



St Nicholas area Conservation Area Character Statement



St Nicholas' Chapel, in St. Ann's Street, near the north extremity of the town, is a chapel of ease to St Margaret's. The estate belonging to St Nicholas' Chapel, for repairs, etc., has been vested in trust from an early period, and consists of three houses, 17A, 3R, 34p of land, and a mill and house, in Gaywood, and 13 houses, etc., in the town. A yearly rent-charge of 40s., for the use of this chapel, has been paid by the corporation since 1658.

William White 1845

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1 Introduction

A Conservation Area - “An area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”.

The conservation of the historic environment is part of our quality of life, helping to foster economic prosperity and providing an attractive environment in which to live or work. The Borough Council is committed to the protection and enhancement of West Norfolk's historic built environment and significant parts of it are designated as conservation areas.

Conservation areas were introduced by the 1967 Civic Amenities Act. Local Authorities were required to identify areas of special architectural or historic interest, whose character or appearance it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and to designate them as conservation areas. This duty is now part of the 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act which also requires the review of existing conservation areas and, where appropriate, the designation of new ones. The quality and interest of a conservation area depends upon a combination of factors including the relationship and architectural quality of buildings, materials, spaces, trees and other landscape features, together with views into and out of the area.

The King's Lynn Conservation Area was first designated in 1969 and extended in 1979 and 1991.. This document highlights the special qualities which underpin the character of the conservation area, justifying its designation. It also seeks to increase awareness of those qualities so that where changes to the environment occur, they do so in a sympathetic way without harm to the

essential character of the area. This type of assessment has been encouraged by Government Advice (PPG15) and it has been adopted as supplementary planning guidance

This character statement does not address enhancement proposals. Community led enhancement schemes will be considered as part of a separate process.

2 Setting and Location

King's Lynn stands at the south-east corner of The Wash, but several kilometres from open water, at the outflow of the River Great Ouse, 170 kilometres (106 miles) from London, 69 kilometres (43 miles) west-north-west of Norwich, 74 kilometres (46 miles) north of Cambridge and 56 kilometres (35 miles) north-east of Peterborough.



Its location at the mouth of the Ouse, and the inland waterways that it serves, brought the port its early success. The basins of the

Gaywood River and the River Nar enter the town from the north-west and the south so the land is flat, and indeed much of it is reclaimed from the sea. But 11 kilometres (7 miles) to the east, the ridge of the western chalk escarpment rises to over 90 metres along the roughly north-south line of the Peddar's Way. King's Lynn is a low-lying conurbation, with salt marshes to the north and the dyke-lined Fens stretching away to south and west, often below sea-level. Huge skies dominate the nearly featureless, tree-swept landscape. Beyond Lynn to the north-west is the Wash. From King's Lynn itself views are limited, for nowhere in the conservation area does the land dip below three metres or rise to six metres above sea-level. There are good views within the town, but to architecture not landscape, with the exception of The Walks. One of the best views is from West Lynn over the River Great Ouse to the long and varied quays of the town.

The whole area is agricultural, with the soil of the Fens being among the most productive in Europe. Vegetables for freezing and processing are grown locally and this determines the nature of the bulk of Lynn's indigenous industry, with the product going by road and from the port of Lynn. The town is in the centre of a local agricultural catchment area, with small- or medium-sized market towns, and the nearest population centre which exceeds Lynn's 35,000 is the city of Peterborough.

3 King's Lynn - Origins and Historical Development

King's Lynn has its origins in the Saxon period, but the first settlement was small, based round a series of salt-water lagoons defined by the Millfleet to the north and the

River Nar to the south. On the west side were marshes and the open sea, but this has disappeared with the silting of The Wash and the deviation in the course of the River Ouse. The economy was based on fishing, some coastal trade and the production of salt, but it was not a major settlement until Bishop Herbert de Losinga founded the new town in c1100 and began construction of the priory church of St Margaret. Losinga's town was established to the north of the existing settlement, roughly between the Millfleet and the Purfleet with the market at Saturday Market Place.

Benefiting from the patronage of successive bishops of East Anglia, Losinga's new town became a significant regional trading centre and expanded so rapidly that by the middle of the twelfth Century the 'newe lande' to the north, between the Purfleet and the Fisherfleet, was developed by Bishop Turbe. A second market in Tuesday Market Place was established, and St Nicholas's chapel constructed as a chapel-of-ease to St Margaret. The number of religious houses built by the mendicant friars is, as always, a sign of the importance of a town, and in Lynn they arrived early and in numbers: the Greyfriars in about 1230, the Blackfriars in 1272, the Austin friars in 1293 and the Whitefriars in about 1260. To protect these and the expanding European trade the original defence earthworks were replaced to the north and north-east by flint and brick walls begun in the 1290s and running as far south as the Purfleet. South of that, as far as the South Gates, was a system of ditches and earthworks fed by the two rivers, the two fleets and by a canal dug to link the Nar and the southeast quadrant of the defences. Lynn

relied on water for landward defences as it relied on the River Great Ouse and The Wash for its prosperity.



Most trade went by sea and river, and there is evidence that ocean-going ships unloaded at quays into river craft for distribution inland. Merchants from the Low Countries had by the 12th Century established the Continental trade in wool: in the 1260s 1200 bales were exported, rising to 2000 by the early 14th Century. In the other direction came Gascon wine, coal, Baltic timber and luxury goods, especially after the Hanseatic League established a trading centre in Lynn. After that only London and Southampton (also with Hansa offices) beat Lynn in export volume and value. In less than 200 years Lynn grew from an obscure Saxon settlement crouching by a salt-water lagoon into the third greatest port of England.

From the 16th Century cereal export dominated, with coal, wine and timber constituting the principal return loads, and by the 18th Century Lynn and Yarmouth were the principal grain handling ports in England. In 1800 these two centres handled more grain traffic than all other ports in England put together. No wonder Defoe

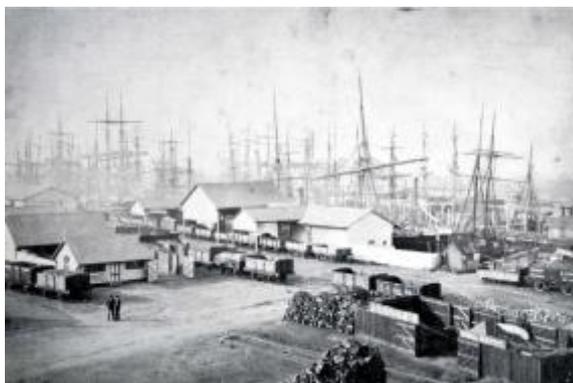
attributed 'more gentry and gaiety' to Lynn than to Norwich: the merchants could afford it.



Trade declined in the 19th Century. First were the Napoleonic Wars, a disaster for a town which specialised in European trade, not with the expanding world empire. In 1844 came the railway, with more convenient and reliable access to the eastern counties, causing a slump in coastal trade. By the last quarter of the Century rail communications from Lynn were some of the best in England, including easy access to London and Hull, stifling the interests of owners of small ships. To compensate, the Alexandra Dock was opened in 1869. Located north of the Fisher Fleet it was capable of taking larger deep-draught vessels and eliminating the big problem in Lynn - the tidal nature of the River Great Ouse which meant that loading and unloading had to be done at the turn of each high tide. The Bentinck Dock followed in 1883, but the great trading days of the port were over.

There was always industry in Lynn: shipbuilding from medieval times, and heavy engineering following the construction of the docks and the arrival of the railway. Traction engines, farm machinery and fairground rides were made at the Savage works, and Dodman's Highgate Ironworks of 1875 made boilers, locomotives and ships. Cooper Roller

Bearings, founded in 1894, is the only surviving engineering works of the 19th Century period.



The period between the wars saw factories serving the new food processing industry, and in 1958 the most famous, Campbells, set up its factory in South Lynn. The post-war industrial boom experienced by King's Lynn prompted the London overspill scheme of 1962, which envisaged a population increase from 25,000 to 50,000 in twenty years. Encouraged by the local authority, fifty new companies came to the industrial estate at Hardwick, south-east of the town, requiring 5,000 extra employees. More houses were provided on the three existing satellite estates to accommodate the surge in population to 38,000 in 1975, and, infamously, the redevelopment of the town centre. Between 1962 and 1971 one fifth of historic King's Lynn disappeared in the area between London Road and the High Street in favour of new shopping malls and pedestrianised streets.

How is this history reflected in the built environment of the town? Power began to pass early from the bishops, but was encouraged by them. Bishop John Grey (1200-22) petitioned King John to grant Lynn a charter to be a free borough, but it was Henry VIII who granted the governing charter

setting up the municipal system of mayor, aldermen and councillors. Almost all of them were successful merchants who before the Reformation conducted town business in the Trinity Guildhall, Saturday Market Place.

