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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. Swineshead Conservation Area was designated in 1982 and the following appraisal of this area is intended to clearly define and analyse its current character and appearance. This will provide a sound basis for development plan policies and development control decisions, as well as for the formulation of the Swineshead Conservation Area Management Plan. The Management Plan will contain policies and proposals designed to secure the preservation and enhancement of the area.
- 1.2. The appraisal itself will initially detail the villages location and population, in order to provide some contextual meaning to the Conservation Area. It will then provide an outline of Swineshead's historical development up until the present day. This is particularly necessary where some understanding of the village's important historical development may be seen to contribute significantly to the Conservation Area's overall value.
- 1.3. The appraisal will also provide an outline of the Swineshead Conservation Area's archaeological significance and potential, with particular reference to its buried historical deposit. It will also appraise other aspects of Swineshead's character such as views and historical buildings
- 1.4. This draft appraisal will be available for public consultation in paper form from Council Offices (West Street) as well available on the Boston Borough Website ([www.boston.gov.uk](http://www.boston.gov.uk)). After consultation the appraisal will be adopted as Council Policy. A Conservation Area Management Plan will follow the appraisal and will also be adopted as Council Policy.

## **2. Planning Policy Framework**

- 2.1. Conservation Areas are 'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance' (Section 69 (1) (a) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990)). Local planning authorities are expected to regularly review these and if necessary, designate further areas.
- 2.2. The designation of conservation areas requires of authorities the regular formulation and publishing of proposals toward their preservation and enhancement (Section 71). This is intended to assist authorities throughout the undertaking of their planning powers, specifically where it is desirable to conserve or enhance the character or appearance of a conservation area (Section 72).

## **3. Location and Context**

- 3.1. Swineshead is situated in south east Lincolnshire, approximately 7 miles west of the historic port town of Boston. The settlement is of a linear nature, with a clearly defined central area dominated by the medieval parish church. The village is set in open fenland with views to distant heathland in the west.
- 3.2. Swineshead has a population of approximately 2,449 (2001 Census) living within the parish. The immediate underlying geology is mainly a thick bed of marine silt and alluvium with some peat. Swineshead is approximately 4.0m above sea level.
- 3.3. Swineshead takes its name from the Old English swin and heaford and means the 'source of the creek'. The creek is believed to have been navigable from Swineshead to the Wash until the drainage of the surrounding fenland.

## **4. Historic Development**

- 4.1. Early Development

The earliest record of Swineshead is in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, mentioned in 675AD. Peterborough Abbey held land here and in about 777AD, when it is recorded as leasing ten hides at Swineshead to Ealdorman Cuthbert, a Mercian noble.

From the 12th century one of the largest landholders in Swineshead was the Duchy of Lancaster. A motte and bailey, known as the Manwar Ings, was constructed in the 12th century. References have been found to a castle, possibly built by Robert de Gresley (who also founded the Abbey) or his son Albert, from the 12th and 13th centuries as well as being one of six Lincolnshire castles noted in Gervase of Canterbury's Mappa Mundi.

The development of Swineshead into a thriving market town in the Mediaeval period is likely to be related to the existence of the Manwar Ings and also to a Cistercian Monastery founded nearby in c.1130. Town Lane runs almost from the entrance of Abbey House and shows the route which would have been taken by the monks to reach the village. The medieval church forms the centre of the village where there is still a market place, on the opposite side of what was once the main road. There has been some encroachment of the market place, by the building, which is now the Church Hall. This is fairly recent (1960's) but other buildings may have been developed on this site previously.

Swineshead continued to thrive as a small market town. A busy market was held until the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Hagar's Directory of the Market Towns of Lincolnshire published in 1849 shows the parish was thriving, with 11 linen drapers, 5 butchers, 6 Blacksmiths and 11 Inns and Taverns including the Wheatsheaf, as well as the Black Bull and the Green Dragon in the Market Place.

A turnpike road was established between Boston and Northend in 1758, perhaps explaining the small settlement that developed at that end of the village. The railway arrived in the 1850's at nearby Swineshead Bridge. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century the settlement's fortunes began to dwindle. The main road was bypassed in the early 1980's, leaving the village a much quieter place.

#### 4.2. Past Industry

This has mainly been the growing of arable crops in recent years. In the past arable crops have also been grown, but areas in and around Swineshead have also been used as fruit orchards. Little now remains, except for an area presently outside the conservation area where there is an old orchard in private ownership.

### 5. Archaeology

- 5.1. The complex underlying geology of the area can sometimes result in evidence for early occupation being covered in a thick layer of alluvial silt. Excavations during development in other areas with a similar underlying geology have produced significant finds of early occupation.
- 5.2. The earliest evidence found in the area consists of two prehistoric stone axes, one of which can be dated to the Bronze Age. Roman pottery scatters and salt making sites have been identified at a number of locations in the parish.
- 5.3. There have been two finds of Anglo-Saxon pottery sherds of the 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> century with domestic in-fill found recently on the new development, the Causeway. This shows that a dwelling of that date at least, was on that site.
- 5.4. Swineshead itself is not mentioned in the Domesday Book, but other settlements within the parish, Stenning and Drayton both have entries. Medieval sites that have been found include the moated Estovening (or Stenning) Hall, manor house of the Holland family. The moat has been filled in and completely obliterated by ploughing. Medieval pottery sherds were found here in the 1970's.

