

KIRTON IN LINDSEY CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL: ADOPTED BY
NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL FOR PLANNING PURPOSES AS
SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE 17TH SEPTEMBER 2004.

**KIRTON IN LINDSEY
CONSERVATION AREA
APPRAISAL ADOPTED
DOCUMENT**

North Lincolnshire Council 2004

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1 INTRODUCTION

Kirton is a small former market town situated on a sloping site along a limestone ridge some six miles to the south of Scunthorpe. The conservation area is divided into two, with the oldest part being centred on St. Andrew's Church, a 11th century building siting on top of a prominent mound. Higher up the hill, and connected to it by a number of winding medieval lanes, is the Market Place and High Street, notable for its interesting collection of 18th and 19th century buildings and a separate conservation area. The town is characterised by its narrow streets, with a strong sense of enclosure, and by the hilly location.

There was no "great house" associated with Kirton, at the time of the Norman Conquest the "Soke of Kirton" (a collection of medieval manors) was owned by Earl Edwin of Mercia, eventually it passed to the Crown. In the 18th and 19th centuries therefore, it was the Duchy of Cornwall which oversaw the development and the improvement of the town.

Kirton is notable for its interesting mixture of modest 18th and 19th century houses, shops, chapels, and municipal buildings, built from stone or red brick. St. Andrew's Church, listed grade I, is the most important building, containing both 11th and 12th century fabric, and in the Market Place is a solid Town Hall of 1897, built from stone robbed from the late 18th century prison.

This appraisal will assess the special interest, both architectural and historical, of Kirton. The history of the town, and its present appearance and character will be described, its problems analysed, and a number of recommendations put forward which will be considered by North Lincolnshire Council for implementation after full public consultation.

Policies within the final section of this appraisal together with those in a sistedr document (Kirton Conservation Area SPG), have been adopted by the Council form part of the Supplementary Planning Guidance for the conservation area, and they will therefore be a

material consideration when determining applications for development, defending appeals or proposing works for the preservation or enhancement of the area. This document will therefore be a useful source of information for owners, agents, applicants and members of the public who live or work in Kirton.

2 LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

The Kirton Conservation Area was designated by the former Glanford Borough Council in 1970 and extended in 1985. It covers two separate parts of the town, the first being the area round St. Andrew's Church including its churchyard, the former Vicarage, and mainly residential buildings in Turksey Street and Church Street. Separate, but forming the commercial core of the town, is the High Street and Market Place, with many small shops inter-mixed with 18th and 19th century cottages and houses. This appraisal includes a proposal to alter the conservation area boundaries by the addition of the streets and buildings lying between the two separate conservation areas.

A conservation area is *an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance* (Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990). The Council is obliged by Section 71 of the same Act *to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area, which are conservation areas*, and this appraisal fulfils this statutory duty.

In making decisions on future development within a conservation area, the Council must *pay attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area* (Section 72 of the Act). This should ensure that harmful change is not allowed, and that new development is of the highest quality.

However, some changes, normally not requiring planning permission (known as permitted development rights) can continue to erode the special interest of the conservation area. These rights, which affect family houses, can be controlled by the serving of an Article 4

Direction which enables the Council to require a planning application for minor alterations such as replacement windows and doors. Such a Direction already covers unlisted family houses included in the conservation area based on the High Street of Kirton. This appraisal therefore includes a recommendation for a review of the existing Article 4 Direction, and its extension to cover all unlisted family houses in the existing conservation area around St. Andrew's Church and in the proposed conservation area which will link the two now separate areas.

Government policy is set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note No.15 (PPG15 – Planning and the Historic Environment). On demolition, this states, '*The general presumption should be in favour of retaining buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area.*' This appraisal identifies the buildings that make a positive contribution as Buildings of Townscape Merit on the Townscape Analysis map at Figure 2.

3 LOCATION AND LANDSCAPE SETTING.

3.1 Location

Kirton is situated approximately six miles south of Scunthorpe on the limestone ridge known as the Lincoln Edge. Roman Ermine Street runs along the dip slope of the Edge, approximately 1.5 miles east of Kirton. The Scunthorpe to Lincoln main road runs through the town, which lies on a steep slope facing east with a flattish plateau to the east. The current population is around 2,800.

3.2 Landscape Setting.

The location of Kirton on the steep scarp slope of the Lincoln Edge provides the town with its most notable topographical feature and results in dramatic views, both long and short distance. To the east of the town, on the summit of the Edge, is elevated, open farmland, notable for the listed windmill (Mount Pleasant Mill) which is an important feature in views when approaching Kirton from Ermine

Street. The fields are large, with low hedges for boundaries and few tree groups.

To the west, and at a much lower level, lies more open, undulating farmland, dramatically incised by the railway which connects through to Brigg. The fields are enclosed by shelterbelts of trees, woodland copses and hedgerow remnants. Views over these fields, towards the wide expanse of the Trent Valley, are a feature of the upper parts of Kirton.

Separating the two, the more wooded scarp slope continues both southwards and northwards towards Scunthorpe, and is designated as an Area of High Landscape Value. The west-facing slope is farmed intensively with medium scale arable fields.

3.3 Geology and Building Materials.

The geology of Lincolnshire provides a number of different stones and clays suitable for building stone and for making bricks. The western scarp of the Lincoln Edge to the north of Kirton is capped by Frodingham ironstone, and St. John's Church in Scunthorpe, built in the 19th century in the Gothic style, is a fine example of the use of this material. Also found on the Lincoln Edge, close to Kirton, is the Middle Jurassic Lincolnshire limestone, which is variable in quality, but in some places can be carved and used for building stone. Many of the buildings in Kirton are therefore built from this limestone, either dressed or in rubble form and presumably quarried locally as the 1907 map shows quarries immediately to the north of the Redbourne Mere road. The limestone is overlain with deposits of clay and silt, with pockets of gravel and sand, providing other useful building materials.

