



# Longton Conservation Area Appraisal

*March 2009*



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# 1. Appraisal Context

- 1.1 This Character Appraisal has been prepared for Longton Conservation Area, whose boundaries were designated in March 2009.
- 1.2 Conservation Areas are designated by Local Authorities under fulfilment of duties imposed by Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This defines Conservation Areas as:

*“areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”*

Special interest may originate from a variety of sources, while character is defined in a holistic sense rather than deriving from the merits of any single building.

- 1.3 Production of Character Appraisals was required under the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister’s *Best Value* initiative (BVPI 219), though best practice has long required their preparation. The objective of an Appraisal is to analyse and define in depth the special interest and traits which make up the *character* of a Conservation Area, to identify the pressures and challenges facing its survival and to recommend courses of action which will aid in achieving sensitive management, preservation and enhancement (the latter points fulfilling duties imposed by Section 71 of the 1990 Act). This BVPI has now been replaced by a local indicator.
- 1.4 Conservation Area status is a material consideration in the evaluation of planning applications. Here Section 72 of the 1990 Act requires Local Planning Authorities to pay special attention to the desirability of achieving preservation or enhancement through their decision making. Appraisals represent an important resource in fulfilling such duties while Planning Policy Guidance 15, *Planning and the Historic Environment*, provides a principal point of guidance. Where new development is planned Appraisals may provide a useful design resource to those proposing it.
- 1.5 Conservation Area status curtails certain ‘permitted’ householder development rights requiring planning permission to be sought in these areas (outlined in the General Permitted Development Order 1995). Local Authorities have further powers to restrict permitted developments to the elevations of properties that front the highway through the introduction of Article 4(2) designations, while approval of the Secretary of State is required for more wide ranging 4(1) designations.
- 1.6 English Heritage recommends production of distinct Management Strategy documents for each Conservation Area. The basis of these documents is the analysis contained within and recommendations arising from each Appraisal. These documents will provide a boost in efficiency while helping ensure fulfilment of statutory duties. In the context of the new Local Development Framework (LDF) these Management Strategy documents may eventually be adopted as Supplementary Planning Documents.
- 1.7 Work on the new LDF is currently proceeding. In the interim, certain policies included within the City Plan 2001 continue in force unless superseded by those arising from the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Structure Plan 1996-2011 or Regional Planning Guidance. The City Plan reiterates the Authority’s commitment to fulfilling statutory

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duties regarding Conservation Areas and listed buildings, sets design and development standards, while introduces two non-statutory 'lists' of relevance to this Appraisal: a *Local List* (Buildings of Special Local Interest) and *Areas of Archaeological Importance*.

- 1.8 When reading or using an Appraisal it is important to note that while every effort is made to provide detailed analysis the document can never be comprehensive. Failure to mention a particular element or detail *must not* be taken to imply that it is of no importance to an appreciation of the character or appearance of the Conservation Area and thus of no relevance in consideration of planning applications.
- 1.9 This Appraisal has been produced by the Directorate of Regeneration (Urban Design and Conservation), Stoke-on-Trent City Council. Enquiries regarding this Appraisal should be addressed to:

The Urban Design Team on

01782 23 5023

or

01782 23 2154

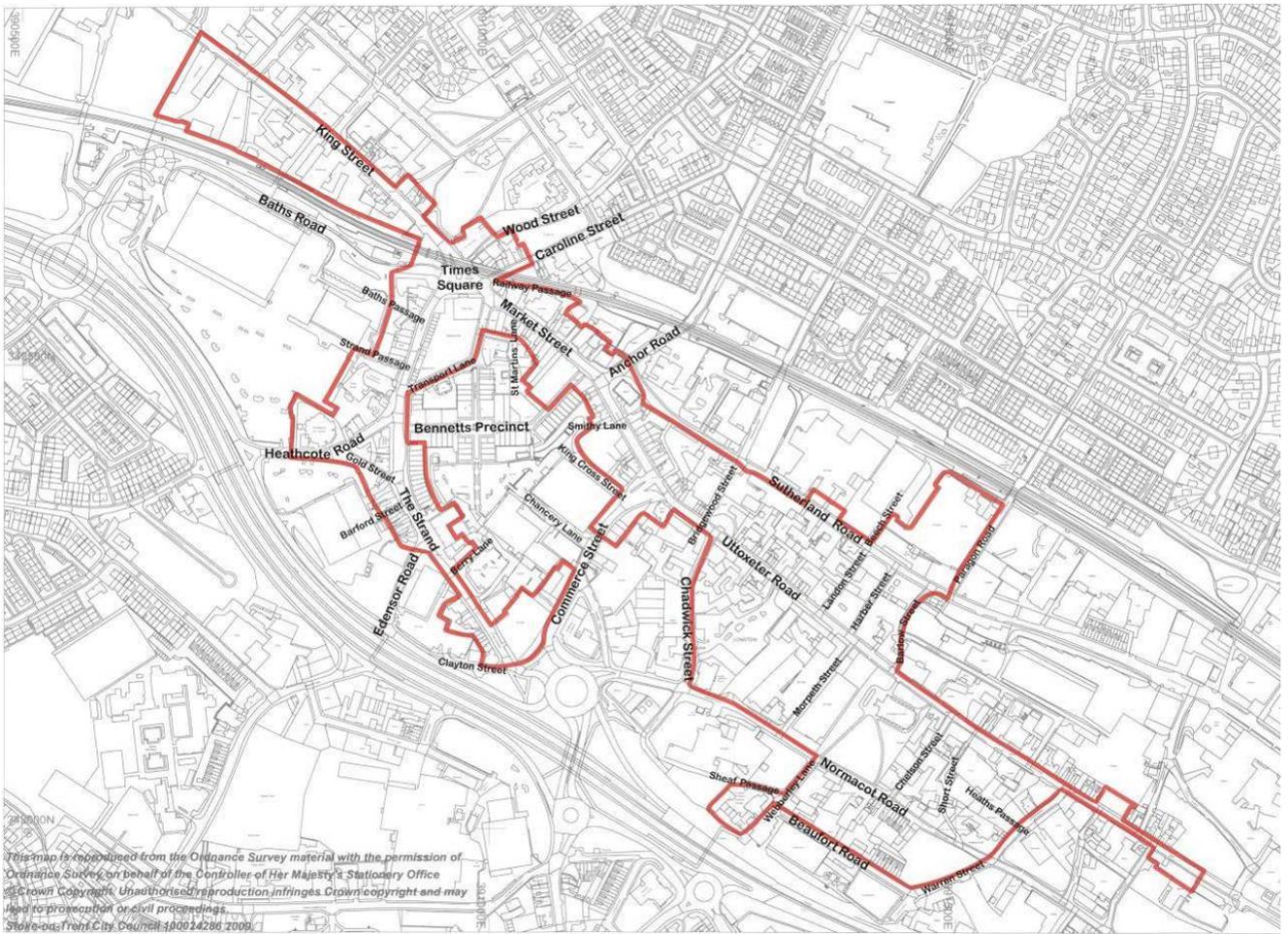
Tree Officer

01782 23 2556

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## 2. The Study Area

- 2.1 Longton is one of the six towns of Stoke-on-Trent. It is the most Southern of the towns and also the newest as it was mainly developed in the 1800's.
- 2.2 Longton is mentioned in Nikolaus Pevsner's books of England where, in 1974, he wrote "Longton has - to date, for the time being - preserved more of the Georgian or Georgian-type pottery offices and warehouses and more of the kilns than the other towns in the Potteries" although he also wrote "Here is urban pride and a sense of civic dignity! The town hall faces the railway, and the railway cuts off the parish church from the town hall." This piece of the town's planning is discussed later in the document.
- 2.3 The Conservation Area combines the former Gladstone and Short Street Conservation Areas and extends them to encompass Longton Town Centre.
- 2.4 Longton has a strong industrial past and this has shaped to town today. It is dominated by the large imposing town hall and Railway Bridge which give a hint to the history and patronage of the area. It has a highly packed town centre with a high number of locally listed buildings, many of which are very ornate for such small buildings. Longton also has the largest number of traditional pottery factories in the city.
- 2.5 The town centre retains most of the nineteenth century buildings. These are mostly in need of some maintenance but retain most of their original features. They were built to show the quality and wealth of the town and this is still in evidence in the quality of the materials and detailing. The buildings in the town centre are tightly packed together in two, three and sometimes four storeys. This creates a dense urban area full of different buildings which tower over the street and are packed with detailing on the narrow facades.
- 2.6 The buildings vary in scale and detailing, each competing with its neighbour for attention creating a very strong townscape dominated by large windows and architectural details such as panelling and intricately designed window surrounds
- 2.7 The factories and buildings on the edge of the town centre also have this urban feel due to the tightly packed but large industrial buildings which tower over the long straight streets especially the Aynsley China Works in Sutherland Street. They retain a sense of civic pride and dignity.
- 2.8 The area around Short Street and Beaufort Road also has a quite dignity in the classical detailing and simple features. However this area has a less urban feel as it is slightly more open than the town centre and has workers housing including the remains of a court.



