



Doncaster
Metropolitan Borough Council

Doncaster – High Street Conservation Area

Review

December 2014

Doncaster – High Street Conservation Area – Review

Since the appraisal undertaken in March 2007, the general character and appearance of the area overall is much the same, however there have been some significant changes and it is important that these are noted. These are as follows: -

Demolition of 13/14/14a Hall Gate

This building was in a poor condition and which was of concern in the previous appraisal and was considered to make a negative contribution to the area at the time. In 2011 it was considered to be in a dangerous state and demolition occurred in line with a previous consent, although due to the economic climate the accompanying redevelopment has not yet been commenced. This and the neighbouring site make a large gap site and are considered to still make a negative contribution to the area. The owner has attempted some enhancement to the area, although this is of limited success and further work would be encouraged.



Gap site on Hall Gate

Alterations to buildings

21/22 Hall Gate has been refaced which has improved its appearance. However, full working vertically sliding sash window rather than top-hung casements would have improved the final look as would a continuous height of parapet. Even so the building is now considered to make a neutral rather than a negative contribution.



The appearance of 21/22 Hall Gate today

Barclays and HSBC banks, which are both Grade II listed, have had alterations connected with the insertion of ATMs. ATMs are considered to be necessary to ensure that these historic banks remain in their original use, but as well as ensuring any insertion are as minimal and sensitive as possible the opportunity has also been used to reinsert lost features such as some of the roundels at Barclays.



Reinstatement of stone roundels at Barclays

An extractor duct has been installed to the rear of 44 High Street, a Grade II listed building, which backs onto Priory Walk. Listed Building Consent and Planning Permission were applied for its retention but insufficient justification and no mitigation was submitted. Information was requested but has not been provided and the applications were not progressed. The current installation is therefore still unauthorised and which is to be pursued.



Flue to rear of 44 High Street

Previous improvements of shopfronts have continued. Recently there has been the removal of an external roller shutter and the introduction of corbels and cornice to the new shopfront of Subway at 32 Baxter Gate and rusticated pilasters and new corniced fascia at 1 Hall Gate.



32 Baxtergate – With change of occupier and new signage the opportunity was taken to add cornice and corbels to frame fascia



1Hall Gate – With change of use a new shopfront was required this included rusticated pilasters echoing those above

Some unattractive external roller shutters have unfortunately been erected. This is considered to be a particular problem in and around Silver Street and a co-ordinated approach is being looked at to address this problem. This has also recently happened at 26 Baxter Gate where action is currently being taken to rectify this. This has also resulted in the sign obscuring the decorative surround.



26 Baxter Gate

Similarly at 5 Priory Place, a listed building, alterations have occurred to the shopfront. This shopfront although not original had been previously designed to respect the architectural details of the building, including exposing the window panels below first floor windows. The recent alterations have covered these panels back up in order to cover loose wiring and have resulted in both the hiding of the panels and a deeper fascia. We are currently with the owner to find a more appropriate solution.



5 Priory Place

Window Replacement

There have been a few occasions where windows have been replaced. Whilst historic models are encouraged, especially where the building retains its original appearance, sometimes where a building has been drastically altered and the windows are not original it may be more appropriate for a simpler design to be used as at 28/29 Hall Gate.



28/29 Hall Gate

There have been some replacement of windows to some of the buildings that are proposed to be included within the conservation area (York House, King's Arcade) whilst regrettable the overall form of these buildings is still positive and should not hamper these areas being included. Inclusion within the conservation area should give adjoining buildings better protection.



York House



King's Arcade

New Phone Boxes

When an application came in for the replacement of modern style phone boxes with ones that incorporated ATMs the opportunity was pursued to ensure that the replacements were of a more traditional style given their historic setting.



New combined phoneboxes/ATMs

Outside Danum Hotel

Outside Lazarus Court (previously known as
Bradford Row)

Condition of Buildings

The condition of some buildings (for example 40/41 Hall Gate) is still of concern however there have been some recent successes such as the redecoration of The Goose. 50 High Street also has been redecorated which has resulted in a brighter appearance since the appraisal with the previous dark green colour of its elevation now being cream. Full survey of area to be undertaken to identify buildings of concern and owners to be contacted regarding undertaking works.