Brick is another popular building material in Kirton, and many of the 18th and 19th century buildings in Kirton are built from brick, clearly used to denote expense and prestige, such as the Old Court House on the Green, which was built by the Duchy of Cornwall in c.1750. The bricks were probably brought from Brigg, where a brickworks was noted in 1907. Clay pantiles were used for roofing until the 19th century when Welsh slate became more fashionable. Earlier

buildings in Kirton may have been simple mud-and-stud structures, but none of these remain although it is possible that they have been subsumed within later structures.

4 HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT.

4.1 History.

The earliest stonework in St. Andrew's Church dates to the late 11th and 12th centuries, although there was clearly an earlier pre-Conquest church as the place-name Kirton, or Churchtown, is derived from Old English. The documentary evidence confirms that in 1075 the church was given to Remigius, first Bishop of Lincoln, to help pay for the new Lincoln cathedral. The church remained Cathedral property, exempt from bishop's visitation. At the time of the Norman Conquest, Earl Edwin owned the Soke of Kirton (a collection of manors and their rights), but in 1066 it passed to William the Conqueror, and during the 12th and 13th centuries it was in the hands of various royal princes as the appendages of the earldoms of Mortain and Cornwall. From 1354 until his death in 1376 it was held by Edward the Black Prince or his assignee, Sir John Chaundos. Subsequently it formed part of the dower of Richard II's queen, Anne of Bohemia, and it remained a Royal soke, becoming part of the Duchy of Cornwall, until the 19th century.

The earliest development was therefore at the lower level around the church, and nearby was the Manor House and the manorial Court House. Kirton had markets and fairs, and all the soke courts were held there, but there was no great house, and the town remained small. A grammar school was founded in 1577 but failed to prosper, and by the 17th century it was recognised that the settlement's position well west of Ermine Street and the road to the Humber crossing was a disadvantage. Revival came late in the 18th century largely through the influence of the Duchy of Cornwall officers, who built a new Court House on the green in 1762. The Duchy encouraged building development and the enclosure of the surrounding open fields, which took place between 1793 and 1801. Further prestige was brought to the town in the early 1790's when the

county magistrates chose Queen Street in Kirton as the site for a new prison and sessions house to serve North Lindsey. This was designed by William Lumby and was at one time called Bridewell. It is now a residential home called The Priory, although all that remains is the three-bay centrepiece and part of one wing. In 1812 a new building called Cobb Hall was erected on the site of an earlier structure in the Market Place. The purpose of this isolated building, now a shop and house, is obscure, but it may have been used as market offices.

The many small cottages and tenements in the town provided labourers' housing and in the 1840's Kirton became notorious as the place where the poor lived cheaply, walking out daily in search of work beyond the parish. Most of these buildings have now gone, although a few remain in Turner Street and Wray Street. To provide education for the local children, an Infants' School was built in St. Andrew's Street in 1837 through the efforts of the Rev. Robert Ousby. In 1848 a railway connection was built to Kirton and on to Brigg, a gas company was founded in 1856, and between 1860 and 1862 St. Andrew's Church was extensively restored under the guidance of first J H Hakewell of London, and then Ewan Christian of Lincoln, whose work can be seen in the chancel. In 1872 the prison was closed, and parts of the building were subsequently demolished and some of the stone used to build the new Police Station on Sunny Hill, and the Town Hall of 1897. The site for the town hall was donated by William Emberton-Fox of Northorpe Hall, who also owned the former prison. The Baptist Chapel in St. Andrew's Street was also built in 1897, but carries a stone plaque commemorating the date of 1663 when the faith first arrived in Kirton.

In the late 1850's there were attempts to emulate the success of the nearby Appleby-Frodingham iron works, but were unsuccessful. In 1882 a large lime works were established to the north of Kirton, but otherwise, the economy of the town was predominately agricultural.

The first few years of the 20th century saw the withdrawal of the Duchy of Cornwall from local affairs, and the final end of the medieval system of land ownership. In 1913 the Duchy sold the Market Place, the green, and Manor Farm to two private individuals, the Market

Place subsequently becoming the property of the Kirton Lindsey Markets Committee. The green is now in the ownership of the Kirton Town Council. The 1922 Law of Property Act finally abolished copyhold tenure and the then Steward of the Manor of Kirton, Lancelot Iveson, a lawyer whose office was in Gainsborough, no doubt received compensation for his property losses in Kirton.

Throughout the 20th century Kirton expanded only slowly, in contrast to the rapid growth of neighbouring Scunthorpe. An aerodrome was built close to the town during the Second World War which eventually became a barracks. New housing developments of the 1960's and 1970's eventually surrounded the older settlement, and infilled many previously empty sites between St. Andrew's Church and the Market Place.

4.2 Archaeology.

The earliest recorded archaeological material from the town is of Romano-British date, but there are indications of earlier prehistoric occupation in the surrounding area, in particular of Bronze Age (2350BC–701BC) burial sites. There are Roman villa sites to the north and south of the town, and other settlement sites of this period have recently been discovered during archaeological fieldwalking.

There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments in Kirton, but St. Andrew's Church retains both 11th and 12th century fabric, and probably sits on the site of an earlier Saxon church (a pagan Anglo-Saxon cemetery of the 5th and 6th centuries has been excavated about one mile to the north of Kirton). On the west side of Moat House Road are the remains of a medieval moated site, the history of which is unknown. Kirton retains its medieval street layout pattern, and of note are the long, thin gardens to the rear of nos. 20-36 High Street, which could date to the 14th or 15th centuries. Many of the existing houses have 17th century or older foundations.

4.3 Effect of historical development on the plan form of Kirton.

Kirton is notable for the survival of its medieval street pattern, for the churchyard and the area around St. Andrew's Church, set on a slight hillock, and for the tightly-packed 18th and 19th century houses which line the streets around the Market Place.