**FIGURE 1: Map showing the Conservation Area**

### 3. History and Archaeology

- 3.1 Evidence for prehistoric activity in the Longton area is sparse, restricted to a few casual Neolithic and Bronze Age finds. Despite the presence of a Roman road, Ricknield Street, Margary's route 181 (Margary 1973), now the A50, evidence for Roman settlement is equally sparse, although several thousand late Roman coins have been found in the region.
- 3.2 The place name Longton, as 'Langeton', first appears in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, meaning the long settlement. The absence of any medieval material from excavations in Longton town centre, however, suggests this refers not to the location of modern Longton but the settlement around the manorial centre along Longton Hall Road.



**FIGURE 2:** Yates map of 1778 showing Longton and Lane End  
([http://www.thepotteries.org/maps/yates\\_laneend.htm](http://www.thepotteries.org/maps/yates_laneend.htm))

- 3.3 Modern Longton town centre is located on the commons of the manor, and it seems to be only in the 17<sup>th</sup> century that this area, Lane End, developed, with encroachments into the commons along the roadside, prompted in part by the blast furnace at Meir and associated iron-mining and charcoaling.
- 3.4 Settlements formed along the road running East from Stoke as ribbon development, the close relationship to the road evident in the names of Lower Lane, Lane Delph, and Lane End. Development gathered pace following the turnpiking of the road in 1759 and when these settlements coalesced into urban units in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, civic pride

dictated that the 'Lane' names were replaced by those of the manors in which they lay. Lane End became known as Longton, and Lower Lane and Lane Delph, Fenton.

- 3.5 During the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Longton consisted of two small hamlets (Longton and Lane End) with a combined population of 150 recorded in 1666. Longton was originally an agricultural area.



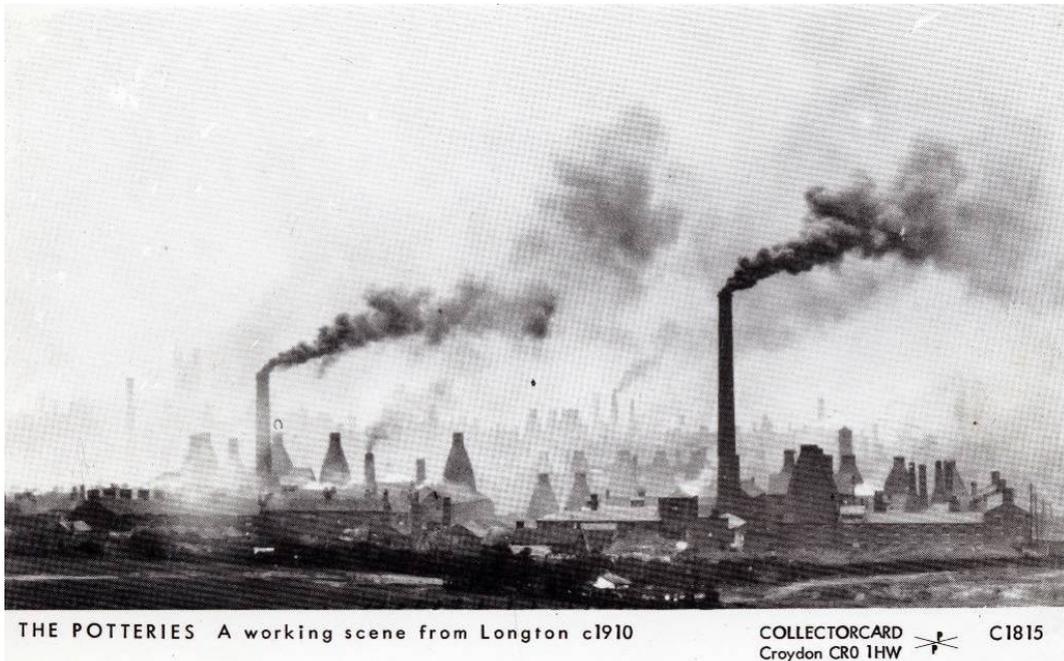
**FIGURE 3:** *Thomas Hargreaves Map of Lane End in 1832*

- 3.6 Initially industry consisted of flint mills converted from former corn mills, which together with Longton's mining industry dates back to 1695. By 1750, the first pot-banks began to appear with early prominent manufacturers including John Turner, the Cycles and

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Garners families and John Forrester.

- 3.7 By 1763 population was dense enough to justify the first church in Longton, St John the Baptist's on the (now vacant) site adjacent to the Crown and Anchor Hotel off King Street.
- 3.8 Longton slowly changed from a rural settlement to an urban community as a result of improved communications, exploitation of surrounding minerals and the growth of the pottery industry. By the 19<sup>th</sup> century Longton was dominated by its expanding pottery industry. 13 pottery manufacturers were recorded in 1784, and by 1867 this figure had grown to over 65. Longton's population had expanded from 2,500 in 1780, to 5,000 in 1811, and by 1871 this had increased to 19,000, a large proportion of which were employed in ceramic-related activities. As the population increased so did the need for civic space and in 1832 the public square, Times Square was enlarged and a few years later in 1844 the first town hall was built.
- 3.9 In 1832 a railway line from Longton to the Trent and Mersey Canal near Stoke was built carry the goods to England's extensive and well used canal network. When the railway from Stoke to Uttoxeter and Burton was built in 1848 a station was opened at Longton.
- 3.10 Longton's pottery factories were generally smaller than those in other towns creating a distinctive appearance. Pot-banks lined the town's main streets, and bottle ovens of all sizes formed the principal features of its industrial townscape these mixed in with terrace housing and shops and glimpses of this can still be seen today.
- 3.11 Many pottery manufacturers and colliery proprietors owned groups of housing situated amongst the industrial buildings, which were rented by workers. Longton contained more back to back housing than any of the other pottery towns; these properties were generally small, dark, had no ventilation and poor sanitation, which led to disease and high mortality rates. Longton possessed very few higher-rated large houses to accommodate the middle classes, many of whom moved out of the town to more attractive surroundings such as Dresden.
- 3.12 One of the reasons for Longton's successful pottery manufacturing was the presence of raw materials in the vicinity, i.e. local clays and coal. The specific type of coal mined in Longton, which achieved high temperatures, led to a concentration of bone china production in the town. Furthermore, the availability of land attracted potters to set up business in Longton, at a time when land elsewhere was in short supply.
- 3.13 In March 1865, Longton and Lane End were incorporated as the Borough of Longton. Longton became one of the six towns that joined together to form the new county borough of Stoke-on-Trent in 1910.
- 3.14 Today, Longton is the second largest centre in Stoke-on-Trent (after the City Centre) with an immediate population of 13,000. Longton is recognised as the District Centre which serves the South of the City, and a recent shopping survey recorded Longton as having a catchment population of over 126,000 people.



**FIGURE 4:** Showing the extent of the pottery industry in Longton in the early 1900'

- 3.15 Longton also serves as a tourist attraction and contains one of highest concentrations of factory shops and ceramic attractions in the city. Existing attractions include; Portmeirion, Aynsley China, Hudson and Middleton, Leeds Pottery, Staffordshire Enamels and Gladstone Pottery.
- 3.16 The town centre has suffered severe economic and physical decline following the collapse of local traditional industries such as pottery and coal mining. In particular, the closure of two local collieries, Hem Heath and Florence, has had a significant impact on employment figures in the Longton area. Longton has experienced further decline with the blighting effect of the A50 trunk road during its construction phases during the late 1990's.
- 3.17 Large areas of Longton are designated as areas of archaeological importance. There are no specific entries on the list of Scheduled Ancient Monuments Records for the Conservation Area.

