

ALFORD CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

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ALFORD CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

I.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Alford is the third largest market town in the East Lindsey District. It is situated approximately 6 miles from the coast and 3 miles from the A16 road which runs between Grimsby and Stamford.

1.2 The Alford Conservation Area was first designated by the former Lindsey County Council in June 1970. In November 1989 a review of the conservation area boundary resulted in some minor boundary modifications. The conservation area covers the historic town centre and areas of quality housing mainly from the C19 whilst leaving the more recent C20 developments outside its boundary.

1.3 This document aims to fulfil East Lindsey District Council's duty to 'draw up and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement' of the area as required by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The survey was undertaken in July 2007.

1.4 This section to describe the public consultation that has been carried out..

2.0 WHAT ARE CONSERVATION AREAS?

2.1 Conservation areas are defined as 'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'.

2.2 When a conservation area has been designated, it increases the Council's controls, with planning applications judged by their impact on the character and appearance of the area. Greater controls over the demolition of buildings and structures are imposed whilst the rights that owners have to do works to their properties without the need to obtain planning permission (known as 'permitted development rights') are reduced or can be taken away.

2.3 Stricter controls are also exercised over the design of new buildings, and owners must give the Council six weeks notice of their intention to carry out works to trees. Planning applications affecting a conservation area must be advertised on site and in the local press to give people the opportunity to comment.

What are the benefits of Conservation Area status?

2.4 There are a number of environmental and economic benefits of conservation area status, including:

- Spaces which contribute to the area's character will be protected;
- Trees within the area will be protected;
- Locally valued buildings will be protected;
- Retaining and enhancing the buildings, features, and spaces that make Alford special will ensure that residents, workers and visitors continue to enjoy a unique area;

- Property values are generally improved within conservation areas;
- Opportunities for grantaid to repair and reinstate traditional buildings;
- Retaining and enhancing building features and details contributes to Alford's special character and benefits the value of property;
- Opportunities to improve the streetscape with appropriate materials; and,
- Greater economic confidence leading to investment in Alford's built fabric.

Why are special Conservation Area controls necessary?

2.5 Alford's special interest derives from a combination of elements that together form the town's well-established character and appearance. These elements include the topography, historical development, prevalent building materials, character and hierarchy of spaces, quality and relationship of buildings in the area, and trees and other green features. Architectural features, such as distinctive windows, doors and fanlights or other characteristic details, are also very important to Alford's distinctive historic character. It is important that these elements are protected to ensure that the qualities that make Alford Conservation Area appealing are enhanced, helping to encourage investment in the town and therefore benefiting the local economy.

What is a Conservation Area Appraisal?

2.6 There is a duty on the Local Planning Authority to determine what parts of their district are areas of special architectural or historic interest and then to designate them as conservation areas. Having established a conservation area they are also required to regularly review the designation and boundaries of the area. This is to ensure the area is still considered to be of value and to consider whether any areas have been overlooked or changes have occurred which need the boundaries to be redrawn. Any pressures for change in the area can thus be identified and enhancement opportunities highlighted.

2.7 The appraisal document sets out the historical and economic context for the locality and identifies what it is that makes the conservation area of special interest. It serves to provide clear guidance on what should be conserved in the area with specific policies devised to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the area.

2.8 The East Lindsey District Council Local Plan Alteration 1999 sets out the local planning policy background against which development in the Alford Conservation Area will be assessed. Of particular relevance is Chapter 4 which contains the Conservation and Design Policies; special notice should be taken of Policies C1 – 6 and C8 & 9. It should be noted, however, that the Government has recently changed the way planning policy is to be prepared by local planning authorities. A Local Development Framework (LDF) will replace East Lindsey's Local Plan by 2009. The LDF will be a portfolio of documents that set out the land use strategy for the District through policies, inset maps and action plans.



No. 117 West Street



Alford Manor House, West Street

3.0 DEFINITION OF SPECIAL INTEREST

3.1 The special interest of Alford derives mainly from its development as a market town serving a large rural hinterland. The town retains its medieval street pattern with roads extending from a central market place and residential development taking place along these principal routes with later infill development between them. The variety of architectural styles and forms reflects Alford's diverse history and development over the centuries.

3.2 Alford has an attractive mix of two and three storey residences and shops with a juxtaposition of larger civic and public buildings sitting comfortably amongst them. Despite the lack of uniformity of architectural styles, building materials and rooflines it is the buildings combined collective contribution and their relationship with each other that adds greatly to the overall character of the conservation area.

3.3 Alford's special interest can also be found amongst its diversity of distinctive areas within the conservation area. These areas include the Market Place and West Street which contains a good range of buildings displaying a mixture of architectural forms and styles such as Alford Methodist Church and the thatched Manor House, reputed to be the largest thatched property in England. In addition to being centrally located in the town, the Market Place is historically important to Alford and many of the important civic buildings are found there.

3.4 Alford's development can be clearly traced with the medieval street plans still distinct and later areas of development, characterised by high quality C19 properties, form pockets of suburbs on the edges of the conservation area. Alford's past prosperity and rich history is noticeable today in its architecture and buildings, noticeably the C19 developments. Modern developments have been built amongst Alford's older buildings and still the town has also been able to retain its historic traditional character, whilst remaining a modern market town.



Extract from 1st edition OS Map (1889)



Extract from 1906 OS Map



Extract from 1971 OS Map

4.0 HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY

4.1 Today Alford is a small market town situated at the foot of the eastern slope of the Lincolnshire Wolds. The village was notable for having three distinct market places although the definition between them has been somewhat lost. The original market charter was granted by King Edward 1 in 1283, but there is evidence that the site of Alford was inhabited long before this date.

4.2 Several suggestions have been put forward regarding the origin of Alford's name including the Old English for "the old ford", or from "eau- ford" - ford over water or from "alder trees by the ford".

4.3 Whilst there is little tangible evidence of an early settlement on the site of Alford, its slightly raised position in the Lincolnshire marshes would have made an ideal location for a settlement. Some prehistoric remains have been discovered in the area including stone axes and other tools which are recorded in the Sites and Monument Record. There are also the remains of a Bronze Age barrow surviving as earthworks. These scant remains are the only evidence of any prehistoric activity and no evidence has been found in Alford for a specific settlement site. Similarly there is no direct evidence for Roman occupation in the town but there have been several small finds of pottery and coins which suggest that there may have been a Romano-British site somewhere in the vicinity of the town.

4.4 It is thought that the first settlement may have been Anglo Saxon but there is little evidence to support this. It has been suggested that perhaps the gravel ridge where the current church stands, was the site of an Anglo Saxon settlement. An Anglo Saxon brooch was discovered in the C19 but there is no record of the actual location of the find though a small sherd of late Anglo Saxon pottery was found at John Spendluffe School.

4.5 Various historical documents refer to the town as Auford, Alleford and Euford but in the Domesday Book of 1086 the town is recorded as Alforde with a manor and sixteen acres of meadow but there is no mention of a church. The lands were held by Gilbert de G and and William Tailgebosch.

4.6 In the early medieval period, documentation shows that the town was divided into four manors, Tothby Ailby Rigsby and Well. Alford seems to have been a very prosperous village with a population of 790 in the C12. The parish church was endowed in 1209 and Alford attained its right to have a market charter in 1283. The Black Death took a huge toll on the population and in 1349 the population was greatly reduced to just 140 people.

4.7 The first mention of a church in the town is in 1195 when there is reference in documents to a disagreement over the church and its associated lands and again in 1220. This dispute may have been caused by local lords seeking to gain control over a flourishing town and its increasing wealth. It is possible that the land to the north of the town around the present church passed to the Gilbertine Priory of St Catherine-by-Lincoln by the end of the C13. They held land in the town and had a granary to store the collected tithe grains.

4.8 White's Directory of 1842 described the Church as "Being built of soft sandstone, and the numerous decayed parts repaired with brick, the exterior has a motley appearance". In 1867 Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, at a cost of £5,500, "restored" the Church adding a new north aisle and raising the tower and adding eight Ancaster stone pinnacles. It is built of coursed and squared greenstone with limestone dressings and a stone slate roof and the porch has a parvise room at first floor which is said was first used as a Grammar School, founded by Francis Spanning, in 1566. To the front of the Church is the 1919 war memorial designed in the style of a medieval church cross by the architect Sir Ninian Comper.

4.8 Francis Spanning founded Alford Grammar School in the C16, the patrons were William Cecil (Lord Burghley) and his son Thomas Cecil. A charter was issued by Queen Elizabeth I legally recognising it as a grammar school. In 1630 the plague struck the town. The Vicar recorded in the register of June of that year "the plague begins" and within seven months 132 of the town's 1000 residents had died.

