

# **Sincil Bank, Revitalised**

*A place shaping framework*

April 2017





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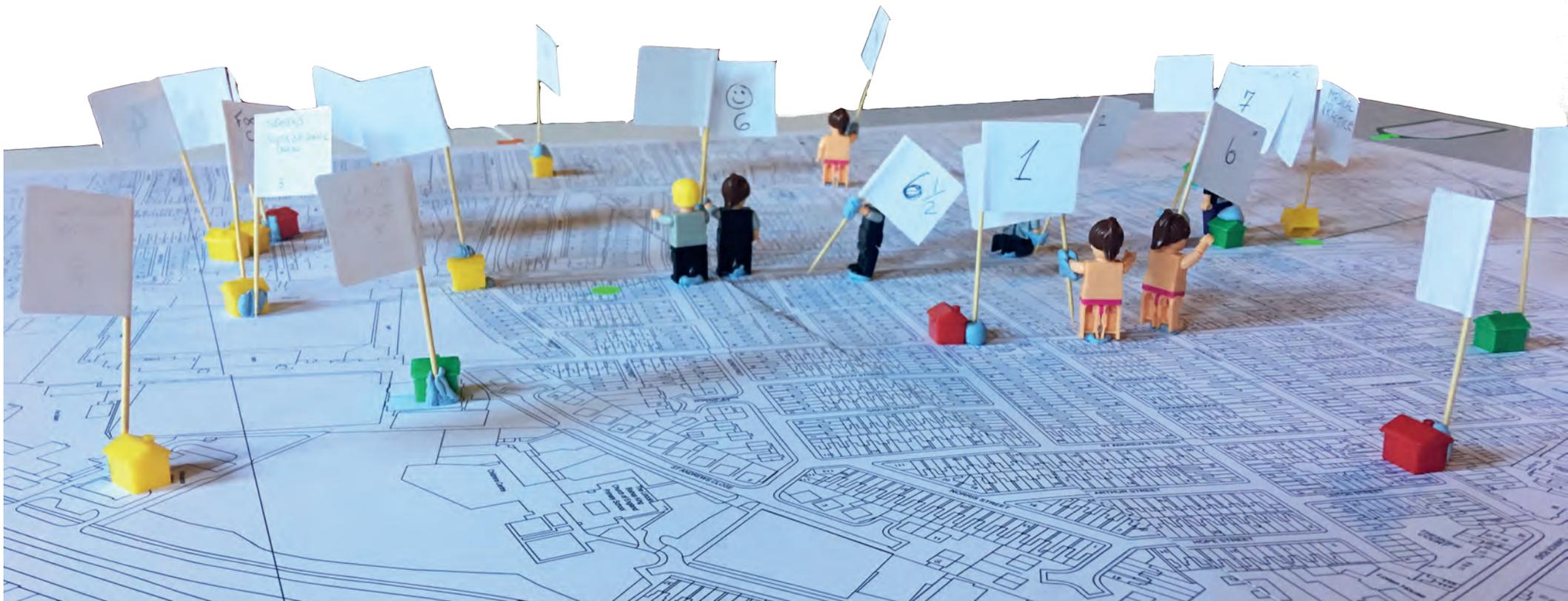
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## Community Workshops & Engagements:

- Pecha Kucha: Stories of Sincil Bank, 17 June 2016
- Sincil Bank Residents' Group Meeting, 4 July 2016
- Street Print Workshop, 27 Jul. 2016
- Street Print Fashion Show, 29 Jul. 2016
- Litter Pick, 3 Sept. 2016
- Sincil Bank Residents' Group Meeting, 6 Sept. 2016
- 'Celebrate Sincil Bank' Walkabout, 16 Sept. 2016
- Street Party on Sincil Bank, 24 Sept. 2016
- Sincil Bank Residents' Group Meeting, 4 Oct. 2016
- Sincil Bank Residents' Group Meeting, 1 Nov. 2016
- Visioning Workshop, Saturday 5 Nov. 2016
- Theme development 'drop-in' workshops:
  - » 'Health & Well Being', 7 Nov. 2016
  - » 'Skills & Enterprise', 8 Nov. 2016
  - » 'Homes & Communities', 10 Nov. 2016
  - » 'Streets & Spaces', 11 Nov. 2016
- Community Lunch, 21 Nov. 2016
- Residents' Group Meeting, 6 Dec. 2016
- Portland Street businesses, 9 Nov. 2017
- Residents' Group Meeting, 7 Feb. 2017
- Residents' Group Meeting, 7 Mar. 2017
- Action Workshops:
  - » 'Skills & Enterprise', 21 Mar. 2017
  - » 'Homes & Housing', 22 Mar. 2017
- Neighbourhood Board, 23 Mar. 2017
- 'Streets & Greening Action Workshop', 24 Mar. 2017
- Residents' Group Meeting, 4 April 2017



# 1 Introduction

In June 2016 the City of Lincoln Council appointed OpenPlan to prepare a Place-Shaping Framework for the Sincil Bank Area - the area defined by the railway to the north, Canwick Road to the east, South Park to the South, and High Street to the west. Running north/south through the middle of the area is one of the place's defining features, Sincil Dyke and, beside it, Sincil Bank.

The brief was to work with stakeholders (members of the community, organisations and other individuals) whose activities and decisions affect the way this part of Lincoln works, feels and looks, to come up with recommendations for making the Sincil Bank Area a better place for the people who live here and work here – now and in the future. This Place-Shaping Framework includes short, medium and long-term actions and changes relating to:

- managing and maintaining the place;
- enabling physical improvements;
- promoting and supporting social & economic development;
- developing opportunity sites.

The approach taken has focused on Sincil Bank's assets: identifying opportunities for change from a position of strength. Problems have not been ignored or brushed aside, but the emphasis has been on finding ways to tackle them by drawing on the inherent strengths of the Sincil Bank area - and the communities and individuals who live and work here.

This is not the first time that ways of improving

Sincil Bank area have been looked at - and not the first time that people living and working in the area have been asked about changes they would like to see. Placechecks were carried out in 2001, 2005 and 2009 - with local people explaining what they liked and didn't like about living in the Sincil Bank area, and outlining changes they wanted to see. A "Neighbourhood Plan" was produced in 2014 - the result of work carried out by the Sincil Bank Neighbourhood Board.

All those previous studies, reports and plans contain useful information, ideas and recommendations - many of which are repeated in all of them and remain just as relevant today as they were when the first of the Placechecks was carried out 2001. That is helpful, because there has been continuity in the analysis of issues and the recommended actions, but also sobering and challenging because, despite all the efforts that have gone in to looking at this part of Lincoln and recommending improvements, many of the things identified as problems in 2001 are still problems now. That observation is not made as a criticism of people who have put much time, effort and commitment in to trying to improve things in Sincil Bank area - and are continuing to do so. It is not a dismissal of the good things that have been - and are being - achieved. It does, however, mean

that considered, integrated and effective action must now be taken in order to avoid further loss of community confidence and greater levels of decline in an area which already makes such an important contribution to the city and still has so much more to offer.

The asset-based approach allows a new opportunity to understand, celebrate and drive change in the area. It still seeks to understand the lives of people living in the Sincil Bank area - including the difficult challenges many of them face day-after-day - but it tries to focus less on what's wrong and more on what's right with the Sincil Bank area, using these strengths to inspire solutions and identify opportunities. It amplifies inherent strengths and ways of working with the grain of the place and its communities to find "home grown" solutions to the challenges people face. It is an approach underpinned by two core aims:

- **to show the value this place and its communities contribute to Lincoln; and**
- **to show that this place and its communities themselves are valued.**

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## 2 Setting the Scene

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### Sincil Bank's DNA

To understand the contributions Sincil Bank area and its residents make to the life of Lincoln now, it is helpful to look back to the reasons why this part of the City was first built, why it was built the way it was, and the role it played in Lincoln's life at that time - the later 19th and early 20th Centuries.

At an early stage in the study our attention was drawn to a short film in the [British Film Institute's Archive](#). Dating from about 1901, the film provides a vivid glimpse into the life of what was then a relatively new and still-growing "urban extension" of Lincoln.

The screen is filled by men leaving Robey's engineering works on Canwick Road and crossing into Ripon Street on their way home.

The stream of home-going workers is already in full flow as the short film starts and is continuing just as strongly when it ends. Captured here, in just two minutes, is the fundamental essence of this place's creation: the Sincil Bank area is the direct product of the industrialisation that transformed Lincoln from the mid-19th Century. The dense terraces between Canwick Road and the High Street were built for one overarching purpose - to house the large number of people employed in the huge engineering works nearby. The houses were built as close as possible to the factories (at this time there were also several streets of houses on the



east side of Canwick Road) so that workers could walk there easily and quickly.

In 1901, the Sincil Bank area was still growing. The first areas to have been developed were between High Street and Sincil Dyke, with the first houses built in Monson Street in 1846, the same

year that the railway first came to Lincoln. Ripon Street had been developed from about 1860, but some of the other streets did not yet exist (Sausthorpe Street and Edna Street, for example, were not built until 1911).

A search of the 1901 Census to find out a bit more about these people and their families, and the way life was being lived in Sincil Bank area at this time uncovered the following information:

- Most of the people (about 58%) whose occupations were given were employed in engineering - probably mostly in the factories just across Canwick Road;
- Other people appear to have been employed mostly in providing a range of services to the local community (occupations included teacher, shoe repairer, beer and wine dealer, baker, brush maker, dressmaker, draper, clothes seller, confectioner, shop keeper,

- cabinet maker, bricklayer, builder, dairyman, basket maker);
- Most people living in Ripon Street in 1901 had not been born in Lincoln: about 50% had migrated in from other parts of Lincolnshire, and about 48% from either other parts of the British Isles - Scotland, Wales, Ireland, other regions of England - or from other countries, including Romania, Germany, even Australia. Only about 2% had actually been born in Lincoln itself.

The picture that emerges is of a place that was built quickly to accommodate large numbers of people brought in to Lincoln to work in the rapidly growing factories which dominated the local economy - and townscape - at this time.

The place was laid out so that people had only a short walk between their homes and workplaces. Few people owned cars.

Building houses in terraces allowed large numbers of people to be housed in a compact area alongside the factories where most of them worked. The “grid-iron” layout made walking as easy as possible by minimising distances between the places people needed to visit. The terraced streets also appear to have provided a framework for strong communities and a synergy between work and home.

Other records show that living conditions in places like this were often problematic, with poor sanitation, inadequate open space and pollution from industry giving rise to serious public health concerns. Conditions such as those motivated

changes in the ways housing estates were laid out and developed.

Taking inspiration from developments such as the model villages built for their workers by philanthropic industrialists like the Rowntree, Cadbury and Lever families, and the Garden City movement led by Ebenezer Howard and Raymond Unwin, Lincoln’s response can be seen in the largely incomplete Swanpool Garden Suburb, on Skellingthorpe Road, and the St. Giles estate off Wragby Road. In those slightly later developments, the emphasis on spaciousness, recreation areas and tree-lined streets is an interesting pointer to the deficiencies perceived at the time in the layout of places like Sincil Bank - deficiencies that still affect the quality of people’s lives in Sincil Bank area.

Sincil Bank neighbourhood has continued to grow and change, with, for example, some of the older housing being replaced by flats built by the City Council in the 1970s, some large-scale office and other buildings being added in the 1970s, 80s and 90s, and the railway lines and embankments being taken up and redeveloped with further houses in the 1990s. However, the industrial housing heritage from the 19th Century, with its dominant “grid-iron” pattern of terraced streets, continues to have a fundamental influence on life in this part of Lincoln. Understanding this - why Sincil Bank area is laid out as it is and why its houses were built as they were - provides insights in to some of this place’s inherent strengths and how they might be used to best effect in planning for its future.

#### Sincil Bank area is inherently:

- a place designed for walking and cycling;
- a place where people live close together and close to their City Centre;
- a place designed for close relationships between home and work;
- a place for families;
- a place of arrival for many people moving in to Lincoln;
- a place of strong communities.

#### There is, however, also a less positive inheritance, which includes:

- scarcity of open space - especially green space;
- streets not well-suited to intensive use by motor vehicles;
- houses designed for single families now being used to accommodate single people or multiple families, without thoughtful conversion;
- streets that can be problematic to clean and maintain;
- places where pollution (now from vehicle emissions rather than industry) damages the environment and people’s health and well-being.



## Sincil Bank Now

The Sincil Bank area is now home to over 6,000 people with widely varying circumstances and from many different backgrounds. Some have lived in the area all their lives, some have moved in quite recently; for some Sincil Bank is their settled home, for others it is more temporary.

The area accommodates a wide range of businesses - retail, service and manufacturing - four schools, several places of worship, social clubs and organisations involved in sports, recreation and cultural activities, and is synonymous with Lincoln City Football Club's stadium.

The proportion of residents born outside the UK is higher than in most other parts of Lincoln. This is reflected in the two primary schools, where a large number of other languages are spoken alongside English, and in the relatively large number of shops catering particularly for people who have moved in to Lincoln from places outside the UK.

The number of students living in the area has been growing as the University of Lincoln has grown and properties have been converted and let as student houses. In addition there are now many private-sector Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) and other private rented accommodations. There appears to be quite a large number of people who live in the Sincil Bank area and travel out to other parts of Lincolnshire to work in the agri-food industry - some on a seasonal basis - and many of these residents are also living in HMOs.

HMOs and other private-rented accommodation are not distributed evenly across the area. **In some areas, up to 47% of properties are HMOs** whilst other areas have very few, if any at all.

The area has a substantial social housing stock - mostly in the form of low-rise flats managed by the City Council, and also some purpose-built housing association accommodation. There are also several places providing accommodation for people with particular needs.

Some streets consist almost entirely of owner-occupied homes, whilst others have varying mixtures of owner-occupied and rented housing. **In some areas, up to 70% of properties are private rented housing.**

### Strengths

This is probably the most culturally diverse part of Lincoln - and, from the discussions held during the course of this project, it appears that **many people value this diversity**. It is reflected most obviously in the range of businesses in the area - particularly the food shops, restaurants, cafes and take-aways - but it is also apparent in the schools (over 70% of the children in one of the local primary schools have English as a second language) and on the streets.

It would be misleading to suggest that there are no tensions, but the overarching impression gained through the conversations held during the course of this project is that there is a high degree of tolerance, mixed with a little apprehension, and

a general **desire to achieve greater interaction and understanding between the various communities now living in the Sincil Bank area.**

Notably, when invited to identify the Sincil Bank area's assets at the community visioning workshop (5th November 2016) one that attracted unanimous support was the large number of bilingual children in the two primary schools. As well as providing very valuable support to parents who may be less proficient in English, they are also seen to be **providing bridges between cultures. The schools themselves - and their staff teams - are highly valued local assets.**

Conversations with people living in the area suggest that other strengths and assets include good health care services - the **City Medical Practice** is highly regarded - and the **proximity of emergency services** - fire, ambulance and, soon, police. The contributions being made by **committed teams and individuals working in the area**, such as the Neighbourhood Management Team, the Community Organiser, Green Synergy and Police Community Support Officers, have also been identified as significant assets.

