Lincolnshire COUNTY COUNCIL
Working for a better future

Historic England

Cottages on West Street

Market Place

LINCOLNSHIRE EXTENSIVE URBAN SURVEY

Alford—2021

Alford Manor House

The Project

The primary objective of the Extensive Urban Survey is to create a record of the development and historic character of Lincolnshire's towns. It is anticipated that the survey will be of use and interest within the planning system and to the public, particularly those living within or visiting the towns. It should be noted that although every effort has been made to be thorough, the reports are not completely comprehensive and should not be expected to cover all that is known about a place.

The project consists of a written report, detailing the archaeological and historical background and development of the town. The character of the town will also be discussed within the report within specific Historical Urban Character Area (HUCA) assessments, which indicate the heritage value of each area based upon the four values identified within Historic England's 2008 Conservation Principles: Evidential, Historical, Aesthetic, and Communal, these are also compared to values seen in the NPPF.

The Extensive Urban Survey provides a 'snap shot' of the development of the towns of Lincolnshire taken at the time of survey, as such it is one of many data sets which could and should be consulted prior to development proposals within the towns. The Lincolnshire Historic Environment Record (HER) maintains an up to date record of all historical and archaeological data that is known within the county, and should be consulted as part of planning applications (NPPF21 para194).

Location

Alford is located in the district of East Lindsey, at the eastern edge of the Wolds. The town is located within Natural England's National Character Area 42 Lincolnshire Coast and Marshes. Area 42 is described as having *a flat coastal plain to the east, with dramatic skylines across great distances, rising gradually in the west to more undulating land at the foot of the adjacent Lincolnshire Wolds… Important coastal habitats are managed for nature conservation with extensive dune systems and salt marshes which support a wide range of overwintering and migratory seabirds… Land management has had a fundamental impact on the character of this area, with a clear distinction between the higher ground of the Middle Marsh, where settlement is nucleated, and dispersed settlement relating to drainage in the Outmarsh… Inland is a predominantly open, medium-scale agricultural landscape with mixed arable farmland in the Middle Marsh to the west… Woodland and hedge cover is sparse but increases westwards towards the foot of the Lincolnshire Wolds with significant ancient woodland on the Middle Marsh… A complex series of rivers and small streams drain eastwards towards the sea. There are some natural watercourses such as the Great Eau and Waithe Beck, as well as a network of many manmade drainage ditches. The disused Louth Canal – a canalisation of the River Lud – extends as far as Tetney Lock… Many deserted medieval villages surviving under grass are found in this NCA… A dispersed settlement pattern is characteristic throughout much of the area with a concentration of larger settlements along the coast including resort towns…*

The Lincolnshire Historic Landscape Characterisation includes Alford in Character Area 8—The Grazing Marshes, specifically in the Middle Marsh. The modern landscape of this character area is recorded as having fields that *comprise a balanced mix of types. Close to the historic settlements at the edge of the zone, there is some survival of ancient enclosures of the former open field systems… There is also a strong survival of planned enclosure landscapes across the character zone, and the modern fields, produced through a process of consolidation in the twentieth century, seem to retain much of the rectilinear character of the underlying planned enclosures… The south of the zone displays two distinct settlement types. Larger settlements, such as Alford, Willoughby or Orby, are situated on higher ground and are highly nucleated. On the lower lying, drained marshland settlement is restricted to isolated farm complexes, which are scattered evenly throughout the zone, and linear settlement strings, such as Irby-in-the-Marsh, which are situated on a series of small mounds rising two or three metres above the surrounding land…*

The British Geological Survey records the bedrock within the survey boundary as comprising Ferriby chalk in most of the survey boundary, with the Carstone formation recorded in the western part of the survey area. This is overlain by three different superficial deposits: alluvium following the Wold Grift Drain which is a former river, Devensian glaciofluvial deposits in the town centre and northwest of the survey boundary, and Devensian till to the west of the survey boundary.

The survey boundary used is the parish boundary for Alford.

Lincolnshire
Lincolnshire Districts
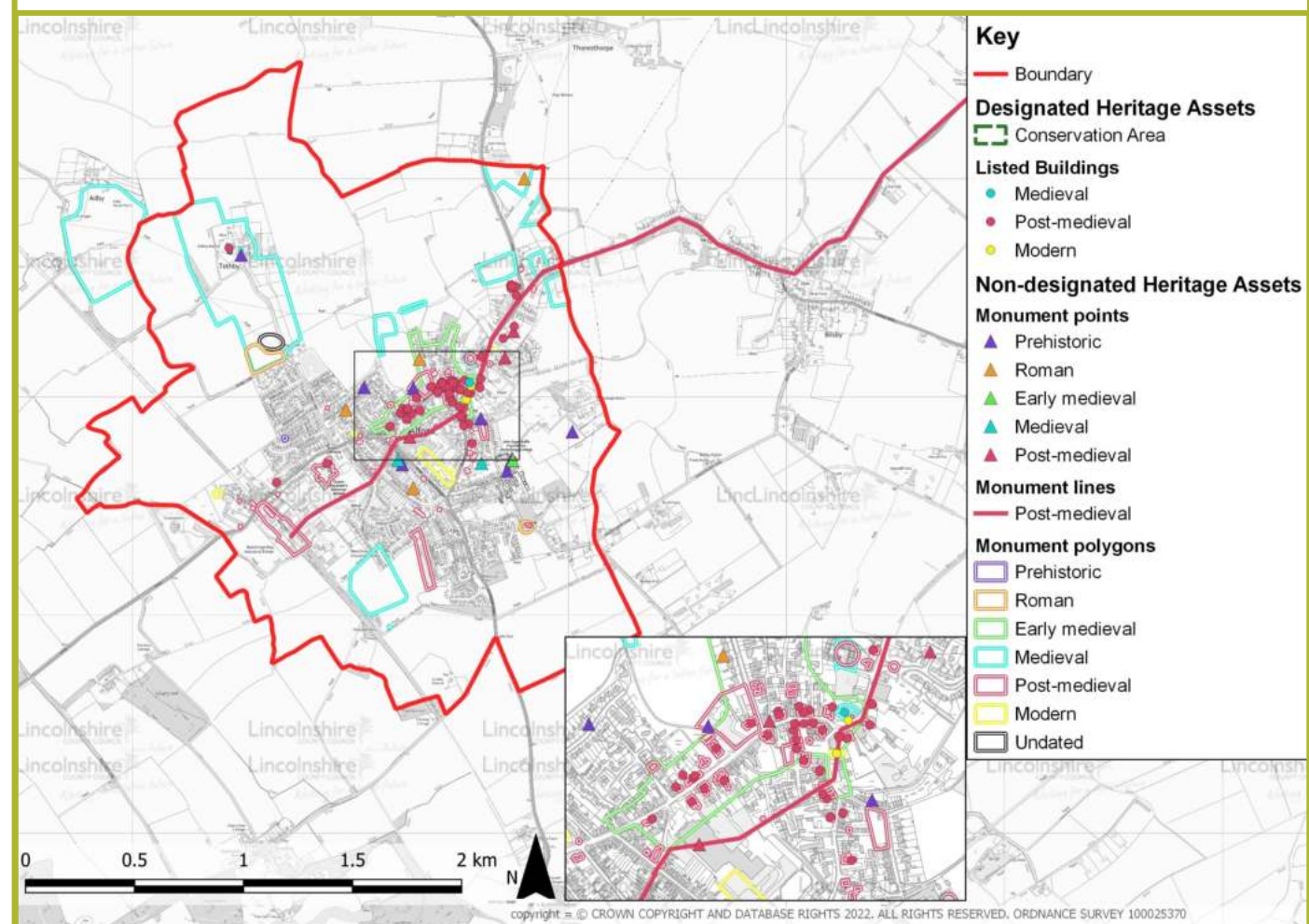East Lindsey
EUS Towns
Alford
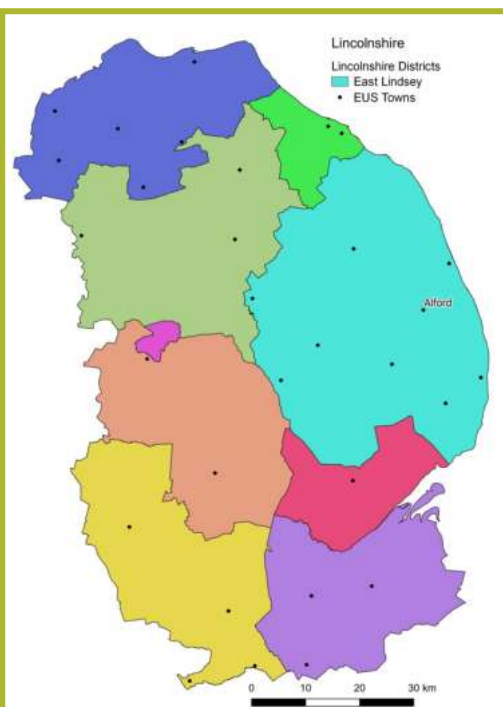
Summary

The settlement of Alford was established in the early medieval period and is likely to have been centred on West Street. Before this there is evidence of prehistoric and Roman activity throughout the character area. During the medieval period Alford encompassed current-day West Street, Church Street and South Market Place. The crossroads formed by these streets probably dates back to this earliest time. Alford was granted a market charter at the end of the 13th century, which coincides with a high point in the English wool trade. The town's location meant it was well situated to serve the wool trade and this led to its growth. During the post-medieval period the town continued to rely on agricultural produce and the market for its economy. The windmill at Alford is an important testament to this agricultural past. It is during this period that the landscape saw significant change, due to the enclosing of fields, as well as drainage works to manage seasonal flood waters. The majority of buildings in the historic core date from the 19th century, although there are also thatched buildings on West Street dating from as early as the 16th century. During the 19th century there was also urban expansion beyond the historic core, mainly along West Street and East Street. Alford also had some small-scale industry brought by the arrival of the railway in 1848. The town was also home to a short-lived tram to Sutton-on-Sea in the 19th century.

In the 20th and 21st centuries Alford experienced further urban expansion, this time along South Street, Willoughby Road and Tothby Lane. This mainly represents residential developments and schools which do not reflect the town's character but rather reflect national trends. The 20th century also saw the closure of the railway station, the area of which was replaced by an industrial estate in the late 20th century. Two more industrial developments in this century include Straven's knitwear factory and Safelincs' depot, both located off West Street but the former is now closed.

Alford has a strong character and sense of place which is produced by its visible and readily legible built heritage. The well-conserved thatched buildings on West Street combined with the post-medieval buildings in the market place, provide a unique character to the town.