The overall plan form is somewhat confusing and this is explained by the response to the hilly topography, the siting of the early Saxon church on the lower slopes, and the much later positioning of the Market Place some distance from the church, up the hill, where presumably it was closer to the main road to Scunthorpe and Lincoln, and to Ermine Street. This provides a somewhat dispersed settlement, with scattered groups of cottages and small houses around the churchyard, most of which have generous gardens. These contrast with development along the High Street and Market Place, which contain continuous terraces of varied late 18th and early 19th century houses, many of which have ground floor shopfronts. However, to the rear of nos. 20-36 High Street are a number of long, thin garden plots which stretch back to South Cliffe Road and which contain a variety of outbuildings. These are probably medieval in origin, with names like "Duck Lane" providing a link to the rural character of these back yards. This area contrasts with the openness of the green, presumably once unenclosed common land. In the 18th century the Green was much larger, being reduced in size when the Court House was built in the late 18th century, and the further truncated when the library was added in the late 19th century.

5 CHARACTER OF THE KIRTON CONSERVATION AREA

5.1 General Description

The Kirton in Lindsey Conservation Area is divided into two separate parts: the area around the Market Place and High Street, and the area around St. Andrew's Church. The Market Place area contains the open public square (site of the former market) and groups of closely packed, 18th and 19th century houses. To the north lies the

more open town green, with more dispersed buildings around it, and some modern development just outside the conservation area boundary. Around St. Andrew's Church is a spacious churchyard and former vicarage, with many trees and pleasant landscaped gardens. Separating the two sections are Queen Street, Wesley Street and March Street, currently not within the conservation area boundary.

5.2 Relationship to setting and views.

Kirton sits on a steep scarp slope of the Lincoln Edge, overlooking the River Trent valley to the west. Surrounded by farmland, the town feels somewhat cut off from the rural setting by the trees which line North and South Cliffe Roads (to the east) and by further tree belts along Moat House Road to the west. The rather convoluted street pattern also means that the layout of the town is somewhat confusing and as a stranger it is easy to become lost, providing a rather inward-looking character to the town. The most important feature is the steep hill on which the town is located, and the views to the far west over the River Trent valley which this provides. Approaching Kirton from Ermine Street it is difficult to see the town as it lies on the slope facing westwards, but there are wide vistas over the surrounding flattish fields. Mount Pleasant Windmill, to the north of Kirton, is a very important local landmark, and a particular feature when entering the town from Ermine Street.

5.3 Activity and uses.

Kirton is primarily now a commuter town with a number of small, local shops centred around the Market Place and along High Street. A small supermarket and Post Office are located on the corner of Sylvester Street and High Street. There are several religious buildings of which St. Andrew's Church is the most important, with a number of non-conformist churches or chapels, most notably the Baptist Church in St. Andrew's Street, and the Methodist Chapel in Wesley Street. The Queen's Head Public House, on the corner of King Edward Street, is the largest inn. The Town Hall in the Market Place is still used as municipal offices, and further local facilities are provided by the library on the green, and the junior school in St.

Andrew's Street. Otherwise the majority of the buildings in Kirton are in residential use.

The town is generally quiet with sudden activity before and immediately after the arrival of the school bus. There is no longer a street market as Scunthorpe is close by and provides a wide range of national chain stores and other shops.

5.4 Open spaces and trees.

There are four important public open spaces in Kirton. The first is the Market Place, almost triangular in shape, with historic buildings lining two sides, and modern shops along the third. The most notable building is the Town Hall, situated at the east end. The Market Place is used for car parking and contains a permanently-planted Christmas tree. The second space is "The Green", forming the most northerly part of the conservation area and providing a pleasant, grassed area, punctuated by trees along its boundary with King Edward Street. The Green contains three important structures: the War Memorial, the Old Court House, and the town library. The third space is the churchyard around St. Andrew's Church, with the ancient church sitting on slight hill and a number of trees and tree groups, particularly around the Old Vicarage. The green and St. Andrew's Churchyard, the gardens to the Long Room, and the curtilages of the Old Vicarage, Treberthewick, the Doctors' Surgery and nos. 23 and 33 are all designated in the Local Plan as "Areas of Amenity Importance". The same designation applies to the fourth important area around Ash Well near the junction of Traingate, Steep Hill and the High Street.

Significant trees or trees groups are annotated on the Townscape Appraisal map (Figure 2) but of particular note are the trees around nos. 25, 27, 29 and 31 South Cliffe Road, and on the opposite side of the road around no. 32. These mark the entry to the town from the south. Further trees of note are sited to the east of South Cliffe Road, opposite the Queen's head Public House, and on Steep Hill. The same designation applies to the area around Ash Well near the junction of Traingate, Steep Hill and the High Street.

5.5 Building materials and architectural styles.

The vast majority of the buildings in both sections of the Kirton in Lindsey Conservation Area are modest two storey houses or cottages and date to the 18th and 19th centuries, with either red brick, limestone, or rendered facades. Often, brick and stone are used on the same building. Roofs are usually covered in clay pantiles, or for the post 1840's buildings, Welsh slate. Many of the buildings are just one room deep and earlier examples sit at right angles to the street, such as no. 30 High Street, facing the Market Place. Later buildings usually sit parallel to the road on the back of the pavement, such as along the High Street.

There are no known examples of any buildings which pre-date 1800 apart from St. Andrew's Church, although many of the houses in Kirton sit on the foundations of earlier buildings and some contain vestigial remains of earlier structures, such as no. 28 High Street, which may have some 17th century timber framing inside. Other buildings in this group (nos. 18-26) may also contain early fabric, as their location next to the Market Place, and the long thin plots which form their gardens, all suggest a pre-1800 date although none of them are listed. On the other side of the road, nos. 27 and 29 have late 18th century fronts with older sections of building facing George Street and revealed in the shop of no. 29.

The more prestigious early 18th century houses in Kirton, such as Limehouse, no. 4 Queen Street, typically sit at right angles to the road, and are built from limestone rubble with tumbled brick gables and brick chimney stacks. The adjoining barn uses the same stone, but without brick dressings. Other examples include nos. 36 and 38 Queen Street, which are similar in date and form. No. 18 High Street of c.1750 is another, very important building, sitting at right angles to the street with a tumbled brick gable above roughly coursed limestone walls. The rear wall is also stone and is very visible from the High Street, but the front elevation, facing a small triangular garden and the side of the George Hotel next door, is built from red brick with blue brick headers, an unusual detail for Kirton. The building has lost its end chimney stack, and the original multi-paned sash windows have all but one been replaced with later, two-over-

two Victorian sashes. The simple doorhood, and original six-panelled front door, are however of note.