Statistically, this is an area where many residents are employed in low-skilled jobs: There is a need

to address this, but it seems probable (although this needs further investigation) that there may also be quite a few people with **hidden / under-utilised / undeveloped skills and creative talent** living in the area. This has become apparent through discussions with people involved in various events held in the area during the period of the study. The potential for encouraging and supporting new enterprise locally should be explored. Portland Street is one place where opportunities exist - and it is certainly a street with unrealised potential currently held back by a number of social, economic and physical challenges. The football ground and garage courts present further opportunities.

From discussions held with local residents a consistent "like" about living in the Sincil Bank area is its **convenient location** - close to the City Centre, close to workplaces, close to schools and services, and close to public transport facilities.

With car ownership levels lower than the City and national averages (37% of people don't have access to a car or van), **over half of the area's working population (51%) walk, cycle or use public transport to travel to and from work**. This community is making a significant contribution towards **minimising the impacts of transport on the local environment and economy and playing its part in keeping carbon emissions down**. Most people involved in the conversations agreed that "**walkability**" is one of the area's strengths - although the dominance of vehicles (parked and moving) in many streets, the clutter of wheelie bins and other obstructions, and perceptions of crime can hinder this.

For people walking or cycling through the area, Sincil Dyke and the **views of the Cathedral** are regarded as strong assets. The **watercourses and the green strips and wildlife they bring in to the area are valued**, even though people would like to see them better maintained and, in the case of Sincil Dyke, beautified.

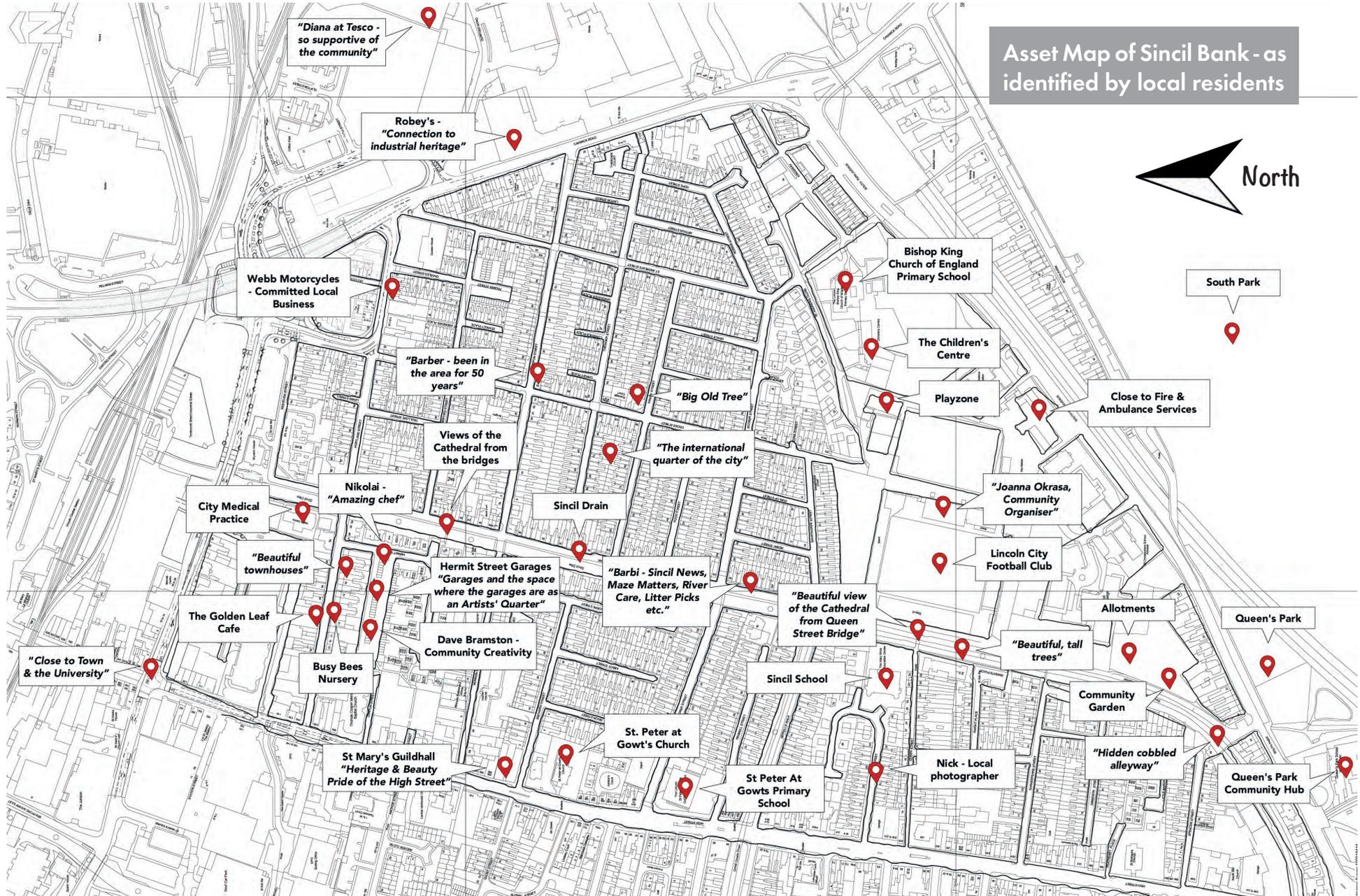
The **Football Club** was often mentioned as being a strength of the area - comments were made about the sense of identity that it creates amongst the local community, despite there being much scope for strengthened relationships and interactions between the physical space of the football ground and its neighbours.

The **rich history** of the neighbourhood and the significant contribution it has made over the years to shape the Lincoln of today is to be celebrated. From beautiful built heritage assets such as the historic churches and **St. Mary's Guildhall, on the High Street** to the area's history as a **point of welcome** to the city for industry workers from across the United Kingdom

and Europe, the stories and roots that are held in this part of the city should be more widely shared to build confidence and strengthen sense of place.



Asset Map of Sincil Bank - as identified by local residents



## Challenges

Data from the 2011 Census, other statistical sources and several topic-focussed reports reveal a number of areas of concern:

- **Social and economic deprivation** - there is a relatively high proportion of households on low incomes and 24% of local children are living in poverty;
- A high proportion of houses in the area are significantly **energy-inefficient** and levels of **fuel poverty are relatively high**;
- In some streets a **high proportion** of the housing is in the form of privately rented **Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)**, with a relatively high number of these properties classified as being in a state of **disrepair and/or hazardous**;
- There are significant numbers of student houses in the area.
- The spatial distribution of those issues is not uniform, but varies widely from street-to-street. In very broad terms, the northern parts of the area have a greater concentration of HMOs and houses in disrepair than streets further south, but there are variations within this pattern too.

Other issues about which local residents have expressed concern include:

- high numbers of cars being parked in the area by people who live elsewhere and commute in to Lincoln to work, **treating the area as a free car park**;

- drivers using parts of the area as **“rat runs”** to avoid congestion on other routes;
- streets that are unsafe and/or unpleasant for pedestrians and cyclists to use;
- streets marred by **persistent littering and fly tipping** and **inadequate street cleansing**;
- problems with the ways in which **waste and recycling** is dealt with (resulting in some streets being dominated by wheelie bins and spilled refuse)
- **inadequate street lighting**;
- street-clutter and **poor maintenance** of street furniture;
- streets marred by **ugly “to let” sign boards and redundant cables and cable boxes** on the fronts of buildings;
- **shortage of accessible open space** for play and recreation;
- areas prone to **criminal and anti-social behaviour**;
- poor interaction between communities - **limited opportunities for people to come together**, learn from each other and share their cultural traditions, local knowledge etc.

Business owners have also expressed concerns about:

- the impact of recent road network changes making for **difficult trading conditions on Portland Street**;

- traffic and parking arrangements making trading on High Street a challenge;
- poor image / perceptions of the area.

### Perception of crime

There is a perception that Sincil Bank is an area with an exceptionally high crime level. This is not borne out by the statistics or the reported experience of police officers who work in the area. Undoubtedly crimes and anti-social behaviour occur - and some of those reported have been particularly serious - but the incidence of reported crime has been falling and, despite a few “hot spots”, is not unduly high overall by comparison with other parts of Lincoln. The perception remains, but it is not matched by the reality.

### Home and work

The synergy between home and work that created the Sincil Bank area has weakened. There are both skills gaps (there are a lot of people on low incomes and, at least nominally, with low skills levels) and physical barriers. Ironically, statistics alone seem to paint a different picture: the area houses 6% of the City’s population but 18% of its employment. The problem is that this is a historic quirk of the statistical area boundaries, which leads to the whole of the area east of Canwick Road and Pelham Bridge - where hardly any one lives but a very large number of people work - being included in the statistical area.



## Encouraging and achieving positive change

The overall conclusion drawn from the study and the conversations that have been had is that the basic structure of the Sincil Bank area remains sound and inherently sustainable.

It can be argued that, despite the challenges that are apparent, both the buildings (mostly) and the overall urban form of the place have stood the test of time. There is certainly a need for greater care, and investment in thoughtful adaptations and enhancements, but the inherent strengths outweigh weaknesses.

Socially, the place works for many of its residents. It works better for some than others - some love living here, some don't - but, fundamentally, it works and the potential for improvement is high.

Environmentally, huge amounts of finite resources and energy have been invested and encapsulated in this place over the course of the past 170 years and it will be better to support and consolidate that investment rather than trash it and start again

In current economic circumstances, large-scale demolition and redevelopment would be highly unlikely to be a realistic option even if it were to be considered desirable. In reality, lessons from the past cast serious doubt over the wisdom of such an approach, even if it could be funded.

There are some opportunities for development and selective redevelopment in places (and

some are identified in this report) but most of the buildings that are going to be here twenty years from now are the ones that are here now. Most of the buildings here now, were already here a century ago - or more. This is proving to be a sustainable place. It is essential, therefore, to

work with its grain, using its inherent strengths as the foundations for coordinated programmes of promotion, intervention, action and support to shape and adapt it to meet the needs of the people living here now and in the foreseeable future.

### Children and Young People

Conversations held during the preparation of this Place Shaping Framework often turned to the lives of local children and young people. At the visioning workshop, this age group was identified as a key asset in building the neighbourhood's future.

The neighbourhood's two primary schools not only achieve good educational outcomes (attainment at Key Stages 1 and 2 is generally above the City average) but also contribute greatly to the well-being of the wider community, providing family support that extends well beyond the classroom. A large proportion of children start at these schools with a first language other than English. Many help their families to understand vital information and to participate in the life of the community.

However, Sincil Bank's children and young people have to handle some tough challenges. Almost a quarter of the children here are living in poverty. Some key facilities that enrich the lives of children and young people in many other places are scarce or absent here: safe and easily accessible play and games areas, youth groups, a clean, healthy and inspiring local environment.

Despite the good start provided by the local nurseries and primary schools, average attainment levels of teenagers living in the Sincil Bank neighbourhood drop well below the City average by the time they get to Key Stage 4. It has been suggested that this might be due to a combination of factors, including different support expectations and practices at secondary schools and scarcity of good social space, youth facilities and pastoral support within the neighbourhood. These and other possible causes of the marked drop in the recorded educational attainment of teenagers should be investigated further so that appropriate actions may be taken to break the cycle of low-skilled working and low-incomes.

Sincil Bank should be a place where **all** children and young people can thrive. Specific opportunities to achieve that aspiration are, therefore, highlighted throughout the Framework in boxes like this.

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## 3 Vision

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In November 2016 local residents and other stakeholders came together at a Place Shaping Workshop, the aim of which was to identify shared hopes and aspirations for the future of Sincil Bank. Guided by their contributions and developed through further discussion with people who live and work in the area, the Vision below describes the place people would like to see the Sincil Bank neighbourhood become.

### A village in the city.

A community of communities, where people from diverse backgrounds and with differing needs live together in mutual respect.

A great place to live - close to the city centre and close to nature.

A place where people feel at home, whether they stay for months or decades.

A place that provides a healthy and supportive environment for families and works well for people at all stages of their lives.

A place where people have access to good facilities for education, health-care, recreation and culture.

A distinctive place where a sustainable future is being built on a robust heritage.

A place built around safe, clean, sociable streets.

A healthy place, where walking and cycling are given priority and where the environment is cherished and cared for.

A place where the vibrant and the tranquil coexist and beauty can flourish.

An enterprising and self-sustaining place, supporting a diversity of businesses and organisations and benefiting from the range of services they provide.

A place where creativity is encouraged and supported.

A place where the contributions its communities make to the well-being of their City are recognised and celebrated.

A place where people choose to live.



## Touchstone

To assist the process of translating that vision into productive actions, a touchstone has been produced - again in collaboration with those who attended the Place Shaping Workshop. It provides a simple reference point against which the desirability and effectiveness of particular actions, activities, development proposals and other interventions can be assessed.

