Stage 2 Bid and Action Plan
Prepared by Bromsgrove District Council
A bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund

20 April 2012
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<th>Description</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>CVs of new members of the THI Project Team</td>
<td>David Thomas (BDC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mary Worsfold (BDC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Christopher Holmes (BDC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jack Carradine (BDC)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Richard Clewer (WCC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jennie Delorenzo (BDC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jon Fraser (WCC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kevin Hirons (BDC)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jayne Pickering (BDC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Iain Mackay (BDC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rachel McAndrews (BDC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fiona Scott (BDC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>John Staniland (BDC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sarah Sellers (BDC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Michael Dunphy (BDC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Please note:</td>
<td>(BDC = Bromsgrove District Council)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(WCC = Worcestershire County Council)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Simple diagram which summarises the structure of the project team</td>
<td>Figure 1 from section 2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Written confirmation that the main contact is authorised to act on the</td>
<td>Letter, Kevin Dicks, Chief Executive, Bromsgrove District &amp; Redditch Borough Councils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>partnership’s behalf</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Written confirmation from a senior member of the relevant organisation</td>
<td>• Letter, Roger Hollingworth, Leader, Bromsgrove District Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>that their staff’s involvement in the project team will be treated as a</td>
<td>• Letter, John Staniland, Executive Director, Planning &amp; Regeneration, Regulatory &amp; Housing Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>high priority</td>
<td>• Letter, Kit Taylor, Portfolio Holder, Planning &amp; Regeneration Regulatory &amp; Housing Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Job description and person specification for the THI project officer post,</td>
<td>Includes:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>plus grade, salary and position in the management structure</td>
<td>• Structure of Strategic Planning Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Advertisement for THI Project Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Job description &amp; person specification for the Assistant Conservation Officer post</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>---</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 6 | External consultants - draft specification of services proposed and skills and qualifications needed, and procurement strategy for choosing consultants; or the name, practice or company profile and details of the specific consultants already appointed, the terms of their appointment, and how you chose them | **Request for Quotation: Brief to Consultants. August 2011**  
*Comprehensive Analysis: Tender Evaluation (28/08/2011)*  
*Requirements for an archaeological desk-based assessment for Bromsgrove Town Centre*  
*Letter, Martin Ashcroft, Senior Projects & Partnerships Manager (WCC/BDC), confirming details of appointment of public realm architects*  
*Contract for the provision of an Accessibility Audit* |
| 7 | Letters of support from new partners, stating why and how they are going to support the scheme | **Archive & Archaeology Service, WCC**  
**Bromsgrove School**  
**Avoncroft Museum**  
**The Housman Society**  
**English Heritage**  
**The Victorian Society**  
**Rosemary Sidaway, retail representative**  
**Rev. Chris Wingfield**  
**Artrix (to come)**  
**NEW College (to come)**  
**Bromsgrove Society (to come)**  
**Earth Heritage Trust** |
| 8 | If there were any relevant changes within your local planning authority, include a letter of support from the planning authority’s chief executive | Not applicable |
| 9 | Formal written constitution of partnership | Aim, vision, mission statement, common objectives & terms of reference - Partnership Steering Group (meeting 08/09/2011) |
| 10 | Flow-chart summarising the decision-making process for third-party grants | Figure 2 from section 2.5, plus:  
*Bromsgrove THI Guide to Eligible Works*  
*Bromsgrove THI Introduction to Grant Scheme*  
*Bromsgrove THI Specification Requirements for Grant-Aided Work*  
*Application Form* |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Conservation area appraisal and, if applicable, statement/minutes/resolution confirming the adoption of the document</td>
<td>Please refer to appendix 11 for Bromsgrove Town Draft Conservation Area Appraisal &amp; Management Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Copies of surveys</td>
<td>Report &amp; Valuation - Thomas Lister Ltd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Copies of valuations</td>
<td>Report &amp; Valuation - Thomas Lister Ltd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Photographs of eligible projects</td>
<td>Photographic survey of all properties showing features requiring intervention - Heritage &amp; Regeneration Solutions Ltd</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 15| A map or maps that precisely define the location of all eligible projects, as well as the boundary of the THI scheme and the conservation area | A3 maps:  
  * Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area & THI Boundary  
  * Eligible buildings within the THI Boundary  
  * Priority Plus buildings  
  * THI & surrounding ward boundaries  
  * 1839 Tithe Map |
| 16| Letters of support from owners, businesses or chamber of commerce to confirm demand for third-party grants | Questionnaire results from Property Owners and Occupiers (2012)  
  * Public Consultation on THI (02/02/2012-15/03/2012)  
  * Questionnaire for Property Owners & Occupiers  
  * A5 8-page THI summary booklet  
  * Traditional Construction Skills Questionnaire |
| 17| A conservation area management plan                                                                    | Please refer to appendix 11 for Bromsgrove Town Draft Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Plan |
| 18| If applicable, relevant committee meeting minutes confirming the local planning authority’s commitment to adopting, publishing and implementing the conservation area management plan | Please refer to appendix 11 |
|   | Copies of relevant and up-to-date strategies and frameworks, or sections thereof | BDC Anti Fraud & Corruption Strategy. April 2010  
- Historic Environment Assessment for BDC. June 2010  
- Town Centre Health Check. December 2011  
- Maintain your Building. April 2012  
- BDC Planning Enforcement Policy. January 2011  
- Bromsgrove Town Centre Regeneration AAP Survey  
- Accessibility Audit. 2011  
- Draft Public Realm Scope 2011  
- Draft Community Archaeological Scope 2011  
- Archaeological desk-based assessment 2012  
- BDC Draft Core Strategy 2. January 2011 |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Written confirmation that the partnership funding for the whole scheme is secured at least ‘in principle’</td>
<td>Declaration signed by John Hobbs, Director of Environmental Services (WCC) &amp; John Smith OBE, Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways &amp; Transport (WCC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Written confirmation that the partnership funding needed to deliver the Year 1 programme is in place</td>
<td>See Appendix 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>A signed copy of the Declaration</td>
<td>Declaration signed by Kevin Dicks, Chief Executive, Bromsgrove District &amp; Redditch Borough Councils, dated 11/04/2012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 1
Summary
## Section One
### Summary

### Table 1: Changes to Stage 1 Bid

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of Change</th>
<th>Effect of Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 critical projects have been removed from the scheme as it was felt that the restoration of these properties would not necessarily provide a very significant step change in the appearance of the THI area. A critical project is one in which funding is ring-fenced within the Action Plan and such a move, in light of THI guidance notes, may prove counter-productive</td>
<td>The 3 critical projects: 22-24 High Street, 75 High Street, 73 High Street have been reclassified as Priority Plus, Priority &amp; Reserve. 73 High Street is the Reserve property - a recipient of grant aid under the recent Frontage Improvement Grants scheme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Project Team has grown from 7 to 18 members all of which have been involved in various aspects of Stage 2 development. CVs for new members of the Project Team are attached in appendix 1</td>
<td>The Development Control Manager is a significant new member of the 6-strong core team. Also represented now are the following skill sets: media &amp; communications, highway engineering, maintenance &amp; public realm, housing/vacancy initiatives, financial, enforcement, equality/accessibility issues, legal issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Steering Group has also grown to include shopkeepers and small businesses from the town centre, a religious leader and a specialist in archaeology</td>
<td>There is greater community representation making Steering Group meetings more productive and engaging. Shopkeepers and small businesses, of which we will try to maintain a minimum of 3 members, view their inclusion as a genuinely open and transparent measure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-alignment of THI boundary</td>
<td>Please see map (appendix 15). It was felt that the re-adjustment would concentrate the impact of grant aid in a tighter, more property-eligible area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area of Special Control has not been approved</td>
<td>This measure has not been taken up because it was felt that sufficient control was already in place by virtue of the conservation area designation and the updated Shopfronts and Advertisements Design Guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction of Discontinuance Notices</td>
<td>Despite the above change we will try to bring about an improvement in the appearance of the conservation area through the removal of, for example, illuminated box signs and their replacement with more suitable signs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1 Executive Summary

Bromsgrove District Council, in partnership with Worcestershire County Council, is seeking to regenerate the historic Town Centre of Bromsgrove through a Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) - a partnership project between Bromsgrove District Council, Worcestershire County Council and the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). The £1.6 million heritage-led regeneration scheme which is scheduled to run between 2012 and 2017 will help to achieve the long-term economic sustainability of Bromsgrove by preserving, restoring and enhancing the historical, architectural and cultural heritage of the town.

The THI area extends from Worcester Road to the Strand and follows the medieval plan comprising the main south-west/north-east route between Worcester and Birmingham.

The Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area was added to the national Heritage at Risk register published by English Heritage in July 2010 as a result of a clear deterioration of the area’s condition and appearance over the previous 3 years. This is one of only four at risk areas in Worcestershire, and one of 51 identified across the West Midlands. The heritage at risk assessment process identified several noticeable problems that are contributing to the erosion of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area:
Bromsgrove District Council Conservation

Bromsgrove... a thriving market town

- Loss of historic detail or inappropriate change to doors and windows, front elevations, decorative features, shopfronts, signs and advertisements, as well as ill-planned new extensions
- Vacancies within buildings
- Signs of a lack of maintenance such as poorly maintained gutters or joinery
- The condition of the public realm
- Signs and advertisements, street clutter, highway works, traffic management, poor quality street furniture and a large number of planning enforcement cases were identified as particular problems
- The appearance and vitality of the Conservation Area has deteriorated over the last 3 years and is expected to continue to deteriorate in the next 3 years without interventions
- Condition and vulnerability both ranked at level 4 with a deteriorating trajectory

There is an assortment of notable historic buildings dating from predominantly the 18th and 19th centuries but with some earlier surviving timber-framed buildings. A range of architectural styles is represented from English vernacular, to restrained Georgian and more elaborate Victorian Gothic buildings. This variety of elevational treatments and styles demonstrates high quality construction and craftsmanship, giving a rich texture to the town centre - a tangible reminder of the town’s past prosperity.

The narrowness of the historic building plots, the varied rooflines and the overall height of the buildings give a general impression of vertical emphasis and a strong sense of enclosure.

The more modern, especially post-WW2, buildings unfortunately detract from this as they are set back from the established building line, occasionally a storey lower and with detailing that gives a horizontal rather than vertical emphasis. These sites do at least give opportunities for redevelopment in the future without requiring the loss of more historic buildings.

We are agreed that positive measures are urgently required to give the town centre a sustainable future and a new lease of life. Major intervention is vitally needed to reclaim Bromsgrove’s once distinctive offer. Our aim is to bring back the traditional life and vitality of the high street and to support the re-introduction of year-round outdoor activity. We are strongly in favour of specialist retailing and the re-establishment of High Street and Worcester Road as an attractive thoroughfare to be envied across the region and nationally. Our vision is nothing short of the transformation of Bromsgrove into the thriving market town it used to be.

The residents of the deprived wards adjacent to the High Street depend upon the town for their employment, retail and entertainment needs, and those residents have already been affected by the decline of Bromsgrove as a retail destination over the last 20 years.

A Draft Area Action Plan was published in January 2011 to provide a planning framework for the regeneration of the town. The Bromsgrove THI initiative will be integral to this by helping to recreate a vibrant and sustainable environment which will attract visitors and businesses alike.

We aim to:
- tackle condition and appearance problems of historic buildings and frontages along the High Street
encourage the future maintenance of notable historic buildings
find new uses for vacant buildings and upper floors
upgrade the public realm
raise awareness of the historic built environment as a cultural asset
transfer conservation knowledge and skills into the community

This Stage 2 Bid and Action Plan has been written by the THI Project Officer working in close association with the THI Project Team and the THI Partnership Steering Group - a body that represents a wide selection of Bromsgrove’s major stakeholders.

The total overall cost of the 81 eligible projects, including expenditure on public realm, staffing, publicity, education and training, is £4,563,800. The Common Fund will have £1,600,000 including £1,200,000 anticipated from the HLF and £400,000 match funded from Worcestershire County Council.

15 properties have been identified as priority plus (P+) and a further 38 properties are regarded as priority (P). There are 28 potential reserve properties (R). The long list of eligible properties reflects the genuine need for regeneration in the conservation area where nearly 60 properties are statutorily listed buildings and many more are deemed worthy of townscape merit.

It is widely acknowledged that the priority plus properties we have selected demonstrate a reasonable spectrum of works - 1 is completely empty, 8 are empty in part and all 15, taken as a whole, represent those buildings in the worst condition but with the highest heritage value.

Community involvement and skills training are vital factors in Bromsgrove’s THI. We have allocated £50,000 for training, education and learning opportunities and these have been carefully programmed to appeal to all groups in the community. The THI Partnership Steering Group has pressed for a diverse range of complementary initiatives and most of these activities and events are highlighted in this application. There will be seminars, open days, short courses, competitions, opportunities for volunteering, guided walks and a great deal more over the course of the scheme’s 5-year lifetime.

As we progressed the Stage 2 Bid we were able to develop and improve upon a number of strategies and policies. For example, we have reviewed and significantly updated and adopted our Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan and further updated our already adopted SPG on the design of shopfronts and advertisements.

The Project Team and Partnership Steering Group - including the local community via a period of public consultation - have collaborated extensively over many months on drafting this second-round document, and are now pleased to present their final version to the Heritage Lottery Fund. We remain committed and focussed on regenerating our town centre and look forward to delivering a scheme of quality and integrity on behalf of the people of Bromsgrove.

1.1 Our Organisation

Bromsgrove District Council
Planning and Regeneration
The Council House
Burcot Lane
Bromsgrove
Worcestershire
B60 1AA

(The THI area postcodes are B60 and B61, with the centre of the THI in B60).
Section 2

The Project Team and Partnership
Section Two
The Project Team and Partnership

2 The Project Team and Partnership

The scheme will be led by Bromsgrove District Council which will:
- act as the Lead Body
- hold the contract with the Heritage Lottery Fund
- manage, and be responsible for, the Common Fund

The Project Team and Partnership Steering Group will provide a key element towards the Town Centre Regeneration Programme and will support and inform the projects developed by the Town Centre Regeneration Steering Group.

Figure 1: THI Project Team & Partnership Links and Structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LINE MANAGEMENT</th>
<th>RESPONSIBILITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Town Centre Regeneration Steering Group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Executive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THI Partnership Steering Group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THI Project Team (see 2.1 below)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THI Project Officer David A. Thomas (see 2.2 below)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THI Project Team &amp; Partnership Links and Structure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Realm Funding Package</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linkages with adjacent projects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approves THI grants over £150,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tactical issues, Directing, Monitoring, Community/Training</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Views sought on THI grants over £30,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All grants reported to group quarterly for feedback on quality and design.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational issues Scheme development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Planning Manager approves THI grants up to £30,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Executive Director for Planning &amp; Regeneration, Regulatory &amp; Housing Services approves THI grants between £30,000 &amp; £150,000)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day-to-day management Engagement Management Administration Implementation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.1 The THI Project Team

At a corporate level the THI scheme will be championed by John Staniland the Executive Director for Planning and Regeneration, Regulatory and Housing Services under his wider responsibility for town centre regeneration. John has taken an active role in the project to this date as the chairman of the Steering group and will continue to fulfil this role throughout the lifetime of the project.

We have set up a 6-strong core THI Project Team including staff from both Bromsgrove District (BDC) and Worcestershire County Councils (WCC). The responsibilities of this core team encompass operational issues, decision-making and scheme development. Individual core team members and their skills are detailed in table 2 below.

Table 2: Core THI Project Team Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Martin Ashcroft</td>
<td>Projects and Partnerships Manager (BDC)</td>
<td>Planning processes, project management &amp; procurement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dale Birch</td>
<td>Development Control Manager (BDC)</td>
<td>Development control &amp; planning enforcement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike Dunphy</td>
<td>Strategic Planning Manager (BDC)</td>
<td>Strategic planning -policy development and implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Savory</td>
<td>Senior Projects Manager (WCC/BDC)</td>
<td>Project management, regeneration &amp; economic development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Thomas</td>
<td>THI Project Officer (BDC)</td>
<td>Building conservation, urban design, architecture &amp; financial management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Worsfold</td>
<td>Conservation Officer (BDC)</td>
<td>Building conservation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(BDC = Bromsgrove District Council    WCC = Worcestershire County Council)*

The core THI Project Team, which will meet 4-weekly during implementation, now has 3 new members, namely:

- **David Thomas** who has filled the vacant post of THI Project Officer
- **Mary Worsfold** who has replaced Judith Carstairs as Conservation Officer providing specialist advice on building conservation and heritage issues
- **Dale Birch**, the Development Control Manager for the town centre
Christopher Holmes (Accountancy Technician), currently a very active member of the supporting Project Team, will be moved to the core team prior to the start of the implementation stage. In a further change, Ross Walker, has now left Worcestershire County Council.

