

LOUTH CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

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QuBE³

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A) LOUTH CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

I.0 INTRODUCTION

I.1 Louth is the largest of East Lindsey District's seven market towns and is often referred to as the "Capital of the Wolds". The town has a rich history and has changed little from the mid-C19 which has resulted in an interesting and varied architectural legacy from the Georgian and Victorian eras.

I.2 The Louth Conservation Area was designated in October 1968 and was amongst the earliest to be designated in the country after Stamford which was the first. In September 1993 a review of the conservation area boundary resulted in some minor boundary modifications. The current conservation area covers the majority of the historic town, stretching from the foot of Hubbard's Hills to the Riverhead.

I.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 June 2007.

I.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 buildings, features, and spaces that make Louth special will ensure that residents, workers and visitors continue to enjoy a unique area;
- Property values are generally improved within conservation areas;
- Opportunities for grant aid to repair and reinstate traditional buildings;
- Retaining and enhancing building features and details contribute to Louth'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 Louth's built fabric.

Why are special Conservation Area controls necessary?

2.5 Louth'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 Louth's distinctive historic character. It is important that these elements are protected to ensure that the qualities that make the Louth 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. Having established a conservation area they are also required to 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 This 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 Louth 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.



View of St James' Church Spire from Hubbards Hills



Commarket



Westgate



River Head Road

3.0 SUMMARY OF SPECIAL INTEREST

3.1 Louth is a traditional and distinctive market town that still retains the character of a true country town, a character derived mainly from the survival of a substantial street market three days a week and a weekly cattlemarket. The dominance of distinctive locally owned and locally run small scale businesses over national chain stores adds to the traditional atmosphere.

3.2 Louth's historical role as significant administrative, religious and educational centre is reflected in the presence of a number of high status public buildings and sizeable institutional buildings. St James' Church is an important and dominant landmark which is striking for its magnificent spire which is visible for miles around the town and prominent within Louth.

3.3 The Parish Church was also the setting for the Louth Panorama undertaken by William Brown and completed in 1847. It is a major work of C19 provincial art and is a unique record of the town, bearing witness to the changing events of the mid C19 including the arrival of the railway. The town has changed remarkably little since the Panorama was completed.

3.4 Despite its ancient Anglo-Saxon or Roman origins and the survival of its Medieval street pattern, Louth is renowned as a Georgian town and there are many fine C18 buildings particularly in the western end of the town. The C18 also saw the emergence of industrial Louth with the completion of the Louth Navigation Canal at the eastern end of the town at the Riverhead. Until this point, Louth's wealth had been predominantly based on agriculture.

3.5 The buildings of the C19 are also an important part of Louth's character and, in particular, the work of James Fowler, a prominent local architect. He designed many important buildings within the town including the Grammar School which was attended by Alfred Tennyson who later commemorated his time there in a poem.

3.6 Louth's position on the Greenwich Meridian Line is celebrated as part of the Louth Art Trail which runs between the Hubbards Hills and the Riverhead through the town. The Hubbards Hills are an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and are an important part of Louth's setting at the foot of the Lincolnshire Wolds.



Commarket



Westgate Fields



Queen Street



Crowtree Lane



Alleyway between Commarket and Mercer Row



Aswell Street

4.0 LOCATION AND SETTING

Location and Context

4.1 Louth lies approximately 25 miles east of Lincoln and 16 miles south of Grimsby, in the east of Lincolnshire County. It is the administrative town of the East Lindsey District and has a population of approx. 15,000.

4.2 The conservation area covers much of historic Louth and is centred on the traditional market place at the heart of the town. It includes the commercial centre, residential areas including later suburbs, the industrial Riverhead area and the public open spaces in the west.

4.3 Louth lies on the A16, a key north-south route in the district, although the town is now bypassed. Its relative isolation from other major settlements and larger size means that its commercial centre is still dominated by independent retailers which makes it an attractive tourist destination.

General Character and Plan Form

4.4 Louth developed along the banks of the River Lud and became a prosperous trading community based on agriculture, particularly the wool trade. Louth prospered in the medieval period and the medieval street pattern is still clearly evident in the compact town centre. The Commarket forms Louth's focal point, although the town is dominated by the spire of St James' Church built in 1505.

4.5 Until the C18 Louth developed tightly centered round the medieval street pattern, but in 1790 the Louth Navigation Canal opened. With this, the town developed out to the east of the medieval centre, creating a new industrial area at Riverhead. The wealth generated at the east of the town was displayed in the grand architecture in the west end of the town.

4.5 Later, C19 residential developments were built to accommodate the expanding population. These developments usually infilled the gardens of existing large properties and created a denser townscape. The arrival of the railway in 1848 created another hub to the north east of the existing town centre, and led to the eventual decline and closure of the canal.

4.6 Early C20 development occurred along outer-lying routes such as St Mary's Lane, effectively forming Louth's first suburbs. Later C20 development, mostly housing estates, now surrounds much of the historic town except to the west where the town emerges from the foot of Hubbard's Hills.

Landscape Setting

4.7 Louth lies at the foot of the wooded valley of River Lud, where the Lincolnshire Wolds meet the Lindsey coastal marsh. Hubbard's Hills which are a key component of Louth's setting to the east, are designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. They provide informal recreation for inhabitants and visitors alike and connect Louth to the surrounding countryside.

4.8 Louth's setting at the foot of Hubbard's Hills in the River Lud's valley adds greatly to the townscape interest with variations in the roofscape because of the undulating topography. This increases skyline interest and allows long views of buildings that are hidden from the street. The spire of St James' Church is visible from most locations in and around the town and is an important landmark in the wider area.

4.9 Approaching Louth from the south and west, the routes are tree-lined and rural and the transition from countryside is gradual, particularly in the western parts of the town. From the south east, east and north, the approaches are more urban and the urban boundary is more immediate.

5.0 HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY

5.1 The name 'Louth' is thought to derive from the old English word 'lud' meaning 'loud' and presumably refers to the river. The Latin name 'Luda' is not Roman but medieval. The evidence points to a Saxon origin for the town but today's street layout is closely based on the Medieval street pattern. Whether this medieval pattern is based on an older street pattern is unclear.

5.2 Very little archaeological exploration has taken place in Louth and there are a number of aspects of its history that are a mystery.

5.3 There is little evidence for any prehistoric or Roman settlement in Louth – there are just a few finds from the town to indicate any activity. The reasons for the establishment of the first settlement are unclear but presumably it developed around a bridging point of the River Lud. The pre-Roman trackway known as Barton Street passes through Louth providing good communications with the Humber and possibly the Wash.

5.4 Louth is generally believed to be an Anglo-Saxon settlement. An Anglo-Saxon Chronicle states that the Abbott of the monastery of Louth was elected Archbishop of Canterbury in 792; however, the site of the monastery has never been found. A small amount of Anglo-Saxon pottery was found during the development that took place in 1996 on Eastgate, and a Saxon fibula was found in the Cemetery on Uppgate. These finds are the first real proof of Anglo-Saxon settlement. There is no archaeological evidence for Danish settlement, although the many street names ending in 'gate', meaning 'street', are suggestive of Danish use of the town.

5.5 There is much more evidence for Medieval Louth, both documentary and archaeological. A site containing a Medieval building north of Mount St Mary has been partially excavated and pottery, tiles and ashlar blocks from the C14 and C15 were found. A tessellated tiled floor from the C13 was found in 1801 whilst building work was taking place at Westgate House. During restoration work on St James' Church in 1868 walls were found under the present building which were the remains of an earlier building dating to around 1170.

5.6 There are many buildings which are mentioned in documentary sources which are yet to be found. This includes St John's Chapel which stood in the market place in 1311, the Church of St Herefrid,



Extract from 1889 Ordinance Survey map



Extract from 1906 Ordinance Survey map



Extract from 1932 Ordinance Survey map

which may or may not be on the site of St James', a leper hospital in Spital Hill mentioned in 1314 and in 1488, a Moot Hall in the Market Place which preceded the Town Hall of 1595, St Mary's Church which was demolished in 1753 and the Grammar School in Schoolhouse Lane. Clearly, further archaeological excavation in Louth would help to fill in the gaps in the knowledge of the development of the town.

5.7 Louth is one of only seven market towns in the whole of Lincolnshire to be mentioned in the Domesday Book when it had a population of 600 and was a prosperous trading community. The main trading commodities in Medieval times were wine and grain and, in particular, wool. Louth Park Abbey had very prosperous dealings in the wool trade with the Flemish Lowlands. The Medieval town was approximately defined by the River Lud to the north, Gospelgate and Kidgate to the south, Church Street to the east and the Bridge to the west, the area which is still the core of the town today. Large areas of the central town retain early property boundaries, for example, the areas between Mercer Row and Kidgate, Eastgate and Northgate and parts of Queen Street and Upgate. These are characterised by the long, narrow shape of a Medieval urban property with a narrow street frontage, where land was at a premium. The Commarket was the focus of trade from Medieval times. The name of Fuller's Street is a reminder of the importance of the woollen industry at this time.

5.8 The population of Louth probably expanded and contracted with bouts of the Black Death, but overall its prosperity and wealth grew. This prosperity enabled the C15 rebuilding St James' Church when generations of men spent their life working for the Church as labourers and craftsmen. The building was moved 1.2m and raised by 50cm on new bases. The tower was built separately and joined to the Church at a later date.

5.9 Louth began to expand eastwards when the canal was built in 1770 at Riverhead. The idea was to develop Louth into an inland port with a direct connection to the Humber via the Louth navigation. The canal was over eleven miles in length, extending from Louth Riverhead to Tetney, and eight locks were incorporated to overcome the 46 foot differential in levels involved. Trade through the canal was brisk and there were regular sailings to London and Hull and other local ports. Timber, coal and groceries were imported and corn and wool were exported.

5.10 The canal gave rise to a great deal of industry with warehouses and housing for workers being built. Industries such as carpet making, malting, brewing, a ropery, soapery, tannery and leather factory were generated and a large complex of warehouses, factories, chimneys and windmills developed in the area. Louth became a major trading centre as the canal became a thoroughfare for the town, adding to the



Extract from 1968 Ordnance Survey map



Extract from 1974-89 Ordnance Survey map

wealth generated from the wool trade. This economic activity in the east of the town financed much of the construction of elegant buildings in the west of the town at this time.

5.11 In 1801 the population of Louth was over 4,250 and it grew to 10,000 in 1851. At this time it was the third largest town in Lincolnshire after Lincoln and Boston. However, shortly after the arrival of the railway in 1848 the population began to fall slightly into the late C19. It was at this time, as Louth was flourishing, that William Brown completed his panorama, an extraordinarily detailed depiction of the town from the scaffolding surrounding St James' Church Spire which was being renovated.

5.12 The C19 saw a considerable amount of civic improvement and building. The gasworks were built in 1826, and in the 1830s New Street was built with shops, covered markets and a public hall. New building in the 1830s included Holy Trinity Church at the far end of Eastgate to serve the growing population at Riverhead, the Public Building on the corner of Mercer Row and Butcher Lane, and The Union Workhouse. The British (Kidgate) School opened in 1841. A Sessions House was built next to the House of Correction in 1852; this complex of buildings was taken down and replaced by the Orme Almshouses in 1885. In 1837 Westgate and Mercer Row were re-paved with 'good pebbles', and York Stone was used in the 1840s and 1850s to repair Eastgate, Church Street, Queen Street and Ramsgate, which led to the railway. A new town hall was built in 1854 and the Corn Exchange in 1855. George Street was added in 1850. New building was also occurring away from the town centre, for example Newmarket or Sharpley's Row.

5.13 Non-conformism was as popular as it was in Lincolnshire in general. In 1850 the Primitive Methodist chapel was enlarged and in 1854 a grand neo-classical Free Methodist chapel on Eastgate was built. When the new cemetery was opened in 1855 there was an unconsecrated section for non-conformists.

5.14 From the 1920s onwards the population of Louth increased and by the 1970s it had risen to 13,000. (It is currently around 15,000.) In the 1920s and 1930s the first council houses were built in Louth and from 1935 the streets were lit by electricity. Hubbards Hills opened to the public in 1907 to provide an outdoor leisure area. In 1920 disaster struck the town when the river and canal flooded, destroying large areas of Louth and killing 23 people. The waterway finally closed in 1924, after a period of decline following the opening of the railway.



6.0 SPATIAL ANALYSIS

Character and interrelationship of spaces within the area

6.1 Westgate Fields is Louth's main public open green space and links the town centre with Hubbards Hills to the west. St Mary's Churchyard is, as its name suggests, the former churchyard of the now demolished St Mary's Church. It sits behind a good screen of mature trees on a hill to the north of the town centre.

6.2 The cemetery on the southern outskirts is currently outside the conservation area, but is an important part of the town's development and history. It sits on a hill with its entrance from London Road marked by the Lodge; it is more visible from Linden Walk where the main pedestrian entrance is located. It is enclosed by strong tree belts on all sides.

6.3 The only other significant public green spaces are those around the town's churches. The green space around St James' Church is however in the midst of a busy junction and the green space around Holy Trinity Church is very small. St Michael's small churchyard is elevated above street level and sits behind a retaining wall.

6.4 Despite the relative lack of public green spaces particularly within the town centre, much of Louth has a verdant feel. This is due to the substantial greenery and large numbers of trees that are within the grounds or gardens of private residences. Their contribution to the townscape is great and they help to break up the built fabric of some of the more tightly built up streets.

