

CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

CITY OF LINCOLN GOWTS BRIDGE CONSERVATION AREA: No. 5

Conservation Area 5 is located on High Street between Scorer Street and St Botolph's Church, occupying an area of 3.19 hectares and comprising High Street, short stretches of adjoining side streets and properties fronting on to High Street. The Conservation Area [CA] was designated in July 1983, and contains two Listed Buildings, and two buildings on the Local List.

For location map, see Appendix 2.

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 context:

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:

The second of a 'chain' of CA designations along both sides of High Street. Urban and linear in form, CA 2 extends from Scorer Street and Princess Street in the north to St Botolph's Church in the south, encompassing only the High Street, frontage buildings and short stretches of side streets. CA 5 lies immediately to the north, CA 4 to the south. There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments, and two Listed Buildings; Gowts Bridge¹ [grade II] and 53 and 54 High Street² [grade II]. Two properties are on the Local List; 60 High Street, a

¹ Revised List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest for The City of Lincoln. DCMS 20 December 1999. [ref. Grade II. 1941-1/5/143]

² Revised List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest for The City of Lincoln. DCMS 20 December 1999. [ref. Grade II. 1941-1/5/144]

former gate house and lodge for a private road (LL 45), and 41-44 High Street (LL 2)³

General views are northwards to the Cathedral along High Street, and in the direction of South Common to the south, as well as along side streets both to east and west.

The most significant historical elements of the CA are the High Street itself, Gowts Bridge (1813), Great Gowts Drain (c AD1000), 53-54 High Street (c 1700), converted textile factory at 48 High Street (1700s), and several groups of buildings from the 19th century.

The predominant building type is red brick housing with pitched roofs and contemporary detailing, dating from the mid 19th to early 20th century, converted to retail or commercial use on the ground floor.

Building height is of 2 or 3 storeys.

One striking aspect is the uniform appearance of the properties on the east side comprising nos. 437-458, built from 1850 and initially named St Botolph's Terrace. Most are 2-storey houses with shop fronts added in the 20th century and extending in front of the building line, the row extending for c 130m.

The most modern buildings are those from the mid-1990s built on the site of the Avoiding Line railway bridge abutments removed in 1987; Lancaster Court 74-75 High Street on the east side, and 416a-c High Street on the west side. 70 High Street is a 1972 bank in brutal style. 409-410 High Street is a plain red-brick retail establishment from 1979.

Public realm is dominated by the High Street [dual carriageway as far south as Dixon Street, two-lane south of that] and side streets of standard construction with tarmacadam surfaces and concrete flagstone footpaths, with associated traffic, pedestrian crossings and lighting paraphernalia. The exceptions are four cobbled vehicle cross-overs; to 69 High Street; south of numbers 39 and 40, and passing under 37, all on the west side of High Street. Four side-streets have retained their narrowness where joining High Street – Queen Street, Mill Lane, Featherby Place and Gibbeson Street – the latter pedestrianised for 25m back from High Street.

4.0 Assessing special interest:

4.1 Location and setting:

4.1.1 Location and context.

CA 5 is situated in the long (1.5km) lower High Street, with CA 4 to the south and CA 2 to the north. For nearly 2000 years the High Street has been the dominant route for vehicles and pedestrians travelling locally south-north to and through the city, although east and west inner relief roads now carry most through vehicular traffic. The city centre and

³ City of Lincoln Local Plan, 26 August 1998, Appendix F

main historic core lie to the north, the continuation of High Street to the south.

4.1.2 General character and plan form.

The overwhelming character is urban and linear, and encompasses the carriageway and properties fronting on to High Street. Long burgage plots once stretched back from these buildings, to the upper Witham on the west and Sincil Dyke on the east, but the boundaries have mostly vanished under modern development. Only the parts close to High Street are included within the CA. Occupation on the frontage is dense, broken by sixteen road junctions and open spaces in front of St Botolph's Court, the Golden Cross and Millers Arms Public Houses, the garage parking area at 427 High Street and Great Gowts Drain and Gowts Bridge. The carriageway widens by 8m at the south end of the CA, before narrowing again at Gowts Bridge in CA5.

4.1.3 Landscape setting

Urban. Situated within the low-lying wetlands of the valley of the River Witham, the street is virtually flat within CA5, rising only 0.3m from north to south (1:1600), and locally in the centre of the span of Gowts Bridge by 1.3m; the land to east and west is similarly even. The setting is as part of the long High Street, with views north to landmark buildings in CA 2 (the Cathedral is not visible); the southern aspect is dominated by the High Street and the tower of St Botolph's Church in CA 4.

