

116 High Street, Boston



Evaluation of the
Conservation and Development of
116 High Street, Boston : Summary

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This summary is based on an evaluation undertaken by DC Research (July 2013). The full report can be downloaded at www.lincsheritage.org



Heritage Lincolnshire : A Buildings Preservation Trust



Founded in 1991, the **Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire** is a charitable trust which undertakes a range of activities in the promotion and conservation of the County's heritage. The Trust's aim is to "protect, preserve, promote and present the rich heritage

of the county for the benefit of local people and visitors".

Heritage Lincolnshire incorporates a **Building Preservation Trust** which is currently one of the most active in the country. The Trust has saved a succession of historic buildings at risk from dereliction, and is able to undertake

difficult building projects; raising funds to repair listed buildings; and finding appropriate new uses for them. This includes undertaking restoration projects that would not otherwise be commercially viable and bringing them back into commercial, community or residential use.

The Trust's most recent project is the conservation and development of 116 High Street, Boston, a Grade II* listed building in the heart of this historic town. The repair project began in 2009 and was completed in 2012.

'Garfit's Bank' : 116 High Street, Boston

116 High Street in Boston is constructed in red brick with limestone dressings, and many of the original features survive, such as 18th century panelling and fanlights. The building is Grade II* listed due to its architectural and historic significance.

Although the exact date of construction is unknown, clues uncovered during the repair of the building suggest that the original single pile house was first built in the late 17th century. William Garfit II (1700-81) was a wealthy merchant who had capitalised on the success of trading in Boston in the early 18th century. He later founded Lincolnshire's first private bank in this building in 1754 and it remained in this use

until 1891 when the bank was moved into the market place. The Garfit family had also used numbers 114 and 116 High Street as a residence. The accommodation would have been grand, reflecting their standing in society, and the gardens stretched down to the river to the east. Alterations made throughout the 19th century add to the building's architectural significance, and demonstrate how the family continued to invest in the building in order to keep up with contemporary fashion. Since the Garfit family sold the property in 1893, it has been the 'Lincolnshire Diocesan Home for Fallen Women', a private house and the offices of various local businesses.

When Heritage Lincolnshire was asked to begin a repair project in 2009, the building had been on English Heritage's Buildings at Risk Register for over 12 years and required extensive structural repair. The historic building had been neglected by an absentee owner and despite the efforts of local people the building was at risk of imminent collapse.



TO CAPITALISTS, SPECULATORS,
BUILDERS, AND OTHERS,
BOSTON, LINCOLNSHIRE.
To be SOLD BY AUCTION,
By Messrs. J. G. KELLINGWORTH AND SON,
At the RED LION HOTEL, in Boston aforesaid, on
WEDNESDAY, the 11th day of JANUARY, 1893,
at 3 for 4 o'clock in the afternoon, subject to
conditions of sale :-
THE following highly important FREE-
HOLD RESIDENTIAL ESTATE, comprising
a capital Mansion known as the "Bank House,"
for many years the Boston residence of the late
Thomas Garfit, Esq., with Stables, Coach House,
large Gardens, Shrubberies, and Plantations,
the whole covering an area of 2a. 1r. 27p.
The Mansion fronting the High-street comprises
on the ground floor large entrance hall, dining-
room 26ft. by 16ft. 6 in., library 24ft. by 14ft., ser-
vant's hall, butler's pantry, side entrance, kitchen,
cook's pantry, china closet, store room, other office
and large wine cellar. On the first floor, which is
approached by an oak and pine staircase, drawing-
room 26ft. by 16ft. 6 in., morning-room, two
sunnies, four bedrooms, and three dressing-rooms.
On the second and third floors six bedrooms and
three attics.
The glass house in the garden and leading thereto
comprise conservatory 25 feet by 13 feet 6 inches,
corridor conservatory 44 feet by 3 feet, viney 36
feet 6 inches by 15 feet, fernery 37 feet by 11 feet,
swee house 18 feet by 13 feet, peach house 33 feet
by 12 feet 6 inches, and five light melon pits.
The conservatories were built by Messrs. Foster
and Pearson, and are heated throughout by hot
water supplied by two saddle boilers by that firm.
The outbuildings comprise a glass-room 43 feet by
19 feet, with store-room over, wash-houses, boot-
houses, store-rooms, gardener's store-sheds, coal-
house, &c. Breetail stables, two loose boxes, all
well paved and furnished with galvanised iron fit-
tings.
The garden and grounds are tastefully laid out
with large tennis and other lawns, the whole being
surrounded by choice well-matured shrubs and
ornamental trees. There is also a good kitchen
garden stocked with suitable trees, herb and other
beds.
The residence has a frontage to High street, and
the whole estate being bounded on its northern
side by a thoroughfare leading to the river offers an
exceptionally favorable opportunity for disposing
of a portion thereof (without disadvantage to the
remainder) in most eligible building lots.
For further particulars applications can be made
to the AUCTIONEERS, Care-exchange-yard, Boston ;
or at the Office of
MESSRS. MILLINGTON and SIMPSON,
Solicitors, Boston and Sleaford.
Where a plan of the Estate may be seen.
Boston, 21st December, 1892.