4.9 The Manor House was possibly built by John Hopkinson in 1611. Its prestigious location on one of the main routes into the Town so close to the Market Place indicates the status and wealth its owner possessed. Sir Robert Christopher, who fought in the English Civil War on the Royalist side, bought the property in about 1638 and was rewarded with a knighthood in 1660 by King Charles II. At the time of Sir Robert's

death he was wealthy enough to leave money in his will for a tomb and alabaster effigy of himself and his wife in St Wilfred's Church and for the foundation of almshouses. The almshouses were situated in West Street, but had to be rebuilt in 1870.

4.10 During the C16 and C17 Alford became a centre for Nonconformism and a number of chapels were built and rebuilt during the C19. The Primitive Methodists built a chapel on South Street in 1837 which they enlarged in 1856. A Wesleyan Chapel was built in 1819 on Chapel Street, a Preachers House was added in 1820 and a Sunday school in 1839. Other churches which appeared during the C19 included the Congregationalists (1877), Wesleyan Reformers, Independents and Baptists.

4.11 Due to its proximity to the coast the area around Alford was rumoured to have been rife with smuggling during the C17 and C18 for the illegal export of wool from the Lincolnshire coast and the import of contraband such as Dutch Gin, tea and tobacco. It has been suggested that there was an extensive network of tunnels beneath the town although no evidence has been found for this.

4.12 Thomas Paine (1737 – 1809), one of the forefathers of the United States and author of the widely read pamphlet "Common Sense" (1776), was an Excise man in Alford between 1764 and 1765. He began work as an Excise Officer in Grantham but moved to Alford in August 1764. During his stay he worked from an office located on the site of the Windmill Hotel in the Market Place.

4.13 The agricultural revolution saw an increase in the town's wealth and from the second half of the C19 Alford could boast four windmills and a brewery. Only one windmill remains today however.

4.14 The arrival of the railway saw an increase in wealth and prosperity in the town. The construction of the Boston to Grimsby section of the East Lincolnshire loop line was started in 1848. In the 1860's there was a proposal to improve railway links with a line from Alford to Mablethorpe but the Bill was rejected by Parliament and so an 8 mile section of 2ft gauge steam tramway was built to Sutton on Sea in 1884 at a cost of £30,000. However, because the tram was so slow dangerous and unreliable it was closed within 5 years of opening. The existing railway remained in use until the Beeching cuts in the 1960's.

4.15 Alford's increase in wealth and prosperity was marked by the development of a number of high quality properties and developments in the C19 within the town, noticeably along Chantry Road and Hamilton Road. This increase in development continued into the early C20. Noticeable developments during this time include the construction of the Corn Exchange in 1856. The later half of the C19 in Alford also saw the establishment of Alford Urban District Council.

4.16 Alford's prosperity in the early C20 is reflected in the further development of residential properties along the three main routes into the town centre. During the mid to late C20 more housing was being built and two new housing developments off the Tothby Road, which were sited well away from the historic core of the town, began to fill the land between the arterial routes. A Townscape Heritage Initiative Scheme was introduced in Alford in 1999 and has provided funding for a number of successful regeneration schemes for a number of buildings in the town centre.

5.0 SETTING

5.1 Alford is situated at the foot of the East Lincolnshire Wolds approximately 14 miles south east of Louth and 36 miles east of Lincoln. It lies some 6 miles from the coast and 3 miles from the main A16 road which runs between Grimsby and Stamford. The border of the Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty designated in 1973, lies just to the west of Alford.

5.2 The flat landscape of the fens stretches eastwards from the town, whilst the Lincolnshire Wolds unroll to the west. Approaching Alford from the west, over Miles Cross Hill, gives the best view of the town and its surroundings, as the undulating landscape of the Wolds drops down to meet the marsh and gives way to views out across the flat and marshy fens. The underlying geology of the Alford area is chalk with overlying glacial deposits, a small outcrop of sandstone runs close to, but not through, the town.

5.3 There is a noticeable difference in the nature and character of areas immediately surrounding the conservation area. Stretching around the southern and western points are areas of modern growth which encroach onto the C19 developments within the conservation area. Whilst small areas of property envelope locations elsewhere in the conservation area, it is largely open countryside that borders the northern and western areas of the conservation area where the traditional medieval street layout of the town is still clearly distinctive.

5.4 There are three main approaches into Alford: from the north along East Street which joins onto Church Street; from the south along South Street and from the west along West Street. Travelling into Alford from the south the start of the conservation area is marked by South Street which, under the proposed boundary inclusions, will take in the Memorial Recreation Ground. This largely residential street contains a number of large properties situated in spacious grounds. Travelling through the conservation area by this route offers opportunities to view glimpses of St. Wilfrid's Church.

5.5 Approaching Alford from the west along West Street the outer limits of the current conservation area boundary extends to the junction with Hamilton Road. West Street is a busy road which offers the opportunity for views towards the town centre.



East Street – view south



South Street – view north



West Street – view north east

Situated along this road are a diverse mix of buildings including C19 and C20 terraced properties, a former Boys School, the thatched Manor House, the former Methodist Church and commercial and civic buildings. The northern approach into the start of Alford Conservation Area is clearly marked by the only remaining windmill in the town on East Street. This approach into Alford is characterised by its long linear tree lined road on which is situated a mixture of properties including C19 terraced houses and large villa houses.

5.6 The Alford Conservation Area covers the historic town centre and areas of quality housing mainly from the C19 whilst leaving the more recent C20 developments outside its boundary.



Nos. 86-91 West Street



Nos. 40-43 West Street

6.0 TOWNSCAPE ANALYSIS (see Fig.1)

6.1 West Street

6.1.1 Approaching the conservation area along the busy A1104 gives good views towards, but not into, the town centre. There is a considerable mix of building types and styles but this street is mainly characterised by modest C19 terraced cottages at the western end which merge into larger residences before entering the town centre with its commercial and important civic buildings.

6.1.2 Currently the boundary of the conservation area terminates at West Street's junction with Hamilton Road. However, it is proposed to extend the conservation area westwards along West Street to terminate at Boume Road. This will include the former Boys School, the Telephone Exchange building, a small number of terraced properties and the substantial No. 57 West Street on the corner of Boume Road.

6.1.3 The attractive former Boys School building is almost hidden from view until reaching it. The derelict school building is situated at the junction of Parsons Lane and West Street and is constructed in polychrome English bond brickwork with a slate roof and has attractive bands of yellow and blue brickwork and stone detailing. This building appears on the 1891 Ordnance Survey map and is similar in style to other key buildings of this date within the conservation area. On the opposite side of West Street, set back from the road in an uncharacteristically spacious plot, is a telephone exchange building, which was built on the site of a row of terraces and is typical of its time and function. Constructed in Flemish bond with wire cut bricks and hipped pantile roof, its Crittal windows have unfortunately been replaced with UPVC but it retains its good signage.

6.1.4 Beyond these two buildings there are a number of C19 and C20 terraces constructed in Farlesthorpe brick with slate or tiled roofs. Whilst many of these terraced properties have suffered from inappropriate alterations, they are proposed for inclusion in the conservation area because they are a good group of smaller scale late C19 housing. They have lost their original uniform appearance, but they do have very distinctive large chimneys which are a noticeable feature and enliven the roofscape.



Nos. 116-118 West Street – view south west



West Street – view south west

The terraces are mainly modest two storey properties set back hard on the pavement edge, although both commercial units and some attractive larger properties reflecting the more affluent parts of the late C19 and early C20 are found amongst them.

6.1.5 Beyond the junction with Hamilton Road the character gradually begins to change from the narrow Victorian residential terracing (clearly visible on the 1891 O S map) to a mixed group of buildings with wider frontages in both residential and commercial use. The increase in plot sizes denotes the outer limits of the historic town which developed in a linear form along this main route.

6.1.6 The notable group of Almshouses, which were originally built in 1668 and reconstructed in 1870, are an interesting group of 1½ storey red brick buildings with stone dressings and dormer windows with barge boards and feature gables. There are a number of lamps and down pipes which have created some unfortunate clutter on the façade of these buildings and could be repositioned to the benefit of the buildings' appearance.

6.1.7 West Street's almost continuous built frontage is broken at the junctions between Chantry Road and Commercial Street with the set back frontage of the Finnveden factory. This marks the entrance to the commercial centre of the town which is unusually marked by a splash of greenery. From here there are good views of the former brewery and maltings building which was an important site to the agricultural heritage and development of Alford. Although this building is in a poor state of repair it is a landmark building and can be seen from various locations in the conservation area.

6.1.8 Behind, and to the side of, the Finnveden factory frontage there is a large area with derelict buildings and open land which was originally part of the brewery site before becoming the Straven knitwear factory. This area has been included in the conservation area boundary because of the historical importance of this site and its close association with the town's development. This site has been designated as a development site but due to its location so close to the town centre and many listed buildings any development would need to be carefully designed to reduce its impact and effect on the conservation area and the relationship with the historic town. This site links through to South Street via the Memorial Garden.