- 5.5. It is clear from the above that Swineshead still contains important buried deposits and that much about the past development of the settlement remains to be discovered.

## **6. Heritage Assets**

- 6.1. Scheduled Ancient Monuments in the Parish:

Swinehead Abbey  
Manwar Ings  
Stump Cross

- 6.2. Scheduled Ancient Monuments within the Conservation Area:  
The Butter Cross and stocks

- 6.3. Listed Buildings within the Conservation Area

Grade I The Parish church of St. Mary is grade I listed. The origins of the Church date from c.1300, with additions in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries and again in 1767. Some rebuilding was undertaken in 1848. The church is built of squared limestone rubble and ashlar with lead roofs. The tall tower and spire dominate the surrounding landscape.

Grade II The Wheatsheaf Hotel, late 18<sup>th</sup> century. Stucco with rusticated quoins.

Bank House, c.1800. Red brick, with 'moustachio' lintels. (also found in Folkingham)

Westholme House, c.1880. Red brick with ashlar dressings and slate roof.

Old Maltings at Westholme House, a Georgian malthouse, red brick with ashlar dressings.

The cross base and stocks are also grade II listed.

There are no grade II\* listed buildings in Swineshead Parish.

## **7. Landscape: Setting and Relationship**

- 7.1. The Church dominates all approaches to the village with its unusual small spire placed on the top of a much larger tower. There are open fields behind the properties on Church Lane and High Street, which are arable, (crop growing). The boundary of the conservation area on the eastern side of the village is very much one of modern developments.

- 7.2. The approach towards the Church from South Street and High Street also has some buildings of architectural merit. Although they are beyond the boundary of the conservation area and, do not meeting criteria for listing, they do add to the historic feel of the conservation area at the core of the village.

## **8. Landmarks and Vistas**

- 8.1. Swineshead's most prominent building is St. Mary's Parish church, which can be seen from all entrances to the conservation area.



- 8.2. All views into the conservation area feature St Mary's Parish Church. Views from Abbey Road highlight both the Church and the extensive greenery found within the conservation area. From South Street the construction site currently features heavily, however once completed will help define the street line. From High Street the view into the conservation area is framed with trees on its eastern side. Ferndale House is prominently viewed from this street.



## 9. Character of Buildings

- 9.1. Swineshead contains differing styles and periods of architecture within the Conservation Area. This juxtaposition of different styles is part of the essential charm of the area. The unifying architectural element of the majority of the buildings is the use of mainly vertical sash windows, showing the frontage of properties as being of 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- 9.2. The style of buildings in the Conservation Area is very varied, each being built as required, whether individual or terrace. A mixture of differing styles, varied in height, scale and materials mingle happily together making a pleasing whole.
- 9.3. Apart from the church, most buildings date from the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The Wheatsheaf Public House and adjacent Bank House provide a very elegant, town like vista on entry to the Market Place from South Street. These are complemented by the slightly lower range of shops on the eastern side of the Market Square.

## 10. Local Details

### 10.1 Shop fronts

Within the Conservation Area there remain 3 period shopfronts. Orchard House and The Pharmacy are virtually complete. Ferndale House retains pilasters and console brackets that are original.

### 10.2 Architectural Details

Most of the houses within the Conservation Area paid attention to window treatment when first built. There are a good selection of rubbed, flat brick arches both in complementing brickwork and also contrasting coloured red brick arches at Orchard House. Other arch detail is stone, and this is in a variety of shapes according to age and style and whether the use is above a window or a door.

### 10.3 Follies/garden buildings

There is a small brick and pantiled garden store within the churchyard. This has castellated frontage and is a distinctive feature within the grounds. There is a rear outbuilding of traditional composition, (now partially derelict at the rear of Ferndale House. This forms a boundary with the churchyard, and provides a visual stop to the churchyard.

## **11. Contribution by Key Unlisted Buildings**

- 11.1. Two distinctive buildings mark the approach from High Street. The Hollies mid to late 18<sup>th</sup> century, with later additions is built of red brick with small paned sash windows is just beyond the present boundary but makes a positive contribution to the setting of the Conservation Area being of architectural merit.
- 11.2. The Hall is a substantial Victorian House, of red faced brick with stone dressings. This building and the ground surrounding it provide an imposing setting on the approach to the centre of the village.
- 11.3. The High Street narrows in nearer to the village centre and a terrace of houses of late Georgian/early Victorian date line the right hand side of the road. Some of these contain period shopfronts. This terrace contributes in architectural style being somewhat town like in appearance, and delineates the curve of the High Street, framing the view upon entry to the village centre.

