

Broadway

When John, Fourth Duke of Atholl purchased land at the widest part of the seafront, in order to construct the Castle Mona, the site was remote from the main town and in part involved access along the beach. His estate was bounded by the Ballaquayle stream which flowed through Glen Falcon, down to the sea. A fine carriage drive, some six hundred yards long, was formed with a pair of lodges set back and flanking the entrance. With various amendments to the abutting frontages and the widening of the main route to upper Douglas, the original narrow road developed into a 'broad way' and is shown as Broadway on the 1869 Ordnance Survey map for Douglas. The flat fronted properties below Woodville Lane — Broadway Terrace were the first to be built, followed later by Sherwood Terrace above the lane. Stuart Slack concludes that this terrace was almost certainly built to commemorate the sad death by suicide in 1883 of Richard Sherwood, MLC and Second Deemster.

Having been purchased by the Douglas Corporation, Glen Falcon House, which stood on Broadway, was demolished as part of a road-widening scheme in 1948/49. The Glen was landscaped to provide a public amenity. The former Glen Falcon Brewery building provides an important anchor in the Conservation Area: water from the stream which ran through the glen was used for the brewing of the Okell's ale. In 1951 the glen was dedicated to poet T. E. Brown with a plaque bearing the inscription: 'A Garden is a Lovesome Thing'. Together with the Rose Gardens, Glen Falcon completes the feeling of openness in the approach to the Promenades and is of importance in this major link with the residential areas of upper Douglas.

Central Promenade

The lower section of Broadway is dominated by the highly decorative frontage of the Mannin Hotel and the Registered Building known as the Central Hotel, a tall six-storey building, which is the highest remaining Victorian property on the seafront. This striking composition marks the beginning of the Central Promenade, which was the last of the Douglas Promenades to be completed. The grand opening was one of the first functions under the newly formed Town Council and incorporated celebration of the completion of the new double line of the Promenade Tramway and the bringing into service of the Upper Douglas Cable Tramway.

The Drives

It was during the late 1880s that land which had formed part of the lawned drive to Castle Mona was laid out as building plots, which were sold in 45 lots by public auction. The proposed road layout of 'The Drives', as it became known, was slightly different from that which was to be finally adopted, with Empress, Mona and Castle Drives running in from the promenade, united across the top by Empire Terrace.

Tramways

Thomas Lightfoot was the originator of the Douglas Horse Trams. He envisaged a horse drawn tramway running the length of the sea front; he judged it would be of great service to the thousands of visitors arriving at the newly developed pier, as they made their way to the hotels and boarding houses, which were rapidly being constructed along the seafront. His plans received the support of the Town Commissioners and in the spring of 1876, Tynwald approved the Douglas Tramway Act. By the end of July that year the line was complete from the foot of Burnt Mill Hill to the south side of the entrance to the Iron Pier, built in 1869 at the bottom of Broadway. The first passenger services began on Wednesday 7th August 1876. The opening of the line met with an immediate success and work to extend it as far as the new Peveril Hotel, which was in close proximity to the Queen Victoria Pier, went on during the winter months. The completed line of just over 1.5 miles opened at the end of January 1877. The running of the trams was the final touch to the new Loch Promenade, which had been officially opened in 1875 by Governor Loch.

The reclamation of hundreds of yards of the Douglas foreshore and the erection of Victoria Pier, Victoria Street and the Loch Promenade were major construction works by which Henry Loch is best remembered. Work on the reclamation moved a pace to such an extent that it was sufficiently advanced for the Governor and Mrs Loch to drive along its entire length after only one year of work.

Mr Lightfoot eventually had to sell his tramway company for an estimated £15,000 due to the failure of other costly ventures.

The Consortium that purchased the tramway in 1882 formed itself into the Isle of Man Tramways Limited, one of the directors being Major J.S. Goldie Taubman of the Nunnery, who was also the first Speaker of the House of Keys and a director of the Isle of Man Railway. New terminal buildings were in course of construction at Burnt Mill Hill at the northern end of the seafront. With the co-operation of the Town Commissioners, double tracks were laid for most of the Promenade length terminating in new tramway depots at Derby Castle, which stood on the present Summerland site.

By 1890 the horse trams were handling well over 500,000 passengers annually and were earning themselves a reputation as a pleasure ride along the entire seafront. The Commissioners were soon in a position to implement their plans to build a new public shelter on the Harris Promenade during the time when Colonel's Road was being widened, thus enabling the horse tram track to be also doubled in this area. The former grassed frontages gave way to a hard metalled promenade, which with the widened roadway was extended northwards beyond the foot of Broadway.

Negotiations between the Town Commissioners and various parties resulted in acquisition of the Horse Tramway by the Tramways and Electric Traction Company, headed by Mr Alexander Bruce. This resulted in a parallel service of electric cable cars, which served various parts of upper Douglas. During 1899 the horse trams carried 1,725,155 passengers, with the highest daily total being recorded at nearly 33,000.

The figures are offered to put into context the bustle of pedestrian and tramcar traffic at the height of the Victorian and Edwardian tourist industry on the Island. Douglas Promenade was the centre of this activity and a main thoroughfare through the town. Today the promenade remains a major arterial route into the heart of Douglas from outlying districts.

Marine Gardens

During the early 1930s, the scheme to widen Loch Promenade enabled the construction of the Marine Gardens; the formal landscaping of sea frontage locations was part of the movement to develop seaside resorts which was popular in the 1920s and 30s, the length and breadth of the country. The design laid out six gardens, five of which were separated by public shelters, with walkways, bedding plants and shrubs sunken below the level of the general footway. Thus, shelter from sea winds was afforded to both planting and pedestrians. The project was planned and supervised by Mr John Denman of the British International Horticultural Society on behalf of Messrs Dicksons' Nurseries of Chester. The gardens, enjoyed by visitors and local residents alike, have become a distinctive part of the Loch Promenade frontage and throughout their lifetime have won awards for the quality of their landscaping.