Until the Reformation Lynn was concentrated in the strip of land near the river front, with large areas of open ground to the east stretching up to the town walls and ditches. Only the two main highways to the permanent gates of East Gate and South Gate were built up with houses and shops. East of a line roughly following the present Friars Street, All Saints Street, Tower Street and Chapel Street were the fields and the precincts of the friars. An exception was the Whitefriars, whose house to the west of Friars Street to the south-west of the centre survives only as a gatehouse. South-east of All Saints church were open fields and rope-walks.

This pattern of land use remained essentially the same until the first years of the 19th Century. John Wood's 1830 plan (Appendix 2 Map 4) indicates that the two central fleets were still open waterways, much reduced in width, and the southern spur of the Fisherfleet was still identifiable. The first systematic encroachments of the open lands were the development of the Valingers Road area in 1807, the new London Road of 1803-06 and the railway quarter built over the Blackfriars' land north of the Purfleet in the late 1840s and 1850s. These new streets were lined with terraces, and it is terraces that are the most important 19th Century contribution to the town's character.

The remainder of the open land was also being encroached. East of London Road came Windsor Place and Guanock Terrace, and the roads opening north of them, and in the same area south of the Millfleet was the

hospital. The most remarkable and important survivor of the old fields however is The Walks, one of the earliest municipal parks in the country intended for public recreation. The New Walk (the present Broad Walk) was well established by 1753, and planted with trees and hedges, with seats added, by 1762. The Town Wall Walk was laid out in 1800-27, covering an area from Guanock Terrace in the south to Kettle Mills in the north, but was bisected in 1844 by the railway, and the northern section closed in 1870. Further expansions in the 19th & 20th Centuries enlarged and consolidated The Walks (St James' Park 1903, St John's Walk 1906, the Recreation ground east of the walls on land bought between the Wars), so that today a realistic impression can be appreciated of the openness of the land in this part of Lynn through a millennium.

Domestic buildings and those with dual domestic and commercial function survive early in Lynn, the earliest being the stone-built Norman hall at 28-30 King Street, which, when new, looked straight out over the lagoon on the other (west) side of the street. Courtyard houses were confined to the first medieval town, on the west side of Nelson Street and Queen Street where the sea-bank allowed larger plots and where land was available up to the beginning of the 16th Century. Hampton Court and Clifton House were both begun in the 14th Century and Thoresby College in about 1500. More common are houses of an L-shaped plan, with a street front often used for shops, and a range running back at the rear, which contained the Hall. Nearly all the houses on the west sides of Queen and King Streets are of this type, the latter more altered than the former. This plan predominated from the 14th Century. Houses with shops began to disappear after 1560.

Almost every house in Queen Street and King Street has a Georgian front added to an earlier building, for example the early 19th Century front at No.14 King Street conceals a late 17th Century double-pile plan. None of the 18th Century houses had warehouses incorporated within them, and of grander 19th Century houses there is nothing remarkable in King's Lynn. The story is rather of terraced houses, all typical and beginning late, but of generally high quality, especially those in the developments round London Road. In the thirty years from 1821 1,384 houses were built in Lynn. King's Lynn also had its slums, situated in about 160 alleys or yards off the main thoroughfares, in which lived nearly a third of the town's population. Some of these survive and have been restored, but most succumbed to slum clearances in the 1920s and 30s. The gradual expansion of the town outside the walls continued throughout the 19th Century, but major planned developments came with the 20th Century, with council houses going up at Gaywood and North Lynn to the east and north, and at South Lynn.

Warehouses are more remarkable. The river front moved west releasing land and from the 13th Century it became possible to build on narrow plots along the west side of King Street. These plots were elongated in stages until river movement ceased in this area in the 17th Century. The movement of the river in the first town was rather slower, but began earlier when there was less pressure for land by the river. This resulted in more generous sized plots, reflected today in the surviving buildings dating from the 14th - 17th Century around open courtyards. Warehouse design changed from the later 15th Century from ranges parallel to the river, as at Hampton Court, to blocks set gable-end to the river, such as the Hanseatic Warehouse of about

1477 on St Margaret's Lane, the latter configuration capable of extension as necessary. St George's Guildhall on King Street of 1410-30 has behind it a whole series of added warehouses extending to the watergate at the river.

4 King's Lynn Conservation Area - 1969 to 2001

The original King's Lynn Conservation Area was designated in 1969, following the introduction of the concept of conservation areas in the Civic Amenities Act of 1967. At that time the conservation area was confined to the streets surrounding St Nicholas Chapel/Tuesday Market Place, and St Margaret's Church/Saturday Market Place, linked by King Street and Queen Street. (Appendix 1 Map 1).

In 1978 a re-appraisal of the historic character of King's Lynn within the old town walls was undertaken. The study area was divided into 18 zones with 10 of these zones forming the basis for a new, enlarged conservation area, adopted by the Borough Council in March 1979. (Appendix 1 Map 2).

In 1991 a minor extension to the conservation area was made in Stonegate Street to protect the remains of an historic house and shop contained within a printing works. Further minor adjustments were made in 1992 to accord with new base maps. There have been no additional changes since that time.

In the early 1980's the Borough Council became increasingly concerned about the alterations to the exterior of unlisted historic buildings which owners were making under normal 'permitted development' rights. The effect was to dilute the special character of

the conservation area by changes such as slate/clay roofs to concrete tiled roofs, and plastic windows replacing traditional timber frames. In 1983, at the Council's request, the Secretary of State for the Environment approved an 'Article 4 Direction' for King's Lynn Conservation Area under the Town and Country Planning General Development Orders 1977-81. The effect was to remove 'permitted development' rights for certain types of development, requiring formal planning permission to be sought.

5 Changes to the King's Lynn Conservation Area 2003

Through many centuries of development King's Lynn exhibits a complex traditional character. As a result of the review in 2003 it was felt that the existing single, large conservation area did not adequately reflect the clear pattern of growth which can be seen in the physical make-up of the town centre.

So the existing conservation area has been sub-divided into five new conservation areas with boundaries which define the main historic periods of development (Appendix 1 Map 3 shows the extent of these areas). Character Statements for each area have been written to highlight their special features and were approved by the Borough Council in 2003 and the text has been fully revised in November 2008.

6 St Nicholas - Origins and Historical Development

This area is different from any other in King's Lynn, in that it did not grow organically out of an existing settlement, but was instead founded about 1145 as a new town, or 'newe lande' by Bishop Turbe of Norwich. The site

was the low-lying marshy ground north of the Purfleet and south of the River Gay, and the circumstances permitted a planned layout of streets and tenements. Like most new towns of the period a grid plan was adopted, though at Lynn not in a particularly pronounced way, although a rectilinear emphasis may be identified. The most important factor was the position of the River Great Ouse which until c. 1300 washed the west sides of King Street (then Checker Street), Tuesday Market Place and St Ann's Street (Northirne), at the north end of which was the River Gay. It is on the east sides of these streets that the earliest buildings occur, or are known to have existed. St Ann's Street was the location of the first chapel of St Nicholas, but the earliest fragments are of c. 1225 at the west end, and, next to it, was a fine Norman stone hall mentioned in 1187 as standing on the sea-bank. On King Street Nos. 28-32 is also a Norman stone hall, this time with plenty of original fabric, and there must have been others in the vicinity. Most buildings however would have been of timber, small, low and with undeveloped plans, and of these we have no evidence except for the enduring legacy of long rectangular building plots with the short end towards the street frontages.

The continuation of St Ann's Street to the south was Chapel Street (Listergate), linking up with Norfolk Street (Damgate & Grassmarket) and further south along the line of Broad Street to Belvacos Bridge over the Purfleet. The other bridge, Stone Bridge, carried High Street (Briggate) across the Purfleet to connect Tuesday Market Place with the older Saturday Market Place. This basic pattern is much as it is today, and further development, known from the Survey of the Newe Lande of c. 1250, indicates the addition of built-up streets at Austin Street

(Hopman's Way), Pilot Street, North Street between Pilot Street and St Ann's Street, Surrey Street (Jew's Lane), and Cowgate. Cowgate continued the line of Norfolk Street to King Street and the landing quays, but had disappeared by the early 16th Century under housing and warehouses. All other streets in this conservation area appeared later.