40/41 Hall Gate



The Goose



50 High Street which has repainted a different colour since the appraisal was undertaken

Vacant Buildings

Although given the present economic climate there are relatively few long term empty premises there are some that are of concern. These include the prominent old Co-op/TJ Hughes building. However this as well as The Vault (ex. Yorkshire Bank, High Street) have been granted a flexible range of uses in order to help get these listed buildings back into use.



Danum House



The Vault

Similarly plans are being worked up to ensure that The Mansion House is fully utilised since many of its functions have transferred to the new Civic Office. It has already operating as a wedding venue and the Tourist Office is to occupy the former Chief Executive Offices next door.



Mansion House

High School for Girls and Site of Civic Theatre

As part of the original appraisal the conservation area was recommended to be extended in several areas. One of these was around the triangular open space of Waterdale. Within this laid the High School for Girls and the Civic Theatre. The school was considered to be a key unlisted building at the time of the initial appraisal. Unfortunately due to vandalism the building had been seriously damaged and in order to try to ensure that the most prominent part of the building could be retained and usefully redeveloped, the difficult decision to demolish the site wings of the school was taken by the Council with the corner element being retained. This element is still expected to be incorporated with a redevelopment of the site and should be a key component within the streetscape and would still be considered to make a positive contribution to the area. The Civic Theatre was considered to make a neutral contribution and this has now been demolished. The site however is still considered to be important to this conservation area, as well as the adjoining one of South Parade, and it is still recommended that the boundary of Doncaster – High Street Conservation be amended in line with the original appraisal.



The retained corner element of the High School for Girls



Site of Civic Theatre

Additional Key Unlisted Buildings

The merit of some of the other buildings in the conservation area has been reassessed and there are now considered to be additional key unlisted buildings to those outlined in the original appraisal of 2007. These are:

- **26 Baxter Gate**

Originally purpose built as a public house called The Blue Bell, hence the carving of a bell within a stone panel between first and second floor. It was designed by Harry Johnson (who also designed The Nag's Head) and built in 1930 and is of three storeys. It show regard for its Georgian neighbour by using traditional features but in the idiom of the time. It has a substantial surround to its ground floor frontage, which stepped recesses and cornice. The first floor is in brick with a Flemish bond with two tall metal casement windows with separate metal balconies to each. The second floor is stone with a pair of smaller metal windows above each of the first floor windows, topped with a decorative stone cornice. All windows are slightly recessed within their openings. The shopfront itself is modern and is recessed in the surround although the current signage obscures the top of the stone surround and its stepped detailing, the latter should be addressed as noted elsewhere in this review.



- **'Flares', 4 Hall Gate**

The main building was a rebuilding of The White Bear in 1885, although the pub's earliest reference is in 1779. It is three storied to its most elaborate part that has a Dutch feel to it. The two storey element to the left shares some of the same elements but is more restrained and is an extension of 1925. Both parts are red brick in English bond with stone dressings. The ground floor is relatively modern but provides a robust base for the upper levels with a central round oriel window stretching over the upper two floors on the three storey element with narrow windows to either side surmounted with Dutch gable. The condition of the oriel is of concern. All windows are timber which reflects its architecture.

Flares also includes 5 Hall Gate, to the right, which is a listed building and was incorporated into one premises in 1989.



- **42 Hall Gate**

This is thought to be a Georgian building with a re-fronting in the early 20th century. There is evidence of this from the position of the windows and the roof form. It was modified to become the offices of the Britannic Assurance in a simple Neo-Classical style, it is similar in style to the banks built at a similar time on Doncaster's High Street and brings a financial feel to this part of Hall Gate. Whilst the ground floor is modern and detracts, the robust nature of the upper floors with their strong detail in faience makes it stand out as a key building. It is surmounted with a decorative parapet with the owners' name at the time of the remodelling proudly displayed topped with an anthemion, a Greek honeysuckle. Window detailing is simple and in timber to its upper levels.



- **Danum Hotel, High Street**

Built on a prominent corner, it is a local landmark. It replaced The Ram Inn, an ancient public house, and was originally erected in 1908 in connection with the widening of Cleveland Street. It was extended in c. 1913 along the High Street to include a Ballroom. It is a large building of three storeys plus attic storey. It has a French feel to its architecture. Its corner is curved, a typical Doncastrian feature and topped with a dome with ironwork to its summit. The ground floor is stone clad with first and second floors being red Accrington brick. It has a steeply pitched Mansard roof covered in Westmorland green slate roof which is interrupted by the dome and numerous dormers and occasional gables that line up with the lower windows. Stringcourses and pediments also add interest. Windows have unfortunately been replaced in uPVC that gives a bland look to this element.