4.2 *Historic development and archaeology.*

4.2.1 The origins and historic development of the area.

Prehistoric to Roman 1000BC-AD400

No evidence for pre-Roman occupation has been found within the CA. The first Roman legionary fortress may have been established in this area. High Street, and the plan of central Lincoln as a whole, is based on the major south-north Roman road of Ermine Street, which was joined by Fosse Way north of King Street. In CA 5 Fosse Way underlies modern High Street, and has been recorded archaeologically at the junction with Pennell Street.

Anglo-Saxon to Viking AD 400-1050

Little is known of the occupation of this area between the 5th and 9th centuries, but the northern part of CA 5 forms the southern end of the suburb of Wigford, (as far south as Great Gowts Drain), reoccupied from the early 10th century. The Drain was cut as a defensive boundary and drainage channel, with bridges crossing this watercourse and the smaller Little Gowts Drain a few metres to the south. It is possible that the church of St Michael, on the north side of Gowts bridge, dates from this first phase, but it may be part of the 11th-century lower Wigford

suburb development. The site is now Pennell Street and St Peter at Gowts School playground.

Medieval AD 1050-1485

The southern part of the suburb of Wigford, south of Gowts Drain as far as Sincil Dyke in CA 4, was occupied from the 11th century, being laid out around a long funnel-shaped market, St Botolph's Green, gradually widening out from a point south of Gowts Bridge.

Three churches were established, Holy Cross south of Gowts Bridge (Boultham Avenue) and at the northern end of the extended suburb (with St Botolph's at the southern end); St Michael's (see Anglo-Saxon to Viking), and St Margaret's in the area of Cranwell Street.

Little is known of housing, but there was industry, including a tannery in St Margaret's Parish, Wigford around 1200, almost certainly close to the Witham for its water supply (ed. Major 1968, RA2464, p. 69).

Featherby Place follows the line of a lane, skirting the north-east side of St Botolph's Church, leading to Little Bargate Bridge and a route to Washingborough and Canwick.

Tudor, Stuart and Hanoverian AD 1485-1714

St Margaret's Church was taken down in the 16th century, its parish merging with that of St Botolph. The same happened to Holy Cross, but the church and the churchyard were used as a walk mill and dye works by the Clothiers in c1551, (Hill, T and S L, 67). St Michael's joined with St Peter-at-Gowts and was pulled down in the 1530s.

The two Gowts Bridges are depicted as being of stone in 1722 (Stukeley 1722), and there may have been fords alongside. A drawing of 1790 by W Nutter shows them as humped single-arch spans with stretch of open river and banks between (Hill 1966 pl 9).

Georgian AD 1714-1830

Much rebuilding in the 18th century on High Street, as well as continuing use of existing buildings, mostly on the west side. The High Street retained its wide funnel shape from the medieval market place. The present Gowts Bridge was built in 1813, replacing the two spans.

Victorian to Modern AD 1830-present day

The west side of High Street was densely built up in the early 19th century, the east with only isolated structures at the north end. Housing and shops extended southwards along the east side throughout the century, with frontages aligned with High Street rather than the medieval market line to the east. The growth of the city's housing needs from the 1870s resulted in new residential streets to east and west.

The Victoria County Infants School, and St Peter at Gowts Boys and Girls School were founded in 1838, and replaced on the same site in 1973 by St Peter-at-Gowts C of E Primary School.

Side streets were built or metalled: c1830 Mill Lane, c1860 Queen Street, c1870-1901 Peel Street, 1872 Featherby Place (metalled and realigned, following a medieval route to Little Bargate), 1875 Gibbeson Street, 1876 Shakespeare Street, 1870s Sewell's Walk (metalled and widened, following a medieval route), 1884 Boultham Avenue (metalled and widened, following a private road and medieval route), 1893 Dixon Street and Cranwell Street, 1895 Vernon Street. 1901 Robey Street, 1907 Scorer Street (west end) and Pennell Street (a short private road to Pennell's Nursery from c1840), 1911 Smith Street.

Dixon Street bridge provided the first public road route over the River Witham in 1925, resulting in the only major road High Street junction in the CA.

A prominent feature was the railway bridge over High Street immediately north of Peel Street, present from 1882-1987, which carried the high-level Avoiding Line, first operated by the Great Northern and Great Eastern Joint Railway.

Little Gowts Drain was culverted in the late 1980s, after the removal of the Avoiding Line embankment, and is now not visible.