6.5 Although Louth does not have a large amount of public green space within the heart of the town, it does have a network of other public spaces which are centred on the Commarket, the historical focus of the town. A series of small spaces, usually at the junctions of the older streets link through the town and are often marked (and well enclosed) by imposing buildings.



Vickers Lane – view west towards Market Place



Eastgate – view west with Holy Trinity Church tower in the foreground

Key views and vistas

6.6 The focus of many views in and around the conservation area, particularly, longer distance views, is St James' Church. Its eye-catching spire towers above the other buildings which are generally no higher than 4-storeys, but which nonetheless often frame views towards the Church. The spire is even visible from the well-treed landscape of Hubbards Hills to the west of the conservation area. A good view of the church is also gained from the public footpath through Westgate Fields, leading from Hubbards Hills to the town centre.

6.7 The tower of Holy Trinity Church on Eastgate forms a local landmark in the eastern end of Louth and views of it are gained from Ramsgate Road. The Market Hall Clock tower is prominent in the centre of the town, but longer views of it are also gained from, for example, the Kidgate area. The undulating topography brings to prominence other buildings, often grand residences, which turn their back to the roads. Views of the elegant garden fronts of properties such as The Cedars on St Mary's Lane are possible from Crowtree Lane.

6.8 The tightly built up streets of the town centre allow only short views, but these are always attractively enclosed by the eclectic buildings of the commercial area. As the town opens up, longer views are possible along the old medieval routes such as Gospelgate, Eastgate, Westgate and Upgate and along the straight C19 roads such as George Street and Broadbank.

6.9 The elevated locations of St Mary's Hill and Crowtree Lane allow views across the less built up western end of the town. Long views out of Louth are also possible looking south from the cemetery on London Road and from the Riverhead looking east along the canal.

7.0 CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Character Areas

7.0.1 Louth is a large market town that has developed over many centuries, resulting in a rich and diverse townscape. It is consequently quite varied and several discernible character areas are evident. These zones have been already been identified in previous conservation area studies, notably the Louth Conservation Area Assessment and 'An Urban Design Study for Louth'. This appraisal has identified twelve character areas within the conservation area which approximately correspond with the previous studies.

7.0.2 The character areas are defined by the history of the area, its natural and man-made components and its past and present uses, amongst other criteria. Each character area's special interest is summarised and its significance analysed in the context of the conservation area as a whole and of the wider town. The twelve character areas are shown in Figure 1 with the character analysis below and in Figure 2.



Commarket



Mercer Row – view west to Uppgate

7.1 Town Centre

Activity and prevailing or former uses and their influence on plan form and buildings

7.1.1 The retail district has a tight grain, which is emphasised by the mainly 2 and 3-storey narrow buildings which stand hard on the pavement edge and combine to create a sense of enclosure. The centre includes much of the oldest parts of the town and appears to loosely follow the grid like Medieval street pattern which allows interesting glimpses through the quieter narrow alley ways and passages, which link the front and back streets, to other streets and buildings beyond. The long narrow medieval burgage plots are still evident within some of the building footprints and street frontages along Commarket and Mercer Row.

7.1.2 Although there are few discernable reminders of the town's heritage in its built form, the street names reflect many former uses, e.g. Butcher Lane, Fish Shambles, Commarket and Market Place. Louth was well known for cloth manufacture and sales in the medieval period and Mercer Row takes its name from the medieval word for a fine cloth dealer – a Mercer.

7.1.3 The Market Place is an important feature of this central area and the bustle of the markets on a Wednesday, Friday and Saturday adds to the visual and sensual experience of the visitor. The

Summary of significance

This character area is the commercial heart of Louth and contains the historic focus of the town in the Commarket and the greatest concentration of Louth's numerous listed buildings. The area is dominated by C18 and C19 architecture, but with their tall, narrow frontages, the existing buildings are more reminiscent of the medieval buildings on whose burgage plots they stand.



Butcher Lane



Market Place – view north



The Kings Head Hotel, Mercer Row

busy retail streets are part of the main thoroughfare for both pedestrians and traffic but the streets' narrowness and the tall buildings on either side give an intimacy created by the sense of enclosure. The main route for vehicular traffic doglegs through, rather than cutting straight or bypassing, the centre and the narrow streets add greatly to the charm and interest of the centre creating a sense of anticipation as to what lies beyond.

7.1.4 At the junction of Mercer Row and Queen Street the property boundaries still reflect the medieval plan form and it is possible that Queen Street marks the extent of the medieval town.

7.1.5 At the western end of Eastgate there are many narrow retail units which probably follow the burgage plots of the medieval town. The road is wider at this end and the buildings are less uniform in their appearance with more poor quality modern replacements creeping in where gaps in the historic street scene have been in filled.

Qualities of buildings and their contribution to the area

7.1.6 The buildings vary in styles from larger retail units and municipal buildings to smaller shops and public houses. There is also a mixture of ages and dates of buildings although the C18 and C19 buildings are all that remain in any quantity. There is no dominant architectural form or style in the town centre but the imposing C18 and C19 buildings do share elements which create some relative cohesion. Whilst there is no uniformity to the roof levels the juxtaposition between the varying roof levels adds greatly to the character of the area.

7.1.7 The area's diverse range of tightly packed retail buildings includes many listed buildings and also a number of noteworthy properties of townscape merit.

7.1.8 The C17 Gothic style Kings Head Hotel is a prominent building within the more conventional shop frontages along Mercer Row. The main building has 2-storey canted bay windows and to the right hand side a 3-storey bay with canted bays to the first and second floor and a coped gable with octagonal pinnacles and quatrefoil band below the gable top. This decorative gable end and parapet is clearly visible amongst the other rooflines and is an important landmark in the street scene.



Eastgate – view west



Market Place

7.1.9 The other buildings in Mercer Row are more reserved, generally 3-storey brick built with decorative details including eaves and string courses and cills and lintels. However, at the eastern end of Mercer Row Nos. 28 - 34 are exceptions. This prominent group of properties in white painted render form a three bay frontage at second and third floor levels, with the central one breaking forward, and with a moulded cornice and parapet. The sliding sash windows at first and second floor level are divided 3.1.3 across the front elevation and are each separated by Corinthian columns. The addition of ugly modern shop fronts do little for the building and the list description notes that “this building would be of II* quality with more sympathetic shop fronts”. This building compliments others of a similar style in Market Place.

7.1.10 On the northern side at the eastern end of Mercer Row an early C19 flat bowed fronted building turns the corner into Market Place. This brick building has a sliding sash window to each storey with stucco flat arches with a keystone and cills which continue to form bands round the building and creates another interesting feature in the street scene and denotes the end of Mercer Row.

7.1.11 The Market Place is surrounded by tall buildings cheek by jowl and as the road curves round from the south western corner to the north east it narrows before running into Eastgate and opening out again. Designed by Rogers and Marsden and built in 1866 the Market Place elevation of the Grade II Listed Market Hall has a 3-storey clock tower. This clock tower is a prominent landmark feature within the town centre and beyond.

7.1.12 The Commarket to the west of the Market Place has buildings on three sides and there are many fine buildings dating from the C18 and C19. The most prominent of these buildings is The Masons Arms which is a fine C18 building (possibly with earlier origins) but with later additions and alterations. The buildings in the Commarket mainly date from the C19 but there is evidence that some of the buildings have earlier origins especially to their rear façades.

7.1.13 Eastgate runs parallel with Mercer Row and at right angles to Upgate. It runs the length of the retail heart of the area and at its western end views are terminated by St James Church. Although running almost parallel to Mercer Row and Commarket the western end of Eastgate is a quieter and narrower street and is dominated by the towering scale of the Town Hall.



Playhouse, Cannon Street



HSBC Bank, Cormmarket

7.1.14 Most of the buildings in the central area have C18 or C19 origins. However, a more recent C20 building, the Playhouse on Cannon Street with its clean lines and metal windows reminiscent of the 1930's Art Deco style is a building of townscape merit.

Building materials, local details and public realm

7.1.15 The building materials are restricted to a limited palette and buildings are generally built in red brick or rendered with a variety of both good quality traditional, and modern shop fronts. Lincolnshire limestone (Ancaster stone) is also used for detailing and some building work. Slate and pantiles are the most common roofing materials although some properties do have modern concrete tiles which are discordant alternatives to the traditional.

7.1.16 A variety of styles of sliding sash and casement windows abound but some PVCu replacement windows are in evidence. There are some good quality timber shop fronts with decorative detailing but at ground floor level there is a noticeable influx of modern non traditional shop fronts with inappropriate signage which often span more than one unit. These shop fronts frequently reflect the corporate image of the company rather than respecting the character, design and proportions of the historic building and leave the upper storeys visually divorced from the ground floor as attention is drawn towards the modern alterations.

7.1.17 The HSBC Bank on Cormmarket has 3-storeys which are, unusually in this part of Louth, all stuccoed, and at the upper levels has full height 2-storey pilasters of a Greek Corinthian form. The stucco continues across at ground floor level for one extra bay but above and to both sides the form is a more traditional brick build with sliding sash windows.

7.1.18 The area suffers from an abundance of poor quality floorscape, generally hard surfacing such as tarmac and asphalt although there have been some recent enhancement works in the Market Place.



Chequergate – view west



Northgate car park

Green spaces

7.1.19 There are very few green spaces or open areas within this part of the conservation area. However, the Church and its surrounding grounds at the boundary of this character area make a welcome green splash amongst the urban setting and hard landscaping characteristic of this area.

Negative factors

7.1.20 The numerous car parks in this central area are disruptive to the townscape quality as they are often open and contrast negatively with the tightly enclosed streets typical of this character area. The larger areas are usually simply surfaced with tarmac and are little landscaped, creating unattractive gaps in the streetscape.



Queen Street – view east



Queen Street, view east

7.2 QUEEN STREET

Activity and prevailing or former uses and their influence on plan form and buildings

7.2.1 Larger generally residential properties replace the narrow town centre units. Along Queen Street the properties sit hard back on the pavement edge and in this respect mirror the character of the town centre. However, along Church Street and Eastgate the properties start to become more suburban in character and sit back from the pavement edge with gardens and open spaces giving a more relaxed open feel. The streets are also wider which helps to create a more open aspect and as such the area appears less congested.

Summary of significance

This area marks a change in character between the commercial town centre and the industrial and residential properties further out. As a result it contains a variety of uses which is a key part of the area's character. However, it has seen much redevelopment over the years and consequently is of varied townscape quality. Queen Street is a key route in this area, forming a pedestrian link between the redeveloped bus station and the town centre.

7.2.2 Eastgate and Church Street act as main thoroughfares running into and through the town centre and as such there is more vehicular movement than Queen Street. The first edition Ordnance Survey map (1889) shows the lower half of Church Street as Maiden Row. It is first mentioned by this name in the Court Rolls of 1433 and it is also clearly marked as this on the 1951 Ordnance Survey map.

7.2.3 On the 1889 Ordnance Survey map there is a clear distinction between the narrow street frontages of the town centre and the western end of Queen Street and then a distinct increase in plot sizes beyond the Burnt Hill Road junction. Queen Street,



Church Street – view north



Bus Station, Queen Street



No. 146 Eastgate

Church Street and Maidens Row housed larger scale production and industries such as the brewery on Queen Street and a gas works off Maiden Row and this area is still less compact in its layout.

7.2.4 The wool industry was an important factor in Louth's history and Armstrong's plan of 1778 shows Queen Street as Walker Gate (also known as Fullers' Street). This name originates from the large number of dyers and fullers (or walkers) who resided and worked here. The prohibitive cost of land in the town centre would have meant that merchants and traders, who required larger plots of land to carry out their trades, would have moved to the out skirts of the Medieval town where land would have been cheaper. This is still evident in the street patterns and names of today and should be kept in new developments.

7.2.5 Queen Street acts as an important pedestrian link between the town centre and Bus Station and retains some commercial properties at its western end. Although Queen Street is an important pedestrian route the area is quieter and does not have the bustle and commotion of the town centre.

7.2.6 There are a number of properties beyond the junction of Queen Street with Church Street which may have some connection with the old brewery that was situated on this corner site and their retention and repair should be encouraged. The 1889 Ordnance Survey map shows a brewery and malthouse situated between Kiln Lane (now Kiln Yard) Queen Street and Maidens Row. This brewery belonged to TM Winch and Co (formerly East & Co) and must have been an important industry on this prominent corner site and even influences a street name today. Historically many breweries owned their own maltings and kilning was the final stage of the malting process (hence Kiln Yard).

Qualities of buildings and their contribution to the area

7.2.7 Whilst the quality of the buildings in this area does not reflect that of the town centre and there are fewer listed buildings, there are a range of good quality properties which are of townscape merit.

7.2.8 At the junction of Eastgate and Church Street there are a number of good quality buildings of both residential and commercial uses. There are larger semi-detached and detached houses and villas more in evidence with fine detailing, some stand in spacious mature gardens. No.146 is a particularly good example of a late C19 brick built detached property with an apsidal end and an



Nos. 57-67 Queen Street



Queen Street – view west

almost symmetrical front elevation with very deep overhanging eaves supported on console brackets and a shallow hipped slate roof. The Church and Hall are important buildings at a prominent location between the junctions of Eastgate, Church Street and Ramsgate. The supermarket site on the southern side of Eastgate is however of lesser quality and has a rather dead frontage.