Key
— Boundary
Designated Heritage Assets
Conservation Area
Listed Buildings
• Medieval
• Post-medieval
• Modern
Non-designated Heritage Assets
Monument points
▲ Prehistoric
▲ Roman
▲ Early medieval
▲ Medieval
▲ Post-medieval
Monument lines
— Post-medieval
Monument polygons
▢ Prehistoric
▢ Roman
▢ Early medieval
▢ Medieval
▢ Post-medieval
▢ Modern
▢ Undated

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1. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

1.1 PREHISTORIC

Alford would have been on the southern end of a probable prehistoric routeway, known as Barton Street. This route would have followed the eastern edge of the Wolds from Barton upon Humber to Alford, possibly continuing to Burgh-le-Marsh (May, 1976). There are several prehistoric finds recorded within the survey boundary, these include a Neolithic axe found at Tothby Manor (HER: MLI42542) to the north of the town centre. Another Neolithic polished stone axe was found in the grounds of Alford House (HER: MLI42532) and a late Neolithic or early Bronze Age stone axe (HER: MLI42546) was found near Caroline Street. A Neolithic leaf-shaped arrowhead (HER: MLI42538) was found on Christopher Road and a Neolithic flint dagger on Hamilton Road (HER: MLI42534). Further prehistoric tools were found in the grounds of John Splendluff Secondary School, including a Bronze Age stone axe (HER: MLI42535) and Neolithic to Late Bronze Age flints (HER: MLI43302). A Bronze Age axe hammer (HER: MLI42539) was also found in the field south of the sewage works. These remains provide evidence as to how the area was being utilised and managed during the prehistoric period; it is likely that hunting and woodland management were being carried out locally.

A possible Bronze Age round barrow (HER: MLI87420) was recorded at John Spendluffe High School and another probable Bronze Age round barrow in a housing development north of Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School (HER: MLIMLI87550).

1.2 ROMAN

There is evidence of Roman occupation in the surrounding region, including the presence of a Roman settlement in Willoughby, 4 km south of Alford. Another settlement is recorded 6 km south-west of Alford, in the parishes of Dalby and Ulceby-with-Fordington (Whitwell, 1992). Within the survey boundary, archaeological evidence indicates Roman occupation in the local area. This evidence includes ditches and pits which are related to an enclosure and field system which are recorded on land off Tothby Lane (HER: MLI116296). Pottery from these features date the site to the 3rd century. Animal bones, mainly cattle, were also recovered; cut marks seen on the bone indicate that they were processed for meat, indicating the probability of a local settlement. Spelt grains recovered from ditches on the site demonstrate the type of agricultural cultivation which was taking place during this period. This is the only confirmed evidence of Roman settlement, although there may be further unrecorded settlement activity evidence across the survey area. Roman coins are also recorded by the HER in the survey area. Three coins were found at Park Road (HER: MLI42533), a Roman coin was found in the west of Alford (HER: MLI42530) and a denarius of Trajan was found in Parsons Lane (HER: MLI42537). The base of a Roman carinated bowl was also found in a field on the northern edge of the survey boundary (HER: MLI42545).

1.3 EARLY MEDIEVAL AND ANGLO-SAXON

Settlements, as we would recognise them, were established across the Lincolnshire Wolds during the early medieval period. Alford was also probably established during this period (HER: MLI87404). The settlement would have been centred on West Street and around St. Wilfrid's Church (HER: MLI42536).

1.3.1 PLACE-NAME EVIDENCE

The name Alford could have one of two origins. One suggestion being *alr-ford* meaning "alder ford" or "ford by the alder trees" in Old English, which was spoken between the 5th and 12th centuries. Another suggestion, also from Old English, is that it relates to *alh-ford* meaning "ford by a heathen temple". Alford appears as *Alforde* in the Domesday Book and as *Auford* in the 1175 Pipe Rolls, as well as in the 1202 Assize Rolls (Ekwall, 1960).

1.3.2 DOMESDAY SURVEY

Alford is recorded in the Domesday survey as being part of the Calcewath wapentake (an administrative division within a shire), and having two landowners: Rademar, with Gilbert de Gand as tenant-in-chief and William Tailgebosch.

Gilbert de Gand's land which had been owned by Tonni of Lusby prior to the conquest, comprised of 6 and half bovates (97.5 acres of land) assessed to the geld, land for 12 oxen and 10 acres of meadow. There were 2 sokemen (freemen), 3 villeins (villagers) and 1 bordar with 1 team. William Tailgebosch had 4 bovates (60 acres of land) assessed to the geld, land for 6 oxen and 6 acres of meadow. He had 1 villein with 2 oxen in a team. The annual value for the lord was 5 shillings in 1086 and 1 pound 10 shillings (30 shillings) in 1066. Before William Tailgebosch, the lord in 1066 was Thorfridh, who may be the namesake of the settlement of Thoresthorpe located outside of the north-eastern boundary of the survey area.

A second settlement, known as Tothby was documented in the Domesday survey to have been extant within the survey boundary, located to the north-west of the town centre. It was sokeland belonging to Rigesbi (Rigsby). The resources associated with

this settlement included half a carucate (a carucate was approximately 120 acres) of land assessed to the geld, land for 10 oxen, 12 acres of meadow, and 12 acres of woodland for pannage (seasonally allowing livestock into the woodland to feed) as well as 40 acres of underwood. There were 3 sokemen and 2 bordars who are recorded as living in the hamlet and as having a plough team.

1.3.2 RELIGION

There was no church in Alford at the time of the Domesday survey, it is likely that the town was served by St James' Church at Rigsby (HER: MLI42436) (Baron, 1909).

1.4 MEDIEVAL

1.4.1 STREET PATTERN AND DEVELOPMENT

Alford remained a small settlement throughout the medieval period. It developed along West Street, Church Street and South Market Place. Probable burgage plot outlines can be identified in plan of the properties and land to the east of South Market Place.

1.4.2 RELIGION AND EDUCATION

The first recorded church in Alford dates to 1150, located on the same site as the current St Wilfred's Church. It was in use until its demolition in 1350, at which time the present church was constructed. The funds for this work came from William of Tothby, who also founded the North Chapel as a chantry chapel in 1396. The church tower was rebuilt in 1525-1535, although part of the top stage and parapet are from the 19th century. Gilbert de Tothby also built a chantry chapel (HER: MLI42544) at his house in Tothby. In October 1536, the Lincolnshire Rising began in Louth, it soon spread to the surrounding settlements including Alford with local people joining in the march. This was soon quashed by Henry VIII and many members of the movement were then executed for treason.

St Wilfrid's Church

1.4.3 ECONOMY AND INDUSTRY

There was not a great deal of economic or industrial activity at the beginning of the medieval period in Alford. The economy of the town at this time was mainly agricultural. It wasn't until the late 13th century that a market and fair were held in the town. The first charter was granted on the 10th October 1283, by Edward I to William de Welle, for a market which was to be held at the manor. The town was also granted a fair on the same day, to be held in the manor on the day of the Holy Trinity, the first Sunday after Pentecost. On the 6th May 1439 a new fair was granted by Henry VI to Leo, Lord Welles, the heir of William, possibly superseding the 1283 charter, and was celebrated on the first Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday after Whitsunday. A second charter was granted at the same time for a fair to be held on the 28th October in honour of Saints Simon and Jude. Leo also surrendered the market charter to be cancelled in order that Henry VI could grant him a new charter for a Tuesday market.

The creation of the market and fair in Alford at the end of the 13th century coincides with a high point in the English wool trade, which peaked in 1305. Wool accounted for nearly all of England's export earnings by 1300. During the 1280s Boston's share of wool exports by weight counted for over a third of the kingdom's total, this decreased to a quarter in the first decade of the 14th century (Platts, 1985). It is likely that wool was sold at the market at Alford and then transported to Boston, although market towns such as Louth played a more important role in this trade. In the wider wapentake area of Calceworth, evidence indicates that is was not an affluent area. Towards the end of the 13th century the wapentake had an above average number of men who had to participate in military service but were not considered knights. Only landholders of land valued over £20 per annum were obliged to become knights and paid a fee for the privilege indicating that not many residents of the wapentake could afford this right (Platts, 1985). The 1322 lay subsidy shows that Lindsey, which included Alford, was poorer than Kesteven and Holland. The lay subsidy recorded "*a tax of one-fifteenth the assessed total value of each household's movable possessions*" (Platts, 1985). Those with properties valued at less than 10s were exempt so it is difficult to know the proportion of poor inhabitants in towns and villages (Platts, 1985). The relatively small economy of Alford and the surrounding area, likely kept the town small, with little opportunity for growth during this period.

The first half of the 14th century saw wetter weather and flooding in parts of Lincolnshire which affected crop yields. Famine in 1315 and the decline of the population meant that by the 1330s, grain prices dropped due to reduced demand. This pricing was an improvement compared to the years just after the famine that saw poor harvests and inflated prices.

1.4.4 LANDSCAPE

Alford's surrounding landscape would mostly have consisted of agricultural land. This was part of an open-field system which

was farmed in strips by the community. This system also laid out areas for arable and meadow allowing access to a variety of resources.

Tothby Manor House (HER: MLI42849, NHLE: 1063040) is a 17th century manor house that stands beside a moated enclosure which is the site of the earlier Tothby Manor. The manor was home to William of Tothby, founder of the 14th century church of Saint Wilfrid in Alford. Sir Robert Christopher bought the manor in the mid-17th century when the present house was built. As previously stated, there was a hamlet at Tothby (HER: MLI42529) mentioned in the Domesday survey. Although it still existed in 1565 it is now lost. Earthworks located on the site indicate evidence of former tofts, crofts and ponds, as well as ridge–and–furrow associated with the settlement. It is not clear why it was deserted, however there are several reasons that villages were abandoned: such as a lack of economic power to maintain independence from larger settlements, poor soils not providing enough food or revenue and outbreaks of plague and famine. From the 15th century, increasing numbers of landowners began to enclose lands for sheep pasture thereby shutting once cultivated fields off to villagers, which forced their migration. (Platts, 1985). The site of the former hamlet is now agricultural land.

1.4.5 CHARACTERISTIC BUILDINGS

Church of St Wilfrid (HER: MLI42536, NHLE: 1063026)

The church of St Wilfrid is a mid-14th century church with 15th, 16th and 17th century alterations. It is located on the site of a previously demolished mid-12th century church, which was removed to accommodate the current structure. It was heavily restored in 1869 by Sir George Gilbert Scott when a north aisle was added and the west tower was altered.

1.5 POST-MEDIEVAL

1.5.1 STREET PATTERN AND DEVELOPMENT

During the post-medieval period urban development increased in Alford, although there was not a rapid expansion compared to other larger market towns in the wider area. There was also residential development along Willoughby Road to the south and along East Street. The urban development essentially followed the main communication routes of the town. The population of the town grew rapidly over the 19th century. In 1801 the town had 1040 inhabitants, expanding to 1784 people by 1831, and peaking at 2894 in 1891. The construction of the railway and the town's station towards the end of West Street meant industrial, commercial and residential development westward. After this the population declined steadily until the mid-late 20th century.

1.5.2 LANDSCAPE

The landscape around Alford went through considerable change during the post-medieval period. The largest change to take place was the enclosure of the landscape, following a Parliamentary Act. Although enclosure of the land had been gradually happening for centuries the Parliamentary Enclosure was at a much larger scale and meant the loss of access to most of the land for residents of the town. This process changed the landscape surrounding Alford from one of open fields which were communally farmed to small rectangular fields, enclosed by hedges and fences, which were owned by a smaller number of individuals. Parts of the Fens had been drained to a certain degree in the medieval period, but it is not until the late 19th century that major drainage works were carried out. Drainage of the land had occurred in one form or another since Roman times, however, these later works reclaimed vast areas of land towards the coast for arable use. This led to increased access to agricultural produce for Alford. The creation of new drains in Alford during this period would have further changed the local landscape.

