



Lancaster Conservation Area Appraisal

March 2013

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1. Introduction

Lancaster Conservation Area is a large, all-encompassing designation resulting from the merger of several previous conservation areas. It now includes all of the City Centre and the Castle Precinct, in addition to land to the north (St George's Quays) and residential and industrial areas to the east and the west of the City Centre.

Several smaller conservation areas were originally designated in Lancaster: Castle Precinct, St George's Quay, High Street, Market Street and Dalton Square. In 1988, as part of the Local Plan Process these were combined into two principal conservation areas: the City Centre and the Castle. On the 11 May 2011 these two areas were combined with the Moor Lane Mill Conservation Area to form the current Lancaster Conservation Area.

The new designation followed a boundary review and public consultation exercise, undertaken by The Conservation Studio on behalf of Lancaster City Council in 2010. This concluded that the three areas should be merged. The consultation response was overwhelmingly in favour, although the number of respondents was very low. Other adjacent conservation areas (Aldcliffe Road, Bath Mill and Westfield Memorial Village) remained as stand-alone conservation areas. Cannon Hill was designated a conservation area for the first time in 2010, following consultation.

Given this designation history, and the large extent of the Conservation Area, it is perhaps not surprising that this is a diverse area containing many smaller areas of distinct character. For this reason a Character Area approach is important in undertaking this appraisal; the conservation area has been divided into eleven character areas (see section 3).

During research for this appraisal, The Architectural History Practice and Taylor Young used resources in the libraries of Lancashire County Council and Lancaster University and are grateful for the assistance received from librarians, particularly Andy Holgate at the Lancaster University Library

who granted permission for the use of historic maps in the report. These can be seen on the University website at <http://lancaster.libguides.com>. The Lancashire Historic Environment Record was consulted, particularly the Urban Archaeological Database for Lancaster and we are grateful to Ken Davies and to Peter Iles of Lancashire County Council for advice on archaeology.

1.1 Consultation and Adoption

The first draft of this appraisal formed the subject of a six-week public consultation period from 2 November until 14 December 2012. The appraisal was posted on the Council's website, with hard copies available to view in Lancaster and Morecambe Town Halls, as well as in Lancaster and Morecambe Libraries. Two public consultation events were held in Lancaster Library on 3 and 14 November 2012, where there was an opportunity to speak to a conservation officer about the document.

A Consultation Report was produced, and final amendments made. The final draft was then considered by Lancaster City Council's Planning Policy Cabinet Liaison Group on 11 March 2013, and received Management Team approval on 21 March 2013. Final approval was given by Individual Cabinet Member Decision on Monday 25 March 2013, with an implementation date (following a call-in period) of Thursday 4th April 2013.

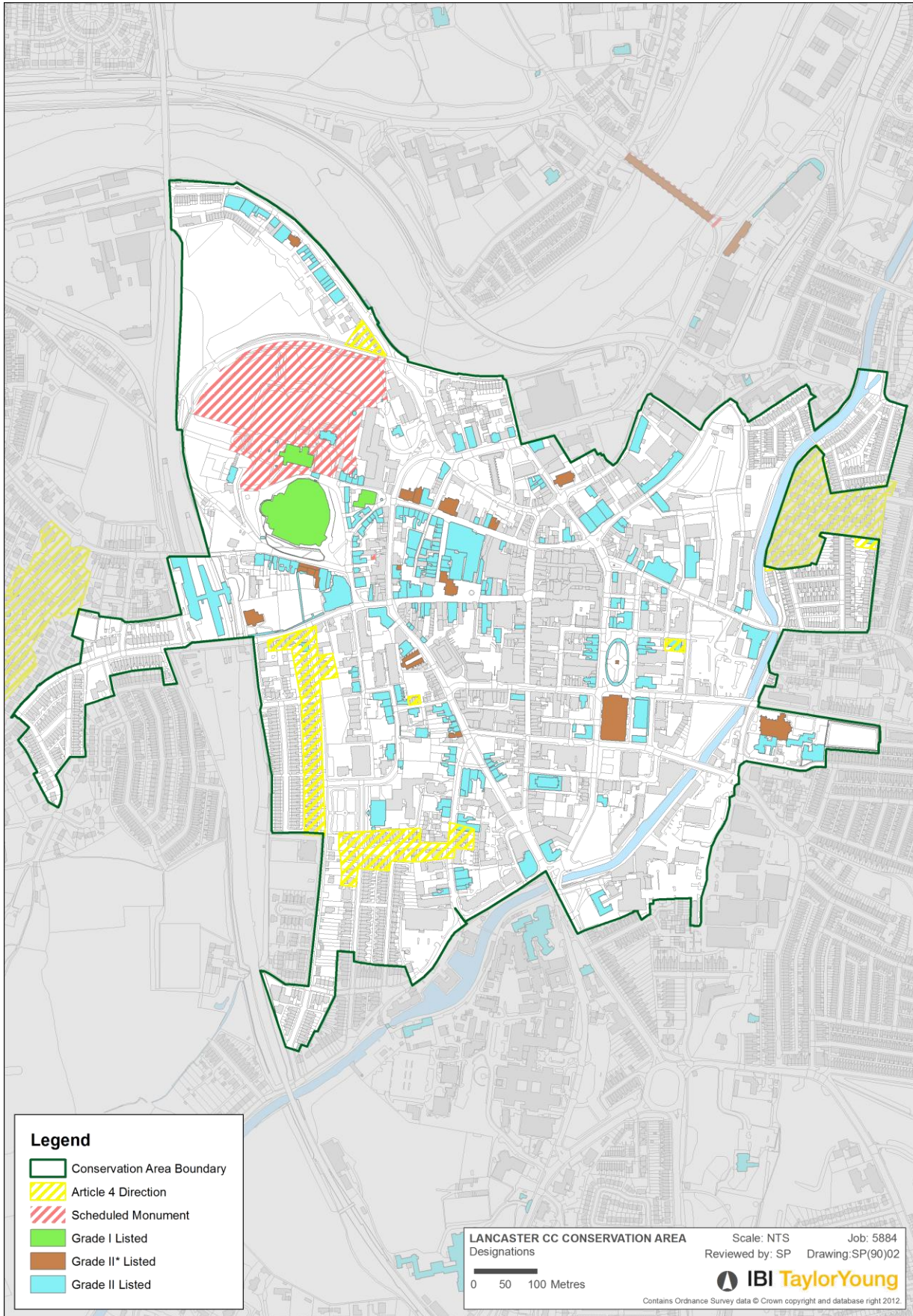
1.2 Planning Policy Context

Figure 1.1 illustrates the current conservation area designations in the area. In addition to the Lancaster Conservation Area boundary it shows listed buildings, scheduled monuments and Article 4 Directions, and adjoining conservation areas. This plan clearly shows that there are many listed buildings in the area, especially in the City Centre core. The plan also shows the Scheduled Monument designation, protecting the site of the Roman fort and the pre-conquest priory on Castle Hill, as well as the glassworks of Shrigley & Hunt. Conservation areas are designated under the 1990

Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act, which requires local authorities to review conservation area designations and if, appropriate, to designate additional areas. This appraisal has been produced to define and record the special architectural and historic interest of the Conservation Area, following the adoption of the extended area in 2011.

