

CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

CITY OF LINCOLN SIBTHORP CONSERVATION AREA: No. 7

Sibthorp Conservation Area No.7 (CA7) is located to the east of the south part of High Street. It includes most of Sibthorp Street together with a small section of Nelthorpe Street, and contains 49 unlisted terraced houses (6-10, 16-58, 3-41 Sibthorp Street, and 15-21 (odd) Nelthorpe Street). It occupies an area of 0.85 hectares. It contains part of one Scheduled Ancient Monument (St Mary's Guildhall), and no Listed Buildings, buildings on the Local List or Buildings at Risk. CA7 was designated in July 1983.

1.0 Introduction

Lincoln has 11 designated Conservation Areas. The ability to designate and control development within such areas is as outlined under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The latter defines a conservation area as 'an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'.

Designation places certain duties upon Local Authorities to:

- draw up and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas and to consult the local community about the proposals over a reasonable period.
- pay special attention when exercising their planning powers to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas.

These duties have been reinforced by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in February 2005 through the inclusion of National Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI) relating to Conservation Areas, which aims to monitor Local Authorities performance in relation to Sections 71 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

This appraisal is being undertaken in compliance with BVPI 219 and follows the consultative guidance published in February 2006 by English Heritage ("Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals" English Heritage 2006).

2.0 Planning policy framework

The Regional Planning Context for the City is set out in the Regional Spatial Strategy For the East Midlands (RSS8), adopted in March 2005.

The Policies in this document aim to promote better design and identify priorities for the planning of the Region.

With regard to the priorities for the Regions' Natural and Cultural resources, Policy 31 "Regional Priorities for the Historic Environment" has been influenced by:

- The Regional Environment Strategy; this emphasises the importance of ensuring change, but does not destroy the region's irreplaceable historic assets and distinctive character
- Viewpoints on the Historic Environment of the East Midlands (July 2002) produced by the Regions Heritage Forum
- The annual "Heritage Counts; the state of the East Midlands Historic Environment Report" produced by English Heritage.

Following the outcome of these documents English Heritage recommends that development plans and other strategies should be based upon an approach which:

- Adequately identifies and assesses the natural or cultural assets
- Considers the contribution that these make to local character and diversity
- Assesses the capacity of these assets to absorb change.

The City of Lincoln Council is currently in the process of replacing its 1998 Local Plan with a Local Development Framework. It is intended that the Core Strategy, currently at preferred options stage, will set out five Keynote Policies that all development must meet. Under a Heritage and Built Environment Keynote Policy all development will need to be consistent with strategies for conserving and enhancing the City's natural, historic and cultural assets.

The Conservation Appraisals will contribute to the baseline data required for Local Planning Policy formulation, appraisal and monitoring, as well as other local strategies relating to the City's natural, cultural and historic context such as the Cultural Strategy and Heritage Strategy which are to be subject to review in 2006.

3.0 **Definition [or summary] of special interest:**

Sibthorp Street is an area of late nineteenth century artisans' and lower professionals' housing developed within a wide field, of possibly medieval origin, stretching back from St Peter at Gowts church and St Mary's Guildhall with boundaries stretching from High Street to the Sincil Dyke. The street itself was laid out in 1895 by Mortimer and Son of Lincoln for Thomas Martin, and most of the houses were built by the Lincoln Land and Building Society and several private developers over the following five years. Although the development was piecemeal, all the houses have a similar plan and elevation which is typical of the housing of the period. The difference between particular build units can

be seen mainly in the specific details of boundary walls, windows, doors, eaves and chimneys.

The houses are grouped in terraces built of red brick and (originally) roofed with Welsh slate. All the houses are set back from the pavement behind small forecourts which are bounded by low brick walls with stone copings which formerly carried cast-iron railings. Ground floor canted and rectangular bay windows of differing styles are a feature of every house. Cast-iron crestings have survived on some bay windows. Most of these bays are of brick with timber cornices, but there are some which are entirely of timber, reflecting the different builders involved. The surviving original windows are timber-framed vertically-sliding sashes with large sheets of plain glass in each sash.

Most of the houses have recessed porches entered through arched doorways with simple carved or moulded keystones and springers and tiled floors. Some of the doors and fanlights have panels of stained and etched glass.

The original rainwater goods are of cast iron and are supported, together with simple timber eaves cornices, on carved wooden brackets.

Brick chimneys with decorated yellow clay chimney pots are a feature of the roofscape. The chimney stacks have projecting string courses and cornices in moulded brick.