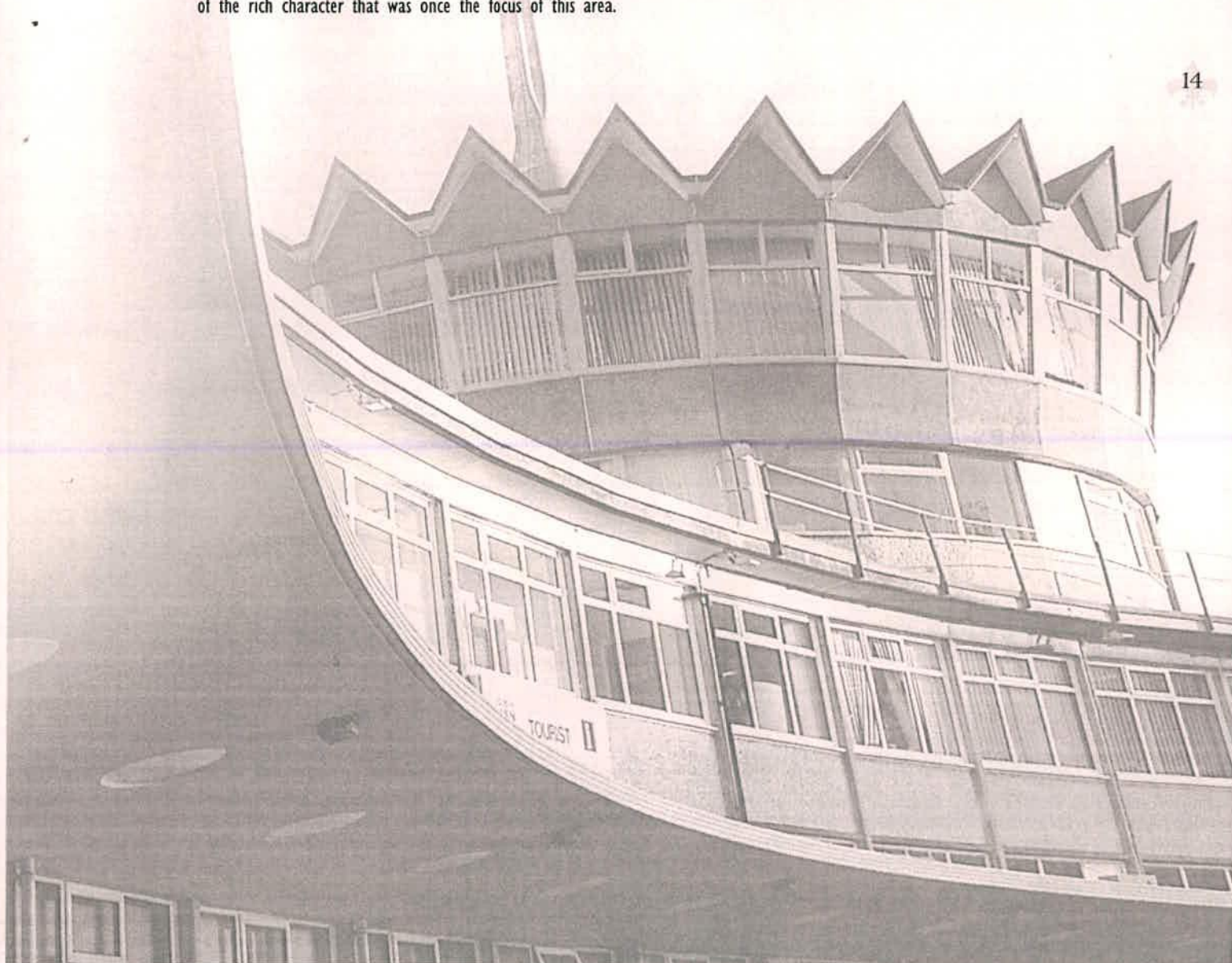
The Sea Terminal and Approach to the Promenades

For generations of past visitors arriving in the Island's main port, Peveril Square, with its fine work by John Robinson, as in the The Peveril Hotel and the triangular Victorian arcade surmounted by a large, ornamental clock tower, presented an imposing entrance to Douglas. Changing tastes and demands for better facilities saw the demolition in 1961 of the cast iron Victorian arcade and its replacement by the new Sea Terminal, which won architectural awards and was officially opened in July 1965 by Princess Margaret, Countess of Snowdon. The Peveril Hotel, a striking symmetrical composition in the late-Georgian style, in due course also gave way to a new office block, which regrettably is not of comparable quality with its predecessor.

A major new development which replaced Rennison's magnificent Villiers Building, is seen in new premises known as Bank of Scotland House, designed by the widely acclaimed designers Haworth Tomkins Architects of London. The development is planned in several phases and is to include a new town square.

Walpole Avenue

This area of land, together with Peveril Square, was created out of ground reclaimed from the sea in the 1870s, as part of the programme which led to the formation of Loch Promenade. Some of the buildings which dated from 1887 and abutted upon the West side of the avenue, have been demolished in recent years, with the exception of the former Yate's Wine Lodge, which has fortunately been the subject of upgrading and change of use to office accommodation. The site of the former Royalty Cinema with its Art Deco faience work, is now occupied by the new Royal Buildings which again house office accommodation. Fortunately, the Grand Hotel frontage of Loch Promenade remains and serves to remind us of the rich character that was once the focus of this area.



APPENDIX 2

ARCHITECTURE

Strathallan Crescent

This small development of sea side cottages form a unique group in the Isle of Man and were built at the direction of the Duke of Atholl during the 1820s. The block nearest to the existing tram terminus are thought to be the earliest of these buildings.