7.2.9 The striking brick mill buildings on the northern side of Queen Street are unusual and prominent features. They are the only buildings of 3-storeys which face gable end on to the street and are constructed in dark orange brickwork with banding picked out in yellow brickwork which continues through as detailing around the lintels and cills of the windows. Unfortunately it has been re-roofed in modern tiles. The terrace of houses next to the warehouse (No's 69-71) appears to be related to this building as they have the same detailing and brickwork although they have a slate roof.

Building materials, local details and public realm

7.2.10 The terraced properties in this area mainly sit at the back edge of the pavement and are built of polychrome or the local red brickwork, a few are rendered. Many have good quality detailing including decorative cills, lintels and string courses. The roofs are mainly traditional pantiles or slate and the fenestration is sliding sash windows or casements in a variety of styles. Some properties have canted bays and a number of properties on Eastgate and Queen Street have been converted from shops to residential dwellings and retain their original historic shop fronts.

7.2.11 Larger buildings, including warehouses and churches, are interspersed among the residential properties and are constructed of similar materials to the other buildings in the area, although more recent infill sites and housing developments do not always use materials from the palette of locally distinctive building materials.

7.2.12 Good quality 2-storey terraced houses are a dominant feature of Queen Street and are constructed of polychrome or rendered brickwork with local pantiles on the roof and sit hard back on the pavement edge. Occasionally some are set back from the pavement which gives a welcome break in the street scene. No. 29 is one such example, this Grade II Listed Building is an early C19 brick built property with a Welsh slate roof and sash windows with carved stucco arches and banding which continues into the first floor cills. There are two round-arched doorways with stucco arches and keystone, one with a panelled door and the left-hand one into a passageway has a blocked ornamental fanlight.



Eastgate - view east



Queen Street - view west

7.2.13 Only one side of the northern end of Church Street is included in the conservation area and is dominated by the bus station development built in 2003. The hard surfacing with its contrasting surfaces of tarmac and red brickwork contrasts with other parts of the conservation area.

Green spaces

7.2.14 There are few open green spaces in this area until the outer edges of this character area. On Eastgate the larger villas and houses have mature verdant gardens and there are a number of mature trees which form a positive feature in this part of the conservation area and beyond.

Negative factors

7.2.15 The supermarket on the corner of Eastgate and Church Street and a couple of buildings along Church Street including the modern health centre, are large blocky buildings which do not respect the traditional grain of the area. There are also some gap sites which are untidy and erode the enclosure of the streets.

Neutral areas

7.2.16 Demolition in this area has led to the formation of gap sites which have allowed the introduction of modern developments including car parking areas which do not reflect the historic character, grain and street pattern of the area. Queen Street is less tight grained than the town centre streets and the car park and the low modern health centre on the southern side add to the open feeling.



Kidgate – view east



Nos. 67-119 Newmarket

7.3 St Michael's

Activity and prevailing or former uses and their influence on plan form and buildings

7.3.1 Close knit C19 and C20 workers cottages on the edge of the town centre combine with areas of more spacious residences on the outskirts and define the character of this area. The original builders and owners of the larger properties took advantage of the cheaper land prices at the edge of the town centre to build good quality, spacious homes and gardens. Whilst the cottages and terraces are of a similar style and design to those closer to the town centre they are generally set back from the pavement and have a more suburban character.

7.3.2 Further out from the town centre the spacious building plots and mature gardens create an informal feel with welcome greenery and verdant breaks amongst the buildings and contribute to the character of the area. Boundary treatments are more in evidence with well detailed brick walls often adding to the character of the area.

7.3.3 Newmarket acts as a boundary between the older historic town and the more recent

Summary of significance

St Michael's Church gives its name to this area and is the spiritual heart of this area of modest C19 terraced housing. The consistent building line in the area creates a well-defined building frontage which is noticeably urban with little greenery and only small front gardens. The two oldest streets in the area, Kidgate and Newmarket, are connected by several north-south routes, and together these form a distinctive Victorian residential neighbourhood to the south east of the town centre.



St Michael's Church, Church Street



Cinder Lane – view north



Church Street – view north

developments on the outskirts. Newmarket is a much wider road with through traffic but the other roads in this area are far quieter, although on street parking does have a detrimental effect on the street scene.

7.3.4 From Newmarket the land drops down towards the town centre. The historic street pattern runs at right angles to Mercer Row and Queen Street and there are good views into and out of the centre and towards prominent town centre buildings.

7.3.5 Cinder Lane, which runs at right angles to Kidgate, is unusual in that it has a diverse range of buildings including former industrial buildings as well as residential and educational buildings and playing fields. This street name often indicates that an area was used in medieval times for smelting and iron working and it would seem probable in this location which would have been a sufficient distance from the medieval town centre.

7.3.6 On the first edition Ordnance Survey map the block of land between Kidgate, Newmarket and Cinder Lane is shown as a large open area in a location surrounded by buildings. This area is later in filled and by 1932 there are large industrial type buildings shown. Down the eastern side of this area ran a long narrow plot of land known as Rope Walk, indicating that this was used in the rope manufacturing process. Machinery would have been sited at either end of the strip of land and would have been used to twist strands together to form the ropes.

Qualities of buildings and their contribution to the area

7.3.7 The buildings in this area are mainly residential and date from the later Victorian and Edwardian expansion of the town. Whilst the quality of the buildings in this area does not reflect that of other character areas and there are few listed buildings, there are a range of good quality properties of townscape merit.

7.3.8 Church Street (named after St Michael's and All Angels Church) runs from the junction with Eastgate to the north to its junction with Newmarket in the south. It has an informal grain with a less distinctive character than some of the other residential areas and combines both residential and industrial buildings.



St Michael's Road – view east



Nos. 33-41 Lee Street

7.3.9 Around the junction with St Michael's Road and southwards there are larger Victorian and Edwardian villas with a mixture of smaller detached properties as it runs up to meet Newmarket. St Michael's Road joins Newmarket with Church Street and the Church of St Michael's and All Angels forms an impressive focal point at the end of the road. The Church was built in 1863 by James Fowler of Louth, who was also responsible for the restoration of St James' Church. It is constructed in stone with an open two bay arched porch with a polygonal turret and a tall pyramidal roof to the northwest. The Church has a verdant setting which adds greatly to the appearance of the church and surrounding buildings.

7.3.10 At its eastern end Kidgate rises from its junction with Church Street and runs parallel to Queen Street. It has a more suburban character, with well detailed terraces and good quality semi-detached properties in wider plots replacing the smaller town centre terraces. The properties are generally set back from the pavement behind gardens with distinctive well defined boundaries in a variety of styles of brick walls. The use of timber fencing, which is particularly noticeable in just a few properties, should be discouraged as it detracts from the cohesive street scene.

7.3.11 Further along Kidgate beyond the school there are more close knit Victorian terraces. The southern end of Aswell Street beyond Kidgate is shown as Quarry Lane on Espin's map of 1808 and is free from any development. Bayley's map of 1834 shows development is already creeping along the road. At the upper end of Aswell Street and Lee Street the terraces and semi-detached houses are generally good quality comparable with those in the other surrounding streets. At the junction between Lee Street and Kidgate there is a complex of factories and taller buildings but these do not disturb the flow of the street scene as they step down the slope.

7.3.12 The houses along Newmarket are smaller and of a more fragmentary style and quality. Relative cohesion is created by the materials used and similar plot sizes, the smaller terraces have a tighter grain, but the detailing is simpler and less intricate than many of the right angle streets. There are views from Newmarket looking back towards the centre of the spire of St James' Church.



Nos. 69 & 71 Church Street



School, Kidgate

Building materials, local details and public realm

7.3.13 The building materials are consistent with the other character areas and are mainly a red/brown brick from the C18 and larger red bricks from the C19, Flemish or English Garden are the predominant brick bonds. Some properties have stucco or painted brick work or render. The majority of buildings are roofed in the local pantiles which are used throughout the spectrum of building styles and ages. Other roofing materials include plain tiles and slate. Unfortunately there are some buildings which have been re-roofed with inappropriate concrete and interlocking tiles.

7.3.14 The buildings display a variety of fenestration and features such as decorative keystones and terracotta panels which gives each property its individuality whilst the building materials create a pleasing cohesion.

7.3.15 No.69 Church Street is shown as the Vicarage to St Michael's Church on the first edition Ordnance Survey map. It is set in a large garden with a number of outbuildings surrounding it. The building is built in red brick with detailing in cream brickwork and a slate roof. It has a feature 2-storey canted bay with a pyramidal roof and was designed by James Fowler to complement the Church.

7.3.16 The Church Hall on Mount Pleasant is constructed in red brick work with render and applied mock timber frame to the first floor. It has a central gable above an arched gateway which stands forward of the main building and is supported on decorative brackets, and is reminiscent of a fortified gatehouse.

7.3.17 The existing school building which fronts Kidgate displays a date stone of 1929 but there is a building shown on this site on the first edition Ordnance Survey map as a British School which was built in 1841. This attractive historic building remains a prominent feature in the street scene.



Meridian Line, Kidgate



Kidgate – view north towards town centre

Green spaces and public realm

7.3.18 The hard landscaping is not of a good quality and there are few green spaces and trees in public view although some are visible through from gardens. The Meridian line runs across Kidgate close to Kidgate Primary School and is celebrated by a series of public art statues and metal strips following its route at various points in the town.

Neutral areas

7.3.19 The car park on the north side of Kidgate near its junction with Aswell Street is poorly surfaced, but its openness and the fall of the land at this point allows long views over the backs of the surrounding buildings into the town centre.



Nos. 82-102 Upgate



South Street – view east

7.4 George Street

Activity and prevailing or former uses and their influence on plan form and buildings

7.4.1 This character area is mainly residential with a mixture of properties sitting hard back on the pavement edge. Moving into the quieter “out of town” side streets there is a more suburban feel with small front gardens.

7.4.2 Upgate, South Street, Gospelgate and Edward Street are known to have earlier Medieval origins and whilst the street plan remains there is little built evidence from before the C18. The area is characterised by good quality mainly C19 and C20 residential properties that mark a period when Louth flourished as a prosperous Market Town and expanded rapidly. This area is one of the most prestigious areas of housing and in the side streets there are a good mixture of high quality semi-detached and terraced 2-storey properties which retain many historic features and add to the scale and formality of the area.

7.4.3 As the main route into the town Upgate runs almost directly north south and acts as a division between the commercial centre of the town and the quieter mainly residential houses to the west. At the junction of Upgate, Newmarket and South Street there are good views down



Nos. 17-25 Gospelgate

Summary of significance

The George Street character area is, in essence, a grander version of the St Michael's character area. It is also a predominantly C19 neighbourhood with terraced residences, but these are on a far grander scale than the humble terraces found in the adjoining neighbourhood to the east. The George Street area includes Upgate, South Street and Gospelgate which contain some of the finest planned development in Louth.



Gospelgate – view east



Nos. 24-27 South Street

towards the centre of the town and to the spire of St James' Church in the distance. The buildings step down the hill and change from residential town house properties to a mixture of simpler cottages and shops nearing the outskirts of the town centre.

7.4.4 Gospelgate and the northern end of Edward Street are mainly characterised by houses set hard back on the pavement edge although there are some larger detached properties with front gardens forming occasional breaks in the continuous street frontage. George Street is a late C19 "planned" street and here and on South Street the buildings are generally larger semi-detached residences which have a more open character and wider street frontages, which are set back from the road behind small front gardens.

7.4.5 Gospelgate runs westwards at right angles to Uppgate before merging with Breakneck Lane. The name of Gospelgate has no religious connotations but originates from "Goosepool Lane" as the lane led out of the town towards a goose pool at the end of Breakneck Lane.

7.4.6 Edward Street presumably took its name from its proximity to the King Edward VI Grammar School. There had been a school in Louth well before the C16, and there is mention of a Louth schoolmaster, Simon de Luda, in a document of 1276. However, with the dissolution of the religious guilds in 1548, the future of education in Louth was placed at risk. Leading figures in the town petitioned Edward VI to secure the school's future, and on 21 September 1551 the school was granted a royal charter under which it was handsomely endowed and a Foundation was set up to administer it.

Qualities of buildings and their contribution to the area

7.4.7 This character area consists mainly of good quality residential properties many of which are of townscape merit and there are a number of listed buildings.

7.4.8 There are some fine 3-storey Classical terraces on Uppgate, which befits its importance as a main route into the town centre. The C18 and C19 houses that line both sides of Uppgate have a formal grandeur which reflects the status and wealth of their original owners. The 2-storey terrace of properties on the western side of Uppgate (Nos. 70-102) date from the C18 and C19. They are constructed in red brick with slate roofs and have a number of unifying features whilst maintaining their individuality with a variety of fenestration details. To the eastern side the properties are 3-storeys built in the same brickwork which create a formal sense of enclosure.



