

1. VILLAGE C14 MARKET CROSS

1. HISTORY

In the centre of Metheringham, known as Cross Hill, a Village Cross has stood from at least the 14th century. A new cross was built in 1835, but by the turn of the twentieth century it was in a dilapidated condition and unanimously agreed to erect a replacement cross to mark the Coronation of King George V on 22 June 1911. The medieval cross was carefully dismantled and reconstructed into a new recess built into an adjacent stone wall. The 1911 cross was damaged beyond repair by a United States Army lorry at the end of the Second World War and replaced in 1949. The Parish Council replaced the cross in 2013, but this too was accidentally damaged in 2020 and repaired and rebuilt in August 2021. Whilst purporting to be a replica of the 1911 Cross, the ornate top was surmounted facing a different direction to the original.

Initially, from 1911, the stone wall forming the recess to the 14th Century medieval cross was capped with a red brick string course topped with clay pantiles, once a common feature throughout the village. However, from contemporary photographs, the capping was replaced by insitu concrete saddleback coping in the early 1920's although the original red brick string course was retained.

In the late 1960's a section of the original 4'0" (1200) high stone wall between the Market Cross and No.27 High Street was removed by the former Kesteven County Council for a new Library and Clinic to be built.

The C14 Market Cross is adjacent to the Village War Memorial, opposite Nook House and Star and Garter public house, all Grade II Listed, and also falls within Metheringham Conservation Area.

In the 1949 edition of Arthur Mee's *The King's England - Lincolnshire* the following reference is made under METHERINGHAM (page 270). *In the twisting High Street is a war memorial - a statue of a soldier with arms reversed; close by is a stone cross set up to mark the coronation of George the Fifth; and built into a wall is the stump of the ancient village cross.*

In the 1989 revised edition by Nicholas Antram of Nikolaus Pevsner and John Harris *The Buildings of England - Lincolnshire* the following reference is made under METHERINGHAM (page 562) *In the village the base of a C14 CROSS.*

2. LISTING STATUS OF C14 MARKET CROSS

The 14th Century Market Cross (National Grid Reference TF06904614130) in High Street, Metheringham was Grade II Listed by English Heritage, now Heritage England, on 02 May 1985.

List Entry No. 1317180 with following description:

Market Cross.C14. Octagonal stepped base topped with much weathered octagonal shaft.

The Cross is listed as a Scheduled Monument 1005022 (Medieval - 1066 AD to 1539 AD).

Full Description (December 2019)

Monument Record ML160713 - Village Cross, Metheringham

Stands in a recess of the wall by the side of the road. Shaft about 5ft high surmounted by an ornamental octagonal feature (it is likely that this was originally about half way up the shaft which stood at a much greater height). The shaft stands on two modern steps. (1)

The Cross at Metheringham which consisted of three octagonal steps, base, restored shaft and a corbel on which had been fixed a lamp, formerly stood at the junction of three roads. In 1911 it was removed and re-erected in a niche in the wall a few yards from its original position, except for parts of the shaft which were built into the wall itself. (2).

White says that the cross was replaced by a new one in 1835, at a cost of about £25, and a market was held around it on Sunday evenings. (3).

For the full description and the legal address of this listed building please refer to the appropriate List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. (6).

Sources/Archives (6)

1. SLI4067 Scheduling Record: HBMC.AM7.SAM94.

2. SLI2635 Index: OS CARD INDEX. METHERINGHAM. TF 06 SE:5, 1964, HARPER FR

3. SLI886 Bibliographic Reference: William White. 1856. History, Gazetteer and Directory of Lincolnshire - Second Edition. page 363.

Under the Town and Country Planning Acts 1947 and The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 buildings or structures of special architectural or historic interest are eligible to being designated and legally protected. Such buildings or structures may not be demolished, extended or altered without permission from the Local Planning Authority (LPA) or Heritage England. Advice can be obtained from the LPA Conservation Officer and if required, an application for Listed Building Consent (LBC) submitted.

Unauthorised work is a criminal offence and individuals can be prosecuted including the person who carried out the work and by anyone who caused or instructed the work to be carried out. The LPA can insist that all work carried out without consent is reversed.

To date, and despite extensive research, no record of consultations with Heritage England and the LPA have been located. No records for a Listed Building Consent nor Planning applications or approval notices have been located.