- **Santander, 56/57 High Street**

Originally two buildings, that to the left is very similar in style to the listed Lloyds bank next door in a neo-classical vein in faience. It is a rebuilding of Maw Baker's (also known as Princess Victoria Vaults) by Ind Coope & Allsopp Ltd. in 1925, with the earliest mention of the hostelry going back to 1822. It is of three storeys, with simple modern shopfront to its ground frontage which is sympathetic to its upper levels. The upper levels has four double height pilaster separating the glazing and surmounted by stylish cornice with date of construction in roman numerals MCMXXV(1925). Windows are metal in keeping with the building's architecture.

That to the right appears to off a slightly earlier date (c.1911) and has a curved frontage following the building line that forms the corner between High Street and St. Sepulchre Gate. It is of five storeys in stone. Again the ground floor frontage is modern but has been designed to respect the architecture of its upper levels. Above the façade has a large window to the centre with narrow windows either side. The central window projects out as a double storey canted bay at second and third storey. There is a cornice separating the fourth floor level from the lower levels making the fourth floor read as an attic storey with semi-circular window and decorative outline to its gable. Below the cornice is the building's original name of 'Royal Buildings'. Windows are timber again in keeping with the building's architecture.



- **The Arnold Building, 39/41 Printing Office Street**

Although of quite a modest size it is of considerable interest due to the quality and variety of brickwork much of a highly decorative nature. It was built as the offices of the builder Harold Arnold and obviously promotes their skills as bricklayers.

It is a low two storied gable fronted building in red brick. Shopfront all in brick of three bays, with a narrow central one with wide side bays. Arched heads to the bays set between pilasters with decorative brick infills over the heads. Recessed panel with signage for 'Harold Arnold – Builder' undertaken in tiles. On the first floor there is a tall central window set in arched recess with shorter window openings either side. The gable is topped with dentilled pediment.



- **1 St. Sepulchre Gate**

The building has a curved corner, a Doncastrian feature, and is of four storeys. It was designed by Henry Beck and is from 1912/13 when the previous building here was demolished as part of the road widening scheme that took place between c.1910 -1930. The ground floor has a modern shopfront which detracts, but above the building is stone, and is strongly detailed. It is of eight bays, the outer ones are banded and slightly project. The central six bays are separated by double high pilasters to first and second floors (unfortunately the current shopfront fascia obscures the bases of the pilasters), with a cornice defining the third storey as an attic storey. Three Diocletian windows with wreaths between form the central part of the third storey, with round windows surmounted decorative pediments to the outer bays at this level. Windows are timber which is in keeping with the buildings architecture.



- **3 & 5/7 St. Sepulchre Gate**

The previous buildings were demolished as part of the St. Sepulchre Gate street widening and the present buildings erected in around 1913 and were again by Henry Beck. The building is three storeys with some attic storeys. The shopfront are modern and detract, the ground floor frontage to No. 3 was originally much more solid as it was a rebuilding of the Three Legs (later renamed the Yorkist in 1969). This hostelry had been here since at least 1782. The upper storeys are sandstone and have a Neo-Baronial feel to them with double storied bay windows, stringcourses and other decorative features such as shields and panelling. The skyline is enlivened with gables and open tracery – from old photographs the gable to the right-hand side has at some stage been removed. Most of the timber windows remain with their thin profiles but those on the upper level of No.3 have unfortunately been replaced with thicker framed windows.



- **17 St. Sepulchre Gate**

Again rebuilt due to the widening of St. Sepulchre Gate, No. 17 is another building in the Neo-Baronial style of three storeys with attic storey. It has a simple modern shopfront with upper levels in sandstone. Decorative features include mullioned windows, with that on second floor being a canted bay, dentilled cornice separating lower levels from the attic storey and curved head to gable of attic. There is also a metal balcony to attic window. Windows are timber with leaded lights which is in keeping with the design of the building.