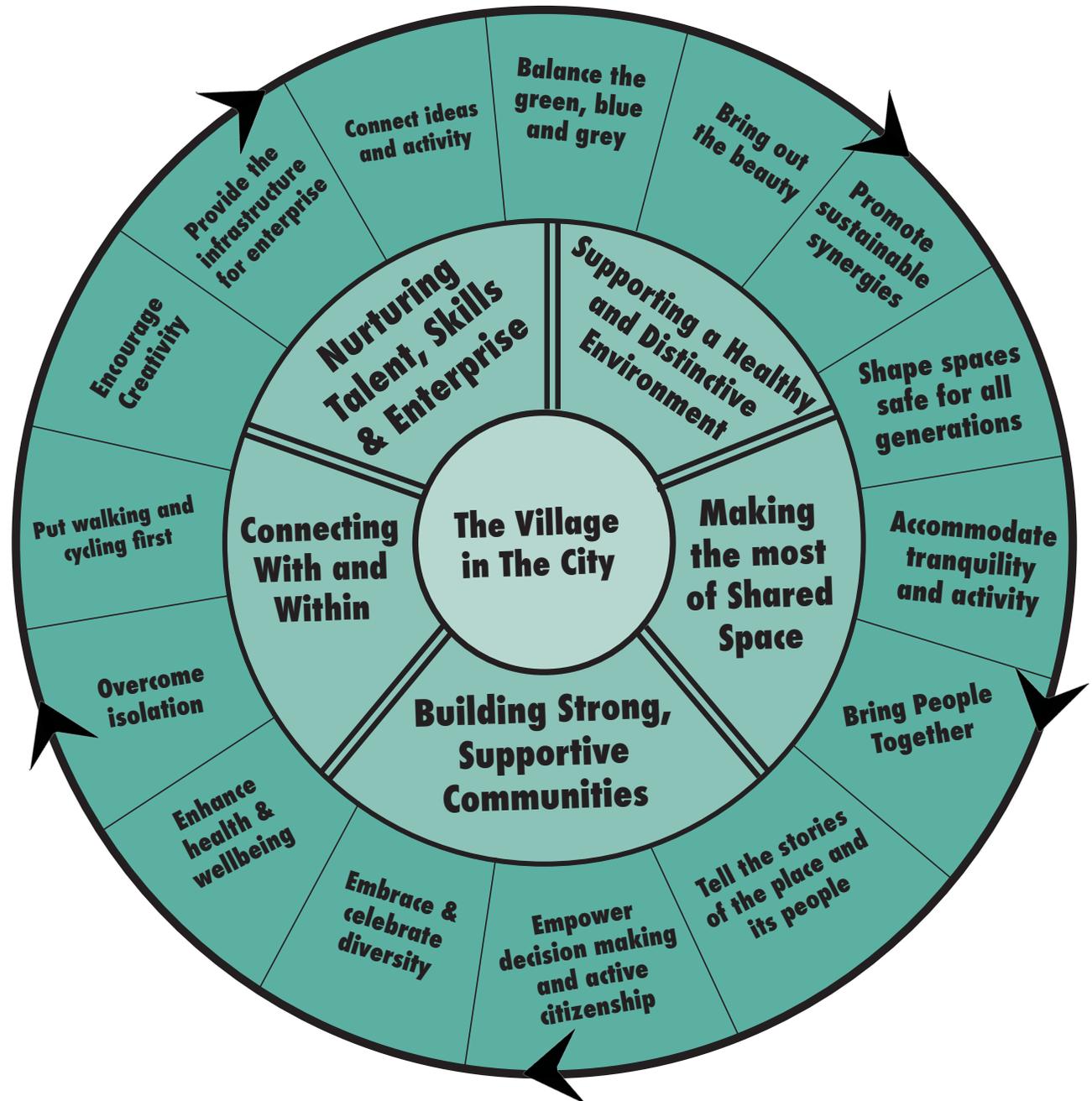
At the centre of the touchstone is the overarching vision of 'The Village in the City'.

Surrounding that central concept, and developing from it are five core place-shaping objectives:

1. Building strong and supportive communities;
2. Connecting with and within;
3. Nurturing talent, skills and enterprise;
4. Supporting a healthy and distinctive environment;
5. Making the most of shared space.

The outer ring is made up of requirements and values to which any changes and interventions should contribute.

The acceptability of any proposal may be judged against the extent to which it is consistent with the Touchstone.



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## 4 Recommended Actions & Interventions

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The Vision and the Objectives set out in the Touchstone need to be pursued through an integrated programme of interventions and changes. The objectives articulated in the Touchstone can be met by pursuing the following interconnected revitalisation themes:

- Streets for People
- Gateways
- Greening
- Community Hubs
- Skills and Enterprise
- Homes

Actions recommended for each of those strands are described in this chapter.





## Streets for People

Streets connect the lives of the people who live and work here. For too long, streets in Sincil Bank neighbourhood - the main elements of its public realm - have been dominated by traffic and clogged with parked vehicles. This and other factors have degraded the public realm. Litter, fly-tipping, dirt, neglect are prevalent and too many of the area's streets are just not pleasant places. The streets need to be returned to the people.

The guiding principle is that the whole of Sincil Bank Area should be a place where the safety, convenience and comfort of pedestrians, cyclists, people with reduced mobility and other vulnerable people should be put first. This does not mean that motor vehicles should be excluded or not catered for, but it does mean that the streets should be organised and managed primarily as shared public spaces.

Through their design, management and maintenance, streets throughout Sincil Bank Area should be:

- **Safe,**
- **Clean,**
- **Sociable,** and
- **Green**

### Recommended Actions

**It is recommended that traffic management, street design and other related interventions should be coordinated so as to achieve the following outcomes:**

- Eliminate through-traffic and "rat runs" (adjusting "one-way" streets and other traffic management orders and complementary measures accordingly);
- Make 20 mph the speed limit throughout the area (supported by carefully designed traffic-calming measures and education);
- Make the whole area a "residents-only" parking zone, so that it no longer acts as a free car park for commuters;
- Make appropriate parking provision to support local businesses;
- Use street space reclaimed through the measures outlined above to provide for:
  - » play streets;
  - » social "parklets" (particularly in places where the forms of accommodation lead to the streets being used as "living rooms" by residents with little other opportunity to socialise);

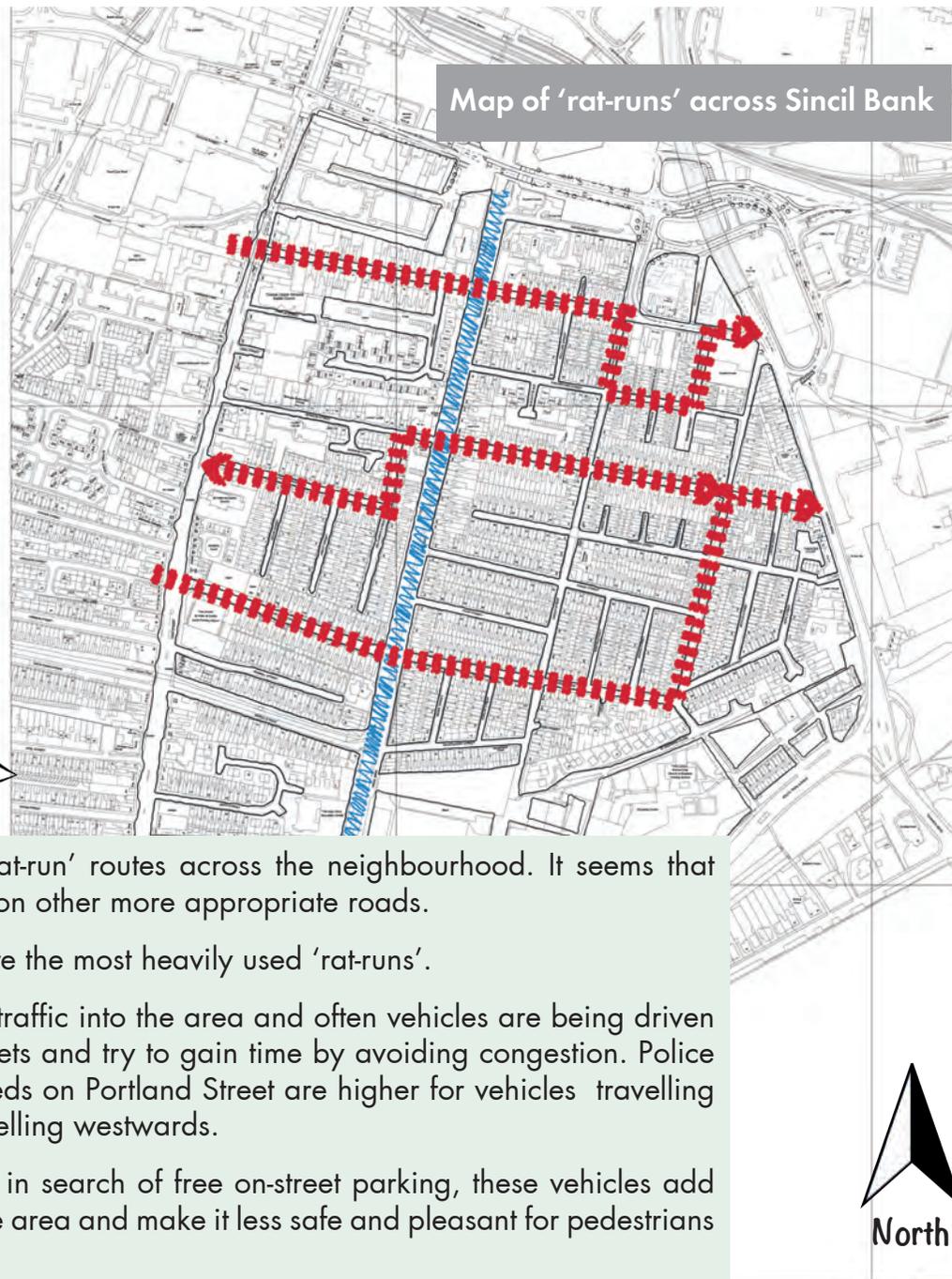


- » street cafes on Portland Street;
- » street trees and other planting;
- » Reconfiguring the whole length of Sincil Bank (the street) as a "green" route, primarily for cyclists and pedestrians - serving residents of both the Sincil Bank area and areas to the south (including the proposed "South East Quadrant Sustainable Urban Extension" -





- Bracebridge Heath and Canwick Heath);
- » Reconfiguring Portland Street to calm traffic and make it a pedestrian and cyclist friendly shopping and community-services street (see also the related section dealing specifically with Portland Street, below);
- » Reconfiguring Cross Street to calm traffic and make it pedestrian and cyclist friendly;
- » Reviewing parking and traffic management arrangements relating to Lincoln City Football Club, so as to minimise intrusion and impact of traffic on home match days;
- » Applying a “Super Blocks” approach across the area as a key tool for delivering all the changes outlined above (see map and information box on page 19).



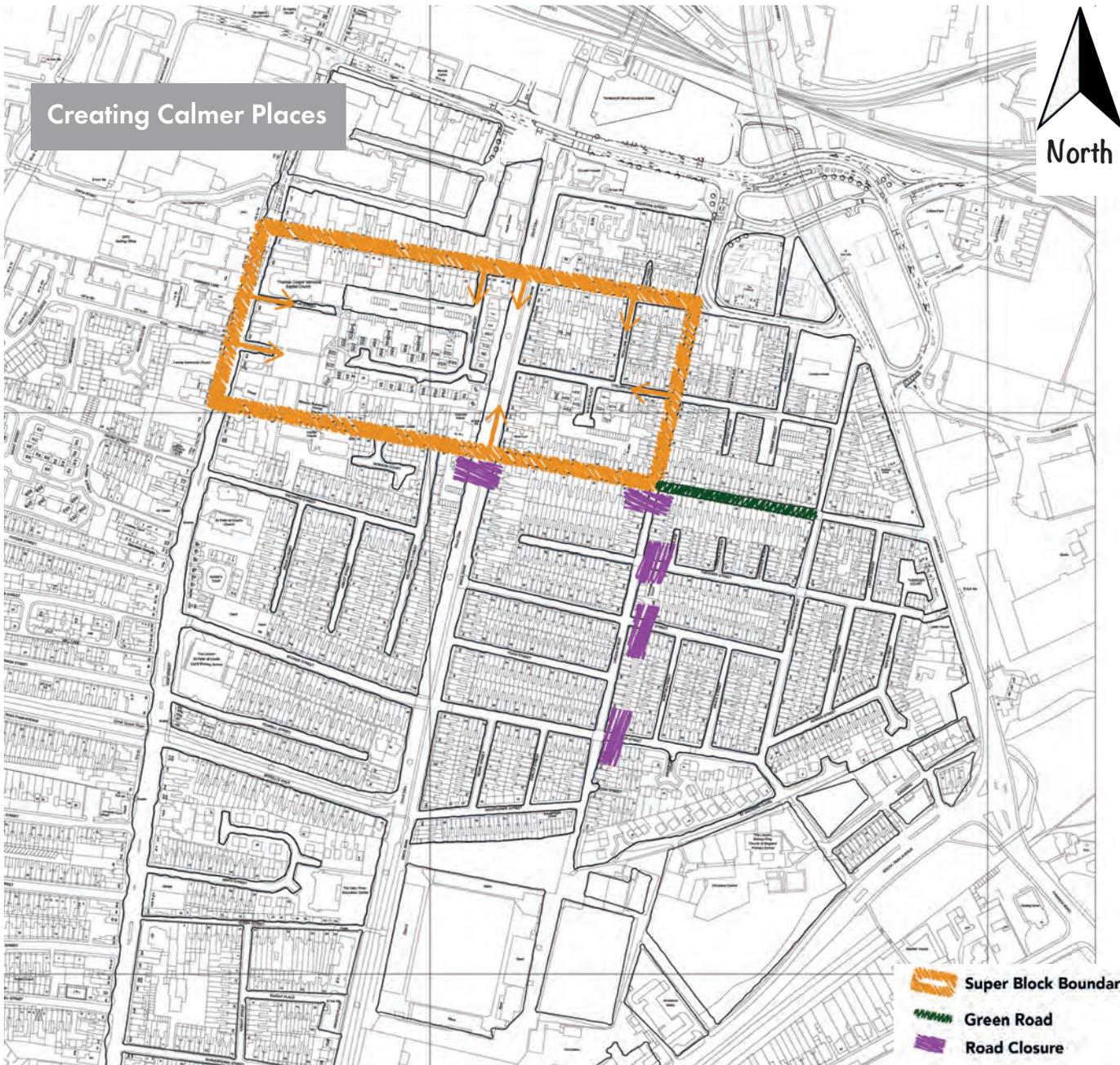
Local residents have drawn attention to several 'rat-run' routes across the neighbourhood. It seems that drivers use these as a shortcut to avoid congestion on other more appropriate roads.

The red routes shown on the map, opposite, indicate the most heavily used 'rat-runs'.

The availability of these routes brings unnecessary traffic into the area and often vehicles are being driven relatively fast as the drivers weave through the streets and try to gain time by avoiding congestion. Police checks have shown, for example that average speeds on Portland Street are higher for vehicles travelling eastwards, towards Canwick Road, than those travelling westwards.

Together with other non-resident drivers circulating in search of free on-street parking, these vehicles add considerably and unnecessarily to traffic levels in the area and make it less safe and pleasant for pedestrians and cyclists.

## Streets for People



**Creating Calmer Places**

**Super-Block Approach**

The city of Barcelona and Sincil Bank may not appear to have much in common. Both, though, have a 'grid-iron' street layout.

In Barcelona's case, the grid is very regular and geometric - less so in Sincil Bank. However, there is an interesting approach to creating streets for people that is being pursued in Barcelona and could be applied, in modified form, in Sincil Bank.

Access is allowed around the edges of several blocks, grouped together, and into and out of those blocks but not through them. This reduces traffic overall and frees up street space for more social uses and allows greening and other place-improvement initiatives.

This map illustrates how this approach could be applied to one part of Sincil Bank as part of an overall scheme to prioritise the needs of residents and reduce the number of cars on the roads.

-  Super Block Boundary
-  Green Road
-  Road Closure

**Streets for People**



In tandem with the actions and interventions outlined above, a package of measures to improve the appearance, cleanliness and safety of the streets should be pursued. It is recommended that this should include:

- **Restrictions on the display of “To Let” signs on properties available for rental.**

It is recommended that the City Council makes a “Regulation 7 Direction” to bring the display of these signs under control, and then allows only one small board mounted flat on the wall for each property.

- **Refuse and recycling storage and collection**

It is recommended that the use/ management of wheelie bins should be reviewed, investigating any possible options for a different system that could respond better to the circumstances of people living in terraced houses and HMOs where access is difficult. This is certainly not an easy problem to solve but it needs to be considered to see if there may be creative and innovative solutions. One minimum aim should be to eliminate bins on the streets except on collection days.