Old brick wall, School House Lane



Nos. 5-21 Edward Street

7.4.9 No.69 Upgate sits at a prominent location set back above the junction with South Street and Newmarket and is associated with the stone fronted St Mary's Church. It is an L-shaped building built in dark brickwork with a slate roof, gothic windows with white painted stone surrounds and decorative barge boards with pendant finials. The building has a jettied bay window to first floor with an extended moulded string course which forms a canopy on brackets over the front door. The church and house appear on the first edition Ordnance Survey map and a building is shown on this site on Bayley's map of 1834. No.69 is a very prominent feature in this group of otherwise terraced houses and makes an attractive building at the important cross roads. The Church of St Mary is also prominent due to its rather subdued but attractive stone façade. Its side walls are constructed of brick which match those used to build No.69.

7.4.10 There are a wide variety of building types and styles along Gospelgate and these sit hard back on the pavement edge. The School buildings are attractive brick built with stone dressings and slate and decorative clay ridge tiles. An old brick wall runs along the side of the road opposite the School buildings and round Sommersby Court, a modern housing development at the corner of Gospelgate. The wall was remembered by the poet Tennyson when he attended the School between 1815 and 1819:

"How I did hate that school! The only good I ever got from it was the memory of the words "sonus desilientis aquae" and of an old wall covered with wild weeds opposite the school windows."

7.4.11 George Street is a later addition to the town, dating from the 1850s, which was added between William Brown making his provisional sketches for his Louth Panorama and the final paintings. George Street retains much of its original architecture which is due in part to the designation of the Article 4 Directions in 1992 by the Council. There is more planned, regimented feel to the western side of George Street. The eastern side has a mixture of architecture that has differing scale, age and formality.

7.4.12 South Street runs at right angles to Upgate and rises gently from its junction with Upgate and Newmarket before turning a corner and levelling out towards its junction with George Street. The buildings on South Street comprise 2-storey terraces, semi-detached and detached properties in a variety of styles, which have a more informal layout than those in George Street. Many of the buildings are set back from the Road behind small gardens separated by railings and brick walls. The status of the buildings increases on the southern side of South Street towards its junction with Upgate and Newmarket.



Nos. 45-55 Uppgate



Nos. 1-11 George Street

Little South Street provides glimpses through to St James' Church spire in the distance. There are good views from Uppgate towards a row of C19 brick terraces set against a backdrop of mature trees.

7.4.13 Edward Street is built up on the eastern side but is open to the west with playing fields and larger houses which are all part of the School complex. Towards the junction with Gospelgate there is a range of good quality mainly C19 properties with a taller 3-storey property of earlier date. Further south modern piecemeal development has been set into the gardens of larger historic properties which gives a very verdant and open feel to this end of Edward Street.

Building materials, local details and public realm

7.4.14 The building materials are similar to the rest of the town, dark red and orange brickwork is the predominant building material interspersed with some painted render and brickwork. The buildings have attractive detailing, including feature string courses and bay windows, decorative door and window surrounds (often in painted stone) and fenestration in a variety of styles and patterns, which all add greatly to the character and appearance of the area.

7.4.15 Along Uppgate arched window and door surrounds are a particular noticeable feature and echo the carriage entrances, which befit the higher status of these properties in this important location. Pantiles and slates are the main roofing materials although by the C19 as slate began to be cheaply imported via the new railway it became widely used and has sadly replaced many of the local tiles. In this area good quality materials and existing Article 4 designations have meant that historic features have in general been preserved and enhanced.

7.4.16 Towards the southern end of George Street there are a number of semi-detached properties of a similar style and design. All are built in red brick with slate roofs, and have 6/6 sliding sash windows with white painted flat arched headers and doors with classical porticos and fanlights. Their uniformity adds greatly to the character of the streetscene.

Neutral areas

7.4.17 There are a number of modern buildings towards the eastern end of Gospelgate that form an unfortunate entrance into Gospelgate when turning in from Uppgate.



No.82 Westgate

7.5 Westgate

Activity and prevailing or former uses and their influence on plan form and buildings

7.5.1 This extensive area to the west of the town centre consists of large, mostly detached houses set in substantial plots. The gardens often contain large mature trees that contribute significantly to the character, appearance and to the leafy skyline of this part of the town which contrasts markedly with the more urban town centre. The Church of St James is the dominant feature in this character area and streets radiate out from it to the south and east towards the town centre and north and west toward the more residential and rural areas of the town.

7.5.2 Westgate, Bridge Street and Breakneck Lane have Medieval origins and Westgate and Bridge Street were main routes into and out of the town. Documents indicate that the residents of Westgate were both influential and wealthy people, who could afford to build in such a prestigious area of the town. The Medieval street pattern can still be seen in the area and many of the properties retain their distinctive Medieval plots with long gardens backing onto the river. Collectively, these gardens and other land on the north banks of the Lud form an important green wedge which contributes to a sense of spaciousness and should be protected from piecemeal erosion.

Summary of significance

This grand western end of Louth emerged as a result of the wealth generated at the industrial eastern end of the town in the late C18 and C19. In this area, most of the properties survive in their original condition and there is a good mixture of architectural styles unified by their scale and formality. It is a prestigious residential area, complementing the landmark St James' Church.



Westgate – view northeast



Westgate – view east



Nos. 25 and 34-38 Westgate

Today Westgate is still home to some of the largest, oldest and most prestigious properties in the town.

7.5.3 The buildings vary from C18 and C19 mansions and large detached townhouses whose scale and formality contrasts with the smaller scale more informal terraced and semi-detached properties.

Qualities of buildings and their contribution to the area

7.5.4 Bridge Street appears on the 1889 Ordnance Survey map of Louth but it is shown as Willow Row on the 1808 map of Louth. The entrance into this part of the conservation area along Bridge Street is marked by the C18 Old Mill building which sits at an angle to the road and forms an attractive group with the bridge and the mill house. The other buildings in this street are mainly formal 3-storey C18 and C19 buildings standing hard on the pavement edge. These buildings have a prestigious location in such close proximity to the town centre and the Church and frame the view through to the Church and the open land and trees in front of it.

7.5.5 The Church of St James has C11 origins when the wealth of the wool merchants helped to pay for the building of the Church of St Herefrith. It was re-built in the C13 and in the 1440's the chancel and nave were rebuilt and the Church was re-dedicated to St James. The spire was not completed until 1515 and is the tallest Medieval spire in England, which can be seen from many locations throughout the town and surrounding areas. James Fowler carried out a major renovation of the Church in the mid C19 and much of the stained glass dates from this time.

7.5.6 The imposing 3-storey brick building at No.25 Westgate faces the junction of Westgate



Bridge Street – view south



The Sycamores, Crowtree Lane



Irish Hill – view north towards No. 16 Westgate

and Breakneck Lane and is an important focal point at this junction in the road when heading towards the town centre.

7.5.7 Along Crowtree Lane there are many good quality large buildings set in mature well established gardens, the buildings of King Edward's School are particularly noticeable at the junction of Crowtree Lane and Edward Street.

7.5.8 The Sycamores sits in a spacious plot between Westgate and Crowtree Lane, although the building dates from the C19 it sits in on an important historic site. The current house sits gable end on between Westgate and Crowtree Lane and has fine shaped gables and decorative chimney pots which can be glimpsed from Crowtree Lane. The neighbouring property "The Mansion" is of C17 origin and sits above but facing Westgate. It is a good example of the large high status properties which are typical of the eastern end of Westgate. Looking along Crowtree Lane there are views out from the residential areas of Louth towards the Westgate Fields and the countryside beyond.

7.5.9 Irish Hill runs at right angles between Crowtree Lane and Westgate, its name originates from when the Lane was developed in the C19 by the Irish navigators (which became shortened to "navies") who settled here whilst working on the canal system. Whilst there are few historic buildings along this street No.16 Westgate is an important focal point at the end of the view down the hill. The property has many original features including tripartite sash windows and a curved triangular fanlight above a door with a stained glass panel.

Building materials, local details and public realm

7.5.10 This area has some of the oldest buildings in the town and the predominant building materials are mainly red brick and the older dark brown brick which is sometimes painted or rendered. The National Schools building on Westgate is constructed wholly in a cream brick which is an unusual material for the town. The fine C15 Church is constructed in the local limestone whilst some of the earlier Medieval church remains are constructed in a warm honey coloured stone. Although slate is used the local pantiles are more prevalent in this area.

7.5.11 The open area around the Church is a highly important public open space with seating and a modern statue which is part of the Louth Art Trail celebrating Louth's position on the Meridian Line.



Breakneck Lane – view east



Westgate Place – view north

7.5.12 The long red brick walls which run down either side of Breakneck Lane give a sense of enclosure and definition to the Lane and lead the eye towards glimpses of buildings at either end of the lane.

7.5.13 Westgate Place is unusual in Louth for retaining much of its historic street surfacing. The original York stone slabs and cobbles are important to the setting of this important terrace (Tennyson lived in one of the properties) which sits directly on the back of this narrow alley.

Green spaces

7.5.14 The open area around St James' Church is surrounded by a range of high quality 3-storey buildings and 2-storey terraces to Bridge Street which creates a heightened sense of enclosure. It forms the only public area of open space in the character area, but the area is nonetheless characterised by greenery as a result of the spacious grounds and mature trees of the private residences. The vegetation in these private spaces contributes much to the townscape of the area and brings the greenery of the Westgate Fields area almost into the heart of the town.



Cemetery Lodge, London Road



Linden Walk – view south

7.6 Cemetery

Activity and prevailing or former uses and their influence on plan form and buildings

7.6.1 With the exception of the cattle market which is located off Newmarket, the area is almost entirely residential and has a very quiet and secluded feel, particularly along Linden Walk. Even Upgate, an approach road to the town, is relatively quiet, and has a bosky character with mature trees and grassed banks lining the road.

7.6.2 The cattle market appears on its current site on the first edition Ordnance Survey map (1889), although the southern half is shown as the Julian Bower Lime Works. Quarry Road was originally the access road to these works and Rock Cottage's name is also a reminder of the area's former use. (The name Julian Bower survives outside the proposed conservation area boundary in the renamed Mill Lane and Julian Bower House.)

7.6.3 Linden Walk rises southwards from Newmarket until the top of the hill is reached at the cemetery entrance where the land descends again. Hill Terrace is a short off-shoot from Linden Walk; its name explained by its position at the top of the hill.

Summary of significance

The cemetery opened in 1855 with two identical chapels built; one for Anglicans and the other for Non-Conformists. Its consecration led to the development of Linden Walk (originally called Cemetery Road), Hill Terrace and Quarry Road which all contain a good selection of Victorian villas, many of which retain their original architectural details.

Although accessed from Newmarket and containing the cattle market within its boundary, the area has a genteel character imparted by the large trees that create a verdant background to the well-detailed buildings. This area is currently outside the conservation area, but it is proposed to include it within the boundary as it is an important part of the town's development and contains one of the town's main open spaces and many important trees, key to the town's setting.



Nos. 101-115 Upgate



Hill Terrace

Qualities of buildings and their contribution to area

7.6.4 There are no listed buildings within the area, but the area is characterised by good quality Victorian villas, particularly along Linden Walk. They contribute greatly to the character of the area as a group, and there are also some noteworthy individual properties of townscape merit. On the other side of the area, Upgate contains more modest properties, some of which have unfortunately been altered quite significantly, although good details remain on a handful of houses including No.124.

7.6.5 Upgate provides a low key approach to Louth with little development until near the junction with South Street/Newmarket. Its west side (mostly outside the proposed boundary) is more modern until the crossroads; the exceptions are Nos. 122 & 124, two C19 houses which are just visible in their raised location behind trees.

7.6.6 The Cemetery Lodge is an attractive surprise along London Road and creates a dramatic entrance to the cemetery. The route that leads through the arch in the lodge runs up to the pair of cemetery chapels that are located at the top of the hill that the cemetery lies on.

Building materials and details

7.6.7 Whilst the Upgate properties tend to be quite plain and more altered (the exception is No.83), the Linden Walk properties display a variety of attractive Victorian detailing. All properties are, however, unified by the virtually consistent use of red brick and originally slate roofs, although many have been replaced with concrete tiles.

7.6.8 Most Linden Walk properties retain their original sash windows which are generally plate glass, although some have a 2/2 fenestration pattern and a number have pretty margin lights. Gault brick is commonly used for gauged brick and segmental arched window and door heads along Linden Walk, although these are also found in red brick which is more commonly used along Upgate where they are also sometimes in stone. Two Linden Walk properties have projecting keystones, one in contrasting brick. Gault brick is also used to pick out quoin detailing, pilaster-strips (No.15 Linden Walk) and window surrounds in the grander houses.



Cemetery chapels



Quarry Road – view west

7.6.9 Many houses, including a handful along Uppgate, have bay windows at ground floor, but only a couple have full length bays. Window cills are generally of limestone and sometimes form part of the property's banding detail. The Hill Terrace properties have central arched windows at first floor level, whilst No.17 Linden Walk has two semi-gothic arched window heads at ground floor of gault brick with faience impostes, possibly in reference to the cemetery chapels.

7.6.10 A number of properties have decorative eaves details which are generally moulded timber cornices, although No.18 has a gault brick dentil course in its central, slightly recessed, bay. Chimneys are plain with the only decoration often some simple banding; a handful have dentil detailing. Plain clay chimney pots are clustered at the top of stacks.

7.6.11 The main exceptions to the above are the cemetery lodge and the matching pair of mortuary chapels. These are of contrasting architectural styles and of different building materials. The mock-Gothic chapels are of grey brick with limestone dressings and trefoil tripartite leaded windows, whilst the red brick Victorian Tudor cemetery lodge has a battlemented pediment and tower and oriel windows on both front and rear elevations.