The buildings are for the most part two storeys in height, some having later additions in the form of projecting bays or dormers at roof level. The more southerly of the group are typical of the seaside villas developed during the Regency period and are similar to those found in other coastal resorts, particularly in the south of England. Regency architecture comes in varying styles and often borrows details from other traditions. Many of these fantastical ideas came with the return of soldiers from the Napoleonic wars and this approach came to be known as the Picturesque style. Numbers 1 & 2 Strathallan Crescent retain elements of the decorative timberwork at first floor balcony level and number 2 also retains its romantic elliptical entrance porch. In their original form many of these properties featured this exuberant and artistic approach to craftsmanship with delicate tracery enhancing features such as barge boards, balcony screens and entrance porches. A feature retained by several of the properties are the waisted chimneystacks and deep overhanging



eaves; almost all roofs are finished in traditional slate. Some properties still retain their stone hip and ridge tiles and almost without exception, the properties all enjoy long front gardens, which would at one time have given access directly onto the seashore.

The Min-y-Don, although bearing the date 1795, is believed to have been constructed in approximately 1830. Numbers 10 to 14 Strathallan Crescent would originally all have been flat fronted properties with Georgian sliding sash windows. Glazing would have six-on-six panes at ground floor level, three-on-six panes at first floor. Number 12 Strathallan Crescent has at some stage during the Victorian period had a double-height projecting splayed bay added, as was the fashionable practice at this time.

Where original windows, or at least the original pattern of windows, are still in place, it is important that these be retained to preserve and enhance the character of this special group of buildings.

The Tram Terminus, which now houses the recently created 'Strathallan Conference Suite' as well as the Horse Trams themselves, although a relatively modern building, responds in scale and form to its neighbours and has some interesting and attractive Art Deco detailing. The Terminus Tavern has, during the latter part of the 20th century, had an additional projecting bay added to the whole of the front elevation. The building was originally a private residence (Strathallan Lodge) and shows similarities in style, such as in the chimney stacks, slated roofs and deep overhanging eaves, as seen in its neighbours, suggesting a common construction date.

Part of the historical development of the tramway system is reflected in the small Kiosk Office, typical of the family of buildings erected during the late Victorian and early Edwardian periods along the length of the electric tramway line between Douglas and Ramsey. Whilst the distinctive feature of split timber applied to the face of the building may not be to everyone's taste, this approach to the architecture of the small and individually designed buildings is a trade mark of the historic Manx Electric Railway system.

Mention should be made of the Kaye Memorial Gardens, which stand at the junction of Strathallan Crescent with Summerhill Road. These gardens are a peaceful retreat and were completed in 1955 in memory of Alderman Joseph Kaye and Sarah Kaye, Mayor and Mayoress of Douglas between 1904 and 1905, through a bequest made by their son. The gardens also have a statue of the famous Manx author Sir Hall Caine (1853 - 1931), by sculptor Bryan Kneale. In August 1998 a stone was also laid by the Douglas Corporation to mark the 25th anniversary of the Summerland Fire Disaster as a memorial to all of those who lost their lives.

The Summerland complex was completed in 1970 and was a 'state of the art' entertainment complex. Following the disastrous fire of 1973, the building was rebuilt in a modified form, but has regrettably not stood up to the severe weather conditions of its sea front location as its older neighbours. The Summerland site now offers a valuable opportunity for development and enhancement on this important prominent site.

The Manx Electric Railway sheds are the last group of buildings at this northern extremity. They are an intrinsic part of the image of the tramways and the Conservation Area; nestling in to the foot of the cliffs, they form a logical end-stop to mark the extremity of the boundary.