The Public Realm consists of the streets with pavements and carriageways. The surfaces are tarmac with concrete kerbs and channels. There are no public green spaces. Limited planting exists in the small forecourts and rear yards.

The views in and out of CA7 are limited by the two storey terraced buildings and the smaller scale of the streets. However, there are two important views – one on to High Street and one from High Street along Sibthorp Street to Nelthorpe Street. The former provides the setting of CA7 as a development immediately off the most important street in Lincoln. The latter demonstrates the nature of the late Victorian development associated with High Street in the context of its long history from the Roman period (as the Fosse Way along this section).

All the properties in the area remain in residential use today.

CA7 is an exemplar of late Victorian housing development off High Street as the workforce and population expanded in Lincoln.

4.0 Assessing special interest:

Location and setting:

4.1 Location and context.

It has an urban context. CA7 includes 6-10, 16-58, 3-41 Sibthorp Street, and 15-21 (odd) Nelthorpe Street plus the sections of Prior Street and Abbot Street which run alongside the sides of 9 and 11 Sibthorp Street, and 25 and 27 Sibthorp Street respectively.

Its immediate proximity to the east of High Street is an important aspect of its setting. For nearly 2000 years the High Street has been the dominant route for vehicles and pedestrians travelling south/north to and through the city. The city centre lies to the north of CA7 along High Street. CA7 abuts CA2 which lies along High Street. It forms part of the Medieval suburb of Wigford.

4.2 General character and plan form.

CA7 has an urban character with a grid street pattern of two storey single front terraced houses with small forecourts and rear extensions, and rear yards (some with detached brick outbuildings). The streets are 6m wide consisting of two lanes with a tarmac surface and with 2m wide pavements, also of tarmac. The frontages are continuous, broken only by some passageways to the rear, entrances to other streets and the modern entrance to Homer House. Sibthorp Street runs east-west. The section of Nelthorpe Street that provides an 'end-stop' to Sibthorp Street runs north-south.

The previous plan form of the area was an enclosed field (of possibly medieval origin) stretching back from St Peter-at-Gowts church and St Mary's Guildhall to Sincil Dyke to the east. This has vanished under the C19 development although the N boundary of the field may have been the current rear boundary of the N side of Sibthorp Street.

4.3 Landscape setting

CA 7 is situated within the low-lying wetlands of the valley of the river Witham. The area of CA7 is virtually flat (the area was previously used as a sports field). As noted above, its landscape character is urban. Sincil Dyke lies immediately to the east behind the east side of Nelthorpe Street.

The public open space consists only of the pavements and carriageways in the area. There are small private spaces in the forecourts and rear yards of the terraced houses that contain limited planting. There are no other 'green spaces' in CA7.

Historic development and archaeology.

4.4 The origins and historic development of the area:

Prehistoric to Roman (10000BC-AD400)

No evidence of pre-Roman occupation has been found within CA7. However the area around CA7 experienced substantial development during the Roman period. High Street, and the plan of central Lincoln as a whole, is based on the major south-north Roman road of Ermine Street, which is preserved north of King Street (just north of CA7) as the line of High Street. It was at this location that Ermine Street was joined by Fosse Way, whose line is preserved as High Street and Newark Road south of this point. The first Roman legionary base may have been established in the vicinity of CA7. CA7 may also have been the site of Roman cemeteries to the east of High Street. The CA7 area may also have lain adjacent to Roman commercial buildings along the Fosse Way and Ermine Street.

Anglo-Saxon to Viking (AD 400-1050)

Little is known of the occupation of this area between the 5th and 9th centuries.

Medieval (AD 1050-1485)

Little is known of the activity in this period until the creation of the early medieval suburb of Wigford as far south as Great Gowts Drain (in CA5), with the high status of the area reflected by St Mary's Guildhall and St Peter-at-Gowts' Church and buildings now lost, such as "John O'Gaunt's House", the house of Adam, Lincoln's first mayor, as well as St Andrew's Church and St Andrew's Hall. CA7 lies east of and to the rear of this high status area of High Street (directly behind St Mary's Guildhall and St Peter-at-Gowts' Church). Sincil Dyke to the east was probably constructed in this period. Medieval properties extended back from the High Street to Sincil Dyke. The area now occupied by CA7 was known to have belonged to St Mary's Guild at the Guildhall and the land between the High Street frontage and the Sincil Dyke had a use which was presumably related to activity on the street front (Jones et al, 2003)). The larger residences had ample plots: perhaps, as above, this was the origin of the wide plot going back to Sincil Dyke shown on the 1842 map by JS Padley on which Sibthorp Street is now located.