By the end of the 14th Century the river had moved sufficiently to allow construction on the west sides of the streets formerly marking the shore, and there are 14th Century survivors to record the fact: - the splendid brick vaulted cellars of No. 18 Tuesday Market Place on the corner with Page Stair Lane, the brick L-plan hall house at Nos. 7-9 King Street, Nos. 40-42 King Street, 2A-C St Ann's Street, and even earlier, the 13th Century Nos. 4-6 St Ann's Street. One outcome was the redundancy of the north and west sides of Tuesday Market as landing quays, and the same along King Street, and to compensate warehouses were built, usually combined with the domestic quarters of the merchants who owned them.

By 1600 the river was far enough west to permit the completion of finger developments at Page Stair Lane, Water Lane, Ferry Street, Ferry Lane and Purfleet Quay, and it was on these streets and in the rear yards of merchant's houses that the system of warehouses grew up.

By the early 15th Century it was realised that the older warehouse plan, parallel to the street, which had probably been the first type of warehouse in this area, was at risk of redundancy as the river moved west. Several of these survive south of the Purfleet, but all of those to the north were replaced with warehouses edge on to the street, which

could be added to as and when necessary. This explains the pattern of building west of King Street especially, of long narrow warehouse or domestic ranges gable-end on to each other. The series begun about 1420 to the rear of St George's Guildhall is a celebrated example, becoming later and later until the present watergate was finally reached. King Street and Tuesday Market Place turned from an extended quayside with houses on the east sides only to prosperous residential areas, the headquarters of the merchant families, and a major produce market.



The other streets quickly took on a specialised commercial character, always combined with domestic function, and the greatest concentration of tenements in the mid 13th Century was in the island formed between Surrey Street and Norfolk Street, along Norfolk Street to Broad Street, and all of High Street as far south as the Purfleet. The usual trades were all represented, and by the late 16th Century the short length of Norfolk Street from High Street to Broad Street had four public houses on the south side alone; not cheap ale-houses but substantial establishments. The Jewish quarter up until the massacre in 1189 was centred east of Tuesday Market around Surrey Street (still called Jews Lane until the

1860s), and the northern section of High Street was called Mercer's Row (dealers in high-quality textiles) until the late 18th Century. To provide for these trades new quays were set up on the river bank from the later 15th Century. The established merchants with their own river-front warehouses off King Street had, of course, their own private wharves, but more public access was required, especially in the area west of Tuesday Market Place. By the mid 16th Century public wharves opened at St Ann's Fort, north of the Market where the timber yards now are, linked by two new roads of which the only remnant is the passage to the east of No. 14 Tuesday Market Place., Four new wharves formed the area which became Common Staithe Quay, at the west end of Ferry Lane, and more were built at Purfleet Quay in the south.



Two further new streets sprang up to carry goods: Market Lane (Pillory Lane) and Purfleet Street, which also had a public wharf. In addition a third bridge across the Purfleet appeared, at the south end of King Street.

This street pattern was similar by the time of Henry Bell's plan of c. 1670 (Appendix 2 Map 1), but by this time the whole of this

conservation area was developed with housing and shops to the extent that it is today, without agricultural open spaces. There was no development other than fish ponds north of the River Gay, apart from the distant line of the 1643 town defences. Rastrick's 1725 plan (Appendix 2 Map 2) is essentially the same, and the modern plans, beginning with John Wood's of 1830 (Appendix 2 Map 4) indicate only minor differences. By then the area north of the Tuesday Market was a honeycomb of yards and lanes serving private quays of merchants such as William Bagge (who also owned the entire block on the south of Page Stair Lane) and Thomas Allen. Tuesday Market Place became the home of banks, hotels, a market house and splendid private residences, the best of which was the fourteen-bay mansion on the west side built in 1703 for Sir Charles Turner by Henry Bell. The large blocks east and west of King Street were still warehouses, but also breweries, John Aikman's foundry and timber yards. Facing the High Street were shops and the premises of carpenters, mercers, goldsmiths and others, mostly living above the shop in properties developed and redeveloped throughout the 18th & 19th Centuries. There was no room and no need for the early 19th Century terraces and urban development that were beginning to have an impact in south Lynn, and similarly no call for the mid 19th Century expansion of terraces after the opening of the railway.

Topographically the major change came around 1850, when the Ouse changed course again, assisted by human effort. Up to then the east bank cut sharply north-east from Common Staithe Quay to St Ann's Fort, but by 1857 it ran nearly due north, releasing further acres for development, particularly of the Alexandra Dock in 1869 and the

Bentinck Dock in 1883. There was an entire fishing community based in the North End area, served by Fisherfleet at the mouth of the River Gaywood, as it then was. Following the slum clearances of the 1920s and 30s, the only survivors of two large blocks which comprised hundreds of houses north and south of North Street are the two cottages, c.1780, behind True's Yard and two pubs - the former 'Naval Reserve' and the building occupied by S & T Shipping Ltd.



With the decline in shipping and Continental trade in the later 19th Century – the new docks were intended to reverse this – Tuesday Market Place and King Street rapidly became the province of the professional classes rather than of traders and merchants. The big merchant families of course maintained addresses in these streets, but even from the start of the 19th Century this area was quickly becoming the commercial and legal centre. The process increased with the 20th Century so today both these streets are the home to banks, doctors, solicitors estate agents and insurance companies. In 1822 the situation had been much more varied. For example, Tuesday Market Place had two lawyers, one bank (Benjamin Massey & Co), a printers, two chemists, a confectioner, a corn

merchant, the Equitable Life Insurance office, a glover, a grocer, two high-class inns (the Globe and the Duke's Head), two taverns (the Angel and the Maid's Head), an ironmonger, a machine maker, a maltster, a plumber and glazier, a saddler, two silversmiths, a clockmaker, a chandler, a wine & spirit merchant, and a tea & coffee merchant. These are high-class trades and professions, and there were no boot and shoe manufacturers, for instance, or brush makers or milliners. King Street was already attracting surgeons and banks, and all of them required smart new frontages even if a medieval timber-framed house lay behind. That process had been in train since the early 18th Century, and gives the main streets in this area the character and identity they have today.

7 Character Overview

The area is flat, so that there is only a total north-south deviance of 30 cms along the 650 metres (11 inches in 710 yards) between the conservation area boundaries,

but a gentle rise from west to east of 1.5 metres over 190 metres (5 feet over 207 yards).



Apart from the west side of St Anns Street and the area around St Nicholas' chapel, there are few trees in this entirely man-made environment. The character comes from the facades of the houses facing each other across the streets and in the great open squares of Tuesday Market Place and Common Staithe Quay, both soaked in maritime history. Almost all of the buildings in the conservation area are individually designed, and this variation within established themes means that, unusually, there is not a single terrace of houses with identical plans and elevations. There are no through traffic routes in this part of King's Lynn, partly because Norfolk Street is pedestrianised at the west end and partly

because John Kennedy Road carries the bulk of traffic sufficiently far to the east to be unnoticeable. The area immediately surrounding St Nicholas' chapel is therefore surprisingly quiet, without many shops, which leaves Pilot Street as a perfect example of the traditional English street scene, clearly cherished by its residents. Good modern residential developments at St Nicholas Close and North Hirne Court complement the existing medieval houses to be found in the area, and the trees contribute enormously.

Tuesday Market Place is different. Always a cosmopolitan square and one of the largest in provincial England, it is lined with splendid facades, only three of which are not listed buildings. It bustles with activity, and despite the sea of parked cars in the centre each side is visible from the other, partly due to the absence of tall trees which disappeared around the turn of the 20th Century. Smaller trees have been replanted in recent years and a more mature specimen graces the south-west corner, but the impression is of architecture defining the space, that is of centuries-old money creating a setting for its own display. It is a square which could only be created by the mercantile classes of the 17th & 18th Centuries. These centuries, plus inevitably the 19th, are the visually dominating ones, and the style is Georgian.

The same may be said of King Street, both the street and the square benefiting from discreet street lamp standards and only a few examples of the excessive use of signs. One end of King Street can only just be seen from the other, due to a slight curve at the half-way point, but it is a wide street, perfect

for the display of the sober but emphatic Georgian facades attached to the medieval buildings behind.



To the west of King Street is a series of narrow alleys leading to courtyards and the former warehouses or brewery complexes of 15th to 19th Century merchant families, many of which have found new uses in recent decades. The scale and atmosphere of the yards is virtually the same today as it was in 1750, with a crucial exception: now it is residential, not the teeming place of work for storemen, carriers, victualers, coopers and all the other trades supported by an ancient and thriving sea-port. Any work done in this area is by professional men and women in their converted offices, and there is enough of that to keep the street busy, but not congested. King Street seems to have found a perfect balance and, if this were possible, seems pleased with the outcome. The residents have an exceptional appreciation of the cultural and historical value of the properties they hold for the coming generations.