Harris Promenade

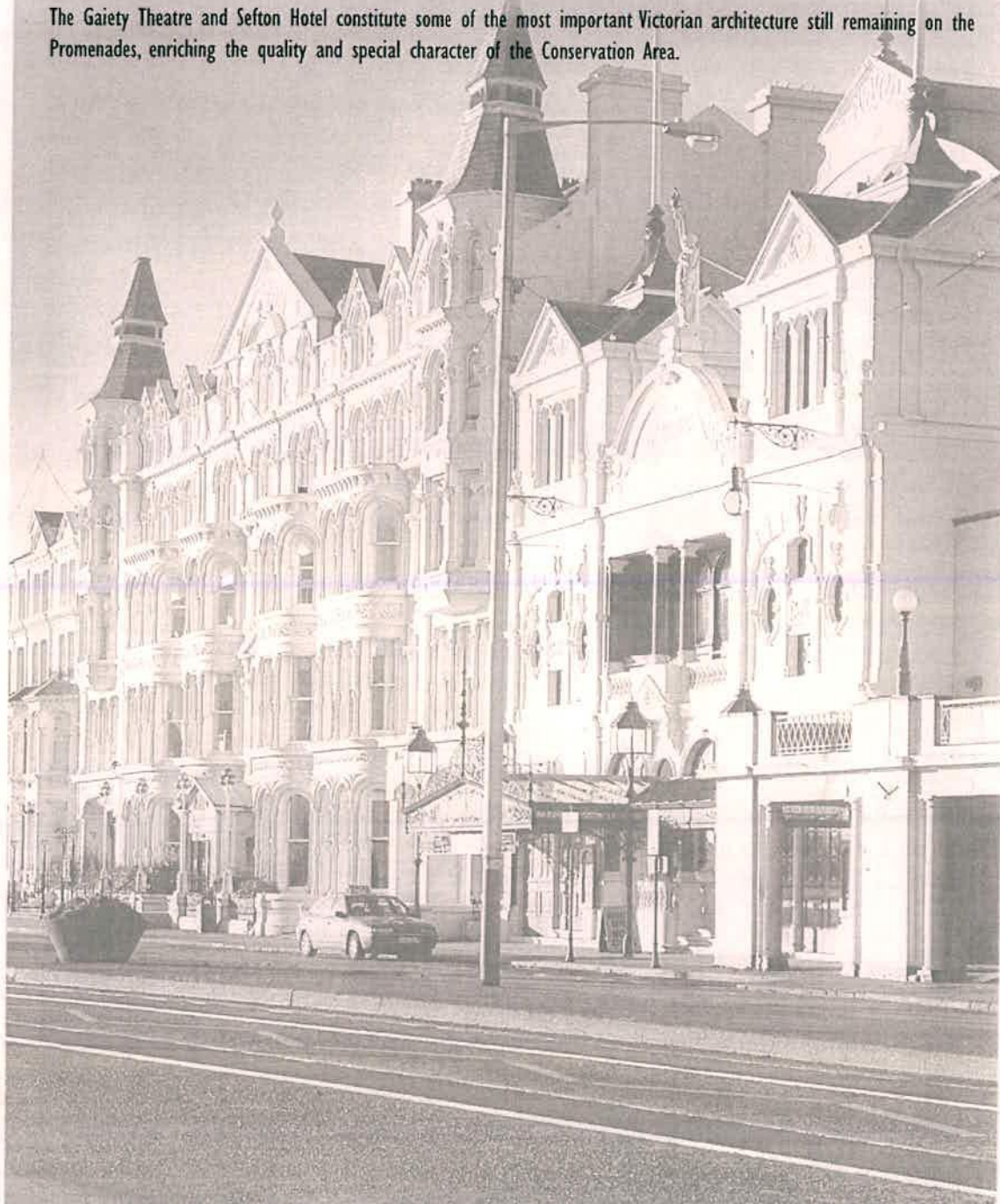
Although not forming part of the main frontage of Harris Promenade, St Thomas's Church, which was consecrated in 1849, forms an important landmark feature within the sweep of the entire promenade. The building was designed by the eminent architect, Ewan Christian. Its square tower and tall lancet windows give a rather sombre exterior which belies the wonderful interior, decorated with murals by John Miller Nicholson RA. Its near neighbour, St Thomas's School, is, save for King William's College, the only remaining Anglican Church School on the Island and together the Church and School remain as an important unit, deserving of protection within the Conservation Area.

Across the street on Church Road we find the typical language of the Victorian boarding houses. This terrace sets the rhythm of bay-fronted properties, which then turn the corner onto Harris Promenade. The architectural language of these buildings continues the intact Victorian frontage that is seen on Loch Promenade, despite localised loss of style at ground level on the commercial frontage of Argyle House.

The Sefton Hotel, completed by 1895, offers a striking architectural composition; with the main entrance located centrally, the building displays wonderful decorative stucco work and retains much of its original detail. Major features of the design are the curved bay windows, which rise from ground through first and second floors. Although these projecting bays were originally topped with decorative balustrading, sadly no longer remaining, the building still retains fine decorative iron work along its street level frontage. A pediment at roof level spans the two central bays, whilst symmetrical octagonally-roofed towers complete the oriel bays, a feature of each end of the property. When originally constructed, the property had coaching houses and stables at the rear, which were accessed via arched openings running under the building. The profile of these openings is still evident although the access routes now have been incorporated within the overall accommodation of the hotel.

Adjoining the Sefton Hotel was the Marina, otherwise known as the Pavilion; originally a dance hall, it was also used for variety shows. Approaching the turn of the last century, the theatre was re-modelled and famous seaside theatre architect Frank Matcham was commissioned to upgrade and re-design the building, resulting in the gem that we have today. The Gaiety Theatre is a striking example of Matcham's work and has been lovingly restored and conserved so that it is now one of the best preserved Victorian theatres to be found anywhere in the British Isles.

The Gaiety Theatre and Sefton Hotel constitute some of the most important Victorian architecture still remaining on the Promenades, enriching the quality and special character of the Conservation Area.



Three years after the new Gaiety Theatre opened in 1900, the death occurred of Mr Henry Bloom Noble, a prominent local gentleman. His large estate was left for trustees to be used for charitable purposes. Mr Noble's house, the original Villa Marina, was set in fine gardens adjacent to the Gaiety Theatre and behind a high wall. The trustees appointed for administration of the trust, following discussions with the Douglas Corporation, staged an architectural competition for the design of a public building and the laying out of grounds. This resulted in the building of the complex which came to be known as the Villa Marina Gardens and Kursaal. The winning design was that of Percy Robinson and W.I. Jones Architects of Leeds. The building has classical architectural references and in its original form had much in common with some of the neo-classical Italian villas and private palaces, which were designed to be viewed "in the round". The Villa Marina Estate was purchased by the Corporation for the sum of £60,000 and the building was erected and furnished at a cost of £25,000, out of funds provided by the Henry Bloom Noble Trust. The later addition of a verandah and colonnade with shops built upon this approach to architecture, which was only marred by the extension to the Garden Room, which occurred in the 1960s. The building is undergoing extensive upgrading and extensions to provide much needed facilities for the heart of the Island's capital. Structural problems with the original colonnade walkway have resulted in a replicate of the original design, set back from its original building line to enable better traffic circulation, and this is part of the overall scheme planned for the site.

The Villa Marina Gardens are also judged most important to the promenade experience. From the original description of the complex in 1913 we learn:

The Gardens of 8 acres form a welcome relief amid the buildings of the sea front, and with their background of trees possess a natural charm. About half the site is now laid out as a lawn in the centre of which a bandstand has been erected. Deck lounge chairs and tables are provided so that visitors may partake of afternoon tea while listening to the music and performers. A raised promenade terrace runs parallel with the sea frontage and below this terrace the street pavement is covered over forming a verandah for shelter.

