

5. GREEN SPACES AND PLANTING



Aerial Photograph of Lord Street. Reproduced with permission from Historic England

5.1 PUBLIC GARDENS

The public gardens and spaces of Lord Street are generally confined to the landward side of the Street and contribute a great deal to the quality of the environment within the Lord Street Conservation Area.



Open green spaces such as the Lord Street Gardens are located on the landward side of the street.

The classically designed spaces are strongly differentiated from the general street scene by a combination of planting and low balustrade walls. The physical separation from the pavements and the planted borders and grassed lawns within the spaces give the gardens their own sense of place and detachment from the busy town centre. Overall it provides a soft landscaped green appearance, giving respite from the urban nature and traffic of Lord Street.

The common theme of boundary treatments and layouts of the public gardens adds to the coherence of the streetscene, its visual interest is enhanced by each garden having unique features which provide added interest to views within and through the classically themed spaces.

Whilst several of the gardens have seating areas within them, they are more frequently spaces that people walk through, rather than linger in. The routes through the gardens largely do not line up with townscape features beyond but the routes are numerous allowing good permeability.

The public gardens have a mutually beneficial relationship with the buildings which line the street. The spacious, open and green nature of the gardens provides an attractive setting for the buildings as they help soften the otherwise hard and urban character of the street. The classical theme seen in most of the public spaces particularly complements the architectural character of the traditional buildings. Viewed from within the gardens, the buildings provide a sense of enclosure,

complementary architectural character and provide visual interest. Where the gardens front blander modern buildings the value of the gardens still have a positive impact on the street scene but the relationships are not as strong and therefore the quality of the townscape is diminished in these sections.

To provide a more formal setting for the civic buildings Town Gardens were remodelled in 1998 with support from the Heritage Lottery Fund. This scheme recreated significant elements of the classical scheme that characterises the street. They are flanked by two traditionally styled single storey pavilions. Since construction the space has become increasingly commercialised, to the detriment of the formal setting of the civic buildings.



Well-kept gardens have a positive impact on Lord Street

Redeveloped gardens have a different character to those which have not been altered. The southernmost gardens have not been altered. They have a greater shadiness, as trees are overbearing to the lawns and planting beds, this has resulted in a lack of low level planting within the beds. By way of contrast, the redeveloped gardens have a more modern character with less of a sense of enclosure. Trees are of less size, new shrub beds and paths have curved lines. Planting beds contain a variety of modern shrubs which are probably not indicative of the original planting style.

5.2 PRIVATE GARDENS

The planted character of the private gardens complements that of the public gardens and helps to sustain the appearance of continuous gardens along the whole length of the street. These green spaces have been particularly vulnerable to loss for car parking purposes, which has diminished the quality of their contribution to the Conservation Area, as seen in photographs overleaf.



Examples of harmful loss of gardens to car parking

Where the original walls and boundary treatments survive these make a positive contribution to the area and also make clear the age of the arrangement.

The private gardens spaces in front of the houses (and former houses) contribute greenness and complement the public gardens creating unity within the townscape. The gardens are of particular value where remnants of the early garden layouts remain. Taken together with the buildings they front, these sites illustrate the early layout and form of development in Southport.

5.3 CHURCH GROUNDS



Charming stone walls help distinguish church boundaries from the public realm

The semi-private green spaces that front the three churches are all physically separated from the street scene by stone walls. They have more limited access points. The layout of all the spaces dates from the Victorian period. Each is of a simple character and with a symmetrical design to them. The design of these green settings with a heavy tree canopy means they have a greater sense of seclusion and separation. The large specimen horse chestnut trees to the front of Christ Church are highly attractive. They particularly dominate the space and help to create the sense of

separation from the melee of the shopping environment. These features bestow these spaces with a more tranquil character compared with the wholly public spaces. These settings add to the sense of reverence and importance of the churches that they front.

5.4 TREES

Both the public gardens and the footpaths are planted with trees, several of which have reached maturity. Originally the trees were planted to unite the separate gardens and private spaces, and this function remains important. Early photographs of Lord Street show the uniformity of the plantings with trees regularly spaced in lines either side of the carriageway. Although there have been reductions in the trees and gaps have developed, the positions of the tree planting in lines next to the carriageway is unaltered.

It is notable that the trees selected at this time were not of uniform character and the original plantings displayed some characterful peculiarities. Some examples of this remain such as the rather unusual double horse chestnut adjacent the War Memorial, which are two separate trees that were purposefully planted close together.



Victorian layout of street trees, note the Prince of Wales Hotel on the right. Image courtesy of Sefton Information Services, Sefton Libraries

The trees help to create a mature and pleasantly shaded environment and they contribute to the series of views along and across Lord Street, which are revealed in stages between them.

A section of boulevard lined with a double row of mature trees complements the gardens in front of the former houses at 152-172 Lord Street and also the remainder

of the street trees. Where the planted character of the gardens has been lost to hard standings, the mature street trees lining the boulevard help to mitigate the loss.

The trees are of mixed species including, horse chestnut, sycamore, beech, oak and plane. During the 1980s all of the Elm trees were lost to Dutch Elm disease.

In 1982 the Civic Society counted 658 trees on Lord Street (including those within public gardens) of which 54 were dead or dying. Today the number of trees as recorded by Sefton MBC is 355, which indicates a significant reduction has taken place over the last 30 years, however it is not certain if the methodologies used for these counts were the same.

Trees in Lord Street have been decorated with lights since the late 19th century. Recently a new scheme has been completed involving strings of white lights wrapped in spirals around branches in a modern fashion. These are occasionally altered for special occasions such as Halloween.

The trees were historically positioned similar to their current arrangements. Tree pits on the seaward side of the street are set close to the kerb edge and are generally of sizeable dimensions bordered by tiles. The simple design and appearance of these tree pits and large size enables the trees to grow without detriment to the hard surfacing. However there are some poor examples where trees have been encircled by asphalt right up to the trunk.



Examples of reproduction Southport paviers



Some trees have been inappropriately covered in asphalt up to the trunk

6. BUILDING GROUPS

The buildings vary considerably along the length of Lord Street in terms of building type, plot width, scale and style. The architectural characteristics of each building correspondingly vary in line with their original purpose and their age.