The High Street is different again. It has always been a street of shops, artificers and craftsmen, so little has changed, except perhaps for the pedestrianised areas and the consequent need for new service roads

behind the frontages to the east and west. There are the usual unfortunate brash shop signs and fascia boards, but the architecture above them remains varied and of real quality. Apart from some amalgamated plots, mainly associated with post-war developments to the south end of the street near Purfleet Street, the shops remain of small frontage, even if they do reach far back. The short length of Norfolk Street maintains the balance achieved by the remainder of the street: plenty of excellent brown brick facades from the early 19th Century holding their corner against the occasional modern façade.



The two other areas are also of significance. To the south is the quiet, narrow Purfleet Quay heralded by the Custom House, but with echoes of its mercantile past in the warehouses on the north. Common Staithe

Quay has no warehouses, but a good Pilot Office and fine views of the river and north to Trinity Quay (1990), one of the best residential developments in this quarter. The quay is irregular in shape but large enough to limit the scale and impact of the buildings surrounding it on three sides.

8 Spaces and Buildings

The north end of the conservation area is very open at the junction between St Ann's Street and North Street. The 19th Century No. 5 **St Ann's Fort**, on the north-east corner is visually important, and beyond it to the west is a car park and a post-war port building. To the south-west is a modern red brick wall blocking access to the loading yards. Above this swing the cranes of the yards beyond. A strip of land curving around the northern part of the Conservation Area here is proposed for removal from the Conservation Area (see Area A on the map) as it does not reinforce its character and the revised boundary much more accurately reflects boundaries on the ground. The south side is closed by Nos. 8-12, rebuilt houses designed to directly replace their predecessors. At the south-east corner of the road junction stands True's Yard, and then the narrower **St Ann's Street** runs off to the south. The east side commences with a 2-storey group of a former public house and a pair of shops amalgamated into one (Nos. 3 & 5), all with good late 19th Century shopfronts and containing the remains of a smoke house at the rear, and then the taller irregular return of **St Nicholas Close**. Then the street opens up into the **chapel yard** and the **chapel of St Nicholas**. Both are rewarding. The yard has an extensive set of railings and gates with an overthrow dated 1749, and is studded with mature trees, while

the chapel itself is a majestic stone structure of the early 15th Century and earlier with a plan-form of European importance.



The view north up St Ann's Street is pleasantly constricted by the chapel yard trees and one opposite in the corner of the car park to the Tudor Rose Hotel, where brick walls screen the cars. The wall ends at No. 20, presenting a shaped gable to the street, and then the recessed bulk of the 17th Century St Ann's House (Nos. 14-18), listed and with modern railings and a low wall of brick and stone marking the front boundary. To the north of it is North Hirne Court, a discreet modern design whose 1950s frontage to the street at Nos. 8-10 matches the size and scale of No. 12, a balanced late 18th Century stuccoed house six bays wide. The modern building does not compromise the lower, rendered, II* medieval hall house at Nos. 4-6, partly due to the similar heights of the roof ridge. Immediately there is another medieval hall house, No. 2, and, at the corner No. 7 St Ann's Fort, a 16th Century timber-framed house and shop.

The west side of **Chapel Street** is within this conservation area. The view north from Norfolk Street is narrowed by the sheer brick walls of stores, but opens quickly into **Surrey**

Yard. On the north corner is a post-war building, and the yard itself is a car park lined with the backs of Norfolk Street premises to the south.



Several young trees provide the green relief, and beyond to the west loom the brick extensions to Marks & Spencer on High Street. North of the Yard Chapel Street continues with two 19th Century shops and flats and the 17th Century No. 25. The street opens out again on the west, for the car park of the **Duke's Head Hotel**, improved by three beds of trees and shrubs lining the road, but compromised by the yellow brick pile of the 1967 hotel extension set far back from the street line. The Market Lane junction is marked by the timber-framed **Lattice House**, one of Lynn's restoration triumphs of the early 1980s. The largest of the street's three car parks turns the corner with St Nicholas Street, defined by low post and rail fencing and with a few trees, but with a heavier screen of trees to the west. The south side of the car park is closed by the restored and converted **Fells Warehouse**, originally of the early 19th Century and actually on Market Lane. Isolated at the north-east corner of the car park is No. 26

St Nicholas Street, one of Lynn's many early 19th Century houses of Wisbech brown brick.



Opposite, on the east side of Chapel Street, is the new development at No. 76, then a very good late 18th Century pair, Nos. 78 & 80, the last with its north return facing the chapel yard. A small amendment has been made to the Conservation Area here to realign the boundary with the kerb line.

The west end of **Austin Street** has escaped the post-war developments, although the large corner building already noted, No. 76, is a new innovative low energy building designed by Jeremy Stacey Architects, completed in 2001. It extends a considerable distance along the road, facing an excellent high 18th Century brick wall. South of the wall is King's Court, with trees, and within the wall are the remains of the 15th Century Gateway to the Austin Friars precinct. Beyond this to the east the scene opens into the enormous Austin Street car park, mitigated by the screen of low trees on the south, and taller ones to the north by Regis House. On the north side Chapel Lane leading to Pilot Street runs towards St Nicholas', the junction marked by a prominent former workshop with brickwork

in the west return dating from the 17th to the 19th Centuries. Beyond that is the wide four-bay facade of the early 18th Century No. 15, Austin House, recessed behind a hedged garden wall, and its later extension at right angles, No. 15A. This is an excellent group of three, but further east is all 1970s with the tower blocks of Regis House and Priory House (the former redeveloped as flats), but these are outside the conservation area.



Pilot Street is one of those residential streets found in major towns that escaped continuing postwar slum clearances in the late 1940s and 1950s by accident rather than design, and, like Elm Hill in Norwich, became instead a valued example of the merits of renovation over demolition. It has everything – a major chapel dominating it, fine 18th Century railings, a cobbled street surface, a line of houses of real quality and charm, (one of national importance), few cars, a serpentine course giving sudden changes of view, and trees. The view north from Austin Street is towards the Perpendicular windows of the chapel, masked by mature trees, with a good 17th Century brick wall on the east and on the west two modern brick cottages, followed by the **Exorcist's House**

facing the chapel. The Exorcist's house is dated 1635 and has a prominent Dutch gable facing north, one of the earliest known Dutch gables in England. The street turns east, with the 1749 chapel yard railings on the north and the continuation of the 17th Century wall on the south (partly rebuilt in this stretch). At the next turn north is a series of good, mainly 19th Century two-storey houses, Nos. 8-18 (evens), followed by another group, Nos. 22-32 (evens), becoming progressively older until the II* timber-framed 15th Century parallel hall house is reached at Nos. 28-32. Two shopfronts in the street indicate past commercial activity. Of enormous value are the mature trees in the chapel yard, and at the north end the rather garish orange brick of the modern St Nicholas Close closes the view.

At the north end an alley cuts south-east back into the late 20th Century and the thunder of **John Kennedy Road**, a product of the early 1960s. The east side of this road is outside the conservation area, and is dominated by widely-spaced post-war industrial units and factory premises, but the view north and south still has trees. Turning north to **North Street** is a similar prospect: 1950s buildings on the north, outside the conservation area, and trees on the south, partly screening the well and variously designed **St Nicholas Court** of 1975-7, with the spire of St Nicholas' rising above them beyond the foliage screen. At the west end is **True's Yard**, consisting of an early 18th Century house fronting North Street and the former Naval Reserve pub on St Ann's Street, both taken in for a museum and research centre in 1990-1. Behind them are

two late 18th Century fishermen's cottages, the last representatives of hundreds to have been built in this fishing quarter of Lynn.



St Nicholas Street links St Ann's Street with Tuesday Market Place. Its south side is mainly a car park, with the remains of the 15th Century doorway to a tenement yard which collapsed in 1952. On the north side stands the group of three buildings comprising the Tudor Rose Hotel, grade II* and which has a superb mid 15th Century doorway and traceried door. With the bulk of the 1960s Lovell House Tuesday Market Place is reached. Immediately west of Lovell House is a yard closed to the north-west by a concrete sectional wall; this area has been removed from the Conservation Area as it does not contribute to its character. Beyond this are the marshalling yards and transit sheds of the timber yard occupying the southern part of the domain of the port of King's Lynn. The juxtaposition indicates how mixed this area is, and how close is the connection between late medieval housing and international trading interests: in a sentence this is the story of Lynn. To the north-east is a surprising density of trees, appearing from this point as thick as a wood, located at the rear of St Ann's House. To the north-west is a very small area which has

been included into the Conservation Area as a minor amendment to fit with the boundary on the ground.