Public realm

7.6.12 Quarry Road and South Terrace both have a gravel surface, but otherwise, tarmac is the surfacing for most roads and footpaths. The cemetery inevitably contains an array of monuments and headstones associated with the graves, but it also has a small well feature which houses the outdoor water tap. Cast iron benches rest against the sides of the cemetery chapels.

Green spaces

7.6.13 The majority of the character area comprises the cemetery which is mostly open, but screened from surrounding streets by rows of good mature trees along its boundaries. An avenue of trees divides the cemetery in half, separating the consecrated ground from the non-consecrated. Narrow routes through the cemetery wind under the gatelodge, past the two mortuary chapels and through the gravestones which are surrounded by wild flowers and shrubs.



Cemetery – view east towards Linden Walk



Cattlemarket, Newmarket

Negative elements

7.6.14 The cattlemarket intrudes rudely into the character area with its large shed buildings and expanses of car-parking. Although it is fairly well screened from the residential area until the Newmarket end of Linden Walk is reached, it has a negative impact on views at this end of the character area and detracts from the setting of the Quarry Road properties. The quality of the development at this end of Linden Walk and on the other side of the cattlemarket along Uppgate is generally lower than the rest of the area.



James Street – view east



Wellington Street

7.7 James Street

Activity and prevailing or former uses and their influence on plan form and buildings

7.7.1 The north side of James Street is bordered by the River Lud which was a major thoroughfare for the town and the centre of much economic activity. The former wool warehouse and old mill of the (now demolished) large carpet, rug and blanket manufactory which straddled the river survive, albeit converted to residential use now. The former Technical Institute lies on the south side of James Street and is a substantial Edwardian building, now used as offices and a day care nursery.

Summary of significance

This area developed rapidly in the C19 as a result of the railway which arrived in Louth in 1848. Ramsgate Road led to the station and was soon lined with terraced houses and small commercial premises at its junction with James Street. This part of the area is currently outside the conservation area, but is important in views north from Ramsgate's junction with Eastgate, and it is therefore proposed to include it within the boundary.

7.7.2 The majority of the character area is, however, residential and is characterised by terraces and rows of relatively modest houses which probably housed some of the workers from the mill in James Street and the other nearby mills and brick and tile works. These houses are interspersed with slightly larger houses such as No.65 James Street and 27-39 (odd) Ramsgate Road and there is a small chapel in Wellington Street.

7.7.3 The influence of the railway (the Grade II Listed railway station lies to the north of the area) is evident by a small cluster of former shops located at the Ramsgate Road / James Street junction. However, all but one have now reverted to residential use although the shop windows are still evident. Eve Street, at the other end of the character area, however, still retains a small cluster of retail premises and links the area into the town centre.



Eve Street



Ramsgate Road – view south



Nos. 8-13 Alexandra Road

Qualities of buildings and their contribution to area

7.7.4 The area is predominantly comprised of modest 2-storey terraces which vary in quality of detailing, but there are some individual buildings of note including Ivy House which is the only listed building in the area. No.65 James Street retains its original Victorian detailing and is a delicate contrast with the adjacent Mill and nearby Technical Institute.

7.7.5 The terraces sit tight on the back of the footpath enclosing the streets well and providing a continuous building line. Although in townscape terms this is positive, it does also highlight the alterations that have occurred, eroding their uniformity.

7.7.6 The north side of James Street has a less cohesive character than the south side because more redevelopment has occurred here, and much of this is of neutral quality. The south side also has some modern buildings, but they are much more in-keeping with the traditional properties.

Building materials and details

7.7.7 Although gault brick is relatively uncommon in Louth, it is much in evidence in this character area. Ivy House is the grandest example of its use, but No.39 also has a gault brick front elevation and No.72 James Street and No.49 Ramsgate Road, again in gault brick, are on a prominent corner position in views north from Eastgate along Ramsgate Road.

7.7.8 Red brick, inevitably however, is the predominant walling material. It appears in varying shades depending on the type of bricks used and dates of the buildings, and is sometimes almost brown in colour. Slate roofs are most common, although many of these have been replaced with concrete tiles and red clay pantiles are used on the older properties.

7.7.9 Moulded semi-circular arched window and door heads with imposts appear on a number of properties, notably the well-detailed No.65 James Street and the prominent No.72 James Street and No.49 Ramsgate Road. No.34 has a good pedimented classical doorcase and two shallow bay windows of which more decorative examples are found on Nos. 41-49 (odd) James Street.



No. 65 & former warehouse, James Street



River Lud, Ramsgate Road

Public realm

7.7.10 Ramsgate's importance grew with the arrival of the railway and during a period of public improvement works in the town, York stone was used to repair Ramsgate in the 1850s. Sadly there is little of this enhancement visible today; paths and roads are now surfaced in tarmacadam.

Green spaces

7.7.11 Although there are no large public open spaces within the character area, the river creates attractive breaks in the street frontage as it carves between the buildings. Because the river channel has been canalised, there are no river banks and the sole greenery in the area is provided by trees within gardens; those outside Ivy House are a key group.

Negative elements

7.7.12 Many properties have lost their original sash windows which have been substituted with inappropriate, usually PVCu, replacements. These detract from the quality of the buildings and erode the uniformity of terraces and groups of buildings.



Broadbank – view north



County Hospital, High Holme Road

7.8 High Holme

Activity and prevailing or former uses and their influence on plan form and buildings

7.8.1 The former Union Workhouse and its entrance range, which today form the County Hospital, were built in 1837-39 to designs by George Gilbert Scott for the Louth Poor Law Union. It is a substantial building and is prominent in the 'Louth Panorama' drawn by William Brown between 1844 and 1847. It was originally a lone building located on the periphery of the town because of the 'shame' that was associated with its purpose, and its grounds were enclosed by high walls.

Summary of significance

This character area lies immediately to the north of the commercial core of the town. The land rises northwards along Broadbank toward the County Hospital and its grounds which, as a result, form the focus of the character area which is otherwise predominantly residential. The area includes a section of High Holme Road, part of which is currently outside the conservation area. These properties include a selection of high quality late C19 terraced housing and some larger detached houses of note, and it is, therefore, proposed to bring them within the boundary.

7.8.2 To the north east of the Union Workhouse was a tower windmill which was demolished by 1847 and a grand 3-storey house, High Holme, was built instead; this later became a ladies' boarding school. This grand residence set the tone for the area from the mid-C19 onwards and good quality houses were built along Broadbank and High Holme Road including the late C19 terraced properties and the larger detached houses proposed for inclusion within the conservation area.

Qualities of buildings and their contribution to area

7.8.3 The Grade II Listed County Hospital, formerly the Union Workhouse, is the dominant building in the area, but more



Nos. 66-72 Broadbank



Union Street – view north



High Holme Road – view east

because of its vastness than street presence which is surprisingly modest because its 3-storey bulk is hidden behind the single storey entrance range which is also set back from the road. The remainder of High Holme Road contains a range of virtually unaltered late C19 terraces and good individual houses.

7.8.4 Broadbank contains a range of good quality mid-C19 properties grouped together in rows which attractively line the street leading up to the County Hospital; No.74 forms the focus of views from Grimsby Road west along High Holme Road. The area around the junction of Broadbank and Cannon Street is more mixed with later development including some very recent apartment blocks at the entrance to the Co-op store.

7.8.5 Many of the buildings in Mount Olivet actually face Grimsby Road and are grouped in short terraces which have been significantly altered. The exceptions are Nos. 10 & 28 Grimsby Road which are detached houses and retain many of their original details. To the south of Grimsby Road's junction with High Holme Road, is a small group of individual houses displaying a range of architectural detailing. This group includes the Grade II Listed White House and they close views east along St Mary's Lane.

7.8.6 The Cisterngate area is generally characterised by more modest properties, but which still display good C19 details and create an intimate townscape by tightly enclosing the narrow streets.

Building materials and details

7.8.7 In common with the majority of the town, red brick and slate are the common building materials and unify the varying forms of building found within the character area, although the details vary between individual buildings and terraces. A number of properties have, however, subsequently been painted and slate roofs replaced with concrete tiles. There are also a couple of gault brick properties, notably No.34 High Holme Road and the Grade II Listed No.2 (The White House) Grimsby Road.



Nos. 4-8 Grimsby Road



Spout Yard – view south



County Hospital parking area, High Holme Road

7.8.8 High Holme Road and some of the larger properties along Broadbank display a variety of good quality late Victorian architectural details, many of which are highly decorative. Cisterngate and Mount Olivet are generally lined by more modest properties which are simpler in detail, but still retain sash windows and gauged arch window and door heads.

Public realm

7.8.9 Aside from some good contemporary lantern style street lights along High Holme Road, there is little of interest within the public realm. Surfacing is generally in tarmac, except on Mount Olivet which is poorly surfaced with loose stones and pitted tarmac.

Green spaces

7.8.10 The river and the trees which line it form the main open space in the area. Glimpsed views of the river are gained from Spaw Lane / Spout Yard which links Broadbank and Chequergate, and it provides an attractive setting for the new development that is currently under construction off Spout Yard.

Negative and neutral elements

7.8.11 The telephone exchange on Chequergate is a large blocky building that does not respect the surrounding grain, form or details of the surrounding development.

7.8.12 To the east of the County Hospital is an area of land which appears to serve as an overflow parking area for the hospital, but also contains a mixture of C20 buildings including a portacabin. Aside from the mature tree which fortunately screens some of the unattractive buildings on the site, this area is of lesser quality than the surrounding development.

7.8.13 Another car park, this time on Broadbank, is simply surfaced in tarmac, but its effect is softened by the good red brick wall that forms its boundary with Broadbank and the trees that denote its boundary with the river to the north.



St Mary's Lane – view east



Mount St. Mary, St. Mary's Lane

7.9 St Mary's Lane

Activity and prevailing or former uses and their influence on plan form and buildings

7.9.1 The majority of the area appears to have been open fields or gardens until the early C20 when individual house plots begin to appear on the Ordnance Survey maps. The north east end of St Mary's Lane was, however, the St Mary's Lime Works whilst across the road lay the disused St Mary's burial ground. St Mary's was the first of Louth's two original parish churches, but it was deserted with very little physical evidence left of it by 1650.

7.9.2 The only significant buildings in the area until the early C20 were Highfield on the north side of the road and The Cedars and The Mount (now Mount St Mary) at either end of the south side of the road; all three are substantial detached houses set within large grounds. Today, St Mary's burial ground remains an open space and The Cedars and Mount St Mary retain their large grounds, but Highfield's large gardens have been encroached upon and a variety of individual houses from the first half of the C20 now line both sides of the street, although they are barely visible behind the dense tree screen.

Summary of significance

St Mary's Lane is essentially a late C19 / early C20 leafy suburb which is part of the later development of Louth before the estate development of the 1960s onwards. The avenue of trees is an important link between the countryside immediately to the west and adds to the substantial swathes of mature trees in the surrounding area, providing an attractive backdrop to the town in views north.

The north side of St Mary's Lane is currently outside the conservation area, but contains a good selection of late C19 and early C20 houses, which display a variety of architectural styles and details of high quality. It is therefore proposed to include the majority of the north side of the road within the boundary.



Westnor, St. Mary's Lane



Brendan Lodge, St. Mary's Lane

Qualities of buildings and their contribution to area

7.9.3 The Cedars, an early C19 house, is the sole listed building in the character area. Mount St Mary also appears to date from at least the early C19 whilst Highfield, built in 1878, is notable for being a Fowler design; both should be considered for listing. No.29 is another later C19 house, whilst Westnor is an unusual fan-shaped 'bungalow' from the turn of the C19/ C20 when St Mary's Lodge and Lound Hill was also built. No.72, Brendan Lodge, is also potentially listable. It is an eye-catching property in a Modernist design which dates from the mid-late 1930s as do the majority of the remaining properties. This includes Nos. 39 & 42 (originally named Lyncot and Cambrat respectively) which are of a simplified 'Arts and Crafts' style and were built in the grounds of The Cedars.

7.9.4 The variety in the style and size of the buildings creates an attractive and diverse townscape which is unified by the mature trees that line the road and screen the buildings, often allowing only glimpsed views of them along driveways. The development of this exclusive suburb has created a showcase for the evolution in architectural styles that occurred during the late C19 and early C20.

Building materials and details

7.9.5 The Cedars is stucco fronted with a central 4-column Doric porch and a hipped slate roof, whilst the other Georgian house in the area, Mount St Mary, is of grey brick with a slate roof. The two Victorian houses are of the local red brick with slate roofs; Highfield is in a Victorian Tudor style with stone detailing and mullioned windows, whilst No.29 is smaller and simpler in detail with segmental arched window heads and a semi-hipped slate roof.

7.9.6 Westnor has a deep sweeping tiled roof and rendered walls with leaded casement windows and various architectural embellishments such as canted windows and a semi-circular open porch. No.31 which looks Edwardian in origin, but does not appear on maps until 1968, has a red brick ground floor and rendered upper floor with a tiled roof and pretty sash windows with multi-paned top sash.