Despite the variation there are some groups of similar buildings and also buildings which encompass several units, built as one architectural whole. These are described below and illustrated in plan 7.

6.1 SHOPS

The shops which characterise the seaward side of the street range from two to four storeys, and directly abut the back of the pavement. The purpose built shops display a rich tapestry of mostly Victorian and Edwardian architecture, and the variety of designs and styles together form an attractive composition. The architectural designs are influenced by wide ranging historical styles including Classical, Gothic and Tudor.

A high proportion of the shops are constructed as part of one larger building. In these cases the architectural unity of the frontages of the individual units is particularly important, as this helps to maintain the character and appearance of that 'building'. Where alterations from the original form have been carried out the effects are detrimental.

Purpose built commercial buildings tend to be 3-4 storeys in height and utilise higher quality materials and elaborate architecture. Some of the shops seem to be conversions from older dwellings, these tend to be only two storeys, and upper floors largely maintain a somewhat residential appearance, these are primarily found on the side streets and towards the northern end of Lord Street.

6.2 RESIDENTIAL & FORMER RESIDENTIAL



Original purpose built residential buildings range from the narrow plot widths, small scale and simple style of Wellington Terrace at the south-eastern end of the street, to more substantial semi-detached villas at the north-eastern end, and the later Victorian terraced dwellings on Manchester Road.

The original residential properties on Lord Street are of two storeys situated on the landward side, and built in the first half of the 19th Century. They have been subject to various alterations, with some now quite disfigured. The houses forming Wellington Terrace are grade II listed and the buildings have been restored. The consistent Welsh slate roof, stucco treatment, and similar windows helps to maintain the sense of unity across the terrace though there is an unfortunate lack of consistency in boundary treatments and several front and rear gardens have been detrimentally lost to car parking.

The group at 152-172 Lord Street were largely built by 1834, several houses were likely to have been built for the purpose of receiving paying guests; 152-154 is shown as the 'Bridge Hotel' on Walker's Plan (See Appendix D). Today the properties contain a mix of uses. Unfortunately several of the properties have been subjected to major alterations though most retain some features that make clear their residential and simple character. One which has retained its smaller domestic appearance is 156 Lord Street although this at one time was also an office. There is evidence of early 20th century changes, with some properties incorporating features such as Edwardian porches and early 20th century leaded lights. Such features are of interest as they illustrate the historic changes and adaptations to these early dwellings. There is a consistency in building heights and scale of buildings and most have Welsh slate roofs with stone gate piers which have been largely retained. Some frontages retain their planted gardens, which enhances the domestic character of these buildings.

6.3 ST GEORGE'S PLACE



The purpose built commercial properties fronting St Georges Place and Post Office Avenue form a cohesive group, which were likely to have been built by the same individual. They are particularly well preserved and incorporate high quality details. Their locations adjacent the War Memorial and St Georges Gardens provide an attractive setting which complements the buildings. The units along Post Office Avenue are of a locally unusual design which incorporates windows, rather than shopfronts.

The high standard of architecture within St George's Place is in keeping with the grandeur of the nearby War Memorial and gardens

6.4 MARKET STREET

86-88 Lord Street, and 2-10 Market Street are built using the same buff brick and display the same architectural style and decorative treatments. These were likely built at the same time by the same builder probably coinciding with Market Street's creation around the turn of the 20th century. The distinctive materials mean that this group of buildings particularly stand out as a unified element in the Conservation Area.



Consistent design through style and materials helps this section of Market Street remain distinct, but still within the character of the Conservation Area

6.5 CIVIC BUILDINGS

The group of Civic buildings overlooking Town Gardens occupy substantial plots and although the Town Hall is relatively modest in style, The Atkinson is more imposing.

The important cultural value of these buildings is reflected in their scale, elaborate architectural designs, carved details and use of expensive materials. Their architectural grandeur marks them out as key buildings within the street scene, reflective of their greater cultural and civic importance. Each has its own distinctive characteristics and features which are important to maintain.

The buildings have been subject to some losses of details, extensions and changes. Christ Church has seen the greatest change with only the frontage and tower remaining of the historic structure. The Cambridge Hall, now part of The Atkinson complex, has lost its original ground floor windows and doors and changes and

additions to the rear have been made to incorporate the covered shopping area of Cambridge Walks. The changes to link the buildings physically has included closing off main entrances, reducing the sense of activity and access from one entrance from three.

With the exception of the fire station which is a well-executed modern replacement for the original, the Civic Buildings at the Junction of Manchester Road and Albert Road share the same qualities of age and architecture, having been built during the 1930s after the functions outgrew their original Town Hall accommodation.