## **12. Building Materials**

### **12.1. Brick**

Materials used are mainly brick, mostly on more 'polite' or formal styles of architecture, such as the red/brown brick used for the frontage of Bank House, or Swineshead Hall, where a fiery red brick has been used. In addition to this there is some use of early 19<sup>th</sup> century yellow brick.

### **12.2. Stucco and Render**

Stucco, with painted black quoins has been used on the Wheatsheaf, giving a slightly classical feel. Render has been used on some smaller, more vernacular buildings, although these are likely to have been brick, with the render applied at a later date. These often consist of one and a half storeys, having upper floor light through the use of dormer windows, let into a pantile roof, such as the cottages on Cheese Hill.

### **12.3. Roof Materials**

Pantiles remain on the earlier cottages, or at the rear of more formal buildings, such as The Wheatsheaf. Slate has been used as a roof covering on the more polite, or front elevations. There is much use of slate and several brick built Victorian buildings, which denotes a move towards more national trends in architecture, with materials being supplied by the nearby railway. There is some degradation due to the use of concrete interlocking tiles in the area.

### **12.4. Windows**

Any original windows existing are sash windows. There are vertical hung 6/6 and 9/9 as well as 8/8 sashes, in addition there are some Yorkshire sliding sashes on rear elevations. Some older cottages have now been renovated and have lost triple sliding sashes to the front elevation. Modern replacement PVCu windows have been used to replace traditional sash windows in the Conservation Area.

### **12.5. Cast Iron**

The railings at The Hall are very decorative and give a defined delineation to the frontage of the Hall. Bank House is also fronted by cast iron railings. These are echoed in an enclosure around the Market Cross and village stocks.

### **13. Open Spaces**

- 13.1. The main areas of open space are the churchyard and the remains of the Market Place. The churchyard takes up a large portion of the centre of the conservation area. Included within its perimeter is the church itself, and also the Old Vicarage. The area has many trees within its boundary, and the walled area around the churchyard and its original precinct is clearly defined with Church Lane being formed around it.
- 13.2. The Market Place is quite small, having been encroached upon by the Church Hall. There are the remains of the 14<sup>th</sup> century cross base and 18<sup>th</sup> century stocks, but these are within a cast iron fenced area. This gives a rather closed in, compartmentalised feel to the Market Place.
- 13.3. There is little open space provided by front gardens within the Conservation area. There are some gardens on the corner of and along church lane. Most older buildings are built on the frontage, although a little formality is observed by Bank House which has a small frontage with cast iron railings.
- 13.4. There have been other open spaces within the conservation area but these are now mostly built upon.

### **14. Green Spaces and Greenery**

- 14.1. There are many trees in the conservation area, with a clustering around the church and the Old Vicarage. There are also many trees in the grounds surrounding Swineshead Hall as well as cultivated hedges. Both areas have mature specimens. The Hollies just beyond the boundary also has good tree coverage within its grounds. There is also a large individual tree along Town Lane as well as trees lining Church Lane, forming almost a tunnel, with trees in the churchyard.
- 14.2. Tree Preservation Orders  

Swineshead Tree Preservation Order No.3 (1979) covers trees in the grounds of the Old Vicarage. Swineshead Tree Preservation Order No.4 (2001) covers a tree within the curtilage of 5 Adrian Close. Although this is not within the conservation area it does affect the amenity of the area.

### **15. Loss/Intrusion**

- 15.1. Permitted development rights have resulted in some erosion of character, with PVCu windows being used on some buildings. Also concrete interlocking roof tiles have been used as well as concrete pantiles which weather to a brown colour, rather than the “glowing red/orange” so characteristic of Lincolnshire.
- 15.2. Inappropriate modern cement render has been applied to fine Victorian brickwork at Ferndale House, which occupies a very prominent site adjacent to the church. The stable outbuildings to the rear require repair.



- 15.3. The Wheatsheaf Hotel carpark is sited prominently and would benefit from some form of improvement.
- 15.4. The recycling centre has been sited beside the churchyard and the stable building to Ferndale House. Although the site is convenient for use, the visual impact is not positive.



- 15.5. The design of the village hall is somewhat incongruous, particularly considering its prominent location.

## **16. Needs/Opportunities**

- 16.1. A list of houses suitable for possible addition to the statutory list of buildings of architectural or historic interest be drawn up and sent to the English Heritage – a survey has not been undertaken since 1984 and did not take effect until 1988.
- 16.2. Enhancement: There is a heritage need identified in Swineshead, yet the village may be too small to attract schemes such as THI, however a joint bid with another village (Kirton) could be made.

## **17. Community Involvement**

- 17.1 This Draft Conservation Area Appraisal will be available for public consultation for 7 weeks from the 19<sup>th</sup> December 2005. A week has been added to the normal 6-week period in recognition of the closure of Boston Borough Council offices for a week over the Christmas period.
- 17.2 This Appraisal will be available to download on the Boston Borough Website and available on request from the Council Offices (West Street, Boston)
- 17.3 All written comments will be taken into account when redrafting this Appraisal. The finalised Appraisal is intended be publish in April 2006.