More of the local stone can be seen at Kirton Infant's School, also in St. Andrew's Lane, of 1837. This uses coursed limestone blocks with stone dressings to the simple, multi-paned windows, in an unusual (for Kirton) Gothic style. The Town Hall of 1897 also uses squared limestone blocks, laid in more regular courses, and limestone ashlar dressings, including quoins, window architraves and cornicing to the pediment. This building appears somewhat old fashioned for its date, perhaps because some of the stone details were re-used after parts of the 18th century prison were demolished. This building, now called The Priory and located in Queen Street just outside the current conservation area boundary, is built from two types of limestone, the central projecting bay being much rougher and the northern wing using a more regularly-shaped stone block, with thin courses. Another good example of the use of stone is no. 1 Spa Hill, a fairly prestigious local building on a prominent site, built from irregularly coursed limestone and limestone ashlar quoins, with a slate roof.

There are many examples of single storey workshops, barns, stables and small cottages in Kirton, often built from limestone rubble and roughly painted or rendered. These also date to the late 18th and 19th centuries. Many of the barns have now been converted into residential uses, such as The Long Room, next to St. Andrew's Church, which uses roughly coursed yellow limestone without any brick dressings. A further range at the rear of no. 19 South Cliffe Road, retains its long stone wall, important in views across the long, thin gardens to the rear of the High Street properties, but otherwise appears to have been largely rebuilt.

The mixture of stone with brick on the same building is a feature which frequently occurs in Kirton. Around Steep Hill and its junction with Queen Street and George Street are a number of barns and high boundary walls, all built in yellow rubble limestone or red brick. These walls are a prominent feature and utilise roughly-shaped stone blocks of varying sizes, very informally coursed. The pantiled roofs above, with hipped ends and clay ridge tiles, are another important feature, typical of Kirton. Close by, no. 50 High Street, important in

views up to the Market Place, has a “polite” red brick Georgian façade facing the main street, with large stone blocks to the flank wall facing down Steep Hill. Again, the quite shallow pitched pantiled roof above is a typical feature. Another tall, stone wall continues southwards along Queen Street, again providing a strong sense of enclosure.

Brick-only buildings start to be built in Kirton after the mid-18th century when a number of two or three storey houses were built in the town to a high specification, clearly denoting some status. Examples include The Old Court House (1762) on The Green, with its red brick walls, decorated with a stone eaves cornice and parapet; nos. 1 and 3 King Edward Street (both c. 1800, three storeys, detached 3-bay brick buildings with sash windows and shallow, pantiled roofs); no. 5 Queen Street (two storeys, red brick front and chimney, limestone flank walls with brick tumbling, sash windows, end stacks and a clay pantiled roof); and no. 9 Sylvester Street (two storeys, 3-bays, sash windows, end stacks).

Several terraces of 19th century brick cottages are also found in Kirton, almost certainly built for agricultural workers. West View Terrace, off Sunny Hill, is built from red brick with a pantiled roof and timber casement windows and simple, boarded doors. It dates to c.1875. In Wray Street is a group of early 19th century cottages, mainly brick but some stone, with Yorkshire sliding casements and small boarded doors below a pantiled roof.

Throughout the conservation area, sash windows, usually with six or eight panes per sash, predominate on the more prestigious historic houses, with horizontally-sliding Yorkshire casements to the smaller cottages. Some, such as no. 34 High Street, which dates from c.1820, have both. This three storey building (surprisingly unlisted) has a pair of such casements to the second floor, a tripartite sash below, and a good shopfront to the ground floor.

5.6 Shopfronts.

Due to little demand for change, Kirton retains a number of good quality, 19th century timber shopfronts, some of which are relatively unaltered. Most of these are, unsurprisingly, in the High Street, and around the Market Place, the main commercial core of the town. These are:

- Cobb Hall, Market Place
- 20 High Street (George Hotel and shop)
- 26 High Street (Christine's Hair fashions)
- 28 High Street (Furniture Bargains)
- 30 High Street
- 34 High Street (Angie's Fruit and Veg)
- 42 High Street (Classicuts)
- 44 High Street
- 46 High Street
- 48 High Street
- 50 High Street
- 25 High Street
- 29 High Street

These shopfronts are all painted timber, with some interesting details such as the Doric columns to the shopfronts at Cobb Hall and to no. 28 High Street. The George Hotel (no. 20 High Street) also has columns and the shopfront to the adjoining shop is a very complete example of a shopfront of c.1875, with its corbels, pilasters, curved glazing bars and central entrance.

Most of these shopfronts are in unlisted buildings so there is little control over their removal. It is proposed in this appraisal that Supplementary Planning Guidance for Kirton will include policies which will seek the retention and enhancement of these shopfronts.

5.8 Listed buildings.

There are only 16 listed buildings in the upper (Market Place/High Street) section of the Kirton in Lindsey Conservation Area, and only three in the conservation area around St. Andrew's Church. This appraisal contains recommendations for further listing, based on English Heritage guidance, to include buildings in both sections of the conservation area.

The most important listed building is undoubtedly St. Andrew's Church, described by Pevsner as "*quite a large church, with a mighty west tower and clerestory*". The building sits on a raised site, probably previously occupied by a Saxon church, with a Norman priest's doorway in the chancel and late 12th century arcading. The west tower dates to the 13th century. It is built from limestone, roughly coursed, with a slate roof. The Old Court House on The Green dates from 1762, and is now a house. Externally, it still looks more like a chapel, as originally it contained a double height room (for the court) and various changes have occurred over the years including the blocking-up of some of the windows. The front boundary walls and railings are also listed.