The Project Team, which includes the Project Officer, will have the requisite technical ability to manage all aspects of the scheme on a day-to-day basis conferring with the Partnership Steering Group either once every 2 months or when necessary to do so, e.g. should a grant be under development for greater than £30,000.

David Thomas was appointed Project Officer in June 2011 and has since taken responsibility for the development of the THI Stage 2 bid. His Line Manager is Mike Dunphy who will assume overall responsibility for delivery of the scheme.

The THI Project Officer will prepare recommendations on grant applications which will be reviewed by the Line Manager before being passed for comment through the Project Team and - if greater than £30,000 - the Partnership Steering Group.

Delegated authority to approve grant applications is set out in Section 2.5 below and the executive decision approving the delegated powers and grant scheme application and approval process is shown in figure 2 (page 19).

Table 3: Supporting Project Team Leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andrew Bucklitch</td>
<td>Tree Officer (BDC)</td>
<td>Tree management &amp; landscape works</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack Carradine</td>
<td>Media Officer (BDC)</td>
<td>Media and Communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Clewer</td>
<td>Senior Highways Officer (WCC)</td>
<td>Highway engineering, maintenance and public realm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennie Delorenzo</td>
<td>Housing Initiatives Officer (BDC)</td>
<td>Housing/vacancy initiatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jon Fraser</td>
<td>Highways Manager (WCC)</td>
<td>Highways, public realm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kevin Hirons</td>
<td>Street Scene &amp; Communities Manager (BDC)</td>
<td>Public realm - street scene &amp; communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jayne Pickering</td>
<td>Executive Director Finance &amp; Corporate Resources (BDC)</td>
<td>Financial/Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christopher Holmes</td>
<td>Accountancy Technician (BDC)</td>
<td>Financial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iain Mackay</td>
<td>Planning Enforcement Officer (BDC)</td>
<td>Planning enforcement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rachel McAndrews</td>
<td>CCTV &amp; Telecare Services Manager (BDC)</td>
<td>Public realm - CCTV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiona Scott</td>
<td>Equality Officer (BDC)</td>
<td>Equality/accessibility issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah Sellers</td>
<td>Senior Solicitor (BDC)</td>
<td>Legal issues</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(BDC = Bromsgrove District Council     WCC = Worcestershire County Council)
In a change from the first-round bid the Project Team has grown from 7 to 18 members. All supporting Project Team members have been involved in various aspects of preparing this stage 2 bid. The skills of a valuation surveyor will be made available via Worcestershire County Council for the length of the scheme on a building by building basis.

During the Delivery Stage they will be kept up to date with minutes from the core Project Team and will be asked to attend meetings as matters requiring their particular expertise need addressing. Guided by the Project Officer, all members of the Project Team, core or otherwise, will provide specialist support and share in decision-making. During the delivery stage the Project Team will assist the Project Officer with strategic direction as well as reporting to, and working alongside, the Partnership Steering Group.

CVs of the Project Team accompanied the Stage 1 submission indicating the requisite skills needed for delivery of the THI. We are confident that within our 18-strong Project Team we now have a full complement of skills. CV’s for new members of the Project Team are attached (appendix 1).

2.2 THI Project Officer

Following the award of a first-round pass of £1,250,000, which included development funding of £50,000, Bromsgrove District Council employed a THI Project Officer to carry the scheme forward towards Stage 2 submission - a job description and person specification for this post can be seen in appendix 5. The THI Project Officer will continue at Bromsgrove District Council for the duration of the 5-year scheme, the contract funded through the THI Common Fund, following HLF approval of the second-round bid.

The Project Officer will be based amongst colleagues in the Strategic Planning Team where he will take on the day-to-day running of the scheme, regularly reporting on progress and any issues to his line manager, the Strategic Planning Manager, as well as the Project Team and Partnership Steering Group. Written confirmation that the Project Officer is authorised to act as the main contact on behalf of Bromsgrove District Council can be read at appendix 3.

In addition to support from the Project Team, the Project Officer will be granted administrative support from the Strategic Planning Team. Further guidance will be given from other District and County Council officers as and when necessary. The Conservation Officer and the Development Control Manager will provide significant and dedicated support throughout the 5-year scheme.

The Project Officer’s responsibilities include:
- First point of contact for all THI enquiries
- Day-to-day responsibility for implementation of the THI
- Providing guidance to property owners on the THI application process
- Making principal assessment on all THI applications
- Monitoring THI approvals - both financially and on site
- Developing and implementing THI complementary initiatives
- Liaising with the Media Officer to market and promote the THI
- Engaging with the community and voluntary sector and property owners
- Liaising with the council’s accountant to ensure grant claims and financial record keeping is completed efficiently
- Preparing agendas for Project Team and Partnership Steering Group meetings
- Providing the primary contact for the HLF Monitor and Officers
Key competencies required from the Project Officer include:

- experience in project management
- experience in building conservation
- robust financial management skills
- organisational and negotiation skills
- a focused and proactive approach

A job description and person specification for the Project Officer along with a structure chart for the Strategic Planning Section is attached as appendix 5.

The salary of the Project Officer will be set at Grade 7 (SCP 30 - 36), currently £25,472 to £30,011 (pay award pending). The post will be established on a temporary 5-year contract basis. A budget of £196,490 has been allocated for the Project Officer which is split as detailed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salary over 5 years (at current rate)</td>
<td>£135,260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual salary increase allowance</td>
<td>£2,096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inflation allowance</td>
<td>£16,934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Insurance</td>
<td>£11,091</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pension Contribution</td>
<td>£31,109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total over 5 years</strong></td>
<td><strong>£196,490</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Project Officer has been retained by the Council as an Assistant Conservation Officer for the period between submission and determination of the bid. This post is fully funded by the Council. Should the bid be successful David will revert to the role of THI Project Officer enabling the scheme to begin its implementation phase without delay.

This will also allow other THI related projects to be managed over the summer months, and will ensure a consistent approach is taken to the scheme as it progresses from preparation to implementation.

### 2.3 Other partners and their commitment to the scheme

The main partners involved in the scheme are detailed in section 2.4 below, this partnership will be kept under constant review for the lifetime of the scheme ensuring that if new people wish or need to become involved in the project they can be included as necessary.

The Partnership Steering Group meetings attended by both the Ward Councillors and Portfolio Holder/heritage champion (alongside the approval process up to cabinet level that this bid has gone through) demonstrate the commitment from the elected members of the Council. It has been recognised not only through this bid but other regeneration incentives being progresses by the Council that the economic well-being and an attractive, well-maintained historic environment are mutually inclusive and constitute a vital factor in the revitalisation of the town centre.

As well as showing the required leadership by attending the various meetings Bromsgrove District and Worcestershire County Councils have both lent their considerable financial support to the successful submission of this Stage 2 bid. Worcestershire County Council has match-funded £400,000 to the overall scheme while Bromsgrove has contributed £16,700 towards the development phase.
The Project Team meets every 4 weeks to safeguard the scheme’s momentum and ensure that the appropriate departments - local and county - are not only updated on progress but given the opportunity to contribute to delivery.

The Project Team has lined up a thoroughly representative cross-section of the local community to sit on the Partnership Steering Group as detailed below.

Letters of support from the Chief Executive of Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils (appendix 3) and the Leader of Bromsgrove District Council (appendix 4) outline the Council’s continued commitment to the scheme and the involvement of key officers to ensure its success. There is also considerable and enthusiastic support from our newly-designated Heritage Champion Cllr. C. B. Taylor (Linthurst Ward), Portfolio Holder for Planning, Regeneration, Regulatory Services and Strategic Housing (appendix 4).
2.4 The Partnership Steering Group

Since the first-round bid was submitted the Partnership Steering Group has changed in the make-up of its members - there has been the addition of a representative from the retail sector, a religious leader and a specialist in archaeology. Their support letters demonstrating their valuable contribution to the Steering Group are attached (appendix 7). District and County Council officers will continue to contribute to the steering group as and when required.

We felt it especially important to invite shopkeepers and small businesses to the Partnership forum in that their daily lives are so tightly interwoven with the vicissitudes of the high street. This measure has been much appreciated and is leading to greater transparency and co-operation among town centre retailers, etc. The contributions of each Steering Group member are highlighted below.

We recognise that members of the Steering Group may come and go during the lifetime of the scheme and so we will be especially vigilant that a representative balance is constantly in place at meetings and other consultative events.

The Partnership Steering Group is chaired by the Executive Director for Planning and Regeneration, Regulatory and Housing Services and meets bi-monthly having met as many as 5 times now that the Stage 2 bid is complete. The Steering Group membership includes:

- Lesley Ashworth, Lesley Ashworth Associates
- Andrew Oulsnam, Oulsnam Estate Agents
- Representatives of the Weston family, local landowners
- Avoncroft Museum of Historic Buildings
- The Victorian Society
- The Housman Society
- Artrix - Bromsgrove’s Theatre, Cinema, Live Music and Comedy Venue
- The Bromsgrove Society
- Bromsgrove School
- North East Worcestershire College
- English Heritage
- Historic Environment and Archaeology Service at Worcestershire County Council
- St. John’s Church
- Representative for the town centre retailers
- Councillor Dr. D. W. P. Booth JP
- Councillor Mrs. R. L. Dent
- Councillor. C. B. Taylor (Heritage Champion)
- Bromsgrove District Council
- Worcestershire County Council
- Clare Haines, Grants Officer, HLF West Midlands
  and or
- Phil South, HLF External Monitoring Officer - by open invitation

The Steering Group, when it first met in September 2011, approved the following terms of reference:

- To endorse and agree the details of the second-round bid to the HLF
- To oversee the implementation of the funded works and review progress

and will be called upon to give technical guidance and support to the Project Team and Project Officer as the scheme runs its 5-year course. Normally, the Steering Group will meet every 2 months - timed to follow on from the Project Team meetings - to be appraised of progress and other matters. For terms of reference and other commitments and objectives the Steering Group has approved please see appendix 9.
The Steering Group’s function is to assist in the delivery and management of the scheme and to ensure that the direction taken benefits the overall requirement to revitalize the town centre. Many Steering Group members are likely to be heavily engaged in complementary initiatives either training or community-based. At the inaugural meeting of the Steering Group the principal aims as highlighted below were agreed:

- To promote conservation of the heritage and respect the distinctive quality of the historic buildings
- To work together to develop vision and strategy for the implementation of the THI scheme
- To develop a THI scheme that will regenerate and develop the town centre as a prosperous, vibrant, safe and accessible work place and visitor destination, providing employment in a high quality environment
- To promote the THI scheme actively and to work together to secure Bromsgrove’s second-round bid to the HLF
- To help raise civic pride and promote an image demonstrating Bromsgrove town centre as a sound investment opportunity for new uses that will aid sustainable regeneration
- To develop community involvement in the regeneration of Bromsgrove town centre

The roles of each partner are as follows:

- The Director of Avoncroft Museum of Historic Buildings, just south of Bromsgrove, is providing valuable knowledge of traditional construction and repair techniques. The museum will host 3 days of courses for homeowners on historic building maintenance. There is also a commitment to procure traditional rural craft and trade workers for an archaeology open day scheduled for August 2013
- The Bromsgrove Casework Reporter at the Birmingham and West Midlands branch of the Victorian Society is providing guidance on the reinstatement of missing architectural features as well as participating in our training and outreach projects
- The Chairman of the Housman Society, through the THI scheme, is promoting knowledge and appreciation of the life and works of A. E. Housman - a poet and pre-eminent classicist from Bromsgrove
- The Director of Artrix, Bromsgrove’s versatile multi-disciplinary arts centre, is working closely on a number of art in the public realm initiatives. Innovative artists, designers or makers with the vision to make their mark on the High Street will be invited to tender as an integral part of an exciting public realm scheme
- The Chairman of the Bromsgrove Society is providing the lead on a number of projects such as landscaping the Spadesbourne Brook, redesigning the town trail guide and a plan to address visually the backs of High Street properties from traffic passing by on Market Street
- The Headmaster of Bromsgrove School is keenly supporting the history and regeneration of Bromsgrove. Representation from the school on the Steering Group will provide a valuable connection to local residents and young people specifically
- The Principal of North East Worcestershire College, through the Assistant Principal Learner Experience, is working closely with the THI Project Team and the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) on developing masterclasses in construction for 16 - 19 year olds
The Historic Areas Advisor for English Heritage in the West Midlands is providing specialist advice on the proposed repair and improvement works, as well as guidance on our training and outreach projects.

The HLF Monitor and Officers will be invited to attend the Steering Group meetings to provide an understanding of HLF priorities and the THI progress.

Officers from Worcestershire County Council Historic Environment and Archaeological Service are helping to develop plans for a community dig which is proposed for Mill Lane in Easter, 2013. There will be a second community dig in Sanders Park culminating in an open day later that year.

St. John’s Church is an important link to the local community and has a vital high street presence, this will help in publicising the THI and in developing discussion about the history of High Street/Worcester Road.

The Town Centre Retail Representative will help us contact and consult local shopkeepers and small businesses to find out what the real issues on the high street are and how these might be tackled so that Bromsgrove becomes an attractive destination for retailing.

Shopkeepers and small businesses make a significant contribution to the overall running of the scheme. As they are freeholders or leaseholders, some of whom may wish to draw down grants, and encourage others to do so, their experience of real high street trading is paramount.

Bromsgrove District Council has allocated senior staff members to provide conservation and planning knowledge to the Steering Group. Local councillors will represent and deal with some of the issues affecting town centre owners, tenants and users.

Worcestershire County Council includes the Highways Authority and is providing match funding of £400,000. County officers will see that other Town Centre regeneration programmes dovetail with THI initiatives as well as providing advice to the Steering Group on the proposed public realm works.

Bromsgrove District and Worcestershire County Councils have prioritized senior staff for inclusion on the Steering Group who can have a direct impact on the work of the group so that progress has already been made in delivering key strategies in relation to the scheme. The Conservation Officer, for example, has updated the Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area Appraisal and written a Conservation Area Management Plan to accompany it (appendix 11). The Strategic Planning Team have produced a Bromsgrove Town Centre Draft Area Action Plan and a Town Centre Health Check as well as revised design guidance on shopfronts and advertisements (appendix 19). Also, at meetings of the Steering Group, officers have presented for endorsement the Project Brief for the public realm upgrade, a significant part of which (£400,000) will be funded through the THI common fund (appendix 19).

Partnership Steering Group tasks include:

- Attending bi-monthly meetings to receive regular updates on progress and provide feedback on the design and quality of implemented projects.
- Approving any changes to the scheme
- Providing views on all grant applications over £30,000
- Monitoring progress against the action plan
- Promoting the THI scheme to the wider community
- Providing technical expertise and guidance

The THI Project Officer will provide the secretariat for the Partnership Steering Group.
2.5 Decision-making processes

Figure 2: Bromsgrove decision-making flow chart
The THI will be the responsibility of Bromsgrove District Council (the lead body) who will sign the declaration to the Heritage Lottery Fund. The Project Team will manage the £1.6 million Common Fund having the appropriate technical skills to deliver every aspect of the scheme. Within the Project Team the Project Officer will administer the day-to-day running of the THI, recommending where, and under what circumstances, the District Council will enter into contracts with individual owners or tenants. The Steering Group will review progress, share knowledge of initiatives and plans and generally encourage grant applications.

The District Council is committed to providing the requisite number of specialist staff needed to deliver the scheme - disciplines include enforcement, planning, conservation, property and economic development.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning, Regeneration, Regulatory Services and Strategic Housing who is also the Heritage Champion will supply the political profile that the scheme demands.

In all likelihood the Steering Group, having provided encouragement and expertise throughout the scheme, will continue to regularly meet and provide input on town centre regeneration matters once the delivery phase has completed in 2017. Such commitment will help to ensure that the £1.6 million Heritage Lottery Fund investment is protected beyond the lifetime of the scheme.