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## 4. Spatial Analysis and Appraisal of Views

### 4.1 Form

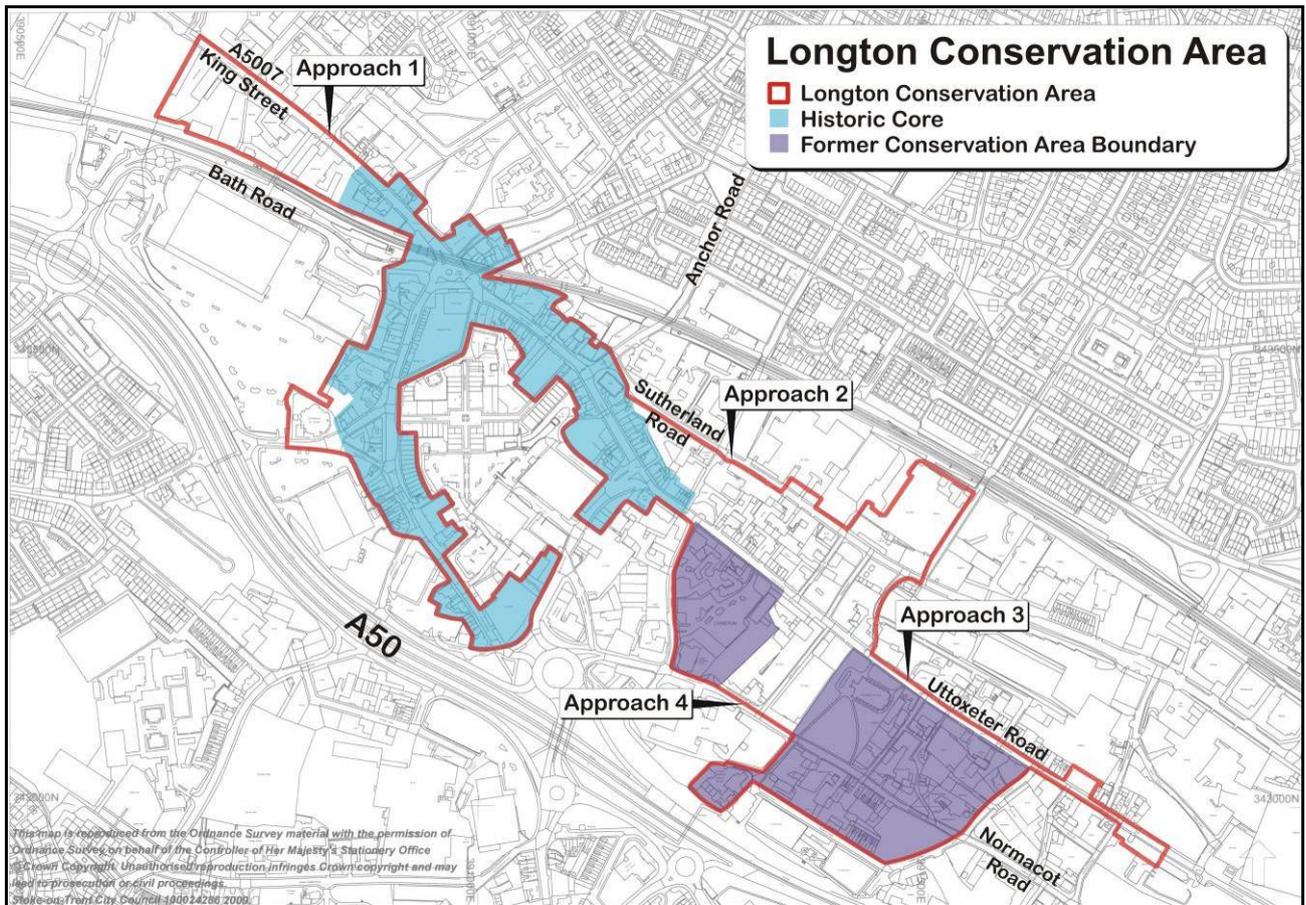
- 4.11 The Conservation Area takes in the former Conservation Areas of Gladstone and Short Street to create the Longton Conservation Area. This includes the town centre and extends down The Strand, King Street, Normacot Road, Uttoxeter Road and Sutherland Road to create an area which encompasses the historic fabric of the town centre.
- 4.12 By its nature the Conservation Area is urban in character and as Longton has a strong history of industrial and in particular pottery workings which still dominate the area.



**FIGURE 5:** *Showing some the distinctive skylines of Longton with part of the railway bridge in the foreground.*

- 4.13 The Conservation Area takes in the two roads which remain from the historic core of the town centre, The Stand and Market Street. It also includes the main routes into the town centre. One from the North and three from the South.

4.14 The Conservation Area is drawn together around the historic core of Longton and encompasses the four approaches into the core. These approaches are:



**FIGURE 6:** Modern road map

- **Approach 1:** King street from Stoke and Fenton
- **Approach 2:** Sutherland Road
- **Approach 3:** Uttoxeter Road
- **Approach 4:** Normacot Road

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## 4.2 Views

4.21 An number of significant internal views, alignments and relationships can be identified within the boundary of the Conservation Area.

4.22 A number of significant internal views, alignments and relationships can be identified:

- Longton Railway Bridge - elevated views of the core historic townscape of Longton are visible from the railway platforms, including excellent views of the former Pottery works on King Street, the Crown Hotel situated on the corner of King Street and Wood Street and the Town Hall that fronts Times Square (see map at appendix 1).
- Times Square - attractive and interesting views that emphasise the strong historic building frontages on Market Street and the Strand are afforded from ground floor level within Times Square. These views are strengthened by the prominent location of the Town Hall that is visible from all approaches into the square. The railway bridge obscures clear views of King Street, Wood Street and Caroline Street from Times Square, although the enclosed nature of these streets lends a strong character to Times Square.
- King Street - King Street affords a significant stretch of strong building alignment on the South side of the street illustrating 19th century industrial architecture that enhances the vehicular approach to Times Square from the A5007. Fragments of industrial architecture on the Northern side of the street reinforce this perception. Glimpsed views of the yards and bottle ovens associated with the former Pottery works are also afforded by pedestrians.



**FIGURE 7:** Views along King Street showing the railway bridge, town hall beyond and St James beyond that with the tops of the bottle ovens at Gladstone just visible

- The Strand (lower), Transport Lane & Market Hall - the surviving early nineteenth century architectural frontage on The Strand combined with the late eighteenth century elevation of the Market Hall combine to create a strong and intact double fronted historic street scene that can be viewed from the approaches of Times

Square, Heathcote Road and the Strand. An axial relationship exists between the Crown Hotel and the Earl of Clarendon that reinforces views along this stretch, although the existing shop frontage of the Earl detracts from the attractiveness of this view. The strong frontage of the Market Hall extends to Transport Lane. Views of the Methodist Church from the Transport Lane approach are framed by the Market Hall building frontage, although the quality of views is reduced due to the poorly finished retail development located on the opposite side of the street.



**FIGURE 8:** Views towards the railway bridge

- The Strand (upper) - views of The Strand from the roundabout are marked by a strong and intact double fronted historic building line that is further enhanced by an attractive corner building. An axial relationship exists between the entrance to the Strand and the Pet Shop that is located on the corner of Gold Street and Strand Street. Clear views of St. Gregory's Church from The Strand on entering Gold Street are also visible. Pedestrians will experience views of 92 – 108 The Strand and the rear of the pottery works situated on Commerce Street from the entrance to B&M. The visual integrity of The Strand as a whole is broken up by poorer quality modest buildings with an insensitive use of shopfronts, signage & advertising. This detracts from the overall quality of townscape views within this area.



**FIGURE 9:** Views along Gold Street and The Strand showing the two churches in the distance

- Commerce Street - views from the roundabout towards Commerce Street are enhanced by the former Potteries works opposite the entrance to Millbank Street, although more modern interventions to the streetscape detract from the quality of this view as a whole. The Wilkinson building significantly detracts from the quality of views afforded the visitor along this stretch of road, but the historic architectural integrity of buildings located at the junction of Market Street, Uttoxeter Road and Commerce Street adds significantly to the quality of views within the Conservation Area.
- Market Street - the surviving historic architectural frontages on both sides of Market Street are interspersed with more modern architectural interventions. The poor quality of these buildings detract from the overall quality of the building alignment along this stretch, although the building line is maintained. In particular, the entrance to the Longton Exchange detracts significantly from the visual quality of Market Street. However, the historic facades of surviving buildings contribute significantly to the views afforded on this street. Axial relationships are marred by street clutter and modern architectural interventions, such as the building located on the Northern corner of Market Street and Anchor Road. Locally distinctive views are afforded from Market Street towards Times Square and the railway bridge.
- Sutherland Road and Uttoxeter Road - strong historic building frontages to the Southern sides of Sutherland Road and Uttoxeter Road enhance views of the Conservation Areas from these approaches. The location of Aynsley pottery on the Northern side of Sutherland Road provides a double building alignment that visually reinforces this historic approach further. The straight alignment of Uttoxeter Road results in good views of Union Square upon the approach.



**FIGURE 10:** *The sense of enclosure along Sutherland Road from the two Aynsley Factories*

- Roslyn Works and The Gladstone Pottery Museum - the rear buildings of the Roslyn Works provide a highly attractive and colourful view for visitors approaching Longton on the Uttoxeter Road. Visitors accessing Chadwick Street experience similar high

quality views. Glimpses into the Gladstone yards also provide interesting and characterful views on Chadwick Lane for pedestrians, although poor quality buildings on the Western side of the street and at the junction of Chadwick Lane and Uttoxeter Road detract from the quality of views along this stretch of road. However, high quality views of the Gladstone pottery Museum are experienced from the junction of Uttoxeter Road and Bridgewater Road, shortly after passing the Union Hotel. The Gladstone & Roslyn chimneys and kilns can also be viewed from the works on Normacott Road.