The Core Strategy was adopted by Lancaster City Council in 2008. Within this document, the vision for Lancaster is a "prosperous historic city with a thriving knowledge economy". Policy SC5 seeks to achieve quality in design of new buildings and this will have a particular focus on Lancaster City Centre and its approaches, and the conservation areas generally. A Development Management Document is currently in draft and is due to go out to public consultation in October 2012. This contains important planning policy relevant to development within conservation areas and Lancaster City Centre.

Figure 1.1: Conservation Area Boundary and Designations



1.3 Summary of Special Interest

Lancaster Conservation Area covers the historic core of the city, as well as peripheral areas of 19th century urban expansion for housing and industry. The archaeologically sensitive Roman and medieval heart of the city has been overlaid with phases of 18th and 19th century development which have created a city of great richness, character and diversity. The use of local sandstone unifies the mix of buildings and is continued into some good areas of pavement and setted street surfacing, for example around Dalton Square.



The hilly topography provides fine views and interesting level changes which are a distinctive aspect of Lancaster; key historic buildings such as the Castle and St Peter's RC Cathedral have landmark quality on the higher ground with more intimate framed views along streets. The river and canal provide strong landscapes within the city, lined by good groups of historic warehouses, mills and workers housing, complemented by recent development.



The city centre is busy with people; the retail and cultural core supports a wide range of activities in historic buildings, many re-used for current uses. On some streets traffic is intrusive, but overall the city retains strong historic character with few visual intrusions or areas of over-development. The city centre is still predominately low-rise and finely-grained, allowing landmark historic buildings to punctuate the townscape.



Good quality small public spaces provide attractive settings for historic buildings and relief in the city centre's grid of streets, with larger areas of green open space around the Castle, notably overlying the scheduled ancient monument of the Roman fort.

2. Conservation Area Appraisal: Area-wide Overview

2.1 Location and Setting

Figure 2.1 shows the wider setting of the Conservation Area. Lancaster is located approximately 3 miles inland from the coast, on the south side of the tidal River Lune. It is strategically located at the lowest crossing point of the Lune. Lancaster has now effectively merged with Morecambe, but the River provides an effective break that gives separate integrity to both settlements. Lancaster is located on hilly terrain, with the Castle and Priory situated on a bluff overlooking the river, and the land rising higher in the east towards the Lancaster Moor and beyond to the Forest of Bowland. This topography gives attractive views across the City Centre, especially to the Ashton Memorial, which sits on the crest of a hill to the east. To the east of this runs the M6 motorway.

The natural setting was attractive to early settlement, demonstrated by the almost continuous occupation of Castle Hill for over 2000 years. The river leading into the Irish Sea and beyond to the Atlantic enabled the town to become the 4th largest port in Georgian England, the key to the city's prosperity that provided the architecture and townscape making it one of the finest Georgian towns in northern Britain. As the historic county town, Lancaster's hinterland stretched south to Manchester and Liverpool, east into the Pennines and north to Barrow in Furness; before local government re-organisation in 1974, its position in the north of Lancashire made more geographical sense.

The underlying geology is a buff carboniferous sandstone, a source of excellent building stone, also riven for 'grey' roof slates; there were quarries on the hill on the east side of the city, later landscaped for Williamson Park. To the north, the volcanic rock of the Cumbrian fells provided Lancaster with Burlington blue/grey and Westmorland green roofing slate.

2.2 The Conservation Area boundary

Figure 2.1 also shows the surrounding Conservation Areas of Westfield Memorial Village, Cannon Hill, Aldcliffe Road and Bath Mill for context. These are separately designated conservation areas and are not the subject of this appraisal.

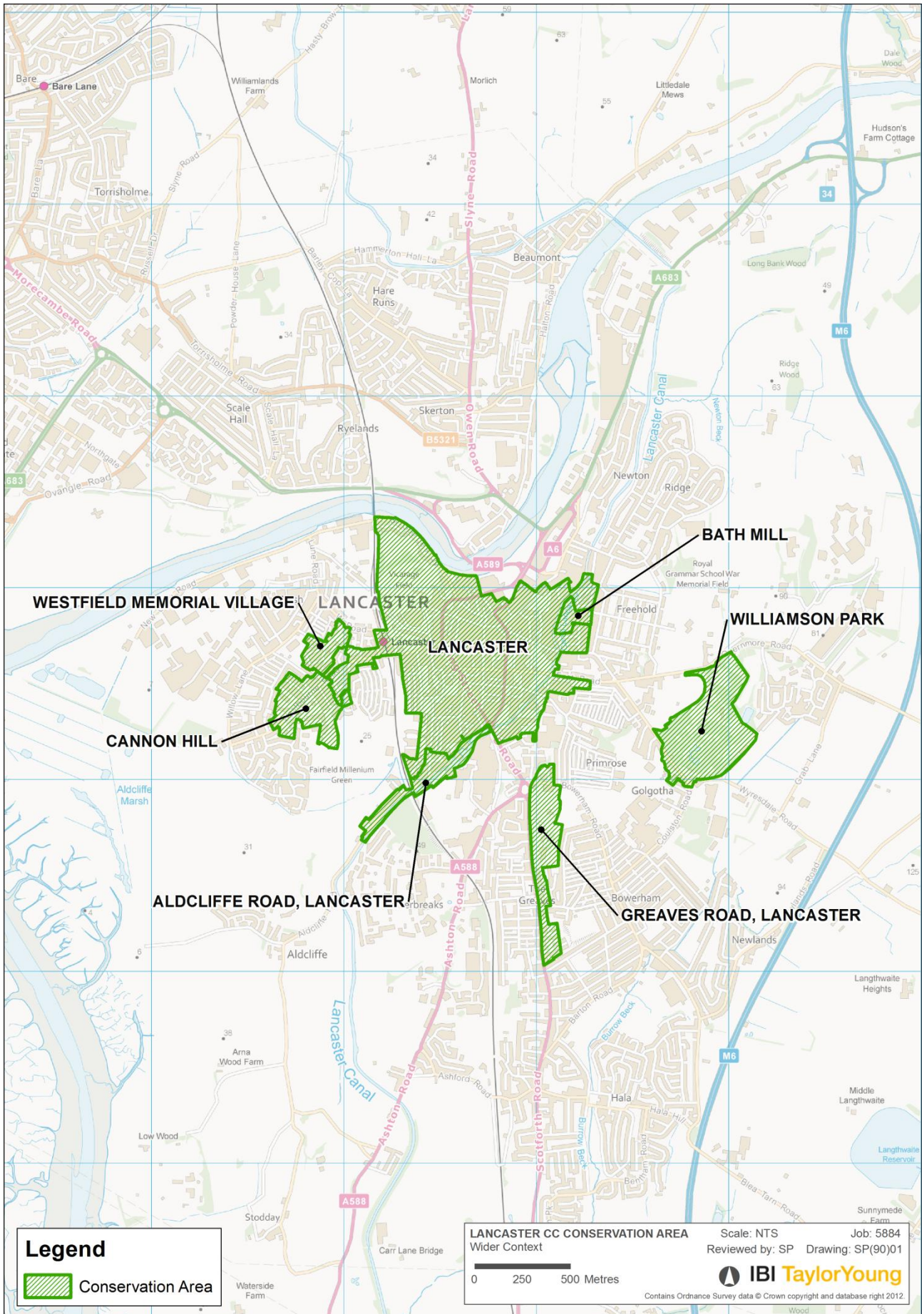
The Lancaster Conservation Area covers the City Centre and selected areas of residential expansion. This generally comprises land defined to the north by the River Lune, by the Canal to the east and the railway line to the west. There are, however a number of projections: the Cathedral and blocks of residential streets to the east of the Canal and the Westbourne Road area to the west of the railway line.