West Street – view north east



West Street – view east

6.1.9 In 1530 when John Leland visited the town he described Alford as consisting of one street and "all thacked (thatched) and redid". Beyond the factory a cluster of thatched buildings survive with a distinct and different character to the surrounding street scene. These cottages were probably constructed in the local vernacular tradition of mud and stud, but have since been cased with brick. The dormer windows display attractive tumbled brick work which is another distinctive feature and can be seen in gable ends of other historic buildings in the town.

6.1.10 Beyond this group of thatched properties West Street begins to widen out and curves gently northwards. Almost the entire length on the southern side is lined by buildings right on the footpath edge. Here a tighter grain prevails and a mixture of two and three storey C19 buildings add some formality to the streetscene with occasional glimpses between buildings and arches to outbuildings and the factory site beyond. Whilst the building styles are still mixed, brick (both painted and plain) and white painted render are the most prominent walling materials, with Welsh slate or pantiles being the predominant roofing materials.

6.1.11 On the northern side of the street the frontage has a more open layout. Nos. 119 and 120 West Street date from the C19 and are probably connected with the former Methodist Chapel. These properties form a symmetrical pair of two storey houses in Farlesthorpe brick with a slate roof and rusticated brick quoins. Some of their details appear to have been copied from the neighbouring C16 thatched Manor House.

6.1.12 Views are dominated by two important landmark buildings on this section of West Street whose scale and formality sit comfortably in a public open space with many mature trees which play an important role in this rare town centre open space. The former Methodist Chapel stands further forward in the street frontage than the Manor House and is of a much larger scale than the surrounding buildings. It was built in 1864 and replaced a chapel in Chapel Street which had become too small. The brick work was carried out by Hasnip and Son who owned Farlesthorpe brick yard.

6.1.13 The manor house sits beyond the Methodist Chapel. This imposing two storey building is setback from the road in a well maintained grassed area surrounded by formal



High Street – view north west



No. 18 High Street

railings. The building is encased in brick with a thatched roof and recent archaeological investigation by a team from York University has discovered that the building dates from 1611. The building belongs to Alford Civic Trust and is now used for museum and community purposes.

6.1.14 Beyond the Manor House there is a distinct change in the character of the conservation area. At this point the road narrows, the buildings change from two to three storeys and sit hard back on the pavement edge creating an almost continuous shopping frontage, with many good quality shopfronts and historic features. The pavements also become narrower and the grain becomes tighter which creates a sense of enclosure.

6.2 High Street and Candlehouse Lane

6.2.1 High Street arches across the top of the Market Place so that the entrance into the Market Place is hidden from view and only glimpses of the Church tower give any clue to the proximity of the centre of the town.

6.2.2 The buildings on the northern side of the road are tall and imposing above their narrow street frontages. They extend back into their sites, and are presumably built on the narrow burgage plots of the medieval town. Despite there being no dominant architectural form or style the juxtaposition between the varying styles and heights of buildings adds greatly to the character and appearance of the area. There are a number of good quality shop fronts along the High Street including No18 which has recently undergone an enhancement scheme through the Alford Townscape Heritage Initiative scheme.

6.2.3 The George Hotel and the adjoining small shop were built in the C18 but also retain parts of an earlier C17 building. This "L" shaped building with the projecting wing towards the road, provides an attractive "stop" at the end of the curving façade of buildings in the High Street and forms an attractive foreground to views of the church tower beyond.



The old County Police Station, No. 21 Park Lane



No. 12 Park Lane

6.2.4 The entrance to Candlehouse Lane is almost hidden from view tucked between two buildings. It leads through and opens out to an un-metalled road with an assortment of building ages and styles giving this area an informal character.

6.3 Park Lane, Park Road and Chapel Street

6.3.1 These three roads run almost parallel with each other northwards from West Street and High Street. A footpath and road run at right angles across the three roads and informally divide both the character and appearance of this area. Towards the centre there is an eclectic mixture of commercial and residential properties in a jumble of scales with a tight form, emphasised by the buildings sitting hard back on the pavement edge. Northwards the area becomes more informal and mainly residential in use with larger plot sizes and a more verdant setting.

6.3.2 Turning into Park Lane from High Street a high red brick wall in header bond with buttresses and an ornate coping encloses the grounds of the Manor House. Beyond this wall the western side of Park Lane is not included in the conservation area boundary as it consists of modern housing. On the other side of the road opposite the boundary wall is the Sessions House which is now in use as the Alford Conservative Club, and the County Police Station which has been converted to residential use. The buildings are constructed in pale red brickwork with soft orange brick detailing including dog tooth dentil courses and eaves and feature pediments to the gable ends and dormer windows. The eastern side of Park Lane has a number of attractive detached and semi detached late C19 villas in local Farlesthorpe brick and red brick, setback from the road standing in spacious gardens with mature trees, they are shown on the 1891 OS map as "North Villas". The end of this road finishes with attractive views out across open countryside and farmland framed by mature trees and hedging.

6.3.3 Chapel Street was so called because of the chapel built here in 1819 with an associated Preacher's house and Sunday school. Whilst these buildings are still in existence they are now in other uses. A formal 3 storey mill building in local brick with rubbed red brick arched lintels retains many of its original 8/8 sliding sash windows and has been converted to residential use. There is a plaque which reads "JS Hildred &



Market Place – view east



The Corn Exchange, Market Place

Since established 1852"; the 1860 Trade Directory says that John Stafford Hildred was a confectioner and biscuit maker who also had premises in the Market Place. Park Road runs centrally between Park Lane and Chapel Street, allowing views of buildings on both these streets.

6.4 Market Place

6.4.1 The three main routes into Alford converge in the Market Place, which lies at the heart of the conservation area and forms the historic and commercial core of the town.

6.4.2 Historically the market area was divided into three separate markets (South Market Place, Market Place and Market Square or North Market) but these spaces have become less defined with the demolition of key buildings, although a central pinch point in the road helps to visually and physically split the South Market Place from the central Market Place. The recent enhancement scheme in the Market Place has introduced trees and a seating area which have gone some way to reinstating the definition between the Market Place and the former Market Square. This area of seating and trees provides an important focus and public meeting place between the two Market Places. The central Market Place has a large hard surfaced area which serves as an area for stalls on market day or parking. Despite the open feel of the market areas, the continuous and generally tall building façades around the central and northern Market Places provide a sense of enclosure and contribute greatly to creating a strong "sense of place".

6.4.3 There is no uniformity of building styles, ages or types within the market areas but the interest and character of the conservation area is greatly enhanced by this comfortable juxtaposition of buildings. The relationship between large scale buildings which stand cheek by jowl with more modest two storey narrow frontage buildings creates little discordance and adds to the character and charm of the market area.

6.4.4 The mixed palette of building materials, which include red brick, Farlesthorpe brick, render, polychrome brickwork, slate and local clay pantiles combine to create a pleasing cohesion within the Market areas. Windows are mainly sliding sashes with tripartite, plain or multi-panes and there are also traditional shopfronts.



The Windmill Hotel, Market Place



21-23 Market Place

6.4.5 The narrow rectangular shaped northern Market Place (formerly known as Market Square) has a more enclosed feel than the other market areas due to its narrowness, emphasised by the 3 storey buildings sitting hard back on the pavement edge and overshadowing the area. No.17 (The Studio Coffee House) is an unusual narrow four storey building and its scale and proportions make this a landmark building. The red granite drinking fountain was erected to celebrate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897 and was later reinscribed following her death in 1901.

6.4.6 The Lloyds TSB Bank (formerly The Capital and Counties Bank Limited) is a C19 building in red brick with limestone and terracotta dressings; it is of a similar style to other key civic buildings of this date in Alford. It has a corbelled corner door, a feature which appears elsewhere in the town and surrounding area.

6.4.7 The Market Place is larger than the northern Market area and is enclosed by buildings on three sides creating a well defined space. One of the most dominant and attractive buildings in the central Market Place is the early C19 Windmill Hotel. The building is three storeys high but its scale gives the impression of a far taller building. Brick built with render to the front elevation, it has an asymmetrical roof form hipped at the southern end and a gable to the north. The windows are 6/6 sliding sashes to the ground and first floor with 3/6 to the second floor. A canted bay with tripartite sashes has been added at first floor level at a later date possibly matching other similar style ones in the Market Place and along West Street. This distinctive canted bay and the painted signage across the front of the façade along with its scale make this a prominent building but not incongruous within the Market Place. Its present appearance including the introduction of a new portico is the result of the Townscape Heritage Initiative Scheme. This building is important in the town's history because on this site stood the Customs Office where Thomas Paine was an excise officer from 1764-1765.

6.4.8 On the northern side of the Market Place is another unusual tall narrow four storey building with a canted front which appears to have been an infill building. It has painted white brickwork and different styles of window on every level.

6.4.9 The Corn Exchange, described by Pevsner as "drab Italianate" was built in 1856 in red brick with limestone detailing and rusticated quoins and a hipped slate roof. This



Lloyds TSB Bank, Market Place



The stone disc marking the entrance to The Hole in the Wall, Market Place

two storey building is a landmark in the Market Place with central double half glazed doors with tall flanking glazed panels and rectangular pilasters with tiled inlays and a moulded surround with scrolled brackets flanked by tripartite sashes. The first floor has three semi-circular headed margin light sashes with shouldered stone architraves and keystones.