- St. James's church - key views are afforded to St. James's church from Barlow Street, Harber Street, Landon Street, Morpeth Street, Normacot Road, Webberley Lane, Warren Street & Uttoxeter Road in addition to views from The Strand. St. James's church provides a prominent and attractive landmark feature within the built landscape that enhances views within the Conservation Area as a whole.



**FIGURE 11:** *The large open space around the church of St James which stretches from Normacot to Uttoxeter Roads.*

- Attractive views of terraced housing characteristic of past times can be gained at the junction of Warren Street and Beaufort Street. The same location also provides views of the existing bottle kilns within the Enson and Minkstone Works. The straight axis of Beaufort Street also provides good views of the Hothouse situated at the end of Beaufort Road. The building facades on Warren Street to the North of Normacot Road also reinforce the industrial character of this area, although vacant land detracts from this building line in isolated places. The exit from Warren Street onto Uttoxeter Road also provides good views of existing works situated to the East of this junction.
- Historic building facades on both sides of Normacot Road provide strong references to the historic character of this area, in particular the Sutherland Works and

associated terrace housing, and the Enson and Minkstone Works. However, derelict brownfield land located to the South of the Enson Works and Short Street, and the more expansive vacant land bounded by Normacot Road and Warren Street detract from the urban industrial character of this area.

- Past times are visible from views looking to the South whilst walking along Short Street, with pottery works and associated bottle kilns intermingling with small terraced housing and cobbled walkways.



**FIGURE 12:** *showing the relationship of the railway bridge to the Crown Inn*

4.23 There are views of mixed quality out of the Conservation Area.

- Views from the roundabout towards Commerce Street are enhanced by the former Potteries works opposite the entrance to Millbank Street, although more modern interventions to the streetscape detract from the quality of this view as a whole.
- Key views are provided to the surrounding townscape from the Conservation Area, as illustrated in the plan in the appendix.
- Views from The Strand (upper) are enhanced by the prominent location of The Sutherland Library, although views towards the surrounding areas to the Southwest of Longton from The Strand and Heathcote Road are marred by the A50. Clear views of St. Jame's Church Tower are also visible from this location.
- Good views of the Sutherland library are also available from Beaufort Road, adjacent to the HotHouse and at the junction of Beaufort Road and Warren Street.
- Due to the topography of the site, good views of 19th century terraced housing and the surrounding undulating landscape are visible at the junctions of Uttoxeter Road

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and Barlow Street, Uttoxeter Road and Harber Street, Uttoxeter Road and Landon Street and lastly, Uttoxeter Road and Bridgewater Street. These views complement the historic nature of the Conservation Area.

- Views from Uttoxeter Road looking to the South East of the Conservation Area are compromised by poor quality buildings with associated car parking and also the green bridge crossing the A50. The use of insensitive hazard markings to the railway bridge mars views from Sutherland Road adjoining Anchor Road and Bridgewater Road.
- Views from other roads leading out of the Conservation Area are characterised by the built urban fabric that is typical of the surrounding townscape. Consequently, they are not memorable.



**FIGURE 13:** *View to the North showing near and far views combined due to the elevation of Uttoxeter Road*

4.24 There are several key gateways to the area which are illustrated on a plan in the appendix.

- The historic land uses within Longton have evolved around a retail core and surrounding industrial buildings. Key gateways within the Conservation Area occur at three locations, namely Times Square, Upper Strand & Commerce Street road junction and Union Square.
- With respect to Times Square, the prominent location of the Town Hall and historic railway bridge combined with key views to Market Street and The Strand in addition to other linkages combine to make this a key Northern gateway into the retail core of Longton. The existing built form is historically intact in this area which emphasises the sense of arrival when entering this space.
- The corner positions of No. 108 The Strand and Tams Pottery works, the intact historic double street frontage of The Strand (upper) and the vacant pottery works on Commerce Street combine to create a historic frontage to the Southern entrance to the retail core of Longton that contrasts starkly with the A50 infrastructure and

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surrounding built form. The historic nature of this gateway is reinforced with key views to The Sutherland library and St. James Church.

- The Union Square occurs where Commerce Street, Uttoxeter Road and Market Street converge at the Eastern point of arrival to Longton town centre. The historic nature of the surrounding buildings is for the most part intact, with the exception of the Wilkinson store. The sense of arrival is enhanced by good views towards Market Street from an elevated position. This square could serve as a key linkage point between the historic retail core and the Gladstone Pottery Museum.

### 4.3 Open Spaces

- 4.31 Open spaces within the Conservation Area consist of internal courtyards, car parks, garage forecourts, vacant brownfield sites and green spaces.
- 4.32 Internal courtyards are typical of the historic built form within the area and complement the use of the buildings. Examples of internal courtyards can be found within the Gladstone Pottery Museum, the Roslyn Works and other associated pottery works (on Sutherland Road and King Street). Glimpsed views from external pavements add to the historic charm of the area.
- 4.33 As a latter day intervention, large expansive open areas of car parking are incongruous with the tight grain that was formerly characteristic of Longton and generally detract from the historic integrity of the Conservation Area. Examples include the car parks that flank the A50 link road that are associated with NEXT and other retail shops. However, the car park to the Roslyn Pottery provides dramatic views of the rear of bottle ovens associated with the Gladstone and Roslyn works. They form a unique silhouette against the skyline. Views of the works to the South of this car park detract from the overall quality of this open space. Smaller forecourt parking areas have developed on the main approaches to Longton as modern infill developments have replaced older buildings. These parking areas allow ease of access to customers using facilities. However, the car parks break up the strong building line that would be characteristic to these approaches. This is particularly apparent on the approach from Uttoxeter Road, although smaller pockets of forecourt parking are also located on King Street, Sutherland Road and Normacott Road. Advertising associated with garage forecourts also detracts from the historic integrity of these approach roads.



**FIGURE 14:** *Uttoxeter Road showing views of the church and the signage along the road*

- 4.34 Numerous vacant brownfield sites are visible on the approach from Sutherland Road, particularly at the junction of Barlow Street. Another vacant site occurs where Landon Street and Harber Street join with Uttoxeter Road. These sites detract from the strong building line that is characteristic of the approaches to the Conservation Area.
- 4.35 There are numerous green spaces within the Conservation Area. These areas of open space are discussed in further detail in section 5.4.



**FIGURE 15:** *Brownfield sites, whilst allowing clear views across the area, detract from the densely built up industrial character of the area*

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## **5. Built Form**

### **5.1 The Influence of Use Patterns and Patronage**

- 5.12 Modern Longton town centre is located on the commons of the manor, and it seems to be only in the 17<sup>th</sup> century that this area, Lane End, developed, initial encroachments into the commons along the roadside, were prompted in part by the blast furnace at Meir and associated iron-mining and charcoaling.
- 5.13 Longton had a strong leadership throughout its early history with commissioners in charge of the town from 1839 to 1910. This is in evidence in the town hall and Times Square. Local residents also had a strong voice, which they used in the May riots of 1839. In 1910 with the difficult amalgamation of the six towns was initiated by the proposal of combining Longton, Stoke and Fenton.
- 5.14 Longton also competed unsuccessfully with Hanley to become the prominent shopping town of the potteries.
- 5.15 Two families had a great influence on the town. John Aynsley and the Dukes of Sutherland.
- 5.16 John Aynsley was born in 1823 to a working class family and started his working life aged 9 as a potter's lad. He worked hard, saved and worked his way up to become a land and potteries owner and generous benefactor to Longton. He became a councillor in 1865, and then was the mayor of Longton from 1886 to 1890. He was a county councillor and Justice of the Peace and county magistrate. He was on the local board of Heath and was instrumental in installing proper sewage systems. He was the driving force for Longton Park at Dresden and Normacot Cottage Hospital and through his donations and powers of persuasion both opened debt free. It is likely that he had a strong hand in designing Aynsley Pottery so that he workers would benefit from things such as well ventilated rooms to reduce lung damage. He was a freeman of Longton and was called 'The Grand Old Man' of Longton or 'GOM' for short. He died almost penniless in 1907.
- 5.17 The Dukes of Sutherland strongly influenced the town though their role as the major landowner from 1770 to about 1920. They supplied the town with water and had the largest colliery serving the town. They also donated land and money for most of the principal buildings such as St Johns Church, the national schools, the park and the hospital.



**FIGURE 16:** *Sutherland Street and Anchor road in the 1960s showing the domestic scale of the large pottery industry in Longton*

- 5.18 Longton has had a major changes to the town centre, though the building of Longton Exchange and then more recently through Tescos and the new retail development associated with it.
- 5.19 Longton Exchange was opened in 1965 and completely altered the town centre. Prior to the building of this new shopping centre the area was filled with small lanes, passages and courts housing small pot banks and workers housing. Most of the workers housing was demolished when the bus station was built in the 1930's on the strand side of the shopping precinct and the pot banks demolished later in the following development of the large retail sheds and the Longton Exchange. The original layout of the area is still visible in St Martins Lane and Smithy Street.
- 5.20 The Tesco's development has also had a strong impact on the town centre. The development of a large area of what was vacant land and industrial buildings to a large car park and retail area including a large Tesco store altered the dynamics of the town centre. It extended and altered the shape of the town centre and intensified the activity on the strand. This altered the way that cars and pedestrians entered into the town centre and opened up the Strand.
- 5.21 Longton has been carefully catalogued through the lens of local photographer and shopkeeper William Blake who photographed Longton and the surrounding area in the early 1900's.