18

Images of the atmosphere, quality and setting of the building can be conjured up from such descriptions and it is hoped that the revitalised Villa Marina complex will continue to act as a focal point for enjoyment and relaxation for local residents and visitors alike.

The Villa Marina Arcade is an Art Deco composition such as found nowhere else on the Island. Its preservation and enhancement must pay due regard to the quality of original architecture and detail found in shop frontages with their bronze doors; the use of Vitreolite (the coloured glass finish employed) giving the distinctive appearance of the art deco design.

The group of buildings which make up the frontage of Harris Promenade are unique and provide a rich and varied architectural statement, justly deserving Conservation Area Status.

Loch Promenade

When it came to the building of hotels and boarding houses, speculators and developers responded with true Victorian entrepreneurial style. The lodging houses in the older parts of the town were rapidly succeeded by a new generation of hotels and boarding houses, which by the end of the Nineteenth Century had transformed the appearance of the town. The development of the Promenades and the availability of plots for building offered a wonderful opportunity for architects and builders to display their skills: one of the foremost among these was the architect W.J. Rennison who hailed from Stockport and set up an office in Douglas.

Mr Rennison went on to design many of the boarding house establishments on the Loch Promenade and gave this section of Douglas seafront a truly, classic Victorian appearance.



Loch Promenade provides a comprehensive development of well-ordered and closely related Victorian facades. Many of the buildings retain their original form and important features, such as decorative cornices supported on corbelled brackets; decorative stucco work; hooded mouldings to window and door openings; entrance porticos supported on Doric or Corinthian columns; decorative iron work and original entrance doors, and a good proportion of properties still retain original sliding sash windows. There is an emphasis on verticality with building bays being at regular intervals and generating this repetitive pattern along the whole of the sweep of Loch Promenade. However, the emphasis on the horizontal is also carried through consistently with common floor levels and string courses being clearly expressed and helping to unify the appearance of the group. Where arch headed windows exist it is important that this aspect be retained in any proposals to upgrade property, as the common architectural language is an important means whereby individual buildings are brought into a cohesive and outstanding architectural statement.

In spite of the loss of some elements from this section of the promenade the remaining group substantially retains its architectural integrity and is well worthy of protection and enhancement. It is important that any new building erected on the site of the former Greensill's site should respond in architectural language, scale, rhythm and form to the overall concept as seen in the group of buildings that make this section of the promenade so important.

Queen's Promenade

Built in celebration of Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee in 1887, Queen's Promenade brought together the terraces and crescents between the Castle Mona and the foot of Summerhill under a common title. The Castle Mona (now a hotel) was completed in 1805 for the fourth Duke of Atholl; it was originally set in fine lawns and constructed from free stone from the Isle of Arran and the 'tooling' of the ashlar stonework is important and distinctive. The Duke did not occupy the building for long, however, and following his death in 1830 the Castle Mona was offered for sale. It was purchased the following year by a Manx consortium and twelve months later it was opened as a hotel. Initially the project was not very successful but came into its own when a Dublin hotelier, George Heron, took over the premises in 1835. The long carriage driveway originally extended to Broadway, but was shortened when some of the garden area was sold off for building plots. The hotel retained its dignified position for more than 50 years before the building of the 'Drives', and then the Palace Ballroom, on the site of the present Palace Hotel and car park. Eventually the row of shops in front combined to place it in the confined situation it finds itself today. This single-storey parade of shops topped with the decorative iron work announcing the title of the hotel still enables a glimpse to be obtained of one of the Island's finest Registered Buildings. The shops have undergone extensive refurbishment in recent years but still retain their characteristic seaside architecture of the late Victorian/early Edwardian period.



Although hailed as true ground-breaking architecture when it was first constructed in the 1960s, the present modern appearance of the Hilton Hotel unfortunately jars the rhythm and line of the majority of buildings which make up the curve of the sea frontage of Douglas. The property known as Queen's Mansion, commenced within the last ten years, was to bookend a much larger scale project; there now exists a vacant site awaiting further development between this property and the beginning of the original Palace Terrace.

Built by Alec Gill from 1891, and once the most popular row of hotels on the seafront, Palace Terrace was almost certainly named by association after the nearby Palace Ballroom. As Stuart Slack tells us in his book *The Streets of Douglas Old and New*, "the rock face was cut back considerably to make space for the original terrace, which has been partly demolished in recent years. It is split by a lane along which can still be seen the piped Falcon Cliff Stream, which formerly provided power for the Loch Mill which stood on the site prior to the erection of the Castle Mona".