Tudor, Stuart and Hanoverian (AD 1485-1714)

There were probably some new buildings along High Street in this era. From 1611-1623 the area might have been used for activities of Christ's Hospital School (The Bluecoats School) occupying St Mary's Guildhall.

Georgian (AD 1714-1830)

An enclosed field is shown on the 1842 Padley map which may date back to this period and earlier (noted above).

Victorian to Modern (AD 1830-present day)

As stated above, in 1842, the area of CA7 was contained within a former enclosed field. The land to the east of St Mary's Guildhall and St Peter at Gowts' Church, stretching to Sincil Dyke, was then developed into John O'Gaunt's Football field. It was leased in 1884 by brewer Robert Dawber, who occupied St Mary's Guildhall as a brewery in the 1880s, for the first matches to be played by Lincoln City Football Club (LCFC). The pitch was re-laid in 1885 and paths and dressing rooms built, with spectators' access from High Street through the gate of the Guildhall. A grandstand was added in 1888 upon LCFC's entry into the Football Combination. Upon Dawber's death in 1895, the field was sold and LCFC moved to their present home at Sincil Bank.

Sibthorp Street, and the northern parts of Nelthorpe Street, Prior Street and Abbot Street were built on the land in 1895 (MON3506¹) as follows:

- Abbot St. Residential street (cul de sac) running south from Sibthorp Street. Proposed in 1895 by Thomas Martin, architects W Mortimer & Son. Extended in 1899 and 1905 by the Lincoln Land and Building Society (MON3598)
- Prior St. Residential street running south from Sibthorp Street. Proposed in 1895 by Thomas Martin, architects W Mortimer & Son. Extended 1899-1901 by the Lincoln Land and Building Society. A cul-de-sac terminating against the properties on the north side of Scorer Street. 1-29, 2-28 (MON3656)
- Sibthorp St. Residential street running east from High Street to Nelthorpe Street. Proposed in 1895 by Thomas Martin, architects W Mortimer & Son. Named after the Sibthorp family. (MON3664)
 - 35-41 Sibthorp Street. Four houses built by the Lincoln Land and Building Society. A previous application for 41 (BA2568) seems not to have been built. 1897 (MON4731)
 - 11-17 Sibthorp Street. Four houses built by the Lincoln Land and Building Society. 1895. (MON4738)
 - 19-25 Sibthorp Street. Four houses built by The Lincoln Land & Building Society. 1896 (MON4748)
 - 3-9 Sibthorp Street. Four houses built by S C Basker. 1896 (MON4752)
 - 50-58 Sibthorp Street. Five houses built by H Allman. 1896. (MON4760)

¹ References in brackets and beginning with MON refer to the City of Lincoln Council's digital Urban Archaeological Database (UAD)

- 27-33 Sibthorp Street. Four houses built by the Lincoln Land and Building Society. 1896. (MON4775)
- 14-16 Sibthorp Street. Ten houses built for James Watkin, architects W Mortimer & Son. They have been removed and the gap provides an entrance to Homer House car park. 1895-1980 (MON4795)
- 36-48 Sibthorp Street. Seven houses built by the Lincoln Land and Building Society. 1898 (MON4824)
- 16-22 Sibthorp Street. Four houses built by the Lincoln Land and Building Society. 1898 (MON4836)
- 24-34 Sibthorp Street. Six houses built by the Lincoln Land and Building Society. 1898 (MON4863)
- 4-10 Sibthorp Street. Four houses built by C R Lucas, architects W Mortimer & Son. 1906 (MON5181)
- 2 Sibthorp Street. House built by C R Lucas for C C Sibthorp. Lucas occupied the house as a tenant. 1904 (MON5104)
- Nelthorpe Street. Residential street running south from Monson Street. Cul-de-sac against the back of properties on the north side of Scorer Street. Proposed in 1895 by Thomas Martin, architects W Mortimer & Son. Extended in 1899-1903 by the Lincoln Land and Building Society. Possibly named after William Tweed Nelthorpe of 24, Lindum Road, quarry owner and lime producer, or his relatives. (MON3650)

4.5 Archaeology and conservation areas, including any scheduled monuments.

CA7 is an area of archaeological importance. There may be remains of the Roman legionary base in the area. To the rear of High Street properties towards the east there are remains of a Roman cemetery, with little evidence, as yet, of Saxon and Medieval activity away from the High Street.