## 5.2 Architectural Character, Materials, Colours and Textures

### 5.21 Style

The Conservation Area spans a large area and covers the core town centre and some of the surrounding historic areas. It is of high quality and stylistically quite mixed with even the nineteenth century buildings varying in scale and detailing, each competing with its neighbour for attention. Many of the nineteenth century buildings remain and dominate the street scene giving a grand classical presence to the area. A majority of the architecture is Victorian, Edwardian and Queen Anne Revival Style in character taking influences from the Classical and Italianate. Although most of the buildings follow a local and vernacular style some of the buildings have suffered from detrimental progressive changes, especially to shopfronts. Interspersed with the historic buildings are modern buildings such as the bank on the East corner of Anchor Road and Market Street.

5.1.2 Many of the buildings are examples of Queen Anne Revival Style popular in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The first impression is one of order and repetition but closer inspection reveals the introduction of “one off” elements. The most striking features are the repeated gables and large windows, especially to the first floor. The gables are either decorated with moulded brickwork in relief panels or form the front of a dormer at third floor. The windows are surrounded by carefully and intricately detailed brick or stonework.

5.1.2 On the approaches large industrial buildings of varying periods have been built in the style of the period, such as Edwardian brick or 1980's cladding. They are more utilitarian in character than those buildings in the town centre and the scale of the decoration is finer in the town centre than on the industrial buildings.



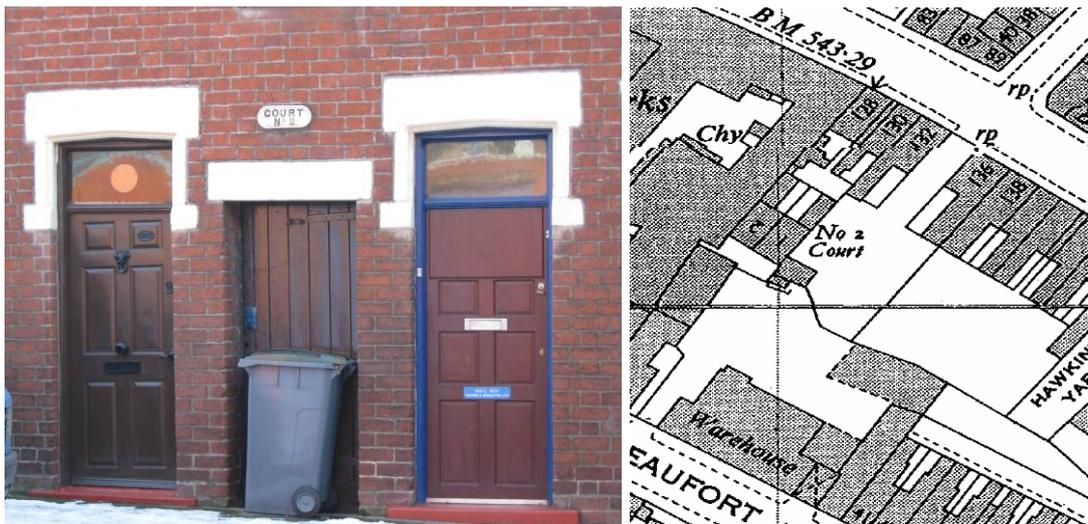
**FIGURE 17:** *Market Street c1910 and in 2009 showing that many of the traditional buildings have been retained*

## 5.22 Plan, Form and Massing

Whilst the Conservation Area is clearly the commercial town centre it retains many of the original buildings which are smaller and narrower in scale than modern town centres. Two or three storey buildings packed tight together line the historic core on The Strand and Market Street. Further out on the approaches these are punctuated by larger pottery factories such as Gladstone, Boundary Works and Aynsley.

The area follows the two historic main routes through the town. Much of the infill area between these two routes was demolished to create a new shopping space in Longton Exchange called Bennetts Precinct in the 1960's. This is not included in the Conservation Area. The shopping centre is incongruous with the rest of the area and has a transitory feel to it. Its siting and layout do not respect the surrounding areas and the finishes are not of the same quality as the nineteenth century buildings which surround it.

Approaches two, three and four run almost parallel and form a strong industrial area with infill development consisting of large blocks of factories between them and small roads interconnect them. There is a small area of housing along part of and to the South of Normacot Road. This includes a row of terraces which would have originally had a court in which more terraced housing was situated only accessibly via an alleyway.



**FIGURE 18:** Terraced housing on Normacot Road showing the old court entrance

An interesting part of the town is the railway bridge. Pevsner clearly considers the location of it odd but it shows the development and priorities of the town. The railway was an important trade route which made Cornish clay easier to import and the finished ware easier to export. It was also a testament to the prominent townsfolk and trade of the town that they had a railway connection to the canals. It dominates the view of King Street, Market Street, the Strand and of course Times Square.

## 5.23 External Walls and Façade Finishes

### Façade Treatments

A majority of the buildings have brick facades with stone detailing. Some of these have been rendered or painted but many retain the brick facades. However over the years there have been progressive changes to the shopfronts to create a variety of styles and designs which range from modern to the retention of traditional shopfronts.



**FIGURE 19:** Showing two very different shopfront treatments. The one on the right showing how a shopfront can be alienated from the building above it.

### Brickwork - Tiles

Red brick laid in Flemish or English bond is the common façade material across the Conservation Area. Brick detailing is common throughout the area. Use of detailing at eaves level and in decorative panels is common. The panels are used to great effect with Dutch gables.



**FIGURE 20:** Brick detailing and stone window surrounds

### Stonework

Stonework is used throughout the area to declare status and add interest to buildings. This is evident in the stone Town Hall, the Central Methodist's Church and the Church of St James on Uttoxeter Road. Stonework is also used to a lesser extent throughout the area in detailing such as eaves details, coping stones, finials and window details. In some cases this is particularly decorative in style. On Uttoxeter Road a majority of the traditional factory buildings have stone moulded window surrounds and this is a detail repeated throughout the area. On the modest factories and shops only plain window sill and lintels are in stone. The Town Hall and the market are the most prominent stone structures in the central core of the area with St James dominating the Eastern end.

The Town Hall and market were built in 1844 and extended and remodelled in 1863 to twice original size and a grand front pedimented portico was added. Further alterations were carried out in 1912-1913. both parts of the building were built of grey ashlar in a monumental Italianate style which gives them a grand presence.

St James dominates the views within the Eastern end of the Conservation Area and is a large sandstone ashlar faced church set in its former churchyard and built circa 1833.



**FIGURE 21:** *Crown Public House.*

### Concrete

Used on some of the later buildings within the town centre including 28 Market Street. Lloyds bank and used extensively within Bennetts Precinct. The most prominent example is no 41 Market Street (Lloyds bank) which is a modern concrete block completely at odds with the surrounding character but which creates a strong statement on the corner of the street. Although not within the boundary of the Conservation Area the Wilkinson building (the former bus station), even whilst being set back, has a strong presence in the area due to its size and height and blank facades.

## 5.24 Roofs

- Material

Most roofs carry local dark blue-purple tiles. A few such as the Crown Hotel have pitched slate roofs. Some of the roofing materials have been replaced with concrete pantiles but relatively few have lost their traditional roof covering.



**FIGURE 22:** *Roofs: different roof details within the Conservation Area*

- Pitch and Type

The Conservation Area is characterised by buildings with plain gable roofs carrying mid or full dormers and Flemish gables. A majority of the smaller and plainer buildings, especially within the town centre, carry plain blue clay tiles on a pitched roof. No 108 The Strand has a curved clay tile pitched roof and no 14 The Strand has a small turret on the corner of the building. The factories either have a traditional pitched roof or a modern flat roof. However a few such as Aynsley China works have hipped roofs and the Hothouse in Webberley Lane has a catslide roof. Dutch gables and parapet walls are also a common feature through out the Conservation Area.