1.5.3 ECONOMY AND INDUSTRY

In the early 18th century Boston, Spalding and Stamford were regional commercial centres in the Fens, while the smaller towns of Alford, Epworth and Bourne were in a second tier of market towns. Alford's economy was still heavily reliant on agriculture during this period, with a small amount of manufacture also taking place. The buildings erected at this time reflected the lower economic success of the town's residents at the time (Beastall, 1978). Examples of higher calibre buildings in Alford are Hanby Hall (HER:MLI87469), The George Hotel (HER: MLI87493) and several other residential and commercial properties built at the time. Prior to the late 18th century, markets were held in the South Market Place. The present-day marketplace was occupied by buildings before

South Market Place

the late 18th, when a fire *"from a cartridge from one of the cavalry on exercise"* destroyed many of the houses. After this event, space was left for the current marketplace. (Cooke, 2006).

In the 19th century a major land estate in Alford of around 7000 acres was owned by Robert Adam Christopher and later by Nisbet Hamilton (Beastall, 1978). This covered part of the parish but most of it lay outside the parish.

From the 18th century Lincolnshire tradesmen, bankers, lawyers and clergy all participated in land acquisition as an investment. They also invested capital in utilities such as turnpike roads and canals. Some of these men married into the lesser gentry or in to farming communities (Beastall, 1978). An example of this was John Higgins who bought lands and was the enclosure commissioner for Alford and its neighbouring parishes. He was also steward of the estates of the Christopher family, which included land in Alford.

In the early 18th century wool production still played an important part in the Lincolnshire rural economy. Sheep were fattened in the pastures of the Outer Marsh after being bred in sheltered areas in the Wolds and west-facing lands off the Heath and Cliff. Export of English wool was prohibited between 1660 and 1825, this led to the smuggling of raw wool on the Lincolnshire coast in the late 18th century in exchange for wines, spirits and tea. Alford may have been involved indirectly in this trade as a market town selling wool to smugglers in the nearby coast. Around this time overseers of the poor were ordered to get unemployed people working in textile manufacture. "The Vicar of Willoughby near Alford, the Rev. R. G. Bowyer, helped to set up a Society for the Promotion of Industry to employ the poor in spinning and weaving wool, a cheaper material than locally grown flax or hemp" (Beastall, 1978). Despite this production, at the beginning of the 19th century, consumers preferred cotton or softer woollen products. This meant a decline in demand for the harsher wool produced in Lincolnshire and there was therefore a decline in production compared to the previous century. (Beastall, 1978) The nobility and gentry of Lincolnshire would gather in Lincoln for events at certain times of the year. One of these events was the stuff or colour ball, which was originally held at Alford from 1785. It was held in Lincoln in 1789 in late October or early November. The patroness would be a lady of high standing and would choose the colour of the year. Woollen dresses for the ball were meant to encourage cloth manufacture in Lincolnshire (Olney, 1979).

Hoyle's mill

There were numerous traders and craftsmen in Alford recorded during the 19th century. In 1872 journeymen boot and shoemakers secured a reduction in hours and an increase in wages after an 1871 country-wide movement gained momentum (Olney, 1979). There was a Brick yard on Hollywell Road (HER: MLI87630) in the 19th century that continued operating until possibly the 1960s. A gas works (HER: MLI92080) was established off Hanby Lane in 1842 and continued until 1957. A Mechanics Institute, whose building is conserved, was founded in 1854 and was converted into offices in the mid-20th century. There were also two recorded smithies in Alford from the 19th century, one off Church Street (HER: MLI87624) and one off West Street (HER: MLI 87621), neither of which have remaining buildings in the present day.

There are at least four recorded mills in Alford during the 19th century. Oxley's or Hoyles' mill was built in 1813 or 1837. Sam Oxley was also the owner of the Burgh le Marsh windmill. Myers mill was demolished in 1978 and was located in Half-Moon Lane. There were two other mills, Cliff's or Station mill was adjacent to the railway off Station Road and a mill on the corner of Christopher Road and Tothby Lane was demolished in 1909 (Cooke, 2006).

1.5.4 RELIGION AND EDUCATION

The 17th century in England was religiously tumultuous due to the effects of the Reformation a century before. This hostile climate towards non-conformists from the Anglican Church and institutions of power meant that some sought to leave the country in search of religious freedom. Anne Hutchinson, born in Alford, was once such person. Hutchinson was a puritan that had been influenced strongly by John Wheelwright, her brother-in-law, and minister in nearby Bilsby and by John Cotton, a minister who preached in Boston. Hutchinson and her husband sailed to Boston, Massachusetts Bay Colony, with other puritans from London in 1634 on the 'Griffin'. In 1638 she was expelled from the community in Boston for her religious views and practices, which had angered some of the colony's ministers. She eventually settled in New Netherland, now New York, where her and her family were killed by Native Americans in 1643. It wouldn't be until the late 18th century when non-conformist chapels and churches would appear in Alford, due to the spread of Methodism in Lincolnshire. The Congregational Chapel (HER: MLI87622) on the corner of Chauntry Road and Hamilton Road is the earliest non-conformist chapel in Alford, erected in 1797. It was extended in 1845 and a larger chapel was added to the original building in 1876. This was possibly a chapel for the Countess of Hungtingdon's Connexion. Selina Huntingdon was patroness of George Whitefield, a former associate of John Wesley. White-

field fused Calvinist theology with evangelist practices and in 1782 the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion seceded from the Church of England. She had an important influence over the Connexion, in its direction and support. Alford was one of ten locations in Lincolnshire to have a chapel for a congregation (Ambler, 2000). The evangelical Church Missionary Society, now Church Mission Society, was a voluntary body that linked evangelically minded clergymen and middle class laymen. Support for the society increased during the early 19th century and an auxiliary of the society was set up in 1813 at Spilsby and Alford, with Lord Gwydyr as its patron (Ambler, 2000). Other post-medieval religious buildings include the Church of the Good Shepherd (HER: MLI87629) on Holywell Road and Alford Cemetery Chapel (HER: MLI115936). The former was demolished around 1970, the latter is an Anglican Chapel constructed towards the end of the 19th century which is still standing. Another non-conformist religious building was the Wesleyan chapel (HER: MLI87639) on Chapel Street, which was functioning between 1819 to 1865, since which time it has been a Masonic Hall. An additional early Methodist chapel was the Primitive Methodist Chapel (HER: MLI99210) on Ranters Row, which was built in 1820. By 1837, the building had been taken over by the Baptists and since 1880 the building has been a private residence. The longest running Methodist chapel was the Primitive Methodist Chapel (HER: MLI87626) in South Street, which ran from 1836 to 1946; the building is now used as a funeral directors. Another chapel, the Free Methodist Chapel (HER: MLI87628), was built around the same time in South Street, which ran from 1850 until its closure in 1936; the building has since been converted into a private residence. On West Street there was a Sunday school, built around the year 1841. A Methodist Chapel was built on the site of the Sunday School (HER: MLI87565) in 1864, it ran until 1986 when it was then converted into a shop.

The first school was founded in Alford in 1566 and classes were originally held in St Wilfrid's Church, possibly in the room above the entrance. The wool merchant Francis Spanning gave £50 to six governors and four auditors on 18th March of the same year. Around £40 was used for the upkeep of a free school and the appointment of a schoolmaster and in 1569 William Gubbe gave an additional £30. Children were taught to read English and Latin, and it may have admitted girls as well as boys, which would have been unusual at the time (Hodgett, 1975). In 1576 Queen Elizabeth I granted a charter recognising it as a grammar school by petition of Lord Burghley. In 1585 Richard and John Spendley gave lands in Strubby, Woodthorpe, Withern, and Cumberworth to help with the upkeep of the school. New statutes at the school meant the elementary teaching at the school disappeared and it was solely a grammar school (Hodgett, 1975). The explorer and future governor of Virginia, John Smith, was born in nearby Willoughby in 1580 and educated at this school before continuing his education at Louth grammar school. The Queen Elizabeth Grammar School (HER: MLI87550) was moved from Chauntry Road to its current location in Station Road in 1881 (Cooke, 2006). There was also a boys school (HER: MLI91869) constructed on West Street in the 19th century and the building is now derelict. It is possible that this was a National Society school established in 1820, mentioned by Wright (Wright, 1982).

1.5.5 RAILWAY AND TRANSPORT

Alford Railway Station

During this period roads nationally were often poorly maintained and badly affected by seasonal weather. Turnpike roads tended to be better maintained as tolls were collected for their upkeep. Alford was served by two such roads, one heading northwest to Louth following East Street and one going southwest to Spilsby via Ulceby Cross. They are likely to have closed in the mid to late 19th century when turnpike trusts were progressively being dismantled due to governmental and economic pressures, especially due to the success of the railway.

Alford Railway Station (HER: MLI43442) was opened on 4th September 1848, as part of the Great Northern Railways' two track Grimsby-Boston line. The station was located at the western end of the town on Station Road, a continuation of West Street. This area was not previously developed and the introduction of the railway station attracted the construction of public houses and new industries. Houses were also built as part of the area's development. The Alford & Sutton Tramway opened in 1884 and connected the train station to the Jolly Bacchus Hotel in Sutton on Sea. Travel was inexpensive for the time (return fares were one shilling for adults) and allowed for day trips to the beach from Alford and for tourists and inhabitants of Sutton on Sea to go shopping to Alford. It closed in 1889 and during its five year lifespan five people died in accidents. The main reason for its closure is likely to have been the 1886 opening of a railway line from Willoughby, just south of Alford, to Sutton and Mablethorpe which inevitably drew traffic away from the tramway.

An 1826 Act of Parliament was passed to allow for the building of a canal from Anderby to Alford. The inland port was proposed to be on the east side of Alford, by Farlesthorpe Road. Works never began on the project and no navigable canal exists.

1.5.6 RECREATION

There were several public houses during the post-medieval period, several of which are still open. The longest standing public house is the White Horse Hotel (HER: MLI87554) which was built in the 17th century. Other on-going establishments are the 18th century Half Moon (HER: MLI87553) and The George Hotel (HER: MLI87493), and the 19th century White Hart (HER: MLI87547), Black Horse (HER: MLI87548) and The Anchor Hotel (HER: MLI87637). Public houses that have since been lost are the 19th century Stags Head, which was demolished in 1870 (HER: MLI87633), the Railway Tavern which has been repurposed as housing (HER: MLI87638) and the Hole in the Wall Inn (HER: MLI87635) which was demolished in the 20th century.

Alford Manor House

1.5.7 CHARACTERISTIC BUILDINGS

Alford Manor House (HER: MLI86812, NHLE: 1063001)

A probable mid-16th century Grade II* house with a timber frame and thatched roof. It would have originally had mud and stud walls but was encased in brick in the 1660s with later alterations. It also hosts a landscape garden to the rear of the building. It is currently a museum of rural life and a venue for events.