Tuesday Market Place ranks among the most splendid of all urban open squares of England, as well as being one of the largest (133 x 106 metres, 145 x 115 yards at its greatest), and one with the most interesting and ancient history. It is an irregular quadrilateral, narrowing to the north, and this huge open area bounded by two- and three-storey buildings has a few immature trees, one fairly mature tree at the south-west corner, a few obtrusive lamp standards and plenty of parked cars.



Of the various buildings only three are not statutorily listed (Nos. 22 & 25 on the south side, and Nos. 1-3 at the south-east corner), but these have strong local interest. Of the others three are graded II*. The smart merchants' houses which line the square have all been taken over for professional offices, and the others are purpose-built banks, a hotel and a public house, and the former Corn Exchange of 1854 in the centre of the west side. None of them is without interest or fails to contribute to the outstanding quality of this environment; instead they exhibit variations on familiar

themes. Some have red brick frontages, some brown Wisbech brick, others are stuccoed, the Corn Exchange is of stone, and one, No. 14 on the north side, has false timber studwork (dated c.1900) applied to the façade. Roof lines vary in height, but never sufficiently to create a gap, and add to the air of provincial irregularity. On the west side four lanes run off towards the river quays.

Page Stair Lane exits from the north-west corner, the north side beginning with suddenly modest single-storey early 19th Century workshops, Nos. 17A & B. Further west, outside the conservation area boundary, is the entrance and main warehouse of Patrick & Thompson's timber yard. The whole of the north side as far as the river is the domain of timber yards, a position unchanged since the migration of the Ouse allowed reclamation of this land.



At the west end of the lane is a very good 1990 development of flats, **Trinity Quay**, overlooking the river. The south side retains the large 19th Century maltings, converted to a club, but with its kiln cone surviving at the east end, and then the rear of Bishops Lynn house at the east end. This rear wing was rebuilt in 1975.

Water Lane is narrow, between No. 19 and the Corn Exchange, and for the most part dominated by the tall brick wall of the 1996 renovation and adaptation of the Exchange on the south. On the north however is an 18th Century brick wall. The lane leads to a second large square, **Common Staithe Quay**, which benefits from the wide expansive views from the south-west to north-west across the River Ouse. There are limited plantings of trees and shrubs on the north side, much car parking but few detractors in the form of modern street furniture. The Trinity Quay development to the north is complementary, and the energetic, irregular, brick and rendered Conservancy Board Pilot Office (1856 & 1864) is a tangible reminder of the nautical purpose of this space, which has hardly changed its shape for 200 years, and has existed for several hundred. The Pilot Office funnels attention south to **Ferry Street** where the view is controlled by the Crown & Mitre pub, of brick and of 16th Century origins. The south side continues with low brick outbuildings before cutting back for the yard at the rear of the Globe Hotel, with a modern extension to the hotel. At this point the north side of the street has its own opening, allowing glimpses into the east side of Common Staithe Quay and even of Trinity Quay in the distance. The remainder of the street towards Tuesday Market Place and the tree at the end has the three-storey length of the cream-painted Globe Hotel on one side and a modern public lavatory block on the other. Bollards hedge it in.

In the centre of the east side of the Market Place is **Market Lane**, an ancient thoroughfare linking the market with Chapel Street. Being straight and narrow the enormous glazed-brick extension to the Duke's Head Hotel of 1967 is not

immediately apparent, but Fell's Warehouse opposite tries to compensate, as does the good early 19th Century red brick wall on the north side of the lane. Lattice House at the junction with Chapel Street then claims all attention. From the south-east corner of Tuesday Market Place is another narrow lane, **Surrey Street**, this time curving gently to the south at the east end. Starting between the side walls of two 20th Century banks, it is largely given over to car parking, with views of the backs of buildings on neighbouring streets. The 19th century warehouses and workshops on the north side have been demolished.

One of the highlights of the southern end of the conservation area is **Purfleet Quay**, visually part of the open expanse of King's Staithe Square on the southern bank of the Purfleet. The river was culverted to the east in the 19th Century, so that **Purfleet Bridge** crosses at the half-way point, with open water between the new (1999-2000) quaysides and caisson gate to the west and the cut off canal to the east. The bridge has some 17th Century brickwork, and has been re-paved with contrasting setts in 1999 as part of the Millennium North Sea Haven

Project, and it stands right next to Henry Bell's celebrated **Custom House** of 1683, sited for maximum picturesque effect.



The Quay itself is neatly paved and has a length of anchor chain which has scenic value but also acts as a parking deterrent. The traditional standing figure statue of Captain George Vancouver, the famous naval map-maker of the 1780s and from Lynn, is by Penny Reeve and was erected in 2000. On the north is the return of No. 1 King Street, then a lower two-bay pair of brown brick houses, all of which are boarded up. Next is an early 17th Century brick and stone warehouse (converted to offices), with its three-storey loading gable rising above its neighbours. The lower gault-brick warehouse range of 1876 which follows is built over a 16th Century warehouse, of which two arches remain in the rear wall. The Quay turns north, with another

prominent and dignified brick 19th Century warehouse, and, at the north end, the gable of Ouse House with its low veil of shrubbery.

Any street which begins with a monument like the Custom House will find competition difficult, but **King Street** manages with ease. It is 212 metres (232 yards) long, south to north, and with a mean width of 14 metres (15 yards) was the widest street in King's Lynn from the 13th Century to 1804 when London Road was created. It curves gently to the east to meet the south-west corner of Tuesday Market Place and almost imperceptibly undulates, but the entire deviation in height is only 90 centimetres (35 inches). Almost without exception the houses which line it wear Georgian dress, but these facades are usually additions by their merchant owners to modernise the visible while retaining the older cores. In the later 19th & 20th Centuries most of the houses were adopted by professionals for their offices, as they remain today, but unlike Tuesday Market Place there is still a few domestic ranges in use as such. Unhappy late 20th Century ornament or loss of original sash windows is little known here. On the west side every building is listed, as are many of those in the yards behind, for these began life as the 15th Century warehouses of the merchants living in their halls by the street. There is the grade I **St George's Guildhall** of 1410-30, and six grade II* merchant's houses or warehouses.

The east side has one grade I building, but this is Norman, with twin stone arches inside, and 14th Century additions on their own worth a high grade. Of the other buildings only four are not listed (Nos. 2, 12, 22 and 50), but they all contribute to the quality of

the street. There are only two post-war buildings in the street, Nos. 12 (part) and 50, but these blend in quite well.



The street has the dignity that the new professional classes will have appreciated, but at the south end of the east side is a series (Nos. 2-10, with No. 15 Purfleet Street) of less pretentious houses nevertheless dating from the 16th Century (No. 4) to the early 18th Century. With their variations in height and width and the gentle rhythm of colourwashing, red brick and brown brick, they are the image of an undisturbed scene from a major English market town.

On the west side of King Street are several lanes, alleys and entries to yards of private medieval houses, necessary for access to the warehouses which developed between the thoroughfare and the river. The warehouses collectively are one of the best groups in the country illustrating evolution of design from the early 15th Century. Working from south to north, the first is behind No. 3. A block of new flats on the south is followed by a red and gault-brick 19th Century warehouse facing the listed range behind No.5 King Street. At the end is the

warehouse noted from Purfleet Quay, and also the two 16th Century arches against the rear wall of the Probation offices.



The yard opening through the medieval Nos. 7 & 9 has four warehouses, three of which are listed (one II*). The yard has trees and bushes and narrows to the east end where it faces further greenery in the garden of Ouse House; like all these yards it is a quiet backwater. **Trenowaths Place** has a wide carriage entry under No. 11, and it is a wide yard with, on the north side, a range of 19th Century maltings and on the south a set of warehouses, both groups converted to houses and flats. At the river end is a small raised garden and a summerhouse, all of the 1980s. The actual entry to the yard is curious, for the door north of the carriageway, apparently within the curtilage of No. 11, in fact leads to the hall entry passage of the adjacent house.

No. 15 has an archway to a narrow yard paved with setts and hemmed in by the listed buildings on either side, and, to the west, by the back of the Trenowaths Place maltings. Then follows **Aickman's Yard**, famous as the site of John Aickman's iron foundry, as the plaque on No. 19 records, dated 1827. The wide carriageway has a segmental arch

and within it the doorway into No. 19. The yard itself begins with three grade II-listed buildings, one of them associated with foundry work, and beyond them are two workshop units, that to the south dated 1891, to the north 1904. The earlier one has been raised a storey and fitted with modern top-hung casements, but both retain the now rare lap-glazing to the ground-floor windows. The west end has been closed by railings of the 1990s to form a car park for Old School House, with trees on either side. The 17th Century Old School House is the next building north, with very fine railings outside and a projecting entrance porch leading to a group of flats created in 1982 out of the school buildings erected between 1902 and the 1930s (it was a school from 1902-79). An L-shaped building at the west end, beyond a shrubbery bed, has an arch opening to the communal garden by the river which has mature trees and lawns, and is bounded by 15th Century brick walls on the north and south. The one to the south is listed, but the other is not and appears to be the only remaining wall of a warehouse range edge-on to the river.

