



LOWER KINNERTON

CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL
JANUARY 2008



Chester
City Council

Maps can be seen on the following link: www.chester.gov.uk/conservationareareview

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DESIGNATIONS

Conservation Area	First designated in 1996
Listed Buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Bridge Farm Farmhouse and attached Shippon</i> • <i>Broadhey Farm Farmhouse</i> • <i>Broadhey Farm Buildings</i> • <i>Gell Farm Farmhouse</i>
Scheduled Monuments	None
Registered Parks and Gardens	None
Archaeological Priority	None
SSSI	None
Article 4 directions	None
Regulation 7 directions	None
Any other designations	
Area of Special County Value (ASCV)	None
Site of Biological Interest (SBI)	None
Site of Nature Conservation Value (SNCV)	None
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Green Belt Area</i>

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Lower Kinnerton did not appear in the Domesday survey. Post Norman Conquest, it probably formed part of the estate of Earl Edwin.

Its name has varied over the centuries, being known as 'Kynarton' 'Kynnerton', Kynyrton', 'Kenerton'. They are all variants of the Old-English 'Cyneheard's tun', or Cyneheard's farm.

The general historical setting for Lower Kinnerton is that it has remained part of the of major landholdings in this area, on which the Grosvenor Estate made a significant impact during the latter half of the 19th century, and which is still visible today. The Duke of Westminster between 1850 and 1870 built a high proportion of the properties that still exist today, although parts of Bridge Farm at the west end of the hamlet alongside the brook, date back to the late seventeenth century.

The importance of the east-west road route through Gorstella is not known, but is probably of significance that prior to draining the marshes, this would have been the northernmost east-west road land route from England into Wales. The above named Bridge Farm would confirm its importance as a



Looking east from Bridge Farm Cottage

border crossing.

To this day the route is known as “Welsh Road” by local road users.

Although there is no known important archaeology in this area there are a significant number of marl pits just outside the conservation area, and many editions of Ordnance Survey maps still show marl pits (or ponds) in fields around Lower Kinnerton.

KEY FEATURES OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

General:	strong rural and agricultural setting, almost exclusive architectural influence of the Grosvenor Estate
Topography:	flat
Streetscape:	one main road crossing the settlement, from West to East, i.e. Kinnerton Road (or Main Road)
Built environment:	Residential units two storey high, slate or clay tile roof, mainly single or double hipped gable often with the upper part white rendered, generally duo colour brick walls and big chimney stacks with impressive ornamentation. Built between 17 th century and 20 th century
Building setting:	detached houses with homogenous set back of the dwelling units (more or less 10 meters) lined along Kinnerton Road (also named Main Road).
Boundary treatment:	no significant boundary treatment except Bridge Farm
Historic floor surface:	no significant floor surface
Trees and hedgerows:	strong presence of medium height hedgerows almost all along Kinnerton Road
Open spaces:	none
Change of conservation area boundaries:	none

CHARACTER OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

Lower Kinnerton is one of five settlements which together make up the parish of Dodleston. These include Dodleston village itself, Rough Hill; Balderton, Gorstella and Lower Kinnerton. Standing some 12 to 15 metres above sea level, above what would have been the extensive marshes of the River Dee estuary prior to the canalisation of the Dee. Today, this can still be read into the landscape, as the land drops away to the flatlands of Saltney in the north, and the low lying marshy fields alongside Pulford Brook to the south.

Lower Kinnerton has maintained physical and visual detachment from major conurbations, and is surrounded by open, rural landscapes, including the next village to the west and over the national border: Higher Kinnerton.

The built character of the conservation area remains consistent and homogenous throughout its area, John Douglas, Grosvenor Estate's architect having built almost all the houses in the boundaries of the conservation area in the end of 19th century.