Alford Mill / Hoyes Mill (HER: MLI42765, NHLE: 1146936)

A Grade I listed 6 storey tower windmill built of black bitumen-painted brick by the local millwright, Oxley in the early-mid 19th century. It was owned and operated by the Hoyles family until 1955. It was restored in 1978. Repair to the sails and cap is currently required before the mill can reopen to the public. When it is reopened it will be one of only a small number of working mills remaining in the county. It is an important symbol for the rural and agricultural character of the town and its history.

1.6 MODERN AND 21st CENTURY

1.6.1 STREET PATTERN AND DEVELOPMENT

The street pattern continues the same as in the medieval and post-medieval period. However, residential developments do not follow the road network as they did in the post-medieval period. They expand from the previously built areas into agricultural fields further from the main roads. This expansion mainly occurs in the late 20th century. The population in Alford declined throughout much of the 20th century, dropping from 2478 in 1901, to 2227 in 1931 and 2139 in 1961. In the late 20th century, the population began to grow again and at the 2011 census stood at 3459.

1.6.2 TRADE AND INDUSTRY

In the early 20th century, Alford's economy did not see a lot of growth. Small industries, largely based upon processing local resources, were located across the survey area; such as brick-making, quarrying, brewing and milling. In the late 20th century, trades and light industrial businesses have become concentrated in a few sites on the periphery of the town and one factory is located in the town centre behind the road frontage. These areas have grown from previously developed sites. On Church Street there is a coal depot where there used to be concrete works up until the mid-late 20th century. To the west of the town, the former railway station and yards on Beeching Way has been converted into an industrial estate; although the railway buildings have been retained.

Hildrid's was a confectioner and biscuit-maker which was established in 1852 and owned the former mill building on Chapel Street. It was their sweet factory and it turned into a wholesaler and distributor at some point in the 20th century until at least 1988 (Cooke & Crome, 1988). It is now closed and the building now has a residential use.

Straven's knitwear factory was opened in the mid to late 20th century on West Street on the site of an early 20th century brewery. It was demolished some time between 2009 and 2011, however there is a currently vacant Straven's building remaining on West Street with signage indicating it was the factory shop. The 1971 OS map shows an 'engineering works' adjacent to the knitwear factory. This is the location of the current Safelincs headquarters, a fire protection equipment and service supplier. Also on West Street is the Horticultural Society shop, which still has the sign "K. Arrowsmith" after the traditional forge that operated from here until about 1988 (Cooke & Crome, 1988).

1.6.3 RELIGION AND EDUCATION

As mentioned, in the post-medieval period, most of the non-conformist chapels and churches had been demolished or repurposed in the late 19th century or in the 20th century. The only remaining churches are The Storehouse Church and Alford Methodist Church, both on West Street. As for the Anglican Church, St. Wilfrid's Church continues to be a medieval landmark for Alford. As well as this, an Anglican chapel was built towards the end of the 19th century in the then newly constructed cemetery (HER: MLI115936). Alford Primary School and John Spendluffe Technology College (possibly a variation on the name of the pre-

viously mentioned John Spendley) were both built in the mid-20th century on Hanby Lane to the east of the town. These continue to function alongside Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School on West Street.

1.6.4 RAILWAY AND TRANSPORT

Bus services started to appear from 1918 in the county and in Alford a small operator was Fred Hunt, who in 1930 set up a Alford-Spilsby-Boston service. By 1939 most of the county was served by a bus network, with Skegness being a centre for buses towards Boston, Spilsby and Alford. (Mills, 1989). Alford became more reliant on bus services and car usage after the closure of the railway station (HER: MLI43442) in 1970. This closure was part of a railway modernisation plan known as the 'Beeching Cuts'. The plan was influenced by two reports written by Dr Richard Beeching in the 1960s. The Willoughby – Mabelthorpe line failed to increase demand and was therefore one of the lines closed. There haven't been any major road infrastructure changes in Alford, the main road is still the A1104 that joins Station Road, West Street and East Street in the centre of the town.

1.6.5 CHARACTERISTIC BUILDINGS

Barclays Bank (HER: MLI87495, NHLE: 1308705)

A Grade II listed red brick building with a slate roof and ashlar dressings. It was built as a bank in 1906 and continues being one. It is quite a prominent building as it is a modern building and one of the few red brick buildings in the Market Place.

40 East Street (HER: MLI91874)

A 1920s bungalow considered of townscape interest by the Conservation Area Appraisal. It is built of red brick with a white render façade, it has a steep pantile roof and three red brick chimneys.

1.6.6 RECREATION

In the 20th century a small number of local sports clubs and facilities were established in the town. In the mid-20th century a bowling green was built to the north of West Street. The mid-20th century outdoor sport field, tennis courts and recreation ground off Church Street (HER: MLI116043) were reduced in size and rearranged due to the expansion of the Safelincs warehouses. In the late 20th century the cattle works and concrete works on Church street were demolished, in their place a supermarket and two other buildings were built. These buildings are where Alford Silver Band and Alford Squash Club are located. The Alford Cricket Club grounds were built in the late 20th century, in the south of the survey area.

1.6.7 MILITARY

Throughout the wars of the early 20th century, several local buildings were repurposed for military use. During World War I the headquarters for the area's training camps was located at 7 West Street. The Manor House was used by officers of the Scottish Horse Company as their headquarters. The Drill Hall on South Street was used as an infirmary, with the arrival of the influenza epidemic in 1918 which took the lives of many soldiers. A room at the back of the Half Moon Inn (HER: MLI87553) was used as an improvised mortuary (Cooke & Crome, 1988). During the Second World War searchlight batteries (HER: MLI87702) were set up near the railway station. There were a few interactions in Alford with the Luftwaffe. On one occasion, in June 1941, a Heinkel 111 was shot down near Alford while carrying

Old Drill Hall, South Street

two 500 pound bombs. The bombs did not explode and the pilot survived, the plane was taken to the Market Place to be displayed. In September of the same year a bomber, returning from a raid, bombed Alford train station. It hit the Great Northern Railway goods shed to the south of it. The building was demolished and a worker on fire-watching duty was killed (Cooke & Crome, 1988). This area is now part of the Beechings Way industrial estate.

Tithe Map of Alford, 1838 © Lincoln Archives DIOC/TITHE AWARD/B 84
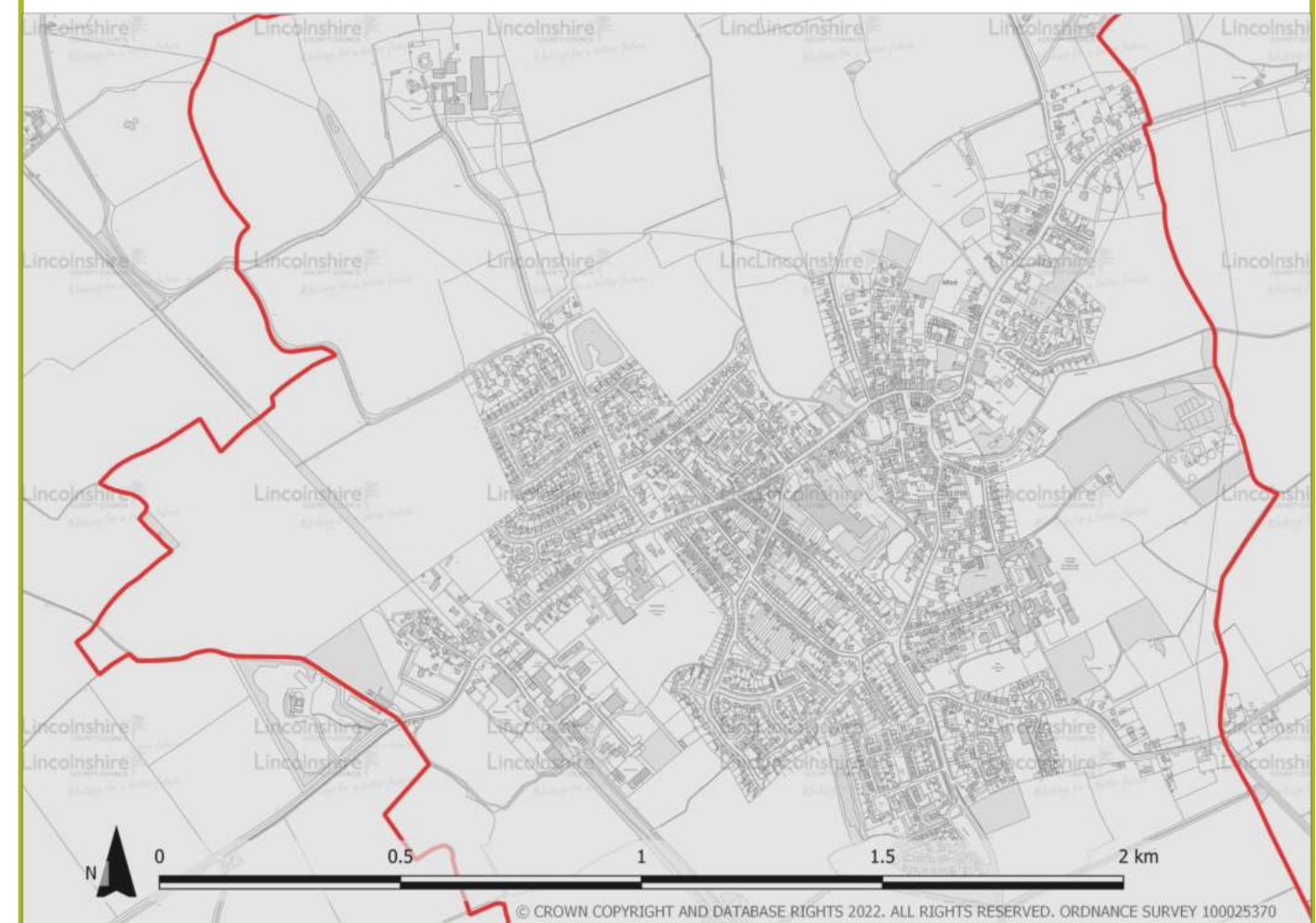
2022 Ordnance Survey MasterMap

HISTORIC URBAN CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

Summary

The Historic Urban Character Areas (HUCAs) have been based on the Historic Urban Character Types (HUCTs). The HUCT maps are available separately to this document. The HUCTs highlight patterns of development through areas which have originated at a similar time, are comparable in how they have developed or demonstrate a similar character or land use. The identification of HUCTs with these similarities allows groups (HUCAs) to be formed and analysed as a wider area.

The HUCTs are divided into 14 periods (see table opposite); these have been narrowed from the periods in the archaeological and historical background to provide a more detailed picture of the development and character of a place, incorporating the Industrial Revolution and the fast pace of development throughout the 20th century.