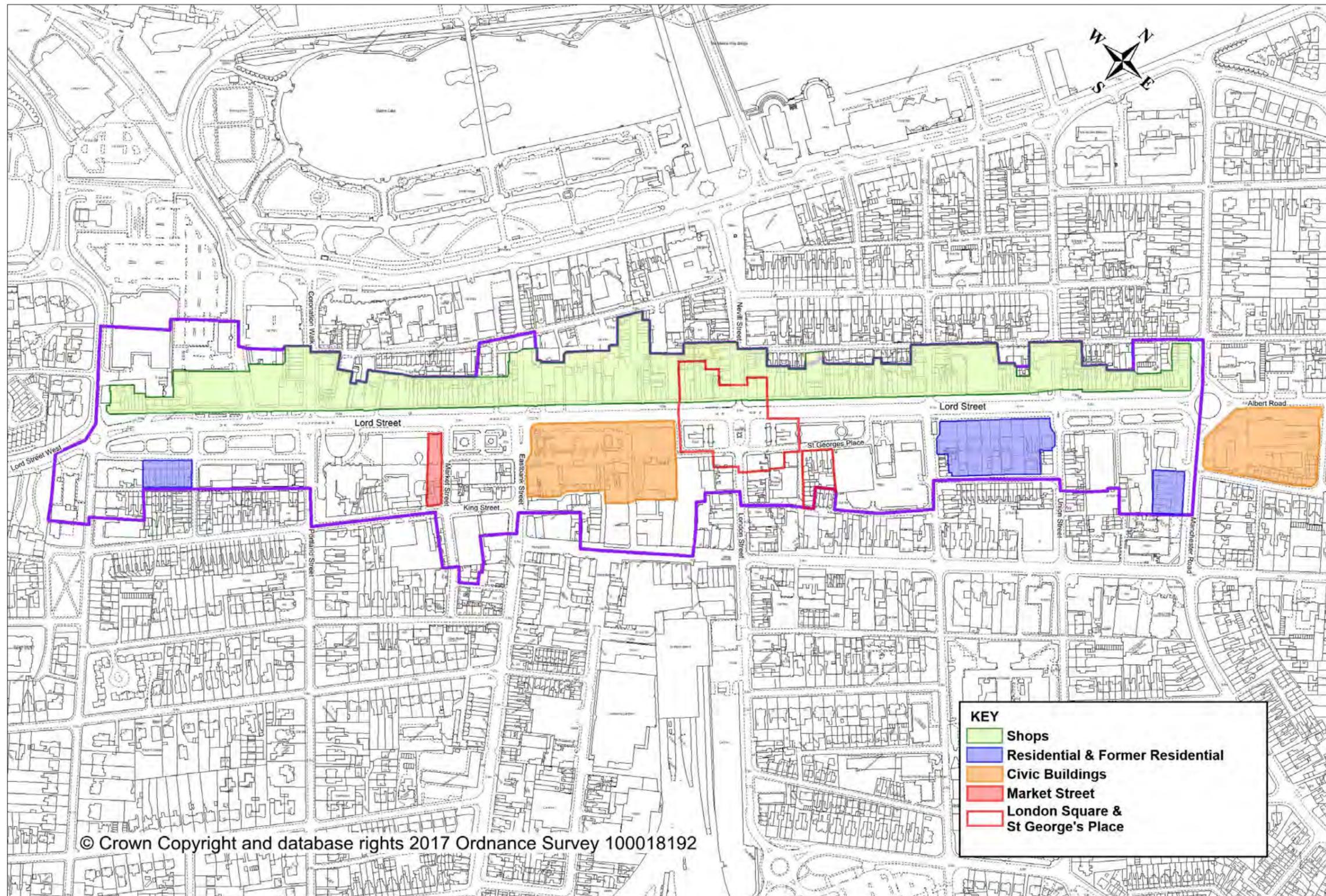
6.6 THE MONUMENT

This space is dominated by the Portland stone War Memorial which spans the junction. The obelisk forms a central landmark. On the corners of the broad junction three of the four buildings which face the space are also built in classical styles in Portland stone which complements the memorial and enhances the relationship between them. The buildings in the near vicinity are all of a high architectural quality which further enhances the grandeur and formality of the space.



The Portland stone War Memorial is a key local landmark

Plan 7 to show building groups



7. ARCHITECTURE, DETAILS AND MATERIALS

The Conservation Area is characterised by different types of properties built over a period of approximately 200 years. The buildings exhibit a mix of different architectural styles which sit side by side in an attractive composition.



The Conservation Area contains examples of a great many different styles of 19th and early 20th Century architecture. They are mainly revivals or reinterpretations of historic English styles including Gothic, Tudor, Elizabethan and Jacobean. A variety of styles have also been imported from abroad including Greek, Flemish, Italian and Moorish. Classical styles have generally been used for the most imposing properties, including public buildings and banks.

Most commercial buildings are built in these styles and are generally very decorative; features include prominent chimneystacks, gables, balconies and turrets. The banks and former bank buildings are particularly striking having been built in archetypal classical styles.

A former bank designed in a strong classical style

The most ornate designs are largely focussed in the central portion of the street, adjacent to The Monument and Town Gardens, particularly on corner plots at major junctions.

By way of contrast the earlier residential properties display a much simpler style of architecture, and a more limited palette of materials, examples are the former cottages within Nevill Street as well as on Lord Street.



Historic cottages located in Nevill Street

The result of the use of such a range of building styles and materials in close proximity creates a very lively and varied street scene, particularly along Lord Street itself.

Because the ages and styles of buildings vary, the features seen are not generally suitable to be copied from one building to another. It is important to maintain the individual styling of the buildings to ensure that they retain their architectural integrity and sense of variety.

Below is a description of the variety of features to be found in the Conservation Area.

7.1 FRONT ELEVATIONS

Late Victorian and Edwardian commercial buildings are primarily fronted with a smooth-faced rich red imperial sized brick with very narrow mortar joints laid in either Flemish or stretcher bond. Mortar is also usually of a colour which blends in with the bricks but will usually be of a lime mix. Walls to less prominent side and rear elevations are generally a lower quality, common and more variegated brick, though there are also instances where glazed brick is used.

Frontages are variously decorated with stone banding, projecting sills, and terracotta tiles. Many of the frontages also include projecting and recessed elements such as pilasters and columns. Some brick buildings have been painted, or rendered; where these form part of a larger 'building' the effect of the change is noticeably inappropriate.

Some stone-faced and block buildings incorporate particularly impressive and elaborate carved details including statuary and friezes.

Half-timbered elevations are also seen with their characteristic mix of white rendered panels and black painted timber. 215-219 Lord Street is a particularly notable example. In these elevations the timbers are traditionally jointed and set into the render rather than on top of it. 'Pegs' are added to increase the illusion of the timber having a structural function. Where half-timbering has been replaced often the construction details are simpler, consequently these fail to offer the same authentic appearance.



Inappropriate painted-on detail on the bay

Typical Victorian half-timbered detail

Date stones and carved stone names are incorporated within some buildings, located at higher level. Decorative cast iron rain water hoppers are also a feature on some buildings at high level. Some state the date of the building within their castings.

Façades of the older commercial and residential properties are a mixture of softer red/brown brick and smooth stucco render. Some have been altered to have a painted, rendered or dashed finish.

7.2 ROOFS

Along Lord Street there are a number of commercial, civic and ecclesiastical buildings which incorporate elaborate roof level features. The slender turrets such as those at Pavilion Buildings and Tower Buildings are particularly eye-catching and contribute greatly to broader views of the streetscape.