4.2.2 Archaeology and conservation areas, including any scheduled monuments.

The CA is within an area of high archaeological importance, having been occupied from the Roman period onwards, and situated on the most important arterial road in the city, where remains are most concentrated. Back from the street properties are likely to be remains of a Roman cemetery, with little evidence, as yet, of Saxon and medieval activity away from the High Street. Little investigation has taken place on the frontages, apart from the area where the Avoiding Line embankment was removed, and no archaeological evidence has been gathered of the medieval street line dominated by the large market area of St Botolph's Green in the southern part of the CA. It is likely that future archaeological work here will reveal important evidence for occupation in the Roman and mediaeval periods. The Roman Fosse Way has only been archaeologically recorded in a service trench at Vernon Street.

The sites of the three medieval churches have not been excavated, but burials from St Margaret's and St Michael's Church cemeteries have been recorded during services work and minor groundworks. Medieval levels are known to survive at a shallow depth beneath High Street properties. (see also 2.2.1 above)

4.3 *Spatial analysis.*

4.3.1 The character and interrelationship of spaces within the area.

Linear, along High Street with buildings containing views and vistas. Important presence of the watercourse of Great Gowts Drain

Open spaces are small and associated with private commercial uses.

4.3.2 Key views and vistas.

The view north is the High Street itself, and landmark buildings in CA 2, particularly the Central Methodist Church, the tower of St Peter-at-Gowts Church, and 115 High Street with its distinctive cupola (the Cathedral is not visible); the southern aspect is dominated by the High Street and the tower of St Botolph's Church in CA 4.

Side views:

- east and west along Great Gowts Drain and its banks from Gowts Bridge, Pennell Street and Boultham Avenue
- east view to Lincoln City FC from Queen Street
- east view along Smith Street to The Mary Knox Education Centre, former Sincil Schools
- east view along the curving medieval line of Featherby Place
- west view of Crown Mill along Princess Street
- west view to rear of Shakespeare PH, with cobbled setts and trees in the distance
- west view along Dixon Street is of major traffic route

4.4 *Character analysis.*

4.4.1 Definition of character areas and zones.

A single unified zone

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

Some of the side streets follow the medieval burgage plot lines, but most have not survived. Commercial, industrial and agricultural activities to east and west have been replaced by residential development, leaving very few visible signs. Yards and outbuildings behind High Street properties, particularly those on street corners, are reminders of stabling and workshops. The central reservation of the street coincidentally overlies the line of the rails of Lincoln's tram service (1881-1929). The line of the medieval market can be traced as a rear (east) boundary to properties on the east side of the High Street, ie nos. 440-465, and particularly 457 southwards, but it is not apparent from High Street.

Most properties which began as residential have been adapted to retail and commercial uses, with the notable exceptions of 42-43 and 53-54 High Street

Some former and current building uses:

- 69 High Street; 19th-century gatehouse to retail
- 48 High Street and 1-2 Robey Street; 18th-century textile factory to commercial and residential
- 49-51 High Street; Public House to retail

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

There is a variety of building styles in CA5, with the dominant type being later 19th- and early 20th-century shops with accommodation above, but these vary in height and style, several with painted brick, some in inappropriate colours.

- 41-44 High Street; 3 dwelling houses, one converted to a shop, of 3 storeys, with well-conserved fenestration, c1820
- 53 and 54 High Street; 2 dwelling houses, now shops. Recently restored with pantile roof; c 1700
- Gowts Bridge and Great Gowts Drain is of great importance in the history of the Wigford suburb, as the boundary between the upper and lower parts

4.4.4 The contribution of key unlisted buildings

There are several groups of buildings, or longer terraces, which make an important contribution to the CA which is often only evident above ground-floor level:

West side

- 39 High Street; detached shop rebuilt in 1904 by local architects W Watkins & Son
- 40 High Street. Shakespeare Public House, from c1790
- 40a High Street, rear of Shakespeare Inn. Club Room of 1908
- 45-47 High Street; 3 shops of 2 storeys, 2 gables with timber detailing and original fenestration; c1900
- 48 High Street and 1-2 Robey Street; converted in 1901 from 2 rows of dwellings (Albert Place and Snows Row), themselves a conversion from a textile factory of c1700 – “Oxsprings or Obbinsons”. Here fabric for the Lincoln Stuff Ball was made.
- 49-51 High Street; former Sportsmans Arms Public House of c1900, recently restored.
- 52 High Street; house and shop of 3 storeys, c1900, by local architect J H Cooper.
- 62-63 High Street; house and shop of 3 storeys, c1900, by local architect J H Cooper.
- 69 High Street; Former lodge and entrance to a private road to Boultham Hall and Estate, built for Major R G

Ellison, local architect W Mortimer. Coaching archway and ornate pediment above. Date stone of 1883. Now furniture shop.