3. BUILDING WORK TO THE C14 MARKET CROSS Pre-Contract

The following is a summary regarding repairs to the Market Cross;

- i. Quotations were invited by the Clerk (KS) in June/July 2019 for repairing the Market Cross wall following damage caused by a vehicle crash. Quotations were received and the work carried out and completed.
- ii. At an Extra Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 19 April 2023 it was resolved to allocate £198,000 towards 11 projects including *Refurbishment of the Cross* and also *To review quotes received to repair wall around the cross outside the council office, if available.*
- iii. From the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 22 November 2022 it was recorded *To Receive an update on the repair to the old village cross. Reported that the work will be substantial and require highways closure. Quotes are to be sort. Proposed; Cllr Tatton, Seconded; Cllr Nelson and RESOLVED unanimously.*
- iv. Emails dated 21, 23 and 24 April 2023 exchanged between Councillors M Worthington and J Tatton, Parish Council Clerk and John Burrows of a.l.b.m. regarding carrying out repairs to the Market Cross wall.
- v. An estimate dated 15 May 2023 was submitted by a.l.b.m. for materials and equipment (including saddle back wall cappings) for the sum of £16,245.00. Attached was a list of *Considerations, Schedule of Work, Method Statement and Footpath Closure.*
- vi. Although invited D Hatcher & Sons of Sleaford declined invitation to submit a quotation.
- vii. Under Clauses 10.3, 11.1.b. and 11.1.h. of the Parish Council's Financial Regulations *When it is to enter into a contract of less than £25,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph (a) the Clerk or RFO shall obtain 3 quotations (priced descriptions of the proposed supply);*
- viii. Apart from the estimate received from a.l.b.m. no other quotations/estimates appear to have been submitted.
- ix. Under Item 5 of Agenda dated 19 May 2023 the Parish Council Environment Committee *To review quotes received from contractors for repair work to the cross on Thursday 25 May 2023.*
- x. At the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 31 May 2023 it was recorded that the Council were *To receive recommendations from the Environment Committee for the refurbishment of the Cross and it was resolved to award the tender to John Burrows with a maximum budget of £20,000 as recommended by the Environment Committee.*
- xi. By email dated 15 June 2023 the Clerk wrote to John Burrows of a.l.b.m. awarding him the contract to carry out the work.
- xii. Although a.l.b.m. submitted details of the *Proposed restoration works to 14C cross wall, Footpath Closure* and a *Proposed schedule of work*, it may have been a requirement to notify the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) under The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM15).

4. BUILDING WORK TO THE C14 MARKET CROSS Post-Contract

- i. From the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 26 September 2023 it was recorded under Item 12. *To receive update on Old cross refurbishment. Councillor Parker gave an update on the old cross. Work will*

be starting very shortly and is expected to be completed before the Fayre and Feast.

- ii. From the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 25 October 2023 it was recorded under Item 8. *To Receive update on Old cross refurbishment. Councillor Parker reported that the work had been completed in time for the Fayre and Feast, as had been promised. All councillors agreed that a good job had been made of the renovation.*
- iii. Listed in their Estimate Sheet dated 15 May 2023 a.l.b.m. included for *Saddle back wall cappings*. However, in the attached Proposed schedule of work it states *Supply and lay new stone copings to full length of wall, mitres and ends included*. It is unclear whether this variation was ever agreed. Consequently, the architectural detailing has been substantially changed from the original wall. The red brick string course has been omitted and limestone copings (small sections being throated) added with limestone stone-on-edge toppings. Concern is expressed that the limestone used may be susceptible to weathering and frost damage and a recent site inspection has already shown spalling and fissures in the pointing.
- iv. A block of white marble approximately 450 long by 100 high had been incorporated into the wall many years ago, but was removed during the renovation work. The block, incongruous to the limestone wall, was most probably a sample of Carrara marble for the War Memorial soldier figure made in Italy and obtained by monumental mason, Mr Frederick William Baldock, to present to the Memorial Committee for approval. His yard and workshop were located on the other side the wall and he constructed the Memorial in 1920. His son Charles died in Egypt during the Great War.
- v. Invoice dated 02 August 2023 in the sum of £5,000 received from J Burrows of a.l.b.m. for materials delivered to site.
- vi. Invoice dated 05 October 2023 in the sum of £6,000 received from J Burrows of a.l.b.m. for works carried out to date.
- vii. Invoice dated 23 October 2023 in the sum of £8,245 received from J Burrows of a.l.b.m. being final payment (this should have been £6,245).

5. CONCLUSION

- i. From lack of evidence to the contrary it would appear the work was carried out without Listed Building Consent or Planning Approval.
- ii. From available Parish Council records and contrary to the adopted Standing Orders and Financial Regulations only one quotation was received and accepted for the work.
- iii. Clarification required whether the project was subject to the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM15) and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) notified.
- iv. It is understood only verbal instructions were given on site by Councillors Worthington and Tatton and no written records or agreements have been traced of site meetings, site instructions or variations to the original contract.

Michael Credland BEM
14 February 2025