Roofs are overwhelmingly of Welsh Slate. Earlier roofs use particularly heavy slates, laid in diminishing courses. Later Victorian properties use more regular sized slate, some with special shaped slates and different tones used to decorative effect. Replacement materials such as concrete tiles and felt are not sympathetic to the age and style of the buildings, for example the thickness of concrete tiles gives heaviness to the appearance of roofs. Ridge tiles are varied in materials and design; some are decorative and add to the decorative effect of the roofscape. Older and plainer properties tend to utilise simpler ridge treatments which complements their simpler architecture.

Gables or dormers are a feature of many of the traditional buildings, with designs from the relatively simple to the elaborate. Natural stone copings and/or timber carved verge boards adorn pediments, dormers and gables. Elaborate finials of carved timber or wrought iron sit atop the various roofscape features. Eaves brackets, decorative projecting brickwork, stonework or carved joinery decorate the eaves of many buildings. Together these elements add to the attractive and characterful mixture of interesting forms and shapes on the roofline.



Rooftop elements enhance many parts of the townscape through their materials and design

Chimneys are varied, some being plain others elaborate. A particularly notable chimney is the exceedingly tall chimney at 599 Lord Street. Its position against the neighbouring property has probably enabled its survival. This property was likely to have been a Victorian domestic dwelling, later converted to commercial use.



Tall chimneys at 599 Lord Street



Turrets add to the roofscape



Lavish Gables overlook the townscape

The roofs of earlier domestic properties such as at Wellington Terrace and 152-172 Lord Street are simple without ornament, dormers or roof lights and with a low pitch displaying simple shapes, pitched or hipped. While there is a long and interesting

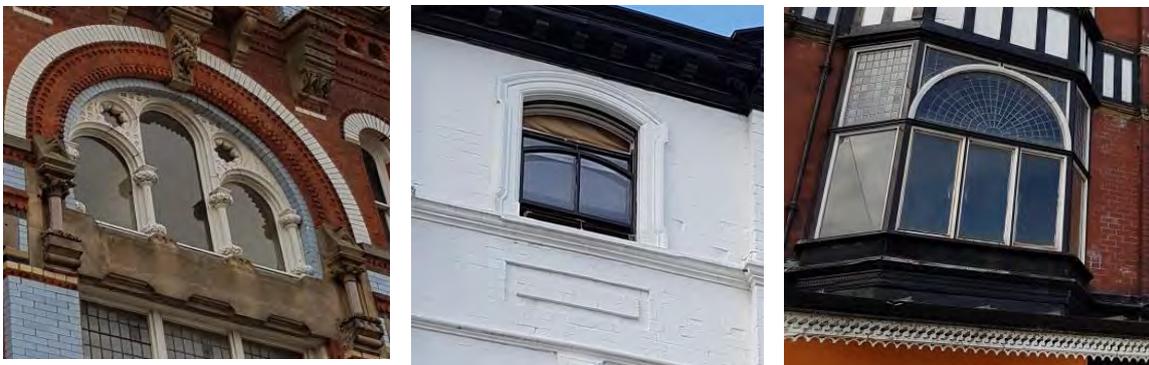
history of adaptations to several of these buildings, some have been harmed through the loss of their simple roofscapes.

7.3 WINDOWS

The style of the window and window surround flows from the original use, age and architectural style of the building, they are always integral parts of the architectural composition of the buildings.

Windows within the Conservation Area vary considerably in their detailed design, depending largely on the type of building to which they belong. On the whole windows set within the frontages of the purpose built shops are highly decorative with multi-paned designs, shaped heads and some incorporating leaded and stained glass lights. Larger oriel windows display timber and tile hung details are a feature of a good number of the shops. Windows are generally set deep into reveals which helps to give the buildings texture. Heavy architectural decoration around windows is the norm creating deeply modulated façades. Pillars are often seen between windows and rounded, horseshoe or lancet arches create further decorative interest.

Windows on less prominent elevations of the Victorian and Edwardian shops are largely timber sash windows with simple arched heads, some include coloured or leaded glass.



Examples of Moorish windows, sash windows and casement windows to be found within the Conservation Area

Window openings within the houses or converted former houses generally have strong vertical proportions. Many of these properties have retained traditional sliding sash windows of Georgian or Victorian designs. Early casement windows, including the leaded and coloured glazing to the top lights are also found in places. Splayed bay windows are characteristic features of some of the residential and former residential properties.

Where windows have been replaced with windows of standardised modern design the effect is damaging. Alterations to standard uPVC and modern timber casements fail to adequately reflect or reproduce the character or appearance of traditional

windows. Where the openings have been enlarged or altered in proportions the character of the properties is particularly poorly affected.

At Albany Buildings, oriel windows have been removed and replaced with a plain detail spoiling the symmetry and otherwise opulent architectural character of the building.

The Grand Casino features some very interesting stained glass within its windows, referencing Disney characters and its former existence as a cinema.



Albany Buildings, depicting the major alterations to the window



The Grand Casino's stained glass windows depict pictorial references Disney's Snow White and the Seven dwarfs as well as other Disney characters

7.4 DOORS

Several of the commercial buildings were designed so the upper floor showrooms or offices were directly accessed from Lord Street. The doors are generally recessed well back from the frontage and are well detailed with heavy moulded details. The recesses often entail decorative tiles to floors and walls, and plaster details are found to ceilings. Many of the original doors and recessed entrances have survived in good condition, though some would benefit from repairs and improvements.



Westminster Buildings door to upper floors



Tower Buildings

The front doors to residential or former residential properties are constructed of timber, with a panelled design and painted finish. Those at 6-20 Lord Street have semi-circular overlights with slender decorative metal or timber glazing bars. The terraced residential properties of Manchester Road retain original panelled doors and are surmounted by large rectangular overlights, some with margin lights.

Modern replacement doors generally lack depth to decorative mouldings. Those with a high proportion of glazing or those with dropped fanlights are particularly out of keeping with 19th century houses.

7.5 SHOPFRONTS

Most of the original shopfronts have been removed and replaced with comparably bland modern creations. Where original or early shop fronts remain, these make a valuable contribution to the street scene and it is essential that these be retained.