North-west of the centre, St George's Quay is important for a fine group of 18th century warehouses that face the River Lune. The river is spanned by a series of dramatic bridges. The former warehouses have mostly converted to residential use, with some sensitive infill development of new-build apartment blocks.

The Lancaster Canal contours along the eastern edge of the Conservation Area. Whilst most of the Conservation Area is occupied by town centre uses, these peter away to the east and industrial, or former industrial, uses occupy most of the land around the canal. The exceptions are on the eastern banks of the Canal in the north, where streets of dense terraced housing adjoin the canal, and to the south of this St Peter's RC Cathedral is a landmark the east of the canal. In the south of the area the Penny Street Bridge over the canal marks a natural gateway to the City Centre.

In the south-western part of the area, west of King Street, land-uses become more residential, with middle class Victorian terraces east of the railway. The railway line marks a more dramatic division, with the character of the area markedly suburban to the west and land-uses almost wholly residential. Part of this area, along Westbourne Road, is included in the Conservation Area.

Figure 2.1: Wider Context



Legend

 Conservation Area

LANCASTER CC CONSERVATION AREA
Wider Context

0 250 500 Metres

Scale: NTS
Reviewed by: SP Drawing: SP(90)01

 IBI TaylorYoung

Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2012.

2.3 Historical Development of Lancaster

Historic Lancaster has been the subject of numerous published accounts including a series of well-researched books by Dr Andrew White. A series of historic maps dating from the 17th century onwards charts the growing city, and are available in the local library, via the County Council's Mario website and on the Lancaster University Library's website. Investigations by Oxford Archaeology North (OANorth) and its predecessors has shed light on the Roman, medieval and later phases of the city and are recorded in an Urban Archaeological Database for Lancaster.

There is still little known about prehistoric activity in Lancaster, although the Lune Valley and coastal strip attracted farming communities during this period. Scattered evidence of activity from the Neolithic period has been found, and a series of cremation burials point to a settled and organised population from the Bronze Age, but the settlement sites themselves have proved elusive.

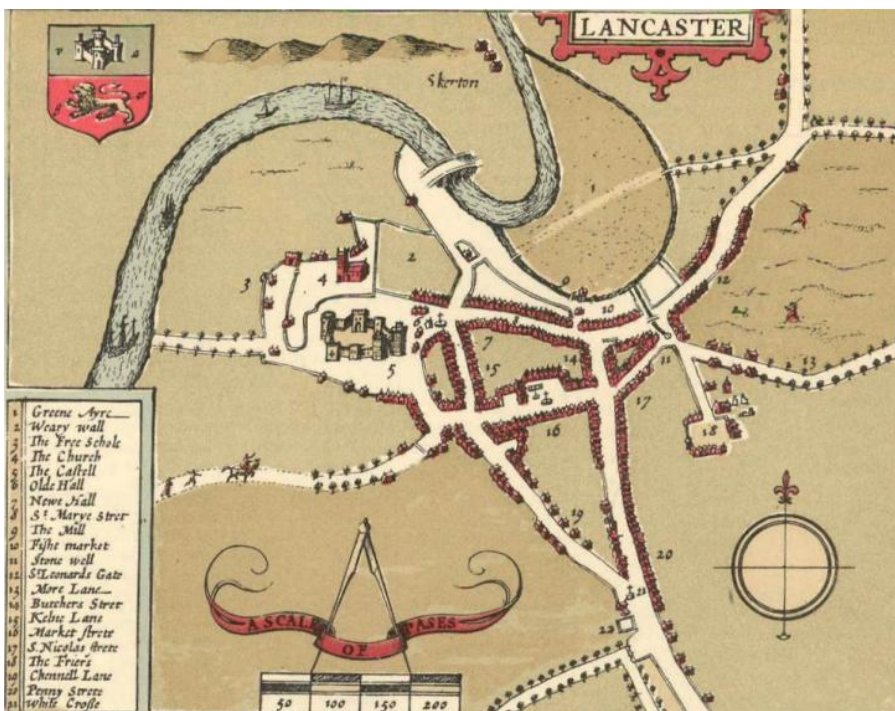
Lancaster's Roman settlement developed around an auxiliary fort on Castle Hill late in the 1st century AD. The fort later gave the city its name – the *castrum*, or castle, on the Lune – and was subject to several phases of occupation and rebuilding, probably not continuous. A civilian settlement developed on the slope to the east of the fort, either side

of the present Church Street, and was occupied until the late 4th century. The fort was abandoned early in the 5th century. Roman burials found around the Penny Street/King Street junction indicate a substantial occupied area, covering most of the modern city centre.

After the end of Roman occupation in the 5th century, the settlement dwindled, although the fact that some Medieval streets (Church Street and Penny Street) follow the same line as Roman streets strongly suggests that the town was not completely abandoned. By the 8th or early 9th century, there was an early Christian community on Castle Hill, within the still visible enclosure of the fort.

Lancaster is mentioned in Domesday in 1086, and there was a castle from the late 11th century, probably built by Roger of Poitou. He also founded a Benedictine Priory in 1094 which took over the earlier community and flourished until the Dissolution in the 16th century. A market charter was granted in 1193 and there was a bridge across the Lune by 1215.

In 1351 Lancashire was made a County Palatine under the Duchy of Lancaster, giving it a higher status than Liverpool or Manchester, but economically it was probably of little significance. The expanding castle expressed the strategic significance of Lancaster and its status as the County town; the castle has been continuously used for law courts and as a prison since the late 12th century.



Speed's plan of Lancaster, published 1610 (University of Lancaster)

Medieval Lancaster provided a market for the surrounding rural area and the Market Place is referred to from 1314. Some street names have changed, for example Church Street was known as Marygate or St Mary's Street, King Street as Chennel Lane until the 17th century and Cheapside as Pudding Lane (in 1451). Other streets in existence in the medieval period include Penny Street (c.1280), King Street (1225-40), Calkeld Lane (1220-50), China Lane (1362) and Stonewell (1362). A Dominican Friary was founded in about 1260 on land now occupied by Dalton Square, closed at the Dissolution in 1539. St Leonard's Gate is named after a leprosarium or hospital at a small priory, founded between 1189 and 1194 outside the north-eastern edge of the town. The medieval town was ringed by the townfields, the glebe land of Vicarage Fields, the Marsh to the west and Lancaster Moor to the east used for rough grazing. The medieval population of the town was probably no more than 1,500.

The layout of Elizabethan Lancaster illustrated in the plan on John Speed's map of Lancashire, published in 1610, probably reflects the medieval street pattern. This shows houses lining the key east-west streets of Market Street, St Nicholas Street and Church Street cut by the north-south streets of Penny Street and King Street, with routes out of town such as St Leonard's Gate and Moor Lane. The mill race curving off the east side of the Lune, enclosed the Green Ayre, its culverted line now followed by Fleet Street and Damside Street.

Behind narrow street frontages, land was divided into the long burgage plots typical of medieval towns. The pattern of these plots survives in parts of the modern city and property layout, except where erased by larger modern development. Mackreth's plan of 1778 clearly shows these medieval plots lining Church Street and Market Street, with Georgian expansion also evident.