The Town Hall in the Market Place is another listed building of merit. Designed by J K Broughton, a local builder and cabinet maker, it was built in 1897 using salvaged materials from Bridewell (now The Priory), the partially demolished former prison in Queen Street. This was built between 1791 to 1794 and is listed grade II but lies outside the present conservation area boundary.

Other listed buildings of note include: No. 1 Spa Hill, the former Police Station, also built using materials salvaged from the prison, with its rather gruesome whipping post (also listed) on the green outside; the Queen's Head Public House in Sylvester Street of the mid-18th century; the Methodist Chapel of 1840 and c.1900, in Wesley Street (not in the conservation area); The Infant's School of 1837 and 1875 in St. Andrew's Street; and no. 18 High Street. The unusual diaper patterned brickwork of this building has already been referred to, but this building also contains a pattern-book Chinese

Chippendale balustrade to its principal staircase. The Long Room in Cornwall Street, close to St. Andrew's Church, apparently contains the former rood screen from the church.

The remaining listed buildings within the two conservation areas are late 18th or 19th century houses, built from brick or stone (sometimes rendered), with pantiled or slated roofs. A good group faces South Cliffe Road : nos. 11, 13 (with possibly earlier fabric), 15, 17 and 19. The tumbled brick gable to no. 19 is an important focal point when entering Kirton from the south.

5.8 Buildings of Townscape Merit.

This appraisal has identified a large number of Buildings of Townscape Merit, particularly along the High Street and in Queen Street. These are unlisted buildings which it is considered contribute positively to the character of the Kirton in Lindsey Conservation Area. They largely date to the 18th and 19th centuries, and a number of them are proposed for statutory listing. The buildings are generally unaltered or, could with some restoration, be easily reinstated to their original appearance. Their age and architectural interest is considered to provide sufficient justification for them to be given special protection and the Council will resist their demolition unless the applicant can prove that the building is beyond the point of economic repair. Additionally, because these buildings are an important part of the character of the conservation area, the Council will pay special attention to applications to alter or to extend them. Policies to help to achieve their preservation and enhancement are provided in the Supplementary Planning Guidance for Kirton.

5.9 Public realm audit.

Within Kirton there are few examples of historic street paving, and it is likely that in the 19th century the roads and pavements were just dirt or compressed gravel, appropriate to a small country town. York stone has, however, been used to pave the footpath in St. Andrew's churchyard. Now, virtually all of the pavements have been covered with tarmac and although there are some thin sandstone kerbs, some of which have been replaced with concrete. In the Market Place, an

attempt has been made to provide a more interesting surface using concrete paviors. These have no historic precedent in the town although, fortunately, their effect is neutral.

Street lighting is almost exclusively by modern streetlights. These have slim, tall columns, usually painted white, with simple modern light fittings. The Market Place has some examples of three-light, "heritage" street lights. Overhead cables supplying electricity or telephone lines, are also very evident in some locations.

Street signs are simple white panels in a black surround, with black letters. There are some quite obtrusive traffic signs close to the junction with North Cliffe Road.

6 AREA ANALYSIS

6.1 Introduction

This section seeks to describe in greater detail the buildings and spaces within the Kirton Conservation Area. The aim is to identify the special character of the area which provides Kirton with its particular "sense of place". Building materials and details are also included and any unusual features have been identified.

Kirton in Lindsey Conservation Area covers two separate areas : Kirton town centre, and the area around St. Andrew's Church. At present, the streets which link these two areas are not included within the conservation area, but this appraisal includes a proposal to designate a much larger area in which are situated a number of listed buildings and Buildings of Townscape Merit.

Of note are the many barns and other buildings which were once in agricultural use. Some of these have been converted into residential use (such as the Long Room by St. Andrew's Church), and some have been retained as stores. They are an important link with Kirton's past and their simple, utilitarian appearance makes an important contribution to the character of the conservation area.

6.2 Kirton Town Centre

In the centre of Kirton, and forming the core of the conservation area, are several streets with cohesive, historic townscape, made up from two or three storey terraced buildings which line the backs of the pavements. Many contain ground floor shops, particularly in the Market Place, and along the High Street. This part of the conservation area divides conveniently into three character areas: The High Street and Market Place, The Green, and Queen Street and South Cliffe Road.

Area 1 - The High Street and Market Place.

The High Street is a medieval road which connects the Market Place to the main road from Scunthorpe to Lincoln, and to the lower part of the town, and the parish church, to the west, where the road drops steeply down the hill. The road is lined with one, two or three storey buildings, positioned usually on the back of the pavement with the only open space being the small gardens to either side of no. 18. They date to the 18th and 19th centuries, and seven of them are listed grade II (the Town Hall, nos. 18 and 28 High Street, nos. 27, 29 and 31 High Street, and Cobb Hall). Those that are not listed have all been identified as Buildings of Townscape Merit, apart from the rear and side sections to no. 5 (now the supermarket) and no. 52, a modern detached house on the junction with Queen Street.

The historic buildings are largely rendered and painted, with some red brick and local limestone. Windows are sashed or Yorkshire casements, with slate or pantiled roofs. The most noticeable feature is their variety, with every building being a different height, profile and often using different materials. Of special interest are the large number of 19th century shop fronts which remain. Along the south side of the Market Place, the properties contain a number of narrow alley entrances (Red Lion Passage and Duck Lane) providing access to the rear yards and gardens behind, and connecting through to South Cliffe Road. These narrow gillies are an important feature of the "backlands" and should be protected. Regrettable features

include the replacement concrete roof tiles, modern windows, the loss of chimney stacks, and the poor condition of some of the buildings.

The Market Place is a roughly triangular shape, with the Town Hall of 1897 providing a focal point at one end, and Cobb Hall, siting on its island site, a point of interest to the opposite end. The Market Place has been repaved using modern materials including concrete paviers, and “heritage” street lights have been provided to illuminate the central area, now used for car parking. A Christmas tree has also been planted in the centre of the space, for annual use. Whilst the car parking provides a useful local facility, more could be done with this space to provide a better pedestrian environment.