Some shop frontages contain elements of earlier shop fronts, e.g. pilasters or early timber fascias are found above verandahs or above modern shopfronts. In these circumstances the original elements should be retained or replicated and the

shopfront restored, or the new installation designed to incorporate the earlier features on display, the loss of these details would conversely result in loss of significant character and interest.

Originally the shopfronts along Lord Street incorporated recessed entrances to allow space for more prominent window displays. Fortunately this traditional characteristic layout has been largely retained. This adds texture, modulation and interest to the street scene, and also allows for a larger area for displays. It is essential that this continues when shop fronts are replaced. Where recessed entrances have been replaced with flat-fronted shopfronts this detracts from the distinctive character of the streetscape.

The bronze 1930s shop front framework at 451 Lord Street is of interest and enhances the look of the Conservation Area. Designed by Arnold Ashworth & Sons, it is illustrated in “The Golden Age of Shop Design: European Shop Interiors 1880-1939” by Alexandra Artley. The frontage has sadly seen several elements replaced, however the styling of the replacement features are reminiscent of its former appearance.



Recessed entrances to shopfronts within Westminster buildings



Original bronze frame to shopfront at 451 Lord Street.

Some modern shopfronts are of a good quality. The following elements seen in more modern shopfronts help to ensure that the shopfront is harmonious with the building:

- timber construction painted in traditional colours (or varnished hardwood),
- recessed entrances
- traditional proportions
- stall risers
- pilasters
- mouldings to their elements

Several shops, notably jewellers, incorporate roller shutters. These detract from the traditional character of the street scene. Where these are external or solid they create a deadening effect when the shops are closed, harming the perception of town centre vitality. External guide rails and projecting boxes are jarring elements which obscure and detract from glazing bars, transoms and fascias. Fortunately the incidence of shutters is limited owing to the restrictive approach taken to these locally. This approach must be strictly maintained in order to continue to preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Whilst security may be a concern, there are other methods available which are more sympathetic to the historic nature of locality.

7.6 SIGNAGE

Remnants of original signage schemes add interest and a sense of history to the street scene. Examples of historic signage, such as those shown below, should be retained on display.



Some signage obscures or boxes-in architectural features, meaning that these cannot be enjoyed by visitors to the street.

Lord Street is blighted by many examples of overlarge fascias, upon which correspondingly overlarge and poor quality signage is displayed. It would be highly beneficial if new schemes ensure that signage is of an appropriate scale for the building, using typefaces and materials appropriate to the overall architectural appearance of the building.

Traditional applied gold lettering is a subtle and sympathetic solution where used on the upper floor windows. Lord Street is not typified by signage on external walls above ground floor level, or above the gutter of the verandah. Illuminated signage, projecting or applied signboards at higher level would be of detriment to the architectural appearance of the buildings and harm the quality of the environment.

7.7 VERANDAHS

Southport is famous for the row of decorative iron verandahs which form an almost unbroken canopy along the frontage of the shops. This type of structure was a new

architectural phenomenon borne out of the industrial revolution whereby cast iron and glass were used structurally. The use of iron verandahs was popularised in spa towns such as Harrogate and Buxton and was later adopted by some seaside resorts. In Southport the verandahs were erected piecemeal by individual shop owners from about 1860. Those present today all remain in private ownership. The move to build verandahs would have also supported the promotion of the resort during the winter season, as people could shop regardless of the weather. The rate of survival of these features in Southport is impressive and as a result Lord Street benefits from the most numerous and complete set of verandahs in the country.



Southport features many excellent examples of Victorian verandahs throughout Lord Street

The verandahs are broadly of two types. The earlier verandahs have columns supporting them and are designed with similar scale features but varying decorative treatments. Columns comprise a base, column and capital and are flanked by spandrel brackets supporting a frieze. Roofs entail narrow glazing bars running perpendicular to the building, glazed with Georgian wired glass.

Later iron canopies on buildings from the 1920-30s often used a cantilevered type of construction. Examples of this can be seen at the junctions of Lord Street with Coronation Walk and Bold Street. The verandah at 377-385 Lord Street positioned on the junction of Nevill Street was originally a cantilevered design but it has been awkwardly adapted to incorporate columns and other features.

Verandahs were designed by architects, some of particular note, including Mills and Murgatroyd of Manchester who are believed to have designed the verandah of 423-435. Generally the castings were provided by Glasgow manufacturers such as McFarlanes and McDowall, Steven & Co. Each installation is constructed and ornamented differently though overall they are built to relatively consistent dimensions with consistent features. Some incorporate rainwater goods within

columns, others have curved glass roofs and some incorporate space for a fascia. Overall however they have a strong unity of appearance and scale.



Southport's distinctive verandahs add unique character to the townscape

The black and white colour scheme which has been adopted for virtually all the verandahs is highly practical in the sense that it is easy for neighbouring verandahs to be painted in the same colours despite varying ownerships. The consistency of colour scheme along the line of verandahs enhances their character and sense of unity. This should be maintained.



Weather vane and fleur-de-lis gutter cresting



An example of cantilevered verandah at the corner of Bold Street



Ornate verandah details



A curved roof verandah

7.8 BOUNDARIES, GATE PIERS AND RAILINGS

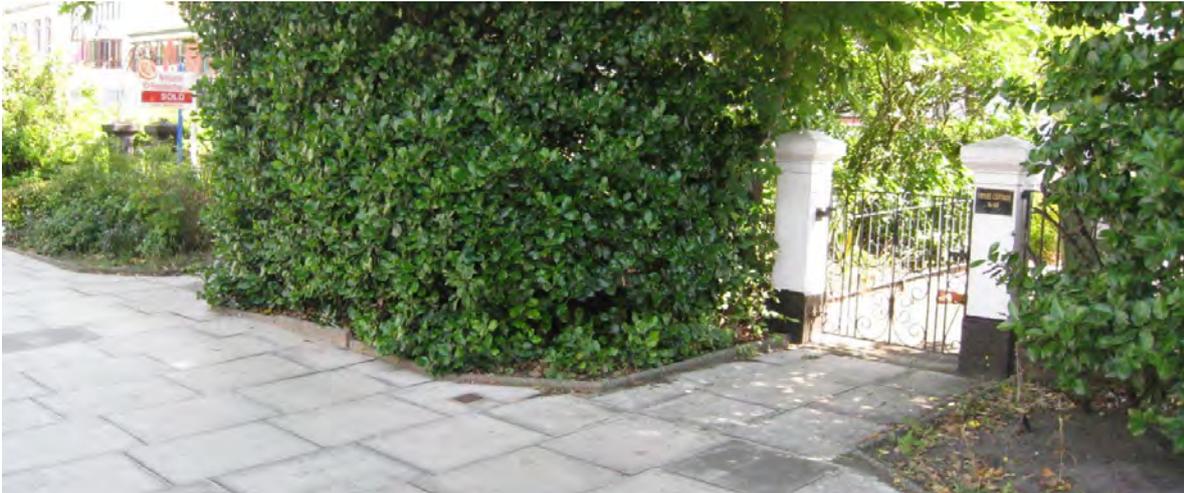
The terraced residential properties along Manchester Road benefit greatly from their consistent original front boundary treatment. Decorative original iron handrails flank the steps to the entrances adding to the appearance of Victorian opulence.

