

Derby Conservation Areas

Friar Gate



INTRODUCTION

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Local Planning Authorities to determine areas of special architectural or historic interest, "the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance". These areas are called Conservation Areas.

Derby is a City of considerable historic interest and architectural merit with a range of streets and buildings spanning many centuries. In an effort to conserve important elements of our built heritage, the City Council have designated fifteen such areas. The City Centre and Friar Gate Conservation Areas are at the heart of the City Centre. Seven are based on aspects of Victorian Derby (Railway, Arboretum, Little Chester, Strutts Park, and Hartington Street, Highfield Cottages, Leylands Estate, Nottingham Road) and the remaining five are focused on former village centres (Darley Abbey, Mickleover, Spondon, Allestree and Markeaton). This document outlines the history and mentions some of the exceptional buildings contained within one of these areas.

There are legal requirements and constraints which apply to Conservation Areas which do not apply elsewhere and the City Council therefore must pay special attention to the "character" and "appearance" of these areas when exercising its planning powers. This is a positive process in which a continuing effort is being made to control the nature and scale of change.

With the exception of certain buildings, no building in a conservation area can be demolished without consent from the Local Authority. This is enforced to maintain some of the more ordinary buildings that nevertheless contribute a great deal to the character of the area. An application for Conservation Area Consent must be made separately from any application for planning permission for redevelopment of the site. Application forms are available from Derby City Council, development and Cultural Services Department, Roman House, Friar Gate, Derby, DE1 1XB or telephone 01332 255950.

There is also special protection for trees within designated Conservation Areas and anyone wishing to cut down, lop, top or uproot such a tree, must, with limited exceptions, give six weeks' notice to the City Council of their intention. This is to allow the authority an opportunity to formally inspect the tree and decide in the interest of public visual amenity, whether it is appropriate to make a [Tree Preservation Order](#).

“The Ordnance Survey map data included within this website document is provided by Derby City Council under licence from Ordnance Survey in order to fulfil its public function to act as a planning authority. Persons viewing this mapping should contact Ordnance Survey copyright for advice where they wish to licence Ordnance Survey map data for their own use. The OS web-site can be found at www.ordsvy.gov.uk”.

Friar Gate Conservation Area

Friar Gate was Derby's first Conservation Area. It was designated in September 1969, and extended several times, most recently in October 1987. The Conservation Area has many interesting buildings, over 100 of which are listed as Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. Though it is best known for its fine Georgian buildings, Friar Gate has its origins much further in the past.

Though originally called Markeaton Lane, Friar Gate takes its present name from the 13th century Friary that once stood close by.

A Priory of the Convent of St Mary de Pratis was also located near Friar Gate and gave its name to Nun's Street and Nun's Green, which occupied a large space on the north side of Friar Gate from the Headless Cross as far as Ford Street.



Headless Cross, Friar Gate, Derby

The Headless Cross which is claimed to have been "Headless" from as early as 1483, has been relocated near its original site by the City Council. It is a site where horse and cattle fairs were held from early times until 1861; hence the unusual width of the street at its west end.

On the dissolution of the monasteries, the lands of the Convent passed to the Borough, whilst the Friary was disposed of privately, becoming a private residence, the successor to which is now the Friary Hotel. This building is of particular interest and was once the town mansion of Samuel Crompton, banker and financier of the 18th century industrial enterprises.



St Werburgh's Church, Friar Gate, Derby



Georgian House Hotel, Friar Gate, Derby

The Church of St Werburgh at the eastern entrance to Friar Gate is believed to have originated on this site from the 8th century, but the earliest part of the existing building is the tower of 1610. The Church takes its name from the sister of King Aethelred of Mercia who was Abbess of Ely and died at Trentham in 699. The tower survived flooding in 1698 but a new Queen Anne style church was built, (of which only the chancel now survives), only to be replaced in 1893 by the present building to the designs of Sir Arthur Blomfield RA. Samuel Johnson, the famous man of letters, married

Elizabeth Porter here on 9th July 1735.



Friar Gate Bridge, Friar Gate, Derby

The lower part of Friar Gate between St Werburgh's and the Railway Bridge has a number of important buildings. These include the Georgian Friary Hotel, the 17th century group opposite, an imposing Georgian group adjacent to the bridge, and a far more modest group of 17th and 18th century buildings on the south side of Friar Gate near St Werburgh's.

The religious connections of Friar Gate extend to the north west of the railway bridge where a fine Georgian group of buildings occupy part of Nun's Green, site of the Borough's pinfold after the dissolution. This area was developed after an Act of Parliament in 1768 allowed the Corporation to sell off the land adjacent to the street in plots. The present group begins with important late Renaissance style town houses, four of which are believed to be the work of architect Joseph Pickford (1734-1782), Derby's leading architect during the reign of George III. No. 41 Friar Gate has a particularly fine entrance hall and is Grade I listed. It is now used as a museum.



Pickfords House, Friar Gate

The Conservation Area includes two buildings by Francis Goodwin, a renowned architect of the early 19th century. The Church of St John in Bridge Street is a

Gothic style church of 1826 which stands across the Brook from the quiet backwater of St John's Terrace, whilst in South Street the former County Gaol of 1828 is a severe classical design, pronounced soon after its opening as "of the best plan and construction in the United Kingdom". The "Martello towers" were added after reform bill riots in 1831. The land in the front of the Gaol was used for public executions until 1862, and together with the Gaol, forms a backdrop to the Regency Vernon Street.