Additionally, the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan and the Shopfronts and Advertisements Design Guide will be used as material considerations when determining planning applications and will assist in dealing with breaches of planning control ensuring good practice continues during and after scheme completion.

The District Council has a great deal of previous experience in managing public funds - the Town Centre Regeneration Programme Manager (who is a member of the Core Project Team) has nearly 20 years experience of running major, publicly-funded grant schemes in the economic development and regeneration arena. These have included Foot & Mouth Recovery, Rover Recovery and Rural Regeneration Zones - each with multi-million pound budgets.

The Project Team will take particular care with records and accountability, strictly observing the principles set out in the Stage 2 guidance, so that internal and external auditing can proceed with all due clarity right up to scheme completion.

**2.5.1 Pre-Application**

Applicants for grants will be given 3 A5 booklets which explain different aspects of the scheme:

- Guide to Eligible Works
- Introduction to Grant Scheme
- Specification Requirements for Grant-Aided Work

The Project Officer will meet applicants on site to discuss which remedial or reinstatement measures might be eligible under the scheme.

Other pre-application processes are expected of the applicant and include:

- The need for three competitive and detailed tenders - if the grant contribution is likely to be over £10,000
- Agreed specifications, priced schedules of work and drawings
- Any required consents such as listed building consent, planning permission, building regulations approval or advertisement consent

These will need to be submitted with a completed full application form as well as other relevant information as set out in the booklet: *Introduction to Grant Scheme* (see Appendix 10) before an application can be assessed.
2.5.2 Grant Application Decisions

In figure 3 (on page 17) the Project Officer shares responsibility with the Project Team in deciding which works are eligible for grant – should a decision be required on a grant of less than £30,000, then the Strategic Planning Manager is authorised to sign the contract on behalf of the District Council. Over £30,000 the views of the Steering Group will be sought, although there may not be any need to wait for the next bi-monthly meeting for a decision to be made. For grants over £30,000 the designated signatory is the Executive Director for Planning and Regeneration, Regulatory and Housing Services who can sign on behalf of the District Council to the value of £150,000. Grant applications in excess of £150,000 are passed through Cabinet - and the Steering Group - for approval.

The Project Officer, in collaboration with the Project Team, reviews all applications before submitting them for approval to the Strategic Planning Manager. The Project Team is able to bring to bear all its collective expertise – conservation, development control, etc. - to oversee each separate application. Where necessary, the Project Team will defer to the Steering Group to guarantee that the applicant’s request meets the assessment criteria and priorities laid down in the action plan.

Once a critical and objective assessment has taken place the Project Officer will recommend a decision to either grant or refuse an application request. The Steering Group may be called upon to endorse a request should the value of the grant be in excess of £30,000. The Strategic Planning Manager or the Executive Director for Planning and Regeneration, Regulatory and Housing Services will then have the delegated authority to confirm the applicant’s request.

Occasionally, a grant application may need referral to the Heritage Lottery Fund, for example:
- If an application is made by a member of the Steering Group
- Where the grant from the HLF is likely to exceed £100,000

The application form is included in appendix 10.

Assessment Criteria

Every application for grant aid will be measured against the following criteria:
- Is the cost of the project reasonable and does it provide Value for Money
- Is an historic shopfront to be put back
- Are specialist contractors and accredited consultants to be used (conservation-trained architects or surveyors must be used where the grant element is in excess of £20,000)
- How great is the need for repair
- Does the proposal satisfy the grant requirements in the Guide to Eligible Works
- Has the building townscape merit and to what extent will the grant enhance this
- Is the property Priority Plus, Priority or Reserve
- Is there the will to use traditional materials and techniques according to national conservation standards

The Project Team, and where necessary the Steering Group, must also be assured that the following are provided:
- Copies of any required consents such as listed building consent, planning permission, building regulations approval or advertisement consent
- Proof of either freehold or leasehold status
- Historical evidence for any elevational changes, e.g. the reinstatement of traditional shopfronts
● A structural survey if necessary
● A development appraisal together with a valuation of the property in its current state plus an estimated valuation once the project has been completed - for projects where vacant historic floorspace is brought back into use
● A full specification and priced schedule of works
● Details of buildings insurance and any additional insurance required
● Scaled drawings showing all existing architectural detailing, plus relevant details of the buildings on either side at a scale of 1:50. Applications will also be expected to show clearly all details of the proposed shopfront and its relationship with the whole elevation, including any existing features that are proposed to be altered or removed. Plans, elevations and sections should be at a scale of 1:20 and it may be necessary to show architectural detailing at a scale of 1:2. At least one sectional drawing of the shopfront should show its profile and relationship to the upper part of the building
● Outstanding enforcement matters or unauthorised works should be settled in writing under the direction of the Project Team
● The need for 3 competitive and detailed tenders if the grant contribution is likely to be over £10,000 - 2 detailed quotes are required when the grant is less than £10,000
● Copies of letters informing the applicant of any other grant offers from sources other than the Heritage Lottery Fund
● The lender’s consent should the building be mortgaged and/or the freeholder’s consent should the building be leased

Members of the Project Team and the Steering Group will be careful regarding conflicts of interest and should any arise they will not be invited to take part in deciding a grant for that particular property. The range of grants will be from a minimum of £2,000 to a maximum of £200,000 for each property.

2.6 Skills and skills gaps of the Project Team and Partnership

The Partnership Steering Group has been established to include all the skills and experience we feel necessary to successfully deliver the 5-year scheme. Similarly, the Project Team includes officers whose professional remit encompasses conservation, heritage management, training, planning, property management, economic regeneration, community engagement and project management.

In reviewing the range of skills in the Project Team and Steering Group we have perceived few gaps. Should additional skills be needed then specialist officers from within the District and County Councils will be contacted for additional advice.

The key new member to have joined the Project Team since the first-round bid is the Project Officer, David Thomas, who can offer skills in building conservation, urban design, architecture and financial management as outlined below:

● THI Project Officer - a specialist in the conservation and management of historic buildings with considerable experience of Heritage Lottery Fund grant processes. An Affiliate Member of both the IHBC and ASCHB who has five years experience of conservation and urban design in a local authority. Former Chairman, Area Representative and Treasurer of the UK Association of Preservation Trusts in the Midlands and current Chair of the Shropshire Building Preservation Trust, David was previously a THI Project Manager in Medway, Kent.
At an early stage in the development phase we appointed *Heritage and Regeneration Solutions Limited* to undertake a more detailed assessment of the historic buildings within the Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area and develop proposals for repairs and improvements to those buildings eligible for costs. The work produced accurate building condition surveys and detailed financial assessments of potential projects.

The study addressed the following issues in relation to the buildings and spaces of the area using photographs, plans and illustrations:

- disrepair, dereliction and mutilation of buildings
- condition survey and identification of scope of work
- use and level of occupancy
- ownership
- missing architectural details
- professional valuation of buildings
- schedule of grant eligible works and associated realistic and accurate costings.
- poor quality building facades including shopfronts
- intrusive and inappropriate shop signage and advertising
- unsympathetic modernisation schemes.

We stressed that in order to meet the requirements of the Heritage Lottery Fund under the Townscape Heritage Initiative, studies should comprise and address the following issues:

- a) a detailed photographic survey of the important features of properties requiring intervention in the study area

b) a comprehensive condition survey of these properties to concentrate on the external fabric, but to include brief assessments of internal condition and to establish whether buildings are structurally sound. These assessments should consider:

  - Building Repair
  - Reinstatement of lost historical and architectural detail
  - Bringing vacant floor space back into use

- c) Schedule of grant eligible works for individual identified properties and accurate costings for the above categories of eligible work under the THI scheme
- d) An overall detailed cost breakdown for all proposals including a financial appraisal of those elements eligible for grant assistance

We feel that quality training will underpin the success of the THI scheme and have therefore developed a training regime in close consultation with North East Worcestershire College and Avoncroft Museum of Historic Buildings both of which are represented on the Steering Group. The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings is a third consultee in this process.
Section 3
The Conservation Area
Section Three
The Conservation Area

3 The Conservation Area

Please refer to Section 3.4 below to understand why the THI boundary has changed from that previously given in the first-round bid.

3.1 The area’s social and economic context

There are 23 wards across Bromsgrove District which has a total population of 93,441. Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area sits within St. John’s Ward (see map on page 26 and also appendix 15) and covers an area of 1.14 square miles with a population of 4,655 (2010). The Town Centre plays an important role in supporting the needs of the adjacent wards especially Charford and Sidemoor.

Indeed half of the people shopping on Bromsgrove High Street have walked there from home. This is a key statistic as three of the neighbouring wards are low income areas and Charford and Sidemoor wards contain Super Output Areas (SOAs) that are ranked nationally in the top 3 decile of the Indices of Multiple Deprivation and are among the most deprived wards in the Region. Therefore a high proportion of residents in the neighbouring areas are low-income families who rely heavily upon the town centre both in terms of employment in the retail sector and for their own retail requirements.

The lack of spending power from these shoppers currently primarily serviced by the town centre has in part contributed to the closure of shops. This in turn means fewer jobs available for the residents further impacting on the spending power within the town centre, meaning that the town has become a less attractive retail destination and risks an irreversible spiral of decline.

The Town Centre retailers currently depend heavily on the people in these wards, because the declining retail offer coupled with the poor fabric of the buildings and public realm mean that the residents of the more affluent wards in the wider district travel to alternative retail centres - including Birmingham, Merry Hill, Kidderminster, Redditch, Droitwich and Worcester.

This is further evidenced by the fact that the High Street defines the Town Centre Area which is also a considerable proportion of the Conservation Area, which has recently been put on the ‘At risk’ register because of its decline.

The following table on the next page shows some of the individual ‘deprivation’ measures across the St Johns, Charford and Sidemoor wards, these include examples for income, transport, employment, housing, education and health that all show the pressing need for support for residents by arresting the decline in the town centre area:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heading</th>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Charford</th>
<th>Sidemoor</th>
<th>St Johns</th>
<th>England</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Index of Multiple Deprivation</td>
<td>Super Output Areas in top 3 decile most deprived areas in UK</td>
<td>E01032132 (13c)</td>
<td>E01032161 (10d)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>% 'ACORN' categorisation as 'Hard Pressed'</td>
<td>50.5</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>19.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>% population who do not own a car</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>16.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% population who walk or cycle to work</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>% Population employed in Retail (&amp; wholesale)</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>16.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% claiming Job Seekers Allowance (Feb 2012)</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>% properties in Council Tax Band A - C</td>
<td>88.7</td>
<td>82.9</td>
<td>69.5</td>
<td>66.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and Qualifications</td>
<td>% population with no qualifications</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>36.3</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>28.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% population with level NVQ 4/5</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>19.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>% population with limiting long term illness</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>17.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% population with health not good</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A comprehensive list of measures would show a similar pattern with these wards performing significantly worse than the national average. On a more local basis St. Johns Ward, Charford and Sidemoor accounted for 33% of the crimes committed in the whole of Bromsgrove District in February 2012.

In the 2008 Bromsgrove Town Centre AAP survey (appendix 19), respondents (59%) considered that a safe environment is the most important thing that will attract them into Bromsgrove Town Centre in the evening - all community groups need their Town Centre to be one that they can use and enjoy. However the High Street in Bromsgrove Town Centre is a pedestrianised area and it creates a strong sense of enclosure and affects the perception of safety to pedestrians after dark. The high enclosure means that pass-by traffic is unlikely to see what is going on in the street.

Currently, the upper floors of shops are mainly used as shop storage or offices and there is a lack of natural surveillance outside shops’ trading hours and office hours.

However actions of the Regeneration Programme so far have helped to begin to tackle these issues and arrest the potential for the wider spiral of decline. The THI can build on this work and give the Town Centre great potential to improve.

The new public realm along the High Street and environmental enhancements in the immediate vicinity will make the area a pleasant and varied place to spend time. Its design will ensure a safer and more welcoming environment and incorporate room for evening and day time events. These include Farmers Markets, Specialty Markets, Christmas Events, Street Theatres, and Park Programmes etc., which bring many visitors into the vicinity of the Town Centre at certain times.

The high proportion of very local shoppers means that we have a good ‘captive audience’ on which to build, wider accessibility and public transport improvements planned for Bromsgrove mean that even more local shoppers currently at the edge of the ‘easy walk’ area will be able to easily get into the High Street.

The surrounding district is a relatively wealthy area and new retailers on redevelopment sites will attract more of this spend into the High Street, which offers an experience that is distinct from other competing centres which are often dominated by unremarkable shopping malls.

The market has already been moved from a single edge of town centre site to along the High Street and will be further enhanced by the public realm investment. This has already increased footfall and a number of new independent shops, such as a Toy Shop, Accessories Shop, Gift Shop and Jewellers have started to set up along the High Street and vacancy rates fell between 2010 and 2011.

The public service initiatives will support the High Street with several hundred council employees located just off the High Street and service users being brought into the area.

New major residential developments in adjoining areas and filling vacant spaces above shops will bring hundreds of new residents into the Town Centre. Any new residential development in the town will provide a welcome addition to the overall housing offer and will reflect the needs of the District. New housing will focus on the provision of smaller affordable units, and housing suitable for the elderly, although more aspirational housing will also be welcomed in appropriate schemes and locations.
Our THI programme will therefore help to create a virtuous cycle; enhancing the appearance of the town, encouraging new businesses into the area, creating jobs for local people and attracting visitors from more affluent areas into the town centre, raising the spending power of the local residents and encouraging long term investment by the property owners.

2011 Town Centre Health Check

The Town Centre Health Check presents Bromsgrove as a town capable of increasing in vitality and viability - there is also a reasonable expectation for growth. Additionally, Bromsgrove should be seeking to make its mark as a strong competing sub-regional centre able to successfully attract and accommodate new retailers and commercial/business enterprises. The ongoing regeneration opportunities across the town centre - including the conversion of the statutorily listed former Parkside School into a civic centre and library - will assist with this, although further development is also required in order to improve the high street’s performance. Fortunately, the local planning authority and its regeneration partners have provided a very good starting point for this process within the suite of projects outlined in the Bromsgrove Town Centre Draft AAP.

The Town Centre Health Check is produced for a number of reasons:
- It is in accordance with previous requirements of PPS4 which supports the monitoring of town centres
- It helps assess the success of retail policies within the adopted Bromsgrove District Local Plan
- It will be used to assist the development of town centre and retail policies within the Local Development Framework, particularly the Town Centre Area Action Plan (AAP)

- It helps assist with retail planning and development management in Bromsgrove town centre
- It helps assist with the ongoing information required for the THI in the town centre

Bromsgrove Town Centre is constantly changing and therefore elements of the 2011 Health Check will only provide a snap shot in time, for example, the ground floor survey and pedestrian count. However, as the Health Check is updated comparisons can be made with previous years. There are also a number of other benefits this document will offer:
- It allows positive and negative aspects of the town centre to be identified, and in turn regenerated or enhanced
- It provides data that can be used to make sure that the centre remains competitive with neighbouring centres in the region
- It provides baseline data for comparative links to be made with future health checks

The 2011 Bromsgrove Town Centre Health Check follows on from the 2009 and 2010 documents, monitoring vitality and viability through the consideration of economic, environmental and social factors. Bromsgrove District Council has identified that a holistic approach to the redevelopment of the town centre is required, one that takes into account the prime sites for regeneration and includes systematic consideration of other opportunities. The annual Town Centre Health Checks are a vital component to this regeneration process and a useful evidence based tool for the Bromsgrove Town Centre Area Action Plan (AAP) and THI. For the full report see appendix 19.
3.2 Community Consultation

3.2.1 Retailer Representation

Despite the presence of multiple retailers, 83% of respondents in the Bromsgrove Town Centre AAP survey (2008) considered the range of shops in Bromsgrove as very poor or poor, only 16% considered them as adequate or good and none considered it as excellent. The top choices which respondents considered would make the town centre a better place to shop were:

1. More small independent and specialist shops (63%)
2. A department store (59%)
3. More national chain stores (53%)
4. Regular farmers markets (44%)
5. A high quality national food store for the Market Hall site (39%)
6. Occasional special markets such as a French street market (39%)

3.2.2 Frontage Improvement Scheme

Bromsgrove’s frontage improvement scheme was approved in May 2010 and launched shortly afterwards with an initial budget of £20,000 allocated which was raised by a further £50,000 in August, 2010. The scheme was originally launched with a leaflet posted to all the eligible property owners and handed to all eligible tenants (Nos. 61-97 High Street only). The scheme was further publicised via a press release and on the District Council’s website. During the Town Centre Area Action Plan (AAP) consultation which took place on the high street in February 2011 further publicity for the scheme was undertaken.