The character areas are discussed in terms of heritage value, based upon Historic England's 2008 'Conservation Principles', these include: Evidential, Historical, Aesthetic, and Communal. *'Conservation Principles' sets out a method for thinking systematically and consistently about the heritage values that can be attributed to a place. People value historic places in many different ways; 'Conservation Principles shows how they can be grouped into four categories.* A concordance table has been produced to compare the values taken from the 'Conservation Principles' with the NPPF21, in terms of significance.
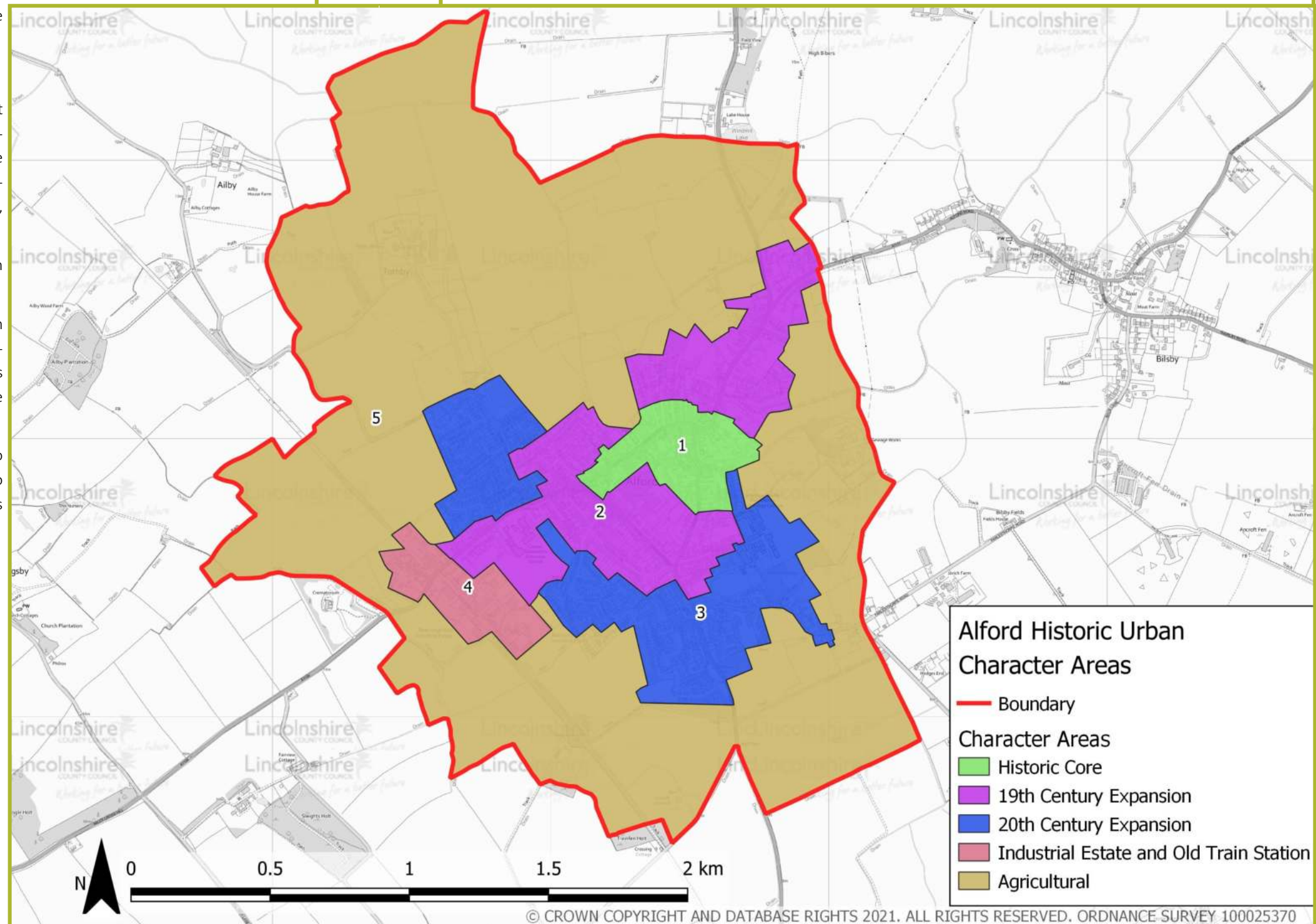
The values are as follows:

Evidential: the potential of what is present within the HUCA to tell us more about past human activity if investigated. This might relate to a national story of archaeological knowledge or architectural history. One factor which will affect the value is the integrity of what the HUCA contains. Archaeological deposits may be compromised by later development or buildings may be significantly altered by later, unsympathetic extensions and alterations.

Historical: the potential of the HUCA overall to illustrate the story of the town. In some circumstances the story may be of national importance.

Aesthetic: the way in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from the HUCA, principally its appearance. This may be derived from a designed element like a 20th century council housing estate, or from the way the HUCA has evolved over time. Unattractive elements, such as neglected sites, might reduce the aesthetic value.

Communal: the values the local community attach to the HUCA - what it means to the local population, including commemorative, symbolic and social values. Also to what extent the HUCA has the potential to increase public sensitivity towards the historic environment.

	Period	Date Ranges	Abbreviations
1	Prehistoric	10000-43	Pre-H
2	Roman	43-409	Rom
3	Early Medieval	410-1065	E-Med
4	Medieval	1066-1539	Med
5	Post Medieval	1540-1759	P-Med
6	Late 18th Century	1760-1799	Late 18thC
7	Early 19th Century	1800-1832	Early 19thC
8	Mid 19th Century	1833-1865	Mid 19thC
9	Late 19th Century	1866-1899	Late 19thC
10	Early 20th Century	1900-1924	Early 20thC
11	Early Mid 20th Century	1925-1949	Early-mid 20thC
12	Late Mid 20th Century	1950-1974	Late-mid 20thC
13	Late 20th Century	1975-1999	Late 20thC
14	21st Century	2000-Present	21stC

Alford Historic Urban Character Areas

— Boundary

Character Areas
- Historic Core
- 19th Century Expansion
- 20th Century Expansion
- Industrial Estate and Old Train Station
- Agricultural

0   0.5   1   1.5   2 km

The Conservation Principles values

This can be used to understand how value has been assigned in the value tables which can be found in the Historic Urban Characterisation Area Assessments (HUCAs).

Evidential value	
High	There is a high potential for the heritage assets within the HUCA to contribute to an understanding of the history of the town. Archaeological sites are likely to survive (both below ground and above ground fossilised within the townscape) and for new research relating to the nature and origins of the built heritage to enhance the understanding of the development of the town. New insights into the history of the town can contribute to an understanding of the development of towns from the medieval period onwards both within Lincolnshire and more widely.
Medium	There is the potential for heritage assets to contribute to an understanding of the history of the town, but there may be fewer opportunities for new insights to be deduced due to the nature of the heritage assets in question or subsequent changes to the historic character of the HUCA. The potential for archaeological deposits to contribute to an understanding of the development of the town may currently be unclear due to the current level of understanding of the origins of the HUCA. The potential may also be impacted by levels of development.
Low	There are no or very few known heritage assets. The understanding for the potential for above and below ground archaeological deposits to survive may be affected by the current lack of research within the wider area. Mitigation may still be required dependent upon an assessment of both the nature of any prospective new development and the potential of the individual sites being developed.

Historical value	
High	The legible heritage assets either dominate or significantly contribute to the historic character of each HUCA. There are strong associations between the heritage assets (both tangible and intangible) within the HUCA that are potentially demonstrable and/or the heritage assets make an important contribution to the history of the wider area. There are often designated sites within or lying adjacent to the HUCA and in some cases these may comprise or include portions of Conservation Areas. The high value is not precluded by some degree of 20th/21st century alterations to the historic character.
Medium	Legible heritage assets are present within the HUCA, but are not necessarily predominant or they have undergone some form of alteration. Their presence, however, may contribute to an understanding of the development of the character area and/or there are potential associations between assets. Further research may clarify these associations and elucidate the contribution of these assets to the history of the wider area. Even in their present form they do enable the public and community to visualise the development of the area over time.
Low	There are no or very few known legible heritage assets; where they exist their associations are not clearly understood.

Aesthetic value	
High	The completeness or integrity of the extant heritage townscape and its contribution to the aesthetics of the zone is significant. There are opportunities to enhance or restore the historic fabric of the HUCA. The HUCAs will often form part of or form the setting to Conservation Areas.
Medium	The components of the townscape are legible, but there may have been considerable impact by 20th or 21st century re-development of elements of the historic character. It is not possible within this project to discuss whether the modern alterations have positive, neutral or negative impacts upon overall aesthetics.
Low	The aesthetics of the historic character have been significantly impacted by 20th or 21st century development. It is not within the scope of this project to discuss whether their contributions are positive, neutral or negative within the wider townscape.

Communal value	
High	Contains numerous heritage assets which could be used to engage the community through interpretation. The heritage assets clearly form part of a wider history of an area which can be drawn into a narrative. There may already have been a degree of interpretation and/or the community/public already has access to at least some of the heritage assets within the zone.
Medium	The ability for the heritage assets to contribute to the history of the town may be limited by the current understanding, their legibility within the townscape or through limited access.
Low	There are few known heritage assets which make it difficult to elucidate their history or apply it to a wider interpretation. There is no access or the legibility of the heritage assets is negligible.

Concordance Table between Historic England Conservation Principles and the NPPF

NPPF Significance	Conservation Principles	Conservation Principles Scope Note	NPPF Scope Note
Archaeological	Evidential	*"the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity."*	*"There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point."*
Historic	Historical	*"the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present - it tends to be illustrative or associative."*	*"An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history, but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity."*
Architectural/ Aesthetic	Aesthetic	*"the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place."*	*"These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skill, like sculpture."*
*See Paragraphs 190 (b) and (c), 193, 197 (b) and (c), 205, 206.	Communal	*"the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory"*	N/A see relevant paragraphs

EUS in planning

It is anticipated that the EUS will be used to support appropriate application of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in the future development of Lincolnshire's towns. The EUS is directly applicable to the aims set out in the 2021 NPPF, particularly in Chapter 3 'Plan Making', Chapter 12 'Achieving well-designed places' and Chapter 16 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment'. Chapter 3 states that *Strategic policies should... make sufficient provision for: conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment... Plans are 'sound' if they are: Justified... based on proportionate evidence.* For both objectives the EUS can provide a thorough evidence base which can assist in the production of plans. Chapter 12 states that Planning policies and decisions *should ensure that developments... are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting... establish or maintain a strong sense of place using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit.*

The EUS discusses local character, including built character and landscape setting, the evidence provided in the character assessments can be used to aid in the creation of 'well-designed places' through supporting an understanding and appreciation (from a heritage perspective) of the history and character of a town. The EUS contributes to the application of Chapter 16 of the NPPF by providing another evidence source on which to base development applications. The discussion of the character within the town can also be used to assist in the reappraisal and designation of new conservation areas.

Recent design-related guidance, including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code, explicitly reference the significance and value of understanding the historic character of a place. Well-designed places are: based on a sound understanding of the features of the site and the surrounding context, using baseline studies as a starting point for design; integrated into their surroundings so they relate well to them; influenced by and influence their context positively; and responsive to local history, culture and heritage. In all cases the EUS programme, and its products, are directly aligned with the aspirations in these key planning guidance advice notes and emerging legislation.