- 76-77 High Street; 2 shops of 3 storeys, with original fenestration and coaching entrance; date-stone of 1808 in arch keystone; recently restored.
- 78-80 High Street; 84-85 High Street; 4 shops (now 3) of 3 storeys with first-floor bay windows and two gables flanking two roof dormer windows; c1900
- 84-85 High Street; 4 shops (now 3) of 3 storeys with first-floor bay windows and two gables flanking two roof dormer windows; c1900
- 88 High Street, Millers Arms Public House; dating from c1849, with the frontage rebuilt in 1905, local architect K S Bayne. Twin Dutch-style gables
- 93-95 High Street; 3 shops of 3 storeys, c1850

East side

- 405-406b High Street; 3 shops of 3 storeys, triple gables with ornate 1st-floor bay windows; 1907 by local architect W Mortimer
- 411-414 High Street; 4 shops of 3 storeys, with plain 1st-floor bay windows; 1879.
- 417-418 High Street; 2 dwelling houses of c1850, converted into retail
- 434 High Street, Golden Cross Public House; 1957. Freestanding brick building
- the former St Botolph's Terrace, 437-458 High Street, with mainly consistent fenestration and roof line (1850s-1900s).

4.4.5 Local details.

None identified

4.4.6 Prevailing and traditional building materials and the public realm.

Red brick buildings dominate, mostly with roofs of slate.

Royal mail pillar-box of George V (GR) outside 84 High Street, with wall-box inset into the wall of 51/53 High Street, also George V (GR) 1910-1936. Locally-made cast-iron street name plates fixed on buildings on side street corners, such as Queen Street, Boutham Avenue, Pennell Street and Mill Lane (9 in all). Faintly visible are faded signs painted directly on brick walls - "High Street" (95 High Street) and "Fosters Passage" (44 High Street) probably dating from the late 19th century.

Iron railings on side walls of Gowts Bridge.

Locally made inspection chamber cover outside St Peter at Gowts School (many more in side streets outside CA).

High Street [dual carriageway as far south as Dixon Street, two-lane south of that] and side streets of standard modern

construction with tarmacadam surfaces and concrete flagstone footpaths, with associated traffic, pedestrian crossings and lighting paraphernalia. The only exception are three cobbled vehicle cross-overs south of numbers 39 and 40, and passing under 37, on the west side of High Street.

4.4.7 An audit of heritage assets.

An audit will be produced and attached as an appendix as part of the review of this document.

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

There are no open green spaces within the CA. There is an open grassed area in front of St Botolph's Court residential development west of the CA, with five trees in paved area and within grassed area, south of 37 High Street.

Trees have grown, probably by air-borne seeds, on the banks on both sides of Gowts bridge. A single tree is situated in the central reservation opposite Mill Lane, with six within the confines of St Peter-at-Gowts C of E Primary School.

At this point the central reservation is grassed and has spring bulbs. There are a few trees on both sides of Smith Street, some behind an advertisement hoarding.

Grassy banks alongside Great Gowts Drain; the watercourse itself is a home to wildlife.

4.4.9 The extent of intrusion or damage, ie the negative factors.

- Large advertising hoarding on south side High Street junction with Smith Street
- Rubbish accumulation on banks of Great Gowts Drain
- Unoccupied and boarded-up properties
- Inappropriate colours on exterior walls, especially 55-57 High Street
- 427-9 High Street, single-storey motor workshop; out of keeping with the streetscape in height and design.
- Dixon Street junction is surrounded by some buildings of lesser interest, and the domination of turning traffic detracts from the linear character of the CA

4.4.10 The existing neutral areas.

None

4.4.11 General condition.

- Occupancy - Properties are mainly occupied at ground-floor level, but there may be some vacant upper-floor accommodation.
- Fabric condition – generally good, but there has been a steady introduction of modern materials such as PVCU doors and windows, concrete roof tiles and plastic guttering and down pipes. There is a continuous need for maintenance of timber windows, particularly at upper-floor level. Some shop fronts are unsympathetically styled and decorated.

4.4.12 Problems, pressures and capacity for change.

Unsympathetic alterations to the properties

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

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

Heritage Team
 Directorate of Development and Environmental Services
 City of Lincoln Council
 City Hall
 Beaumont Fee
 Lincoln
 LN1 1DF
 Tel: 01522 881188
 Fax 01522 567934
 Email heritage@lincoln.gov.uk

9.0 Management proposals

To be considered following the review and in conjunction with "English Heritage 2006, Guidance on the management of conservation areas".

- Appendix 1 – Bibliography
- Appendix 2 – Location map

Heritage Team, DDES 21 March 2006

Appendix 1

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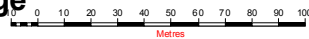
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Appendix 2 Location map



Conservation Area 5 Gowts Bridge

Scale: 1:2100



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