Applications were approved for 4 properties totaling £15,460 and 3 of these had been for the maximum £4000 with the other one being for £3460. The grants were approved for minor window and brickwork improvements, and some limited external decoration on historic properties.

A number of inquiries were received from other landowners and tenants requesting assistance under the frontage improvement scheme for work which would cost more than the stipulated £4000 and one in particular was for the reinstatement of an historically-accurate, early twentieth-century shopfront together with traditional, hand-painted fascia at number 65 High Street as shown in the photo below. For these works to be carried out the assistance available under the Frontage Improvement Scheme was not sufficient. At the time there was a grant rate of 80% of the cost of works (repair or reinstatement) to a maximum of £4,000 per building. In order to carry out more substantial works, however, such as reinstating an historic shopfront - a measure in keeping with the architecture of the rest of the building - it was necessary to remove the £4,000 limit which required approval from the District Council’s Cabinet. It was felt that whilst the £4000 limit was making a modest improvement to the character of the High Street, it was also preventing other opportunities from coming forward which would have a more substantial impact.

65 High Street (middle property) 1943
Street market stalls were operated predominantly by fundraisers also in traditional costume. At this well-attended event a THI A5 flyer was handed out, and advice and information given, to the crowds thronging the town centre. The same flyer was also handed out on the same day at a Community Consultation Conference opened by Kevin Dicks, joint Chief Executive, Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils.

3.2.4 Avoncroft Museum of Historic Buildings

On Saturday, 19th November, 2011, the THI Project Officer and Conservation Officer manned a stall at the Caring for your Traditional Building event held at Avoncroft Museum as part of the SPAB National Maintenance Week. THI flyers were handed out and advice on the proposed THI scheme given throughout the day.

3.2.5 Equality and Diversity Forum

This was set up in 2005, originally to meet the requirements of Level 2 of the (now superseded) Equality Standard for Local Government. It has become a key link between the council and the community and has achieved a great deal over those years with many successful projects arising from issues raised by community members in Forum meetings. As the name suggests, this Forum covers all areas of equality including disability.

The THI Project Officer gave a presentation to the Forum on 8th December, 2011 with the Chief Executive for Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils in attendance. An update was given on the second-round bid and the results of the street access audit were discussed. Following the presentation questions from the floor were taken.

65 High Street 2012

Thus there was an opportunity in the town centre to set an example of good shopfront design based on historic precedent as a benchmark for the Stage 2 THI. Work will be carried out at 65 High Street in accordance with best practice in the enhancement of historic buildings and to a quality appropriate for an assistance scheme of importance to the national heritage. The welcome publicity that such a project will bring ahead of second-round approval is expected to provide a positive message to shopkeepers and small businesses on the high street.

3.2.3 Bromsgrove Fair Day, Annual Street Market

The well-known Court Leet event is the Annual Fair Day Street Market which in 2011 was held on Saturday, 25th June. Members of the Court Leet, a sort of medieval forerunner of our modern Magistrate’s Court, walked in procession from Housman Hall on Kidderminster Road to the Housman Statue in the centre of Bromsgrove dressed in full robes and regalia.
3.2.6 Questionnaire

In the week beginning Monday, 30th January, 2012, the THI Project Officer met with the owners of priority and priority + properties, as well as those properties on the reserve list, to discuss their needs and the opportunities for heritage protection in light of the proposed THI funding. Where properties had vacant historic floorspace above the ground floor discussions were also held to test the viability of bringing these spaces back into viable use.

A Questionnaire for Property Owners and Occupiers was handed out at these discussions and the would-be applicants were encouraged to complete the form in order that the future potential of their buildings might be assessed (appendix 16). The results from this survey were tabulated on 19 March 2012 though more forms were still anticipated. In the sample we analysed 83% (i.e. 15 owners/occupiers) wished to draw down grants in the first year of the grant scheme. Of the remaining 63 properties within the THI boundary some redirected their questionnaires to the head offices of the parent company or else passed them on to the freeholder. Others have not been collected where the premises rely on the evening trade as takeaways or restaurants or are simply vacant. The sample showed 3 priority plus properties, 11 priority and 3 in reserve. The owner of 46 Worcester Road, identified as a potential year one project, has indicated his desire to carry out repairs to the structure and external fabric of his property as well as works to bring vacant historic upper floors back into use. At 1-3 New Road, an attractive, medieval timber-framed building in a landmark location at the gateway to the town centre from New Road, the leaseholder wishes to demolish the modern single-storey extension which is obscuring a handsome double-height oriel window.

3.2.7 THI website

The District Council website contained all the documents relating to the second-round submission, the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan and the public realm proposals. There was a comments form which could either be filled in online or printed off and submitted as a paper copy. Web pages will be subsequently updated so that ultimately the site will act as a hub of information for the public, stakeholders and potential investors.

A primary objective which we are committed to developing is You Tube and the filming of a number of 2-3 minute videos on themes associated with the THI scheme, for example, street interviews, oral history and the casting of the Hallelujah lamp. Other material might include:

- all forms, guidance notes and help guides
- newsletters
- progress updates
- case studies
- interactive maps and images for every building in the THI scheme
- facility to upload pictures (Flickr)
- Blogs
- 3-D visuals

3.2.8 Accessibility Audit

Volunteers from the Worcestershire Association of Service Users (WASU) carried out an Access Audit on Wednesday, 20th. July, 2011. Their summary begins:

The town of Bromsgrove would not attract visitors in its current state. Some of the architecture of the building design lacks character and is depressing. There are many Health & Safety issues in the High Street … the environment is gloomy.
The report continues:

- Trees look neglected, causing semi-darkness. Wrought ironworks around the bases of trees are lifted through root growth and weeds. Other trees in the High Street lean to one side and have electric cables running through them which have embedded themselves into the expanding branches. There are cables which have an attachment/connector that hangs down at a level that can be touched/reached by the public. Some surveillance cameras were visible, but their view is obstructed from the height of the trees.

- Signposts are inappropriately placed, not easy to follow and cause confusion and lead visitors in the wrong direction.

- Some black bollard posts are not fixed firmly in place and leaning to one side.

- Ground/block paving bricks move when walked upon.

- Brick work and broken pavement slabs/bricks are extremely unlevel and make the surface an effort for people to walk on. It jolts and dislodges wheelchairs and pushchairs, causing the user to weave and struggle to balance.

- Drains and manhole covers either protrude above or are sunk below the tarmac, the holes are wide enough for the rubber end of a walking stick to get stuck and become a trip hazard for people.

- Some of the town’s seats/benches are damaged and the back of the seats are warped resulting in the seat not being suitable, unsafe and uncomfortable to sit on.

- The post box outside the post office protrudes far out into the pavement. The red support rail to the left of the post office (building) serves no purpose and is obscured from view if walking from the left of the town.

- Movable tables and chairs from outside café’s were randomly scattered outside the designated areas, causing obstruction to non-users and a reduction to the space of the pavement to walk down.

- “A” boards blocked areas of the road and acted as obstacles for wheelchair and push chair users and people with visual impairment having to try and negotiate their way through.

- Cyclists and skateboard users were speeding through the High Street. There were also cycles thrown down outside shop entrances restricting or limiting access.

- Motor vehicles transporting goods accessing the High Street during the day time after 10.30am were observed weaving and swaying around the black bollards without warning lights flashing on their vehicles.

- There is fast flowing traffic at the corner of High Street and New Road. The pedestrian crossing lights when changing are out of alignment with people’s walking speed and is a danger point for people with visual impairment and people with hearing impairment.

- The dropped kerb is flush with the road surface and wheelchair users can cross with reasonable ease, but the surrounding bricks work and pavement slabs are cracked and unlevel.

- The pedestrian area by Iceland has no clear route through as it is obstructed by a flower stall. There is hardly sufficient space to accommodate a wheelchair user. The pavement slabs in this area are cracked and undulating.

- In the bus area there is no dropped kerb which makes it inadequate for wheelchair users to use when being dropped off by private transport.
There is double parking (buses and taxis) which causes congestion and blocking up of the road means large vehicles/taxis transporting wheel chair users may find it difficult to unload in a suitable place. This may force them to drop off passengers in the road (Crown Close).

WASU are consultees to the Bromsgrove Town Regeneration Programme and their comments on the public realm upgrade have been fed into the design architect’s brief, along with the comments of the less formally constituted Bromsgrove Disabled Access Group (see appendix 19 for full report).

3.2.9 Public Consultation

Information about the THI scheme and the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan was disseminated over a 6-week consultation period beginning 2 February, 2012. Exhibition boards were prepared, a summary A5 8-page booklet printed, feedback forms distributed and a press notice released. The booklet summarized key points of the proposed THI scheme (see appendix 16). Residents groups, business and amenity bodies were contacted at the start of the process and their initial responses and comments have informed the final draft.

The plans were exhibited at the Dolphin Centre on School Drive and Bromsgrove Library on Stratford Road for the duration of the consultation.

Furthermore, officers were on site and available to talk about the plans at the Library from 10am to 4pm on Monday 20 February through to Wednesday 22 February. The information was also displayed on a High Street market stall from 10am to 4pm on Friday 24 February. There was one early evening exhibition at Bromsgrove’s Council House on Burcot Lane on February 23 from 4pm to 7pm.

As a result of this consultation we have made a number of small but significant changes to the Stage 2 bid and Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, for example:

- Pennant sandstone will be considered as a paving material as opposed to Yorkstone flags
- Should the medieval stocks be replicated these will be set on a sandstone plinth
- Works to Spadesbourne Brook will be guided by an archaeological appraisal or evaluation in acknowledgement that this feature is archaeologically sensitive
- There will be broader historic environment awareness training for development control officers
- All references to use classes in the text will make it clear that it is primarily the ground floor that is being referred to
- The architectural character of George House will be made clearer in that although it is post-war and modern it is not necessarily a poor quality building. However, it is jarringly out of character with the rest of the High Street and sticks out like a sore thumb

Additionally, we were able to confirm points we had already upgraded through sunry revisions, for example:

- Suggesting the line: Enhance the local historic environment to Bromsgrove’s Sustainable Community Strategy (2010-2013)

A full summary of comments from this stakeholder consultation are included in appendix 16.
3.3 Statutory Powers and Planning Policies

There are nearly 60 statutorily Listed Buildings within Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area. No scheduled monuments exist in the conservation area although there are two statues in the High Street that would benefit from refurbishment and possible re-siting. The THI area includes over 30 statutorily listed buildings including one - 7 Worcester Road - sat Grade II*.

The District Council has 1 Conservation Officer who will liaise with the Project Officer on repair or reinstatement works to grant-eligible properties. There are also 3 officers on the Planning Enforcement Team who will assist where breaches of development control have occurred within the THI boundary.

The Project Officer, the Conservation Officer and the Planning Enforcement Team form an effective frontline tool in the safeguarding of the Heritage Lottery Fund’s £1.6 million investment. The Strategic Planning and Development Control teams in the District Council oversee and act upon all policies and SPDs.

The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, as well as sundry associated SPDs, sit within an overarching strategy of local and national planning policy regarding the historic built environment. Information on the control of development and use of land in Bromsgrove town centre can be found in the current Bromsgrove District Local Plan (adopted 2004), the draft Core Strategy 2 (January 2011) and the Draft Area Action Plan (January 2011).

3.3.1 Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area Appraisal (January 2012)

The Conservation Area Appraisal (appendix 11) has been written following English Heritage guidance in Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management (2011). As a result, the Appraisal divides the Conservation Area into four smaller character zones. These character zones collectively form a quite detailed record of the nature and special qualities of the Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area. The Appraisal in general makes assessments of architectural quality, character and general condition and for each character zone negative features are outlined.

The council has adopted the appraisal as a material consideration and as such it will be used as a technical document to provide both a sound basis for formulation of policies contributing to the Local Development Framework as well as being used to inform development control decisions and, if required support any planning appeals.

3.3.2 Conservation Area Management Plan (January 2012)

The Management Plan in appendix 17 has been written to clarify the policy for the management of Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area. It provides a strategy for safeguarding and enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area and, as with the appraisal, it will be used as a technical document to provide a sound basis for the formulation of policies contributing to the Local Development Framework as well as being used to inform development control decisions and, if required, support any planning appeals. The Plan will also serve to guide the District Council’s method regarding works or issues that might be considered as having a potential impact on the character of the Conservation Area.
The current Plan has been upgraded since its appearance in the June 2011 Appraisal. As well as updating the local and national planning policies, the new Plan includes comments on training, monitoring and community engagement in line with the requirements of the Heritage Lottery Fund. Both the Plan and Appraisal had a 6-week public consultation between 2nd February and 16th March, 2012.

The special interest of the Conservation Area is described in the Plan and a number of management proposals are made concerning:
- The public realm
- Shop fronts and signage
- Market Hall site
- Modern infill
- Historic buildings in poor condition
- Loss of historic detailing
- Traffic management
- Historic rear areas
- Spadesbourne Brook

Like the Appraisal the Plan has been compiled according to the advice given in English Heritage’s Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management (2011). The proposals consulted on in the Plan were given strong backing at the public consultation events.

The properties in the conservation area are generally of mixed use and consist of retail and commercial units, public bars, restaurants and some residential units in which permitted development rights are much more restricted given that the entire town centre is designated a conservation area. The generally non-residential nature of High Street and Worcester Road, combined with the restricted space for extension to buildings, means that the effect of permitted development will be negligible. Accordingly, the use of an Article 4 Direction has not seemed necessary.

Similarly, the District Council has decided not to introduce an area of special control which would have given stricter policies for controlling advertisements. It was felt that having additional control would be of limited benefit in the town centre since advertisements in conservation areas are already strictly controlled.

It is intended that a guidance manual on maintaining and repairing historic buildings, which has well-presented and illustrated notes, including information on consents (appendix 19), will be passed to new property owners through the conveyancing process - a measure aimed at preserving the character of the conservation area. The manual will be distributed with any land searches within the conservation area.

There is also a commitment to continue work on a Buildings at Risk Register (BARR) for the District, possibly with the assistance a temporary, part-time volunteer.

**Draft Project Brief: Town Centre Public Realm Upgrade (July 2011)**

The early upgrade of the public realm in Bromsgrove is vital to enhance the heritage of the area and to recreate an attractive town centre with a more positive sense of place. These are the key factors in reinstating Bromsgrove as a unique and striking destination of character. It will signal that change in Bromsgrove is permanent, with a statement of intent that sets a benchmark for the standard expected of further regeneration and development initiatives that follow across the town. This project is central to Strategic Aim One of the Regeneration Programme, namely, a revitalised and attractive town centre. The Bromsgrove Town Centre Public Realm Upgrade will be a design-led scheme using a high quality palette of natural materials to deliver a definitive statement of intent.
Shopfronts and Advertisements Design Guide (March 2012)
The District Council’s Shopfronts and Advertisements Design Guide was adopted in 2004 as a means of tackling the increase in inappropriate shop fronts and advertisements then affecting the quality and attractiveness of the high street. The document gave best practice advice for all conservation areas though its principal aim was especially applicable to Bromsgrove. Guidance on design was intended to foster good quality shopfronts and advertisements leading to a better environment, one that respected the character both of individual buildings and of the setting within the conservation area. A revised design guide has since been prepared (appendix 19) and will be supplemented later by a proactive programme of investigation into breaches of advertisement control.

Draft Core Strategy 2 (January 2011)
The key challenge which the district faces has been identified in the draft core strategy document as the regeneration of Bromsgrove town centre. The creation of a thriving and vibrant centre providing facilities to meet the needs of Bromsgrove’s residents is recognized as an important factor with a specific policy (CP15 Town Centre Regeneration) to help guide the regeneration of the town centre. The historic environment is key in making Bromsgrove unique and a source of local identity and pride. New guidance also exists within the Core Strategy in the form of policy CP16 Managing the Historic Environment which further strengthens the heritage protection options open to the Council. As the reforms to the planning system have become clearer with the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the Council is now committed to progressing the Core Strategy to its final stage of production as quickly as possible.