6.4.10 On the eastern side of the Market Place stands the three storey HSBC Bank which displays similar red brick and stone dressings to the Corn Exchange and Lloyds TSB Bank and marks the edge of the Market Place. It was built in 1906 and has an unusual deeply dentiled cornice above the first floor with dormer windows through the eaves above. This building's semi-circular headed margin light windows in ashlar surrounds are an unusual feature in Alford.

6.4.11 The Corn Exchange, Lloyds TSB Bank and HSBC Bank buildings are a good indication of the commercial affluence and agricultural importance of the town in the late C19 early C20 when the town's prosperity was at its peak.

6.4.12 The buildings on the north and east sides of the Market Place are simple, three storey buildings of painted brickwork or render with timber sash windows and slate roofs. There are a number of good quality historic timber shopfronts and many have good detailing. On the south side the properties tend to be of a similar form but of two storeys.

6.4.13 A narrow passage way running between the Market Place and the High Street is known as The Hole in the Wall. Its entrances are marked by large stone discs inscribed with "The Hole in the Wall". These are inlaid in the pavement and were part of a recent enhancements scheme. It is unfortunate that highway signage and a lamp column compromise the view through to the George Hotel which is attractively framed by the buildings in this alleyway.

6.4.14 There is a variety of building styles and forms in the South Market Place although three storey C19 properties predominate. On the western side the properties sit hard on the back of the pavement and retain many historic features including a selection of good quality shopfronts. The former Mechanics Institute, which is now a solicitor's office, was



Caroline Street – view south east



Hanby Lane – view north

built in 1854 and sits gable end on to the street frontage. It is of red brick with stone detailing and slate roof and has three arched full length windows at first floor level which are a prominent feature in the curved street frontage amongst a variety of sliding sashes. This building was awarded grant aid through the Alford Townscape Heritage Initiative which enabled a more sympathetic shopfront to be installed.

6.4.15 On the eastern side the new library is an unfortunate addition to the Market Place. Its design, scale and massing do not complement the surrounding historic buildings.

6.4.16 Views south out of the market are terminated by a terrace of Farlesthorpe brick cottages with slate roofs. The focal point is a shop with a curved frontage turning into Caroline Street.

6.5 Caroline Street and Hanby Lane

6.5.1 Caroline Street runs east from South Street and from the bottom of the South Market Place and consists of mainly small scale 2 storey terraced properties. The terrace on the southern side of the street (Nos. 23-27 consec) can be seen from the South Market Place and it is unfortunate that some of these properties have lost many of their historic features. However, they still make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area as a group of small scale domestic residences constructed of local building materials close to the centre of the conservation area. On the north side of Caroline Street, Nos. 1 & 2 have been rebuilt in light brick with a concrete tile roof and Nos. 5-10 are modern properties which make a neutral contribution to this part of the conservation area.

6.5.2 Currently lying just outside the boundary of the conservation area is an area of industrial warehousing and neglected land which have a negative impact on views along Caroline Street. However, it is proposed to include this land as its future redevelopment will impact upon the character and appearance of this part of the conservation area. It is also proposed to include the terraced properties and the outbuilding at the northern end of this terrace that line the west side of Hanby Lane. The terrace is of similar



Carr Lane – view east



Church Street and St Wilfred's Church – view north east

interest and character as those in Caroline Street, although they too have been subject to harmful alterations

6.6 Carr Lane

6.6.1 Carr Lane runs west from the bottom of the South Market Place. Towards the South Market Place it contains both residential and business uses with small scale outbuildings and modern business units in non traditional materials of modern appearance which are an alien feature within the conservation area. Other industrial units are less obtrusive with mainly traditional roofing materials and white brickwork or render which help them harmonise better with the surrounding historic properties.

6.6.2 A modern development which runs along Windmill Lane from its junction with Carr Lane is an unfortunate neighbour to a terrace of C19 Farlesthorpe brick built cottages which have lost much of their historic character through the replacement of windows and doors. Views westwards along Carr Lane as the road drops down are terminated by another modern development of bungalows which have been constructed in yellow bricks similar to the distinctive local bricks.

6.7 Church Street

6.7.1 Church Street is a short road which curves round the raised mound on which the Church of St Wilfred sits. The buildings opposite are generally large good quality houses set within larger plots of land, befitting their prominent, high status, position directly opposite the church. These buildings generally sit hard on the back of the pavement and follow the curve of the road so that they are almost hidden from view until the Market Place is reached. The only exception is the impressive Hanby Hall which is setback from the road slightly and has a small front garden with railings which provides a green splash in the otherwise formal street frontage.



Church Street – view south east.



Church Street – view north

6.7.2 The Church of St Wilfred is an attractive focal point in the town centre and views of it can be glimpsed from the Market Place and approaching the centre from East Street. Views from the High Street are more limited although the tower is clearly visible above the rooflines. The Church is believed to have been constructed in the C14 on the site of the old church with alterations carried out in the C15 and C16.

6.7.3 Nos. 8, 12, 15 (Hanby Hall) and 16 Church Street display the wealth and status of the former residents who were able to live in such a prestigious location in the town centre. Hanby Hall is an early C18 building built for Sir Richard Hanby. It is constructed in purple/red brick work and is two storeys with a parapet and three domer windows behind with a roof of stone tiles. The building was originally symmetrical with 5 sash windows with flat arches, but an extension has been added to the right hand side.

6.7.4 Nos. 13 and 14 are of a later date than the other properties on this side of Church Street. The existing building replaced the drapery business of Bryant and Walkers and a jewellers after a fire in 1911. The property originally had an attractive shopfront which has unfortunately been replaced with one less sympathetic to the building, though otherwise it retains many historic features on the front façade and is an attractive property. The installation of a more sympathetic shop front would greatly improve this building which is in such a prominent location.

6.7.5 Moving away from the town centre towards East Street, the street becomes more open with a variety of uses. The 1891 OS map shows a distinct break in the built up area with open fields between Church Street and the buildings on East Street, but this area has suffered from unfortunate infill developments during the C20. The East End Car Park was created following the demolition of a row of thatched cottages and a blacksmiths shop. This poorly landscaped open space does not provide a fitting link between the tree lined spacious character of East Street and the tighter grain of the town centre. Whilst this area lies outside the conservation area it is important that any enhancement scheme or development of this site should be carefully considered to ensure that it will enhance the setting of the conservation area.



East Street – view north east



No. 3 East Street

6.8 East Street

6.8.1 East Street is lined with trees and contains a number of good quality large C19 terraces and villas set in spacious mature gardens which define the character of the area. The windmill is the major landmark in this part of the town and is often glimpsed between buildings.

6.8.2 The pleasant verdant setting of the white painted Anchor Public House adds greatly to the setting and character of the conservation area. The gravelled open car park, however, is a poor setting for the building and is an unfortunate end to the attractive boundary of the Church grounds.

6.8.3 Some open green space remains on the northern side and attempts must be made to preserve this important space. Later developments along East Street have been removed from the conservation area as they are not of sufficient quality to warrant inclusion. However, care needs to be taken if any further development is added on this side to ensure the setting of the conservation area is preserved.

6.8.4 No. 3 is a prominent building in the street scene. It dates from the early C18 and is built in red brick in English bond with a hipped pantile roof. Originally it fronted on to East Street and the blocked openings can still be seen, but now the front of the building faces the church. Beyond this, a group of properties including a pair of late C19 red brick houses with slate roofs, canted feature bay windows and original sliding sash windows sit comfortably with the listed building.

6.8.5 No. 40 East Street is a 1920's bungalow and is a good quality example of its style and time with many original features. This property acts as a gateway building going out towards the traditionally built tree lined areas of East Street. Its prominent clay pantiled roof is clearly visible from the west.

6.8.6 Further along East Street the buildings become larger with a range of materials and styles. They display good detailing including an Edwardian property with a tile hung canted two storey bay and half-timbering. Boundary treatments include brick walls and hedging which adds greatly to the character and appearance of this verdant road.



The Windmill, East Street



South Street – view south

6.8.7 Nos. 36 and 37 are large properties set in large gardens. It is proposed to add the garden area to the south east of 36 East Street and the field to the rear of 36, 36a and 37 East Street as this area makes a strong contribution to the character and setting of the conservation area. It is a tongue of green extending into the conservation area and allows good views beyond the boundary.

6.8.8 A break in the verdant streetscene is created by a group of smaller terraces and semi detached properties which sit closer to the road and display an interesting range of building forms and materials. No. 15 has an unusual chequered brick work pattern in red and yellow bricks which is not common in Alford. A cluster of mature trees marks the end of this group.