7.9.7 The other houses are generally a mix of materials with differing combinations of sash or casement windows, red brick, render (sometimes with mock timber-framing details) and slate or tiled



The Cedars, St Mary's Lane



View of The Cedars from Crowtree Lane

roofs; Lound Hill is an attractive Edwardian example. The key exception is Brendan Lodge which is a very striking 1930s 3-storey property in the Modernist style with a horizontal emphasis, wide expanses of glazing, rendered walls and a flat roof.

Public realm

7.9.8 The western end of St Mary's Lane terminates in a small triangular piece of ground at the junction with Westgate and Elkington Road where a timber 'Louth' town sign signals the western boundary of the town. Further east along St Mary's Lane on the north side of the road, there is the stone surround of a gothic traceried window, partially obscured by the vegetation in the midst of which it sits.

Green spaces

7.9.9 The grounds of The Cedars form the largest open space in the area, but the grounds are private and are enclosed by a brick wall on the St Mary's Lane boundary. The disused St Mary's burial ground is now a public park, but is densely planted with trees and is not, therefore, immediately apparent from the street.

7.9.10 The unifying element in the area is the trees that line the road together with those that are planted within the often substantial grounds of the properties. They are important in views north from Crowtree Lane from where a good view of The Cedars (seen against this green backdrop) is gained.



Eastgate – view east



Orme Almshouses, Eastgate

7.10 Lower Eastgate

Activity and prevailing or former uses and their influence on plan form and buildings

7.10.1 At the western end of the area, at Eastgate's junction with Ramsgate Road is a small group of almshouses and associated buildings. These stand on the site of the House of Correction (or prison) which was built on the site in 1680, but were demolished in 1872.

7.10.2 Eastgate itself is an old route, dating back to Louth's Anglo-Saxon origins, but the built form is predominantly late C18 and early C19. All that remains from before this are the Grade II Listed Ruins at The Priory which is masonry from Louth Abbey arranged as a Gothick ruin in the grounds of The Priory.

7.10.3 The abbey of Louth Park was founded in 1139 by Alexander, bishop of Lincoln and was abandoned with the Dissolution of the monasteries in 1536. Its presence lives on in the names of the roads on the borders of the conservation area: Monks Dyke Road, Monks Avenue, Priory Close and Priory Road.

Qualities of buildings and their contribution to area

7.10.4 There are seven listed buildings in the character area, all Grade II. The 2-storey Priory together with the Louth Abbey ruins and Mausoleum is perhaps one of the more interesting buildings, although its street elevation is unassuming. It was built in 1818 by Thomas Espin, an artist and amateur architect, and has an ornamental Gothick garden front.



Holy Trinity Church, Eastgate

Summary of significance

The built form of this eastern end of Eastgate developed from the end of the C18 when the canal was built in 1770 at Riverhead. Although a small residential area, it contains a number of interesting and historically important buildings. This includes the Holy Trinity Church which was rebuilt in 1866 ready for the new ecclesiastical parish of Holy Trinity which was formed in 1867, presumably to accommodate the growing population in this area of the town.



Eastgate – view south along Trinity Lane



Magistrate's Court and Police Station, Eastgate

7.10.5 The other four listed buildings in the area form a short row on the south side of the street, further east from The Priory which is now a nursing home. Nos. 250-256 (evens) are of 2-storeys plus attic or basement and date from the early C19.

7.10.6 Despite the relative scarcity of listed buildings, there are numerous other high quality buildings, many of which are possible candidates for statutory listing. Of particular note are the Orme's Almshouses and Lodge and the neighbouring former Police Station. The Almshouses were designed by James Fowler and built in 1885. They are arranged around an open lawned garden enclosed by railings and they form an attractive composition opposite the Methodist Chapel.

7.10.7 At the eastern end of the character area, the Holy Trinity Church tower is a landmark and forms the focus of most views along the street. Its position at the top of a hill means that it is the dominant feature in this eastern stretch of the conservation area.

7.10.8 Many of the houses that line Eastgate are substantial C19 residences displaying ornate detailing. The individual houses often sit well back from the road, well-screened from the street by large mature trees. There are, however, also more modest C19 cottages and terraces, particularly along Trinity Lane and these tend to sit on the back of the footpath or behind small front gardens. These properties also display traditional detailing, albeit simpler than the grander dwellings.

Building materials and details

7.10.9 Red brick is the almost universal walling material in this character area, although different shades are found; the smaller properties have an almost brown hue, whilst the larger, and usually later C19, properties are a brighter red. Welsh slate is used throughout the area too, but this has unfortunately been replaced in a significant number of properties.

7.10.10 Stucco is often used for building details along with stone. Stucco window cills and heads together with stucco banding are common features on the grander residences, whilst the more modest properties usually have simple brick arched window and door heads. A



Nos. 175-183 Eastgate



Orme Almshouses grounds, Eastgate



Eastgate – view west

notable exception is the Old Police Station, No.145 Eastgate, which displays the polychromatic detailing characteristic of its construction date in 1866. The Gothic style is also typical of its former function.

7.10.11 Many of the grander terraces have ground floor bay windows, and the very grandest properties have Greek Doric porches or Classical doorcases with flat hoods and pilasters. Sash windows survive on the majority of properties in various glazing patterns including some with margin lights, and a delightful Chinoiserie geometric design on No.159 Eastgate. Nos. 175-183 (odds) have Yorkshire sliding sashes at first floor.

7.10.12 The Orme Almshouses are built in a Tudorbethan style with stone mullioned window surrounds and multi-paned lights. The steeply pitched gables have stone carving and plaque details. Tall brick chimney stacks with stone banding puncture the skyline at regular intervals.

7.10.13 The tower of Holy Trinity Church which survives from the church's 1866 rebuilding, is of rusticated stonework with contrasting stone detailing. The clock was originally installed at St James' Church in 1846, but was removed to Holy Trinity Church in 1901. The heavy stone architecture of the tower contrasts with the modern red brick main church building which adjoins the tower to the west.

Green spaces

7.10.14 The neatly kept gardens of the Orme Almshouses are private grounds, but are an attractive setting to the almshouses which are visible from the street through the railings and trees that enclose the gardens. The white War Memorial which is a statue of a soldier standing on a plinth, stands on the corner of Ramsgate Road and Eastgate and is viewed against the background of trees in the Orme Almshouses gardens.

7.10.15 The grounds of The Priory are extensive, but are screened from public view by the brick boundary wall, the house itself and large mature trees. Only a glimpse is possible from the entrance to the house's drive. There are a significant number of trees in the often substantial front gardens along the street which contribute positively to the townscape, often framing views of the buildings.

7.10.16 The small churchyard of the Holy Trinity Church forms the only semi-public green space in the area, but it is very small and the enclosing railings and open lawn do not encourage public access.



Navigation Warehouses, River Head Road



Disused warehouse, Thames Street

7.11 Riverhead

Activity and prevailing or former uses and their influence on plan form and buildings

7.11.1 The River Lud which runs through this area has been the focus of industry from early in Louth's history and the Crown Mills on Ramsgate Road sit on the site of a mill mentioned in the Domesday Book. However, it was the opening of the Louth Navigation Canal that resulted in the area becoming the hub of Louth's industry from the late C18 onwards and as a result, the area is populated by an array of buildings associated with the waterfront industries that emerged including public houses and terraced workers' housing. The industrial nature of the area is also reflected in the road names in the area: Riverhead Road and Commercial Road which has a former chapel, presumably to accommodate the ecclesiastical needs of the local workers.

7.11.2 Industrial uses were not restricted to the Canal Basin and smaller scale industries and commercial premises emerged along Ramsgate Road, connecting with the pre-existing River Lud based industries. However, the arrival of railway in 1848 led to the eventual closure of the canal in 1924 and most of the industries declined thereafter.

Summary of significance

This Riverhead area is an important part of the industrial area at the eastern end of Louth which was formed with the opening of the Louth Navigation Canal in 1770. Until this point, Louth's wealth had predominantly derived from agriculture. The opening of the Louth-Tetney Canal generated further wealth which is reflected in the fine architecture of the period (together with workers' housing) in the west end of Louth.

However, much of the original industrial Riverhead area lies outside the conservation area boundary. This area has in the past, like the industrial heritage of many other areas, been rather undervalued, and its contribution to Louth's architectural grandeur has been overlooked. It is therefore proposed to extend the conservation area eastwards to include the canal and its associated buildings as far as the first lock.



River Head Road – view south



Nos. 7-17 Ramsgate Road

Qualities of buildings and their contribution to area

7.11.3 Three of the original industrial buildings survive and are Grade II Listed, but there are also scattered remnants of other traditional industrial buildings within the proposed extension to the conservation area, notably the buildings attached to Baines Flour Mill along Thames Street. In addition, a couple of earlier buildings survive along the waterfront eastwards from the Riverhead which is flanked by the two listed warehouses. Attractive views along the tree-lined canal are gained from between these buildings.

7.11.4 Many of the unlisted warehouses have been converted into residential use with additional apartment blocks mimicking the traditional buildings built around them. The area is gradually undergoing regeneration with several other housing developments underway or recently constructed, all of which have buildings of industrial scale in keeping with the character of the area.

7.11.5 Commercial Road, Thames Street and Riverhead Road contain a number of short terraces, a few of which date from the C19 and the industrial heyday of the area. Later rebuilding has occurred and the surviving traditional terraces have been much altered, but they are a reminder of the workers that served the industries. The Grade II Listed Woolpack PH on Riverhead Road was also built to serve the Louth Canal Basin.

7.11.6 Further out from the main Riverhead area, the Crown Mills on Ramsgate Road together with its stables and cottage form an attractive group and are one of the few remaining examples in the area of a large town mill. The mill building is of 3 and 4-storeys and sits behind the river whilst the cottage sits on the roadside.

7.11.7 Ramsgate Road is a pleasant tree-lined route with a variety of buildings lining its sides. Buildings such as those on the corner of Commercial Road are an indication of the smaller scale commercial/ industrial premises found along the road. The majority of properties are, however, residential and include a well-detailed C19 short terrace on the north side of the road. The Grove (designed by James Fowler in 1869) sits on the corner of Victoria Road within its spacious tree-covered grounds.

7.11.8 Eastgate contains the Grade II Listed Lincolnshire Poacher Hotel, formerly Park House. It is an early C19 property and sits back from the road in what remains of its formerly extensive gardens,



Crown Mills, Ramsgate Road



Commercial Road – view south

now mostly given over to car parking. Riverhead Court, lies just off Eastgate to the east of the public house. This development is another conversion of a former warehouse.

Building materials and details

7.11.9 The earliest warehouses and mills from c.1790-1800 are of red brick with originally pantiled roofs, although the two listed warehouses both have C20 concrete tile roofs now. They have robust detailing characteristic of their functions, but are also decorated with features such as dentillated brick eaves. They have large doorways with double plank doors on all floors, including loft doors, and multi-paned casement windows.

7.11.10 The numerous terraced properties are all of red brick and generally of 2-storeys. The earliest have pantiled roofs, but most have slate roofs, or even more commonly, replacement concrete tiles. A small number retain sash windows and original detailing, notably along Ramsgate, but most have been significantly altered and some have even been partially rebuilt.

7.11.11 Unusually, the Lincolnshire Poacher Hotel is of gault brick and has a hipped roof of greenish coloured tiles. Otherwise it displays the attractive detailing typical of early C19 grand residences, such as carved stucco flat lintels with keystones, banding, segmental architraves and a Doric columned central porch.

Green spaces and public realm

7.11.12 Ramsgate Road follows the line of the River Lud and is, as a result, lined by trees and has a verdant feel. Buildings are generally, by necessity because of the river, set back from the road, adding to the leafy character of the road.

7.11.13 An informal public space is created at the junction of Riverhead, Thames Street and Porlander Place. However, this space is entirely hard-paved and is an unfortunate contrast with the tree-lined canal and Ramsgate Road which both lead off from this point. There seems to be a great deal of underutilised open space in this area; it could potentially be more successfully used with the added benefit of providing a more appropriate setting to the listed buildings.



River Head Road – view east along River Lud



Ramsgate Road – view south across Old Mill Park

Negative elements

7.11.14 The large modern shed type warehouse on the corner of Commercial Road and Ramsgate Road is derelict and unattractive, particularly so because of its corner location. Its appropriate redevelopment would significantly enhance the townscape along both Ramsgate Road and Commercial Road and contribute to the ongoing regeneration of this part of Louth.

Neutral areas

7.11.15 Much of the newer development in Riverside Court and Old Mill Park, although it attempts to mimic the earlier buildings, is not highly successful. Nonetheless, it does not actually detract from the area, and is therefore considered to be of neutral quality. A good view of the Holy Trinity Church tower is, however, gained from Ramsgate across the buildings of Old Mill Park.



Westgate Fields – view east



Elkington Road – view south towards Westgate

7.12 Westgate Fields

Activity and prevailing or former uses and their influence on plan form and buildings

7.12.1 The River Lud descends from Hubbards Hills providing water power for the mills that sprang up along its course. Following the river as it enters the conservation area, immediately within the boundary is Hubbards Hill Mill (Just outside the boundary is the Pumping Station). Continuing eastwards, at Westgate Bridge is the former Thorpe Hall mill which, until 1842, was a paper mill, and then reverted to corn milling. It subsequently became a trout farm. The modest terrace on Crowtree Lane was presumably built to house millworkers.