Future archaeological work towards the east of CA7 may reveal further information about activities on the waterfront of Sincil Dyke in the Medieval period and also the following period through to the mid-C18. Any remains of the late C19 sports field, dressing rooms and grandstand would be of interest.

CA7 also contains part of one Scheduled Ancient Monument - St Mary's Guildhall. Any work in the vicinity of St Mary's Guildhall

may reveal important information about the original building and site and its subsequent complex development.

Spatial analysis.

4.6 The character and interrelationship of spaces within the area.

As noted above, CA7 has a regular pattern of spaces defined by the Victorian grid street pattern (Sibthorp St, Nelthorpe St, Prior St, Abbot St). There is a clear delineation of space between the public fronts, with carriageway, pavements and short forecourts, and the private back-of-terrace areas which are surrounded by high walls or the rears of other properties and are not very visible from the streets. Most views in or out of the area are contained by the terraced buildings. The only exception is to High Street which is close to and west of CA7. There is therefore a strong sense of enclosure in CA7.

The space at the entrance to Homer House, which is offset from the road, is of a larger scale than the rest of the area. However, there is some sense of enclosure due to the height of Homer House itself. There are no large open spaces in CA7.

4.7 Key views and vistas.

The views in and out of CA7 are limited by the two storey terraced buildings and the smaller scale of the streets. However, there are two important views – one on to High Street and one from High Street along Sibthorp Street itself to Nelthorpe Street. The former provides the setting of CA7 as a Victorian development immediately off the most important street in Lincoln. The latter demonstrates the nature of the late Victorian development associated with High Street in the context of its long history from the Roman period (as the Fosse Way along this section). There are further views of the terraced houses along Nelthorpe Street, Prior Street and Abbot Street which have a similar character to Sibthorp Street and provide the wider context for the development of Victorian terraced houses in this area

Although CA7 has a small area the views along Sibthorp Street itself show the repeating rhythms of the terraced houses which is an important characteristic of the townscape. There are no views to landmark buildings.

Character analysis.

4.8 Definition of character areas and zones.

CA7 is a small urban housing area and consists of a single character zone.

4.9 Activity, prevailing or former uses within the area and the influences of these on the plan form and building types:

The existing terraced houses were developed for residential use in the 1890s. They remain in residential use today. There is little virtually no influence of previous uses and activity in the area on the plan form and building types.

The area now occupied by CA7 was known to have belonged to St Mary's Guild at the Guildhall and the land between the High Street frontage and the Sincil Dyke had a use which was presumably related to activity on the street front (Jones et al, 2003)). The larger residences had ample plots: perhaps this was the origin of the enclosed field on a long wide plot going back to Sincil Dyke which is shown on the 1842 map by JS Padley and on which Sibthorp Street is now located. The north boundary of 6-44 Sibthorp Street may lie along the earlier north field boundary.

In 1884 the field was leased as a football field. The pitch was re-laid in 1885 and paths and dressing rooms built. A grandstand was added in 1888. There are no known remains of this development.

4.10 The architectural and historic qualities of the buildings and the contribution they make to the special interest of the area.

The Victorian terraced housing and streetscape constitute the main architectural and historic interest of CA7. Sibthorp Street is an area of late nineteenth century workers' housing developed within a wide field, of possibly medieval origin, stretching back from St Peter at Gowts church and St Mary's Guildhall) with boundaries stretching from High Street to the Sincil Dyke. The street itself was laid out in 1895 by Mortimer and Son of Lincoln for Thomas Martin, and most of the houses were built by the Lincoln Land and Building Society and several private developers over the following five years. Although the development was piecemeal, all the houses have a similar plan and elevation which is typical of the housing of the period. The difference between particular build units can be seen mainly in the specific details of boundary walls, windows, doors, eaves and chimneys.

The houses are grouped in terraces built of red brick and (originally) roofed with Welsh slate. All the houses are set back from the pavement behind small forecourts which are bounded by low brick walls with stone copings which formerly carried cast-iron railings. Ground floor canted and rectangular bay

windows of differing styles are a feature of every house. Cast-iron crestings have survived on some bay windows. Most of these bays are of brick with timber cornices, but there are some which are entirely of timber, reflecting the different builders involved. The surviving original windows are timber-framed vertically-sliding sashes with large sheets of plain glass in each sash.

Most of the houses have recessed porches entered through arched doorways with simple carved or moulded keystones and springers and tiled floors. Some of the doors and fanlights have panels of stained and etched glass.

The original rainwater goods are of cast iron and are supported, together with simple timber eaves cornices, on carved wooden brackets.