6.8.9 A highway sign at the junction with Bilsby Road is an unfortunate distraction at this key focal point. The building behind is almost hidden behind a large hedge but interesting glimpses of this property and others can sometimes be seen between the trees. The Vicarage which was built circa 1852 is also hidden from view and is another important large building with decorative diaper pattern brickwork.

6.8.10 The five sail windmill is an important feature in Alford and its history, and it reflects the important part agriculture played in the development of the town. No. 51 East Street is a well detailed C19 red brick detached property and this with the windmill forms a suitable gateway building into the conservation area.

6.9 South Street

6.9.1 At its north end, South Street contains a mixture of small commercial units and residential properties. Moving south, the street becomes predominantly residential with properties in wider and more spacious plots.

6.9.2 Beyond South Street's junction with Caroline Street there are a number of well detailed historic properties that are empty and in a poor state of repair. These buildings create a pinch point marking the entrance to the town centre and the Market Place. Their restoration should be encouraged to improve the character and appearance of this part.



Memorial Recreation Ground, South Street



Nos. 47 and 49 South Street

of the conservation area. On the opposite side of the road, Nos. 12 & 14 are a pair of cottages (built in 1819), which form a squatsquare building under a pyramidal roof with large overhanging eaves and a large central stack. The neighbouring properties step down towards this pair forming an interesting and unusual stop to the end of the row

6.9.3 Moving away from the town centre, the buildings on the eastern side are setback from the road which begins to have a more open character. The modern Sandpiper nursing home is of neutral quality. The neighbouring building of red engineering brick with a decorative dentil course around the gable end and arched windows and entrance (built sometime after 1907) is an interesting building in the streetscene and would make a positive contribution to the conservation area with minimal alterations. Opposite this building on the eastern side of the road is the Black Horse public house which was built in 1820.

6.9.4 Beyond the former chapel building, at the junction with Mount Pleasant, the area becomes mainly residential. On the western side of the road are some modern bungalows which are not of interest themselves but their gardens contribute to the overall quality and appearance of the area. No. 28 South Street is a large 1950's detached property which is set in a spacious and mature garden. The use of pale creamy coloured brick and metal framed windows is typical of its period and worthy of note in the conservation area as it appears to be unique in the centre of Alford. The Memorial Ground to the south of this property is also an important public open space within the town and contains a memorial for the 1939-45 war.

6.9.5 Mature trees are an important feature on both sides of the road and the buildings on the eastern side of South Street are hidden in amongst this informal verdant setting. These houses, standing well back from the busy road reflect the dignity and social status of those for whom they were built. Nos. 47 and 49 are of a similar style and design to Nos. 119 and 120 West Street and may have been built by the same builders. A plaque bearing a recumbent lion and unicorn and a shield with the cross of St George is situated at the mid point of the central gable.



Nos. 66 and 68 Hamilton Road



No. 26 Chantry Road

6.10 Hamilton Road

6.10.1 The late C19 was an important and wealthy period in Alford's history and these two roads contain some good quality smaller scale housing which reflect this affluence, and show the expansion and development of the town at this time.

6.10.2 Turning from South Street into Hamilton Road the western side has a number of good quality detached and semi-detached houses set in mature gardens. The properties display an interesting assortment of architectural styles and materials and some good quality detailing. A small number of mid – late C20 properties are scattered amongst this group. Nos. 56-60 form a terrace of dark red brick two storey properties which originally had slate roofs, they have interesting lintels with keystones featuring unusual grotesque face masks.

6.10.3 Towards the junction with Chantry Road the plot sizes begin to narrow and the grain becomes tighter reflecting the proximity of these properties to the town centre.

6.10.4 Alford Congregational Church sits at the cross roads formed between Hamilton Road and Chantry Road and is a minor landmark feature which can be seen from various points along the two roads. It is constructed in red brick with feature brick work panels above the entrance porch and stone detailing with a plain tile roof and a partly tiled and partly metal covered small hexagonal spire.

6.10.5 Towards the northern end of Hamilton Road the properties have a similar nature to the smaller Farlesthorpe brick terraces and semi detached properties on West Street and is more close knit.

6.11 Chantry Road

6.11.1 Only the eastern end of Chantry Lane is currently included within the conservation area boundary including its junction with West Street where some unfortunate modern developments dominate the street frontage and junction. The Alford War Memorial Hall is a good example of newbuild, it has high-quality detailing with arched windows,



No. 25 Bourne Road



Bourne Road – view south east

decorative barge boards and decorative ridge tiles which are similar to features on the Congregational Church and other buildings in the area.

6.11.2 The conservation area boundary has been extended to include some good quality C19 terrace housing along Chantry Road and at its junction with Hamilton Road, and some larger properties at its junction with Parsons Lane and Bourne Road. The terrace housing reflects a mixture of smaller workers housing built using traditional and local materials which maintain some good historic features. No. 11a is a two storey brick built property with decorative keystones and has an interesting corner feature doorway which acts as a focal point in the street scene. Examples of the larger properties along Chantry Road to be brought into the extended conservation area include No. 26, a large C19 villa building with an attractive traditional glass-house and glazed rear porch.

6.12 Parsons Lane and Bourne Road

6.12.1 Currently beyond the conservation area is Parsons Lane and Bourne Road. These straight linear roads run parallel to one another and contain a mixture of two storey terraced houses and larger properties, with a significant amount of good quality C19 housing. Many of the houses still retain their traditional external features; No. 25 Elderberry House for example still retains its sash windows. By contrast, 'Cotswold', at the southern end of Bourne Road is a 1930s bungalow with half-timbering detail.

6.12.2 Both roads are capped off either end by West Street and Chantry Road, although Parsons Lane continues southeast of Chantry Road. Parsons Lane and Bourne Road, in conjunction with Chantry Road, form a suburban pocket in the south west edge of the conservation area, creating a pleasant entry point into Alford.



Memorial Recreation Ground, South Street



St Wilfred's Church, Church Street

7.0 KEY CHARACTERISTICS

7.1 Spaces and trees

7.1.1 There are 4 main public open spaces within Alford. The Market Places form an important hard space at the heart of the conservation area, whilst the open spaces surrounding the Manor House and Methodist Church on West Street, St Wilfred's Church on Church Street and the Memorial Garden on South Street are all important green areas within the conservation area.

7.1.2 The Market Place is enclosed by near continuous building frontages and is completely hard landscaped appropriate to its town centre location. Much of the Market Place is used for car parking except on market days when the space is filled with stalls. A commemorative fountain to the reign of Queen Victoria in the northern market space, is a key landmark feature in this area. Its setting has been enhanced with York stone paving. An area of seating with trees has been provided as part of the same enhancement scheme and this helps to divide the Market Place from the northern Market Place.

7.1.3 The large expanse of green open space around the Manor House and Methodist Chapel to the north of West Street has an important and very attractive group of mature trees which can be seen when approaching the Conservation Area from the west.

7.1.4 The Memorial Recreation Ground on South Street is a long, narrow area of grass with mature trees along its boundaries which make a positive contribution to this part of the conservation area. The war memorial dedication above the gateway is inscribed "in honoured memory" and gives this site a significant place in local history for the residents of Alford as well as being an important area of public open space. The open frontage of the recreation ground is protected by the East Lindsey Local Plan (policy ENV 20).

7.1.5 The small landscaped area around St Wilfred's Church which also contains the 1919 War Memorial by Sir Ninian Comper is the only other significant public open space in Alford and provides an appropriate setting for this fine Grade II* Listed Building.



West Street – view east



West Street – view north east

7.1.6 Groups of trees and some strong hedge lines are very important to the character of the streets on the edge of the conservation area particularly the strong belts of trees lining the roads.

7.2 Views

7.2.1 The linear development of the town allows striking long distance views along the main arterial routes into and out of the centre. West Street offers interesting views towards the heart of the conservation area; the Methodist chapel and Manor House surrounded by mature trees are the key focal points in many of these views.

7.2.2 Another important landmark building is the Church of St Wilfred and its tower with Ancaster stone pinnacles which is prominent from many locations in the town centre. From the eastern end of West Street and High Street glimpses of the Church tower behind other buildings are particularly fine. Another pleasing view of the Church is gained from the north eastern side of the Market Place where the land gently rises to the church and is framed on either side by historic properties.

7.2.3 Towards the outer limits of East Street there is an attractive mixture of good quality buildings in mature verdant settings which frame views into and out of the conservation area towards the windmill. Views into the conservation area from East Street are also dominated by the windmill which acts as an important gateway building and landmark feature in the open landscape on this side of the town.

7.2.4 The central market areas with their almost continuous street frontages provide good stop points to views into and out of the Markets. There are also a number of important buildings such as the Windmill Hotel which features prominently in views into the Market Place.

7.2.5 There are some unfortunate views out of the conservation area into industrial areas and poor quality modern developments which detract from the setting of the conservation area. Opportunities to improve these sites (mainly along East Street) should be taken in order to enhance the boundary of the conservation area.



Alford Methodist Church, West Street



Market Place - view north west

7.3 Uses

7.3.1 Alford contains a mixture of uses typical of any small market town. The greatest variety of uses is found in the town centre, whilst the outer streets are predominantly residential.