The frontages to the remainder of residential, or former residential properties in the Conservation Area, are degraded to some extent, but the remains of the original schemes can be seen in places and these are valuable in illustrating the early appearance of the street.

Sadly a number of boundaries have been lost altogether and only shrubs and gate piers distinguish the limits of the private spaces.

The 19th century gate piers to the older properties between 152-172 Lord Street have largely survived. They are of carved stone and of relatively small proportions. They incorporate the number of the property, a feature that became a requirement of the Improvement Commissioners during 1848. Some of the gate piers have been replaced or removed.

The shrubs and hedges forming several of the boundaries contribute to the domestic character of the buildings; they complement the planting in the public gardens and generally add to the green character of Lord Street. Some new physical boundaries have been erected of varying quality, though none of these replicate earlier forms which were probably railings set into stone plinths. Of those constructed the more ostentatious or higher built boundaries are particularly inappropriate.



Gate piers and soft landscaped boundaries at 168-170 Lord Street

The treatment to the frontages of 6-20 Lord Street are of variable quality and some are largely without front boundaries. Where they exist they benefit from a low key appearance and low height in keeping with the simple character of the buildings.

The frontages in Cable Street have been diminished with only one enclosed frontage remaining, and three stone gate piers left to demonstrate the original character of this domestic enclave.

The original boundary treatment to the Prince of Wales Hotel is very attractive containing ornate panels and lettering. The gate piers are particularly striking owing to their size and detail. The high volume and low quality of signage however distracts from the appearance of the ensemble.

The New Bold hotel retains the original front boundary plinth; however the railings are more recent.



The Bold Hotel features a mix of modern and historic boundary features



The loss of gardens harms domestic character



The entrance to the Prince of Wales Hotel exhibits a pair of outstanding gate piers

The decorative walls which encircle and unify the public gardens are classical in style; the concrete they are constructed from is intended to have the appearance of stone, and is of interest in itself. Sections of the walls were faithfully replicated during recent improvements. The low walls are adorned with decorative classically styled cast iron columns topped with globe lanterns, concrete columns and urns, which are particularly striking when planted up.

7.9 RAINWATER GOODS

Many of the gutters, downpipes, hoppers, brackets and shoes have been replaced, or partially replaced using extruded metal or uPVC. The originals would have been largely cast iron. The replacements do not have the same substantial appearance as cast iron and fail to match the grandeur of the architecture. Where replacements are required cast iron should be used to the same pattern as the originals.

Some of the commercial buildings incorporated highly decorative rainwater goods which were integral to the overall design. Very few examples of these appear to have survived, though an excellent example is the rainwater goods of Albany buildings where some surviving sections display a rope twist type design. Such examples of Victorian ironmongery contribute to the opulence and richness of the buildings.



Square section decorative cast iron downpipe at 165 Lord Street



Cast iron 'rope twist' style downpipe and decorative brackets at 447-449 Lord Street, integral to design of façade.

7.10 MATERIALS

A varied range of traditional materials has been used in the construction of the older buildings, though brick and stone predominates as a walling material and Welsh slate for roofing.

Dressed stone has mainly been used to construct particularly prestigious buildings including the banks, the Atkinson Library and Art Gallery, the Cambridge Hall and the War Memorial. Varieties of building stone include sandstone ashlar, polished red granite and white Portland limestone. The latter material was popular in the early decades of the twentieth century.

Brickwork is usually deep red/orange with narrow mortar joints. The mortar itself is generally colour matched to the masonry and is lime based. Brickwork is combined with sandstone detailing including window lintels and sills, quoins, door surrounds and eaves cornices. Other facing materials include terracotta, faience (glazed terracotta) stucco, render, concrete, moulded tiles and applied timber framing. Some more recent properties incorporate materials not found within the traditional properties, such as block work and art stone.



Glazed brick to rear elevations



Deep orange brick and sandstone details



Blue glazed brick in combination with deep orange brick, buff bricks, terracotta and sandstone

Welsh slate is the predominant roofing material, with purple/blue tones, though there are instances of clay tiles on bay windows. Other roofing materials include Westmoreland Slate, green slate, red tiles, glazed metal frames and lead and asphalt. The latter material is used on flat roofs, which are usually concealed behind parapets.

Houses and former houses are of stucco rendered brickwork. Those built in the late 19th-early 20th century tend to be of higher quality brickwork with narrow mortar joints

7.11 PUBLIC REALM

Street furniture has a significant impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. There are some particularly valued original items of street furniture such as the cast iron lighting columns and features that form elements of the classical gardens which add to the area's attractions. However Lord Street's public realm is characterised by an array of differing features which display different designs, colour schemes and materials. Over time, individual schemes have been designed on differing themes, some modern, some traditional. The combination of varied street furniture, signage and other installations overall creates a confusing and cluttered appearance to the public areas.