Another key feature of Lower Kinnerton is the linear disposition of the dwellings, along the main street with properties separated by small fields of pasture, highlighting the rural character of the area. The only exceptions are the 20th century developments outside the conservation area but which nevertheless impact on the visual appearance of the hamlet: in particular because they are built to a greater density. The Moor Crescent housing (possibly 1930), ranged around a modest green space, is well laid out whereas the development to the east of Gell Farm is dense and is 'out of step' with the visual appearance of the hamlet.

Behind and between the dwellings, the land is in agricultural use. This area has until recently been used for dairy farming and the fields are all pasture. This gives a sense of unchanging farming landscape although in fact there are no functioning farmsteads remaining. All the farmhouses and their major outbuildings are now in residential use. Commuting out to work is likely to be the main pattern of use today.

POSITIVE ELEMENTS WITHIN THE CONSERVATION AREA

Listed buildings

The listed elements within the conservation area constitute for the key features of its overall character. These include two types of building construction, all grade II listed buildings:

- Except Bridge Farm, all are John Douglas's Farm houses built in the late XIXth century with their particular features: single or double hipped gable often with the upper part white rendered, two-colour brick walls, slate roofs and big chimney stacks with impressive ornamentation.
- Bridge Farm built in the late 17th century differs mainly externally by its particular Dutch hipped gables and its massing.

Unlisted buildings of merit

Like the listed buildings, unlisted buildings of merit are varied in their detailing, use of materials and overall form. Most of them seem to date between late 18th century and 20th century.

When special circumstances arise and for more effective built environment protection in conservation areas, it may be appropriate to consider the provision of article 4 directions and making use of a local list for Lower Kinnerton's unlisted buildings of merit.

Local views

Due to frequent wide areas of agricultural land between houses, the views are often directly open to the countryside, but from certain locations to the north, the distant factories of Broughton can be seen, indicating the southern edge of industrial Deeside.

Townscape, Topography and Landscape details

The relation existing between local townscape details, landscape details and topography often



Kinnerton Road Bus Stop

contribute to the sense of local distinctiveness and often are unique to a particular conservation area. They can range from specific building detailing, characteristic building elements, boundary treatments, to the landscape qualities of the streetscape. Individually and collectively they contribute to the overall quality of Lower Kinnerton as well as enhancing individual areas of character within the settlement.

Topography

Lower Kinnerton's topography is flat.

Townscape details

As mentioned earlier, several strong townscape details contribute to give an unifying and particular character to this area, due to the strong impact of the Grosvenor Estate on this hamlet in the late 19th century, and its architect John Douglas: two storey houses, single or double hipped gable roof often with the upper floor white rendered, frequent two-colour brick walls, usually orange and dark brown with its typical Westminster logos, extensive use of special bricks, slate roofs, big chimney stacks with impressive ornamentation and mullioned iron windows.

Boundary treatments

Boundary treatments have a significant impact upon the setting of properties, the coherence of a group and the overall character of a conservation area. Traditional and appropriate treatments will preserve or enhance the appearance of the conservation area.

Lower Kinnerton's Conservation area has no significant boundary treatments, except a couple of properties with a medium height brick wall with round or dented coping stones.

Trees and hedgerows

Trees and hedgerows have significant amenity value and are almost always a positive contributor to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Hedgerows of medium height 600mm to 1000mm are predominant along Lower Kinnerton's main road, bordering fields or properties. These hedgerows are a distinctive landmark in the pastoral appearance of Lower Kinnerton and should be preserved and maintained.

Open Spaces

The space between buildings and the landscape, within which the settlement has evolved, is as important as the built environment in defining its character. The rural character of the Lower Kinnerton's Conservation Area is also established by the fields around and between the properties.

The hamlet in itself has no open public green spaces of any significance, other than the roadside verges. The roads maintain their rural appearance except in the more densely populated area of Moor Crescent,



Old Oak Barns, Kinnerton Road

where kerbs have been introduced. Visually, this seems to work but further kerbing would need to be planned carefully if the effect was not to be detrimental to the rural nature of this hamlet.