This is in order to carryout the government’s wishes of providing a plan which stimulates growth and economic recovery, by giving certainty to the development industry about what development can happen in Bromsgrove District.

Draft Area Action Plan (January 2011)
Bromsgrove town centre is subject to a major regeneration programme as well as a comprehensive restructure of the prevailing Conservation Area Appraisal and Conservation Management Plan. Where significant change or conservation is needed Area Action Plans (AAPs) can be used to provide the planning framework. This is the case in Bromsgrove, where the AAP will be a significant addition to the planning policy providing long term vision, a spatial plan and the requisite detailed policies.

The AAP will:
- Identify planned growth areas
- Stimulate regeneration
- Protect areas particularly sensitive to change
- Resolve conflicting objectives in areas subject to development pressures
- Focus delivery of area-based regeneration initiatives.

Along with the Core Strategy it is the intention of the Council to now progress the AAP to its final stages, providing the certainty developers require when drawing up proposals for the town centre alongside the clear policies for the protection and enhancement of the historic and built environment.
The Project Team and Steering Group recognized the benefits of reclassifying the previous 3 critical projects in the scheme though the first of these is currently subject to enforcement action:

- 22-24 High Street has been re-classed as Priority Plus
- 75 High Street has been re-classed as Priority
- 73 High Street has been re-classed as Reserve

No. 73 High Street (the Red Lion public house) has been downgraded to a reserve project in that this building has already benefitted from funds from the earlier Frontage Improvement Grant Scheme. A thorough appraisal of all town centre properties has been carried out during the development phase. Between Church Street and New Road we have added 2 buildings in reserve whose improvement, by way of replacing inappropriate shopfronts, would have a significant impact on this section of High Street where buildings that make a negative contribution predominate on the south side.

Similarly, replacing the shopfront canopy at 89 High Street would complement a good section of quality townscape. Another addition is 6 High Street where again, the reinstatement of a traditional shopfront would significantly improve a key view into the town centre. There is 1 property that has been upgraded from a reserve to a priority plus, namely 134-136 High Street. This building follows the northern edge of the new THI boundary and along with the Post Office building opposite heralds the true beginning of architectural character to pedestrians accessing the High Street from the Strand area. The priority plus, priority and reserve buildings can be seen in appendix 15 where the numbers in coloured circles refer to street numbers.

### 3.4 The Conservation Area and the THI Area

The Conservation Area Management Plan has been significantly upgraded from the draft June 2011 version in the Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area Appraisal. The new Management Plan was publicly consulted on between 2nd February and 16th March, 2012.

The THI boundary has been changed slightly since the first-round bid - the Strand area in the north-east section has been removed and the boundary redrawn towards High Street (see map on page 37 and also appendix 15). The Project Team and Steering Group felt that this re-adjustment would concentrate the impact of grant-aid in a tighter, more property-eligible area. The Strand area was removed because it presented a townscape wherein 7 buildings were widely scattered, 4 of which were marked as reserve. The small section of High Street removed contains no proposed THI projects. During the consultation period the owners of an unlisted building of townscape merit outside the proposed THI boundary but within the conservation area made a request to have their property included within the scheme. The THI boundary, as a result, has been redrawn slightly to accommodate the small north-easterly section where this historic building is situated. The property is in a prominent location facing Market Street and partly frames a key view across the conservation area. The lateness of the request has made it not possible to allocate funds towards this building but there may be an opportunity at a later stage to grant the building a reserve status.

There are two further small changes to the THI boundary, measures merely designed to remove buildings that make a negative contribution and again in order to maximize the impact of the THI scheme on the High Street. The Project Team and Steering Group recognized the benefits of reclassifying the previous 3 critical projects in the scheme though the first of these is currently subject to enforcement action:

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3.5 The Character of the Conservation Area

The character of Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area can be summarized as follows:

- its many surviving sash windows some having frames that are flush with the external brickwork, typical in early Georgian architecture
- its important views such as the Grade 1 listed St John’s Church on an area of raised ground
- its steeply-pitched, clay tile roofs and the fact that some Georgian buildings have parapets
- its historic market town status containing an assortment of notable historic buildings, nearly 60 of which are statutorily listed, dating predominantly from the 18th and 19th centuries but with some earlier surviving timber-framed buildings
- its continuous period of settlement from Roman times to the present day
- its vernacular buildings with dormer windows in the attic space, as at Nos. 89 to 93 High Street
- its rich variety of architectural styles ranging from English vernacular to restrained Georgian and more elaborate Victorian Gothic buildings
- its diverse range of elevational treatments and styles demonstrating high quality construction and craftsmanship and acting as tangible reminders of the town’s past prosperity
- its medieval street pattern which is based upon an even older Roman Road between Droitwich and Wall
- its narrow building plots, varied rooflines and the overall height of the buildings which give a general impression of vertical emphasis and a strong sense of enclosure
- its predominant use of red brick and clay tiles, plus a number of notable timber-framed buildings - some with wattle and daub, some with brick infill panels
- its many buildings with decorative features in stone including keystones, quoins and window detailing, notably on the high status buildings at the Market Place end of the high street though even the later Victorian buildings have stone cills and lintels to break up their elevations
- its decorative brickwork, notably the Slug and Lettuce Public House which is constructed in blue brick with light brick polychromatic detailing (unusual for the area)

The Conservation Area encompasses the historic market town and is bounded by St. John’s Conservation Area to the west (containing St. John’s Church - the oldest building in Bromsgrove), Bromsgrove School to the south-west (whose oldest building is dated 1695) and the Strand to the north-east - an area formerly known as Rotten Row.

Bromsgrove Town Draft Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (April 2012) is included in appendix 11. The conservation area was originally designated by Worcestershire County Council in 1968 and contained Area A - High Street and Area B - St John’s. The boundary was extended in 1983 and again in 1989 to include the Spadesbourne Brook, the Strand, Crown Close, 9-15 New Road, 64-78 Worcester Road and Hanover Street. At some point the use of Areas A and B ceased and the area was formally designated as one complete Conservation Area.

An appraisal of the Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area was carried out in July 2009 in accordance with advice given by English Heritage in their Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals publication. As a result, the boundaries of the conservation area were reconsidered and revised. The area around St John’s Church was removed form the conservation area and a new St John’s Conservation Area created.
The area from Hanover Street to Bromsgrove School was removed because this area has a limited relationship with the rest of the Town Centre and all valuable historic buildings are already listed.

A further appraisal was carried out in December 2011 in light of the application for THI funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The appraisal was carried out in accordance with the most recent guidance from English Heritage Understanding Place: Conservation Area, Designation, Appraisal and Management. Although produced by the Council, local societies and residents were encouraged to contribute to and comment on the draft document. This has resulted in a well-rounded assessment of the area incorporating local knowledge, perceptions and suggestions.

A further period of public consultation was undertaken to support this bid. The draft appraisal and management plan were made available on the District Council’s website, in the local library, at the Dolphin Leisure Centre and the Council House to ensure that it reached a wide audience. There was also a small, manned exhibition in the main foyer of the local library to explain the purpose of the document and collect local comments. The summary of the comments of this consultation can be seen in appendix 16. This appraisal has now been adopted as a material consideration by the Council.

Bromsgrove had been an important Royal Manor but it was not until the second half of the 12th Century that the town really developed, particularly after the right to hold a weekly market was granted in 1200. The street system in and around the High Street is very clearly medieval, consisting of the main South West/North East route between Worcester and Birmingham which is the High Street itself.

The 1839 tithe map (appendix 15) shows many small lanes leading from the High Street to the backs of burgage plots, many of which are medieval in origin, with narrow frontages to the High Street. The buildings within the Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area are now predominantly in retail use with a mixture of A1, A2, A3, A4 and A5 uses - traditional retail, financial institutions and some pubs and cafes. Some upper floors are in ancillary use, office space and storage; many others are vacant which has led to some condition and maintenance problems. Worcester Road is very much a secondary street to the High Street, with smaller local retail units.

The Conservation Area Appraisal states that several historic styles and periods are represented in High Street and that the oldest buildings are timber-framed dating from the 17th Century, some of which have been re-fronted at a later date, though with evidence of the earlier structure remaining internally or to the rear. There are also numerous good examples of later periods of architecture such as Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian, as well as a significant number of vernacular buildings characterised by being two or three stories high, the upper storey comprising an attic space with a dormer window. Worcester Road is a continuation of the High Street and its west side is predominately Victorian with mainly three-storey buildings of brick construction beneath pitched tiled roofs. Occasionally there are simple decorative details to the windows, including some projecting first floor bay windows. Ground floors are predominantly retail or in use as takeaway restaurants, whilst the upper floors are mostly used for storage or are vacant. There are around 266 properties within the Conservation Area Boundary nearly 60 of these are statutorily listed buildings, a statistic that underlines the significance of the historic townscape.
This assessment will benefit the public realm redevelopment programme as it will highlight areas of archaeological significance. This will allow the District Council to plan for any archaeological issues well in advance and incorporate them into the redevelopment strategy as an opportunity for community engagement and educational experience. Reacting to archaeological issues on a case by case basis as areas come up for redevelopment will lead to greater risks for delay and missed opportunities.

3.6 The heritage need in the conservation area

The protection and improvement of the heritage buildings within the Conservation Area is fundamental for the future of the local economy and the means to ensure its conservation. Although much of the historic townscape has been retained, there are a number of considerations for the future of the heritage that need to be addressed. A SWOT analysis has identified the key issues that affect the local economy and impact on heritage need.

**Strengths:**
- The catchment and the role of Bromsgrove as a local market centre
- The importance and quality of the 19th/early 20th century historic buildings and townscape
- The medieval layout of the old town and the retention of the 13th century burgage plots resulting in an expressive mix of styles within each streetscape
- The retention of historic architectural detail and materials on a number of buildings
- The sense of enclosure and unity, a compactness and dense concentration of quality historic buildings

The Appraisal also notes that many of the shop fronts suffer from poor design and with such a large quantity of vacant or underused upper floor space there is real concern that the structural condition of many historic buildings may be at risk. Matters are not helped by the intricate and irregular rooflines where valleys and gutters are difficult to access and maintain.

The THI boundary was drawn to include and address the following issues:
- an historic, linear streetscape that is vulnerable to further decline, as identified by English Heritage in their at risk report
- the need for revitalization in High Street and Worcester Road - identified in the Bromsgrove Town Centre AAP Survey (2008) as the number one priority
- a cluster of historic buildings in need of repair and reinstatement works
- an unwelcoming and neglected townscape in which the general impression is one of a tired and run-down high street, unattractive and undesirable, with block paving that is dull, dirty and uneven

The THI boundary encompasses Worcester Road and High Street which follow the medieval plan comprising the main South-West/North-East route between Worcester and Birmingham - an area that represents a notable collection of historic buildings.

An archaeological desk-based assessment of Bromsgrove town centre was carried out in the late 1990s though our understanding of the town’s archaeology and historic built environment has changed since then. It has seemed beneficial, therefore, to update this assessment and include new techniques and other datasets that are now available (appendix 19).
**Weaknesses:**
- The decline in the economy with weaker demand for local goods, services and property
- The low profitability of some businesses discouraging appropriate maintenance
- The visual impact of vacant shops and upper floors
- The replacement shopfronts damaging original heritage building designs
- The replacement shop signs dominating shop frontages and disrupting original architecture
- The poor quality of replacement materials and detailing on many heritage buildings
- The lack of appropriate maintenance and care for heritage details
- The inappropriate designs and materials of some new and enveloping development
- The poor environments at ‘gateways’ to the conservation area dominated by parking areas
- The previous enhancements to the public realm are confused and inappropriate

**Opportunities:**
- Improved heritage building maintenance and management
- Further sensitive regeneration of key sites
- The reuse of underused and vacant floor space
- An increase in town centre economic viability and sustainability through the targeting of niche retailers and the development of specialist shopping and leisure sectors
- The marketing of town centre heritage with interpretation initiatives including walks tracing the history of the town and its buildings
- An increase in planning and design controls and guidance

**Threats:**
- The continuing economic difficulties for businesses which may discourage further private investment
- An increase in unused buildings leading to a sense of neglect and decline
- A resistance to appropriate controls on historic building maintenance and alterations
- Inappropriate designs of new infill buildings, extensions, shopfronts and alterations
- A lack of resources to maintain high quality public realm within the conservation area
- The continuing competition from retail outlets and other services outside of Bromsgrove
Examples of need for improvements to heritage buildings:

46 High Street - vacant building/shop front replaced

54-56 High Street - missing architraves plus mouldings/replacement windows

87 High Street - replacement shopfront/obtrusive signage
29 High Street - replacement shopfront also defining building form

52-54 Worcester Road - replacement windows/loss of mouldings

36 Worcester Road - oriel window replaced by inappropriate window
Buildings and the Public Realm

Many of Bromsgrove’s historic buildings suffer from various levels of disrepair, inappropriate alteration, and under-use. The area within the Conservation Area targeted for THI improvements is especially important for the image of Bromsgrove as it contains not only the most prominent and potentially attractive townscapes and buildings in the town centre but also includes a number of vacant premises, neglected buildings and examples of the loss of heritage details with poor quality or inappropriate replacements - particularly shopfronts and signage.

The THI is focusing on the central core of the town with the streets that belong to the earliest phase of the town’s development as a market town. Although many are in reasonable structural order, many others require repair to the fabric and there is a significant number with vacant floor space - predominantly above ground floor level.

A significant number are in a poor state of maintenance and some require comprehensive repairs and architectural replacements. In particular, individual buildings along Worcester Road require comprehensive works and repairs due to lack of maintenance.

The whole area as detailed in section 3.1 has suffered from the gradual loss of architectural detail. Many of the properties, even those occupied and in reasonable structural condition, have lost original windows, doors, chimneys and shop-fronts, and iron work is missing or damaged. Although some of these original features have been replaced with inappropriate materials, this is now felt to be a priority for grant aid within the THI. The problems elsewhere in the conservation area will be addressed through planning controls.

Buildings throughout the THI area have empty upper floors but a few are completely vacant and on the market for new occupiers. Both the High Street and Worcester Road include buildings that require significant works to ensure their future sustainability.

The Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan provides a full description of the historic qualities of the area and the heritage need for protection and improvements (see appendix 11). A complete photographic survey is attached as appendix 14 providing current photographs of all properties selected for the THI, and comparing them with old photographs to demonstrate the potential repairs and replacements that are needed. A THI building condition survey and costings report can be seen as appendices 12 and 13. This provides a full listing of the potential repairs and replacements to protect and improve the heritage qualities of each building and respond to the sheritage need.

Public Realm

The high street in the early twentieth century was roughly surfaced and dusty with a horse-drawn wagon making regular trips up and down sprinkling water to dampen the road surface down. Research into what the public realm may have looked like in bygone times has uncovered the following quotes:

- “The harte of the town is metely well paved” (Leland, 1540)
- “flagstones and pebbles, white and brown, to walk on through this pretty town” (Crane, c.1806)
What remains are areas of cobbles surviving in alleys leading to the rear of buildings which were laid to keep feet out of the mud and these will be preserved as part of the resurfacing project - the use of recycled dolerite cobbles seeming a preferable option. Research carried out using the expertise of geologists from Worcestershire County Council has provided the following comments, which although very fascinating and informative prove inconclusive when trying to determine the exact nature of the historic surfacing:

- Paving slabs in many Worcestershire towns have either been brought over from the Welsh Borders, as at Bewdley, or else extracted from sandstone quarries in Yorkshire.

- Bromsgrove quarrymen and masons were famous in the sixteenth century and no doubt earlier. They were the most highly paid craftsmen building many fine houses, for example, Grafton Manor. Much of the sandstone with which many of Bromsgrove’s oldest buildings are built comes from the Rockhill quarries. These were filled in after the Second World War, and for the first time in many centuries there are now no working sandstone quarries in Bromsgrove. The greatest monument to the skills of the town’s quarrymen and masons is St. John’s church. The relative cheapness and availability of sandstone in Bromsgrove explains its ubiquitous use in foundations and walls.

- Dolerite, a heavy igneous rock, has been used across the region as shaped blocks, or setts, for road paving, driveways and kerb stones. There are no longer any active quarries though recycled stones can usually be procured.