- **Removal of redundant cables and cable boxes**

The appearance of many streets is harmed by redundant cables and cable boxes hanging from the fronts of buildings and projecting from them. Some of these are not just unsightly but also a potential hazard to passers by. The

overall effect is create an impression of neglect and ugliness.

It is recommended that the City Council should initiate discussions with property owners and service providers to investigate options for securing the removal of redundant cables and cable boxes and the tidying up of any operational cables and boxes that need to remain.

- **Review of procedures and requirements relating to street cleaning, litter clearance and removal of fly-tipping**

It is recommended that the current arrangements should be reviewed to see if there are options for dealing with these matters more effectively through a combination of service adjustments and strengthened enforcement measures.

Reducing on-street parking and reclaiming street space as outlined above should make street cleaning less problematic in some parts of the area.

The area currently suffers badly from recurrent fly-tipping and this has a very negative impact on the local environment and on the quality of local people’s lives. It has been suggested that the current practice of clearing items dumped illegally on the streets (mattresses, carpets, chairs etc.) whilst making a substantial charge to collect such items from people’s homes may be counterproductive. It has also been suggested that re-introducing a regular mobile collection, free of charge, could be a helpful alternative.



## Streets for People

## Social Streets

A key aim of the Place Shaping Framework is to encourage changes that can “reclaim” the streets for people, recognising that, particularly in an area where there is little other public space, streets should be social spaces, not just traffic routes.

Taking inspiration from an idea well-established in North American cities, it is recommended that a pilot project should be undertaken to trial the use of “Parklets”, providing small kerbside spaces that would be both green and sociable.

Prospective locations for these green interventions should be carefully considered, recognising the likely close proximity to people’s homes and potential concerns about anti social behaviour. It is recommended, therefore, that the concept should be explored and developed in partnership with the community: locations, styles, installation and guardianship should all be explored together. Piloting the parklet concept will create valuable opportunities to test ideas and raise the profile of the opportunity amongst the local community, whilst also being a relatively quick and straight-forward way of demonstrating a commitment to change in the area.

If the piloting and community response is positive, guidelines should be prepared to create a framework for extending the project across the neighbourhood (San Francisco’s Parklet Manual is a good example - [http://pavementtoparks.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/SF\\_P2P\\_Parklet\\_Manual\\_2.2\\_FULL1.pdf](http://pavementtoparks.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/SF_P2P_Parklet_Manual_2.2_FULL1.pdf))

## Streets for People

## Children & Young People

### Play Streets

Opportunities for children living in the area to play safely together outside are very limited. There was a play park at Archer Street but it was badly located and has been abandoned.

The play park on South Park is convenient for a few, but too far away for most. There may be opportunities to create play areas if any of garage courts become surplus, but there are likely to be competing demand for the space if that happens.

A potential solution is to reconfigure some parts of some streets so that they can be safe places to play, either at certain times or permanently.

It will be important to strike the necessary balance between “natural” surveillance and respect for neighbours’ amenity and privacy and for neighbouring residents to support the project. It is recommended, therefore, that (as with parklets) the Play Street concept should be explored and developed with the community, with a pilot Play Street being trialled in a suitable place first. If it is successful, guidelines should then be prepared and if people in particular streets would like to make it a Play Street they should be supported and involved in design, implementation and supervision, to give them local ownership and encourage self-policing.

Play Streets are a tried and tested concept, with good examples already operating in several other cities in the UK. It is recommended that they should be considered as an integral part of the Streets for People package. The organisation Playing Out is promoting play streets nationally and provides a lot of helpful information on its website: <http://playingout.net>



## Gateways

First impressions are important. At present, the places where Sincil Bank and the rest of the City meet are generally poorly presented and maintained. People who do not know Sincil Bank neighbourhood may dismiss it as just a “maze” of apparently repetitive terraced streets between High Street and Canwick Road - a place to pass by (or, perhaps, look for a handy free parking space) but not a place to spend time in.

The places where people enter and leave the area are particularly important: they are the gateways that connect Sincil Bank with the rest of Lincoln. Both for people whose homes and businesses are here and for visitors, those gateways need to be attractive and welcoming and they need to inspire confidence. At present, they generally fall far short.

People moving in and out of Sincil Bank Area via Portland Street are greeted first by ugly and damaged roadside railings, and then by empty shops and neglected buildings. The East/West Link has benefited drivers travelling in and out of Lincoln, but has not improved the experience for pedestrians and cyclists - especially those travelling to and from Sincil Bank Area. The area below and around Pelham Bridge provides useful links between Sincil Bank Area and the employment and shops to the east - but it is a deeply unpleasant, intimidating and occasionally even dangerous place.

The purpose of producing a Place-shaping Framework for the Sincil Bank area is to stimulate and guide actions and interventions that will make

a real and lasting change, making the place work better for its communities, empowering those communities to fulfil their aspirations and overcome problems they face, and ultimately making this a place people actively choose to live in. Changing the way that Sincil Bank area is perceived from “outside” is both a goal and an integral part of the place-shaping process.

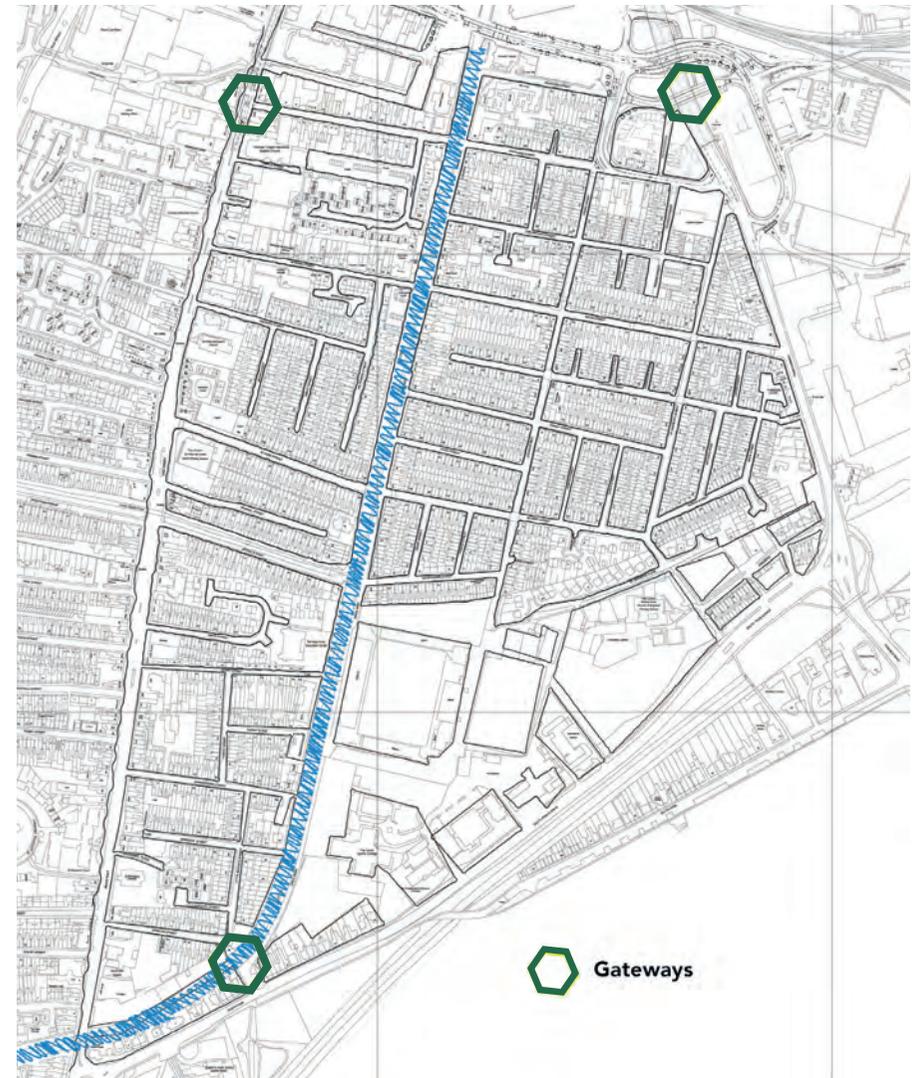
In this context, It is recommended that the following places should be enhanced as gateways to the Sincil Bank neighbourhood, with a concerted commitment to transforming them into positive, strong and respectful transitional spaces.

### Portland Street

It is considered that Portland Street has a vital role to play in the revitalisation of Sincil Bank. Its role as both a Gateway and Community Street is therefore explored on pages 36-38.

### The railway footbridge & Tentercroft Street

The footbridge provides an important link to and from the Railway Station and Transport Hub and the City Centre. It is commonly acknowledged to be in an appalling condition. It is neglected, unpleasant,



inconvenient and probably, at times, unsafe. It is recommended that replacement of the Tentercroft Street railway footbridge should be treated as a priority by Network Rail and the local authorities.

Construction of the "East/West Link" extension of Tentercroft Street is changing the face of this part of the City, but it is not yet providing a much-enhanced gateway to the Sincil Bank area.

### Recommended Action

**It is recommended that the barrier effect of the East/West Link Road should be monitored and opportunities to reduce it should be explored further with the community as development of adjacent land proceeds.**

## Pelham Bridge

The space below and around Pelham Bridge east of Archer Street is neglected, ugly, prone to anti-social and criminal behaviour, and sometimes unsafe. To the east is an extensive area of industry and businesses providing both employment opportunities and services (including the large Tesco store on Dunford Road). Despite its serious shortcomings, this is the safest route for people to walk or cycle between those places and the Sincil Bank area - the alternative being to attempt a dangerous crossing of Canwick Road.

The poorly located children's play area has now

been discontinued and the site is on lease to Green Synergy, to be developed for community use. It is understood that land just to the north, extending below and to the east and west of Pelham Bridge has also been offered to Green Synergy for the development of community garden / city farm facilities consistent with the charity's objectives.

### Recommended Actions

**This whole area should be improved comprehensively, to make it a safe and attractive gateway. To that end It is recommended that:**

- a. a suitable community use of the former playground site at Archer Street and the vacant land to the north should be supported and this should be designed and implemented so that it helps to make this whole area safer and more attractive;
- b. a design competition should be held to generate creative solutions for the use and design of the area below the Bridge itself, and to identify funding opportunities;
- c. as a "meanwhile" measure, it is recommended that a programme of "Under the Bridge" community events should be held to animate the space, establish it as being a neighbourhood space and stimulate the process of developing creative solutions;
- d. owners of the land east of Pelham Bridge - The Pelham Centre - should be encouraged and given support to improve the appearance of the car parking areas and access road and make the area more pedestrian and cyclist friendly.



## Greening

Too much of life in Sincil Bank Area is played out against a harsh setting of unrelieved brick, concrete and tarmac. There is a shortage of open space for play, socialising and general amenity. There are few street trees and visible planting. This absence of green and dominance of hard features creates an environment that is less pleasant and less conducive to physical and mental well-being than it could be. It can be depressing and demoralising.

The few trees and green spaces - or "blue" spaces in the case of Sincil Dyke - contribute hugely, but there are just not enough of them. Every opportunity to make Sincil Bank a greener place needs to be seized.

Green Synergy has been particularly active in helping to overcome this serious problem and in promoting community gardening as a medium for wider community engagement and enhancing the lives of people living in the area. The organisation's aims include using community horticulture, creating a City Farm, and broader environmental initiatives to:

- enable and enhance sustainable socio-economic and environmental well-being and development;
- enhance community cohesion, mental and physical wellbeing, life skills, training and education.

The organisation has led a number of projects and on-going activities, including hanging

baskets, community gardening schemes, schools' projects, harvest festivals and other environmental awareness raising activities. There is a community allotment off Sincil Bank and Green Synergy is actively exploring options for the Archer Street play area, next to Pelham Bridge, and land adjacent to the East/west Link Road.

Sincil Dyke is a crucially important green/blue feature. It brings wildlife and some elements of greenery right through the neighbourhood and it is a constant source of enjoyment and interest for many residents - of all ages - and for visitors walking the Viking Way. The Cathedral view compensates hugely for the dullness of the concrete banks along the northern stretch - although measures to soften and green these edges should be explored creatively.

### Green streets

Generally (and with some notable exceptions) streets across Sincil Bank neighbourhood lack greenery. There are few street trees. Many streets are lined by back-of-pavement terraced houses with no front gardens. The street environment in much of the neighbourhood is unrelentingly hard. Where there are even very small planted gardens at the front of houses, the different 'feel' of the place can be immediately noticeable - and positive. Every opportunity to introduce planting should be taken, whether by planting trees in the street, incorporating shrubs and other planting in build-outs, parklets and road-splits, or planting in

visible places alongside streets.

A number of opportunities for creating green streets have been identified on the map opposite (pg 25), but these are only illustrative suggestions for an approach that should be applied as widely possible.