7.3.2 The Market Place and the eastern end of West Street and High Street consist of mainly retail and commercial buildings, civic buildings, public houses and restaurants. There are a number of banks and former administrative buildings from the late C19 and early C20 which reflect the town's importance at this period in its history. Alford has a high concentration of religious buildings and the Church and Methodist Chapel occupy prominent locations in the central area of the town.

7.3.3 Residential properties are generally situated towards the outer edges of the historic settlement and some have been built as infill developments around the central area. There are some earlier larger scale properties which remain in the central areas.

7.3.4 Despite the key role that agriculture played in Alford's development, very few agricultural buildings remain in the conservation area. The Millwrights and the windmill are two key surviving examples. Industrial uses are scattered throughout the conservation area, with the exception of the Straven knitwear factory site which dominates the centre of the town. It is currently unused, but the site has been allocated for mixed use development.

7.4 Building Types

7.4.1 Alford has a great wealth of building types closely linked to its background as an agricultural market town serving a wide rural hinterland, and it is the collective contribution of these and the attractive mixture of building materials that contributes greatly to the overall character and appearance of the conservation area.

7.4.2 The largest number of buildings in the conservation area in terms of both age and type is the close built 2 storey terraced and semi detached residential properties



Nos. 52-60 (evens) Hamilton Road



No. 55 South Street

dating from the C19 and early C20. There is an interesting and attractive variety of architectural styles and materials on these properties which are mainly brick built with gabled or hipped roofs. There are also a quantity of good quality villas and detached two storey properties which were built in the late C19 and mark an important stage in the town's wealth and significance at this time. Larger earlier residential properties are still found in prominent high status locations for example opposite the Church, these buildings are up to 3 storeys tall and are mainly still in residential use.

7.4.3 Despite Alford's development as a market town over a long period of time the shops round the Market Places and along the High Street generally date from the C18 onwards with many buildings having had shop fronts inserted at a later date. The properties are generally three storey terraces which sit hard on the back of the pavement but the upper floors are often only used for storage or left empty.

7.4.4 The public houses and hotels in Alford have generally been adapted from buildings which hold prominent locations along the main routes into and out of the town centre. The thatched White Horse Hotel is an older 1 ½ storey building whereas the neighbouring Half Moon is a combination of 2 and 3 storey buildings. The Windmill Hotel, which holds an important focal point in the Market Place, was probably purpose built and is of 4 storeys.

7.4.5 There is a variety of civic buildings within Alford including the C13 church and the dominant C19 Methodist Chapel. Some of the Chapels have been converted into other uses including the 3 storey chapel on Chapel Street which has is now in residential use. The unusual 2 storey C19 Corn Exchange building is now the Town Council Offices, whilst the library was purpose built in the 1960s.

7.4.6 The Straven Factory site was originally a maltings and brewery but the buildings were converted to create a major employment site at the heart of the town centre. The central tower is clearly visible from many locations in the town centre whilst the rest of the buildings, despite being two and three storeys high, are hidden from view behind the street frontages. The 3 storey former mill building in Chapel Street has been converted to residential flats and dates from the C19.



No. 19 Park Lane



No. 116 West Street

7.4.7 The town's agricultural heritage is perhaps best reflected in the windmill, situated at the edge of the town which is still in full working order and is the sole survivor of the 4 windmills that operated in Alford.

7.5 Building Details

7.5.1 There are only a few pre C17 buildings remaining in the Alford Conservation Area. The church has the earliest origins from the C14 and is the only building to be constructed in the local greenstone. The Manor House dates from the C16 although few features remain externally from this date as it has been re-fronted in the C17 and extended and altered in the C18 and C19.

7.5.2 The group of thatched properties in West Street all date from the C17, they display simple detailing with arched headers and horizontal sliding sashes to the ground floor and through eaves dormers with Yorkshire sash windows. No. 117 West Street has dormers with tumbling eaves which are an attractive feature and can be seen on other buildings in Alford.

7.5.3 The majority of buildings in the town date from the C18 and C19 when the town was at its most prosperous. Many of the buildings in the High Street have attractive shopfronts, some of which were reinstated through the recent Townscape Heritage Initiative which also enhanced shopfronts in West Street. Many of the town centre buildings retain original windows and doors. Windows are predominantly sliding sashes; late C18/early C19 buildings have 6/6 sash windows whilst later C19 sashes have margin lights. Buildings from the C18 have keystones and splayed lintels, a feature which was also used in some of the later C19 terraces. Stone and brick quoins are predominantly found on C18 buildings, some of which have guttering supported by lion mask brackets.

7.5.4 The C19 buildings in Alford are generally constructed in brick which was a relatively cheap building material. There are good examples of decorative brick work and detailing and some brick segmental heads and stone lintels over windows. A number of properties, both residential and commercial, feature corbelled corners and



Corbelled corner, 11a Hamilton Road



No. 118 West Street

doors and there are some shopfronts with corner entrances. No 11a Hamilton Road has a particularly attractive corbelled corner. Some C19 bay shopfronts survive but otherwise they are generally plain with undecorated pilasters and cornices. A striking feature travelling from West Street into High Street is the number of canted bay windows at first floor level which appear to float above the pavement. Nos. 119 and 120 West Street are a symmetrical pair of C19 2 storey houses in Farlesthorpe brick with a slate roof and rusticated quoins in brickwork. They have a slightly protruding wide pedimented central gable with two bow windows with leaded canopies and rusticated brickwork quoins with kneeler stones. Each property has a doorway within a porticoed surround with a tripartite fan light.

7.5.5 A few properties have C20 Crittal windows including No. 28 South Street which appears to retain all of its original windows. Some early C20 properties retain casement windows and doors but unfortunately uPVC replacements have eroded much of the character of these properties. Nos. 84 and 85 West Street is a pair of early C20 properties with a dentiled string course and arched set-back entrance porches. No. 85 still retains its original windows with stained glass top openers.

7.6 Building Materials

7.6.1 The dominant walling material in Alford is brick and this is generally the local red or yellow Farlesthorpe brick. Many of the C19 bricks are a bright firey red whilst the earlier bricks tend to be a darker brown/red with some much darker bricks amongst them. The yellow Farlesthorpe bricks were created by adding chalk to the clay mix and were manufactured at the brick kiln in Farlesthorpe a short distance from Alford. There are some examples of good quality polychrome brickwork and feature brickwork details. A large proportion of the buildings in the town centre have painted brickwork or rendered/colourwashed walls. Although many have always been rendered, some of the traditional lime renders and colourwash have been removed and replaced with strong cement renders and masonry paints which can be very harmful to older properties.

7.6.2 Mud and stud was the vernacular walling material for early properties, although the surviving small thatched cottages have been cased in brick as it became cheaper.



York stone paving, South Market Place



Street furniture, Market Place

7.6.3 Stone is generally used as a feature or for carved detailing. The local greenstone, a soft sandstone, although not a common feature in the town, was used to construct the Church.

7.6.4 The local clay pantile is the traditional roofing material, and a number of old roofs still survive with hand made clay pantiles in a variety of subtle hues and colours. Longstraw thatch would also have been common although non-traditional substitutes such as water reed and combed wheat are now being used. With the arrival of the railway the importing of Welsh slate provided a cheap versatile roofing material and many of the C19 buildings have Welsh slate roofs. Numerous older buildings were also re-roofed in slate to modernise them.

7.6.5 Some of the C20 materials used in recent developments and new buildings are unsympathetic to their historic neighbours in colour, texture and appearance. The hard red wire cut bricks used on the Old Bowling Green development are in stark contrast to the historic white painted properties directly opposite the entrance and creamy brickwork of Angelene's Patisserie in Windmill Lane. Concrete interlocking tiles and imitation slates do not have the same quality and appearance as their historic counterparts and are a poor replacement.

7.7 Public Realm

7.7.1 There are few examples of historic surfacing or street furniture in Alford today. Photographs dating from the C19 show a range of traditional surfacing materials in use at this time including York stone paving, both sawn and riven, and blue brick pavers. Kerbs were either stone or granite and drainage channels were laid in stone cobbles and setts with Mountsorrel granite setts used to form vehicular accesses from rear yards across pavements.

7.7.2 The predominant boundary treatment in Alford is mainly hedging and low brick walls. The well-detailed wall at the Almshouses on West Street adds interest to the streetscene and makes a positive contribution to the historic environment. A historic photograph of the Sessions House and County Police Station (now the Conservative



Exposed historic stone cobbles

Club on Park Lane) shows that there were railings all around it but these were removed presumably during the War.

7.7.3 Today there is a mix of traditional and non-traditional surfacing in Alford. The Market Place enhancement scheme has reintroduced cobbles and York stone paving in this area. On West Street at the entrance into the car park of the White Horse Hotel the asphalt is being worn away and historic stone cobbles are visible. Otherwise the conservation area is mainly covered with modern surfacing materials including concrete slabs and pavers or tarmac.