- Carboniferous sandstone, from the Forest of Dean or Huddersfield districts, can be split to form gray paving slabs as seen in many Midlands towns.

Restoration and Improvement

Paving materials - we consider that distinctiveness should be a result of quality rather than localness so flags will be cut and laid from Yorkstone or Pennant Sandstone and setts will be shaped from granite.

Street furniture & local distinctiveness

Our aim is to restore lost structures that once contributed to the character of Bromsgrove town centre, such as the Hallelujah gas lamp (see below). The medieval stocks (see page 47) are also proposed but there may not be enough firm historical evidence for the design of these.
1840 drawing of the market place. The building on the left is the old Town Hall with the stocks standing in front of it.
3.7 Schedule of Eligible Projects

3.7.1 Eligible Projects

The eligible projects have been identified as those buildings built before the First World War - plus any more recent period buildings of notable design which are important in the historic townscape and are in need of repairs and/or replacement of heritage detail or have vacant floor space which can be reused. As explained above, the THI area has been selected to include the part of the conservation area of important historic interest and includes the most notable townscape, properties of greatest historic interest and those in greatest need for heritage improvements which will benefit the local economy and have the potential to be self-sustaining.

Within the proposed boundary of the THI, 81 properties in separate ownerships have been identified as satisfying the criteria to be included in the scheme.

Surveys have been completed to assess the conditions and costs of carrying out the THI eligible works on all properties. Internal structure and condition surveys have been completed in a good sample of buildings but it has not been possible to gain access to all properties with empty floors above shops (appendix 12).

All properties have ground floor commercial uses and whereas a significant number of the buildings along the High Street are owned by multiple store companies, many on Worcester Road are owner-occupied. All should be able to reclaim VAT. Current valuations with future estimates based on three levels of improvements have been prepared by Thomas Lister Ltd, Bromsgrove valuers/surveyors (appendix 13). Photographs of each building with historic photographs and a costed list of potential improvements are included in appendix 14.

Consideration of any prioritisation as Critical, Priority and Reserve has led to the recommendation that it is not appropriate to identify any buildings as Critical projects as none satisfy the requirements on:
- The importance of their location and group value to the overall heritage townscape
- The need for urgent works to protect key heritage buildings.

As a result, the selected buildings have been identified as either priority plus (P+), priority (P) or reserve (R) to reflect the proposed efforts to ensure their inclusion in the implementation of the initiative. 15 properties have been identified as priority plus with 38 recorded as priority. There are 28 potential reserve properties (appendix 15).

The property condition survey carried out in September 2011 by a Conservation Architect and Quantity Surveyor reviewing each eligible building in the proposed THI area has identified the scale of disrepair and damage to individual buildings and lists the eligible works with potential costs. These results are listed in appendix 12.
The main issues of concern throughout the THI area are:

1. **Buildings in poor condition requiring significant works to repair structure and fabric**

   These display a range of conditions from semi-derelict, through to problems with roofs, fenestration, wall finishes and brickwork, etc. These include properties requiring major expenditure such as:

   - Market Place, 6 High Street

   - British Heart Foundation, 50 High Street

   - Carpet Centre, 28-32 Worcester Road
2. Buildings with heritage detail removed and inappropriate shop fronts and signage which detract from the ‘image’ of the THI area

Although the traditional townscape scale has been retained lack of maintenance and widespread individual improvements have resulted in the significant loss of heritage details and materials. As examples, these include replacing inappropriate windows and doors, replacing removed dormers and replacing shop fronts. The large number of buildings with significant loss of heritage detail and requiring major investment include:
On some buildings, previous changes are in reasonable condition and it is unrealistic to expect that all owners will afford the cost for reinstatement with heritage materials solely to ensure historic accuracy when they are not immediately needed to maintain the buildings. The expected percentage of properties likely to apply for grants takes account of these owners.
3. Properties with vacant floor space

There are a few vacant properties and a significant number of buildings within the THI area with empty upper floors having potential for reuse.

Prezzo, 22-24 High Street
Bromsgrove District Council Conservation
Bromsgrove... a thriving market town

Rymans, 95 High Street

M & M’s Hair Shack, 46 Worcester Road
for enhancements will be based on the Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area Appraisal (2012). For example, at intermittent intervals, particularly on the west side of High Street, there are alleyways of varying width leading to the rear of buildings. These are all that remains of the historic burgage plots and courts to the rear of buildings that were once used as workshops etc. Some small areas of cobbles survive in these locations and they should be preserved as part of any future resurfacing project.

The priority is for the reinstatement of historic surfaces in a traditional way and works should involve the use of traditional techniques, natural materials and local resources. No works to gap sites are proposed.
3.7.2 Condition and costs of eligible projects

In September 2011 Heritage and Regeneration Solutions Limited were commissioned to undertake a detailed assessment of the historic buildings within the Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area, and develop proposals for repairs and improvements to those buildings including detailed costs for works. It was important that this work produced accurate building condition surveys and detailed financial assessments of potential projects. There were over 100 buildings potentially eligible for THI funding in the area, over 30 of which are statutorily listed buildings.

The selected buildings within the THI area display a loss of some of their traditional heritage qualities that are gradually changing the overall historic townscape. Of particular impact are the inappropriate replacement shop frontages and signage, and the poor design of the public realm. The main examples of unsatisfactory building alterations, repairs and maintenance are:

- loss of heritage details and materials including low-quality repairs
- use of inappropriate roof materials
- replacement of front doors with inappropriate designs and finishes
- replacement of painted wooden sash windows with aluminium or uPVC frames and different window bar designs
- removal of heritage mouldings and other details
- removal of chimney stacks and pots
- addition of aerials and satellite dishes
- extensions of inappropriate design, scale and materials

a. Priority and Reserve buildings - condition and costs

The overall costs for conservation and renovation of the three listed THI categories of works (including contingencies and professional fees etc. but not VAT) on all the 81 selected heritage buildings in the THI area, both Priority and Reserve buildings, are expected to be in the order of:

- £756,300 for repairs to structure and fabric
- £2,055,500 for replacement of heritage detail
- £1,047,000 for reuse of vacant floor space

**total of £3,858,800**

The THI building condition survey and costings (appendix 12) provide a full breakdown of estimates for the 81 selected properties. These tables include:

- The property address
- Ownership and use
- The works that are eligible for grant
- Detailed costings of the eligible works

b. Public Realm eligible costs

The good repair and routine maintenance of pavement and road surfaces is a statutory responsibility of Worcestershire County Council. As a result, the eligible costs of improvement to this type of public realm, and the grant towards them, must reflect the extra costs that arise from carrying out the works to high conservation standards. To work out the eligible costs, the costs of repair to a basic, non-conservation area standard (£210,450) was subtracted from the costs of repair to more costly conservation standards (£587,450)- the grant will cover 100% of the eligible costs, i.e. £377,000.
Grant for types of public realm improvement where statutory responsibilities do not apply can cover all of the costs of the works as long as the property is in public ownership. In this case, there is no need to compare the costs of repair to a basic standard with the costs of repair to more costly conservation standards. Grant will cover 100% of the eligible costs. The proposed reinstatement of the Hallelujah gas lamp (£20,000) and medieval stocks (£3,000), being in public ownership, can be grant-aided at 100% of the eligible costs.

3.7.3 Assessing the financial need for THI grant

a. Justification of grant rates

THI grants need to be justified in financial terms on the basis that the work required cannot be achieved without public subsidy and must make sure that any financial gain on the part of the owner is minimal. This means establishing the impact of the work on the property’s value. This has been estimated by using the judgements of a Conservation Architect and Quantity Surveyor as well as a Chartered Surveyor/Valuer with experience of the local property market - Andrew Croot MRICS, a Director of Thomas Lister Ltd who have a local office within Bromsgrove town centre.

The other consideration when assessing potential grant levels is the likely success of the scheme in encouraging owners to participate and invest their own money. There are many areas with urgent heritage need where an additional problem is the inability of owners to raise even limited funds to protect their properties. This is an additional measure of the case for public subsidy.

The low commercial and residential rents, particularly for upper floors, mean that there is little incentive to undertake repairs that have no direct financial return. While other regeneration initiatives will tackle social and economic problems, none is specifically addressing the historic built environment.

The current property market throughout the Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area is slow and very patchy with very mixed market demand depending on location and resulting in few sales. Property values vary widely throughout the THI area and the effect of the recent economic difficulties has increased the number of properties with vacant floor space. This problem has been identified by the chartered surveyors though meaningful historic data on vacancies has not been found.

The selected properties included within the THI area are predominantly commercial with ground floor shops and the floors above used for a mix of uses - residential, office and storage, but many have been left vacant.

In the current uncertain and fluctuating market, where properties can be on sale for many months, even years, a process of typical building valuations to assess expected increases in market value after various improvements is difficult to prepare with great accuracy and then to use as percentages for overall guidance.

The report by the local valuer/estate agent (appendix 13) has provided some judgements but the accuracy of this work should be qualified by the fact that since 2007 the rate of transactions has slowed reflecting the nationwide state of the economy.

An assessment of appropriate grant rates for different categories of works also needs to be identified by judgements based on recent past experience of the take-up on other grant-aided schemes in Bromsgrove and the West Midlands, a general knowledge of the local property market and the changing economic conditions, as well as by using the examples of potential valuations from the local valuer.
b. Grant-aided Schemes

The current levels of grant availability on similar initiatives provide some examples of comparable levels of assistance that are needed to achieve owner participation. In table 4 below Bromsgrove's THI grant rate has been compared with the THI grant rates of other West Midlands towns.

A recent, small-scale, council grant-aided improvement scheme for shops in Bromsgrove is in the process of renovating No. 65 High Street using a general grant rate of 80%.

Within the West Midlands the THI initiatives have been operating with various levels of success depending on local circumstances as well as the levels of grant. The examples above provide some guidance of expectations when determining a grant level that will succeed in Bromsgrove town centre.

Table 4: Comparison of THI grant rates across the West Midlands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Repairs %</th>
<th>Reinstatement of heritage details %</th>
<th>Vacant floorspace %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wellington</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bliston</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willenhall</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bloxwich</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leek</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bromsgrove</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
c. Surveyors and valuers assessment

In recent years, commercial property sales in the Bromsgrove THI area have been slowing down with a number of the traditional stores closing down - including most recently Bon Marche - and only a few new national chain stores locating in the town centre. The difficult market has been most noticeable where commercial buildings display poor maintenance or are at a distance from the pedestrianised length of High Street and the town centre core. This is particularly the case for the properties along Worcester Road. Due to the lack of commercial demand and the poor image of some of the building groups, the sales have frequently been limited to the purchase of properties by small traders with low value goods, often with limited or no income from upper floors above shops.

The varying property values for such an established town centre location are primarily due to the recent difficulties in the local economy, the variations of distance from the core shopping area, and the attractions of competing centres - out of town and other larger centres.

There is unlikely to be a significant increase in demand for property within the conservation area until there is an improvement in the national economy and a regeneration of the economic opportunities within the town, matched by physical improvements and a resulting change in the public perception of this area.

The current downturn in property values and sales will have the greatest impact on those buildings in poor condition which are in the fringe town centre locations and not seen to be a retail attraction. Any decrease in value will also limit the likelihood of owners being able to repair and maintain their properties with appropriate conservation standards. As a result, investment in properties has been withheld by many owners until there is a clearer picture of the implications for future demand.

As a result, property valuations within the conservation area may vary according to the short term realities and the longer term hopes for the area. There will be significant uncertainty and this will particularly impact on the reuse of vacant upper floor space. Most operational THIs can influence changes in valuations.

The low valuation examples prepared by the chartered surveyor for some of the commercial buildings point towards the difficulties for achieving sales which result from the low levels of current demand. Equally, rental rates for flats and offices above shops are low because of the quality of the floorspaces and the excess supply.

Selected locations within the THI Area have different requirements and potential:

- **High Street (the Strand to New Road)**
  The pedestrianised length of the High Street within the THI Area is the section of the shopping centre that achieves the highest commercial rental values and includes most national multiple stores. Even though this area has significant footfall and provides the prime shopping area, it still includes empty properties (eg. No. 46 - vacant), buildings in poor condition (eg. No. 87 French Connection) and empty first and second floorspace (eg. No. 67 Oswald Bailey).
High Street (New Road to Market Place)
Between the New Road and Market Place junctions on High Street, the road is open for vehicles, though traffic is not usually heavy. The lower footfall results in less demand for properties, and though the ground floors are mainly in retail use, few national multiples are located on this length and values are significantly lower.

This reduced demand is reflected in the empty properties (eg. Nos. 9 and 46), and the poor condition of some buildings - especially upper floors (eg. Nos. 33 Salvation Army and 22 Prezzo). The economic conditions are limiting the ability of many owners to maintain their properties or to ensure improvements achieve conservation standards.

Worcester Road (Market Place to Hanover Street)
A fringe town centre shopping street with two and three storey properties in retail use. The buildings are smaller - both narrower and lower than on High Street, with less space for larger retail users or spacious accommodation above.

The lower demand for properties in this area, and lower values, results from both its location - the distance from the core shopping area - and the lack of space suitability for many potential occupiers. As a result, most units are occupied by single-shop businesses, often serving more specialist markets. These owners are less likely to have funding available for conservation standards of improvements.

In general within the THI area, expected improvements in valuation following repairs and enhancement to structure and fabric, heritage detail and vacant floor space are limited and it will only be when there is a combined impact of a large number of property improvements, supported by the changes proposed through other regeneration initiatives, that values will significantly change.

d. Proposed Grant Rates for each Category of Works

The prime concerns of a THI scheme are to ensure that the selected heritage properties are improved and to make certain that they can have viable uses, while promoting the local economy and appreciation of the townscape, without significant financial benefit to the owner. The selection of the appropriate grant rates for each category of works needs to identify levels that will ensure implementation.

An additional issue is that some owners and their advisors are aware of the current grant levels available for similar works (see table 4 on page 57) and as a result will press local representatives for equal treatment.

Therefore each of the three categories of work on privately owned buildings will require different levels of assistance, with the grant levels based on a judgement reflecting the calculated grant rates from valuations and the other factors discussed.

Grant levels for properties requiring building repairs to the structure and fabric, and replacement of architectural heritage details, will be identified from a judgement based on the range of calculated grants required for the properties that have been valued and the recent and current experience with the THI grants in neighbouring towns.

Within Bromsgrove town centre, much of the vacant floor space is found on the upper floors above shops. To be realistic, improvements to these areas for rental income will only find new occupiers at a slow rate. A combination of the impact of the THI improvements and the other regeneration initiatives will be needed to increase demand. A 'chicken and egg' situation, but both actions are necessary. As a result, owners cannot guarantee early rental returns and this increases the uncertainties of calculations based on this approach.
Calculations for properties with vacant floor space have been made using the total of the condition survey costs for each property, the expected increase in valuation and consideration of the potential additional annual rental income to calculate the possible rates of return. Whereas an average percentage will be chosen for use on all structure and fabric, and heritage detail improvements, the appropriate rate for buildings with vacant floor space will have to be recalculated at the time of each application.

**Structure and fabric repairs**

Selected buildings require work to the structure and fabric of the external envelope. The examples cover a range of problems from building deterioration which may in the future cause the need for major renovation, and those with more minor concerns requiring action before serious problems result from delay.

The calculations of the potential grant rates using a gap deficit based on current and improved valuations vary widely with rates reflecting the particular considerations of each building. As the management of a THI requires an average grant rate for these types of work, it is necessary to identify a percentage that will ensure that key properties are viable and included.

In most cases, the added value to the property of the work being completed will be limited in the constraining and fluctuating market conditions. For owners, who often have limited resources, the benefits of structure and fabric improvements may only be clear in the most urgent cases. The financial inducement required will need to be significant to encourage most owners to invest their own money, while providing only a reasonable sum to cover the average expected development deficit. The wider benefits to the local community and economy do not often affect the decision making of the individual property owner.

The grant calculation findings shown in appendix 12, table 1, identify a wide range of potential rates providing no clear guidance except that most calculated rates are below those found in other THIs.