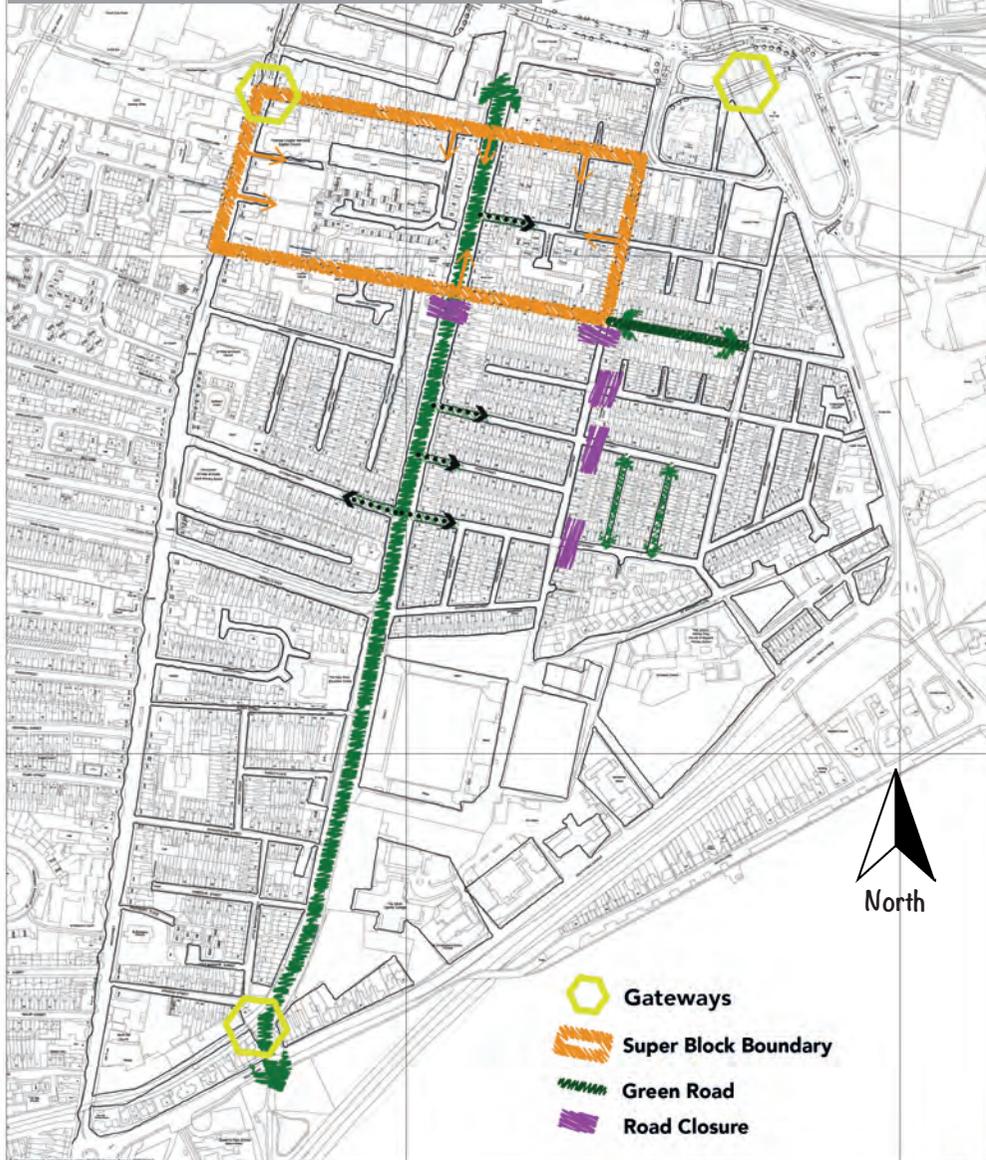
There are two streets which are considered to offer particularly good opportunities to develop a strong "green route" through the neighbourhood:

- **Sincil Bank**, where prioritisation of walking and cycling - with restrictions on through-traffic - could serve residents of both the Sincil Bank area and areas to the south (including the proposed "South East Quadrant Sustainable Urban Extension" - Bracebridge Heath and Canwick Heath)
- **Portland Street**, where the cyclists and pedestrians could also be given greater priority and where the few street trees that already exist and contribute so much to the street scene, could be supplemented by continuous lines of street trees, together with green parklets and build-outs.

### Recommended Actions

- Support the on-going work of Green Synergy and similar groups and initiatives.
- Work with the Environment Agency to explore options for improving the appearance of the

## Green Streets achieved through 'Super Blocks' approach



concrete channel section of Sincil Dyke and the adjacent banks.

- Reconfiguring the whole length of Sincil Bank (the street) as a “green” route, primarily for cyclists and pedestrians, accompanied by the planting of street trees and other vegetation to create a softer, more relaxing environment.
- Continue the strategic green “route” along Portland Street to link with High Street and the City Centre, and (via Firth Road) the Riverside Path alongside the River Witham.

## Children & Young People

All children should have access to good quality, green space where they can learn about nature, engage with beauty, enjoy fresh air and play safely. Benefits include:

### Health & Wellbeing

There is increasing evidence that inadequate access to a good environment with space for play and recreation can lead to both physical and mental health issues, starting at an early age.

### Education

Children learn from their environment. If their local environment is poor and they have few opportunities to access other places, their scope for learning may be reduced or distorted.

### Respect for the environment / civic responsibility

Learning to enjoy and care for the local environment plays an important part in development of civic awareness and responsibility. An ugly, poorly maintained, unloved place does not engender civic pride or responsibility.

### Friendships

Sharing spaces - streets, parks, playgrounds - plays an important part in developing socialising skills that are crucial to later life.

For too many children currently growing up in Sincil Bank, the significant benefits of having access to green surroundings are being lost. Strengthening access to a greener environment must be a priority if we want the children of the Sincil Bank neighbourhood to have a more positive start in life.

Walkable, Cyclable Sincil Bank



Greening

## Community Hubs

Sincil Bank is a community of communities - a very diverse place shared by people from many different backgrounds. Discussions during the preparation of this Place-shaping Framework suggest that many people in this part of Lincoln like the diversity but feel that there should be greater opportunities for people from different backgrounds to meet, support each other and share life in Sincil Bank. There are many people here who need a helping hand from time-to-time (or perhaps over a longer period) but often they don't know who to ask or where to go.

The desire for a place where all members of Sincil Bank's communities can get advice and support, mix in a sociable environment, and hold and share events - a Community Hub - has emerged as a widely shared aspiration through the discussions that have taken place. The Bridge Centre on Newark Road has been referred to as one possible model for such a facility, but many variations are possible. What is clear is that any community facility such as this must be tailored to the specific needs of this community and, therefore, the community must have a leading role in deciding the range of facilities to be included; the management arrangements; and the types of space required.

The location for any Community Hub should be considered carefully. At the 'Community Hubs' focused workshop in March 2017, residents expressed their aspirations for a focal point for the community. The site or building should be:

- **accessible for everyone living in the Sincil Bank area;**
- **suitable a range of community purposes (formal / informal support and also social activity);**
- **not associated with any particular community group or faith group to the extent that this would be likely to discourage others from using it.**

It may be possible and preferable to identify a single space to accommodate all elements of the 'hub' - in which case location will be critical. However, there is also a case for creating a network of hubs and 'hublets', including, for example Green Synergy's plans for a Community Gardening Hub on the Coal Yard site; greater community use of St. Mary's Guildhall, a 'meanwhile' Community Hub on Portland Street; identifying new opportunities for filling gaps; offering clear signposting; and creating an extended presence across the neighbourhood.

### Recommended Actions

- Develop a network of Community Hub facilities, with a main hub in a location that is conveniently accessible to most people living in Sincil Bank neighbourhood, linked with 'satellites' (or 'hublets') providing particular types of facility in other places across the neighbourhood.

- Establish a 'community and service providers working group' to determine, in detail, the form that Community Hub facilities should take, the scope of services and community facilities that should be provided, and the most effective ways of delivering, managing and sustaining the facilities.
- As a first step, establish a Neighbourhood Hub on Portland Street, contributing to the rejuvenation of this struggling street by making use of an empty shop - possibly more than one - creating a physical, caring and proactive presence, and offering space for residents to become more actively involved in the neighbourhood.

Locations recommended as being suitable for development of linked community facilities include:

- **Portland Street** - contributing to its role as a community street for the Sincil Bank neighbourhood;
- **Archer Street / Pelham Bridge** - for a "green" hub and city farm (already leased to, and in development by, Green Synergy);
- **Former Co-op building on corner of Ripon Street and Cross Street** - for a services hub with community meeting / training space;
- **Lincoln City Football Club** - for an active lifestyles hub.
- **Palmer Street Garages** - to provide local



community facilities and recreational space.

## Children & Young People

Having 'Nothing to do' can be a very real issue for children and teenagers in this neighbourhood.

Across Sincil Bank, there is little space for young people to socialise in a safe, engaging and meaningful way.

Recognising that many of these young people are from low income families, the opportunities for positive out-of-school activity are further reduced, as they are unlikely to have disposable incomes to participate in activities elsewhere in the city.

This may have a connection with issues around educational attainment and ambition, explored in the 'Skills & Enterprise' theme which follows this section.

Discussions with the Education Business Partnership suggest that it may be possible to create a bespoke National Citizenship Service programme for older teenagers in the area. This could contribute significantly to the development of leadership skills; sense of civic responsibility; growth of ambition and strengthened relationships with the wider community as well as providing a valuable opportunity to foster young friendships.

A key output of a programme such as this, could be to identify space for young people - a 'young hub'.

Investing in a bespoke programme for young people in the area could provide a strong catalyst for strengthened relationships between younger residents of Sincil Bank and the place they call 'home'.

Critical to the success of any such intervention will be the empowerment of young participants to make decisions, influence change and act as guardians.



## Community Hubs

## Skills & Enterprise

According to the statistics, average skills levels are relatively low in the Sincil Bank area, limiting many people's choice of employment and their incomes. Two of the three statistical areas (LSOAs) are in the lowest scoring 10% for all neighbourhoods in England and one is in the third decile (20-30%) overall

One of the three area is in the 10% most deprived neighbourhoods in England one in the 10-20% range and one in the 20-30% range (English Indices of Deprivation 2015).

Whilst the Sincil Bank neighbourhood accounts for around 6% of the total city population, 9-11% of the total city Job Seeker's Allowance claimants live in this area (data as of May 2014). Furthermore, of those claiming, 41.6% are aged 20-29 - there is perhaps a link here with the low levels of Key Stage 4 attainment in the area (see 'Children & Young People' box on page 33).

A relatively high proportion of people here do not have English as their first language and this can limit their opportunities to put the skills and experiences they have brought with them to best use.

The need for skills development is one that needs to be addressed by multiple agencies over a long period of time.

To address these issues, a multi-layered, multi-agency approach is required, building on the work

that several organisations are already pursuing in the neighbourhood. An integrated approach needs to be developed, addressing education and skills, health and well-being, social support and support for enterprise. Detailing such an approach and putting it in to action goes beyond the scope of this Place Shaping Framework, but it is appropriate to identify the need, to relate it to the recommended development of a Community Hub, and to recommend a few potential interventions identified during the study.

### Releasing Hidden Skills

From conversations with people involved in community groups and activities, it seems likely that there are people living in Sincil Bank with "hidden" skills - currently employed in jobs that do not require the skills they have, but unable to put those skills to full use through lack of opportunities, funding, confidence or affordable business premises, that could be unlocked with appropriate training, encouragement and support.

### Training in construction skills

LEAP (Lincolnshire Employment Accommodation Project) based in Monson Street, is an organisation experienced in providing training - in partnership with others - for vulnerable young people in housing need. From discussions that have been held, it appears that there could be opportunities for LEAP and other interested organisations,

like Investors in Lincoln and Lincoln College, to develop a local programme to combine provision of homes with provision of construction-skills training. The Sincil Bank neighbourhood has one of the highest concentrations of long-term vacant houses in Lincoln - a wasted resource - and there are also some potential new-build opportunities which may be suitable for LEAP and other social landlords to pursue. There is potential synergy here with Investors in Lincoln's interest in establishing a "Phoenix 2" project.

### Training in catering skills

One frustrated chef has already been found living in the Sincil Bank area during the course of this study. There are probably more and they could just need a bit of support to get them up and running either working in a kitchen or running their own.

This part of Lincoln has many restaurants, cafes and take-aways but it is also a place where many people are on low incomes and keeping well fed can be a challenge. Interest has been expressed in combining provision of nutritious meals at low cost and providing training for local people interested in employment opportunities in catering and setting up a business. One organisation that has expressed a particular interest is Super Kitchen which describes itself as "a network of members who run social eating spaces; cooking for their communities with love". The approach Super Kitchen takes is community-oriented and



uses surplus and locally sourced food wherever possible, making it well-suited to contributing to the development of a local “circular economy”. The concept might, as one option, be incorporated in the Community Hub, or it could be free-standing.

### Producing Food and Energy

Discussions with academic and research staff of the University of Lincoln have identified scope to promote and develop a circular economy approach to local food and energy production and consumption in the Sincil Bank neighbourhood.

Examples being explored include:

- schemes for small-scale anaerobic digester energy generation, using unsold food and other organic surplus from local restaurants, cafes, take-aways, shops and supermarkets, and potentially supplying energy from this to support local enterprise initiatives;
- enhancing streets by introducing trees and other planting (in some cases as part of a kerb-side “parklet”) and for making this part of a wider “edible landscape” initiative allied to Green Synergy’s promotion of community allotments, shared gardens and a City Farm.

### Creative Industries

A design lecturer at the University of Lincoln, has

## Skills & Enterprise

been experimenting with running a fabric printing and fashion garment production enterprise, based in one of the garages on Hermit Street and spilling out on to the streets whenever opportunities have arisen. Local residents have become interested, tried their skills and some are now going further and edging towards a business venture. This sort of approach could be developed further.

In the course of conversations with local people during this study, the possibility of finding inexpensive work space for local artists, designers, performers and other creative people has been mentioned repeatedly. Across the wider city, the Creative Industries sector is growing and, as it does, so too is the need for affordable workspace, opportunities to cluster and mechanisms for sharing and exchanging skills: requirements that could be met in the Sincil Bank area and which could contribute significantly to the transformation of both image and reality that is aspired to.

### Recommended Actions

**It is recommended that, alongside more mainstream approaches to skills development and training, consideration should be given to the potential for:**

- **combining skills training and development with the provision of good quality affordable housing - through refurbishment of vacant and poorly maintained properties, and involvement in appropriate new-build schemes as opportunities arise;**

- **linking skills development, community catering and social enterprise;**
- **fostering a creative enterprise culture in the area and working with property owners to identify opportunities to provide low-cost accommodation for start-up businesses;**
- **linking skills development and training with a local “circular economy”.**

### Children & Young People

Taken as a whole, the educational attainment of children in the Sincil Bank neighbourhood starts well but seems not to be maintained. Children at the two primary schools do better than the city average at Key Stages 1 & 2 but their results fall well below that average by the time they reach Key Stage 4.

Perhaps the strong community and pastoral care offered by the primary schools (with parents actively engaged and supported), is lost at secondary school, impacting negatively on attainment and ambition. The causes of the decline in attainment by Key Stage 4 should be explored to find out whether it is this or other factors that need to be addressed.

Steps should be taken to provide a place-based supportive framework for secondary school-aged children in the area, including out-of-school facilities for teenagers.

## Homes

There is no shortage of homes in the Sincil Bank area: it is one of the most densely populated places in Lincoln.

Homes here are relatively affordable and there is a range of tenures - owner-occupied, social rented, privately rented - and a range of types, mostly terraced but some detached and semi-detached, some family homes, some shared houses, some HMOs. Many are well-maintained and cared for, but many are not.

Standards of energy efficiency are poor in many of the older houses, although they do benefit to one extent from the energy conserving benefits of being terraced. Incomes are generally low and fuel poverty is an issue in parts of the area.

There are particular problems with some of the private-rented accommodation, particularly HMOs. Information from the BRE Dwelling Level Housing Stock Model 2014, shows that the prevalence of private rented property varies widely from street to street. At the census area level (each of which includes several streets) private-rented properties as a proportion of the total stock vary between 23% and 70%, depending upon the census output area, and between 3% and 47% of the stock might be HMOs - with between 14% and 33% likely to exhibit a Category One (serious) hazard.

Turning from statistical information to direct inspection, some severe deficiencies were found as

a result of a recent "Rogue Landlords" project. 41 streets were surveyed and 580 rented properties entered and assessed. 318 deficiency notices were served and 7 HMOs were closed down because they were too hazardous for the tenants to remain in them.

This neighbourhood also has the highest concentration of long-term vacant houses in Lincoln. As at 1st April 2017, there were 19 properties known to have been vacant for more than two years. These are mapped on page 33. As can be seen, many have been empty for much longer than two years. Houses that have been left vacant - and often unmaintained - for so long have a depressing effect on their immediate neighbourhood and are a wasted resource, especially at a time when there is a need for more housing than the house builders seem able to supply.