An early 18th century engraving (after Buck) (Lancaster Library)

Lancaster was transformed into an elegant Georgian town by the wealth from the port, associated with the Atlantic trade from the late 17th century. In 1687, 'The Lambe' was probably the first ship to sail to Jamaica from Lancaster, one of many that brought mahogany and plantation-grown products such as sugar, tobacco, rum and cotton into the port. By the mid-18th century, Lancaster was the fourth largest port associated with slave ships in Britain. Improvements to the port included the building of St George's Quay in the 1750s and New Quay in 1767, both lined with warehouses, and the Customs House was built in 1763-4.

A fine new bridge was built upstream of the medieval bridge in the 1780s, allowing the latter to be partially demolished and vessels to sail further up the Lune. The port's industries included shipbuilding, sail and rope-making, and imported exotic raw materials fostered industries such as cabinet making, most famously Gillows, established in 1729 by Robert Gillow. Damside Street and North Road were built along the line of the old mill stream with Cable Street (around 1759) parallel to the river to the north, prompting the development of the Green Ayre, close to the river. The Lancaster Canal opened in 1797, although the initial survey was in 1772, connecting the town to Preston and to Kendal via John Rennie's aqueduct. It was known as 'the Black and White Canal' as it carried coal from the south and limestone from the north.



Mackreths' plan of 1778 (University of Lancaster)

Society in Georgian Lancaster revolved around the seasonal Assizes at the Castle, when families came to town; the Assembly Rooms were built in 1759 and the Theatre on St Leonard's Gate in 1782. The [old] town hall was built in 1781-82 and the Custom House in 1764, with a new Crown Court at the Castle in the 1790s. The wealth of the town enabled owners to build new stone townhouses in place of earlier timber-framed buildings, many in large walled gardens. Detached gardens were laid out on the edge of the town.

On the east edge of the town, the grounds of the former 'Frierage' were planned for residential development in the early 1780s by John Dalton, with a new square. By this date, the Georgian trade boom was over and the port was soon eclipsed by Liverpool. As Lancaster declined economically and became less fashionable, town centre gardens were sub-divided into building plots. In Dalton Square, the planned development faltered, and some plots remained undeveloped until the new Town Hall was built in 1909.

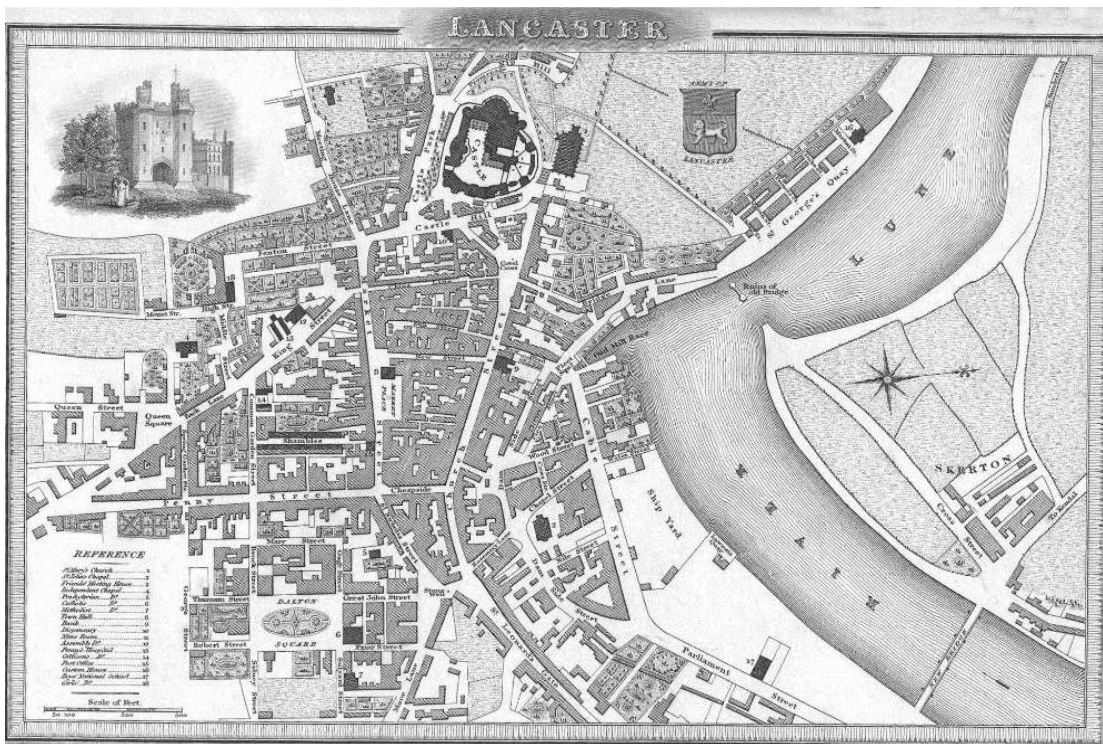
The canal attracted some steam-powered textile mills; White Cross Mill was built in 1802, Moor Lane North (worsted) in 1819, Albion in 1821, Moor Lane South (sail cloth) in 1825 and Queen Street mill (cotton) in 1837. However, compared to other Lancashire towns, textiles were not the only factor in the economy of the town which benefited from a broad base.

The railway arrived in 1840; the new viaduct over the Lune allowed the present Castle Station to replace the earlier station on South Road, in 1846.

After 1850 the economy improved and manufacturing became important, benefitting from the expanding railway network; the line to Leeds via the Lune valley opened in 1850.

The huge Lancaster Carriage and Wagon Works were set up on Caton Road in 1863.. The large Phoenix Foundry, north - of Phoenix Street manufactured and repaired rolling stock in the mid 19th century.

Oil cloth and linoleum were Lancaster's most successful 19th century industries, developed by the Storey Brothers and the Williamsons. These firms took over and expanded earlier mills; the Storeys bought White Cross Mills in 1856 and Moor Lane Mills in 1861 and Bath Mills was acquired by Williamson in 1870. Joseph Storey's Heron Chemical Works on Moor Lane supplied the Storey mills with chemical products, such as dye pigments. Together, Storey Brothers employed around 1,000 people by 1899. Both the Storeys and the Williamsons were active in local politics and philanthropy; the Storeys paid for a new Mechanics Institute, renamed the Storey Institute (1887-91) and James Williamson, later Lord Ashton completed Williamson Park in the 1870s. Existing industries such as Gillows expanded; they extended their factory on St Leonard's Gate in the 1880s, behind new North Road showrooms.



Baines' map of 1824 shows Dalton Square (Lancaster University)

Between 1801 and 1881 the city's population doubled from less than 9,000 to over 20,000. The poor quality of early 19th century housing, often in cramped courts in the town centre, was addressed by local bylaws after 1859, which encouraged better quality housing. Dense terraces with rear yards and back alleys were built on fields and gardens on the north-east side of the town; the Freehold Estate in the 1850s, streets off St Leonard's Gate in the 1850s and 60s, de Vitre Street area in the 1870s and the Greenfield estate in the 1880s. In the south-west new terraced houses were built along Dallas Road and Regent Street from the 1880s onwards, and to the south-west and south, more spacious housing for the middle classes was built in Cannon Hill, the Greaves and Bowerham.