7.12.2 The 20 acre grounds of Thorpe Hall originally included a deer park and lake, and the current formal gardens were laid out in 1906 by Gertrude Jekyll. An access road off Elkington Road leads north to Thorpe Hall Farm which is visible on the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1889. The same road now also provides access for Deighton Close School, the original building of which was built at the turn of the C19 and C20.

7.12.3 The area has remained predominantly open land with only small incremental changes occurring on the edges such as the erection of modern detached dwellings along Crowtree Lane.

Summary of significance

Westgate Fields is the name of the public open space that is enclosed by Crowtree Lane, the River Lud and Love Lane; it forms the southern part of this character area. This space is a popular amenity space with both residents and visitors and the public footpath that runs across it connects the town centre with Hubbards Hills.

The substantial grounds of Thorpe Hall and the Deighton Close School cover the area north of the river. There is only a scattering of buildings within the character area which is predominantly green open space, with swathes of mature trees. It is an important part of Louth's setting at the foot of Hubbards Hills and forms the western entrance into the town from the A16.



Thorpe Hall, Elkington Road



Hubbards Hill Mill, Crowtree Lane

Qualities of buildings and their contribution to area

7.12.4 Thorpe Hall is considered to be one of the finest small country houses in Lincolnshire and is Grade II* Listed; its Garden House (entrance lodge), pigeoncote and garden gateway are all individually Grade II Listed. However, despite the large area of land its grounds cover and the array of outbuildings that surround the main house, it has a limited impact on the area. Its grounds are enclosed by brick walls and mature vegetation including very large trees and the house itself is mostly hidden from view along Elkington Road. The substantial chimneystacks of the main house and its street-facing outbuildings are, however, striking.

7.12.5 The original Deighton Close School building is glimpsed from Elkington Road through a break in the dense tree belts which dominate the character area. Otherwise, however, the School buildings and the Thorpe Hall Farm complex are tucked away and only visible from their access road.

7.12.6 Hubbards Hill Mill is nestled in an attractive rural setting at a bend in Crowtree Lane which focuses views on the building, now in residential use. The millworkers cottages to the east of the mill overlook Westgate Fields and sit behind small front gardens, variously enclosed by low brick walls and timber fences. The terrace, which has arched passageways between every two dwellings, has been much altered, but retains its original linear form at the front and its slate roof and shared ridgestacks.

7.12.7 The buildings of the former Thorpe Hall mill are now in residential use and have been significantly altered including an element of new build. Other modern properties have been constructed along Crowtree Lane. Although these dwellings are outside the conservation area, part of their front gardens are within the boundary, presumably because of the mature trees. However, as these trees are under the protection of tree preservation orders, it is now proposed to remove this strip of land from the conservation area.

Building materials and details

7.12.8 The buildings within the character area vary considerably although all are unified by the use of brick as their main building material. There is little man-made interest in the public realm, with the exception of the handful of attractive lantern style streetlights along Westgate / Elkington Road.



Nos. 73-91 Crowtree Lane



Deighton Close School, Elkington Road

7.12.9 Thorpe Hall, in keeping with its importance, displays a wealth of detailing, including ashlar dressings, diaper brickwork, sash windows and moulded gabled dormers. Its old plain tiled hipped roof has brick coped gables and lead dressed hips; the three large ridgestacks have diamond set shafts. The C18 front has a modillioned cornice.

7.12.10 The two former mills have both been painted white and have replacement tiled roofs. Hubbard's Hill Mill has modern timber casement windows, but retains numerous chimneystacks, the most decorative of which is prominent on the street elevation. The Crowtree Lane terrace has replacement windows and doors, but some window heads survive.

7.12.11 The original Deighton Close School exhibits a wide range of 'Arts and Crafts' detailing including turrets, original casement windows (some with stained glass decoration), tile cladding, half-timbering and canted windows with stone dressings. It also has an ornate open porch.



Mercer Row – view west towards Upgate



King Edward VI Grammar School, Crowtree Lane

8.0 KEY CHARACTERISTICS

8.1 Morphology

8.1.1 Pevsner's description of the town centre as "uncommonly compact, with an intricate pattern of streets, no large open spaces, and no obviously principal thoroughfare" summarises perfectly the lasting impression Louth has on the visitor.

8.1.2 The Medieval core at the heart of the town centre has a tight grain which is only occasionally broken by later developments. The larger thoroughfares are connected by narrower routes and alleys which makes the town centre very permeable, despite the tight enclosure.

8.1.3 In contrast to the formal and tightly defined frontages, the rear spaces of many of the older streets in Louth, particularly south of the town centre, form large 'backland' areas which have a more haphazard and unplanned character. Where demolition of the jumble of structures that traditionally formed these 'backlands' has occurred, car parks have often taken their place.

8.1.4 The core of the town is surrounded by residential areas, some of which represent Louth's C18 and C19 expansion. The London Road / Upgate / Bridge Street line forms an approximate social divider between the wealthier and grander western residential areas and the humbler eastern areas.

8.1.5 Louth's wider hinterland generally has a more suburban character, although these areas vary significantly. They include large sites such as the cattlemarket off Newmarket, King Edward VI Grammar School off Crowtree Lane and the old industrial centre at Riverhead.

8.2 Spaces and landscaping

8.2.1 The Market Place and Commarket are the two most important open spaces in the town centre. Amidst the more residential areas and side streets there are fewer noticeable open spaces and landscaping although in the more suburban areas the introduction of gardens adds greatly to the character and appearance of the areas.



Cemetery, London Road



Holy Trinity Church tower, Eastgate

8.2.2 To the west of the town centre, the open area around St James' Church forms the main public green space within the town and is part of the public art trail. It has an attractive setting at the foot of the dominant church and overlooked by good quality buildings, but this is spoiled by the heavily trafficked roads that surround it.

8.2.3 Westgate Fields is the town's main open space and was, before 1800, part of the town's enclosures. It is a popular amenity space and allows good vistas into the conservation area. It forms the link between the leafier suburbs and Hubbards Hills to the east, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

8.2.4 To the south of the town located adjacent to a main route into the town (London Road) is Louth's cemetery with its twin cemetery chapels designed by James Fowler. It is a valuable open space and its attractive tree-lined setting adds greatly to the townscape of the area.

8.3 Views and Landmarks

8.3.1 St James' Church is the dominant landmark feature of the town and the wider area. It is prominent in most locations from within the conservation area and contributes much to the townscape, acting as a waymarker.

8.3.2 The tower of Holy Trinity Church which is all that remains of the rebuilt 1866 church is a local landmark in the eastern part of the town, standing apart from the surrounding residential development. The Market Hall clock tower is another local landmark, most evident from the rising land to the north of the town centre.

8.4 Uses

8.4.1 Louth, typical of most market towns, has a commercial and civic core which is surrounded by mostly residential areas. It is still dominated by the market and its commercial centre which is remarkably free of national chain stores and as a result has a distinctive and attractive character.

8.4.2 The residential areas which encircle this core vary greatly and have a variety of other current and former uses scattered throughout them. Former industrial buildings are common



Eastgate out of town 2: - Eastgate



Westgate

along the River Lud and, of course, at the Riverhead which was the hub of Louth's historical industry.

8.4.3 Street names and buildings are a good indicator of previous uses in an area and contribute to an understanding of Louth's rich history. The former quarry near the London Road cemetery for example is commemorated in the names of Quarry Road and Rock Cottage, whilst to the east, the former Louth Park Monastery lives on in road names such as Monks Dyke Road.

8.5 Character areas

8.5.1 Louth Conservation Area covers most of the historic town and whilst it clearly has a strong identity and 'sense of place' as a whole, its character varies within different parts of the town. Louth can therefore be divided into several distinct 'character areas' which are identifiable because of their distinctive townscape, greater concentrations of particular uses, building types or materials, or presence of open spaces or more modern materials. These areas are identified in Section 7 and their special characteristics defined. The twelve areas are:

1. Town Centre
2. Queen Street
3. St Michael's
4. George Street
5. Westgate
6. Cemetery
7. James Street
8. High Holme
9. St Mary's Lane
10. Lower Eastgate
11. Riverhead
12. Westgate Fields



8.6 Scale and form of buildings

8.6.1 There are few buildings surviving from before the C18, the architecture of which now so characterises the town. There is virtually nothing, therefore, that could be classed as 'vernacular'. However, the 'Ye Olde White Swanne' PH on Eastgate and the Wheatsheaf PH on Westgate (both C17 in origin) provide some indication of the different scale and form the buildings of earlier Louth might have had. They are of two low storeys with steep pantiled roofs and rendered walls.

8.6.2 The tight grain of the town centre with taller narrow buildings reflecting their Medieval origins, gives way to predominantly 2-storey high density terraces to the east with grander 3-storey versions to the west. However, although the town centre buildings are taller, relative to the rest of the town, they do not generally exceed 3-storeys. Those that do are of 4-storeys and relatively scarce and noteworthy as a result, e.g. No.13 Commarket and Nos. 18 & 20 Mercer Row. Only one building is taller, No.24 (Lloyds Bank) Mercer Row which is of 5-storeys.

8.6.3 The terraced properties to the south east and north east of the town centre are commonly of only 2-storeys. However, these are interspersed with small-scale industrial buildings such as the c1825 warehouse on the corner of Lee Street and Kidgate. To the west of this workers' terraced housing, lies the higher-status George Street area which also has terraces or rows of properties, but these are generally more prestigious and less homogenous. They are often of 3-storeys with the earliest along Gospelgate dating from the late C18 with later C19 planned development occurring along George Street particularly.

8.6.4 Larger scale groups of houses, semi-detached properties and detached properties gradually appear in the townscape moving further out of town. Westgate contains a wealth of predominantly C18 and C19 properties of various forms, although generally between two and 3-storeys, producing a varied roofscape. St Mary's Lane is a late C19 / early C20 leafy





Uppgate – view north towards Bridge Street



Nos. 133 & 135 Eastgate

suburb, whilst at the other end of town, along the eastern half of Eastgate, are good groups of C19 buildings including some individual houses of note.

8.6.5 There are a couple of large “country houses” within the conservation area, and these are located on the outskirts of the town, generally to the west. Thorpe Hall is the oldest and lies on the main route into Louth from the A16. To the north in Deighton Close are the only agricultural buildings within the conservation area; they are a reminder of the agricultural trade that was the basis of Louth’s wealth before the construction of the canal.

8.6.6 Former mill buildings are found along the course of the River Lud. These are supplemented by some industrial buildings such as the former factory on James Street. The Riverhead, however, forms the focus of Louth’s industrial past, and a variety of warehouses, mills and associated buildings are clustered around this area.

8.6.7 Public buildings form the other main type of building in the conservation area. Civic buildings such as the Town Hall, Police Station and Market Hall are predominantly located in the town centre and are often highly decorated. There are a range of ecclesiastical buildings including the Parish churches which are complemented by a range of mainly Non-Conformist chapels usually built in a restrained architectural style contrasting with the decorated styles of the Anglican churches and their landmark towers. In addition to these, there are two good groups of Almshouses, built in a traditional courtyard arrangement.

8.6.8 Louth County Hospital, formerly the Workhouse is a large building with an entrance range forming the gateway to the main complex. King Edward VI Grammar School with its historical associations to Tennyson comprises a range of buildings with its associated playing fields in the west of the town.

8.7 Building Materials

8.7.1 Louth is characterised by its use of local materials with brick buildings being the predominant feature of the historic area. The first edition Ordnance Survey map shows a brick and tile works to the north of James Street which must have produced many of the local building materials before the railways brought cheaply imported bricks and slates from other parts of the country.



Market Hall door detail



Nos. 99-103 Kidgate

8.7.2 The C18 bricks are small and of a brown/red colour usually in Flemish or English Garden bond. The C19 bricks are larger and redder with a smoother finish. Some gault bricks were used during the C18 and C19 which are a yellow or yellow grey shade. Many of the town centre buildings are stuccoed or rendered and painted.

8.7.3 Red clay pantiles are the traditional local roofing material and are a very prominent roofing material in the town. They are used on both higher and lower status buildings and outbuildings and can be seen on C18 and C19 buildings throughout the town. In some cases plain clay tiles have also been used but these are less common than pantiles.

8.7.4 Welsh slate is also a prominent roofing material which appears on C19 buildings and some earlier buildings which may have been re-roofed when the railways brought in cheaply imported Welsh slate. There are no examples of thatched properties although many may have been re-roofed with pantiles or slate at a later date. It is the balance between red clay pantile and welsch slate that is very important to Louth's character and this mix should be maintained.

8.8 Local Details

8.8.1 There are many examples of feature and decorative brick work (tumbled brickwork gable ends is an attractive and distinctive feature in the street scene) whilst good quality monochrome and polychrome brick work is found on many public as well as private buildings; the Clock Tower and Market buildings are fine examples of this.

8.8.2 Vertical sliding sashes of the C18 and C19 are the prevailing style in the town. They are generally either 6/6 or 8/8 sashes, although some of the later sashes have 4/4 or narrow margin lights or tripartite sashes. In some instances Yorkshire sliding sashes are also a feature. Tripartite sashes are more common in the later half of the C19 and early C20 as are the larger 4/4 and 2/2 panes. There are many good examples of doors and door cases and attractive fanlights.

8.8.3 Many C19 shopfronts remain which adds to the charm and traditional feel of the town centre, some earlier C18 shopfronts are also visible. The C18 buildings add grandeur to the streets and have many distinctive features which add to the overall quality and appearance of the area, including bow windows and decorative glazing.