- **1 Silver Street**

This building was built in 1910 as a result of the widening of Silver Street in the first decade of the 20th century. It is quite a tall building for its narrow site but as it is a corner building it is appropriate to be a prominent building. It has the Doncastrian feature of a rounded corner, and with The Danum Hotel forms a 'gateway' into the High Street. Also like the Danum Hotel it has a French feel to it with its banded faience and window surrounds. It is four storeys with an attic storey with dormers behind a balustrade. The shopfronts are modern and unfortunately do not add to the building's grandeur as neither do the windows, which are replacements in uPVC. The building has an interesting light-well from the third floor level above a large projecting bay at second floor due to having to give a right to light to the neighbouring property – a very unique feature.



- **St. Leger Tavern (Biscuit Billy's), 8 Silver Street**

This building is believed to be Georgian, or late Georgian, but the façade was remodelled in the first quarter of the 20th century. It is three storied with a terracotta ground floor frontage (which has recently had more of its original fascia revealed) with its upper levels in scored render with slate roof. It has large casement windows set in pilastered surrounds to its first floor level with Victorian timber vertically sliding sash windows to its second storey with blank panels on both levels, some of which are used for signage which they were presumed designed for. It is a rare pre-20th century surviving building on this street.



- **Diamond Night Club, Wood Street**

Built originally as the Trinity Presbyterian Church and designed by Herbert Athron in 1890, the building lies parallel to the end of Wood Street as it opens up to become the space of Waterdale. As well as the church there appears to be a Church Hall that lies perpendicular to the church. It is in Neo-Gothic in red brick with stone dressing, the latter is painted cream and black, with a Welsh slate roof. The original entrance was on the south end, which has a large traceried window above, this has been replaced with a modern entrance lobby that feeds into one of the original side projections of the former church, and which currently detracts.



Consideration was also given to include 22 Baxter Gate and Jubilee Buildings on St. Sepulchre Gate but both buildings were not felt to have quite enough presence to be key unlisted building.



22 Baxter Gate



Jubilee Buildings, St. Sepulchre Gate

Designation of other buildings

In looking at the potential of the Arnold Building as a key unlisted building, the quality of the new developments either side was put under question. Whilst those going round the corner are still considered positive, due to their curved frontages and sash windows, that occupied by 'Walkabout' are very plain by comparison and has some detailing which is quite awkward and is more neutral in its contribution to the area.



Units on corner of Printing Office and Cleveland Street, which are still considered to positive due their curved frontage and sash windows



Walkabout – some of its detailing is quite plain and overall is now considered to be neutral rather than positive

Kenberne, Hall Gate is currently considered neutral due its oversized shopfront, which obscures its first floor windows, and the loss of its original roof covering of clay pantiles, however these should not be taken that its demolition would be supported. It is one of the oldest buildings on Hall Gate and is a rare survival of buildings built before the filling in of the Town Ditch in 1734. Instead the sensitive restoration of the building including the reduction of the existing fascia sign, reinstatement of the first floor windows to their original size and re-roofing with clay pantiles, which would quite easily change its contribution from Neutral to Positive and which would be supported.



Kenberne, 61 Hall Gate

Consultation on Review

Involving the community and raising public awareness is considered an important part of reviewing the conservation area appraisal and was subject to public consultation from 10th November to 15th December 2014. This included the following measures:

- The review was made available during this period on the Council's website with comments being welcome
- Site notices were erected in the conservation area on Friday 7th November publicising the review and also welcoming comments
- A press notice was placed in the Doncaster Star on Thursday 13th November also publicising the review and welcoming comments
- Doncaster Civic Trust were contacted given their previous involvement with the original conservation area appraisal

Responses

As a result of the above consultation one response was received from:

- Doncaster Civic Trust – they have been concerned about the state of 40/41 Hall Gate and are pleased that this is noted in the review. They are also pleased that the central part of the Hall Cross School for Gils is to be retained and support the extension of the conservation area to include it. They also support the concerns about gap sites and the addition of other Key Unlisted Buildings whose descriptions they have also have added to.

They also asked for the reconsideration of the designation of some other buildings and which has been considered. This included concerns about Kenberne, Hall Gate being designated as having a neutral contribution to the area. They thought this may put it at risk of demolition when instead it retention is seen as important as it is a rare survival of buildings built before the filling in of the Town Dutch in 1734 and this this has been noted in the main text of the review to reflect this concern.