Part of a Map of 1877 by Hall & Harrison, showing terraced housing close to the canal, in the north-east of Lancaster (Lancaster Library) NB. North is to the right.

From the 1920s, the Council funded new greenfield housing estates to replace cleared city centre slums. In the 20th century, the Williamson and Storey mills continued to produce for a growing home market and remained major employers. Lancaster was awarded city status in 1937.

The building of the M6 in 1960 freed the city centre from the through traffic that had choked the A6 and Skerton Bridge. An inner eastern relief road was envisaged but not implemented, although part of the area east of St Leonard's Gate and Dalton Square was cleared for this in the 1960s. In the post-war years, new retail development damaged part of the historic street pattern but most of the

historic core remained intact; the St Nicholas Arcade was built over a medieval street. City centre shopping streets were pedestrianised from 1973 and a circulatory one-way system was introduced, but traffic congestion remained an on-going issue.

Manufacturing decline in the 1960s hit the city hard with the closure of Waring & Gillow's works in 1962 and Williamson's White Cross mills in the 1970s. Local authorities, the NHS and the University became important to the city, creating new jobs and the latter supporting cultural life in Lancaster.

Since the end of the 20th century, Lancaster's retail businesses have faced competition from Preston and Manchester. Strong support for the protection of the historic city centre has been a feature of local politics and planning for the last 30 years, requiring conservation to be balanced against the demand for new infrastructure and development.

2.4 Archaeological Potential

Occupied as a town for over 2000 years, and during parts of the prehistoric period, Lancaster has rich archaeology of all periods. The city's archaeological potential is particularly strong for the Roman, medieval and post medieval periods. The Urban Archaeological Database (UAD) for the city has been compiled by Oxford Archaeology North for use by the County Council and City Council, to inform planning decisions and aid the management and protection of the city's archaeology. Evidence for prehistoric activity is scant and has largely been due to chance finds in the 19th century or during other projects and it is difficult to predict where further remains may survive within the built-up city. As-yet undeveloped areas, particularly those on south-facing slopes with ready access to water and other resources, and areas where later deposits are deepest are likely to have the highest potential to retain evidence of pre-Roman times. There are no known standing features of this period within the conservation area, and little probability for their survival. ;

The Roman occupation in Lancaster has been studied over a long period through

chance finds and excavations, on Castle Hill. Away from Vicarage Fields, archaeological work has been associated with new development and does not provide a full picture of the Roman town and its extent, and cellars have destroyed much evidence, but it is clear that there is a rich sequence of Roman archaeology and there is great potential to learn more about this period.

An outline of the forts on Castle Hill is known, but their full extent has yet to be established and little investigation has been possible away from the Vicarage fields. Remains of defences were found on the site of 27 Castle Hill and it is possible more remains survive as far south as Castle Park. The substantial civilian settlement seems to have extended east of the fort, with Church Street representing the approach road from the north-south route represented by the line of Penny Street and Cheapside. The southern extent of settlement proper is likely to lie between Common Garden Street and Spring Garden Street, but the area alongside Penny Street at least as far as the canal was used as a cemetery and remains have been found in this area beneath 18th century and later development.

The eastern extent of the settlement is less well defined, but the Stonewell area may represent its extent in this direction. Some areas of the settlement (e.g. alongside Church Street) have shown a substantial depth of Roman deposits, and in some places (e.g. off Aldcliffe Road) the top of the Roman layers was more than a metre below the modern surface. In the absence of evidence of particularly deep disturbance, all of Castle Hill and the city centre must be considered to have a high potential for the preservation of Roman material. A corridor alongside the projected line of the main Roman road, at least as far as the canal, must also be considered to have high potential.

The northern edge of the settlement is likely to be defined by the base of the slope between Church Street and Damside Street, which is thought to represent the contemporary river bank, but the location of any port facilities or, indeed, a Roman bridge over the Lune, has yet to be discovered and may lay in the strip from St George's Quay to

Parliament Street. Burials of Roman date have also been found at the Westfield Memorial Village, and this area should also be considered to have a medium to high potential. Standing remains of Roman date are limited to the Wery Wall, the core of a bastion of the 4th century fort, and the excavated remains of the adjacent bathhouse which was destroyed to accommodate the defences

After the end of the Roman occupation there seems to have been a gradual transition into the early medieval period, indicated by the continuous use of Church Street as the main street, but there is not much scope for more investigation of this little-understood period. Pre-Conquest finds on Castle Hill, including cross fragments suggest an early Christian community, but remains of this period rarely survive well outside waterlogged sites. The date of the first stone keep at the Castle is not precisely known; there may have been an earlier timber structure and earthwork. There is little potential for standing remains of this period and even that is restricted to the castle and priory church sites.

As noted above the medieval layout of the town and the outline history of the castle is known, but medieval archaeological deposits have suffered from Georgian and Victorian redevelopment and cellaring. There is, however, survival between cellars and in former (and extant) garden areas, especially towards the rear of plots where disturbance is likely. Areas shown as occupied on Speed's 1610 map should be considered as having some potential for medieval remains, the level depending upon the extent and depth of later development. As well as buried remains there are standing remains of medieval date in the city, with substantial parts of the castle and priory church of this period. The archaeology of standing buildings has potential for this period, and town centre buildings may retain fragments of timber-framing and earlier structure behind stone frontages; for example, on Moor Lane, timber-framing was observed in 2011 in a house on the north side.

By the 18th century the balance of archaeological potential has moved from buried to structural remains, with documentary evidence also available.

Standing buildings of this date are well-represented across the city centre, although the best-preserved tend to be those of higher status; lower status buildings also deserve attention. Building recording is often worthwhile during alterations and more could be arranged through the planning consent process. A small number of sites, such as the Delft Pottery site west of the Carlisle Bridge and outside the Conservation Area, however, retain significant buried deposits of this date, and further investigation or other actions may be merited on occasion.

For the Victorian and Modern periods large numbers of sites and structures exist and whilst many have a high potential for preservation, their significance is lower than those of earlier periods, except where they throw specific light on a Lancaster feature such as the linoleum industry.

2.5 Buildings and Architectural Quality



Priory Church of St Mary

Lancaster retains some exceptionally important Norman and medieval architecture in the Castle, with its 12th century keep and medieval towers and gatehouse. Also significant is the Priory Church of St Mary, on an ancient site but largely of the 14th and 15th century. Otherwise the city's character largely reflects rebuilding in the 18th century, to which period most of the best buildings belong. The dominant building material is the local buff-coloured carboniferous sandstone, widely used, and giving visual cohesion to the street scene. The centre has no high-rise

building and as a result of this and local topography, the dominant buildings remain those of the medieval core on Castle Hill and (outside the Conservation Area, but important in views to the east) the Ashton Memorial in Williamson Park.

Little 17th century domestic building survives, the most important exception is the Judges' Lodgings (1639). The backs of Nos. 74 and 76 Church Street are partly 17th century, otherwise building fabric of this date is largely confined to small houses, such as Nos. 17 and 19 Moor Lane. Survivals from the early 18th century include Penny's Hospital (1718-22) on King Street, a very good, fairly intact example of purpose-built almshouses. The most architecturally significant building of this period is the Music Room (c.1739), an unusual and rare example of a garden pavilion, important for the surviving original interior plasterwork. It was built for the Martons of Capernway Hall, whose townhouse was at No. 76 Church Street; this, with houses on Castle Park (Nos. 20, 22, etc.), is amongst the best of the early 18th century houses.