Key

Designated Heritage Assets
Conservation Area

Listed Buildings
- Medieval
- Post-medieval
- Modern

Non-designated Heritage Assets
Monument points
- Prehistoric
- Post-medieval

Monument polygons
- Early medieval
- Medieval
- Post-medieval
- Modern

Monument lines
- Post-medieval

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Historic Urban Character Types within HUCA 1

Car park	Hotel	Semi-detached housing (19thC)	Brown-field site
Care home	Indoor sport	Almshouses	Club
Cottages	Church,Chapel	Depot	House (17thC)
Detached housing (18thC)	Parliamentary enclosure	Market	Industry
Detached housing (19thC)	Shop	Offices	Library
Detached housing (20thC)	Planned development (20thC)	Park	Open space
Detached housing (21stC)	Industry	Public house	Semi-detached housing (21stC)
Education	Outdoor sport	Road	House (16thC)
Hall,Corn exchange	Tourist centre,Museum	Supermarket	Housing mixed (19thC)
Health centre	Semi-detached housing (20thC)	Terraced housing (19thC)	Mixed commercial/residential
		Terraced housing (20thC)	

HUCA 1— Historic Core

Key characteristics

- Medieval core.
- Commercial core with a market place, shops and public houses.
- Centred around West Street and East Street.
- Mainly 17th to 19th century buildings.
- Red brick or render.
- Some houses have coloured render.
- Building height varies from 2 to 4 storeys.
- Irregular street frontage with varying distances set from street.
- Traditional market street frontage.
- Green street furniture in market place, there are also possible 17th century stocks and a fountain commemorating the 1897 diamond jubilee.

Landscape History

The presence of the church of St Wilfrid in this character area is a testament of its medieval origin. Alford is also attested in the Domesday Book, this means that it has been a settlement from at least the 11th century. There may also have been previous Roman occupation evidence which might be buried under the historic medieval core. This character area and core of the historic settlement developed mainly around West Street, South Market Place and East Street. At the junction of these 3 streets is where the oldest preserved building can be found, St Wilfrid's Church. Apart from the church, the oldest remaining buildings in the character area are the 17th and 18th century thatched houses on West Street, including Alford Manor House. However, the majority of buildings date to the 19th century, especially around the market place. This was due to a fire in the late 18th century which destroyed the buildings which previously occupied the area. Before the late 18th century markets were held in the road known as South Market Place, this was changed to the current market place after the fire vacated space for it.
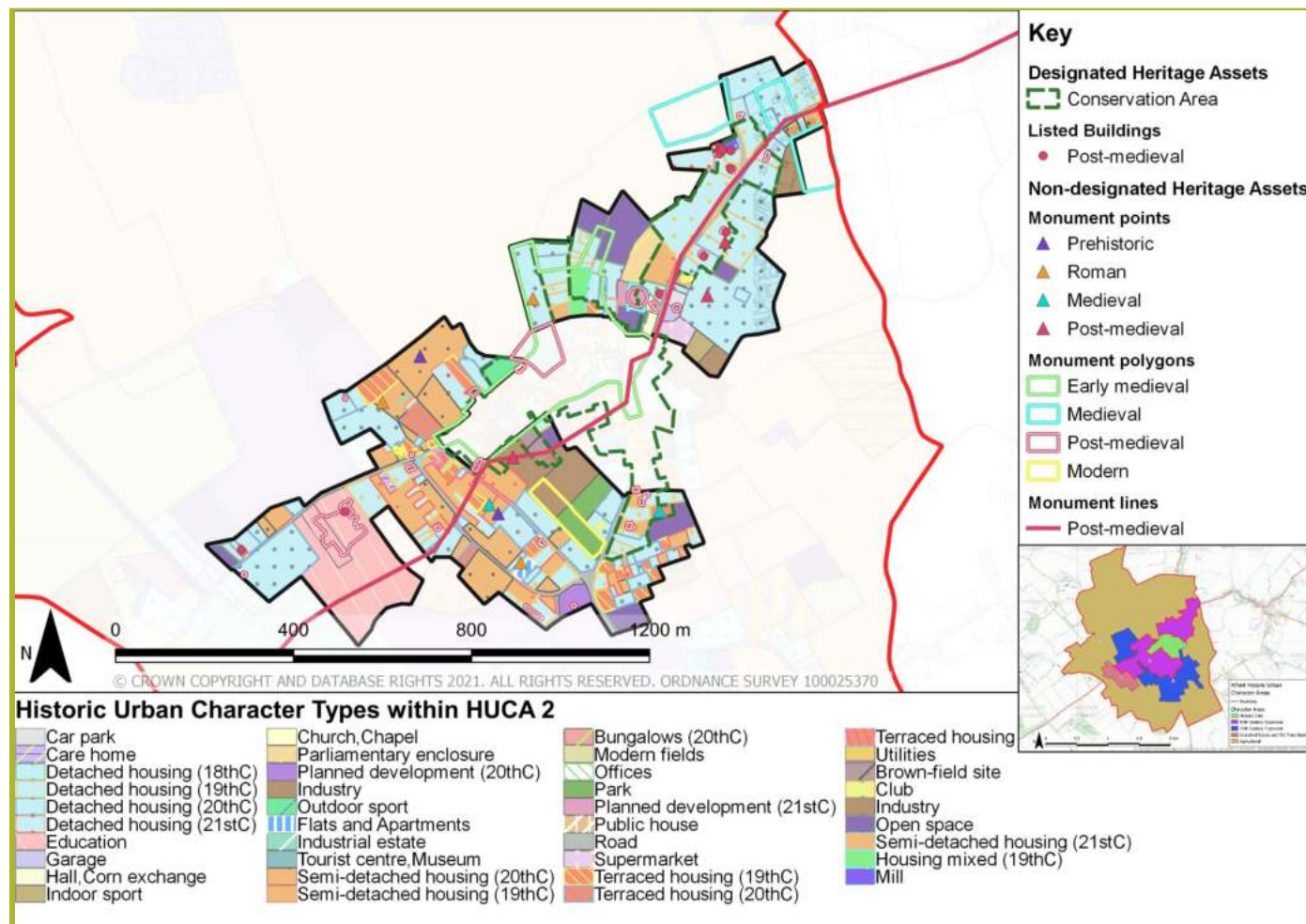

Alford Manor House, West Street

19th century terraced buildings

18th century buildings, West Street

St Wilfrid's Church

The Windmill Hotel, Market Place

19th century terraced buildings

Evidential Value: There is the potential for significant evidential data within this character area. It is likely that there is early medieval archaeology buried beneath the remains of the later medieval period, although more investigation works would be needed to confirm this. The main roads of the town, West Street, East Street and South Market Place create a crossroads and their layout probably pre-dates the settlement. The majority of buildings are 19th century shops, housing and some repurposed industrial buildings. The earliest examples of the town's built heritage are St Wilfrid's Church, Alford Manor House and 16th to 18th century thatched houses on West Street.

Historical Value: The wide range of styles and dates for the built heritage in the character area are an important asset for understanding the evolution of the town and its history. The earlier thatched buildings beside the more recent 19th century buildings contrast the two styles and are snapshot of change in building techniques, which happened also at a national level. The 18th century fire that led to the location of the market place changing is an example of why building techniques changed, so as to avoid the fire hazard posed by concentrations of thatched buildings.

Aesthetic Value: The character area's historic nature is easily recognisable. The variety of building techniques and styles, the varied building heights, irregular street frontage and occasional alleys all indicate a historic town centre that has undergone considerable change over time. St Wilfrid's Church and Alford Manor House are also reminders of its more distant medieval and early post-medieval past.

Communal Value: There is communal value to be found in the use of Alford Manor House as a museum and St Wilfrid's Church as a place of worship and reunion. This character area is also where most of the commercial activity of the town takes place and where the library is located, in South Market Place. There is scope to present more of the town's history here.

Key

Designated Heritage Assets
- Conservation Area

Listed Buildings
- ● Post-medieval

Non-designated Heritage Assets
Monument points
- ▲ Prehistoric
- ▲ Roman
- ▲ Medieval
- ▲ Post-medieval

Monument polygons
- ▢ Early medieval
- ▢ Medieval
- ▢ Post-medieval
- ▢ Modern

Monument lines
- — Post-medieval

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Historic Urban Character Types within HUCA 2

Car park	Church,Chapel	Bungalows (20thC)	Terraced housing
Care home	Parliamentary enclosure	Modern fields	Utilities
Detached housing (18thC)	Planned development (20thC)	Offices	Brown-field site
Detached housing (19thC)	Industry	Park	Industry
Detached housing (20thC)	Outdoor sport	Planned development (21stC)	Open space
Detached housing (21stC)	Flats and Apartments	Public house	Semi-detached housing (21stC)
Education	Industrial estate	Road	Housing mixed (19thC)
Garage	Tourist centre,Museum	Supermarket	Mill
Hall,Corn exchange	Semi-detached housing (20thC)	Terraced housing (19thC)	
Indoor sport	Semi-detached housing (19thC)	Terraced housing (20thC)	

HUCA 2— 19th Century Expansion

Key characteristics

- ◆ Edge of historic core.
- ◆ Mainly 19th century buildings with some 20th century buildings added.
- ◆ Mostly residential, 19th century industrial repurposed to residential use.
- ◆ Mixture of terraced, semi-detached and detached housing.
- ◆ 1—2 storeys.
- ◆ Brick and render.
- ◆ Quiet roads, no footpaths.
- ◆ Some 20th century houses have drives, otherwise there is on-street parking.
- ◆ No grass verges or street furniture.

Landscape History

There is some archaeological evidence of prehistoric occupation in the character area, although the full extent of this presence is not known. There may have been Roman presence in the character area although there is little archaeological evidence and most of what there is comes from random finds of coins. In the medieval period the area would have been agricultural in nature, consisting mainly of open fields with some private enclosures. This would change in 1838 following the introduction of the Enclosure Award, the fields were enclosed and continued to be used for agriculture until it was gradually built over towards the end of the 19th century and throughout the 20th century. The most tangible records of activity from the 19th century are the extant buildings. The character area at the time would have mainly consisted of 19th century housing with some industrial buildings. In the 20th century more housing was constructed as the population grew, and some of the non-residential 19th century buildings were also converted for residential use.


Alford Windmill, East Street

The Anchor Hotel, East Street

19th century detached housing, West Street

20th century semi-detached housing

20th century terraced housing, Willoughby Road

Old Drill Hall, South Street

Evidential Value: The buildings in this character area date mainly from the 19th century, but there are also many from the modern period. Many of the 19th century industrial buildings have been demolished or repurposed, although the windmill on East Street is normally used as a mill and as a tourist attraction but is currently being repaired having suffered storm damage. Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School on Station Road is a partly 19th century building, although the school was originally located on Chauntry Road.

Historical Value: The character area provides context for 19th and 20th century population growth in Alford and the need for residential expansion. There was industrial activity taking place in this area, as can be seen by the extant windmill on East Street. In the 20th century a lot of the industry was turned into housing and industry moved to the Beechings Way Industrial Estate, although the 20th century Safelincs factory/depot still functions in the character area.

Aesthetic Value: A lot of the 19th century buildings are mixed with later 20th century housing. Therefore there are some areas where the character is not clearly evident. However, there are other areas which are more defined as 19th or 20th century residential expansion and provide a clear feel for the period.

Communal Value: The main elements of communal value in the character areas are Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School on Station Road, The Storehouse Church on West Street and the recreation park on South Street.