Buildings and their setting in the landscape

Another important unifying feature of Lower Kinnerton conservation area is the homogenous set back of the dwelling units on Kinnerton Road (also named Main Road).

The general set back from the road is generally between 10 and 12 meters. The unifying characteristic is very possibly due also to the impact of Grosvenor Estate in this settlement at the end of 19th century.

Grosvenor estate cottages built in pairs, are distinctive with their emphasized symmetry, shaping Lower Kinnerton's "skyline".

Boundaries

The boundaries have been reviewed and no changes have been proposed.

NEUTRAL OR NEGATIVE ELEMENTS WITHIN THE CONSERVATION AREA AND ENHANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Neutral elements represent features within the conservation area that offer no strong positive or negative influence upon the character and appearance of the area. Furthermore, negative features detract from the special character of an area and present the opportunity for change, which will enhance the character and appearance of an area. Those elements considered neutral or negative features and those elements that represent enhancement opportunities within the conservation area are listed below.

Neutral elements

The estate houses Moor Crescent no 1 and 2.

Negative elements

The main negative element is vehicular traffic on the main road. Vehicle speeds are high, very dangerous for pedestrians, risky for residents driving in and out of their properties, resulting in notable noise pollution, affecting seriously the character of the area.

It is suggested that the Highway Authority give serious consideration to a speed limit of 30 miles per hour within the conservation area with appropriately designed traffic calming measures.

Enhancement opportunities

The charming and timelessly designed timber built shelter bus stop beside Hill View property on the northern side of Kinnerton Road deserves timely maintenance. A simple wooden bench would enhance this modest structure.

The good design and the simple construction of this shelter could serve as a reference for the rest of the District, particularly in the Conservation Areas.

It is hoped that funding mechanism to achieve these enhancements may be explored locally in due course.

NB: These are our suggestions for improvement, but owners should note that the Planning Authority has no powers to implement those recommendations.

MANAGEMENT TOOLS

In order to maintain the character and appearance of conservation areas, Chester City Council will use the appropriate pieces of legislation relevant for this task:

- Urgent Work Notice.
This notice relates to a building which is in a very serious state of disrepair and needs basically to be water safe. It should be confirmed by the Secretary of State.
- Tidy Land Provision Notice, section 214 of the Planning Act 1990.
This notice relates to a building and its curtilage that is poorly maintained. It requires a tidy up of the property.
- Dilapidated Building Notice, section 16 of the 1984 Building Act.
This Notice refers to a building that is in a poor state. It implies either repairing the building or removal of the building. In a Conservation Area, such demolition would need a Conservation Area Consent.

THREAT

Increasing car traffic - mainly due to commuting - with its side effects such as street widening, road signs, tree cutting, poorly designed garages and drive ways, inappropriate traffic calming measures, etc. often seriously and irreversibly affects the character of a conservation area.

It is therefore important to foresee and manage very carefully the design and material impact of traffic on new developments, in order to maintain the essential features that make a conservation area special, in accordance with the latest guidance on streets published by the Department for Transport (Manual for Streets, March 2007, www.communities.gov.uk).

SURROUNDINGS OF A CONSERVATION AREA

Developments on properties located in the surrounding of a conservation area should also be considered with great care, in order to maintain the essential features that make an area special.

APPENDICES

- Map of the conservation area as existing, scale 1:2,500

FURTHER READING

Chester City Council - 1997 *Living in a Conservation Area - A Guide to Householders*
Chester City Council - April 2003 *Deposit Draft Chester District Local Plan*

Relevant Local Plan Policies

- ENV21 Protection of trees and woodland
- ENV24 Preservation of key features within the landscape and its overall character
- ENV37 Preservation or enhancement of conservation areas

- ENV38 Protection of local views
- ENV45 Preservation of the special interest of listed buildings
- ENV46 Appropriate changes of use to listed buildings
- ENV47 Protection of unlisted buildings of merit

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Chester City Council would like to express its gratitude to the Chester Civic Trust for their valuable assistance in connection with Conservation Areas.