No.4 High Street, c1775

St George's Quay (1750-55) has nationally important maritime buildings. The Custom House (1763-4) is one of the town's most magnificent public buildings, its finest example of architecture of the period, and an expression of the ambitions and wealth of Lancaster's mercantile elite. With the contemporary warehouses, the quayside retains perhaps the best group of Georgian port buildings to survive in the country. Tall stone-built warehouses are found throughout the city, a rare surviving group of distinctive

18th century mercantile buildings. Thomas Harrison's monumental Skerton Bridge (1783-8), built to enable ships to moor further upstream, is another exceptional structure and the first large bridge in the country to have a flat deck. Late 18th century building in the town included fine examples of Georgian houses and terraces, particularly on Church Street, High Street and Queen Street and south of the Castle. Some of the grander houses such as No.20 Castle Park have large gardens and summerhouses, privies or coach houses, features which rarely survive pressure for development in town centres. Many houses have interesting local features, such as tall rear stair windows and outriggers containing services.



Custom House, St George's Quay



The Shire Hall at the Castle, designed by Thomas Harrison, c1796

An important strand in Lancaster's architectural development was its role as the

county town and juridical centre. The rebuilding of the Castle was started in the 1780s by Thomas Harrison, an architect of national repute, completed by Joseph Gandy. Shire Hall is an outstanding example of a late Georgian court complex, with many original features, interesting use of Gothic style and blends well with the earlier castle. The prison additions, many by Gandy, are of strong interest, and very well preserved.

Other key buildings of the 18th century are the tower of the Priory Church by Henry Sephton, a notable example of mid 18th century combination of Gothic and classical motifs and St John's Church of 1754-5 with a tower of 1784 by Thomas Harrison. The old town hall (now museum) of 1781-3, in good sturdy Greek Revival, fronts the market place and provides an important focal point in the town.



St John's Church, North Road (1754-5)

Within the conservation area, industrial buildings are clustered around the edge of the city. One of the earliest is the mid-18th century malthouse on Brewery Lane, with later red brick brewing tower (1901). The early 19th century textile mills along the Lancaster Canal (1797-1819) are good examples of multi-storey stone-built mills, all now in new uses. The wealth generated by the linoleum industry that took over these mills built some of the town's fine Victorian and Edwardian landmarks, through the patronage of the Williamson and Storey families.



Moor Lane Mill North (1819, adapted for student flats 1989)

Lancaster's most important architectural practice was founded by Edmund Sharpe in 1836 which, as Sharpe & Paley and successor firms, including Austin & Paley, produced designs of the highest calibre. Lancaster is an interesting place to study some of their less well known work, as well as outstanding buildings such as Paley's St Peter's Cathedral, a major example of mid-19th century Roman Catholic ecclesiastical architecture and a showcase for the outstanding local stained glass firm Shrigley & Hunt. Good examples of the firm's revival style work include The Storey Institute (1887-91), a very early example of a car showroom on North Road (1902) and the former co-op store on Church Street (1901). 19th century commercial buildings in the centre, by other firms, such as the HSBC bank (1887) on Market Street and the Natwest (1870) on Church Street, are well-executed provincial examples of the building type.



Former car showroom on North Road by Austin & Paley (1902)

Workers' housing was generally not included in earlier conservation designations, but the current boundary was extended to include some good groups of stone-built terraces. One of the earliest groups is on Bath Mill Lane, built in 1837 by the owners of Bath Mill, and there is another mid 19th century terrace on St George's Quay. Most of the terraced housing in the conservation area was built under byelaws, between the 1870s and c.1900 and has varying vernacular details within the consistent terraced form. Stone chimneys, corbels for timber gutters, and simple moulded hoodmoulds over paired doorways are local details. The basic terraced form was used for larger middle class housing, with higher quality details, as on Westbourne Road. Brick housing is not characteristic of the conservation area.



Workers housing on Bath Mill Street, 1837

The key building of the early 20th century is the Town Hall, by E. W. Mountford (1906-9). It is a fine example of Edwardian Baroque architecture with fine little-altered interiors, in a formal setting enhanced by good statuary and balustraded walls. The contemporary fire station is a particularly good example.



The Town Hall (1906-1909)

Building from the later 20th century is generally less significant, and much was influenced by conservation controls encouraging reticence and respect for historic character. Neo-Georgian infill includes the offices on the east side of Dalton Square by the City Council with Harrison & Pitt (1996). An exception is the Millennium Bridge (Whitby Bird & Partners 2000-1) which is an unashamedly modern and successful addition to the waterside.

2.6 Townscape Analysis

2.6.1. Topography and Views

Within the Conservation Area the land rises and falls within the built-up area, creating interesting views and street forms. The most significant hill is of course, Castle Hill, on which sits the Castle and Priory Church precinct. North of this is an area of open land, mostly under grass with some woodland, overlying the Roman fort, a scheduled ancient monument. This offers good long range views in all directions, across Morecambe Bay and as far as the Cumbrian fells on a clear day. The dense vegetation on the undeveloped slopes north of the Priory rather detracts from the value of the land, both as an amenity resource and to appreciate views of the Castle and Priory Precinct.



View south-east from Castle Hill

Elsewhere, long range views are prevalent throughout the Conservation Area to the surrounding hills. In many instances this includes the Ashton Memorial, adding a strong local identity. Views also exist from high ground within the study area over the City Centre, with hills in the background. For example, from Castle Hill south over the City Centre, from the canal bridges and towpath in the east into the City Centre and at various points within the centre (i.e. westwards on Church Street and southwards from the car parks on St Leonard's Gate). There are also important views into the Conservation Area from the surrounding hills, including Williamson Park. The River Lune provides important mid-range views: both from St George's Quay outwards across the river to the Carlisle Road bridge and new Millennium Bridge and from these bridges, and the opposite bank, to the buildings on St George's Quay.

2.6.2. Urban Form

The urban form of the conservation area is still largely dictated by both its topography and its historical development. Development has often replaced earlier structures (especially Georgian and Victorian development replacing medieval development) but this has generally been done within the same plots and has left the original street form intact. In the central part of the area the traditional medieval form predominates: narrow streets, straight or gently curving, narrow and deep plots and back-of-pavement development. Outside of this (notably in the Dalton Square (4), and part of High Street (11) and Castle (2), Character Areas) a more planned Georgian form dominates: larger and wider plots, back-of-pavement development and a more regular street grid (although this is often disrupted by topography).



St George's Quay from Millennium Bridge

Beyond this a Victorian residential street form dominates: a regular, tighter and more linear street grid with smaller terraces facing linear streets (though again often subservient to topography) with back alleys behind the terraces. To the east of the area these are generally small workers cottages (Character Area 7) whilst in the west they are larger, more middle class terraces (Character Areas 9 and 10). Further out still, outside of this Conservation Area, is a more suburban form of late Victorian and 20th century housing areas. Where modern development occurs it largely fits within the pre-existing street structure and urban form, although there have been notable exceptions that have lost historic streets: the superimposed form of St Nicholas Arcades and the clearance associated with the once planned relief road in the east of the area.