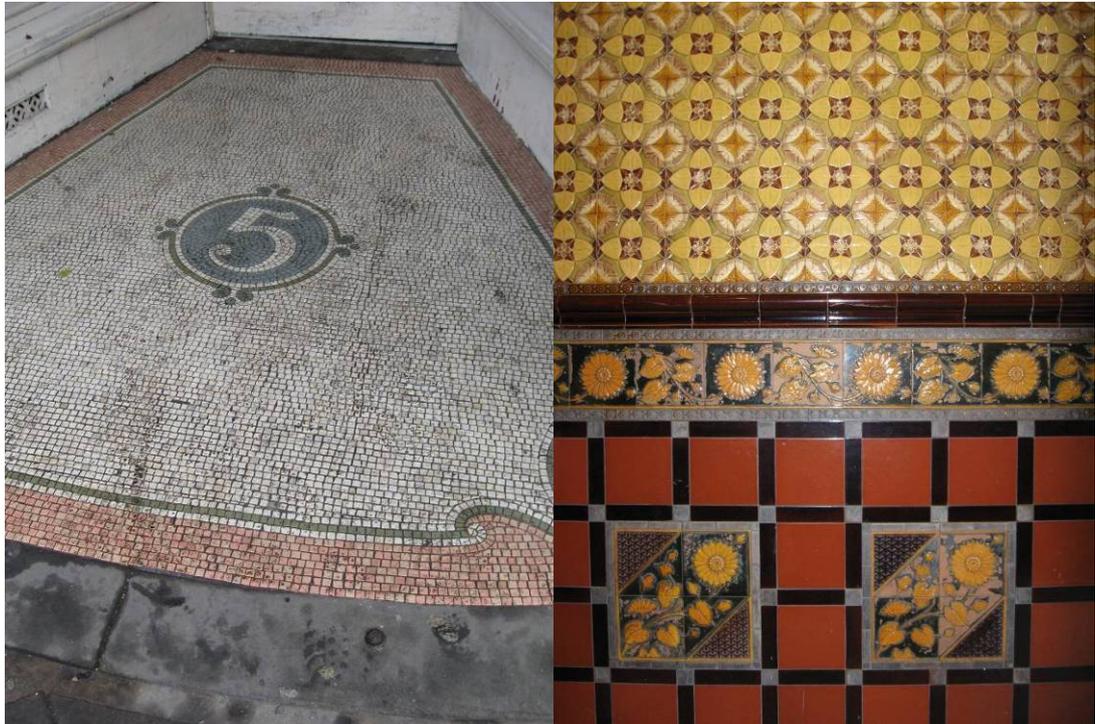
## 5.25 Windows

- Type and Fenestration

A majority of windows and shopfronts at ground have been replaced, often with an unsympathetic design or material. Some first and second floor level original windows remain as timber sashes or casements. Moulded stone sills and lintels are an important characteristic of the Conservation Area as are large windows with a vertical emphasis. Large repetitive windows in pairs with matching details are common throughout the area, especially within the historic core. Oriel or bay windows are also a common detail, especially at first floor level. Some of the factories, such as Boundary Works, retain their Venetian window. The shops that surround the edge of the market hall have large duel height windows. Some of these shops retain their curved shopfronts. All have large curved windows with radial bar fanlights.

## 5.26 Porches

Porches are not a feature of the Conservation Area with the exception of the Town Hall which has a prominent entrance as suits its status. Doors with porticos and pilasters around the entrances are common as are archways through to the factory courtyards. The crown hotel has a recessed porch which is decorated with tiles and no 5 Market Street has a recessed entrance with mosaic tiles.



**FIGURE 23:** *Examples of details within porches*

## 5.27 Doors

Few traditional doors have been retained although where shopfronts have been replaced as it is quite common for the doors to have been replaced to match and where shopfronts are traditional quite often the doors have been replaced with a modern equivalent. Some traditional doors are visible on Normacot Road, Sutherland Road, a few building on Uttoxeter road and on the market.

## 5.28 Enclosure

There are few areas of enclosure as by its very nature the town centre is compact and crammed together leaving little room for outside areas. The factories have either courtyards access through archways within the buildings or have high walls that surround the site such as the Gladstone Pottery Museum and Rosslyn Works. Low modern brick walls are a feature of the east end of the Conservation Area such as those around St James and railings can be seen around Minkstone and Enson Works which allow views of the buildings beyond.

## 5.210 Details and Features

- The decorative brick panels are worthy of note as they form an integral part of the character of the area as are the parapet walls and large windows with vertical emphasis.

### 5.211 Groundscape and Public Realm

- Within the internal courtyard spaces of historic buildings, traditional paving materials such as granite setts are used. The Roslyn works have set stone slabs into the existing sett paving for the internal courtyard to aid disabled access. External paving surfaces within the public realm use less traditional materials, with a predominant use of black top tarmac and concrete paviours. Exceptionally, more traditional materials such as blue brick edging have been used on Chadwick Street. The red chip tarmac bus lane on The Strand particularly detracts from the quality of the street scene within this area.
- The area around Normacot Road, Chadwick and Morpeth Street has had some grant funding for public realm works in the past. Unfortunately whilst introducing a classical lamp design a large number of classically designed bollards litter the streets creating a cluttered look to the streetscene.
- The insensitive design of shop frontages and advertising further detracts from the quality of the public realm and is predominantly out of character with the historic core. Street furniture is poor in quality and is inappropriately positioned. Particularly, the junction at Anchor Road and Market Street is cluttered with public realm elements that detract from the quality of views within this area. Street lights, road signs and barrier rails all contribute to a loss of quality within the public realm.
- There is an absence of feature lighting in the area. Lighting is for functional purposes only and is predominantly provided through the use of column lighting. Additionally, there is no public art within the boundary of the Conservation Area.



**FIGURE 24:** *The cluttered street furniture at the junction with Anchor Road and Market Street*

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## 5.3 Listed and Unlisted Buildings of Importance

### 5.41 Buildings on the Statutory List

- **Boundary Works** (*King Street*): *Grade II*
- **Phoenix Works** (*King Street*): *grade II*
- **Longton Town Hall & Market** (*Times Square*): *Grade II*
- **Commerce Works** (*Commerce Street*): *Grade II*
- **Gladstone Pottery Museum** (*Uttoxeter Road*): *Grade II\**
- **The White House** (*Chadwick Street*): *Grade II*
- **The Red House** (*Chadwick Street*): *Grade II*
- **St Peter's Church** (*Uttoxeter Road*): *Grade II*
- **Enson Works** (*Chelson Street*): *Grade II*



**FIGURE 25:** *Boundary Works showing the central Venetian window typical of the Potteries*

- **Minkstone Works** (*Uttoxeter Road*): *Grade II*
- **Short Street Cottages and bottle oven adjacent to Minkstone works** (*Short Street*): *Grade II*

- 
- **Aynsley China North Range** (*Sutherland Road*): *Grade II*
  - **Aynsley China South Range** (*Sutherland Road*): *Grade II*
  - **Sutherland Works** – Grade II
  - **Royal Doulton's St. Mary's pottery** (*Uttoxeter Road*): *Grade II*
  - **Milepost** (*King Street*): *Grade II*

List descriptions are attached in the appendices. These provide the essential first step in identifying what it is that is protected by law and what it is that makes the building of special architectural or historic interest. They are not comprehensive inventories of everything that is significant about a building and nothing should be dismissed as unimportant simply because it is not described in the list description.

#### 5.42 Buildings of Special Local Interest Listed in The Local Plan

- The Roebuck Pub, 9 Caroline Street
- 2 Commerce Street
- 3-5 Commerce Street
- 6-8 Commerce Street
- St Gregory's Roman Catholic Church, 8 Heathcote Road
- 527 King Street
- 530 King Street
- The Crown Pub, 545 King Street
- Former Co-Op Building, 11 Market Street
- 31-35 Market Street
- Lloyds Bank, 41 Market Street
- 46/46a Market Street
- 51 Market Street
- John Tams Ltd, 111-113 The Strand
- 14-24 The Strand
- Longton Central Hall, 34 The Strand
- The George & Dragon Pub, 40 The Strand
- Williamson's Jewellers and Picture Framers, 52 The Strand
- 93-95 The Strand
- Railway bridge
- Taylor Tuncliffe (Albion Works), Uttoxeter Road
- The Union Hotel, Uttoxeter Road
- St James' Centre Of Ceramic Design, Weberley Lane

#### 5.43 Unlisted Structures of Note

The area has a large and comprehensive local list and therefore there are few unlisted buildings of note in the area.

- **No 98 to 108 (even) The Strand**

A key building in the townscape as it stands at the entrance to the historic core and The Strand. This 3 storey brick building has a curved clay tile pitched roof with Dutch gables with ornamental brickwork in a Mannerist style.

- **No 50 The Strand**

Built in 1878 this former pub sits in a prominent position on the Strand. It has a stone plaque with 'The Cricketers Arms' with an image of cricket stumps and bat below. Built to match the rusticated Italianate design of the Town Hall and market. However the grand design is a little at odds with the small scale of the building which, although it has a corner plot, is not symmetrical and seems to stop short.

- **No 10 The Strand**

Built as a bank in the early to mid 1800's this building still serves the purpose to which it was built. It boasts an intricately detailed brick balustrade to the parapet wall over a complex dentil course. The double height door capped with an open pediment with a infill panel of plant and rose detailing with a small dentil course.

- **23/25 Market Place**

Bank, typical of the Potteries towns. One storey stone building with large windows with large closed pediment supported on pilasters above. Over the corner entrance door is a small closed pediment with a large open segmental pediment above.