There are also a number of late Georgian and Regency buildings in Ashbourne Road which are included in the Conservation Area.

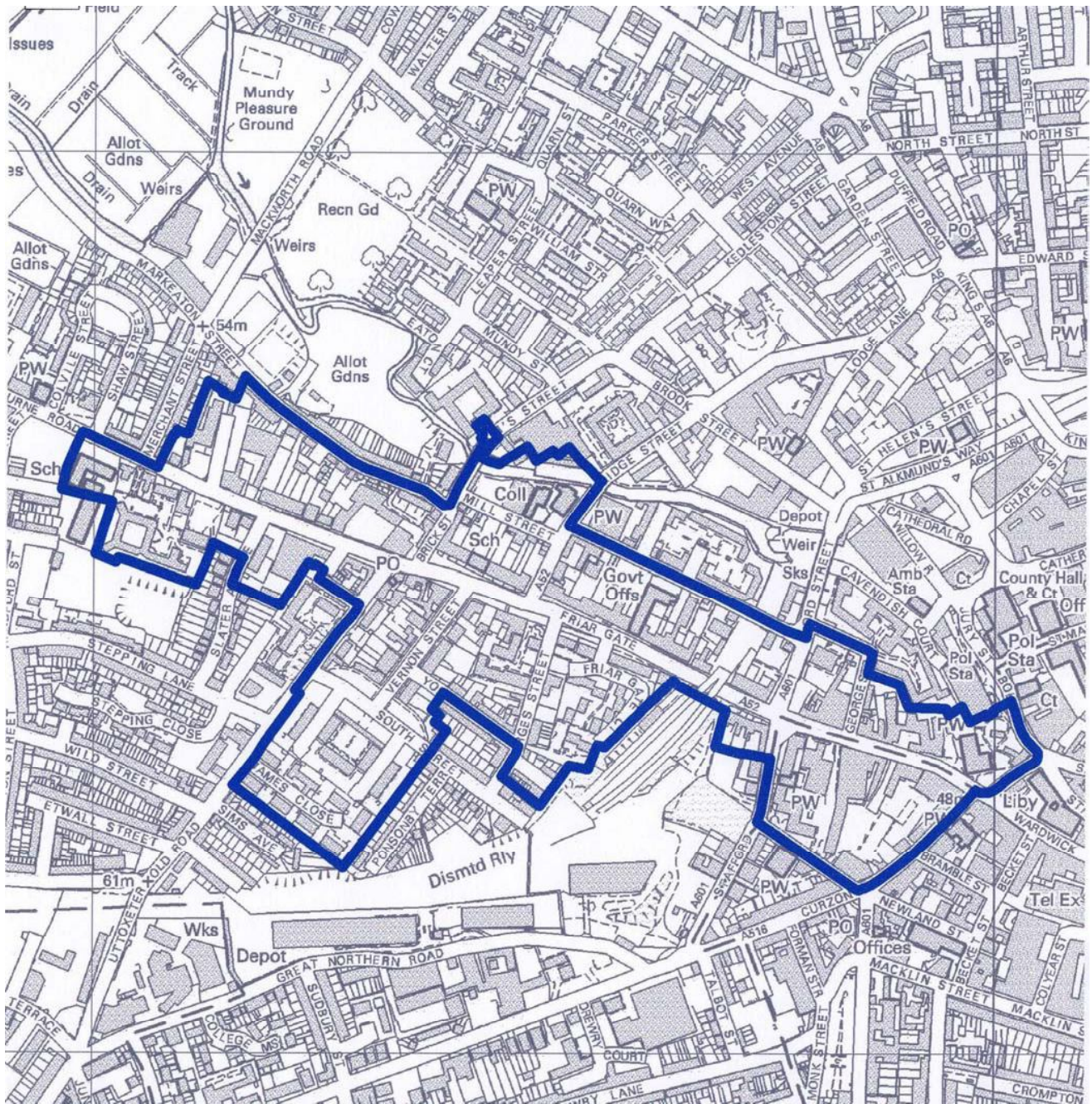
The south side of Friar Gate between Vernon Street and the former railway has a number of interesting buildings; the first is the Elizabethan style former Diocesan School built 1841, contemporary with the Greyhound Inn although the core of the building is probably earlier.

Beyond the recent office development at the site of the former Women's Hospital, a group of (originally) five almshouses known as Large's Hospital was rebuilt in 1880 for the benefit of clergy widows.

No. 93 Friar Gate, adjacent to the former station, is the last remaining building associated with the Royal School for the Deaf. It was built to the designs of Henry Isaac Stevens in 1846. The Friar Gate Railway Bridge built in 1878 but now redundant was the work of Andrew Handyside of Derby, and represents a demonstration of the skill of one of the finest Victorian iron founders. The bridge was acquired by Derby City Council after the closure of the railway.



Friar Gate Conservation Area



“Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Derby City Council - License 100024913 (2004)”



**Designed and updated by the Built Environment Team
Environmental Sustainability Unit
Derby City Council**

Ann Bates MA, BSc Hons