No.56 Westgate



Church Street

8.9 Boundaries

8.9.1 Louth has maintained many of its traditional boundary treatments with a large number of brick walls in a variety of styles and bonds. The wall along Schoolhouse Lane is perhaps the most famous of the walls in Louth as it was mentioned by Tennyson in his memoirs of his school days.

8.9.2 Many of the walls which line the lanes and roads around Louth add to a sense of enclosure in the street scene particularly those in Breakneck Lane and Church Street. There are also some good surviving intricately detailed railings which add greatly to their surroundings including the entrance gates and railings at the Orme Almshouses on Eastgate, No.15 Gospelgate and along Westgate.

8.9.3 Hedges and trees also play an important role in forming boundaries both as well kept hedges in suburban areas and more open informal boundaries in the more rural settings of the outer lying properties of the town.

8.10 Public realm

8.10.1 Some of the late Georgian and Victorian stone flags, kerbs, cobbles and other paving and surfacing materials survive, notably along Westgate Place. This has been enhanced with the reinstatement of stone paving and kerbing in the Cornmarket, Market Place and Mercer Row.

8.10.2 Elsewhere in the town, the tradition of Staffordshire blue brick paving with a diamond or square pattern is also evident, particularly along the smaller alleyways. This surfacing material presumably post-dates the arrival of the railway line. Cobbles are generally used today as hard landscaping in car parking areas.

8.10.3 Louth's position on the Greenwich Meridian is celebrated in a series of public art pieces that are located at positions along the Line throughout the town. These art pieces include a series of sculptural figures and a number of plaques set into the ground marking the line of the Meridian. These pieces form part of the Louth Art Trail which links Hubbards Hills to the Riverhead and also includes



New Street



Louth Meridian Trail, St James' Churchyard

sculptures in Westgate Fields.

8.10.4 The Queen Street Bus Station was refurbished in 1993 in a contemporary style, and there have been various town centre enhancement schemes, predominantly focussed on the Market Place. The town centre is lit by a modern lantern style streetlights, whilst more traditional (and presumably older) streetlamps are found along Westgate Fields.



Cemetery, London Road



Nos. 12-16 Ramsgate Road

9.0 PROPOSED BOUNDARY CHANGES

9.0.1 There are five main areas proposed for inclusion in the conservation area, and two minor alterations to the boundary – one exclusion and one addition.

9.1 Additions

Cemetery

9.1.1 The most substantial change to the boundary is the proposed inclusion of the London Road Cemetery which will also involve the inclusion of several properties along Uppgate, Linden Walk, and Newmarket. This will bring the cattlemarket site within the boundary of the conservation area.

9.1.2 The architectural quality of the properties in this area is generally very good, particularly along Linden Walk, and it is an important part of the development of the town. The cemetery and the many good trees in the area are an important area of greenery and open space in this part of Louth. The inclusion of the cattlemarket and properties of lesser quality along Newmarket particularly, will hopefully serve as an opportunity to improve these areas.

Riverhead

9.1.3 Currently only the head of the canal with two Grade II Listed warehouses is within the conservation area boundary. However, there are other warehouses (both listed and unlisted) outside the boundary which form an important part of the historic industrial area of Louth. This area also encompasses good trees which line the canalside and terraced housing once inhabited by the workers of this industrial area. It is an important part of Louth's history and the reason for much of Louth's wealth in the western end of town.

9.1.4 It is also proposed to include the group of houses on the north side of Ramsgate Road, from No.6a to The Grove. These properties include an attractive terrace of three C19 dwellings



Nos. 2-20 Wellington Street



No.23 High Holme Road

which retain much original detailing. The Grove is a large C19 individual House, designed by James Fowler, and it sits in its large gardens, screened by mature trees which contribute to the verdant feel along this road.

James Street

9.1.5 The buildings at the eastern end of James Street form the focus of views north along Ramsgate Road from near its junction with Eastgate. These buildings and those around them are part of Louth's development when the railway was constructed. Some of the properties have the remains of shopfronts, although most have reverted to residential use. It is also proposed to include a small number of properties along Wellington Street which are quite prominent from James Street, particularly No.2 with its double height bay and Wellington Mews which lines the River Lud.

High Holme

9.1.6 It is proposed to extend the conservation area further east along High Holme Road to include a selection of good quality C19 properties. These residential properties exhibit good traditional detailing and most retain their original windows. They show the development of Louth in the later C19 and early C20.

St Mary's Lane

9.1.7 None of the buildings on the north side of St Mary's Lane are currently within the conservation area boundary, but they are a good group of residential properties displaying interesting architectural detailing. The earliest date from the turn of the C19 and C20, although most are later including the distinctive Brendan Lodge which dates from the 1930s and is potentially of listable quality.

Westgate

9.1.8 Elmhurst on Crowtree Lane is shown on the first edition Ordnance Survey map as "The Elms" and retains many of its original features. The property was one of the first large and imposing



Elmhurst, Crowtree Lane



Crowtree Lane – view east

buildings on this side of Crowtree Lane at this date and it forms the focus of views south along Irish Hill. There are many important TPO trees within the garden of this property which add greatly to the character and appearance of the area. In order to maintain a sensible boundary, it is also proposed to include the adjacent No.39 Crowtree Lane.

9.2 Removals

Westgate Fields

9.2.1 The existing conservation area boundary cuts across the modern plot boundaries of Nos. 57-71 (odds) Crowtree Lane. The boundary was presumably drawn before the properties were built and was devised to protect the good tree belt along this side of the road. However, these trees are subject to a Tree Preservation Order and are considered to be adequately protected by this designation. It is therefore proposed to remove this area of from the conservation area to produce a better defined boundary along the edge of the road.



Gospeigate – erosion of traditional detailing with replacement windows and roof covering and loss of chimneystack



Quarry Road – contrast in quality of detailing between original and replacement windows

10.0 KEY ISSUES

10.1 Article 4 Directions

10.1.1 Despite the adoption of The East Lindsey District Council Restriction of Permitted Development (Louth Conservation Area) Order, the use of non-traditional materials (in particular PVCu) for the replacement of windows and doors appears to be increasing. There are groups of, and individual, buildings where Article 4(2) Directions have been successful in retaining original details, but there are also many examples where windows and doors have apparently been altered without consent and no enforcement action has been taken against the owners.

10.1.2 Although some of these properties may already have been altered before the imposition of the directions, there would appear to be a lack of consistency over planning decisions which undermines the strength of the Article 4(2) Direction. In the case of already altered properties, greater encouragement to replace inappropriate alterations with traditional materials and designs should be given to property owners through the imposition of planning conditions and offers of grant aid where available.

10.1.3 Replacement of roofing materials is also a growing problem, particularly along Eastgate where substantial loss of the original Welsh slate has eroded the uniformity of the terraces, and consequently the character of the conservation area.

10.1.4 If building owners are to be encouraged to undertake often expensive enhancement and reinstatement works, then grant aid becomes essential. This is a major problem with the loss of the Council's Historic Building Grants. Without these, and if unauthorised alterations are allowed to continue unchecked, the Article 4(2) Direction is unlikely to be viewed positively by those property owners affected. There also appears to a lack of awareness of the Article 4(2) Direction in some areas of the town; greater publicity of the implications and coverage of the Direction is required.



Kidgate



Market Place

10.1.5 There are many important benefits to be gained from the receipt of a Historic Building Grant:

- Advice on the practical rescue, rather than replacement of historic features.
- To check and advise on specification or estimate details.
- Financial input of a proportion of the costs of repair and preservation for the owner.
- Regular inspection of the work by the Conservation Officer to assess the quality of the contractor's work, who like the owner wishes to ensure the work is of a high quality.
- To support and encourage the work of local skilled craftsmen and suppliers of traditional materials, thereby encouraging inward investment
- To educate owners and contractors in conservation techniques.
- To pump-prime investment in an area and match-fund other sources of grant

10.2 Derelict and vacant buildings and sites

10.2.1 The 'backland' areas which are predominantly found within the town centre, Queen Street and Kidgate areas are susceptible to significant redevelopment and alteration. Many of these spaces are decaying because the marginal uses that occupied the buildings did not keep the buildings in a good state of repair and have now vacated the properties. This is a particular problem with obsolete industrial buildings which are also found in the Riverhead area.

10.2.2 There are a number of gaps in the townscape left by demolished buildings. These are generally found in, or near, the town centre, although there are some sites amongst residential areas, notably the cattlemarket site. These areas tend to become car parks, and as a result, a significant amount of land in Louth is given over to car parking. Although necessary, they are often unattractively surfaced and create open swathes in the townscape which is at odds with the tight grain of the streets.

10.3 Under-use of upper floors

10.3.1 Although vacancies of commercial premises are relatively low, there is a problem with the ineffective use of the upper floors of these buildings. Whilst trading is good, the ground floors of



Poor quality shopfronts



Bede Houses, Gospelegate

buildings are well maintained as are the empty upper floors. However, if there is a downturn in trading, maintenance of the upper floors which are seen as less important might be affected. In order to minimise the risk, better use of the upper floors needs to be made and initiatives such as 'living over the shop' should be investigated. This would also help to enhance the vitality of the town centre after business hours.

10.4 Inappropriate shopfronts

10.4.1 The limited presence of national chain stores and the survival of the market has ensured that there has been little need to alter buildings significantly to meet changing commercial trends. Louth has a number of fine shopfronts from the C19 and even one surviving from the C18 at No.20 Mercer Row. However, there are also a number of inappropriate shopfronts which detract from the streetscene and the building itself, undermining the very character that makes Louth so distinctive and attractive. Initiatives to improve such shopfronts should be encouraged.

10.5 Under-representation on the Statutory List

10.5.1 In the original 1971 survey of Louth, much of the town's Victorian heritage appears to have been overlooked, perhaps because Louth is primarily considered to be a Georgian town and much of the architecture from this period is included on the statutory list. However, Louth's Victorian architecture is very important to the townscape and character of the town. Many key buildings from this time were designed by the prominent local architect, James Fowler whose work is often clearly distinguishable by certain consistent characteristics. It would be very unfortunate if the better, later Victorian buildings were not protected against misdirected alterations.

B) MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS / STRATEGY

11.0 INTRODUCTION

11.1 The following guidance aims to provide the basis of a mid- to long-term management strategy for the Louth Conservation Area. It should be read in conjunction with the East Lindsey District Council Local Plan Alteration 1999 and the Local Development Framework which will replace it in the next couple of years. In addition to the appropriate planning policies, other statutory requirements such as 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.



Traditional shopfronts



Traditional painted sign, Northgate

12.0 POLICY GUIDANCE

12.1 Shopfronts and signage

12.1.1 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.

12.1.2 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. [Guiding principles to be used in the design of new shopfronts and signage were produced in the unsuccessful Louth Townscape Heritage Initiative Stage Two document (October 2004) produced by East Lindsey District Council. This guidance is reproduced in Appendix 1.]

12.1.3 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.

12.2 New buildings and alterations to existing buildings

12.2.1 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



James Street



Kiln Lane

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.

12.3 Demolition

12.3.1 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.

12.3.2 The demolition of other buildings in the area will only be approved if:

- 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.'



12.4 Public Realm works

12.4.1 Where historic paving materials, associated ironwork and street furniture survive in Louth, these should be 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.

12.5 Protection of views

12.5.1 Redevelopment proposals which will block or detrimentally affect views of or from the local landmarks – St James' Church spire, Market Hall clock tower and Holy Trinity church tower – will not be approved unless there are over-riding public benefits arising from the proposed development or compensatory views of the landmark can be created elsewhere.

12.5.2 Care will be taken to ensure that new street planting does not obscure the views of or from the local landmarks. This will require care in the location and selection of appropriate species which can be managed to maintain and enhance important views.

12.5.3 Where development is proposed, the opportunity should be taken to create views of local landmarks in order to visually link the area to the rest of the town. The roofscape, materials and pattern/form of development will be very important in ensuring that new development is unified with the existing in views from local landmarks.

13.0 ENFORCEMENT

13.1 Enforcement has a key role to play in the protection of Louth Conservation Area, in particular with regard to the Article 4(2) Direction. Enforcement of such directions is often reactive, only resulting in investigation once a formal complaint is made. For the Louth 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 keep contraventions to a minimum 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, the local authority 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 an occupied 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 ODPM'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, if Article 4(2) directions are applied to properties in Louth; these will withdraw permitted development rights 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 is seeking to preserve those features which are important to the character and appearance of Louth 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 Louth, 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 conservation area which has limited public open space, the management and protection of trees in private ownership is very important. The use of further Tree Preservation Orders should be considered on the trees that contribute to the appearance of the conservation area, particularly in the west of the conservation area, but also along Eastgate and London Road including the cemetery. The District Council will encourage and work with owners towards the production of management plans for those trees in private land.

15.2 In order to preserve the character of the few green spaces and trees that are within the public domain, the District Council will work 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. In the case of the area around St James' Church, any proposals should seek to significantly enhance the setting of the church and improve pedestrian and cycling conditions. The use of Tree Preservation Orders should also be considered.

16.0 RESOURCES AND MONITORING

16.1 Resources, both financial and in terms of staffing, are often limited, and must therefore be directed 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

- An Urban Design Study for Louth [Matrix Partnership, 2004]
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