A high priority must continue to be given to interventions to improve the standard of private rented accommodation - particularly HMOs. The City Council has made an "Article 4 Direction" to give it greater control under planning legislation over conversions of "family homes" to shared housing and HMOs. This is being used in conjunction with housing and environmental health controls, as resources allow.

There is a strong case for exploring alternative and innovative ways of providing better quality affordable rented accommodation, both to provide

a stock of good quality accommodation and in an attempt to "raise the bar" and use market forces to encourage less caring landlords to upgrade or dispose of their properties. Potentially, there is a substantial role for the City Council and a community-led regeneration company to work in concert on this.

One of the issues in the area is that the poor quality and deficiencies of some of the HMOs, coupled in some instances with behavioural problems and substance abuse issues, have negative impacts on other members of the community and on the public realm. One potential way forward may be to establish a housing cooperative - or a trust that could be involved in matters outside housing too - to develop and manage either new or refurbished affordable rental homes. It is recommended that this options should be pursued.

A scheme known as the Phoenix Project had some success previously in acquiring empty houses in Lincoln, involving young people in their conversion on a training and skills-development basis and then letting them at an affordable rent. Given the need for skills development in this area, the experience that is already embedded here through LEAP and the existence of a number of long-term-vacant properties and, possibly, some sites suitable for new buildings, it is recommended that a "revival" of the Phoenix Project approach should be pursued further in association with a community-led regeneration company / housing cooperative.



If opportunities for larger scale housing developments arise (for example, as a result of a relocation of the football club) it will be important to take the opportunity to increase choice and contribute to broader community objectives. The form of development must be viable, but should not be dictated by market forces alone.

### Recommended Actions:

- Promote and facilitate active dialogue with landlords of rented accommodation with a view to agreeing appropriate standards of accommodation and management to be achieved across the neighbourhood.
- Continue to take (and publicise) enforcement action where rented accommodation fails to meet minimum health and safety expectations.
- Recognise contributions made by good landlords through accreditation and award schemes.
- Promote and facilitate the formation of a community housing trust to acquire and refurbish sub-standard properties (including long-term vacant properties) as opportunities arise and deliver improved homes for rental and sale.
- Link the activities of the community housing trust with locally-focused construction

training and skills development where practicable.

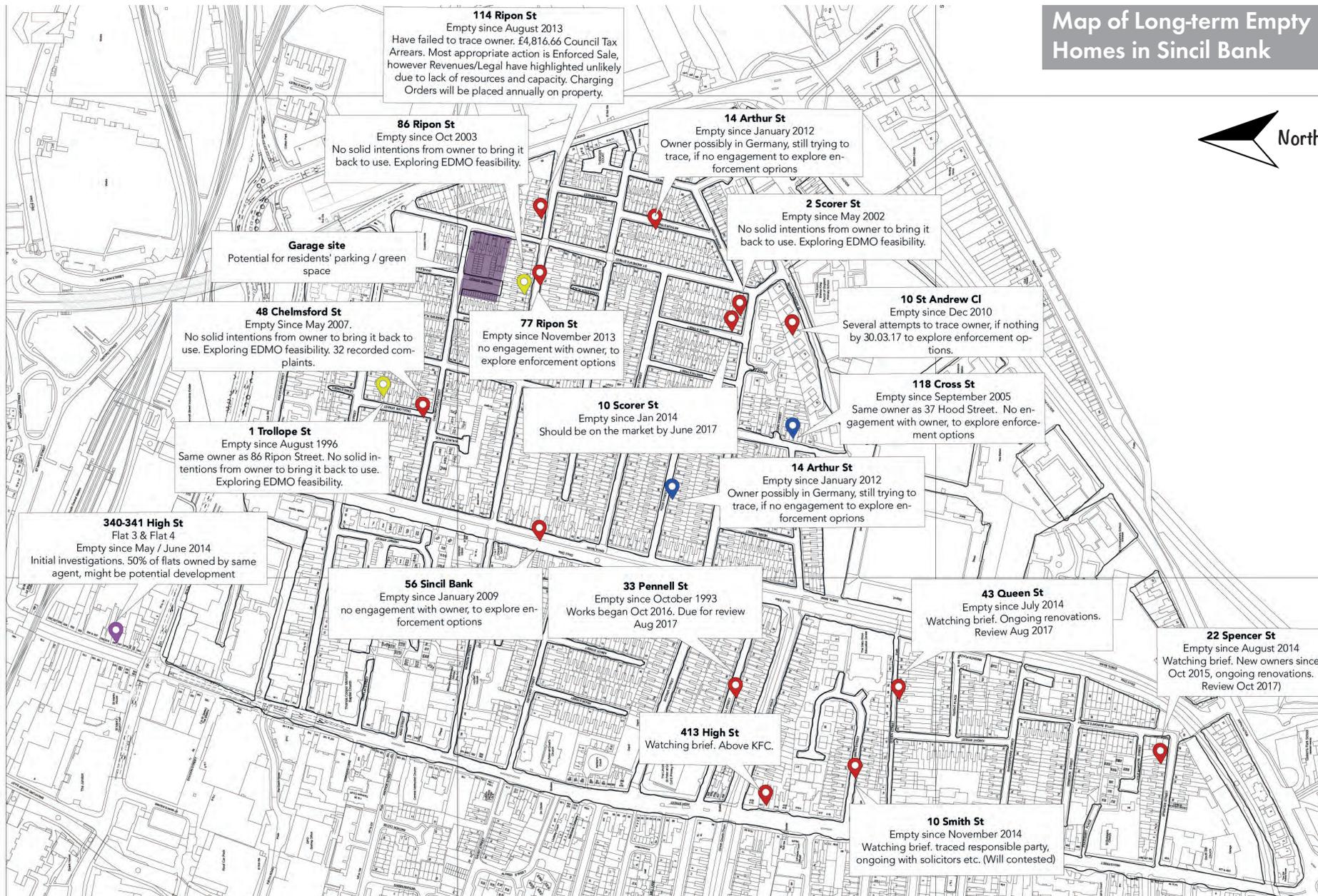
- Ensure that any new housing developed in the neighbourhood “raises the bar” by delivering high accommodation and environmental standards and providing

for needs and aspirations that have not previously been well catered for in the Sincil Bank neighbourhood.



## Homes

# Map of Long-term Empty Homes in Sincil Bank



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## 5 Place-Specific Opportunities

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We have left consideration of the possible development potential of particular sites until last - not because these opportunities are not important, but because they need to be considered in the context of the Placeshaping Framework as a whole.

In practice, unless large-scale demolition of existing streets is to take place (and the recommendation is that this should only happen if there are exceptional circumstances that show it to be the most beneficial, effective and deliverable solution) there are only a few sites that currently present substantial development opportunities. The main opportunity sites are:

- the City Council-owned garage courts at Hermit Street and Palmer Street (should it be decided that garages are no longer the best use for these sites);
- Lincoln City Football Club's stadium (should the Club decide to relocate).

To identify the opportunities that each of those particular sites may offer, it is necessary to consider how the possible options align with the vision, objectives, principles and values encapsulated in the Touchstone. It will also, of course, be necessary to consider viability issues, and a degree of compromise may sometimes be necessary, but the starting point should always be the contribution

that any particular sites and its development could make towards achieving the vision for the Sincil Bank area.

Types of development that could help to meet local community needs and aspirations identified in the course of the study from which this Place-shaping Framework has emerged include:

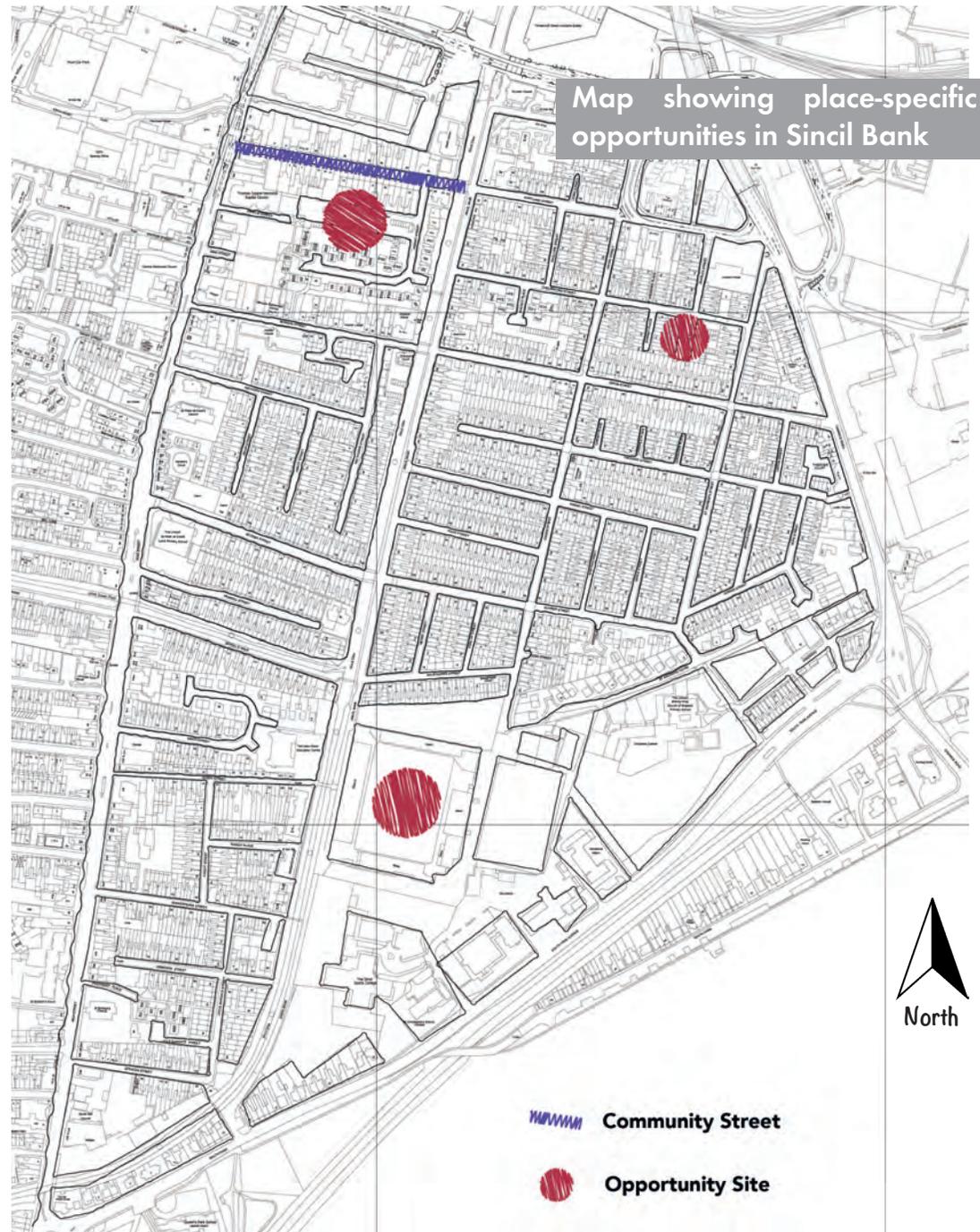
- Open Recreational and Green Space - to redress the current open space deficit;
- Community Hubs - providing conveniently clustered access and "signposting" to services provided by the local authorities and other agencies, and also providing a place for individuals and groups in the community to meet, socialise and share a range of facilities;
- Transformational Housing – ie, new housing that will provide for local needs that are currently inadequately met, will achieve a high level of environmental sustainability, and will make an exceptional contribution towards transforming the Sincil Bank neighbourhood as whole, for example:

- » by enabling other buildings or land to be acquired and developed for community use;
  - » by enabling relocation of residents so that poor quality housing can be acquired, refurbished or redeveloped to provide decent, affordable accommodation.
- Affordable workspace - for entrepreneurial and creative individuals and small businesses whose activities would contribute to greater local economic and social well-being;
  - Car Parking - which may help to achieve other objectives by removing more cars from streets.

For each site, there now follows a brief description of significant features and constraints followed by advice on the opportunities presented. A preliminary assessment has been made of the potential (if any) that each site may have to contribute towards meeting any of the identified needs.

The advice generally takes the form of preliminary

recommendations that need to be given further consideration when more specific and detailed decisions are being taken - a process that should be led by further engagement with the community.



## Portland Street

Portland Street has long had a poor image. It appears very run down at present: parts of the prominent and handsome 3-storey terrace on the south side are neglected and poorly managed, and there are numerous empty shops at present. From discussions with local people, it is clear that some now find this an intimidating place and avoid it, particularly after dark. It seems that, for many people, the impression they have of Portland Street, shapes their impression of Sincil Bank area as a whole.

Fundamentally, however, this is a highly distinctive street - partly tree-lined, with attractive buildings, courtyards and interesting businesses, including shops and hairdressers, cafes, a printer, a gym, several offices, a well-regarded surgery and pharmacy and, at the east end, a very well-known motorcycle centre. This is a street where people from different backgrounds and cultures mix in an interesting and potentially attractive place and it has the potential to act as a vibrant and enticing gateway to the area.

Closure of Portland Street's east end, allied to the development of the East/West Link Road (Tentercroft Street extension) has changed conditions here significantly, presenting a mixture of challenges and opportunities. Some of the through-traffic has been removed but there is currently a noticeable problem with vehicles being driven too fast and going through to use Charles Street and Chelmsford Street as a "rat run". The reduction of passing traffic has combined with other factors to make trading conditions difficult for some of the shops and other businesses, and a large number of shop premises

are currently empty. However, the changes now present an opportunity to transform both the reality and the image of Portland Street.

As noted in the 'Gateways' section, the potential role of Portland Street in the success of the place-shaping strategy is significant. It is considered to be the street with the greatest potential to become a distinctive and vibrant focal point for the whole Sincil Bank neighbourhood - a community street.

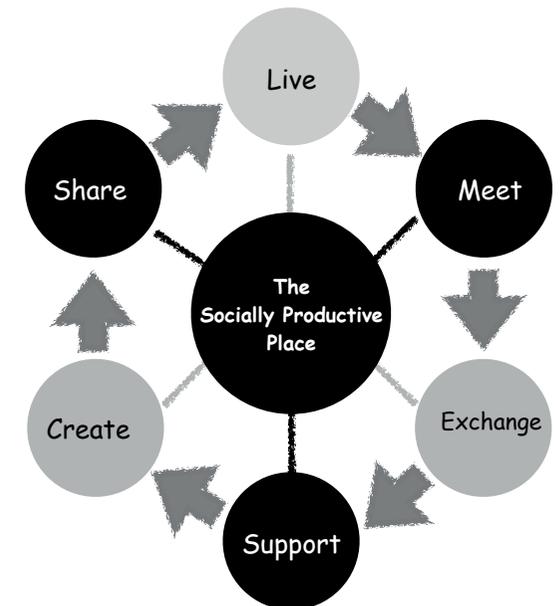
Recently, many Portland Street businesses have closed, but those that survive are a valuable community resource - and so are the shops and other business premises that are currently vacant. If allowed to change in to residential use - which is a likely market response - that resource will be diminished and opportunities to reinvigorate the whole neighbourhood will be lost.