Ferry Lane, the narrowest thoroughfare in King's Lynn, has existed since the late middle ages, leading to the ferry across the Ouse to West Lynn, which still operates daily, except for Sundays and bank holidays. Paved with flagstones it is bounded on the south by the utilitarian rear walling of the Old School Court buildings in Fletton brick, but on the north by a 19-metre (16 yard) length of 15th Century brick wall which is one of the oldest known examples in England of brick laid in English garden wall bond. This gives way to three 19th Century cottages, then further mixed walling, mainly 19th Century, with a plaque: H & E. J. Everard 1881, referring to the Everards & Blencowe

brewery which stood north of this point. The building at the west end is the headquarters of the Ouse Amateur Sailing Club, and the ferry jetty, although of modern construction, merits attention for the antiquity and continuity of the site.

St George's Yard South runs between **St George's Guildhall** on the north and the II* No. 27 on the south, and at once there are varied views of medieval warehouses, slightly compromised by the single-storey post-war building on the south side.



The series of long narrow buildings on the right dates from the 1420s at the east end to the late 15th Century by the river, and they were all warehouses built gable-end on to the previous one as the course of the river migrated west over this period. All are of historical significance and are listed. Opposite are 19th Century buildings associated with the brewery, and at the west end a raised garden with lawns and shrubs overlooks the river, but the 15th Century watergate is difficult to see. **St George's Yard North** is on the other side of the guildhall, and has the best and most unrestored view of the sides of the medieval structure with its heavy buttresses taking the thrust of the scissor-braced roof inside, which

has no tie beams. No. 29 on the south side of the yard is a late 15th Century brick building with a partial crown post roof. The west end of the yard is closed by white-painted 19th Century warehousing.

The east side of King Street has fewer yards and they are less rewarding, partly because of 1970s redevelopment of the area behind, including a new spur to Purfleet Street acting as a service road to the High Street premises. This involved clearances of medieval yards and buildings. Working north to south the first is north of No. 50, but it is a simple entry to the rear yard of the restaurant on the corner with Tuesday Market Place. The opening to No. 46 has iron gates to the wide passageway, paved with late 19th Century setts. The concrete yard beyond opens to a late 19th Century house with a bay window and a range of warehouse units of the same date converted to six flats. At the east end stands another warehouse converted to flats, and beyond that the view is closed by the rendered expanse of the rear of a High Street block. The passage to No. 42 has been absorbed into the offices occupying the house, and that to No. 40 is no more than a yard entry. Between Nos. 24 & 26 is a finely gauged elliptical brick arch over the entry, with good 19th Century gates, and within the long tunnel are the original doorways into the domestic parts of the separate premises. A further set of 20th Century iron gates at the east end closes the passage from the car park at the rear, and the turning space of the Purfleet Street extension. A converted 19th Century warehouse block stands on the south of the car park, and to the north are trees in the garden of Nos. 28-32. An equally long and narrow passageway between Nos. 16 & 18 has studwork on the north side and a post-war building east of that, but the

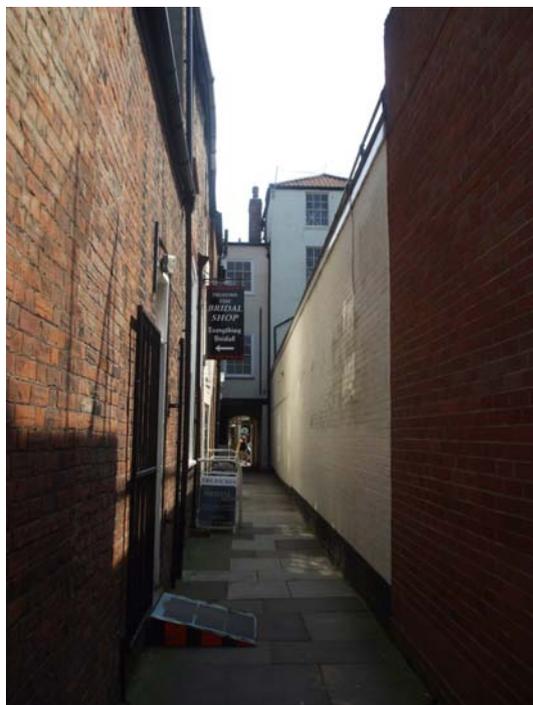
passage has no east exit. No. 10 has a very wide brewery yard carriageway, with an early 19th Century building on the south side and a tall 1970s commercial building on the north. Finally there is the plain narrow passage to the yards at the rear of No. 4, leading to the car park at the south end of the Purfleet Street extension.



Purfleet Street links the Custom House with High Street with, when looking east from Bell's building, the distant view of the fringes of the central area redevelopment of the 1970s. The north side has No. 14 of the early 17th Century and then the good 1923 Classical façade of Highbridge House. Beyond the new surgery is the 1970s mass of Boots Department store. On the south side, backing onto the Purfleet itself, is first a bald and rectilinear post-war Fletton brick structure, then a former warehouse building, refurbished and re-faced in 1989 for retail use, the south front of which takes advantage of the open water of the Purfleet. The north extension of Purfleet Street, already noticed as an entirely modern service road, has the advantage of permitting inspection of the backs of the King Street houses. At once is a car park on the west

side, devoid of trees, and the view ahead is mainly of modern additions to High Street premises.

High Street is a busy pedestrianised shopping street with larger premises than Norfolk Street for a greater proportion of its length, attracting the major chains. It is completely urban in character, and the section north of Purfleet Street runs north, bending slightly to the west to Tuesday Market Place. On the west side (moving north) at first the 1970s Boots development, then the tall narrow façade of the early 20th Century No. 90, in Edwardian Baroque dress. Then a series of three late 19th Century frontages with pleasantly varied elevational treatments and windows. At the end stands No. 85, a 1980s replacement in four window bays, but it fits sufficiently well as to not be at once apparent.



There are then three taller early and mid 19th Century shops originally with accommodation on the upper floors, all listed grade II. Next is the mid 19th Century stone front to the grade II* early 17th Century house behind it (Nos. 81 & 81A), and, on the south, Library Court. This is a narrow paved alley with a fine early 20th Century iron grille over the entrance and the excellent early 18th Century brickwork of No. 81-81A on the north side, with sashes to the workshop range at the west end. High Street resumes up to Norfolk Street with another series of early 19th Century brown brick frontages, one painted white, of three storeys. The continuation to Tuesday Market Place is of much more varied buildings, in height, width and age, but their indiscipline is characterful.

The east side of the street, north of Purfleet Street, again begins with a 1980s rebuilt shop, but continues with Nos. 37 & 38, all listed and all with 19th Century brick fronts concealing older cores. The monolithic Nos. 40-42, c. 1968, is set back from the street line, on the same plane as the early 20th Century Nos. 43-44, which has an elaborate first floor projecting on iron columns and fitted with three timber oriels. It is one of few examples of Elizabethan revival in Lynn. Two more 20th Century shops follow, maintaining the higher roof-line of their neighbours to the north, Nos. 48-51, which are tall uniform developments of c. 1820, very cosmopolitan, and all listed. Nos. 52-54 are also listed and also early 19th Century, but designed and built by different firms, and so are varied in their roof-lines. The entry to Norfolk Street has two curved and interesting buildings forming a spacious approach, 1920s on the south and mid 19th Century on the north (No. 56), the latter listed. Then Nos. 57-60, Marks & Spencer, a wide clean early 1950s shop façade with crisp lines and positive

character. The street approaches the Market Square with two 18th/19th Century listed fronts and the stone-clad Baroque former bank of the 1920s, converted to a restaurant in 2008.