Figure 2.2: Figure Ground Analysis



2.6.3. Listed and Unlisted Buildings

There are many buildings and structures within the Conservation Area which, although they are not statutorily listed, contribute in a positive way to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. Examples of these and listed buildings are referred to in the relevant section in each character area summary, and listed buildings (Grade I, II* or II) and unlisted 'positive' buildings' are marked on the map at Figure 2.3. The best examples of key building types that meet national designation criteria are listed. The conservation area has a rich collection of listed heritage assets, some are landmark buildings designed by nationally important architects such as Thomas Harrison, Paley & Austin or E.W.Mountford. Others are fine examples of a particular building type, such as Georgian warehouses, public buildings and houses and Victorian churches and commercial premises.

Unlisted buildings which are significant in the conservation area are protected under the 1990 Planning Act and by policies in the NPPF. It is important to clearly identify these buildings as proposals for their demolition normally constitute substantial harm to the conservation area, which requires robust justification. There is a presumption in favour of the conservation of unlisted buildings that contribute to the character of the conservation area.

To identify which unlisted buildings make a positive contribution, the checklist published by English Heritage was referred to during the preparation of the appraisal, reproduced in Appendix 3. The first item on the checklist refers to whether a building is the work of a particular architect of regional or local note. All unlisted buildings designed by the outstanding architectural firm Austin and Paley, founded by Edmund Sharpe, have been included where known, as well as buildings by less well-known designers such as Richard Gillow or Post Office architect Charles Wilkinson. Most landmark quality buildings are already listed, but there are many good examples of unlisted buildings on prominent corner sites and community buildings such as chapels and schools or

industrial structures that are important in the city's townscape.

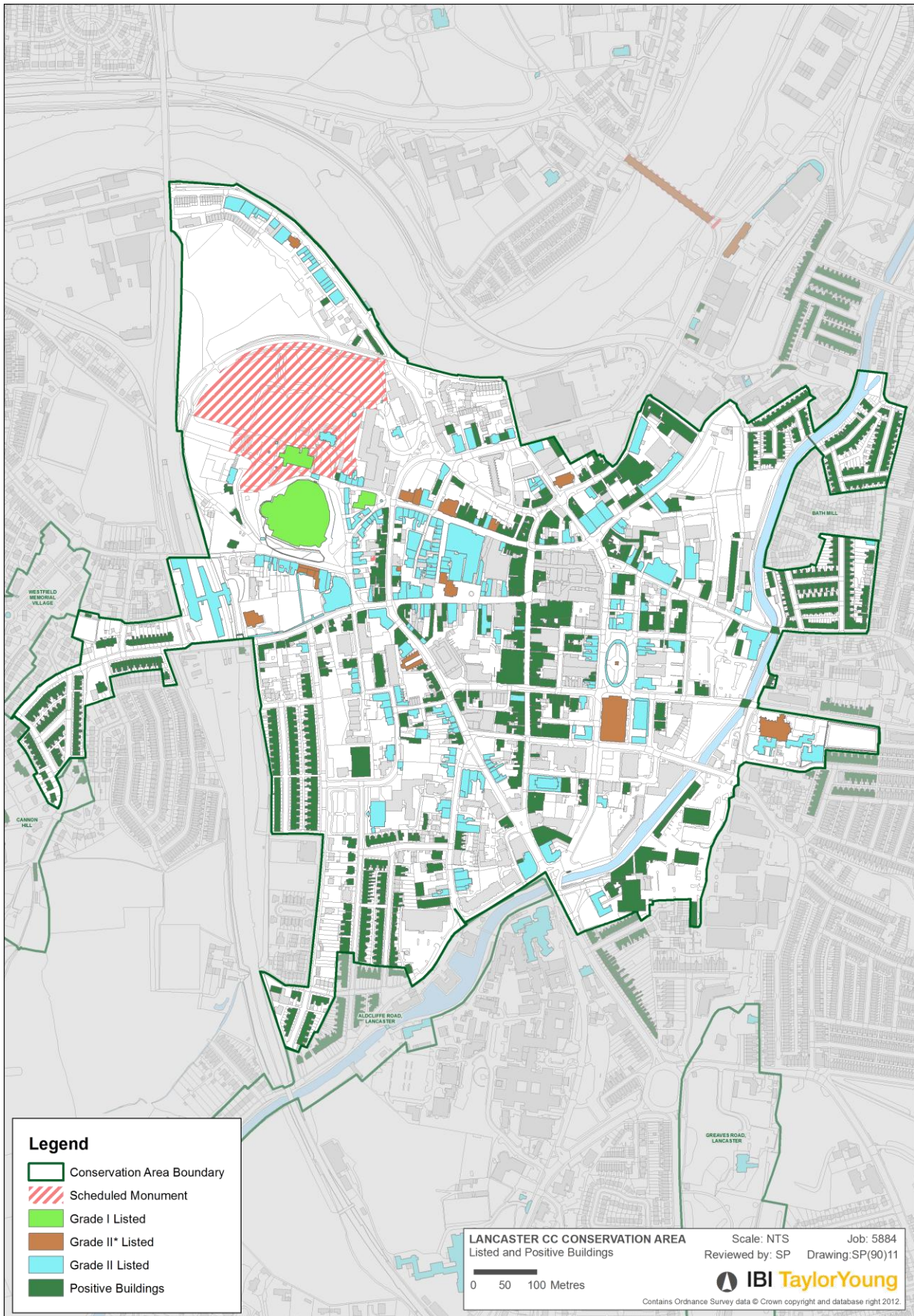


Unlisted Georgian houses, now shops, on Cheapside

Buildings that are characteristic of the city and possess features and details distinctive to Lancaster also make a positive contribution to the conservation area; these may not be architect-designed or individually prominent but they are built in local vernacular styles typical of the city. In particular, Georgian houses in the city centre are often now in retail or business use, but retain characteristic features in their stone details, proportions and overall form. Some have good Victorian shop fronts, later inserted. These former houses are also examples of buildings whose use has evolved and like former warehouses, workshops and mills, they illustrate the changing history of the city.

Victorian terraced housing defines streets on the edge of the city centre developed for residential expansion. Although none of these would meet listing criteria, they have strong character and common details that merit their protection. Early examples of workers housing are now rare; good examples include the terrace on St George's Quay and Bath Mill Lane.

Figure 2.3: Listed and Positive Buildings





Gabled former carriage works on Lodge Street

Some unlisted buildings are associated with well-known local families such as the Storeys, and industrial structures built or used for their manufacturing businesses have been identified as well as smaller premises built for other local businesses such as cabinet making or carriage building. In the city centre, commercial buildings such as banks, shops and showrooms are important to the character of the retail streets and provide variety and interest to the street scene.



Shop built in 1891 on Moor Lane

Stone boundary walls that enclose gardens and public spaces are important to the design quality of parts of the city centre, and are also important in defining private space in residential streets. Canal bridges and wall structures have historic importance and are positive landscape features.