This is a place where small businesses could start up in affordable accommodation, where they could support each other and innovate through close interaction, where there could be strong synergy between creative enterprises, service providers, retailers, cafes, child-care and health-care providers, and people living in the neighbourhood. Reviving Portland Street's role as a meeting place will play an important part in all this. With a suitable mix of uses and a well designed and managed public realm, Portland Street could become the heart of a collaborative and creative community - a place for interactions between residents and businesses, businesses and businesses, creators and consumers.

In subsequent pages, potential changes to the

use and form of the Hermit Street garage court are considered - with opportunities to create affordable work space for small businesses being recommended for further exploration. It is considered that there is scope for strong synergy between small businesses in that location and the retail and community services envisaged for Portland Street, combining to form a quarter for creative and innovative enterprise - all just 400 metres walk from the University of Lincoln which could be a strong partner in creating the conditions that would support sustainable revitalisation of this part of the City.

The diagram below is offered as a stimulus for developing this concept for Portland Street, Hermit Street and adjacent areas further.



## Recommended Actions

It is recommended that the following package of measures should be pursued so that Portland Street can become both an effective and vibrant community street, a place that people want to spend time in - and an attractive and distinctive gateway to Sincil Bank:

- Removal of the damaged “safety barriers” at the High Street junction, replacing them with a distinctive gateway feature designed as a piece of public art;
- Design and implementation of a integrated set of measures to calm traffic and make the street safer and more attractive for pedestrians and cyclists (the “green route” link between Sincil Bank and High Street);
- Introduction and enforcement of a 20mph speed limit;
- Planting of more street trees to continue the existing rows and turn this in to an attractive tree-lined street;
- Discussions and negotiations with the owners of the 3-storey terrace on the south side with a view to achieving restoration of the fabric and better management of the HMOs;
- Discussions and negotiations with owners of vacant commercial premises with a view to securing opportunities for -
  - » local and locally-oriented enterprises needing affordable space;
  - » providing community services and facilities;

- Introduction of kerbside “parklets” and street cafes, integrated with the traffic calming and on-street car parking provisions;
- Creative transformation of the seating area on the corner of Hermit Street;
- Promotion of occasional street markets;
- Active promotion of Portland Street as a unique and vibrant place worth visiting.



Portland Street: A Community Street



## City Council-owned garage courts

The City Council owns and lets garages in several courts in the neighbourhood. They provide parking and storage places for some people, although not all the tenants are local residents. The two largest are at Hermit Street (off Portland Streets) and Palmer Street (off Chelmsford Street).

Whilst the garages at Hermit Street and Palmer Street provide parking and storage places for some individuals, to many people they are ugly and unpleasant places that contribute to an air of neglect. In their current form, they also give rise to some other concerns:

- areas are concealed from public view and there is very little surveillance from surrounding buildings, so they can be prone to littering and provide places where anti-social and criminal behaviour can go unseen, contributing to fear of crime if not actual crime itself;
- the hard surfaces around the garages get used by local children and teenagers for ball games and other recreational activities, for which they are neither suitable nor safe, presumably because play space is so scarce within this part of the Sincil Bank neighbourhood.

It might be possible to rectify those issues by making significant investment in lighting, CCTV surveillance and enforcement of restrictions on their use. An alternative is to see the garage courts as a potential resource for uses to benefit the wider community rather than as a place to park a car,

benefitting just a few individuals.

It must be recognised that the loss of the garages could have some negative impacts. In particular, consideration needs to be given to the extent that this might increase demand for on-street parking in the neighbourhood. In considering that potential effect, account needs to be taken of a number of factors, including:

- a number of the garages are currently let to people who are not resident in the area;
- a number are currently unlet;
- some appear to be used for purposes other than garaging a car.

Findings of a recent occupation survey are summarised below for each location.

### Total garage lettings in the neighbourhood as of February 2017:

- Palmer Street – 22/44
- Hermit Street – 50/57
- Walnut Place – 10/15
- Albion Place – 9/13

**Total – 91/129**

### Hermit Street

As at April 2017, most garages (50 out of 57) at Hermit Street were let but:

- only 30 of those tenants have registered addresses in the immediate vicinity of the Garage Courts;
- 12 of the 50 are not resident in the Sincil Bank neighbourhood.
- the remaining 8 garages are let to residents of the Sincil Bank neighbourhood who live outside the immediate vicinity of the garages - all being closer to the garages at Albion Street or Walnut Place.

### Palmer Street

At Palmer Street, 21 out of 44 garages were occupied:

- 10 of those tenants have registered addresses in the immediate vicinity of the site;
- 4 are not resident in the neighbourhood;
- the remaining 7 garages are let to residents of the Sincil Bank neighbourhood who live outside the immediate vicinity of the garages - all being closer or equidistant to the garages at Albion Street or Walnut Place.

Overall, the package of measures being recommended can be expected to take non-residents' cars off the streets but getting rid of all the garages could add about 60 more. We are therefore, **not** recommending that **all** garages on Hermit Street and Palmer Street are removed but rather that:



- priority for these is given to existing tenants from the immediate vicinity;
- surplus garages (currently vacant or occupied by tenants resident outside the neighbourhood) are removed;
- tenants from within Sincil Bank but resident outside the immediate vicinity of the garage courts are relocated to other garage courts;
- the above actions are coupled with other measures, such as providing additional off-street parking in another suitable and convenient locations and introducing a residents' parking scheme (as explored elsewhere in this document) to create more opportunities for those residents with cars to park close to their homes.

In their current condition, it is considered that the potential negatives associated with redevelopment of these garage sites are significantly outweighed by the potential positives. Unless there are realistic prospects of improving the garage courts so that they no longer impact negatively on the appearance and amenity of the places in which they are located, they should be redeveloped in ways that will make a positive contribution to the well-being and vitality of the neighbourhood.

The development potential of each is, therefore, considered in the pages that follow.



## Hermit Street

There are 57 garages, of which 50 are let -

- 24 to residents in Hermit Street,
- 5 to residents in Portland Street,
- 1 to a resident in Tentercroft Street,
- 20 other.

This is a long (east/west), narrow (north/south) site. Its shape and position conceal much of the site from view from public areas and there is very little surveillance from surrounding buildings. It is a site with a history of anti-social behaviour.

Redevelopment would involve the loss of some of the garages, but not all. The southernmost row of garages would almost certainly need to be kept as they are an integral part of the building that contains the adjacent flats. Conversion of these garages – for example, to form small, low-cost workspace units - might be feasible, but may not be desirable due to the potential for disturbance of people living above and adjacent to the garages and the desirability of keeping some garages available for neighbouring residents.

Retaining these garages for use by Hermit Street residents will be helpful in minimising displacement to on-street parking, but it means that clear access will need to be maintained along the length of the southern edge of the site.

The free-standing garages in the remainder of the site could potentially be removed to make way for redevelopment that would make more beneficial use of the land and solve the issues that make it a problem area at present. There are several constraints that will influence both the physical form of redevelopment and the uses which may be considered acceptable:

- The rear (southern) boundary of the terrace that backs on to the site from Portland Street needs to be improved visually and made secure. It is assumed that the owners / tenants of those adjacent properties do not have rights of vehicular access from the garage court, even though vehicles are parked regularly in several of the rear yards. It is expected that there may, however, be rights of way for residents to access the rear of those properties by foot, and it would probably be beneficial to allow for this (even if it is not actually a legal right at present) and design it into any redevelopment scheme so as to support desirable improvement of those properties;
- There also appears to be a right of access (for vehicles and pedestrians) through the site to property that fronts on to Portland Street further to the west, and it is assumed that this will need to be retained;

- Care will need to be taken to avoid creating undue overshadowing and overlooking of the backs and back yards of the terrace fronting Portland Street, particularly as the improvement of these properties is an important aspiration of the overall revival strategy for Portland Street and the area as a whole;

- There are several mature trees running in an east/west row through the centre of the site. It is recommended that these should be retained if possible, as trees are a scarce commodity in the Sincil Bank Area and these are one of the few attractive features of this particular site.



## Redevelopment Options

### Built Form

The constraints outlined above restrict the form that redevelopment could take. They point towards a plan that would have buildings running in a single line east/west across the site, accessed from the south and sharing a common boundary or rear access path with the properties that front on to Portland Street.

Due to the proximity of the Portland Street terrace to the north, from which the site is separated by only short back yards, care will need to be taken to ensure that new buildings enhance security without causing new privacy or overshadowing problems, so heights should be restricted to two storeys (but with the possibility of some second

floor accommodation incorporated in the roofs if desired).

### Use

Revival of Portland Street is one of the core strands of the Place-shaping Framework and the proximity of this site gives it a potential role in achieving that revival.

Use	Preliminary Assessment of Development Potential
Community Hub	Proximity to Portland Street and accessibility for the whole community make the location quite good, but potential is constrained by the site's shape and dimensions.
Open Recreational and Green Space	This would not be a suitable use for the whole site because it is too concealed from natural surveillance. However, there may be scope for incorporating open space as part of a new street and broadening this at the Hermit Street end to extend north (by removing a small number of parking bays) to link in with refurbishment of the small open seating area on the corner of Portland Street.
Transformational Housing	The site's shape, dimensions and relationship with neighbouring buildings are likely to make it awkward for family housing or even apartments. However, a 24-hour presence of people would be beneficial and there is considered to be scope for including residential accommodation in the form of live/work units.
Affordable workspace	<p>The site's location, immediately adjacent to Portland Street, offers potential to create affordable accommodation for small and creative businesses that could offer entrepreneurial and employment opportunities and contribute to Portland Street's vitality and viability (for more on this, please refer to the 'Portland Street' section) .</p> <p>As a first-step, there appears to be scope for allowing some of the existing garages to be combined and converted to form low-cost workshop and studio space. This could be a practical "meanwhile" use as a prelude to full redevelopment.</p> <p>As a more permanent solution, a development providing a 24-hour presence is recommended. This site could be eminently suitable for an innovative development - such as live/work units - providing low cost opportunities for small entrepreneurial businesses in the manufacturing and creative industries sectors.</p>
Car Parking	The site's current problems and history suggest that open car parking would not be a good use for the site as a whole, although a limited amount of incidental parking in connection with other use (or uses) of the site would be acceptable.

It is recommended that this site should be redeveloped to provide a mixture of Live/Work units and safe open space.

**Partners:** City of Lincoln Council, Investors in Lincoln, LEAP and Community-owned delivery company, with close engagement with neighbouring residents, property owners and businesses.

**When?** Medium-term, but with an early start on consultation, scheme development and funding.

### Hermit Street: Live-Work / Green Space



## Palmer Street / Chelmsford Street

There are 44 garages, of which 21 are let:

- 9 to residents of adjacent streets;
- 1 to a resident on Portland Street;
- 4 to tenants based outside the neighbourhood;
- 7 to residents of the Sincil Bank area who live outside the immediate proximity of the site.

The site is roughly square in shape. The configuration of the garage buildings and the site's location at the back of houses that surround it on three sides conceal much of it from view from public areas and provide little neighbour surveillance.

To make the most of the opportunity, redevelopment can be expected to involve the loss of all of the garages if the issues that make it a problem area at present are to be solved.

There are some constraints that will influence both the physical form of redevelopment and the uses which may be considered acceptable:

- The site is surrounded on three sides (east, west and south) by the backs of terraced houses and their backyards / gardens. A few seem to take vehicle access from the garage court, but it is assumed that their owners / tenants do not have legal rights of to do so.
- Care will need to be taken to avoid creating

undesirable overshadowing and overlooking of the backs and back yards of the surrounding houses;

- Uses will need to be compatible with the levels of amenity that neighbouring residents can reasonably expect to enjoy.

### Redevelopment Options

#### Built Form

The constraints outlined above point towards a plan that would set the building or buildings sufficiently away from the boundaries with the surrounding houses to avoid overshadowing and overlooking, whilst allowing parts of the site to be either public or private open space.



Use	Site Potential
Community Hub	The location could potentially work for a community hub, as part of a linked network of community facilities, and this type of development would probably offer the best opportunity to create some accessible, but supervised community open space for both active recreation and green purposes.
Open Recreational and Green Space	Whilst, on its own, open space could present some problems (its relationship to the backs of properties surrounding it on three sides could make neighbourliness a problem and could offer insufficient surveillance to rule out anti-social behaviour) open space integrated with a development that would provide natural surveillance could work and would help to redress the neighbourhood's open space deficit, which is particularly acute in this north-eastern part.
Transformational Housing	The site is surrounded by housing. Simply adding more housing here would not necessarily help to improve the neighbourhood for the benefit of the community. Development of housing on this site would, therefore, only be recommended if it is demonstrated that the scheme would be truly transformational because it would achieve a high level of environmental sustainability and good design and enable other buildings or land to be acquired and developed for active community use.
Affordable workspace	The site's location makes it less well-suited to this type of use than the Hermit Street site, as it would be less likely to contribute effectively to the critical mass of activity necessary to reinvigorate Portland Street. due to employment opportunities and contribute to Portland Street's vitality and viability. The fact that it is surrounded by houses means that uses would need to be restricted so as to avoid causing problems for neighbouring residents.
Car Parking	The site's current problems and history suggest that open car parking would not be a good use for the site as a whole, although a limited amount of incidental parking in connection with other use (or uses) of the site would be acceptable.

It is recommended that if this site is to be redeveloped the use which would benefit the local community most would be recreational / green space, but this would need to be overlooked by a community building designed and used in ways that would provide a relatively high degree of surveillance to deter abuse of the open facilities and discourage disturbance of neighbouring residents.

If it is decided that the site should not be used for a community / open space development, an alternative could be transformational housing if this were part of a package through which equivalent community facilities would be provided in a suitable location elsewhere.

**Partners:** City of Lincoln Council, Investors in Lincoln, LEAP and Community-owned delivery company, with close engagement with neighbouring residents, property owners and businesses.

**When?** Medium-term, but with an early start on consultation, scheme development and funding.



## Lincoln City Football Ground

The possibility of relocating the football ground has been under discussion for quite a long time. The Club has aspirations that may be better catered for in a new location, and there is a commitment to explore the feasibility of this, so that the Club can make an informed decision. In the meantime the opportunities presented by the football ground need to be considered against two scenarios - "stay" or "move".

### Stay

The relationship between the football ground and the Sincil Bank area is complex. The two are synonymous. The history of Lincoln City Football Club is closely entwined with the history and identity of the Sincil Bank area.