21st century semi-detached housing

20th century bungalows

21st century semi-detached housing
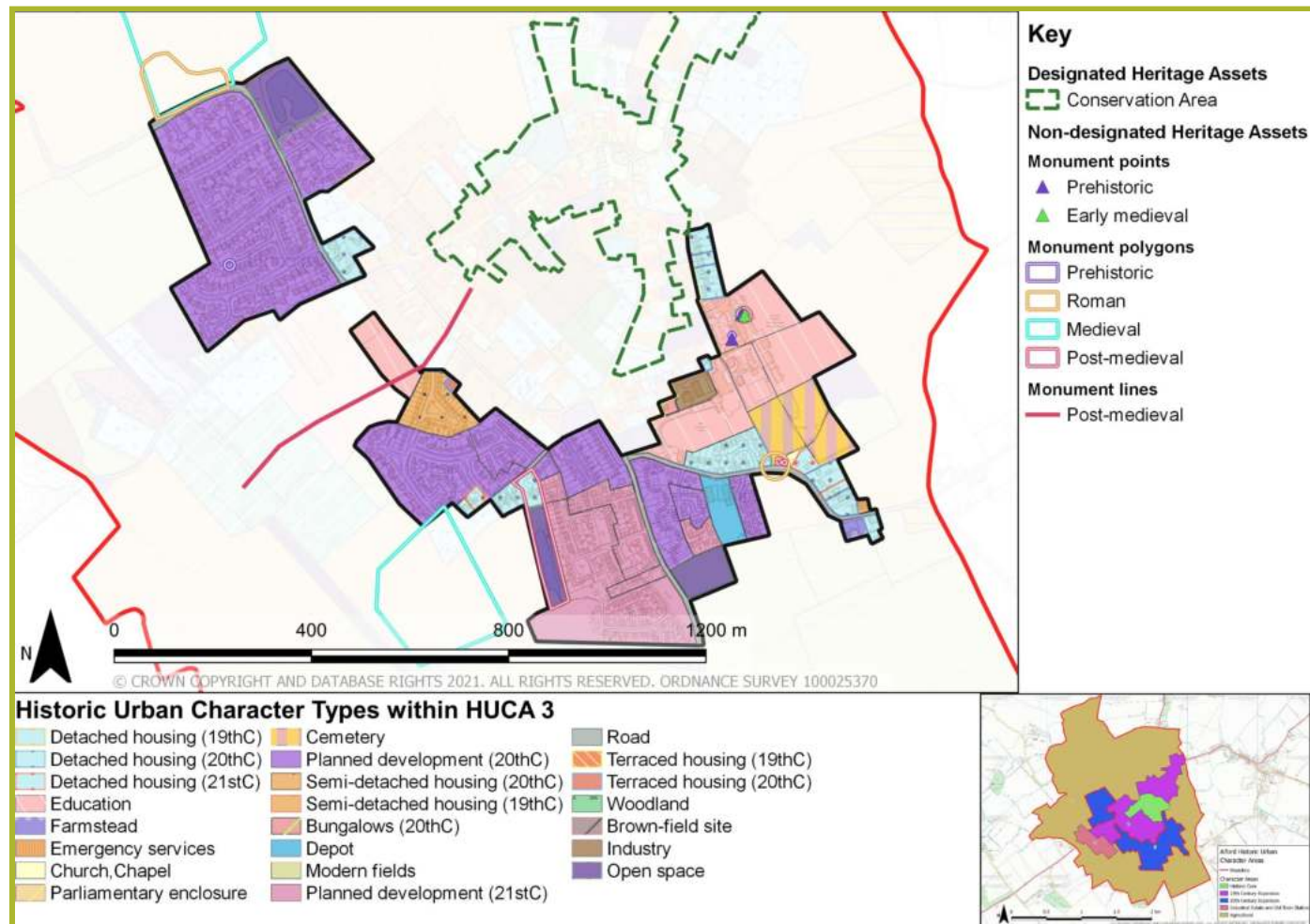
HUCA 3—20th Century Expansion

Key characteristics

- 20th to 21st century housing.
- Grass verges and walkways.
- 20th century street lighting.
- Some greens and parks.
- Some social housing.
- Driveways.
- There is a lot of vegetation on streets but mainly from private front gardens.
- Red, brown and buff brick.
- 1—2 storeys.
- Mix of terraced, semi-detached and detached housing.

Landscape History

There is archaeological evidence for prehistoric activity in the area. This evidence includes burial mounds and a bronze age axe, which may indicate landscape alteration in the way of woodland clearance. The only archaeological evidence for Roman activity in the area is a roman coin found on Christopher Road and possible Romano-British pottery found in Alford Cemetery. In the medieval period the area would have been agricultural, formed by open fields with some private enclosures. In the mid 18th century the land was enclosed and continued to be agricultural in use until the 20th and 21st century when residential developments take over the landscape.
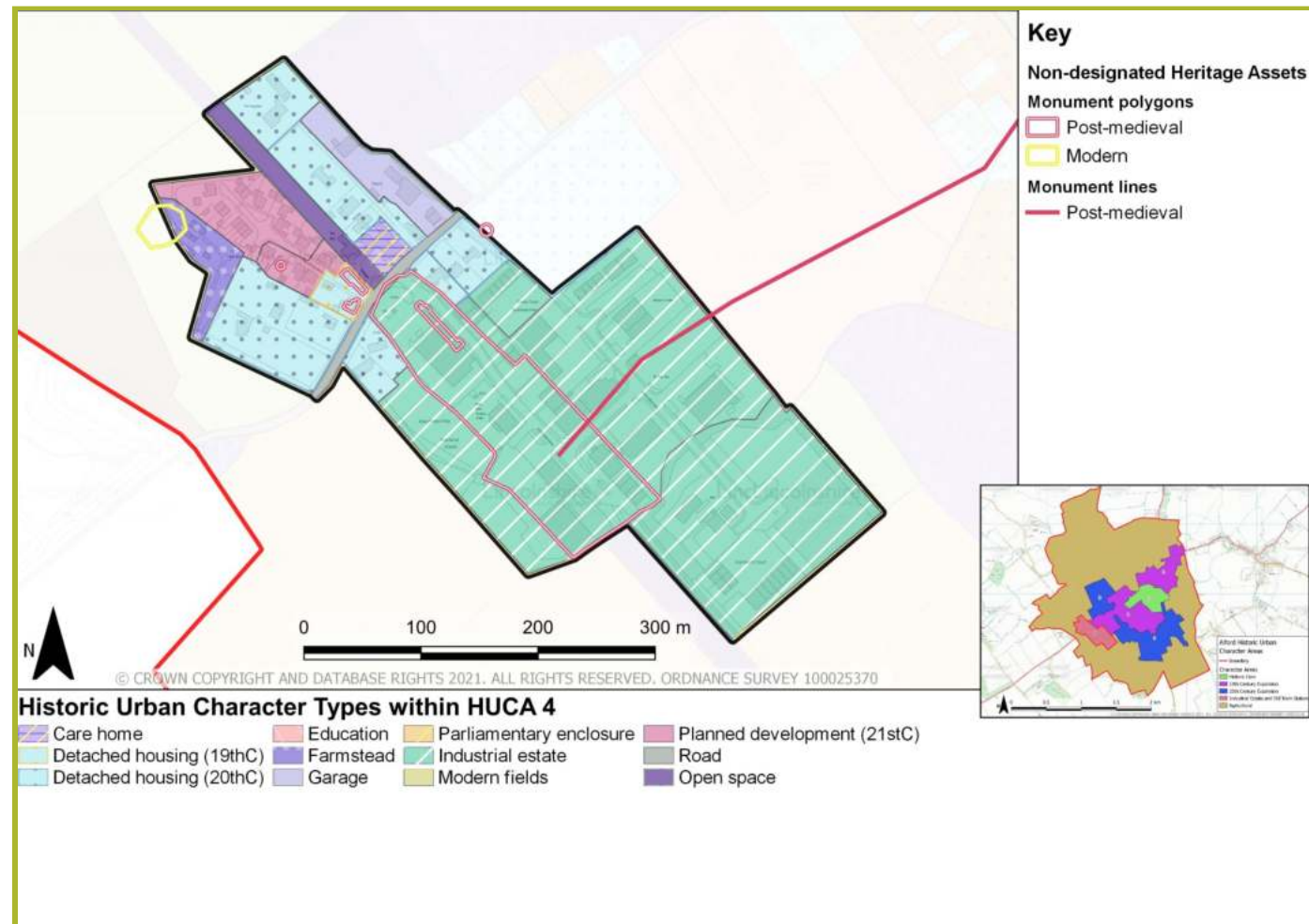
Evidential Value: This character area has evidence of low-level human activity in the prehistoric and Roman periods. During the medieval period it is predominantly agricultural. Currently it consists of 20th and 21st century planned developments with a mixture of terraced, detached and semi-detached housing.

Historical Value: The area is of low historical value, it is mainly modern and residential in nature. It is a testament however to the population growth of the 20th and 21st century in the town.

Aesthetic Value: The character area includes a variety of 20th and 21st century building styles. There is a mixture of terraced, semi-detached and detached housing as well as a difference between housing developments. There is some 20th century council housing and the 21st century developments incorporate more green areas and even recreational parks.

Communal Value: Although the area is primarily residential, there are some greens and parks of communal value, as well as schools.

Key

Non-designated Heritage Assets

Monument polygons
- Post-medieval
- Modern

Monument lines
- Post-medieval

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Historic Urban Character Types within HUCA 4
- Care home
- Detached housing (19thC)
- Detached housing (20thC)
- Education
- Farmstead
- Garage
- Parliamentary enclosure
- Industrial estate
- Modern fields
- Planned development (21stC)
- Road
- Open space

HUCA 4—Industrial Estate and Old Railway Station

Key characteristics

♦ Industrial Estate.

♦ Former railway station buildings extant and repurposed.

♦ Developed in the late 20th and early 21st century.

♦ Comprises industrial units with associated parking.

♦ Materials include buff and red brick, corrugated iron.

♦ uPVC windows, although older buildings have retained traditional timber.

♦ Inactive street frontages, designed for utility.