A sober colour scheme of black and cream is used around the War Memorial. This scheme complements the black and white/cream of the verandahs and is based on the original colour scheme from the 1920s when the War memorial was erected. New benches and bins within the area are of modern styling and materials, which are not repeated elsewhere. A somewhat dated but brighter turquoise, cream and blue scheme from the 1990s includes streetlights along the length of the carriageway. A scheme of black and white of the railings is currently underway, but there are several elements are not included in this wave of improvement. Deep red

and cream, a remnant from the mid-20th century, and locally associated with Southport's connection to Lancashire is evident on some of the historic lighting columns along Kingsway and Coronation Walk. There are however also instances of grey coatings and also inappropriate galvanised finishes being used on various, largely one-off installations scattered across the area. The combination of all of the different schemes and styles results in a visually incoherent and cluttered public realm.

7.11.1 STREET FURNITURE

Lighting

There is a variety of lighting columns and lanterns throughout the Conservation Area. These are finished in a variety of treatments including stainless steel, galvanised, painted and powder coated in different colour schemes.



There are some particularly important original style lighting columns and lanterns such as that which is integral to the War Memorial consisting of the original cast iron columns painted black and cream with clusters of globe lanterns. Also the boundary walls to the public gardens on the landward side of the street have their original style globe lanterns on cast iron posts.

More modern installations are of varying design quality. Galvanised columns are inconsistent with the historic character of the affected streets. The effect is particularly unusual where this is combined with colour coated lanterns and embellishments.

Benches

The stained timber benches are one of the more consistent street furniture items within the Conservation Area. They have a low key genteel appearance. Benches of the same design furnish the gardens and are also set in long lines along the pavements, facing the roadway.

Modern artist designed stainless steel benches have been installed within some of the gardens. Owing to both their flowing design and shiny stainless steel material they appear out of context in the classical gardens.

The modern benches near the war memorial have a more utilitarian flimsy character and generally do not reflect the grandeur and formality of the space, or match the timber benches which characterise the majority of the street.

Some benches in front of the Atkinson appear to be in poor condition and appear unsuitable for their intended location, having been positioned on supplementary legs. This detracts from the uniformity and grandeur of this part of the Conservation Area.



Various styles of benches can be found throughout Lord Street

Bollards

Bollards are installed of many different designs and in places such as Bank Passage seem overused, cluttering the public realm and appear to have been installed piecemeal as a reaction, rather than part of a planned scheme.



An excessive amount of bollards are installed at the junction of Bank Passage and Lord Street, They physically and visually block the broad pavement for pedestrians.



Near the Scarisbrick Hotel the bollards are poorly maintained, poor quality harming the quality of the street scene.



Those around the War Memorial, while of high quality, are robust and numerous, intruding somewhat on the otherwise open and elegant setting of the memorial structures.

Bus stops

New modern style bus stops with curved glazed roofs have been inserted in recent years. Though some of the designs and colouring of these stops are not in keeping with the architectural ethos of the street, their simple lightweight and transparent design is relatively unobtrusive. However, the advertisement panels counteract this. There appears to be no consistent style throughout Lord Street and the corporate colours of bright yellow are visually jarring.



Bus stops are located along the length of the street. Although largely neutral in terms of contribution, advertising installed on these stops can be harmful.

CCTV

Square based CCTV columns are positioned in sensitive location. Some are painted black, others have taken on the blue, turquoise and cream scheme. A more consistent colour scheme would be much more beneficial.



CCTV columns are not of a consistent design

Guard Railings

Several sections of guard railing are installed along the kerb edge, adjacent to a number of pedestrian crossings on Lord Street. The guard rail visually detracts from the area as it gives a sense of restriction for pedestrians and may not be wholly necessary given the generous width of the pavement.



Guard rails along some sections of Lord Street may not be wholly necessary

Litter bins

There are several different styles of litter bin within the area, these include square black metal bins and freestanding round stainless steel bins. It would be beneficial if bins were designed to a consistent scheme, ideally of cast iron to complement the existing character and appearance of Lord Street.



Traffic signs and equipment

There is a proliferation of traffic signs, particularly in relation to parking restrictions and the pay and display machines, and some posts which have now become redundant and serve no purpose.



Signs such as these can found frequently throughout the Conservation Area, and some have become redundant.

Telephone Boxes and Post Boxes

Highlights are the five K6 design red telephone boxes which are all Grade II listed. Originally designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott in 1936, they have become an icon of British design. Red painted cast iron post boxes also add to the historic character of the street. Towards the south end of the street a modern public telephone installation combines with a cash machine, the large lettering associated with this installation and is obtrusive.



K6 Telephone boxes and traditional post boxes add positively to the historic character of Lord Street. More modern versions do not.

Interpretation Panels

Many of the interpretation panels sited through the Conservation Area are looking tired and in need of cleaning. Some feature spikes to deter pigeons but serve a dual purpose in creating an unwelcoming, dangerous and unbecoming quality to the locality in which they stand.



Several interpretation panels have been installed in Lord Street but now appear dejected

Commemorative and Artistic Features

Within the gardens are several features of note such as the Mermaid fountain, sundial and the commemorative plaque relating to the 'Old Duke'. Such features increase Lord Street's sense of place, history and uniqueness. Modern art installations are generally more abstract but are reflective of local distinctiveness.

The three coronation lights within the Conservation Area, set in Eastbank Street Square and within the roundabouts are of particular note. They are not well appreciated and would benefit from improved settings and interpretation.

7.11.2 STREET SURFACES

Some elements of the surfacing materials have historic significance. The square, clay paviours are highly distinctive. They once characterised much of Southport but now only survive in limited areas of Lord Street and on some of the narrow alleyways leading off the seaward side of the road. Some have been re-used decoratively as surrounds for tree pits and several are also now found in private gardens. The paviours are a mixture of blue, red and off-purple in colour, wearing to brown and buff tones. The makers' marks of the Welsh brickworks where they were made add to their local interest. These paviours are no longer in production and are a dwindling resource and therefore important to retain. Red tactile paving has been laid within some of the remaining areas of Southport paving, which is visually obtrusive. Patching with tarmac and concrete by utility firms and others and infilling with the same materials adjacent to trees is visually and environmentally detrimental.



Southport paviours

Carriageways are surfaced in black, hot rolled asphalt and stone chippings. Some sections of Lord Street have received a top dressing in contrasting colours, which is visually obtrusive. The principal carriageway along Lord Street and the Duke Street roundabout are surfaced in red chippings. The original stone kerbs remain along many Lord Street pavements and should be retained. The central reservations and the majority of the side streets now have concrete kerbs. There are also sections of tactile paving at a number of crossings throughout the Conservation Area.