Project Summary and evaluation

The project for the conservation and development of 116 High Street, Boston was developed and managed by the Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire. The former Director of the Trust, Dave Start and the board of trustees agreed to take ownership of the building in 2010 in order carry out urgent repairs.



Project Manager: Liz Bates BA MA IHBC

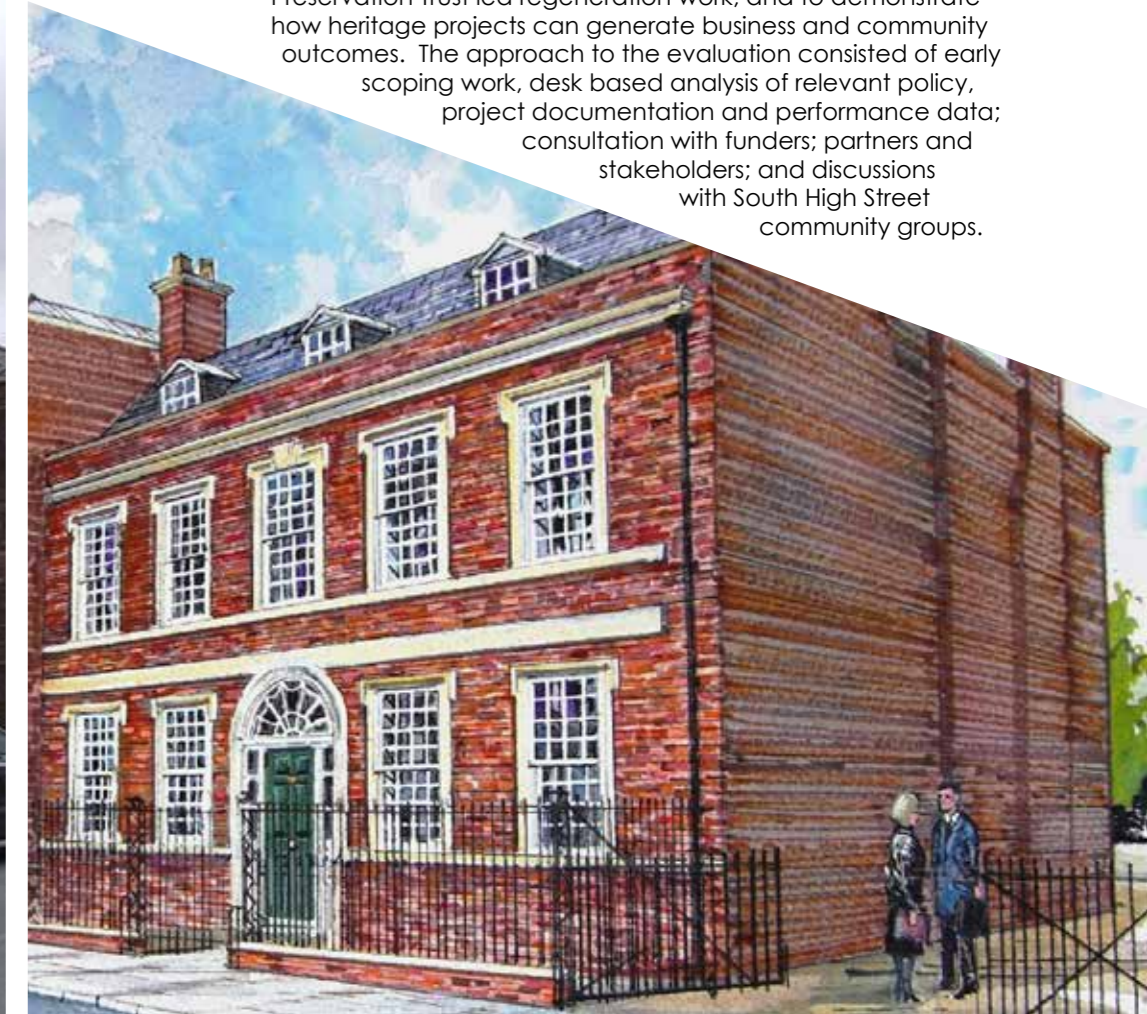
Project Organiser: John Paul Walker BArch dip(arch) MA(heritage man)
RIBA ARB AABC IHBC Walker & Cunnington Architects

