

Peterborough – 4th January 2024

An outstanding cathedral of Barnack stone, founded as a monastery in 655 by King Penda of Mercia and is 480 ft long, 206 ft wide, and 81 ft high. The tower reaches 143 ft. Restorations/additions were made until about 1500.

As well as being a market town, Peterborough has many diverse industries, although heavy engineering has all but disappeared. Locally grown sugar beet is processed, agriculture/farming is carried out in the surrounding countryside by a workforce that has been supplemented, in recent years, by an influx of people from eastern Europe.

In the town centre is the market place where the old guildhall built in 1671 predominates, this was once used as a butter market and above its open ground floor on Tuscan columns is the chamber reached by a tiny spiral staircase.

In Cumbergate are the Feoffee Almshouses dated 1903, and the 17th century old work house built of rubble on the ground floor with an overhanging timber framed upper floor.

In Westgate are the Wortley Almshouses which are early Victorian in a Tudor style with an inscription above the entrance from a previous building of 1744. In Lincoln Road are Victorian cottages.

The bridge which crosses the river Nene was built in 1934 to replace a Victorian iron structure. By its side stands the former customs house, built about 1700 of rubble with a hipped roof and cupola.

The above has been taken directly from Keith's hand written notes for the 2010 visit with the aid of Google's text converter, so hats off to the quality of Keith's penmanship.

This trip is a city centre circuit which Google Maps calculates as taking 30 minutes and is on the level with the exception of one flight of steps up from a roundabout underpass. As is now common, there is little choice for the first stop after 11:00.

It may be possible to do a tour south of the river Nene but the distances would be considerably greater and probably not enjoyable in early January.

Exit the station to the right then head left down Station Road at the mini roundabout. After about 20 yards branch right under the arch signed to the "City Centre & Cathedral". After another 20 yards, do a dog leg left and down to head under the first underpass, i.e. follow the brown sign for the Nene Valley Railway. Walk directly to the second underpass, this time ignoring the signage for the NVR. Immediately after the second underpass, go left up the short flight of steps. At the top of the steps go left again to enter Cowgate and the second on the left is our JD Wetherspoons, **The Drapers Arms**

- 1 The Drapers Arms** 29-31 Cowgate, PE1 1LZ JB Times Leave 11:00
Purpose built for the draper and milliner Charles Armstrong in 1899. Armstrong traded at this address for almost a century, helped by five of his six children, until his death in 1926. In more recent years, Armstrong's specialised in carpets, curtains and linens, trading at this address until 1996.

Turn left onto Cowgate and walk 80 yards to the **Blind Tiger**.

- 2 Blind Tiger** 11-13 Cowgate, PE1 1LZ Opens 10:00 JB Times 11:05 => 11:50
A necessary first stop due to the lack of hostelrys open at 11:00 although the landlady was very welcoming and samples were available. A variety of more niche offerings, see the "beer" file. I had a rather pleasant half of Open Face by Bat Country.

Dry Route . . . Go back onto Cowgate and walk 80 yards, then turn left and after 50 yards enter the Queensgate Shopping centre to the left of the Turtle Bay restaurant. Bear left and go about 50 yards, passing Black Sheep Coffee on your right. Bear right and go about 100 yards, as you approach the escalators bear right and pass them on your left under the signage to Westgate and follow the walkway for about 100 yards. When you exit, turn left and cross the road. **The Bumble Inn**, is about 25 yards on our right, just after the Furniture Warehouse.

Scenic Route . . . Go back onto Cowgate and walk 80 yards, then dog leg left onto Exchange Street, i.e. go down the LHS of St. John's church. Walk 200 yards towards the cathedral, passing the 17th century market hall on your right. Turn left into the Long Causeway (Wagamama on your right) and walk 200 yards. Turn left into Westgate and walk 200 yards to **The Bumble Inn**, on our right just after the Furniture Warehouse.

- 3 The Bumble inn** 46 Westgate, PE1 1RE Opens 12:00 JB Times 12:00 => 12:30
Not the food stop but offers dishes from the Nepalese restaurant next door. Not tried it myself but the menu is in the "food" file. Not much space for diners
This pub serves 5 changing beers and regularly includes a mild or a stout. On the recce I had a very nice porter from Huddersfield's Lord brewing. Beer board in the "beer" file.
Almost directly opposite is the Wortley Almshouse which was a Sam Smith's pub before the pandemic.

Turn right back onto Westgate and walk about 200 yards to **The Brewery Tap** on our right.

- 4 The Brewery Tap** 80 Westgate, PE1 2AA Opens 12:00 JB Times 12:35 => 13:15
This is the official Food stop. It does excellent Thai food as recommended by the landlord of The Ostrich Inn. I had the crispy belly pork starter (plenty) and can confirm it was very good with fast service. It has lunch time specials, e.g. burgers and wraps but there was no sign of a fish finger sandwich! Menus are in the "food" file.
This is an Oakham Ales pub and always has Bishops Farewell, Citra, Inferno and JHB. On my recce they also had Green Devil so I indulged in a pint and that's probably why I didn't note the guest beers. This was the last pub on my recce but was moved up the order to provide a food stop. It hasn't got a pub vibe, if The Ostrich Inn has its basic food offering available then perhaps, we flip the last two pubs? I would personally spend the longest available time in The Ostrich Inn so something to consider.

Go back onto Westgate and walk the 200 yards back to The Bumble Inn. Walk another 20 yards and turn left onto North Street. On the left at the end of the street is our final pub, **The Ostrich Inn**.

- 5 The Ostrich Inn** 17 North Street, PE1 2RA Opens 12:00 JB Times 13:20 =>
Not the food stop but there may be pies, scotch eggs and mac & cheese (sourced from a butcher in Dundee!) **BUT** the landlord says he's going to revamp his food offering in the new year however the small kitchen needs refurbishing and this won't start until January...
This pub serves 5 changing beers. On my recce I had a Chosen Man Bitter, another good offering from Lord's Brewing, and Dark Angel courtesy of my friends down the road at Abbeydale Brewery.

From **The Ostrich Inn** allow at **least 15 minutes** to get to the station as you have to cross a main road. The simplest route is to head back to the Brewery Tap but on the opposite side of the road, then follow the curve of the road round to the left. Cross the main road at the pedestrian lights to head back down Station Road.

Recce performed on 16th November 2023.