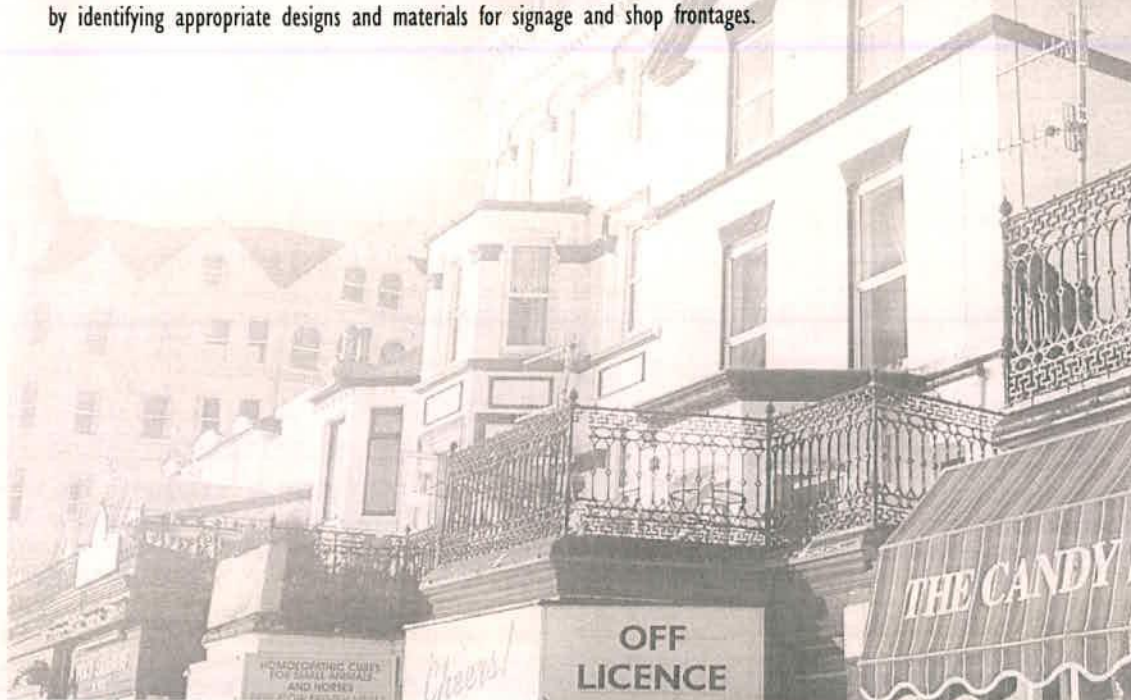
There are some interesting plaques high up on the Trevelyan Hotel, which commemorate the successes of Manx choirs in the Blackpool and Morecambe Music Festivals in 1907, at a time when part of the terrace was being erected. The terraces are large and uniform in scale with a height above basement of five storeys. The terrace represents one of the most intact sections of the promenades and its unified height and extent of is a distinctive feature of the Douglas seafront. Properties vary from single bay to double bay and some hotels now embrace several originally separate units. Many original architectural features survive such as sliding sash windows, decorative stucco work, projecting porticos and decorative iron work, all of which serve to underscore and enhance the special character and unified appearance of this striking group.

Falcon Cliff

Designed by well-known local architect John Robinson in 1938, the building was originally a grand residence for a local bank manager, in the popular Victorian Baronial style. For most of its life the property was a popular hotel and its grounds laid out into a sports arena. Following a fire which gutted the building, the property was converted into prestigious office accommodation. Included within the area is the disused electrically operated lift which enabled easier access for visitors to the hotel from the promenade. Falcon Cliff is highly visible on the skyline of Douglas both during daylight hours and after darkness, when its castellated form is lit up against the night sky.

Marathon Terrace

Marathon Terrace is a mixture of early and late Victorian villas whose front gardens, which were of varying sizes, were given up during the early Twentieth Century, to make way for a series of shops. The profile of the original frontage may be discerned as the buildings emerge above ground floor level and some owners have taken advantage of the flat-roofed form of the shops, to create terraces at first floor from which the sea views can be enjoyed. Various tourist-based businesses are located in this area and Conservation Area designation may help enhance the appearance of this group by identifying appropriate designs and materials for signage and shop frontages.



Broadway

On the 1869 Ordnance Survey map of Douglas, Broadway is shown as a wide, splayed roadway as it approaches its junction with the Promenade, or Colonel's Road as it was then called. The three properties halfway up the hill, now fronted by single-storey shop units, are also present on the 1869 map. These would almost certainly have been late-Georgian/early-Victorian, 3-storey, flat-fronted dwellings, similar to others being constructed circa 1840 onwards in the Douglas area. The 1869 map also shows a detached property 'Belhaven' located at the junction where Broadway meets Victoria Road; it doesn't take too much imagination to realize that the property, now next-but-one to the junction and which again has had modern retail units introduced at street level, is likely to be this same building. It has a very attractive and decorative frontage at first floor, with a central projecting attic dormer, and although this upper dormer is now painted in one colour, the use of half-timbering and terracotta medallions would have originally provided interesting contrast, adding much to the appearance of the property. This feature may well have been added during the latter part of the Nineteenth Century, to the late-Georgian cottage which then stood in its own garden on this prominent site. Additional single-storey shops which cluster at the junction were originally Victorian in design and still retain remnants of their early detailing, however, these shop fronts, together with others on the northern side of Broadway, would benefit from a sensitive approach to the design of signage, window format and colour schemes.

Broadway Baptist Church is faced in local red sandstone with lighter stone employed to dress all of the openings in the principal elevation. Together with the adjoining Alpha Centre, the Church has undergone considerable upgrading and improvements in recent years and makes a very positive contribution to the streetscape in this area. Most other properties abutting upon the northern side of the road are substantial Victorian buildings which are either single or double-fronted and usually of 4 storeys in height, some with an additional basement. These properties, with their splayed bays, step up the slope of the hill in symmetrical pairs. Some retain their original dormer windows and many, their decorative stucco and ironwork. Appropriate painting schemes and signage would considerably enhance the appearance of Sherwood Terrace, which is located above Woodville Lane.

The Mannin Hotel deserves special mention having been the subject of a continuous programme of upgrading, enhancement and expansion in recent years. The property, like its near neighbours in Sherwood Terrace, copes with the gradient of the hill by rising in stepped frontages. The lowest pair of this group is distinguished by its ornate and decorative ironwork at ground and first floor level; semi-circular headed windows at ground floor pick up the rhythm and style set by the adjoining Central Hotel and lay down the pattern of splayed-bay frontages that steadily repeat as the gradient increases. In contrast to others in the group, this first double-frontage displays imprinted scrolled decoration, set into the stucco friezes above windows at first and second floor levels. The former entrances are almost level with the footpath, whereas in the remaining three buildings in this terrace, all approaches to the ground floor levels are via steps, with entrance doors sheltered under imposing square-headed porticos, with flanking granite columns in the Roman 'Corinthian' style. The quality of the decorative stucco is eye-catching and this impressive frontage vies with that of the adjoining Central Hotel.