Landscape History

There is no recorded prehistoric or Roman activity in the area. In the medieval period the character area likely comprised agricultural fields and private enclosures, which operated as part of the open field system. In 1838 the open fields were enclosed, which meant the loss of formerly accessible open fields. In 1848 Alford Railway Station was opened with the construction of a new station, goods sheds and cattle yards. From its opening in the mid 19th century until its closure in 1970, the railway station defined the character of this area. Industry grew around the railway station and after the closure of the station an industrial estate was formed, continuing this function. The railway station buildings have been preserved and repurposed as part of the industrial estate. The former Railway Tavern (HER: MLI87638) has been converted to residential use.
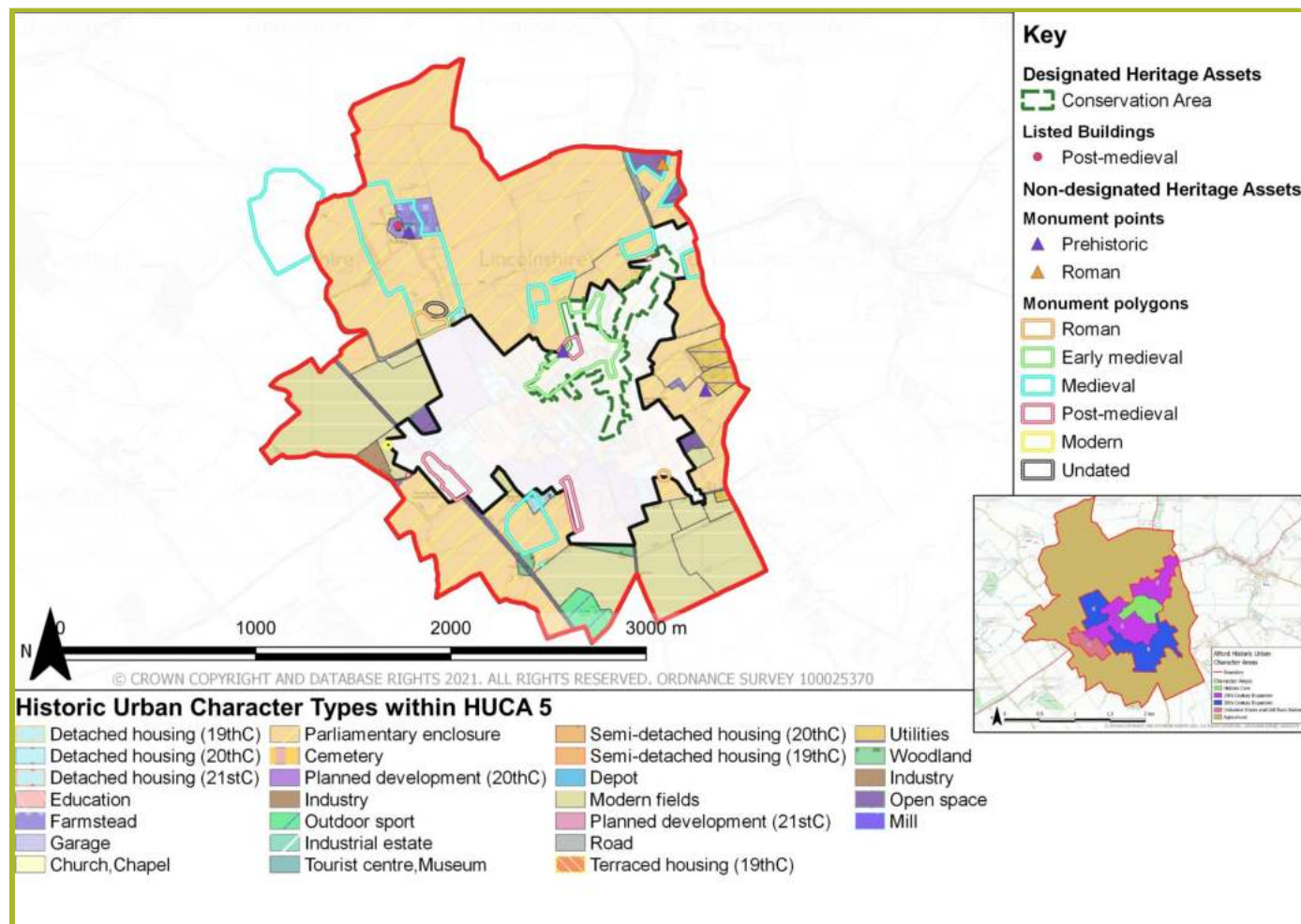

19th century detached house, former Railway Tavern

Former Railway Station

19th century detached house

Beechings Way industrial estate

Beechings Way industrial estate

Beechings Way industrial estate

Evidential Value: The character area is of evidential value for the 19th century industry and communications of the town. The repurposed railway station is a testament to this, as is the former Railway Tavern which still has a sign reading 'Bradshaw's Coal Depot'. Most of the industrial buildings relating to the train station were replaced in the late 20th century by Beechings Way Industrial Estate, when the railway station closed.

Historical Value: The presence of the 19th century railway station and some related buildings can connect the local community to the town's industrial past. The character area contributes to the understanding of the town's economy and transport communications and how they have changed.

Aesthetic Value: Some historic field boundaries are preserved to the west of the character area. The late 20th century and 21st century industrial units do not add to the historic aesthetic value of the area. However, the extant 19th century railway station and residential buildings do add to the aesthetic value of what would otherwise be a modern industrial character area.

Communal Value: the industrial estate provides many jobs to the local population and as such creates communal value. The preservation of the former railway station also provides opportunity to engage the public on history of the town which is no longer extant.

Key

Designated Heritage Assets
- Conservation Area

Listed Buildings
- ● Post-medieval

Non-designated Heritage Assets

Monument points
- ▲ Prehistoric
- ▲ Roman

Monument polygons
- Roman
- Early medieval
- Medieval
- Post-medieval
- Modern
- Undated

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Historic Urban Character Types within HUCA 5

- Detached housing (19thC)
- Detached housing (20thC)
- Detached housing (21stC)
- Education
- Farmstead
- Garage
- Church, Chapel
- Parliamentary enclosure
- Cemetery
- Planned development (20thC)
- Industry
- Outdoor sport
- Industrial estate
- Tourist centre, Museum
- Semi-detached housing (20thC)
- Semi-detached housing (19thC)
- Depot
- Modern fields
- Planned development (21stC)
- Road
- Terraced housing (19thC)
- Utilities
- Woodland
- Industry
- Open space
- Mill

HUCA 5—Agricultural

Key characteristics

- Agricultural fields.
- Arable.
- Tothby Manor
- Farmsteads and agricultural units.
- Red brick and corrugated iron.
- Hedgerows and field trees are the most common field boundaries.
- Utilities, such as sewerage works and electrical transformers
- Alford Cricket Club
- Mostly flat land with views to the Wolds to the west.

Landscape History

There is little evidence of prehistoric activity in the character area, only three archaeological finds have been recorded. These are a Neolithic polished stone axe (HER: MLI42532), a Neolithic stone axe (HER: MLI42542) and a Bronze Age axe hammer (HER: MLI42539). There is even less evidence for the Roman period, for which only a Roman carinated bowl (HER: MLI42545) has been recorded. During the medieval period the area would have been comprised of agricultural open fields and private enclosures. Ridge and furrow is recorded in the character area which provides evidence of the agricultural history of the landscape. To the north of the character area there was a now-deserted medieval hamlet at Tothby (HER: MLI42529). Adjacent to it was the site of Tothby Manor (HER: MLI42849), former home of the founder of St Wilfrid's Church. The manor was on a moated site of which a pond remains. The family of Tothby manor would have been important to the town's medieval development and history. This part of the character area is likely to contain medieval archaeological remains. At this location, adjacent to the moated site, there is now a farmstead with a mid 17th century farmhouse. The open fields were enclosed in 1838 as part of a Parliamentary Enclosure Act. Many of the boundaries established during this process still exist, although slightly modified. The 20th and 21st centuries saw the development of sewerage works in the east of the character area and a cricket ground to the south.

Alford Cricket Club

Country lane

Agricultural land off Tothby Lane

Evidential Value: There is evidence of medieval occupation at Tothby which remains to this day in the form of a farmstead. There is also medieval ridge-and-furrow recorded in the area. From the mid 19th century the fields were enclosed and many of the boundaries still remain. In the character area there are also newer non-agricultural developments such as sewerage works and a cricket ground.

Historical Value: The character area is of historic value for the medieval period of the survey area. The remains of the former village of Tothby provide insight into the changing nature of settlements locally in this period. The remains of the moated site of Tothby Manor are also extant within the HUCA. The family who lived here contributed to the development of the town through the funding of the church. Parliamentary enclosure boundaries are still remaining to a large degree which gives an idea of the post-medieval organisation of the agricultural landscape.

Aesthetic Value: The majority of the character area is undeveloped and therefore contains views of the historic agricultural landscape. The narrative of this landscape is visible in the boundaries and layout of the fields. Post-medieval farmsteads dating from the 17th century also contribute to the history of the area, although the added industrial units detract from this slightly.

Communal Value: The former village of Tothby provides an opportunity to engage the public on a former village which was deserted. This site is not easily accessible to the public, however, its presence still contributes to the narrative of the local area and its people during the early medieval to the post-medieval period.

DISCUSSION

Historic background

There are some archaeological artifacts recorded in the survey area, mainly axes, that indicate some degree of woodland management in the later prehistoric period. There are also two possible Bronze Age barrows recorded in the area. This archaeological evidence, and Alford's location on the southern end of the probable prehistoric routeway of Barton Street, indicate prehistoric activity in the survey area. Human activity in the Roman period is also suggested by archaeological remains and sporadic finds. The main evidence for this is an enclosure and field system recorded off Tothby Lane, as well as Roman coins found throughout the survey area.

The earliest documentary evidence for Alford can be found in the medieval period through the Domesday Book. Alford existed prior to 1066 although it was a small village that did not have its own church. No archaeological evidence exists for the settlement at this time because it is likely to have been buried beneath the later medieval settlement. The name 'Alford' could have two origins, one meaning 'alder ford' or 'ford by the alder trees' and the other meaning 'ford by a heathen temple'. The first recorded church in Alford dated to around 1150 and was located on the same site as the current Church of St Wilfred. The latter was constructed after the demolition of the former in 1350, the work was funded by William of Tothby. Tothby is currently a farmstead but was the location of Tothby Manor and the deserted medieval hamlet of Tothby, both of which seem to have played an important part in Alford's medieval history. Alford's medieval core seems to have centred around the church, following West Street, Church Street and South Market Place. A market and a fair were granted to Alford in 1283. The creation of these in the late 13th century coincided with the increasing value of the wool trade at the time. Alford being an agricultural community located between the Wolds and the Marsh benefited as a trading location, another fair was granted in 1439.

In the first half of the post-medieval period wool production was still an important part of the Lincolnshire rural economy, of which Alford was part of. Along West Street there are several 17th and 18th century extant buildings, including Alford Manor House which is currently used as a museum. In the 19th century there were at least four mills in Alford, one of which is still conserved. The arrival of the railway to Alford in 1848 brough trade and industrial growth. This in turn led to population growth and more residential development. When the railway station closed in 1970 its surrounding area was replaced by an industrial estate. Apart from this there is also industry nearer to the town centre, which include a fire-safety equipment supplier and a coal depot. The 20th and 21st centuries have seen residential expansion of the town away from the traditional hugging of the main roads.

Character summary

There are several character areas and patterns of development in Alford. HUCA 1 represents the historic core of the town, some probable burgage plots can be identified and the medieval church still stands. However, the majority of the character area consists of post-medieval buildings. Notable are the early post-medieval thatched buildings on West Street. HUCA 2 represents the 19th century residential expansion of the town. The character area broadly follows East Street, West Street and South Street. HUCA 3 consists of 20th and 21st century residential expansion with educational facilities and a cemetery. HUCA 4 is centred around the old railway station, the main building of which is extant but repurposed after its closure in 1970. The character area is mainly industrial in nature, consisting in the Beechings Way industrial estate. HUCA 5 is a predominantly agricultural area with fields and farmsteads throughout. There are also sports fields, utilities and the location of the deserted medieval hamlet of Tothby, as well as the now lost Tothby Manor.

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Extensive Urban Survey

St Wilfrid's Church

Alford
2021