7.7.4 The THI enhancement scheme in the northern Market Place has reinstated York Stone paving and created an attractive public open space with seating and street furniture which contributes greatly to the Market Place.



Derelict school building fronting West Street



Nos. 61, 63, 65 and 65a South Street

8.0 PROPOSED BOUNDARY CHANGES

8.1 Additions

8.1.1 It is proposed to include Nos. 1-3 (consec) Station Road and Nos. 50-58 (consec), Nos. 63-91 (consec) West Street. As well as including another good range of terraced and semi-detached residential properties in this area, there are also some interesting individual buildings including the old Boys School and telephone exchange, all of which, together, are an important part of Alford's C19 and early C20 development.

8.1.2 Nos. 2-72 (evens) and Nos. 3-43 (odds) Hamilton Road, Nos. 8-26 (evens) and Nos. 9-31 (odds) Chantry Road, Nos. 1-9 (consec) and Nos. 67-75 (consec) Parson's Lane, and all of Bourne Road are proposed for inclusion within the conservation area. This group includes a number of good quality well detailed detached, semi-detached and terraced properties of the late C19 early C20. These particular types of houses are under represented in the current conservation area.

8.1.3 The terrace (Nos. 12-24 consec.) and the derelict land on the west side of Hanby Lane are proposed for inclusion as this area includes a modest terrace of similar character to the adjoining streets and a good traditional outbuilding. The inclusion of the vacant land will ensure that future development of this site will preserve or enhance the conservation area.

8.1.4 Nos. 16-28 (evens) South Street and the Memorial Ground are proposed for inclusion because their gardens contribute to the overall quality and appearance of South Street. No. 28 South Street is a large 1950's detached property which is typical of its period and worthy of note in the conservation area and appears to be unique in the centre of Alford. The Memorial Ground to the south of this property is also an important public open space within the town. It is also proposed to include Nos. 61, 63, 65 and 65a (odds) on the corner of South Street.



Cotswold' property, Chantry Road



The Old Bowling Green development, Windmill Lane

8.1.5 It is proposed to include No. 40 East Street which is a 1920's property. It is an important landmark building at the entrance to the traditionally built C19 and C20 tree lined areas of East Street.

8.1.6 The garden area to the south east of No. 36 East Street and the field to the rear of Nos. 36, 36a and 37 East Street make a strong contribution to the character of the conservation area, providing a pleasant green setting and providing views out of the conservation area. The present boundary divides the listed buildings from their gardens and the inclusion of this area will ensure that the conservation area follows a well defined boundary.

8.1.7 The area of land to the north of the Windmill forms an important setting to Alford's famous five sail windmill. No. 51 East Street is a well detailed C19 brick detached property and together with the windmill, it creates a gateway into the conservation area. This building and land are, therefore, proposed for inclusion within the conservation area boundary.

8.2 Removals

8.2.1 It is proposed to remove the land to the rear of 112 West Street and to the east of the factory site on Commercial Road to ensure that the conservation area follows a well defined boundary.

8.2.2 It is proposed to remove 'The Old Bowling Green' property development off Windmill Lane. This modern red brick development is not in keeping with, and does not compliment, other properties and developments within its immediate setting and the conservation area.



Replacement of windows and doors with uPVC,
Caroline Street

9.0 SUMMARY OF ISSUES

9.1 Erosion of Historic Detail

9.1.1 Throughout Alford, buildings have suffered from the removal/ alteration/ replacement of traditional features and materials. Works such as the replacement of windows and doors with uPVC or the re-roofing of properties with non traditional materials such as concrete interlocking tiles seriously erodes the historic and aesthetic value of the town. However, such works do not require planning permission on non listed domestic properties.

9.1.2 At present there are no Article 4 Directions in Alford, but their introduction would help to reduce the erosion of historic character by preventing inappropriate or misguided actions taking place. They should be used in conjunction with education about the pros and cons of timber versus other materials, perhaps in the form of an information leaflet. Proactively encouraging owners to reinstate original features, perhaps through the offer of grant aid, would also benefit the town.

9.1.3 A number of buildings in Alford would benefit from the restoration of features which would have an enormously beneficial impact on the town's streetscape. As well as the large number of plastic replacement windows and doors in the town in some cases original window openings have also been altered. Encouragement to restore original windows, doors and openings would considerably enhance a number of streets. This is a particular problem on West Street, Caroline Street and to some extent Hamilton Road. A number of properties have had corbelled doorways blocked up, and the reinstatement of this feature or its introduction in new developments would help to promote local distinctiveness in Alford.

9.1.4 Nos. 51- 54 are a group of terraced properties which are in a poor state of repair but display a number of historic features. An enhancement scheme on this site to reinstate windows, window canopies and other features would be of great benefit to the appearance of this terrace.



Derelict Listed Buildings, Nos. 12 & 14 South Street



Derelict former Boys School, West Street

9.2 Backland development and inappropriate new extensions

9.2.1 The many pedestrian and vehicular accesses from High Street and West Street allows the rear of many buildings to be open to public view. A number of poor quality extensions and new buildings using non traditional materials and roof forms have been erected and have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

9.2.2 Development Control and Conservation policies should be used to ensure that local architects and builders understand the importance of good design within the conservation area and greater encouragement should be given to replace inappropriate alterations with traditional materials and designs. The use of traditional materials and designs could also be enforced through the imposition of planning conditions and offers of grant aid where available.

9.3 Derelict buildings and vacant premises

9.3.1 There are some key groups of commercial buildings within the town that are semi-derelict and some vacant commercial (and residential) premises in the Market areas and along West Street and the High Street which detract from the character of the town. Their appropriate refurbishment and re-use would help to preserve a key characteristic of Alford.

9.3.2 The renovation of the former Boys School at the entrance to the conservation area on West Street would create a striking and pleasing development at an entrance to the conservation area.

9.4 Shopfront improvements

9.4.1 A number of shopfronts of poor quality or with inappropriate modern replacements are interspersed amongst some good traditional shopfronts predominantly along the High Street and West Street. These poor quality shopfronts detract from the overall



Poor quality shop fronts along West Street



View of Straven Knitwear factory from the junction of West Street and Commercial Road

character and appearance of the conservation area especially from the traditional buildings and streetscape that they are seen within. The appropriate repair of traditional shopfronts or replacement of unsympathetic shopfronts should be encouraged.

9.5 Redevelopment of Straven Knitwear factory site

9.5.1 The old Soulby & Son brewery site which later became the Straven Knitwear site is situated behind West Street and is a key development site within the heart of the conservation area which at present has a detrimental impact on the surrounding area. The derelict buildings are visible in views from West Street and to some extent in views from South Street, Chauntry Road and Hamilton Road. A development brief has been produced for this site and the retention of the historic buildings and the redevelopment of the site with appropriate buildings and residences should be encouraged in order to safeguard the character and appearance of the conservation area and also Alford's economy.

9.6 Traffic

9.6.1 Alford's position on the A1104, which runs along West Street, High Street, Church Street and East Street means that a high volume of traffic runs through the town. The narrow streets and buildings in close proximity to the road are particularly at risk from heavy goods vehicles and wide loads and some form of traffic management for the town centre is vital.

B) RECOMMENDED MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

10.0 INTRODUCTION

10.1 The following guidance aims to provide the basis of a mid- to long-term management strategy for the Alford Conservation Area. It should be read in conjunction with the East Lindsey District Council Local Plan Alteration 1999, although this will be replaced by a Local Development Framework in the next couple of years. In addition to the appropriate planning policies, the requirements of the Building Regulations and Fire Precautions Act should be carefully considered as they may also have implications on the external appearance of buildings and areas.



Historic building signage, Chapel Street



Shop front, West Street

11.0 POLICIES

11.1 Shopfronts and signage

11.1.1 Where traditional shopfronts and signage, or elements of them, survive, they should be retained and used as the basis for the restoration of the original frontage or incorporated into an appropriate new shopfront design. Removal of original features will only be permitted if they are beyond repair or are incapable of being successfully incorporated into a new shopfront.

11.1.2 The replacement of inappropriate shopfronts (and signage) will be encouraged provided that the replacement respects the character of the building, adjacent buildings if part of a group or terrace, or the area as a whole. Signage should also respect the character of the building and area as a whole. Signs should always be designed for individual buildings; 'off the peg' designs are not appropriate.

11.1.3 Where change of use is sought for the conversion of a shop back to residential use and elements of an original or appropriate shopfront survive, these will be retained in any conversion unless they are completely beyond repair. Historic signs or name boards should also be retained where possible.

11.2 New buildings and alterations to existing buildings

11.2.1 When considering the design of new buildings or extensions to existing ones, the Council will take into account the impact of the proposal on the setting of Listed Buildings and the character and appearance of the conservation area. Section 7 of this document sets out some of the key characteristics which need to be considered if a design is to fit comfortably with its neighbours. Any application to extend a building or build a new one must be accompanied by a Design and Access Statement which explains how the proposal conforms to the key characteristics identified in the appraisal, or if it does not conform, why this particular approach is felt to be appropriate.