Central Promenade

Although this was the last of the Douglas Promenades to be completed, some of the buildings along this section of frontage formed the earliest developments of boarding houses and hotels along the Douglas seafront. The landmark building on the corner of Broadway and Central Promenade is the Central Hotel, which was commenced in 1897. The building is faced in Ruabon brick, with a high degree of decorative stucco and terracotta work, emphasising the horizontal string courses. There are decorative brick mouldings over window heads and an eye-catching panel at second floor level on the corner of this building, is one of the finest examples of stucco work to be seen on the promenade.

The Central Hotel underwent some unfortunate alterations during the 1970s; the building is undergoing a new lease of life, however, and has been granted a change of use. This revitalisation should enable the property to continue as a striking land-mark building in this locality. The buildings on Clarence Terrace owe much to the Regency period of architecture, with first floor French windows, still retained in some properties. Originally highly decorative cast and wrought iron balconies ran the length of this terrace, however, many of these have been removed during recent years; their reinstatement would make a most important contribution to the appearance of this group. The buildings are all flat-fronted and many still feature their bracketed mouldings over first floor windows and a strong horizontal element is

seen in the decorative cornice demarking the transition of second to third floor levels. Prior to the formation of the Queen's Promenade, the properties' long front gardens would have given access directly onto the sea shore.

The Esplanade is already designated as a Conservation Area. This fine group adopt the "bookend" approach, unifying the architecture of individual properties into one composition. Fortunately, all of the properties on the Esplanade have their first floor balconies, although not all are original. Properties at each end of the group step forward and are finished at roof level with pediments spanning giant orders of Ionic columns, which sit upon rusticated plinths: this serves to emphasize the importance of this group in architectural terms. Although some alterations have occurred to windows and doors, in addition to the removal of, or alteration of decorative iron work and boundary walls, the architectural integrity of the group is still substantially intact and continues to merit Conservation Area protection.

Next, in an Northerly direction, is Castle Terrace, which has also been known as Derby Terrace. This terrace was originally flat-fronted and was similar in architectural style to Clarence Terrace but later additions during the Victorian Period have given us higher properties, pedimented roofs and splayed-bay frontages, a fashion typical of the later Victorian Period. Parts of the Empress Hotel with its 'caterpillar' Conservatory, together with the neighbouring single-storey flat-roofed Crescent Leisure Centre, would be judged to be negative elements within the Conservation Area and worthy of some future enhancement. The former Crescent Cinema is a Registered Building recognized for the quality of its 'faience' (glazed blocks) works to the principal elevation. This building is now a leisure complex and it is hoped that a new lease of life will justify upgrading and conservation of this prominent building. The terrace continues with flat-fronted buildings again responding to the Regency style with highly ornate decorative balconies: these are an important feature of this group. The Marlborough Apartments are an attractive group of buildings with clearly emphasized and heavily modelled string courses, which wrap around the corner. The arched headed windows on alternate floors, together with the highly decorative stucco work, result in a richly patterned building which makes an important contribution to this section of the Promenades. Empress Terrace contains some of the highest densities of buildings on the entire sea frontage. The terrace is generally uniform and with very high, narrow buildings comprising a basement plus 5 storeys. Some properties have fallen into considerable disrepair and detract from the uniformity and attractive qualities of this group. The last terrace on Central Promenade is Castle Mona Terrace, another very high density development with a mixture of red Ruabon brick next to decorative stucco frontages. The buildings largely retain their architectural integrity and the variety of projecting dormers at roof level adds interest and rhythm to the skyline. The Savoy Hotel with its bowed balustrading, turns the corner onto Castle Drive (much as Marlborough Apartments) and forms a prominent visual link with the area of the Drives located behind the promenade.



The Drives

This locality is the most intensely developed area of the promenades with the 5 storey-plus basement being the most popular building format. These properties were being developed during the rapid expansion of the tourist industry and became favoured by visitors who preferred the quieter location off the busy promenades. Finishes tend to be either red Ruabon brickwork with various colours of tile hanging, relieved by black and white half-timbered effect features and decorative terracotta or brick panels; or rendered stucco with emphasis on string courses and decorative panels.

The bay window is used in its variety of forms not only as a device for drawing more light into the interior, but to enable better 'sea views' to be obtained.

The tightness of the street pattern and the heavy concentration of built form, give the character of The Drives an intensity difficult to find elsewhere. Decorative iron railings, small roof dormers and a regular and repetitive verticality, dominate the character and appearance of the buildings. Several properties have been extended to enclose entrances or to provide enhanced facilities, some with more success visually, than others. Large rear outlets are also a device frequently used to gain maximum levels of accommodation and can present a difficult problem when efforts are being made to upgrade their use and appearance on the streetscape. The service lanes at the rear of terraces are in places unattractive and very visible, presenting a future challenge for imaginative enhancement.

The Sea Terminal and Approaches to the Promenades

From its earliest days in the 1960s, the Sea Terminal became known locally as 'the Lemon Squeezer', a name obviously generating from its radially-corrugated roof form and central spire. The ingenious plan form of the building, designed by Mr T. Kennaugh of local architects Davidson & Marsh, represents the Three Legs of Man and the clean lines and geometrical form are distinctive and synonymous with the architecture of the period. The original concept remains striking and provides a visual 'end-stop' to the continuous curve of the bay.