Professional team:
 Architect: Mary Anderson BA BSc DipAA (Cons) FRSA IHBC
 Anderson & Glenn Architects
 Quantity Surveyor: Philip Thompson FRICS & Stewart Townsend
 Thompson's Chartered Quantity Surveyors
 Structural Engineer: Ed Morton The Morton Partnership Ltd
 M&E Engineer: Brian J Evans Consulting Engineers
 CDM Co-ordinator: Anglia Project Services Ltd
 Main Contractor: Lindum Group Plc

The project received support and funding from the following organisations:

- English Heritage
- The Heritage Lottery Fund
- The European Regional Development Fund
- The Architectural Heritage Fund
- The Pilgrim Trust
- The John Paul Getty Jnr Trust
- Lincolnshire County Council
- Boston Borough Council

This funding, and a partnership with the Lincolnshire Community Foundation as end users, has allowed for the high quality conservation of the historic building and for the development of the site as a new social enterprise hub (including four new incubator units in the grounds). The hub aims to encourage new small and medium enterprises in Boston.



Evaluation

DC Research Ltd was appointed in February 2013 by the Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire to evaluate the Conservation and Development of 116 High Street, Boston, Lincolnshire.

The evaluation was designed to capture and assess the extent to which the project has performed in terms of meeting the conditions of its support from English Heritage, Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). In doing this, the evaluation was also designed to identify lessons learned from the project in terms of the role of Building Preservation Trust led regeneration work, and to demonstrate how heritage projects can generate business and community outcomes. The approach to the evaluation consisted of early scoping work, desk based analysis of relevant policy, project documentation and performance data; consultation with funders; partners and stakeholders; and discussions with South High Street community groups.

Rationale – the need for public funding to save this heritage asset



The conservation and development of 116 High Street was **supported by a strong heritage and use based market failure argument** at the start of the project (in 2009), and **these arguments remained valid and robust in 2013**. The 'conservation deficit' for the building (i.e. the cost of repair minus the value of the property on completion) was over £1.5 million. It is clear that left to the market, the building would have collapsed, and a very important part of Boston's heritage would have been lost. Using public funding, the project has produced an asset that is well placed to contribute to economic development, character of place, and community well-being priorities in the area on an ongoing basis.

116 High Street contributed to **Lincolnshire's ERDF Local Investment Plan** for the first half of the programme;

it is aligned to Great Lincolnshire's LEP priorities around the county's heritage assets; and has clear resonance with key documents such as English Heritage's Heritage Dividend¹ (which found **heritage funding is often the first regeneration funding to be committed to area based schemes, which can then encourage other public and private investment**) and HLF's recent New ideas need old buildings² (which reinforces the economic potential of heritage buildings, in particular to independent entrepreneurs).

In terms of its sustainability, the **prospective provision at 116 High Street remains unique in a Boston context**, as it provides flexibility and is set in a community location

¹ Heritage Dividend, English Heritage, 2002

² http://www.hlf.org.uk/aboutus/howwework/Documents/NI0B_2013.pdf

(which is clearly advantageous in terms of service delivery and community accessibility). 116 High Street in particular is **able to provide workspace for service deliverers that is neither institutional nor confrontational**. This means that the barriers to delivery that are inevitable in other settings (such as job centres, council buildings, health centres etc.) are much less prevalent at 116 High Street. This will allow 116 High Street to be seen as **a neutral venue without an underlying agenda**, and a good platform for organisations to engage target groups.

Project management and delivery

The conservation and development of 116 High Street has been a well managed and delivered project, resulting in excellent heritage outcomes, meaningful community engagement and the legacy of a useful and useable building with a sustainable future. **116 High Street is a sustainable development which has conserved and enhanced a nationally significant heritage asset.**



The Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire is now recognised as being far more proactive in taking on challenging projects than many other Building Preservation Trusts, and through 116 High Street has enhanced this reputation through good communication, project management and partnership work. Partners especially welcomed Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire's openness and appetite to deliver a usable building, and for not imposing a heritage-led solution. Whilst partners acknowledge that this use is still to be delivered, they are confident in the building and the business plan.

The conservation and development of 116 High Street, building on the success of 7-13 Bridge Street Horncastle, suggests that **Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire as an organisation shows many of the characteristics of a resilient heritage organisation** as specified in the most recent edition of English Heritage's Heritage Counts¹. The Lincolnshire Community Foundation has successfully managed community assets and are therefore

¹ Heritage Counts (10th Edition), English Heritage 2012

well placed to achieve the same in Boston based at 116 High Street.