New development, Corner House on Ranters Row



New development, corner of West Street and Hamilton Road

11.3 Demolition

11.3.1 In line with national planning policy, there will be a general presumption against the demolition of Listed Buildings (including their outbuildings) and buildings of townscape value which are identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal.

11.3.2 The demolition of other buildings in the area will be approved provided that -

- The building(s) is/are identified as making either a negative or insignificant* contribution to the character or appearance of the area.
- Any replacement building or feature will preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area. Any application for a replacement building must be accompanied by a design and access statement which describes how the new building respects the 'Key Characteristics' of the area as defined in the Conservation Area Appraisal.
- To avoid unsightly gaps in the conservation area, a condition will be imposed on any grant of Conservation Area Consent which prevents the demolition taking place until a contract has been let for the redevelopment of the site.

* Paragraph 4.26 of PPG 15 states that 'In the case of conservation area controls [over demolition] account should clearly be taken of the part played in the architectural or historic interest of the area by the building for which demolition is proposed, and in particular of the wider effects of demolition on the building's surroundings and on the conservation area as a whole.'

11.4 Public Realm works

11.4.1 It is important that any surviving historic paving materials, associated ironwork and street furniture are preserved wherever possible. Similarly recent enhancement schemes have been carefully designed to enhance the character of the conservation area and should also be preserved wherever possible. The District Council will work with the Highway Authority and other statutory undertakers to ensure that reinstatement works are undertaken and that historic and high quality surfaces are protected.

12.0 ARTICLE 4(2) DIRECTIONS

12.1 There are a number of individual houses in Alford which contribute greatly to the overall character of the conservation area. Yet, unfortunately these can suffer greatly from alterations which do not always need planning permission. Minor alterations to houses and the erection of some outbuildings can normally be carried out without Planning Permission from the Council. This development is called "Permitted Development" and even in conservation areas some works to houses are normally permitted development.

12.2 A significant number of properties within Alford have had original features such as sash windows, timber-panelled doors and traditional and local roof coverings removed under permitted development rights. The loss of these features erodes the character and quality of the conservation area. These alterations are particularly disfiguring in terraces, the uniformity of which is a key element of their character. Also the inappropriate demolition and replacement of frontages, such as walls, fences, hedges, or the covering of front gardens with hard standing can be equally disfiguring and may even affect the value of a property.

12.3 Unsympathetic and poorly designed small extensions and porches, which may not require planning permission, can also greatly harm the character and appearance of properties and the cumulative effect of such alterations can erode and undermine the special character and architectural quality of the conservation area which prompted its designation.

12.4 It is therefore suggested that an Article 4(2) direction should be considered to restrict the following types of development, currently allowed under permitted development rights:

Types of work

- *External alterations or improvements including all extensions, changes to window and/or door openings, replacement of windows and doors, taking down,*

altering or building a chimney, external painting of buildings which have not previously been painted; building an extension, porch, conservatory door hood/canopy, garden building or other buildings ancillary to the enjoyment of the main house; the installation of burglar alarms, meter boxes or flues; and painting the exterior of a building, erection of satellite dishes

- **Building, altering or demolishing a fence, wall, gate or railing around a house**
- **Alterations to the roof** including the installation of one or more rooflights, and the replacement of natural roofing materials with artificial materials
- **Provision of hard standing** including creating a means of access onto a highway

12.5 These restrictions would only apply to dwelling houses as flats and commercial premises do not have permitted development rights and thus already require planning permission for the works described above. Listed Buildings are not covered either as any alterations that would affect the historic or architectural interest of the building would require Listed Building Consent. It is therefore proposed that the residential properties in the following streets are covered by an Article 4(2) Direction:

Streets / properties to be covered by Article 4(2) Direction

BILSBY ROAD
BOURNE ROAD
CANDLEHOUSE LANE
CAROLINE STREET
CARR LANE
CHAPEL STREET
CHAUNTRY ROAD
CHURCH STREET
EAST STREET

HAMILTON ROAD
HANBY LANE
PARK LANE
PARK ROAD
PARSONS LANE
RANTERS ROW
SOUTH STREET
STATION ROAD
WEST STREET

13.0 ENFORCEMENT

13.1 Enforcement has a key role to play in the protection of Alford Conservation Area. Enforcement is often reactive, only resulting in investigation once a formal complaint is made. For the Alford Conservation Area, a more proactive approach should be considered, including monitoring development activity and ensuring compliance with the terms of planning permissions. A positive and active approach to enforcement will help to reduce the number of contraventions and secure sustained improvements in environmental quality.

13.2 Consideration should be given to taking forward an Enforcement Strategy based upon the principles of good enforcement set out within the Cabinet Office's Enforcement Concordat. Such a strategy should consider the potential use of urgent works and repairs notices, details of which are set out below.

Urgent Works and Repairs Notices

13.3 Where emergency or immediate repairs to arrest the deterioration of a building are needed, East Lindsey District Council can serve urgent works notices on the unoccupied parts of both listed and unlisted buildings in conservation areas (although in the case of the latter, only with the agreement of the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, advised by English Heritage). Repairs notices requiring works that are reasonably necessary for the proper preservation of a building to be undertaken, can only be served by the local authority on statutorily listed buildings.

13.4 Urgent works and repairs notices can be very effective in helping to secure the future of listed buildings and unlisted buildings that contribute positively to the special interest of a conservation area. Further details of these notices are available from English Heritage's guide 'Stopping the Rot'.

13.5 If the condition of any land or building in the conservation area is adversely affecting the amenity of the area, the local authority can serve a Section 215 notice on the owner or occupier, requiring the person responsible to clean up the site or building. Further details can be found in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's 'Best Practice Guidance' on the use of Section 215 notices.

14.0 THE ROLE OF PROPERTY OWNERS

14.1 Conservation area designation restricts the permitted development rights of property owners within the boundary. Planning permission is therefore required for certain types of development including the addition of dormer windows to roof slopes, various types of cladding and the erection of satellite dishes fronting a highway, the size of permitted extensions is also reduced. In addition, Article 4(2) directions could be applied to many properties in Alford; this would mean that permitted development rights are withdrawn for a prescribed range of development which materially affects aspects of the external appearance of dwelling houses in conservation areas.

14.2 By restricting permitted development rights, East Lindsey District Council could seek to preserve those features which are important to the character and appearance of Alford Conservation Area. However, property owners also have a responsibility to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.

14.3 East Lindsey District Council will work with property owners to encourage them to undertake regular and appropriate maintenance. Property owners should also take the opportunity to consult the local authority over proposed alterations to their properties to ensure that they do not, however unintentionally, harm the character or appearance of the conservation area.

14.4 Without careful consideration, many seemingly minor and insignificant alterations, particularly those undertaken under permitted development rights, can result in the loss of architectural features which are important to the special interest of Alford, e.g. traditional sash windows, panelled doors, fanlights, parapets, chimneystacks, and traditional roof coverings such as pantiles and natural slate.

15.0 GREEN SPACES AND TREES

15.1 In order to preserve the character of the green spaces and trees that contribute much to the appearance of the conservation area, the District Council will encourage and work with owners towards the production of management plans for these spaces. All proposals for landscaping schemes and other works in these important spaces must be based upon these management plans and should seek to maximise the benefit to biodiversity and the local communities where applicable. The use of Tree Preservation Orders should also be considered.

16.0 RESOURCES AND MONITORING

16.1 Resources, both financial and time/staff, are often limited, and must therefore be directed/targeted in the most efficient manner to ensure that maximum benefit is gained. Spending priorities and budgets are under constant review and these will obviously influence the level of success achieved.

16.2 The Conservation Area Appraisal will be reviewed every 5 years and updated as necessary. In order to be effective, the Management Proposals will also need regular reviews at intervals to be decided.

17.0 REFERENCES

- Alford Town [S M Cooke and P E Crome, 1988]
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- Georgian Group Town Report: Alford, Lincolnshire [The Georgian Group, November 1996]
- Alford Conservation Area [Lindsey County Council, June 1970]
- Conservation Area Appraisal Alford, Lincolnshire Townscape Heritage Initiative Stage 2 documents 2-4 [East Lindsey District Council, January 1999]
- Alford Community Taskforce [Alford Community Taskforce]
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Alford



KEY

-  Conservation Area Boundary
-  Listed Buildings
-  Open Green Space
-  Buildings of Townscape Value
-  Negative Building
-  Positive Floorscape
-  Negative Floorscape
-  Proposed Boundary Inclusion
-  Positive View/Vista
-  Negative View/Vista
-  Positive Boundary
-  Positive Hedge/line
-  Tree Preservation Order
-  Tree Preservation Order Group
-  Important Tree
-  Positive Minor Detail
-  Landmark Building
-  Potential Boundary Exclusion
-  River