Walpole Avenue

In its original form of 1887, Walpole Avenue could be likened to a cutting, flanked on either side by very tall buildings, driven through to connect Bath Place with Victoria Street. The recently constructed Royalty Buildings present a modern approach to the Art Deco style of the demolished Royalty Cinema and have been well received in terms of their design. It will be important that any future development proposed for the present vacant site to the west of the avenue, is of a form and quality of design that will compliment the scale and detail of existing buildings.

Jubilee Buildings are an excellent example of re-use of an existing substantial building: this is particularly important on this very prominent site. The soft yellow tones of the brickwork and stone dressings, combine with the imposing scale of the property to provide a fitting portal building to Victoria Street.

The Jubilee Clock is a well-loved local landmark standing at the junction of Loch Promenade with Victoria Street. As denoted by its name, it was erected to mark Queen Victoria's golden jubilee in 1887. The clock has four faces and sits over an octagonal column and plinth. It is a fine example of high Victorian ironwork, which is impressive without being over-grand, however the numerous items of street furniture and signage in the vicinity somewhat detract from its setting.

One of the most recent additions to the promenades, phase two of which is still under construction, is the new building known as Bank of Scotland House, which occupies the Villiers site. This site is acknowledged as being one of the most important sites anywhere in the capital, or for that matter anywhere in the Isle of Man. It has stood at the gateway to the Island for generations, marking the axis where the dramatic sweep of the promenade meets the broad entrance to Victoria Street.

The elevations of the new buildings have been designed to incorporate a series of bays, which reflect the rhythm and intricacies of the buildings continuing the crescent of Douglas Bay. The complete scheme includes the provision of a Town Square which it is hoped will form a focus for the local and wider community, especially during the summer months. It is of crucial importance that the complete concept for the entire site is carried through to fruition. This contemporary architectural statement should be taken to its full conclusion, to stand alongside the robust and imaginative schemes of our Victorian forbearers, which have made the Douglas Promenades such an important part of our historic built environment.

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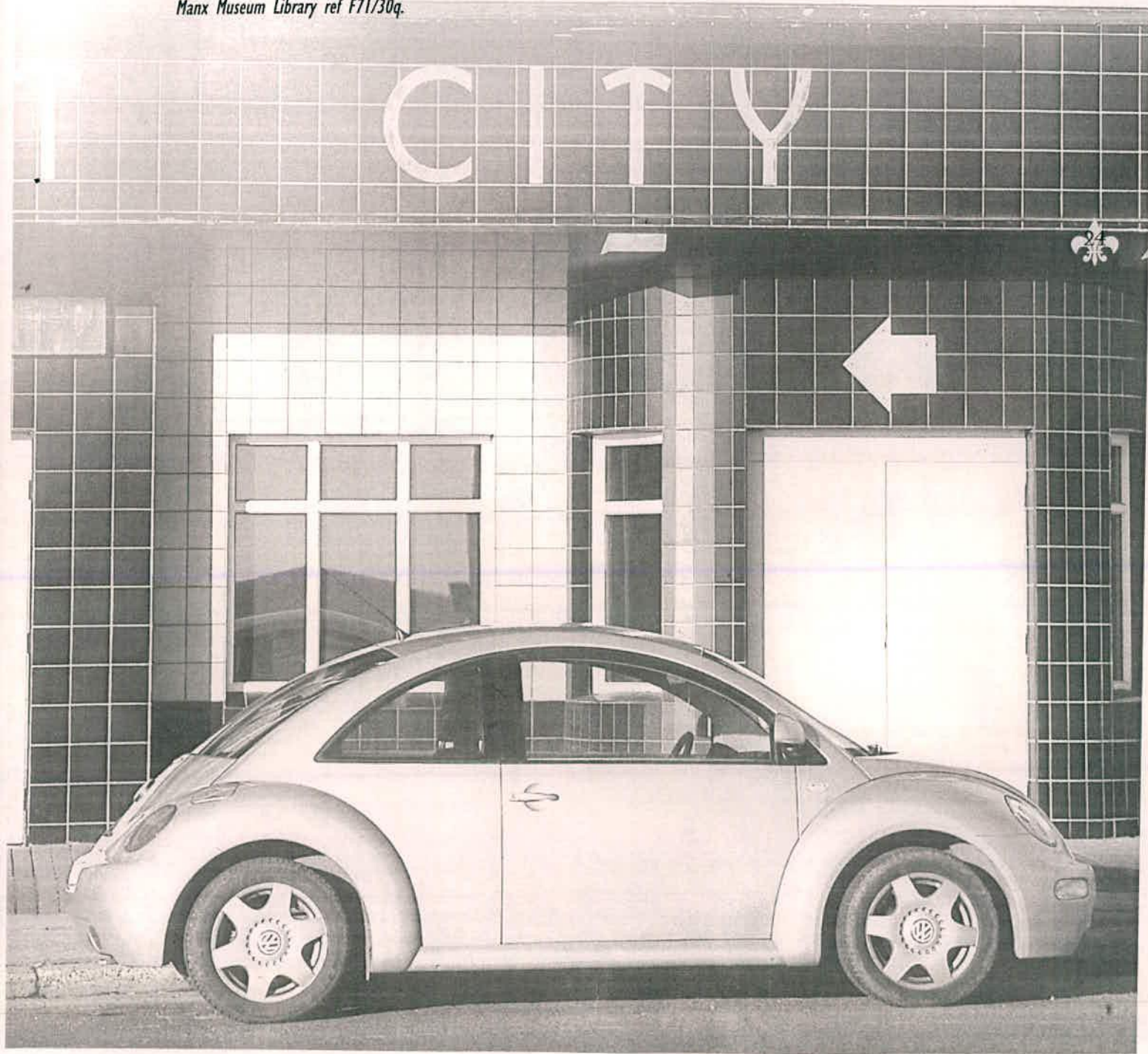
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