

**Open Report on behalf of Andy Gutherson,
Interim Executive Director for Place**

Report to:	Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee
Date:	26 February 2019
Subject:	Understanding Lincolnshire's historic towns - the Lincolnshire Extensive Urban Survey

Summary:

This report will detail a project in progress to improve understanding of the historic environment of thirty market towns across Greater Lincolnshire. The project forms part of a national programme promoted and fully funded by Historic England. Its overall aim is to support more effective local planning and development by understanding heritage and cultural assets in relation to the historic development of their communities, rather than simply as individual items without relationship to one another.

Actions Required:

The Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee is invited to:

1. Consider and comment on the Lincolnshire Extensive Urban Survey including:
 - the potential of the project to unlock additional government funding by planning for investment with improved understanding of community development and the historic 'offer'
 - the potential for the project to drive positive outcomes for economic growth, the visitor economy and local community benefits.
2. Consider the nature and scope of how the performance and outcomes of this project will be measured.

1. Background

This report sets out the background to, and progress in, completing a project to improve our understanding of the historic towns of Lincolnshire. Since the 1990s Historic England has run a programme characterising historic settlements and landscapes. The national programme had three main strands:

- Characterisation of England's historic cities

- Historic Landscape Characterisation
- Extensive Urban Survey

The city of Lincoln has been the subject of its own characterisation work, known as the Lincoln Archaeological Research Assessment, while Lincolnshire County Council previously undertook a Historic Landscape Characterisation of the rural landscape encompassing the whole of Lincolnshire. This paper is concerned with the third and final element of these aspects of characterisation, the Extensive Urban Survey.

In Lincolnshire, the Extensive Urban Survey (EUS) will be undertaken as part of Historic England's national programme. As such the project is fully funded by Historic England. The Lincolnshire survey will cover a total of 30 towns, with the main aim of the project being to increase our understanding of the historical development of each town and to identify how the history of each place can be read in how the town looks today. The survey will cover the towns of the historic county of Lincolnshire, the area covered by the administrative county of Lincolnshire and the unitary authorities of North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire.

The towns will be evaluated to assess their historic character and identify the nature and extent of surviving historic environment assets, whether as standing structures, below ground archaeological deposits or in the surviving historic town plan.

The EUS project will study thirty towns. These are set out on the map and in the list attached as appendices to this report. The funding of £210,000 from Historic England has enabled us to employ a project officer for three years as well as to engage external partners to undertake much of the programme of community engagement. We shall engage with as wide a range of partners as possible to ensure the outputs of the project are achieved to their fullest.

The results will be held as part of the Lincolnshire Historic Environment Record (HER) and the HERs of NLC and NELC both in a database and spatially in a Geographic Information System (computerised mapping). The principal outputs will be a Historic Character Assessment report for each town. These will be available in a limited number of hard copy reports but will mainly be made available digitally through the Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) website and the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) website, where the national programme is currently held. We shall ensure that a copy of each report is available to members. There will also be a summary report produced of the full project.

The project outputs will be used to support and inform a variety of planning policies from national objectives as reflected in the NPPF to the local policies of the relevant local planning authority. This improved evidence base will assist the local authorities of the historic county of Lincolnshire and their partners in planning for the care of the county's historic urban settlements, protecting historic character and promoting sympathetic regeneration at a time of intense development pressure.

In addition the project will engage closely with local communities in understanding their sense of the character of each locality. The project will not be just a survey but an exercise in public engagement with a focus on 'place', and the role that a sense of a location's history has in shaping how its community identifies with it. CLG has developed evidence to show that increasing local belonging or strengthening people's sense of where they live (their sense of place) can have many positive benefits, including increasing their sense of self-esteem and identity, which in turn can lead to stronger communities in which individuals and groups are actively involved in local decision making. Additional research suggests that people living in areas with a higher concentration of the historic environment are likely to have a stronger sense of place.

As well as community engagement in the local environment we will trial roadshow events in a number of towns with colleagues from Heritage Services. This will provide local people with direct access support to explore their town's history and heritage.

A presentation will also be delivered on the progress of the project, and the stages taken to get to where we are, and how the process has developed so far. A preview demonstration into the historical background and development of Holbeach will also be given, including a demonstration of the GIS data.

The project will be overseen by an Advisory Group. This will draw upon expertise from within and outside the county and will ensure it fulfils its stated aims and objectives.

The Lincolnshire EUS is fully funded by Historic England to provide an improved evidence base for planning and economic regeneration in the county's thirty historic towns. It will draw upon local knowledge to ensure the information we gain for each town reflects the views of residents young and old.

2. Conclusion

The EUS project will increase awareness of the importance of the towns of Lincolnshire to its historic environment. Each town is unique and has a character which gives its residents a sense of place. We hope to capture what makes the towns of Lincolnshire special and to demonstrate how we can capture the value each place holds. Our towns are coping with social and economic changes on a large scale and we will ensure that the character of each place is fully recognised as decisions are made for their future.

3. Consultation

a) Have Risks and Impact Analysis been carried out?

No

b) Risks and Impact Analysis

There are no identified risks to LCC by undertaking this work. There will be benefits to the county's heritage and historic environment by reducing the threats we face.

4. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	List of towns to be studied
Appendix B	County map showing towns to be studied

5. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

This report was written by Ian George and Nicola Grayson, who can be contacted on 01522554838 or ian.george@lincolnshire.gov.uk.