Along the north side, a modern two storey development has been built with ground floor shops and residential uses above. The buildings are built from light red brick, with small, multi-paned shop windows. Despite attempts to break-down the bulk of the new development by staggering the front building line, the overall horizontal emphasis is at odds with the strongly vertical emphasis of the older buildings opposite. In the north-easterly corner, Mills Newsagents is situated in a single storey, flat-roofed building. This contributes to the lack of enclosure to the Market Place at this point, which is unfortunately made even worse by the poor quality street surface, and the single storey public conveniences.

The west side of the Market Place contains a group of Buildings of Townscape Merit, two or three storeys high, either painted white or still retaining their red brick. They appear to date to the 18th or early 19th centuries and the gable to no. 19 has quoins and a very steeply pitched roof regrettably covered in concrete tiles. Shopfronts are plain, or in the case of no. 25, older and intact.

Two other roads lead off towards The Green. George Street winds around the back of the Market Place properties, with high stone and red brick walls which provide a strong sense of enclosure. Towards The Green, the streetscape opens out with modern development, and gardens, predominating. Sylvester Street similarly has been

affected by the insertion of modern houses, in large gardens, but their impact is relatively neutral.

Area Summary.

- Topography and position on steep hill important
- Medieval street pattern remains with long, thin plots to the rear of High Street
- Triangular Market Place the most important open space
- Continuous development on the back of the pavement
- Mainly 18th and 19th century buildings
- Some early examples sit at right angles to the street
- Highest concentration of listed buildings and Buildings of Townscape Merit
- Buildings are largely pantiled, with red brick, painted render or stone facades
- Sash windows predominate

Area 2 - The Green.

The Green is a highly visible piece of open land which lies along the side of the main road to Scunthorpe and which is notable for the line of large street trees which separate the grassed area from King Edward Street. The area is grassed with groups of shrubs and smaller trees around the Old Court House and the War Memorial. Informal chain railings surround part of The Green, which also contains a children's playground. The Green is surrounded by a mixture of both modern and historic detached buildings, but these are largely two storeys, with pitched roofs and gardens, so overall the character of the spacious open space is not too adversely affected by the more recent additions.

20th century detached houses lie to the north (outside the conservation area) , and more 1960's houses have been shoe-horned on to sites on the south side of King Edward Street, facing The Green. Fortunately four historic buildings remain which a positioned crucially on prominent sites: The listed Queens Head Public House, and nos. 1, 3 and 11 King Edward Street. Nos. 1 and 3

should be listed and are both c.1800, built from red brick, with multi-paned sash windows and pantiled, hipped roofs.

The Old Court House, the War Memorial, the Queen's Head Public House, and the unlisted library are the most important historic buildings, all of them being highly visible and important in views across the green. Sunny Hill, a small off-shoot of The Green, contains a number of heavily altered Buildings of Townscape Merit which could be restored to their historic appearance by the insertion of more appropriate doors and windows, and roof materials. The large tree on this small section of grass, and the old whipping post, are notable features. No. 1 Spa Hill is very important in views from The Green and down the hill to the north-east. Cotham House and its much altered neighbour no. 9 Sunny Hill, are also important in views over the roof tops to the lower part of Queen Street. A small 19th century wrought iron gate marks an entrance slightly further down the hill to the garden of The Priory. The mixture of stone walls with pantiled roofs is an important feature, but this roofscape has been somewhat spoilt by the insertion of over-large dormers, and the use of stained hardwood windows and boarding. However, no. 9 does retain an early tumbled brick gable facing the street. West View Terrace is somewhat hidden from view but it notable for its carefully-restored exterior and for the views over Queen Street to St. Andrew's Church.

Detrimental features include a huge satellite dish in the garden of one of the houses on the north side The Green, a large street sign marking a vehicular entrance to J. Sargent's premises on the Market Place, and the mixture of front boundary fences and walls to the modern development along King Edward Street. Around West View Terrace are some parking areas and some ruinous buildings which would benefit from improvement.

Area Summary.

- The Green and its trees provide the only landscaped public open space in Kirton
- Trees along boundary with King Edward Street make a major contribution
- Views down Spa Hill notable
- Old Court House and Queens Head Public House listed
- War memorial, the library, and nos. 1 and 3 the most important unlisted buildings
- Sunny Hill slightly separate from The Green
- No. 1 Spa Hill listed and forms a good group of buildings with nos. 7 and 9 and Cotham House
- Good examples of stone walls, pantiled roofs, and some tumbled brick gables

Area 3 - Queen Street and South Cliffe Road.

The southerly end of Queen Street lies within the conservation area and is characterised by the gentle curve of the road, and the steep change in gradient as it climbs up the hill to South Cliffe Road. Clearly, this was the slightly more prestigious part of Kirton in the 18th and 19th centuries, so the street contains a number of mainly detached houses, all of which are listed or have been identified as Buildings of Townscape Merit. High stone front boundary walls, and the use of stone and painted render for the houses, are the most notable features.

The buildings, of a variety of heights and form, sit in gardens and all have a slightly different relationship to the street. No. 4 (Limehouse) is listed and sits at right angles to the road. It dates to the early 18th century, and its long, stone-faced elevation, with a central chimney and tumbled brick gable, is an important constituent to the streetscape. Other buildings of note include nos. 1 and 5, both listed and both notable in views along South Cliffe Road. On the opposite side of the road, and forming an important corner site with South Cliffe Road, are nos. 25, 31 and 33 South Cliffe Road, which create a

group with no. 2 Queen Street. The use of stone blocks and red brick, and slated roofs, are the interesting features of this group, and also the contribution made to South Cliffe Road by the high stone boundary wall to the garden of no. 25. Detrimental features include the modern street lighting and the overhead wires.

South Cliffe Road is a busy route into and out of Kirton but contains a number of dispersed historic buildings and notable groups of trees, particularly at the most southerly end close to the junction with Queen Street. The road curves gently, with four listed buildings (nos. 11, 13, 15, 17 and 19) being of particularly merit. The contribution to the streetscene by the gable end of no. 19, with its tumbled brickwork, has already been noted.