Overall, **funders and partners showed a high level of commitment to the project, especially during a period of significant budgetary pressure.** 116 High Street is now regarded as a prestigious building in which to deliver services and to conduct business, with the development attracting positive feedback from funders, community groups, councillors and business groups.

The **project benefited hugely from excellent support from the local communities in and around South High Street**, who appear to have developed a strong affinity with the conservation and development of the building, and in local heritage more generally. It will be vital that Lincolnshire Community Foundation (or other owner/operators) revitalise and maintain the excellent community engagement achievements of the project as the building comes into operational use.



Community Engagement

Heritage Lincolnshire contacted the newly established **High Street South Neighbourhood Group** in 2009 to find out about their views on the derelict state of this historic building, and to discuss ideas for its reuse. The Group were organising a Place Check project in partnership with Boston Borough Council and the South Lincolnshire CVS and the derelict building had been highlighted as a key issue within their area.

The community-run **'U Decide' project** offered small pots of funding to organisations providing activities meeting the group's defined priorities, and Heritage Lincolnshire was grateful to receive £2,000 following a public vote. Using this funding, the Trust offered a series of events aimed at engaging the local community in the heritage of their area, and to gain their input into the plans being developed for 116 High

Street. Through this process the Trust was able to learn more about the history of the building, the plans for reuse were influenced by local people's views, and the local community's support overall was invaluable. This support continued throughout the project and Heritage Lincolnshire offered opportunities, such as arranging hard hat days, for people to come along and find out more.



Impacts

Assuming that the building and incubator units are actively managed and well maintained, and that the workspace pricing locally competitive, it is reasonable to expect that **up to 30 FTE jobs could be sustained at 116 High Street on an ongoing basis**, as well as a range of outcomes as a result of the delivery of services from the building. **These expected impacts should be sustainable into the long term.**

116 High Street also performed well meeting all contracted ERDF targets, **redeveloping 0.19 hectares of Brownfield**

Land, and developing **526 square metres of new/upgraded floorspace**. Further outcomes achieved included the **provision of social enterprise facilities, DDA compliancy and the highest possible level of energy efficiency** within heritage constraints. Incorporating the energy efficiency and DDA compliance requirements of the project was challenging, but the team developed a range of solutions to the problems presented by the building.

The **project benefited hugely from excellent support from the local**

communities in and around South High Street, who appear to have developed a strong affinity with the conversation and development of the building, and in local heritage more generally. In particular, the fact that local people approved the use of a significant proportion of the 'Place Check' funding on the 116 High Street project, is a significant positive outcome. The community engagement approach developed by Heritage Lincolnshire and partners in terms of 116 High Street was clearly very successful.



There remain a number of interesting and attractive buildings along South High Street that could also benefit from renovation. Partners feel that 116 High Street has set the standard for heritage regeneration for High Street, and hope that in the medium term more buildings are renovated. **It is hoped that 116 High Street will serve to raise investor confidence and encourage the private sector to invest in the area.**

Ensuring the future use of the building is vital, with the key challenge being to ensure this use is in line with the intentions and expectations of Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire and its funders. **The true impacts of the project will be felt into the medium to longer term** (i.e. five to ten years hence), with partners hoping that South High Street will further improve over time as a result of this project, such as the development at Black Sluice Lock, and also the potential benefits generated from a Boston Barrier.



Conclusions

To conclude, one consultee noted that "116 High Street has been blessed with partners who worked very hard to make it happen". Whilst it is always difficult to justify the conservation deficit for such a project, **Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire and partners have delivered a very high quality conservation and development project with a clear business plan for future use**, a very strong platform in terms of community engagement, and improved partnership networks.

More generally, there is a sense from heritage consultees in particular that 116 High Street was fortunate to be in Lincolnshire, as few other Building Preservation Trusts would have been able to deliver such a high quality conservation and development, with credible use expectations. Given the challenges that the building has faced, it would not be unreasonable to conclude that 116 High Street was **the Bank that was not allowed to fail**.

Heritage Lincolnshire sold the property to the Lincolnshire Community Foundation in July 2013. With the capital works complete, the Lincolnshire Community Foundation will establish and manage a social enterprise hub.



Acknowledgements

Heritage Lincolnshire would like to acknowledge the generosity, support, partnership and funding received from the following organisations in delivering the conservation and development of 116 High Street, Boston.

English Heritage
The Heritage Lottery Fund
The European Regional Development Fund
The Architectural Heritage Fund
The Pilgrim Trust
The John Paul Getty Jnr Trust
Lincolnshire County Council
Boston Borough Council
Lincolnshire Community Foundation
The High Street South Neighbourhood Group
South Lincolnshire Community Volunteers Service
High Street Baptist Chapel

Support was also received from members of the Trust's Buildings Advisory and Advisory and Liaison Committees.

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John
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Trust