3. Conservation Area Appraisal: Character Area Analysis

The Conservation Area has been divided into eleven areas of different and distinct character. This section of the report provides a separate analysis of each area. The eleven areas can be seen on Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1: Character Areas

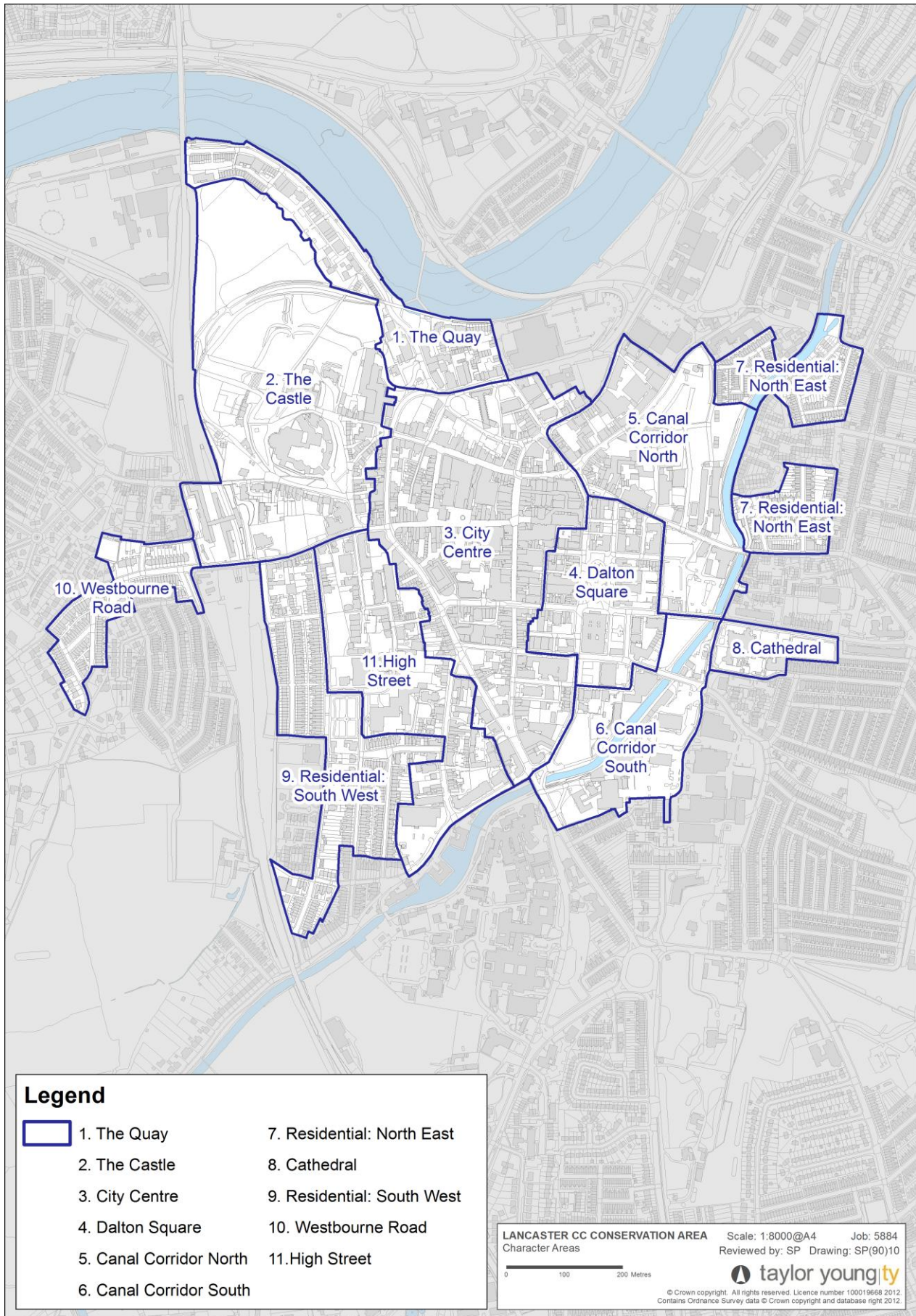


Figure 3.2: Conservation Designations (North)

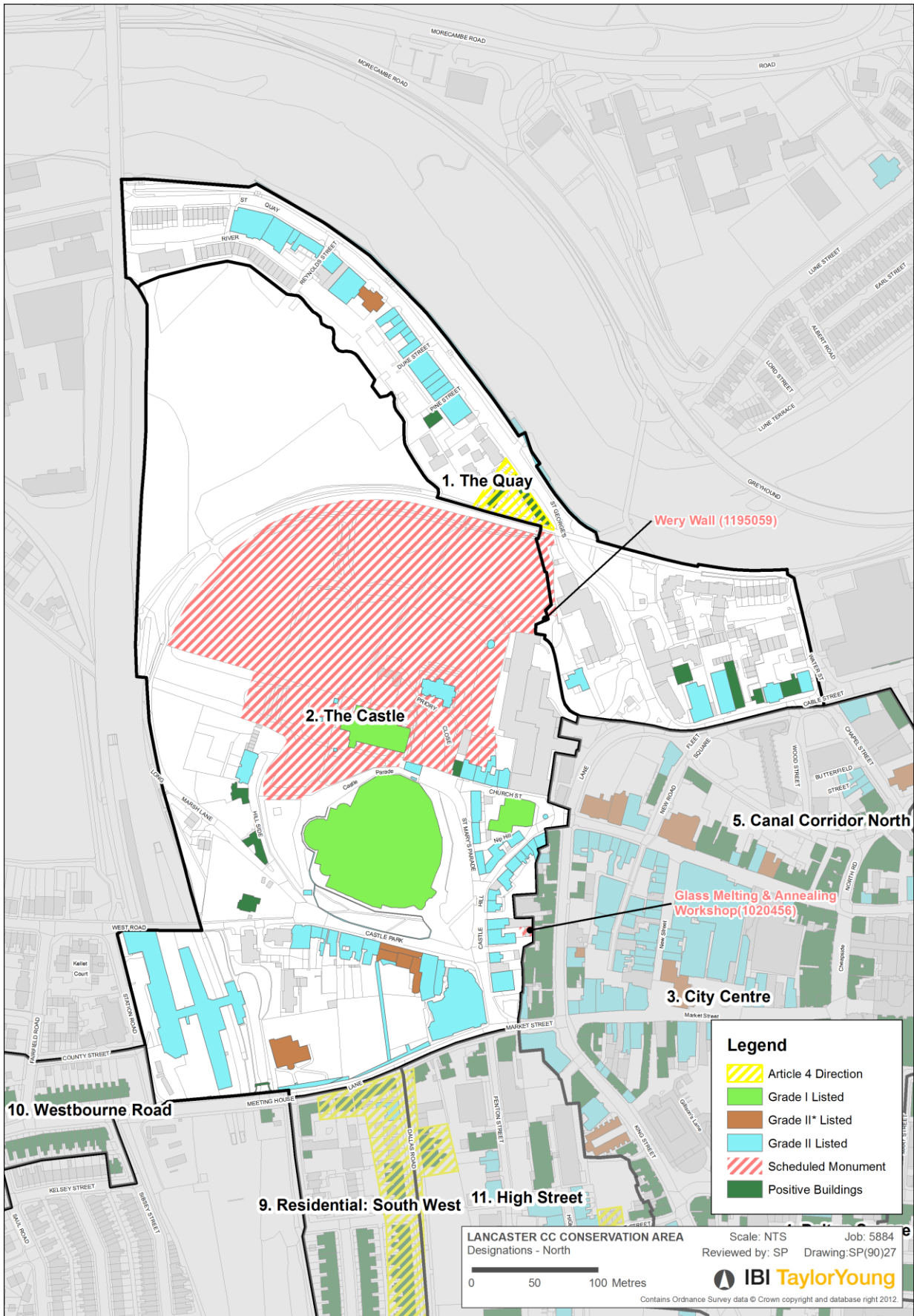


Figure 3.3: Townscape Analysis (North)