Brick chimneys with decorated yellow clay chimney pots are a feature of the roofscape. The chimney stacks have projecting string courses and cornices in moulded brick.

4.11 The contribution of key unlisted buildings.

All the buildings in CA7 are unlisted therefore the contribution they make to the special interest of the area is as described in section 4.10.

4.12 Local details.

None identified

4.13 Prevailing and traditional building materials and the public realm.

Prevailing traditional materials: - Albion brick walling in Flemish bond, Welsh slate roofs, cast iron rain water goods and window crests, timber brackets, cornices and sash windows and some bay windows, etched and stained glass in some door panels and fanlights, yellow clay chimney pots, brick garden walls with stone copings.

Modern replacements: - stone cladding, plastic rainwater goods, PVCu windows and doors, modern timber doors, concrete block forecourt walls

Public realm: – conventional tarmac for carriageway and footpath, concrete kerb and channels.

4.14 An audit of heritage assets.

- Terraced housing as an architectural style.

- Remaining original and decorative detailing

- 4.15 The contribution made to the character of the area by greenery and green spaces; and its ecology and biodiversity value.

There is limited contribution made to the character of CA7 by greenery and green spaces. There is some planting, some in pots, in the forecourts that does improve the area. There is also some planting in the rear yards.

- 4.16 The extent of intrusion or damage. i.e. the negative factors.

Modern buildings and unsympathetic alterations. In recent years, there has been a significant loss of original features caused by the painting, rendering or cladding of brick walls, the removal or alteration of chimney stacks and boundary walls, and alterations to doors and windows, particularly their replacement with designs in modern materials [PVCu] incorporating stick-on lead comes and 'Georgian Style' glazing bars, neither of which are appropriate.

There is a prominent telephone pole on the south side of the street whose wires disrupt the view along the street in both directions

Numbers 12 and 14 Sibthorp St were demolished to make way for the entrance to Homer House in the early 1970s. The rear boundary line of 48 and 50 Sibthorp Street has been altered; probably during the development of Monson Court to the north.

- 4.17 The existing neutral areas.

The wide tarmac entrance to Homer House, on the north side of Sibthorp Street, with large modern brick walls along its boundaries constitutes a neutral area in contrast to the finer grain and detail of Sibthorp Street.

- 4.18 General condition.

Occupancy – all the houses appear to be in use.

Fabric condition – The building fabric is in varied condition with some damaged areas. Some of the low forecourt walls are in poor condition. There have been numerous replacements of original fabric by modern materials.

- 4.19 Problems, pressures and capacity for change.

There is a continuing pressure to replace original details and material with modern replacements.

5.0 Community involvement.

The documents will be subject to a consultation with the public and stakeholder organisations as part of the review and the subsequent development of the Management Plans. This will follow the principles set out in the Authority's Statement of Community Involvement

St Peter-at-Gowts Residents Association performed a street survey of Nelthorpe, Abbot and Prior Street in 2001/2002. It looked at original features, alterations etc and included check sheets and photographs. The Residents Association proposed that all three streets be included in CA7.

6.0 Suggested boundary changes.

To be considered during the review of this document, and the results incorporated into the future Management Plan.

7.0 Local generic guidance.

To be considered during the review of this document, and the results incorporated into the future Management Plan.

8.0 Useful information, appendices and contact details. See: footnotes and bibliography.

Contact information

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9.0 Management proposals.

1. As each terrace was designed as a unified group, it is important that any replacement of original features must be on a strict 'like-for-like' basis to preserve the unity of the streetscape.

2. The specific details of boundary walls, windows, doors, eaves and chimneys vary from block to block according to their individual builders. It is important to recognise these subtle differences and to avoid the transplanting of details which are correct for one part of the street to other properties which have different details.

- 1 and 2 above could be addressed through the appropriate application of an Article 4(2) Direction under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted) Development Order 1995.

3. Consideration should be given to resisting the prominent telephone pole on the south side of the street, or to arranging a less obtrusive means of connecting properties to the telephone system.

- 3 above could be addressed through negotiation with the service provider.

Further proposals to be considered following the review and in conjunction with “English Heritage 2006, Guidance on the management of conservation areas”.

10.0 Appendices:

- Appendix 1 – Bibliography
- Appendix 2 – Location map

Heritage Team, DDES 22 March 2006

Appendix 1

Bibliography

English Heritage 2006, Guidance on conservation areas appraisals

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Appendix 2

Location Map



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Conservation Area 7 Sibthorp

Scale: 1:800