The relationship can, however, be difficult - match day traffic and parking imposes a lot of strain on the streets and their residents. It can also be a positive relationship: there are some very loyal fans living in those same streets; there are businesses on the High Street and in other parts of the area that do well from match days; there are young people - and some older ones too - who benefit from facilities available at the football ground outside match days.

If the club is to stay - which it will in at least the short term - there are opportunities to integrate

even more effectively with the neighbouring community. These include:

- reviewing the use of building space to see if there are further opportunities for community uses, use by local businesses and enterprises and uses or developments that could add to local employment opportunities;
- reviewing the use of the northern car park area to see if it can either be released for open space use or a beneficial development, or can be used in connection with a green transport strategy.
- considering ways of improving the appearance and feel of the area adjacent to Sincil Dyke;
- opening up the northern boundary more, to create more of a street - extending Cross Street in to the football ground.

### Move

If and when the Club relocates, the opportunity for redevelopment must be considered very carefully. Financial viability issues will need to be taken fully in to account but this must not lead to a development that would be

inconsistent with the broader vision and objectives for the Sincil Bank neighbourhood.

It is recommended that four guiding principles should be applied to the development and use of the site:

- integration with the streets to the north - new development should not turn its back on them or take the form of a "gated community";
- new types and higher standards of homes should be provided, with a probable emphasis on urban family housing;
- no negative traffic impacts - the principle of Streets for People must apply;
- there must be a net addition to useable public open space and community recreation and leisure facilities;
- Sincil Bank and Sincil Dyke should be enhanced by the development - the opportunity should be taken to improve this area and the most of its beauty and tranquility, creating a very attractive southern gateway to the neighbourhood.

## Canwick Road

A potential opportunity of a very different type is about to present itself at Canwick Road.

This is an area with an extremely poor environment. Air quality is frequently very bad as a result of the volume of traffic and the canyon effect created by continuous rows of buildings lining both sides of the street, very close to the carriageway.

On the west side, those buildings are mostly homes, the residents of which, together with pedestrians and cyclists using Canwick Road, have to endure an ugly, noisy, dangerous, dangerously polluted and thoroughly unpleasant environment. There are no safe crossings for pedestrians or cyclists between the point at which it is possible to walk under Pelham Bridge between Archer Street and the Pelham Centre (another bad environment) and the underpass on the south side of South Park Avenue. Canwick Road is, therefore, a barrier which for most, is impenetrable and for a few is worth a very high-risk crossing between fast traffic. Why even consider crossing the road? Well, on the other side is Tesco's superstore, a concentration of workplaces, and a large expanse of one of the Sincil Bank neighbourhood's most scarce resources - open space - the Cow Puddle Common.

This part of Canwick Road is currently treated only as a traffic channel. Everything is geared towards getting high volumes of traffic through this place as quickly as possible. The 3-lane tidal-flow system

is designed to maximise throughput of vehicles, with no adequate provision for pedestrians and cyclists. Overall it provides a very poor approach to the City Centre (relieved only by great views to the north and south) and a very hostile edge to the Sincil Bank neighbourhood.

The opening of the Eastern Bypass will provide an opportunity to look again at the Canwick Road environment. This has been recognised when making the case for funding and constructing the Eastern Bypass, the three core objectives of which are described as follows:

- *" To support the delivery of sustainable economic growth and the Growth Point agenda within the Lincoln Policy Area (LPA) through the provision of reliable and efficient transport infrastructure.*
- *To improve the attractiveness and liveability of central Lincoln for residents, workers and visitors by creating a safe, attractive and accessible environment through the removal of strategic through traffic, particularly HGVs.*
- *To reduce congestion, carbon emissions, improve air and noise quality within the LPA, especially in the Air Quality Management Area in central Lincoln, by the removal of strategic through traffic, particularly HGVs.*

*In addition, the council predicts a 25% reduction*

*in traffic on Broadgate following the conclusion of the bypass".*

Extract from Lincolnshire County Council information sheet.

Studies of the effects of other bypasses have shown that there is a relatively short window of opportunity to make changes that will enable a road like Canwick Road to benefit from long-term reduction in traffic volumes. They show that if positive measures to reduce available road space are not taken within a short time, traffic levels on bypassed routes tend to creep back up again over just a few years as drivers then use the spare capacity that has been freed up.

Against that background, it is recommended that serious consideration should be given to reducing the vehicle carriageway along this stretch of Canwick Road from three lanes to two (which equates to a 25% reduction in capacity as the "tidal flow" system effectively provides the equivalent of a 4-lane carriageway at present); reallocating the reclaimed street-space to pedestrians and cyclists; creating a tree-lined approach with a significantly increased distance between the carriageway and adjacent houses; and creating safe and convenient places for pedestrians to cross the road.

**It is appreciated that this appears to be a radical change, but that is what is needed when conditions are as poor as they have become on Canwick Road.**



## Canwick Road: A Liveable Street



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## 6 Place Management / Governance

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Revival and renewal of the Sincil Bank Area will require determined, concerted and sustained activity over many years. To be successful and sustainable, the place-shaping process must involve the community at every step and a high degree of real community ownership and leadership will be essential. The community must be the primary partner in any intervention.

### At present...

Responsibilities for delivery of services and place-management in Sincil Bank Area are currently dispersed between a large number of public authorities and agencies, community-focused organisations and volunteers.

People living in the Sincil Bank Area are represented on the City of Lincoln Council and Lincolnshire County Council by councillors elected for the larger Park Ward area (3 City Councillors, 1 County Councillor). Both the City and County Councils provide services in and for the Sincil Bank Area, but this is a relatively small part of the area and community which each authority has to serve: there are many communities and needs competing for the limited resources available.

### City Council services include:

- Domestic refuse collection and recycling;
- Street cleaning and litter collection;
- Regulation of Houses in Multiple Occupation;

- Environmental Health services;
- Planning;
- Parks, play areas and allotments;
- Provision and management of social housing.

### County Council services include:

- Management and maintenance of public highways;
- Social services;
- Education.

### Other service providers include:

- Lincolnshire Police
- National Health Trusts
- The Environment Agency
- Anglian Water

The City of Lincoln Council provides a

Neighbourhood Management Service in Sincil Bank Area and employs a Neighbourhood Manager and a small team of support staff. This team plays a critical role in building trust, confidence and ambition across the community.

Facilitated by the Neighbourhood Management team, Sincil Bank Neighbourhood Board provides a forum for discussing local issues and ideas. The Neighbourhood Board includes several local residents, elected City and County councillors and representatives of a number of service providers.

Sincil Bank Area Residents' Group meets monthly to discuss local issues and concerns. With the support of the Community Organiser (a post funded by Investors in Lincoln and hosted by Lincoln City Football Club Sport and Education Trust), motivated residents regularly organise litter picks, support River Care sessions, hold street parties and other events, run and contribute to a local Facebook page - Maze Matters - and produce and distribute a free (City Council-funded) newspaper, Sincil Bank News.



Other community-focused organisations particularly active in the Sincil Bank Area include: LEAP - a registered charity and registered social landlord, based at Homer House, Monson Street, whose mission is "to provide effective and innovative housing and support services to vulnerable young people at risk";

Green Synergy - a Lincoln-based charity which uses community gardening and horticultural therapy to help improve people's lives;

Development Plus - a Lincoln-based community development organisation, based in premises at South Park, immediately adjacent to the Sincil Bank Area.

A number of faith organisations are active in the life of Sincil Bank, including St. Peter at Gowts Anglican Church on the High Street, with its Hall on Sibthorpe Street.

Several community groups provide support and fellowship for people who have moved in to the Sincil Bank Area and other parts of Lincoln from other countries.

The area's two primary schools - Bishop King and St. Peter at Gowts - currently provide community support that extends considerably beyond their core role of educating children. They offer significant, compassionate and consistent pastoral care to their whole school community - children and their families.

## Community-led Place-Management: next steps

Through discussions that have been held in the process of preparing this Place Shaping Framework - including place shaping workshops and attendance and participation at meetings of the Neighbourhood Board and Residents' Group - it seems that whilst there are already structures in place enabling a degree of local community involvement in local change and management, there is evident frustration about:

- understanding who is responsible for what;
- achieving coordination of service and management responsibilities divided between different authorities and agencies;
- a tendency for issues to be addressed reactively rather than proactively;
- priorities being set largely from outside the area and its communities;
- limited opportunities for the local community to take the lead in delivering changes that are needed;
- underdeveloped opportunities for wide-reaching and inclusive community-building as opposed to targeted groups.

Discussions with those already involved suggest that there is scope for the Neighbourhood Board to play a more direct and effective role in identifying, promoting, coordinating and overseeing improvement and management of the area. In order for this to happen effectively, and in order for the community to be able to operate

as a true partner in the place-shaping process, the mechanisms and profile of the Neighbourhood Board need strengthening. Current representation is not democratic (except that it includes 4 elected councillors). This is not necessarily a bad thing at this time as those who are involved are passionate, motivated and keen to see change happen - however, as decision-making powers increase, the Board will need to demonstrate accountability to the wider community. The energy, ideas and dedication of those currently involved should be used to galvanise greater engagement with the wider community: an inclusive dialogue must be brokered.

As well as being able to discuss and recommend, the Neighbourhood Board would need to be able to do and to commission - or to work with an allied community-owned delivery company to get things done. In that context, the Community Land Trust model appears to offer an appropriate way forward for Sincil Bank Area.

The purposes of a Community Land Trust are defined in Section 79 of the Housing & Regeneration Act 2008 as follows:

*"[a CLT is] established for the express purpose of furthering the social, economic and environmental interests of a local community by acquiring and managing land and other assets in order -*

- a. to provide a benefit to the local community, and*
- b. to ensure that the assets are not sold or*

*developed except in a manner which the trust's members think benefits the local community.*

*[the CLT must be] established under arrangements which are expressly designed to ensure that -*

- a. any profits from its activities will be used to benefit the local community (otherwise than by being paid directly to members),*
- b. individuals who live or work in the specified area have the opportunity to become members of the trust (whether or not others can also become members), and*
- c. the members of the trust control it".*

Those are clear principles upon which a community-led delivery company for the Sincil Bank Area could be founded.

### **Recommended Actions:**

The formation of a community-owned delivery company for Sincil Bank Area should be pursued through discussions involving the local community, the local authorities, Lincolnshire Community Land Trust and other organisations who are interested in the future of the neighbourhood and who could contribute to the delivery of the improvements and changes envisaged, such as, for example, Investors in Lincoln, the University of Lincoln, Lincolnshire Co-operative, LEAP, Lincoln City Football Club, Lincolnshire Community Foundation, SUSTRANS.



The remit of the community-owned delivery company should be defined by its eventual members, but it is envisaged that interventions and activities should include:

- improving the overall quality of housing in the area;
- tackling problems associated with long-term neglect, disrepair and poor maintenance of both private properties and the public realm;
- pursuing a rolling programme of acquiring, renovating or building, and then selling (or letting) properties that are currently vacant or deficient;
- mitigating individual and community impacts

of social and economic deprivation;

- developing and managing new and improved community facilities;
- supporting community-self help activities.

Careful thought will need to be given to the relationship between the Neighbourhood Board and the CLT so as to enable due oversight and monitoring, whilst avoiding duplication and confusion.



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## 7 Heritage and Legacy

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The core principle underpinning this Placeshaping Framework is that there are many valuable - and largely undervalued - assets embedded in Sincil Bank. Broadly speaking, there are two main assets from which a better place can be shaped:

- **the people** who live in Sincil Bank - communities and individuals of all ages and many backgrounds;
- **the place** and its inherently sustainable qualities.

The future will be shaped by the way those assets are valued, nourished and combined.

In the introduction to this Framework, reference was made to the industrial heritage, from the 19th and early 20th centuries, and the influence this continues to have on the public realm and the context in which people live. The street pattern, the architecture of the houses, the prominent commercial and community buildings, the football club, the channelled Sincil Dyke - all these are integral components of this place's heritage which influence people's lives today. Much could be done to offer today's residents - and visitors - a better understanding of the lives of people who have lived here before and the ways in which the influences of history remain present and significant.

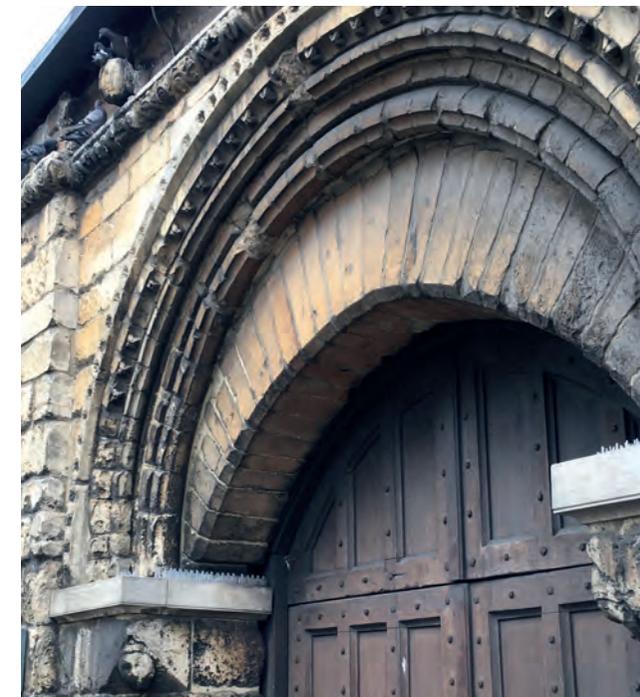
The same applies to the much longer history of

the High Street and the heritage embedded so deeply in the western fringes of the area - a heritage as deep and significant as that of the uphill area which is more frequently - though not entirely accurately - identified as Lincoln's historic core. Historic buildings such as the numerous places of worship, St Mary's Guildhall and many more modest but nonetheless interesting buildings, combine with the area's rich archaeology and documentary records to tell the story of this place and its evolution, as the context for its life today.

More efforts should be made to ensure that cultural and heritage assets in the area have a relevant and engaging purpose, connecting with the lives lived there today.

The "Bricks and Bones" project has started to reveal the depth and value of the history of this part of Lincoln and to make it accessible in new and exciting ways. This creative approach to community engagement could - and should - be supported and developed further, and extended through the Sincil Bank area. Effective placemaking involves understanding the ways in which people influence places and places influence people's lives - connecting the place with people who lived there before, live here now, and will live here in the future.

The intended purpose of this Placeshaping Framework is to contribute to a process and programme of community-led action that will build on Sincil Bank's distinctive inheritance to make this a place that better meets the needs and aspirations of people whose lives connect with and in it. Many of the actions being recommended will require fresh approaches and new partnerships. There are significant challenges to be tackled, but doing so can deliver a truly special legacy to pass forward to future generations of Sincil Bank residents.





This Place Shaping Framework was commissioned by the City of Lincoln Council in partnership with stakeholders from across the city.



[www.thinkopenplan.com](http://www.thinkopenplan.com)  
[enquiries@thinkopenplan.com](mailto:enquiries@thinkopenplan.com)