Other Buildings of Merit but currently unlisted include no. 32, a Victorian villa set back from the road with a large front garden with notable trees; nos. 23 and 25, dating to the 18th century and somewhat altered; and no. 9, a double-pile house of c.1800 with end stacks, sash windows and a central porch. These early buildings all sit on the back of the pavement or very close to it, so they make an important contribution to the street scene.

Detrimental features include the busy traffic, poor street signage, the presence of wheelie bins and modern bollards on the verges, a number of modern buildings (fortunately set back from the road), and a variety of sites in a rather scruffy condition. These include the land around no. 20, sites in the backlands between South Cliffe Road and the High Street, and the woodland on the east side of the road opposite the entrance to the High Street.

Area Summary.

- Queen Street curves as it cascades down the hill
- Dispersed, detached houses with spacious gardens
- Good groups of trees
- Stone boundary walls a special feature
- Several listed buildings and several Buildings of Townscape Merit

Area 4 St. Andrew's Churchyard.

This second and smaller part of the conservation area as designated at the time of survey, focuses on St. Andrew's Church and churchyard, and includes a broad swath of wooded garden to the rear of the Long Room and around the Old Vicarage. The undulating topography around the church, which sits on a small hillock, provides visual interest and the sweep of St. Andrew's Street as it wraps around the church is a particularly striking feature. A line of trees across the west side of the churchyard makes a notable contribution to the character of the area.

The buildings are very varied and mainly in residential uses. The three listed buildings are St. Andrew's Church, the Long Room (a former barn now a house), and the Infants' School. This mainly single storey stone building sits close to the church and has stone mullioned casement windows with glazing bars. Originally built in 1837 (date plaque on front elevation) it was extended in 1875. It has a large front garden, enclosed by a low stone wall, important in the setting of the church and highly visible in view across the churchyard.

Other buildings of note include the unlisted Baptist Church next to the school, highly decorated with polychromatic brickwork; Nos. 1-5 Cornwall Street, a terrace of two storey, red brick cottages, prominently located opposite the church; no. 17 Wesley Street, a former school now converted to a house; no. 10 Church Street, a Victorian villa which retains its original sashes with margin lights; and the Old Vicarage, a substantial late 19th century stone house, well screened by trees and shrubbery.

Negative features include modern street lights and overhead wires, and the insertion of inappropriate modern windows and doors into 19th century houses around the churchyard (e.g. 19 and 23 St. Andrew's Street). Further buildings or features make a more neutral contribution: a block of modern houses (nos. 5-15) St. Andrew's Street) and a similar block around the corner (nos. 33-41 Church Street), with poorly defined boundaries and groups of garages; and

the modern bungalows on the corner of Cornwall Street and Train Gate.

Area Summary.

- St. Andrew's Church and its churchyard the most important feature
- Tree groups make major contribution to the townscape
- Dispersed layout of houses
- St. Andrew's Church, the Long Room and the Infants' School all listed
- Large number of Buildings of Townscape Merit
- Use of stone and red brick for the historic buildings, with pantiled roofs

7 PROBLEMS AND PRESSURES.

7.1 General introduction.

Within the Kirton in Lindsey Conservation Area there are a number of threats to the character of the conservation area, particularly caused by inappropriate modern development, neglected plots of land, poorly maintained historic buildings, the use of modern windows, doors and roofing materials for historic buildings, modern street lighting and overhead wires, and, in some locations, a conflict between pedestrians and traffic

Kirton can be considered rather a "backwater" and since the 19th century, the closure of the street market and the gradual decline in agriculture has meant that the town has struggled to find a new role. Today, it is very much a dormitory town and a large amount of modern housing has been built around and within the town in the last forty years. The fragmentation of the historic townscape which has resulted from the insertion of new houses or terraces which do not relate in scale, form, materials or detailing to the existing, historic

buildings in Kirton is a noticeable feature of both conservation areas and of the streets which lie between them.

7.2 Buildings which have a negative or neutral impact.

On the Townscape Analysis map (Figure 2) buildings or structures which it is considered have a a negative or neutral impact on the surrounding conservation areas have been identified.

Only two structures have been identified which are considered to have a negative impact: no. 11 Market Place and the modern warehouse behind no. 30 South Cliffe Road. Whilst these buildings do not contribute as much to the area character as buildings of townscape merit they can be renovated sympathetically incorporating traditional designs and materials appropriate to the conservation area

The neutral buildings are usually older buildings which have been altered or newer buildings whose design is considered to be reasonably in keeping with the surrounding area. These include modern development on the north side of the Market Place and along Sylvester Street, some modern houses off South Cliffe Road, a group of bungalows in Cornwall Street, detached houses overlooking St. Andrew's Churchyard, and two terraces of modern houses in St. Andrew's Street and Church Street.

7.3 Buildings-at-Risk.

This appraisal has not included a detailed survey for buildings-at-risk but within Kirton a number of both unlisted and listed buildings were noted as being potentially "at risk". These are all located in the town centre, and include the Town Hall and nos. 10, 18, 21, 29, 30, and 32 High Street.

7.4 Sites which have a negative impact.

The Area Analysis has described a number of sites within the two conservation areas which are considered to have a detrimental effect on the character of the surrounding area. Most notable is the corner of the Market Place by the public conveniences, identified on the Townscape Analysis map (Figure 2).

7.5 New development.

New development has intruded into the conservation area in a number of places, particularly between the north side of the Market Place and King Edward Street, in Sylvester Street, facing St. Andrew's Church and along Church Street, and on the corner of Cornwall Street. Most of these detached or terraced houses appear to date to the 1980's and 1990's, and largely fail to replicate the historic details of previous developments. A typical example is the terrace no. 5-15 St. Andrew's Street, with front entrance porches and "Georgian" front doors – both alien features in Kirton. Another problem is the scale of the buildings and their relationship to the street, with the bungalows on the corner of Cornwall Street, with their varied appearance, being a particularly notable example.

Design guidance for any further development is included in the Supplementary Planning Guidance for Kirton.