Therefore as a result of comparable grant scheme take-up experience, the local valuer/estate agents advice and valuations, and the review of the local economic conditions, we are suggesting a grant level for the THI scheme to be set at **up to 60% for structure and fabric repairs which will be used in the Grant Requirement tables for all selected commercial properties.**

A range of percentages may be appropriate depending on the type of works required for each building, but in most cases this will be complex to administrate except where the THI Project Officer deems suitable. Previous local experience shows that with improved proactive methods to encourage owners, assistance with applications and the potential for helpful funding arrangements with local banks etc., it should be possible to achieve a reasonable uptake of grants to ensure the implementation targets are achieved.

**Architectural heritage details**

Most property owners, though attracted to the concept of historically appropriate architectural detailing on their buildings, are less certain about the direct benefits to increase property value or business levels.

In most cases, the added value to the property of improved and appropriate heritage architectural details will be very limited. Historically accurate replacement fenestration or shop fronts instead of existing inappropriate detailing will not often significantly increase individual property values.
The economic benefits and increase in valuation will only accrue over time from the general improvement of the heritage qualities of the local townscape. As a result, the funding gap between implementation costs and short term increases in values will be large. Sample valuations have demonstrated this problem.

The findings from the valuations show that all of the examples, except for one, are within the 65% to 100% range - see appendix 12, table 2.

Therefore as a result of current grant scheme take-up experience in nearby THI schemes, the local valuer/estate agents advice and valuations, and the review of the local economic conditions, we are suggesting a grant level for the THI scheme to be set at up to 85% for replacement of architectural heritage details which will be used in the Grant Requirement tables for all selected commercial uses.

This level will be required to ensure that these works, which will have a significant impact on the overall heritage townscape appearance of the town centre, will be carried out with the involvement of property owners.

**Reuse of vacant historic floor space**

There are significant areas of vacant floor space above the shops within the town centre and a number of shops that have remained vacant over a considerable period. As current demand for the use of the floors above shops in this part of Bromsgrove town centre is limited, the costing calculations and estimates of rental return have been based on preparation of the property for office use - as it would be less realistic to use the higher levels that should be expected for residential occupation except along Worcester Road. The potential costings are based on this use - higher levels would have been required for residential conversions.

The costs for individual property owners to reuse vacant floor space will vary greatly depending on access arrangements and internal layouts. The methods to be used to evaluate grant levels will involve a 'case by case' review of the likely development conservation deficit when the application is made with the calculations based on a residual valuation covering the combined costs of all works to the building (repairs, replacements and reuse).

Individual assessments for each project will need to identify:

1. Existing value
2. Potential values to calculate a residual valuation
3. Construction costs
4. Abnormals
5. Fees
6. Interest
7. Potential rents and required rates of return
8. Profit

in order to calculate the developers’ deficit and a funding deficit.

Appendix 12, table 3, demonstrates the method for calculating the vacant floor space grant levels. Due to recent fluctuations in property values it is particularly difficult to identify an average grant level for use in the Grant Requirement tables that will be useful over a three-year period. Previous experience in similar towns, suggests that the deficit valuations provide much more appropriate findings than the rate of return method. The results, and the current uncertainties which limit the viability of even medium term forecasts, do emphasise the need for the calculations to be carried out for each property when the scale of improvement works is accurately known at the time of the application.
The Grant Calculation results show a range between 38% and 79%, with a clustering between 50% and 68%.

As a result of previous experience in other THI areas, current local grant aid schemes and advice from the local chartered surveyor - an average grant level to be used in the Grant Requirement tables for all selected commercial uses of 55% is expected for Vacant Floor Space, when combined with repair and replacement works.

Public Realm
The Heritage Lottery Fund Guidance Notes show 2 different means of working out grants for public realm works in Bromsgrove town centre.

The majority of the match-funded £400,000 from Worcestershire County Council is allocated for Yorkstone/Pennant Sandstone flags and granite setts and to carry out this work to a high conservation standard appropriate to a conservation area the sum of £587,450 has been estimated.

The good repair and routine maintenance of pavement and road surfaces is a statutory responsibility, however, of the County Council Highways Authority and to achieve a finish according to a non-conservation standard the estimate costs are £210,450. To work out the eligible costs the costs of repair to a basic, non-conservation area standard has been subtracted from the costs of repair to more costly conservation standards and the grant of £377,000 grant will cover 100% of the eligible costs.

Grant is also sought for possibly reinstating the Hallelujah gas lamp and perhaps the medieval stocks, though the latter of these is not supported by firm historical evidence. Certainly for the gas lamp we understand that the HLF can cover all the cost of works just as long as this item is in public ownership. There is no need then to compare the costs of repair to a basic standard with the costs of repair to more costly conservation standards as the grant will cover 100% of the eligible costs, i.e. £20,000 for the lamp (and £3,000 for the stocks).

**e. Summary:**

**Proposed Grant Intervention Rates – Bromsgrove THI**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure and Fabric</th>
<th>Heritage Detail</th>
<th>Vacant Floor Space</th>
<th>Public Realm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to 60%</td>
<td>Up to 85%</td>
<td>Average 55%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 4
The Conservation Area Management Plan
Section Four
The Conservation Area Management Plan

4 The Conservation Area Management Plan

4.1 Adoption and publication of the Conservation Area Management Plan

Cabinet met to recommend adopting, publishing and implementing the Conservation Area Management Plan on 4th April 2012 and minutes confirming the District Council’s commitment to the Plan are included in appendix 11. The Plan will be used to strengthen SPDs and to better inform strategic planning policy. The Steering Group formally acknowledged the Plan on 23rd February 2012.

The document can be downloaded from the Conservation section of the Environment and Planning pages. There are also paper copies available from the Council House and copies will be taken along to any event promoting the THI.

4.2 Putting the Conservation Area Management Plan into practice

The 2 officers charged with putting the Management Plan into practice are from within the Strategic Planning Team. They are the Strategic Planning Manager and the Conservation Officer, both of whom are members of the Core Project Team. The Conservation Officer has overall responsibility for the strategies identified as protecting and enhancing the character and significance of the conservation area. Development control and planning enforcement are represented on the Project Team by Bromsgrove’s Development Control Manager and one of three Planning Enforcement Officers.

The following policies are in accordance with national policy guidance and local policies and follow on from the Conservation Area Appraisal.

Public Realm

The existing poor quality public realm affects both the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and detracts from its historic setting. At present there is a mix of brick pavios and concrete paving slabs throughout the Conservation Area and some oddly random strips of buff concrete paving. There is no obvious pattern or delineation between ‘pavement’ and ‘road space’, and a lack of maintenance has resulted in a rather shabby appearance. Vehicles still use the High Street for deliveries which has resulted in a proliferation of protective barriers and bollards, to the detriment of the wider street scene. The existing street furniture appears to be randomly located, with street signage, bins, seating and trees obscuring some of the possible views through the Conservation Area. Most of this was installed in 1985 and has been poorly maintained adding to the run down appearance of what should be an attractive retail area. In general the public spaces within the Conservation Area have a tired feel that detracts from the appearance of the historic buildings.

Proposed Action

Work with other departments at Bromsgrove District Council and Worcestershire County Council to implement a new public realm scheme. This will involve renewing the surface materials including the introduction of a more cohesive design, a new street lighting scheme, including more appropriately designed lamp posts, improved and more thoughtful illumination of some areas, the removal of redundant signage and CCTV poles, and the integration of new signage and other street furniture.

Ensure that new signage, street furniture and surfacing materials contribute positively to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Work closely with the Street Scene and Communities Manager on an appropriate maintenance regime.
Modern Infill

Several sites in the conservation area have been subject to redevelopment during more recent times. Notwithstanding the loss of older buildings many of the modern buildings erected exhibit design characteristics that are quite different to the established characteristics of the area. The purpose of highlighting these buildings is not necessarily to aim at their redevelopment, although in the long term such discussions would be welcomed, but to prevent them becoming too dominant through future additions or alterations. These buildings will not be regarded by the Council as a guide or precedent for future development proposals.

Proposed Action

Seek improvements to buildings where opportunities arise through development/redevelopment proposals.

New proposals will be assessed in accordance with local and national policies in respect of conservation areas, to ensure that any new scheme achieves better integration into the historic environment and enhances the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Shop fronts and Signage

The majority of the modern shop fronts bear little relationship to the historic building above, and they also lack consistency in terms of style, proportions, materials and colour schemes. Most of the shop signage is also equally poor with over large fascia signs, excessive signage, the use of plastic and lighting. All of which detracts from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Proposed Action

Seek improvements to or replacement of shop fronts and signage where opportunities arise through development proposals.

New proposals will be assessed against local and national policies in respect of listed buildings and conservation areas and the revised Shopfront Design Guidance.

Address unauthorised alterations to shop fronts through enforcement action where appropriate in accordance with Enforcement Policies.

Carry out an audit of the town centre to identify where breaches requiring enforcement need to be addressed.

Historic Market Site

The market hall has now been demolished and the site is currently being used as a surface car park. Although outside the Conservation Area, as it is immediately adjacent to it, it obviously impacts on the setting of the Conservation Area.

Proposed action

Pay particular attention to siting, scale and design of any new development proposals that come forward for this site in accordance with local and national policies in respect of conservation areas, to ensure that any new scheme enhances the setting of the Conservation Area.

Proposed Action

Seek improvements to buildings where opportunities arise through development/redevelopment proposals particularly at key sites including Mill Lane and 138 to 140 High Street.

New proposals will be assessed in accordance with local and national policies in respect of conservation areas, to ensure that any new scheme achieves better integration into the historic environment and enhances the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Historic buildings in a poor condition

Under investment in building repair and maintenance of some buildings on the High Street and Worcester Road detracts from the appearance of the Conservation Area and results in the long-term risk of loss of historic building fabric.

Currently only one building (22-24 High Street) can be described as being a ‘Building at Risk’. However the vacant upper floors of a number of others are also giving cause for concern.
Proposed Action
Seek retention of historic fabric where opportunities arise through development proposals.

Identify Buildings at Risk and develop a strategy for their repair, including the potential use of Section 215, Urgent Works Notices and Repairs Notices to improve the condition of some of the most at risk properties in the Conservation Area.

Investigate initiatives to make use of the upper floors such as 'Living above the shop', in conjunction with the Housing Section at Bromsgrove District Council, or a local housing association. Produce guidance on the maintenance of historic buildings for property owners (appendix 19).

Loss of Historic Detailing
A number of properties, particularly on Worcester Road, have had replacement windows in uPVC or aluminium.

Window replacements with new ones of a different design, detail, materials or finish, erodes local building detail, which is an essential part of the distinctive character and appearance of the conservation area.

Proposed Action
Address unauthorised alterations to buildings through enforcement action where appropriate, in accordance with our enforcement policy.

Undertake a photographic survey of all the properties in the Conservation Area. This will provide a record of the condition and appearance of each property, which would be useful in any future enforcement situations.

We will consider the need for an Article 4 Direction to bring any permitted development works under planning control, to ensure that the special qualities of unlisted buildings of local significance are protected.

Traffic Management
The traffic management measures in The Strand have had a significant impact on this part of the Conservation Area.

The layout of the road system connecting Stourbridge Road/Birmingham Road and Stratford Road has created a visual and physical intrusion in the Conservation Area, severing the two sides of The Strand, and The Strand from the High Street.

Overall this section of the Conservation Area is unfriendly to pedestrians. It has fragmented these historic spaces, undermining their architectural and historic integrity and the visual quality of the historic environment as well as detracting from the setting of the historic buildings.

Proposed Action
Work with other departments at Bromsgrove District Council and Worcestershire County Council to devise a traffic scheme which will give more priority to pedestrians. Improvements to the pavement widths, parking layout, road markings and surface materials would soften the appearance and enhance the setting of the surrounding historic buildings.
Rear Historic Areas

A number of historic buildings to the rear of buildings on the High Street and Worcester Road still exist, and some have been refurbished and gained new uses. Many are underused or vacant, and are generally in a poor condition but are highly visible from Market Street.

The presence of these buildings are evidence of the town’s history and development and are part of its character and interest. In their current state they therefore detract from the character of the Conservation Area.

Proposed Action

Investigate the possibility of carrying out some historical research into these buildings and identify ways they could be repaired and brought back into use.

Spadesbourne Brook

The Spadesbourne Brook is a neglected feature of the Conservation Area.

Although some sections are culverted, there are significant stretches which are visible, and the brook still provides an essential wildlife corridor through the town centre.

A number of the visible sections are heavily overgrown and in their current state do not contribute to the character of the conservation Area.

Proposed Action

The Bromsgrove District Council are committed through the Area Action Plan to the naturalisation of Spadesbourne Brook. Work on this is ongoing.

Local List

The Conservation Area Appraisal has identified a number of ‘positive’ buildings in the Conservation Area which are unlisted, and could form the basis of a Local List for the Town Centre.

Proposed Action

Introduce local criteria for identifying important unlisted buildings, which would then form the basis for the creation of a local list.

Engaging the Community and Circulating the Plan

Bromsgrove District Council will undertake a number of initiatives during the life of the plan to ensure stakeholders and the community are engaged in decisions affecting their community.

The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan will be reviewed every four years to ensure that it is up to date in respect of current issues, including any changes in national and local policies. The consultation on the plan will include a public meeting and exhibition, following engagement with key stakeholders at the time of the review.

Bromsgrove District Council will ensure that all planning applications are available online to allow for ease of access to information, allowing community engagement.

Bromsgrove District Council has designated an elected member, Mr Kit Taylor, as a Heritage Champion. These champions are supported by the Commission for Architecture and Built Environment (CABE) and English Heritage. They will receive the relevant free training and ensure that design and heritage issues are considered in all areas of the Council’s business.
Bromsgrove District Council is committed to widening local knowledge and heritage skills:

- When appropriate, and subject to resources, the Council will develop, with stakeholders and the local community, a Heritage Training and Education Plan. Many activities would establish a legacy of materials for future use.
- Bromsgrove District Council will take advantage of the free training provided for its planning staff through the Historic Environment Local Management Initiative (HELM).
- Bromsgrove District Council will improve the awareness of heritage issues through the annual Heritage Open Days Programme, held in September each year.

During the six-week consultation period, the draft documents were available at the Council House, Bromsgrove Library, the Dolphin Centre and on the council’s website. Letters of notification were posted to a wide-ranging list of consultees and invitations were issued to an evening exhibition on Thursday, 23rd February. There was also a 3-day council officer presence at the library and 1 day included a presentation on a market stall in the high street. Details of all consultation events were circulated to the local press. A questionnaire was available either as a download or for filling in on-line while paper copies were deposited at all the above consultation events.

The Project Officer has discussed a number of initiatives with the Chairman of the Bromsgrove Society who sits on the Partnership Steering group. Since the early 1980s this local civic group has campaigned to save many of Bromsgrove’s best historic buildings and in November 2008 an application to English Heritage resulted in the successful listing of the Grade II, Parkside School. One of Bromsgrove Society’s more current activities is as adviser on the new public realm works scheduled for early October, 2012 should the THI second-round approval be granted.

Resources
A large amount of expenditure will be required for some of the proposals put forward and Bromsgrove District Council will continue to pursue various opportunities for funding including through the Heritage Lottery Fund, or possibly through planning obligations. Some proposals maybe secured through discussions with property owners.

Monitoring
The monitoring of the condition of the Conservation Area over the lifetime of the Management Plan and beyond will be essential to establishing the success of the plan. The following are proposed:

- The Council will work actively with building owners and occupiers in pre planning application discussions to achieve the best design solutions.
- The Council will carry out a photographic survey of all the buildings in the conservation area to aid monitoring, and in particular to aid enforcement action.
- The Council will ensure that appropriate enforcement action is taken, to preserve the character of the conservation area. Defined timescales will be pursued.
- The Council will produce an Annual Monitoring Report to include the statistics on the number of enforcement cases investigated, number of enforcement breaches and number of successful enforcement cases in the town centre conservation area.

Review
Subject to available resources, the conservation Area will be reviewed on a four yearly basis and the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan will be updated where necessary.

Conclusion
The successful management of the Conservation Area will depend not only on the commitment of the local planning authority, but also other stakeholders especially those who work and live in the area.
Section 5

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5.1 Vision and Strategies

5.1.1 The Overall Vision for the Conservation Area

The overall vision will be delivered through the Bromsgrove Town Centre Draft Area Action Plan and the Bromsgrove District Council Draft Core Strategy. Both of these documents have undergone extensive public consultation.