A short section of **Norfolk Street** falls within this conservation area, from High Street to Broad Street, which is also part of the pedestrianised shopping area. Looking east, the road curves to the left, so the narrowing street is closed by a pair of good tall brown brick facades in the middle distance, giving it a constricted air. The north side commences with No. 56A High Street, visually part of Norfolk Street, a 16th Century timber framed and jettied shop and house, altered in 1969. The return façade of Marks & Spencer, Nos. 144-145, is of the 1970s, No. 143 is slightly earlier. A reasonable mid 19th Century plate-glass shop display window remains to the listed No. 142, otherwise of the late 18th Century, then Nos. 139-141 turning the bend in the road are 19th Century but heavily remodelled. The seven-bay, three-storey Nos. 137-139 are a single development of c. 1830, followed by an older set of three buildings with varying roof lines and elevational treatments, Nos. 134-136, and the curving façade of No. 133 at the corner with Chapel Street.



The south side of the street, working west, begins with a lengthy 1970s development completely ignoring historic property divisions, Nos. 10-14. No. 9 is a 1980s rebuild on an original single plot, and then a good group of taller early 19th Century shops with accommodation built of brown brick, Nos. 7-8. No. 6 is of the mid 18th Century but rebuilt in the 19th, and with an early 20th Century shopfront. No. 5 has a similar history but a modern shopfront, and between the two is an archway into the service yard at the rear. The remainder of this side of Norfolk Street musters a group of two early 19th Century buildings of three storeys, Nos. 2A-4, a narrow rebuild and then the curving corner building at High Street. The service yard opening to the south between Nos. 5 & 6, White Lion Court, leads to Vancouver Court, a large car park entirely within the 1970s quarter of Lynn. The view due south is terminated by the concrete and brick back of BHS on the High Street, to the west are the backs of other High Street shops, and all around are the signs of the post-war reconstruction.

Burton's Court is dwarfed by the BHS store, and is no more than a service bay to the shops at the south end of High Street and the west end of **New Conduit Street**. This street is all modern on the south side, but there are some attractive buildings on the north, and trees have been planted in the middle of the thoroughfare, which is another pedestrianised street. Nos. 1-3 are all late 1980s, but Nos. 5-7 have 17th Century origins, visible as brickwork in the passageway between the two. Two wider properties, Nos. 10 & 11 are from the mid and late 19th Century respectively, and after

this is the 1960s shopping parade reaching up to Baxter's Plain, all outside the conservation area.

9 Listed Buildings

There are 121 listed buildings in this section of the conservation area. The Statutory List was revised in 1989-90 and issued on 26 July 1993, with a number of changes made since. . There are four buildings listed Grade I, 15 listed II* and 102 listed II.

Listed Grade I

- **Guildhall of St George, King Street.** Built in 1410-30 this is the largest surviving medieval guildhall in England, of brick, with an elliptically-vaulted undercroft and a tremendous 61-truss scissor braced roof to the first-floor hall. Buttresses to north and south flanks and a large six-light east window.
- **Nos. 28-32 (evens) King Street.** One of the handful of Norman stone halls in England, dating from the late 12th Century, with later timber-framed rear cross wings developed almost as open halls in their own right. The façade was altered in the late 14th Century to provide a timber-framed shopfront of that date.
- **Custom House, Purfleet Quay.** Henry Bell's masterpiece of 1683 standing in a prominent position on the quayside, and, as Sir Nikolaus Pevsner put it, 'one of the finest late 17th Century public buildings in provincial England'. Stone-built and originally with an open arcade to three sides of the ground floor following Dutch practice.
- **Chapel of St Nicholas, St. Ann's Street.** Founded by Bishop Turbe in 1146 but rebuilt in the late 14th/15th

Century as one of the most advanced and sophisticated mendicant-inspired chapels in Europe. Revolutionary rectangular plan without division of chancel or nave and a spectacular south porch. 12th Century west end and tower base. Steeple of 1869.

Listed Grade II*

- **Lattice House, Nos. 37-41 Chapel Street.** Fine timber-framed late 15th Century house unusually lying parallel to the street, jettied to the east and south sides. Three further rear ranges, two of which are medieval. All ranges with crown-post roofs (except for the central rear wing). A pub from 1714-1919 and again after restoration in 1982-3.



- **Nos. 81-81B High Street.** The best house in the High Street. An early 17th Century merchant's house with a warehouse to the rear, the latter with rare early 18th Century sashes. Good 18th façade with windows elongated and other alterations of the 19th Century, but 17th panelling and chimneypieces inside, and further good

detailing of c. 1730 for the then owner Mayor John Exton.

- **No. 5 King Street.** House of c. 1740, with a fine façade and the post-medieval plan of a passageway entrance. Good internal detailing of staircases, panelling and plasterwork.
- **Nos. 7 & 9 King Street.** Typical high quality early 19th Century brick façade concealing a 14th Century brick-built hall house on the L-plan. Excellent 14th Century internal mouldings, and fittings from this and later centuries. Remarkably early for extensive use of brick and stone.
- **Office behind Nos. 7-9 King Street.** A 15th Century merchant's warehouse to go with the main house, now converted. Built of brick. Depressed warehouse openings and windows evident.
- **No. 15 King Street.** Early 16th Century brick hall house with the hall to the rear following the L-plan arrangement, with its six-light dais window. Floored in the 17th Century and with fittings of the time of the mid 18th Century brick façade to King Street.
- **No. 15A(now re-integrated with No.13) King Street.** Facing the last across the narrow yard, also early 16th Century, but remodelled in the early 18th Century with a splendid cantilevered staircase hall with carved tread-ends and a plaster chandelier rose.
- **No. 27 King Street.** Fine stone five-bay front of 1739, with a Corinthian doorcase and an addition of 1814 over the present carriage arch. Excellent staircase hall of the same date with free-standing Corinthian columns. Rear wing c. 1695 for a Dutch merchant fitted with some of the oldest sash windows

in England, with clean cut brick voussoirs.

- **Nos. 30 & 32 Pilot Street.** 15th Century timber-framed hall house parallel to the street, jettied to front and back and formed of two ranges with a central entrance. Crown post roof.
- **2A-C St Ann's Street.** C. 1400 timber-framed hall house parallel to the street, jettied both sides. Façade with two large arched braces and rebates for a shop window visible inside. Mullioned windows.



- **Nos. 4 & 6 St Ann's Street.** The earliest parallel hall-house in Lynn, 13th Century, and built of rubblestone not timber. Blocked 13th Century doorway at the back. Scissor-braced and crown-post roofs. Rather an uninspiring late 1960s shopfront.
- **Tudor Rose Hotel, 10 and 11 St Nicholas Street.** Mid 15th Century timber framed house to the west with a remarkable stone doorway arch and a Perpendicular traceried door. Hall-house arrangement of the interior intact, with the service doorways. Crown post roof. Unusual internal gallery connects with the 1645 addition to the east.

- **Duke's Head Hotel, Tuesday Market Place.** Built in 1683-5 for Sir John Turner as an inn. Nine bays surmounted by a double Baroque pediment. Internal arrangements of a courtyard with galleries identifiable to one range. Late 17th Century staircase.
- **Nos. 15 & 16 Tuesday Market Place.** Early 16th Century range of houses facing south down the Market Place, brought together behind the fine nine-bay façade of c. 1720. Excellent detailing of exterior and the staircase. Six-light mullioned window at the rear into an open hall.
- **No. 18 Tuesday Market Place.** Headquarters of the Bagge family of merchants. The south part rebuilt in 1725, the north part in 1803-4 with a handsome bow window. Fine interiors of 1725-30, and under the north part the late 14th Century brick vaulted cellar of the medieval merchant's premises, one of the first to be built on the west side of the Market Place.
- **Austin Street.** 15 (Austin House), 15A, North gateway to Friary precinct
- **Chapel Lane.** 8 The Exorcist's House, Cannon bollard immediately SE of No. 8
- **Chapel Street.** 25
- **Ferry Street.** Crown & Mitre P.H.
- **High Street.** 37, 38 & 39, 48-51, 52, 53 & 53A, 54, 56, 56A, 61 & 62, 65, 82, 83 & 84
- **King Street.** 1, 3, 3A, 4, 6, Dental Surgery 22m WSW of Nos. 7 & 9, Health Centre 29m W of Nos. 7 & 9, 8 Chancery House, 10, Cannon Bollard at SE corner of Carriage arch under No. 10, Cannon Bollard at SW corner of Carriage arch under No. 10, 11, 13A, 14 & 14A, 16 & 18, 17 Wood House, 19, 20, 21 Old School Court, Railings to forecourt of 21, 23 & 25, 24 & 26, The White Barn, 29 Shakespeare House, 31 The Globe Hotel, 34, 36, 40 & 42, 46, 48, Cannon Bollard at junction of Ferry Lane, The Red Barn, King's Lynn Centre for the Arts & Players Rehearsal Rooms, Riverside Rooms Restaurant incl Watergate, Purfleet Bridge

Listed Grade II

There are too many grade II listed buildings in the conservation area to describe individually, but they embrace a great range of dates from the late 14th Century to the late 19th Century, reflecting house types and materials appropriate to their period. Houses, warehouses, offices, port buildings, civic buildings and halls, banks, shops, railings, watergates, foundry buildings, bollards, quaysides, inns and bridges are all building types represented. Few towns can boast a similar combination in such a small area, testifying to the diverse economy and trading patterns of a major medieval port.