7.6 Alterations to existing historic buildings and shopfronts.

Within the conservation area, a number of both listed and unlisted properties have suffered from the loss of original detailing and materials, such as the insertion of modern windows, the loss of original clay pantiles to concrete, and the insertion of unsympathetic shopfronts, particularly over-deep fascia boards. Guidance to avoid such change, which is detrimental to the overall character of the conservation area, is included in the Supplementary Planning Guidance for Kirton. Further advice is also included on the preservation or enhancement of the existing historic shopfronts, and on the design of new shopfronts.

7.7 Public realm.

Throughout Kirton there are a number of detrimental features:

- Poorly maintained tarmac pavements
- Wheelie bins (e.g. South Cliffe Road, George Street, Sylvester Street, Unicorn Row)
- Use of concrete bollards (George Street)
- Modern street lighting
- Overhead telephone or electricity cables

8 RECOMMENDATIONS.

8.1 General.

This section contains a number of recommendations for the Kirton in Lindsey Conservation Area which will be subject to public comment before parts of this appraisal are formally adopted by North Lincolnshire Council as Supplementary Planning Guidance. Further recommendations may be added, or existing ones deleted, as part of the public consultation exercise.

8.2 New development.

Because of the spacious layout of Kirton, including a number of backland sites and gardens, there will be inevitable pressure for new development, mostly for housing. Such development should take into account the historic street layout and traditional forms of the houses and groups of cottages which still remain in the two conservation areas. The use of traditional materials (red brick, stone, and clay pantile roofs) is important, as is the careful detailing of windows and doors. The use of uPVC and stained hardwoods should be avoided.

Further more detailed advice can be found in the Supplementary Planning Guidance for Kirton.

8.3 Development control including Article 4 Directions

The cumulative loss to the historic character of the buildings within the Kirton in Lindsey Conservation Area has already been noted, particularly alterations to windows, doors, and roofs. Many of these can already be controlled under existing planning legislation as they largely affect listed buildings, commercial properties or those in mixed uses (such a shop with a residential flat above) which such changes usually require planning approval. Where unlisted family dwelling houses are concerned, many minor alterations can be carried out by the owner under his or her permitted development rights, but the Council is able to bring these changes under planning control by serving an Article 4 Direction. One such Direction is already in place which should prevent unsympathetic alterations (particularly windows, doors and roof materials) to unlisted family dwelling houses.

It is therefore suggested that the Article 4 Direction is extended to cover the second conservation area around St. Andrew's Church, and that a publicity leaflet is published to inform residents about the implications of the existing controls and the Article 4 Direction, and to provide guidance about the use of more suitable materials and details.

8.4 Kirton in Lindsey Conservation Area boundary review

Following a careful survey of the existing conservation and its immediate environs, it is recommended that a much larger, single conservation area is designated, to link the two existing conservation areas. This would include historic properties in Church Street, March Street, Queen Street, Wesley Street and Wray Street (See Proposals Map Figure 4).

It is accepted that this will inevitably include a number of modern houses, particularly in March Street and Queen Street. However, these are detached or semi-detached properties, which tend to sit

back from the road with relatively spacious front gardens, so their immediate impact on the street scene is lessened.

More importantly, designation of the additional area would include a large number of unlisted historic buildings identified on the Appraisal map as Buildings of Townscape Merit. Designation would provide additional control and protect them from demolition.

8.5 Buildings-at-Risk survey and potential for grant aid.

The poor condition of some of the town centre properties has already been recorded. A Buildings-at-Risk survey will identify the buildings most in need of grant aid and such a survey can be used to back-up a bid for grant aid. A number of sources for such grant aid are available including English Heritage (Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme – HERS); the Heritage Lottery Fund (Townscape Heritage Initiative grant scheme, called more commonly a THI); and central government, including Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) funds and the relatively new Market Towns initiative (details of these last two can be obtained from the Government Office for Yorkshire and the Humber in Leeds).

8.6 Street improvements.

Many of the tarmac pavements in Kirton require simple repairs or resurfacing. The retention of existing sandstone kerbs is important, and the use of more traditional stone paving in areas such as the Market Place or around St. Andrew's Church would be an improvement. A programme of undergrounding overhead wires is desirable.

8.7 Listed buildings.

It was noted at the time of survey that a number of buildings in Kirton were of sufficient historic or architectural interest to merit listing. The following are therefore suggested for statutory listing (this is not an exhaustive list and further buildings may be added after public consultation):

- No. 2 High Street
- No. 18 High Street (George Hotel)
- No. 26 High Street
- No. 9 South Cliffe Road
- Nos. 1 and 3 King Edward Street
- No. 3 Queen Street
- No. 7 Queen Street
- Nos. 36 and 38 Queen Street
- Nos. 23 and 25 South Cliffe Road
- Baptist Church, St. Andrew's Street
- Nos. 1, 3 and 5 Cornwall Street

For further information on the Kirton in Lindsey Conservation Area contact Edward Rychlak in the Environment Team on 01724 297396, or write to:

The Environment and Public Protection Department,
North Lincolnshire Council
Church Square House
PO Box 42
Scunthorpe
North Lincolnshire
DN15 6XQ

For information on the history and archaeology of the town contact:

The Sites and Monuments Record
North Lincolnshire Museum
Oswald Road
Scunthorpe
North Lincolnshire
DN15 7BD
Telephone 01724 843533

For further information relating to listed buildings and conservation areas, contact:

English Heritage,
23 Savile Row,
London W1X 1AB.
General telephone inquiries: 020 7973 3000
Customer Services 020 7973 4916.

For detailed advice on repairing and restoring Georgian houses, contact:

The Georgian Group,
6 Fitzroy Square,
London W1P 6DY.
Telephone: 020 7377 1644

For “Care for Victorian Houses” leaflet, contact:

The Victorian Society,
1 Priory Gardens,
Bedford Park,
London W4 1TT
Telephone: 020 8994 1019

For an excellent range of technical advice leaflets, contact:

The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB),
6 Fitzroy Square,
London W1P 6DY.
Tel: 020 7377 1644

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