Large sections of the highway have become a patchwork of contrasting colours. Original stone kerbs can be seen within the Conservation Area, as well as modern concrete replacements

In many areas, replacement flags of a different colour to the originals create an unattractive patchwork effect which is detrimental to the character and appearance of the conservation area.



The tiles located outside of The Atkinson and the facing Civic Gardens are limestone, with sit alongside pre-cast flags. However, some are failing due to traffic here. More recent repaving works elsewhere within the central portion of Lord Street has replaced poor quality paving with a mixture of Indian sandstone and standard grey concrete flags. Tactile paving here has been more sensitively incorporated using similar stone.



Worn tiles located outside of the Atkinson

Nevill Street public realm works used a deliberately different and very varied palette of materials and a stainless steel modern styled suite of street furniture.

Recent works around the Market Hall used a simple scheme of grey concrete flags, grey tactile paving and black coated streetlights, though other columns for signage are grey and therefore do not match. Planters on the pavement can help to create a more pleasant pedestrian environment.

Throughout the Conservation Area the way that painted linings have been designed is variable, with some instances of the narrower and subtler double yellow lines being used, and some areas where standard linings are used. A consistent use of the narrower lines in primrose yellow throughout the historic town centre would be helpful in improving the appearance of the area.



Southport Market as seen from the corner of Market Street

7.12 INTACTNESS

One of the features of the area which contributes towards the character of Lord Street is the high degree to which the individual buildings and their architectural

details have survived intact. While there is a high degree of survival, losses of individual historic buildings and losses of architectural features have impacted on the architectural diversity, importance and integrity of the street.

Notable historic losses include the Winter Gardens and the sites of entertainment which populated the landward side of the street. Early-mid Victorian houses along the landward side of the street have been replaced over a period of time with civic buildings, cinemas, and more recently blocks of unsympathetic flats.



Since the designation of the Conservation Area in 1973 there have been notable losses of historic buildings such as Winter Gardens Terrace and in the former Classic Cinema. The latter was one of the earliest purpose-built cinemas in the country, designed by George E. Tonge and demolished in 2005, replaced by the Vincent Hotel.

Architectural details have also been lost, for example the cupola which decorated the roof of the Moorish building at 319-325 Lord Street was removed c1911, diminishing the architectural interest of the building.



Photograph showing Moorish building before cupola was removed c1911. Photograph taken from *Southport: A Pictorial History* by H Foster (1995)

Losses of and inappropriate changes to architectural features such as roof details, windows, shopfronts and walls has occurred both historically and more recently. Shopfronts have proven particularly vulnerable to loss and change, both before and after the Conservation Area designation, with relatively few early shopfronts now remaining in the street. Most shopfronts are relatively recent insertions which largely do not enhance the character of the building of which they form part. Some reinstatements have taken place, such as at Wayfarer's Arcade and further reinstatement of shopfronts using authentic designs would be highly beneficial.

There are several buildings where original feature bay windows have been replaced with flat windows, thus removing the architectural interest. The interiors of shops have largely been substantially altered, though most retain decorative plastered ceilings above false ceilings and the general long narrow layouts.



The Wayfarers Arcade c.1900 (Image courtesy of Information Services Department, Sefton Libraries) compared to its more recent appearance.

Although in poor condition, verandahs have survived though several are altered or are missing features. Despite most being listed buildings, uPVC is beginning to be used in place of cast iron on gutters and where iron finials and details have broken off, these are not being replaced. Ironwork to the buildings has also been removed historically, leading to a reduction in architectural interest. Such changes must not be supported in future if the character of the area is to be maintained, authentic restoration of these features would be beneficial.

The gardens which front some of the residential and commercial buildings on the landward side of the street have been largely lost to car parking with less than half having a detrimental effect on the soft landscaped quality of what is sometimes referred to as the 'garden side' of the street.

7.13 NOTABLE ARCHITECTS

The architects of many of Lord Street's fine buildings are largely known, and include many regional architects and also architects who made their homes in Southport and mostly worked from offices in Lord Street.

The Town Hall (1852-4) was designed by Thomas Withnell, who was also responsible for the Royal Hotel on the Promenade.

Thomas Mawdsley designed Christ Church (1821) and the Bold Hotel (1932).

Maxwell and Tuke of Bury designed Cambridge Hall, the Masonic Hall on Duke Street and Southport's Winter Gardens. Their other buildings include the famous Blackpool Tower.

The Atkinson Library and Art Gallery was built in 1876-8 by Waddington & Son of Burnley

George E. Tonge is responsible for a number of buildings in Southport including both the Garrick Theatre, built 1932 (grade II listed) and the Grand Cinema at 182 Lord Street which was reconstructed from a car showroom in 1938 (grade II listed). He designed numerous buildings of entertainment throughout the region, such as the former ABC Cinema at 98 Lord Street and the Plaza Cinema in the nearby town of Ainsdale.

George Bolshaw was responsible for the building of the Wayfarer's Arcade, Westminster Buildings and Coronation Buildings on the corner of Coronation Walk and Lord Street

Ernest Walter Johnson is credited with a good number of local buildings. Born in Southport in 1853 his buildings which have survived include 331 Lord Street, built in 1888 (Grade II*) and Albany Buildings (grade II) built 1883, where his office was based.

Thomas H. Hodge designed the elaborate half-timbered building at 215-219 Lord Street (grade II), Tower Buildings in 1894 and many other buildings and verandahs.

Goodwin S. Packer was the son of the Borough Surveyor of Southport; he was responsible for 355-357 Lord Street.

J. E. Sanders designed the new Scarisbrick Hotel, built in 1890-1, and 209-211 Lord Street

Other known architects include Witham & Connard, Palmer & Holden, Sydney Ingham, William Owen, W.W. Gwyther, Grayson and Barnish, E. Kenrick, Robert Todd, F. W. Finchett, Thomas Mawdsley, H Jansen, Francis Jones, H Langman, MacGibbon and Ross and Mellor and Sutton.