**FIGURE 26:** *No 50 The Strand*

## 5.4 Trees, Green Spaces, Edges and Ecology

- 5.41 The area has little green space. The most prominent green area is the graveyard to St James which has become an informal park. Adjacent to the Conservation Area in King street the former graveyard to St John's has become an informal green space.
- 5.42 There are small incidental areas of green such as that adjacent to the railway bridge and in front of the Gladstone Pottery Museum.
- 5.43 There are no trees lining the streets.
- 5.44 Longton Rectory - this park is located adjacent to the Crown Hotel & King Street and provides a pedestrian route through to Grafton Road. The park is predominantly grassed with perimeter walling, hedging and trees. There is a strong view of the rear façade of the Crown Hotel from the park that adds visual interest to this amenity space.
- 5.45 Incidental Space adjacent to Commerce Street - this park is located between the two former pottery works, adjacent to Commerce Street. Again, this space provides a pedestrian route, through to the B&M car park. The park is predominantly grassed with perimeter walling, shrub planting and fencing. The space adjoins the gable end of the former pottery works opposite Millbank Street and forms a positive visual linkage with this historic brick façade.
- 5.46 There is a small hard landscaped garden at the junction of Short Street and Normacot Road which is in need of refurbishment.



**FIGURE 27:** *The route through from the Strand to Commerce Street*

## **5.5 Detractors, Neutral Areas and Gap Sites – Enhancement and Development Opportunities**

5.51 There are several detractors identified within the Conservation Area, as outlined below:-

- The Longton Exchange (Bennetts Precinct), new retail buildings near Tescos, Lidl building and Wilkinson building are at odds with the Conservation Area due to the difference between the quality of the nineteenth century buildings.
- Other detractors include the B&M premises, Next car park and the traffic island between Market Street and Anchor Road.
- Although historic by nature, public realm treatments to Times Square and Union Square detract from these areas also.
- The predominance of vehicular traffic and associated traffic signs within these areas also detracts from the historic setting.



**FIGURE 28:** *The Strand showing the Longton Exchange, bus lane and traffic congestion*

- High visibility hazard signs on the approaches to the railway bridge from Sutherland road likewise serve to detract.
- Importantly, the loss of the traditional building line also detracts from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area at the key approaches of King Street, Uttoxeter Road and Sutherland Road.

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5.52 Neutral Areas – those neither contributing to nor detracting from the character or appearance of the Conservation Area:

- Good quality infill development that respects the traditional street design provides neutral spaces within the street scene.
- The area of grass adjacent to the former pottery works on Commerce Street also acts as a neutral space.
- Due to the tight grain of Longton gap sites are limited but are outlined below
- Various vacant brownfield sites occur at the junction of Barlow Street, Paragon Road and Sutherland Road which currently act as gap sites. (see map in appendix for street names)
- An additional vacant site occurs on the junction of Uttoxeter Road and Harber Street.



**FIGURE 29:** *Brownfield sites on Sutherland Road*

5.53 Key Development Opportunities exist within the Conservation Area that could enhance and promote the Conservation Area if dealt with in a sensitive manner appropriate to the Conservation Area setting. These opportunities are outlined as follows:-

- The existing railway arches located on Railway Passage could be sensitively refurbished to provide locally distinctive retail opportunities that enhance the existing retail facilities within Longton. The close proximity of the train station to these arches would support ease of access throughout the day and evening, that could be readily exploited by younger members of the public.
- The Longton Exchange should be sensitively re- developed, with particular attention given to the entry points from Transport Lane, The Strand and Market Street.

- The Lidl building should be earmarked for re-development in the longer term to reinstate the building line and reestablish a building on the site which respects the character of the Conservation Area.
- The prominent location and ease of access from the A50 would lend support to the sensitive re-development of the existing former Pottery Works on Commerce Street for business purposes.
- Existing poor quality buildings on the Uttoxeter Road from Union Square to the Gladstone Museum should be tagged for re-development. Corner buildings on the West side of the junction of Chadwick Street and Uttoxeter Road should be of exceptional architectural merit, to enhance the setting of the Gladstone Museum. The quality of architecture from Union Square to the Gladstone Museum should be high, in order to emphasise the links to the Gladstone Museum from the retail core.
- Vacant brownfield sites on the approaches to Longton from Uttoxeter Road and Sutherland Road should be re-developed sensitively, taking account of the traditional building line and industrial architectural heritage. The use of internal courtyards should be incorporated into architectural proposals, with views into the yards from surrounding pedestrian streets. This is particularly relevant for the vacant plot at the junction of Landon Street and Uttoxeter Road.
- The traditional building line should be adopted as a general guiding principle for re-development on the key approaches to Longton, to re-inforce the building tradition within this historic centre. Forecourt parking and garage forecourts should be avoided as they detract from the historic character of approaches.

5.54 Public Realm Improvements could significantly contribute to the promotion and setting of the Conservation Area. Specific improvements are outlined below:-

- Public realm enhancements to Times Square, Union Square and The Upper Strand & Commerce junction would visibly define the retail core of Longton. Careful selection and siting of design materials would allow the public realm to enhance the historic setting, rather than detract from it. A reduction in vehicular traffic in Times Square would allow for a more formal setting to the Town Hall that is a prominent feature building within Square.
- The rationalisation of public realm elements to the traffic island between Market Street and Anchor Street would help to enhance views of Market Street.
- Public realm enhancements should be made to The Strand, Commerce Street and Market Street as a whole to enhance the retail core.
- Public realm enhancements extending 70m (approx) towards Uttoxeter Road would also emphasise this key link to the Gladstone Pottery Museum & Roslyn Works.
- Stone setts to Chadwick Street, Barlow Street, Harber Street, Landon Road and Morpeth Road would emphasise the historic nature of minor linkages within the remaining pottery industries.
- Levels on the junction of Commerce Street and The Strand should also be revised.

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- Generally, there is a need to reduce street clutter throughout the historic core.
- 5.55 Modifications to shop frontages would contribute significantly to the development of an attractive historic conservation core within Longton. In particular, the adaptation of shop frontages to reflect more closely the building elevations of historic facades would help to enhance the quality of views within the Conservation Area. Shop frontages associated within modern infill developments should be adapted to complement the historic core rather than compete with it.
- 5.56 Feature lighting to the Town Hall and railway bridge would emphasise the nature of Times Square as a key arrival space. Other historic buildings within the above mentioned three public spaces would also contribute further to the historic setting if they were sensitively illuminated, particularly in Union Square. The rear elevation of the Roslyn Works and associated kilns would benefit from asymmetric recessed optic lighting set into the surrounding pavements, in order to enhance this dramatic façade at night time. Aspirationally, lighting to key industrial buildings on the approaches from King Street, Sutherland Street and Uttoxeter Road would also reinforce the night time perception of arrival in Longton.
- 5.57 Detractors to the setting of the Conservation Area should be screened from public view. The following locations have been identified where screening would be feasible:-
- The Wilkinson building should be screened from view through the planting of semi-mature street trees crownlified to 2.5m.
  - Likewise, large expanse of open car parks should be screened from view through the use of semi-mature tree planting crownlified to 2.5m.
  - Future car parking should be screened from view from the main approaches and primary retail streets where possible, preferably through discreet positioning within the overall layout of developments, and tree planting if necessary.
  - The green space adjacent to the former Pottery works on Commerce Street should be planted with semi-mature trees (crownlified to 2.5m height min.) in order to screen views into and out of the car park, whilst allowing for pedestrian permeability. Additionally this would enhance the setting of the former pottery.
  - Tree planting or hedging to the boundary between the Gladstone car park and adjacent industrial works would significantly improve views from this key arrival point for visitors arriving by car.

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## **6. Pressures and Threats**

6.1 Most of the issues have been covered in the previous section, however the following should particularly be addressed:

- Traffic cutting off the centre and making it difficult to navigate in a vehicle and also hinder pedestrian access to the town centre.
- The unsympathetic replacement of shopfronts in modern designs which are not in character with the buildings above.
- Any new build should be carefully designed to be sympathetic, whether of modern or traditional design, and must respect the scale of the Conservation Area.
- The use of out of town centres retail centres should be restricted to increase trade within the town centre.
- An assessment of the public realm to reduce the amount of street furniture which is currently cluttering the area.

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## **7. Summary of Special Interest**

### **Architecture**

There is a distinctive local character running through the Conservation Area of two to three storey buildings with strong detailing and character set tightly together set along side the larger more simply designed potbanks. Windows and gables are prominent features of the area, both with intricate detailing. The area has a dignity and presence which comes from the nineteenth century buildings which were built to show the quality, wealth and importance of their owners and this is still visible today. The industrial buildings The public buildings such as the churches and town hall are built of stone and have a strong presence as they tower over the other buildings and streets.