- **Aickman's Yard.** 1, 3 & 4, Wall 12 metres E of river bank



- **Market Lane.** 1-8 consecutive
- **Norfolk Street.** 5,6,142
- **North Street.** North Gate

- **Pilot Street.** 22 & 24, 26, 28, Railings & Gates to S & E of St Nicholas' Churchyard,
- **Purfleet Quay.** Offices of Probation Service
- **Purfleet Street.** 14 & 15
- **St Ann's Fort.** 7, Watergate of St Ann's Fort
- **St Ann's Street.** 12, 14, 16 & 18, Gates & railings to E of St Nicholas' Churchyard, Table Tomb 3m S of S porch of Chapel of St Nicholas.
- **St Nicholas Street.** 17, 26, Ruins of Doorway south side.
- **Tuesday Market Place.** 4 Nat West Bank, House at rear of 4, 7 Mayden's Head Hotel, 8, 10, 11 & 12, 14 & 14A, 17 & 17A, 19, 20 Corn Exchange, 21 Barclays Bank, Cannon Bollard to rear of No. 21, 23 Bank Chambers, 24, 27 & 28, 29.

10 Important Unlisted Buildings

The St Nicholas conservation area is unlike most in England in that its character is not primarily vested in the nature of its unlisted buildings, because of the very high proportion of listed ones. There are 121 listed buildings, 69 unlisted buildings of positive and definable character, 48 dating wholly to the post-war period (single developments such as St Nicholas Close are counted as one) and about 65 other buildings. Two of the post-war buildings are so well composed that they themselves may also be classed as important unlisted buildings (Marks & Spencer at Nos. 57-60 High Street and No. 50 King Street) because of the continuity they provide in the street scene and the support they give neighbouring listed structures.

11 Post-War Development

The greatest concentration of post-war buildings in this section of the conservation area, and the most insensitive, is associated with the streets on the very fringe of the 1960s central redevelopment - that part of High Street between Purfleet Street and Norfolk Street; the south side of Norfolk Street at the corner with Broad Street; and the service buildings and extensions on both sides of Purfleet Street North. The last street, developed as no more than a service road, was the most destructive of existing yards, houses and former maltings, but has the merit of not impinging on the King Street or High Street



elevations. The largest new blocks belong to the big commercial chains, amalgamating two or more former plots, such as the Marks

and Spencer extension on Norfolk Street, and BHS and Boots on the High Street. No. 14 Norfolk Street, jutting out over the pavement, is perhaps the most arrogantly dismissive of the existing street line and building character of all the late 1960s works.

Earlier and later buildings are generally better. The Marks and Spencer façade towards High Street of the early 1950s has already been mentioned. However, also of that time is Lovell House, St Nicholas Street, affecting the view north-east out of Tuesday Market Place. It lacks style and conviction, overlooking a square in which every other building exhibits those qualities. The 1975 Social Security offices in Page Stair Lane are dull but tucked away behind a II* house, unfortunately involving the demolition of a 16th Century warehouse. (Here there is a photograph in the original document of the port buildings which have been demolished.) Far superior are the developments of the late 1980s and 1990s, with the emphasis shifted to residential use, eg North Hirne Court, St Ann's Street; and Trinity Quay on a very important site at the north end of Common Staithe Quay.

12 Traditional Materials

In common with the rest of King's Lynn the materials used are as eclectic as might be expected in a sea-port with extensive European trading interests. In a low-lying treeless area of the country almost all timber was imported either up-river from the inland counties or from the Baltic. English oak is confined to the structure of timber-framed hall houses of the 16th Century and earlier, and by the 17th Century, when timber framing ceased to be used on any scale, brick was the substitute. The local brick is red, but there is a great deal of brown brick

from the yards around Wisbech, which became very fashionable between c. 1780 and c. 1840. For these houses the roof structure was of Baltic fir, enormous quantities of which were imported to the timber wharves around Common Staithe Quay, as it is today.

Colourwashing of facades, or the application of stucco in the 18th & 19th Centuries is favoured in some of the more prestigious buildings, especially in Tuesday Market Place, and there are very pleasing sequences of houses with gently varying coloured schemes. Slate for roofs is certainly common, arriving in bulk from Wales after the railway opened in 1844, and its presence on roofs of older buildings generally indicates repair or rebuilding. Otherwise pantiles on buildings later than c. 1720 (imported from Holland, but then made locally) and plaintiles on earlier structures are the rule.

Much earlier buildings used stone as the principal building material, imported from Northamptonshire and Lincolnshire, such as in the Norman house at Nos. 28-32 King Street, or in the façade of No. 13, but brick is the material of the town. This area has two examples of large-scale use of brick as early as the 14th Century, at Nos. 7-9 King Street and in the undercroft of No. 18 Tuesday Market Place.

13 Archaeological Interest

The remains of the fort walls and of St Ann's Watergate is the only Scheduled Ancient Monument in this area (monument No. 306), but there is a great deal of evidence of lost buildings. Hearths, walls and pits were discovered under the Marks & Spencer extension of 1965 in Surrey Street, and a hall house at 77a High Street, while a coin hoard of late 13th Century material was

excavated from the Boots site in the High Street. On the same site is evidence of a vaulted undercroft destroyed in 1865.

14 Detractors

The special character of conservation areas can easily be eroded by seemingly minor alterations such as unsuitable replacement windows and doors, inappropriate materials or unsympathetic paintwork and the removal of walls, railings and trees. In a predominately retail and commercial centre replacement of shop display windows is a particular problem, especially as the alteration is seldom necessary for structural reasons, but for fashion and corporate identity, so that main shopping streets, as has long been lamented, eventually all look like each other. Norfolk Street in particular has so much depth of tradition, however, that this is still resisted. High Street is more vulnerable, and there is more disunity of fascia boards and design of display windows, and a complete lack of any shopfronts earlier than 1950. The good Marks & Spencer façade has lost its first floor Crittall windows in favour of uPVC, and there are a number of other first- and second-floor elevations with altered fenestration. Other examples of inappropriate windows are rare, of which the most notable are at No. 5 St Ann's Street.

Traffic signs are a slight problem, particularly those signs referring to a pedestrianised zone (at the junction between High Street and Tuesday Market Place, and in Purfleet Street), no-entry signs (at the south-west corner of Tuesday Market Place) and

pay-and display car park machines (King Street). In front of the Pilot Office in Common Staithe Quay is a camera surveillance pylon,



There are unattractive corrugated iron roofs to the former garages on the south side of Ferry Street.

These are virtually all the detractors in the entire area, and such is the overwhelming quality of the remainder that enumerating them is in the first place possible, and in the second place slightly ungracious.

Appendix 1

Appendix 2

Conservation Objectives

The overall conservation objective is to protect and reinforce the established special character of Conservation Areas and their setting.

This will be achieved by:

- Encouraging the retention and maintenance of buildings which contribute to the overall character of each conservation area
- Ensuring that new development is sympathetic to the special qualities and character of each conservation area
- Protecting the setting of the conservation area from development which adversely affects views into or out of the area
- The retention, maintenance and locally appropriate new planting of trees
- Maintaining and enhancing local features and details which contribute towards an area's local distinctiveness
- Working with the community to prepare schemes of enhancement
- Encouraging the removal of detractors to the special character of each conservation area

Contacts and advice

Within conservation areas, a number of special controls apply and it is advisable that anyone proposing to carry out new development, alteration, extensions, installations or demolition should seek advice from Development Services at an early stage. Special controls also apply to the trees and some may be subject to Tree Preservation Orders. Anyone wishing to carry out work to trees within a Conservation Area should therefore seek advice from Development Services.

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KING'S LYNN CONSERVATION AREA ST NICHOLAS AREA



**KING'S LYNN
CONSERVATION AREA
NORFOLK STREET**

**KING'S LYNN
CONSERVATION AREA
ST MARGARET'S AREA**

**Notation:
DESIGNATED - 1969
EXTENSION - 15.05.79
EXTENSION - 09.10.91
REVISED - 06.02.92
REVISED - 05.09.03**

NOTATION	
	CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY
	DIVIDING BOUNDARY
	LISTED BUILDINGS
	IMPORTANT UNLISTED BUILDINGS

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