### **History**

The area developed through economic activity associated with the turnpiked road to Uttoxeter and the road to Trentham. The local availability of natural resources such as clay and coal and the connection to the canal network through the trams and trains rapidly increased development in the 1800's. Recent developments include Bennett's precinct in the 1960's and Tesco's retail development which have changed the shopping pattern and shape of the town centre.

### **Character and Appearance**

The Conservation Area has a strong urban character and the historic core is tightly packed to a small area. Further out from the core the larger potbanks dominate the landscape. Buildings tower over the streets creating a strong sense of enclosure while the straight roads on the edge of the town centre afford long views of the buildings.

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## **8. Recommendations and Proposals**

- 9.1 Boundaries in each case are suggested by natural breaks in townscape character or historical developmental patterns and relationships. Current boundaries are appropriate and therefore no boundary revisions are proposed.
- 9.1 The area retains much of the historic character but has suffered from unsympathetic alteration, especially to shopfronts and signage. A grant scheme to encourage retention and restoration of historic or suitable shopfronts would benefit the area greatly.

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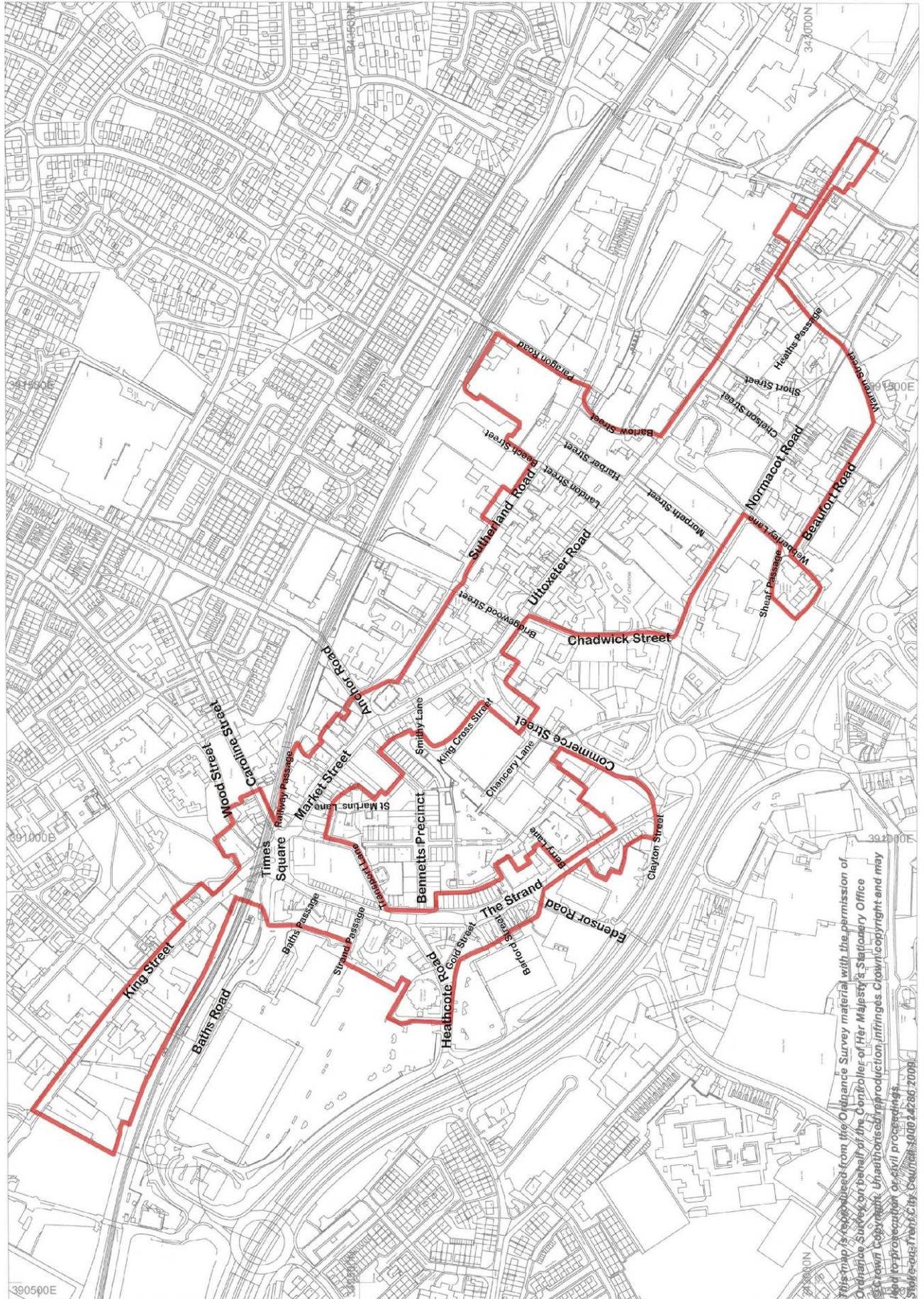
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# Appendices



## Gateways

1. Times Square
2. Union Street
3. Strand/Commerce Street (Crown Square)



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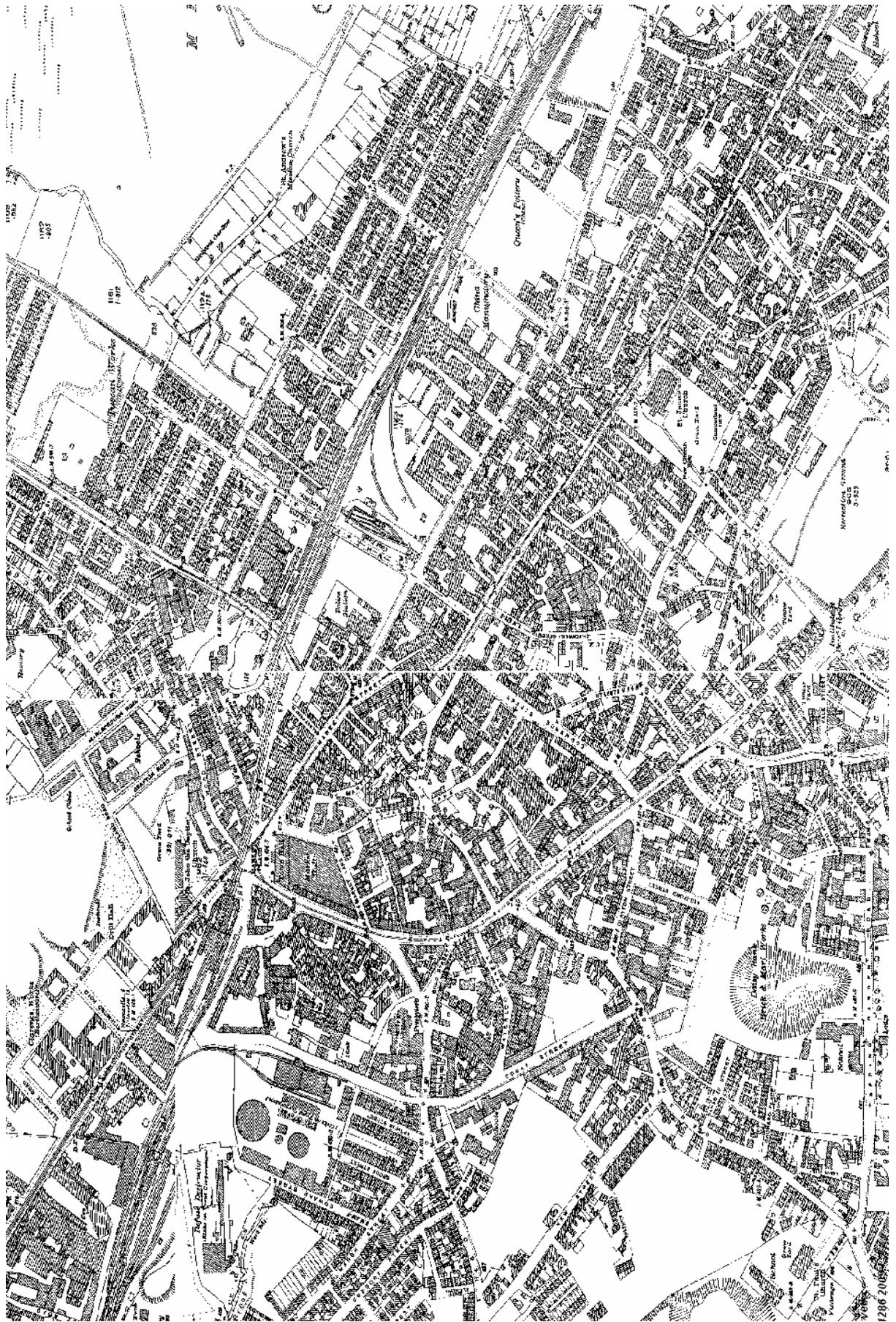




Yates map of 1775 from *Staffordshire Archaeological Studies – Museum Archaeological Society Report, New Series No.4 1987*



London in 1900



Longton in 1924



Longton in 1937