Bromsgrove Town Centre Draft Area Action Plan (Jan 2011)

“Bromsgrove will be a thriving market town which attracts residents and visitors into the Town Centre, both for the shopping experience and its programme of events, activities and markets. The Town Centre will be significantly enhanced with an attractive and safe environment which will provide a focal point for the community.”

This vision was created by the townspeople and businesses of Bromsgrove. The District Council had asked the people of Bromsgrove and many other key stakeholders what they would like to see happen in the Town Centre. A total of 1,198 responses were received for the previous Bromsgrove Town Centre Regeneration Area Action Plan Survey, showing why the respondents visited the centre and what they would like to see done to improve the centre (appendix 19). New paving, the improved appearance of historic buildings and making the look of shop fronts and signs remain in keeping with the historic architecture over them were the top 3 responses received.

Regeneration Strategy

Bromsgrove Town Centre as identified in appendix 15 will be the focus of a number of complementary strategies and policies which will secure its long-term future enhancing its vitality and vibrancy, fixing its place within the West Midlands and beyond as a desirable place to live, work, shop and invest. The strategy focuses on the historic core of the high street and conservation area and its surrounding streets and lanes, opportunities for physical public realm improvement and new development which complement this core area are detailed in subsequent policies. All development in the town centre must have regard to the policies of the Area Action Plan (AAP) and the Bromsgrove Core Strategy. The regeneration will be phased over 15 years in conjunction with the development identified in the Bromsgrove Core Strategy.

The Objectives

Retailing and the local economy

● Improved retail offer through the development of new sites and an extended primary shopping area
● Improved range and quality of evening economy uses within the Town Centre, including a choice of bars, cafes and restaurants
● Number of employment sites for commercial and light industrial usage maintained
● Promoted local and niche shops in traditional High Street premises
● A regular high quality outdoor market in the High Street
● Instigation of an extended events programme
Living and working in Bromsgrove

- To deliver new high quality housing which provides a mix of unit sizes and tenure
- To ensure that residential unit numbers, densities and affordable housing provision is sufficient and appropriate for the local area
- Modern commercial office accommodation will be made available
- New technology businesses attracted as part of improved links with the technology park and A38 technology corridor
- The conversion of empty space above shops converted into flats
- A Care Village in the town centre

Public Realm and Open Spaces

- Upgrading the public realm and Primary Shopping Zone to a high quality including resurfacing and refurbishing the High Street
- Preserving and enhancing the conservation area’s character and appearance
- Wherever viable renovating, refurbishing, rejuvenating or redecorating the town centre’s historic buildings
- Utilising the natural assets in the town centre to provide enhanced green and open spaces including the Spadesbourne Brook and Recreation Ground
- Ensure a safe environment for all and a town centre enjoyable for everyone

Accessible and efficient public services in Bromsgrove Town Centre

- New Customer Service Centre and Civic Suite incorporating a review of public administration and library services
- New Leisure Centre
- New Health Centre
- New / Refurbished Public Toilets

Transport, movement and accessibility

- To reduce reliance on car use and reduce transport related carbon emissions
- An improved road network including the re-engineering of junctions and traffic flows
- Improved pedestrian priority, accessibility, permeability, linkages and mobility within and across the Town Centre for pedestrians and cyclists
- Improved public transport infrastructure including the new or upgraded Bus Station, and new town centre bus routes
- Improved pedestrian and cycle linkages between Bromsgrove Station and the town centre, and the promotion of shuttle bus services between the two destinations
- A re-assessment of car parking provision in the town centre

One of the critical factors in the regeneration programme is to upgrade the public realm, whilst preserving the heritage of the town centre, in order to reinstate Bromsgrove as a unique and attractive destination of character. The THI is therefore vital as the enabling factor in the regeneration programme.
The deprived town wards that the town centre serves do not have the spending power to maintain the town centre themselves and yet depend on it for both shopping and employment. The threat to its viability is compounded as the town centre loses local small businesses and jobs. Empty shops mean a lack of investment and a further deterioration of the town’s historic buildings and public realm.

The THI is therefore vital to help restore the virtuous cycle of investment leading to economic vitality by helping to recreate an attractive and sustainable environment, one that will:

- attract visitors into town
- increase the number of people living in town
- support the investment proposition for leading retailers
- tangibly demonstrate the deliverability of the Area Action Plan to developers
- encourage Bromsgrove to be the location of choice for locating technology corridor business.

All of which will create commercial, retail and high value production jobs for the residents of Bromsgrove.

**Deliverability of the Regeneration Strategy**

As mentioned above the Bromsgrove THI is an integral part of a wider regeneration programme across the town centre. The AAP is an important element of the wider Strategy for the District of Bromsgrove which plans for significant growth in Bromsgrove as a town over the coming 5 - 10 years. The section below demonstrates that the policies in the AAP and the Core Strategy are simply not just a wish list of things that the Council would like to see happen but an actual achievable reality where in many cases progress has already been made.

Within the Core Strategy a mixed-use urban extension is envisaged across 3 sites to the north and west of Bromsgrove creating a new sustainable and balanced community that will integrate into the existing residential areas of Bromsgrove.

This development will fully address the social, economic and environmental elements of sustainable development and will consist of a minimum of 1850 dwellings and 5 hectares of employment land, with potential for a local centre community facilities. This new development will not rival the role of the town centre, quite the opposite, the added influx of new people will have a major positive impact on the viability and vitality of the Town Centre. As part of this planned expansion wider issues such as accessibility of the town have been considered, with the town centre being the focus of new bus routes (as can been seen in figure 7 of the Town Centre AAP in appendix 19) linking the newly developed sites with the more established areas of the town. All these routes, including one linking the new train station to the south east of the town, will have to pass through the Town Centre as demonstrated in complimentary policies in the Town Centre AAP and the Core Strategy. It is measures such as these and as detailed below the new train station, which will ensure that the town centre once again becomes a focus for existing residents, new residents and also visitors to the town. Now that the planning reforms in the form of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) are known the Council will progress the Core Strategy though its legal stages and to adoption as quickly as possible. This will create a major incentive for people who want to live, work and invest in the town as the Core Strategy will give a degree of certainty about the future development in the coming years.

Whilst the draft AAP can been seen in appendix 19 a number of key policies are worth highlighting below. Key development site policies have also been outlined.
The TC3 movement strategy for Bromsgrove will make the Town Centre more accessible for all modes of travel. Combined with the improvements to the public transport options outlined above this policy attempts to change the emphasis of the road network away from being a through route to other locations across north Worcestershire. A detailed Town Centre traffic management study, scheduled for publication later in the year, will add to various studies already carried out. Through traffic will be discouraged, and the notion of Bromsgrove as a destination, rather than a cut-through will be promoted by a variety of actions and policy measures. Many of these actions and measures will take place much further afield from the town centre. They include alterations to signage and road junctions around the town centre, and on main routes into Bromsgrove. The District Council will work with Worcestershire County Council to ensure these proposals are developed within the Local Transport Plan (appendix 19). The success of this will depend on the provision of viable alternative routes for the through traffic that is currently using Bromsgrove, combined with the implementation of measures to make routes through the Town Centre less desirable to through traffic. These measures will include signposting, change of priorities in favour of public transport and pedestrians, weight limits etc. Improvements to the Stourbridge Road and Birmingham Road junction, a new regular bus link between the Town Centre and rail way station, the de-cluttering of pedestrian routes into the high street and retaining the bus stops in current locations are all considered actions most useful to help respondents getting around town.

The Department of Transport has approved plans for a new 4-platform railway station to accommodate trains from Birmingham every 20 minutes. The proposal is now being developed by Centro, Network Rail and Worcestershire County Council and includes a 350 space car park. The detailed design is forecast to be completed later this year, with practical implementation following shortly afterwards.

The TC4 public realm strategy outlines proposals for its early upgrade which is vital to enhance the heritage of the area and recreate an attractive Town Centre with a more positive sense of place. A safe and attractive public realm will attract visitors and shoppers and lengthen their stay, increase the number of people living in town, and help attract businesses from all sectors by tangibly demonstrating public investment in the town. It is envisaged that the revitalised public realm will form part of a town centre that is an accessible asset for the whole community.

The planned growth in Bromsgrove coupled with a structured approach to the regeneration of the Town Centre has led to significant progress on various development sites detailed within the AAP as well as a number of additional private installations.

Using the AAP references, some of the key developments are considered in more detail:

TC8 the historic market site occupies an area of 0.7 hectares and sits at a key southern gateway into the Town Centre where routes from Worcester and Kidderminster meet. This is a key strategic location as it marks the end of the linear high street and one of the major pedestrian gateways into the Town Centre. It is important as a potential new retail-led, mixed-use location, adding to the overall retail offer and creating an anchor at the southern end of the town, thus ensuring active retail uses along the entire length of the Primary Shopping Zone. To have a national food store on the Market Hall site was selected by respondents as one of the choices to make the town centre a better place to shop. The proximity to a proposed street café area and concentration of pubs and restaurants along High Street South and Worcester Road make this site suitable for other supporting uses which could contain a small cinema and/or other leisure uses such as cafes and restaurants - residential or offices are also other acceptable supporting uses on this site.
The establishment of a new anchor store at the Southern end of the High Street is seen as a key element of the District Council’s land use strategy and the historic market site - in public ownership and highly visible - is a council-owned asset which will shortly be marketed for development in line with the proposals in the AAP.

**TC11 the former Parkside Middle School** is a Grade 11 Listed Building made redundant in 2008. The District Council has worked closely with Worcestershire County Council to find a use for the building which ensures its long-term future and maintains it as a heritage asset for the Town Centre. That use has now been confirmed as a sympathetic conversion to office use for Worcestershire County and Bromsgrove District Council services. The move comes after agreement was reached in detailed negotiations over how public services could come together in one building central to Bromsgrove town. The proposals include moving into Parkside the Worcestershire Hub Customer Service Centre (from School Drive) and Bromsgrove Library, along with back office staff from the Council House on Burcot Lane. A planning application is currently being worked up alongside English Heritage. The Councils hope to be fully occupying this building in 2 years.

Proposals for **TC12 School Drive** are centred around the Dolphin Leisure Centre, which is located on the main route into Bromsgrove from Redditch. It is approaching the end of its useful life and with this comes an opportunity to replace it with a modern facility that more successfully meets the needs of the residents. The scope of a new multisport and fitness complex for the residents of Bromsgrove required a consultation exercise to establish the leisure habits and needs of the community. The Bromsgrove Leisure consultation occurred during the summer of 2010 and received 866 completed questionnaires as well as determining current and future customer demand, travel habits, linked trips and preferred location for a new leisure centre.

42% of the respondents were supportive of the Leisure Centre being sited in the town centre. Almost a third of people currently visit Bromsgrove to use the Dolphin Centre. The site is predominantly in public ownership and the limited life of the Dolphin Centre makes this development an early priority, integrating the Artrix, Bromsgrove North High School, NEW College and the proposed replacement Fire and Police station into the town centre community.

On **TC14 Retail Park**, Sainsbury’s have received planning permission for a supermarket store for Birmingham Road on a site that currently has 3 warehouse-style retail premises. Pedestrian linkage with the Town Centre is essential and as such the development is contributing to public realm improvements in Birmingham Road, the Strand and High Street North. This will facilitate the extension of the Primary Shopping Zone to the new supermarket by ensuring a common public realm from the centre of the town to the store. This has led to significant retail interest in the **TC8 site** opposite. The redevelopment of the TC14 site will deliver a number of social benefits and the introduction of a large retail store will increase the range of retail facilities on offer in the town providing choice for residents. The planning permission ensures that the development of the site will retain the character and setting of the 2 listed buildings which provide a limited street frontage along Birmingham Road. Environmental improvements will occur due to the naturalisation of the Spadesbourne Brook at the rear of the site contributing to a network of green infrastructure within the town centre funded in part from a Section 106 agreement.

These and other developments which are currently taking place in and around the Town Centre are shown on the attached Map (see page 73) and are briefly summarised from North to South on the attached table (see page 74).
## Developments taking place

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Map Ref</th>
<th>AAP Ref (where applicable)</th>
<th>Site Name</th>
<th>Current Situation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Council House - Burcot Lane</td>
<td>Due for redevelopment as housing following relocation of Council to Parkside 2014 (TC11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>New Police, Fire and Ambulance Station - Rednal Block – NEW College Campus</td>
<td>Planning Permission for new Blue-Light Campus, due for completion 2013.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Art and Technology Extension – NEW College Campus</td>
<td>Major extension to NEW College just completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>‘Baron’s Site’ Birmingham Road</td>
<td>Planning application for relocated Petrol Filling Station from nearby retail park (TC14)</td>
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<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Chapel Conversion Birmingham Road</td>
<td>Conversion in progress of historic derelict chapel into apartments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>TC14 Retail Park</td>
<td>Birmingham Road Retail Park (Sainsbury)</td>
<td>Planning Permission for major new Sainsbury store</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>TC15 Mixed Use</td>
<td>Birmingham Road / Stourbridge Road Junction</td>
<td>Pre-application meetings held regarding retail led mixed use development with major anchor store</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>TC12 Leisure/Housing</td>
<td>School Drive</td>
<td>Feasibility study reporting on options for redevelopment of Leisure Centre with replacement facility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>TC11 Office/Housing</td>
<td>Parkside</td>
<td>Pre-application stage for proposed conversion of listed school building into civic centre and new library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>New Health Centre</td>
<td>New health ‘poly-centre’ opened 2011 servicing 50% of Bromsgrove residents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>New independent Pharmacy</td>
<td>New pharmacy opened up in old wine warehouse opposite new Health Centre</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Developments taking place continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Map Ref</th>
<th>AAP Ref (where applicable)</th>
<th>Site Name</th>
<th>Current Situation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>TC13 Retail/Mixed Use</td>
<td>Windsor Street</td>
<td>Due for redevelopment as retail led mixed use development following relocation of Council to Parkside 2014 and Fire Station to NEW College campus 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>TC9 Care Village</td>
<td>Recreation Road</td>
<td>Pre-application meetings held regarding proposed comprehensive redevelopment of site for extra care village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>TC10 Green Space</td>
<td>Recreation Ground</td>
<td>Proposals for upgrade to provide amenity space for Recreation Road development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>ASDA</td>
<td>Store expansion and new public realm area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>TC16 Retail/Mixed Use</td>
<td>Mill Lane</td>
<td>AAP site identified for potential redevelopment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q</td>
<td>TC4 High Street</td>
<td>High Street Public Realm</td>
<td>Upgrade of public realm along High Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>TC8 Retail/Mixed Use</td>
<td>Historic Market Site</td>
<td>Site being marketed for redevelopment with anchor store at southern most end of High St.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Police Station-The Crescent</td>
<td>Due for redevelopment as housing following relocation of Police to NEW College 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Bromsgrove School</td>
<td>Major extension of accommodation and sports facilities completion 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Rylands (Youth) Centre</td>
<td>Major refurbishment and upgrade of sports facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>TC17 Employment</td>
<td>Worcester Road Employment Area</td>
<td>AAP site identified for employment use.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The progress on the various development sites shows that it is possible, and that Bromsgrove has started, to attract investment to regenerate the Town Centre. This has been particularly true where public investment and planned redevelopment of surplus public assets is taking place. In this respect the THI will not only benefit from being integral to the wider regeneration investment and developments listed, but in itself will add to the virtuous circle that is emerging within the regeneration of the Town Centre, meaning that the deliverability of the THI is further enhanced in the short term and its sustainability secured in the longer term.

**Bromsgrove Sustainable Community Strategy (2010-2013)**

The Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) sets out the overall strategic direction and long-term vision for the economic, social and environmental well-being of the local area and the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) is responsible for delivering it. In September 2010, the Worcestershire Partnership (in consultation with District Partnerships) approved proposals for a new Single Countywide Sustainable Community Strategy for Worcestershire. This was finalised in November 2011 and it includes a chapter specifically on Bromsgrove District from the Bromsgrove Partnership.

**Bromsgrove Partnership Priorities**

The Bromsgrove Sustainable Community Strategy for 2010 -13 and the priorities within that were based on an understanding of the available evidence and the views of the public. These priorities were reviewed in 2011 and simplified to the top 3 priorities. Key outcomes agreed for each priority and the Theme Groups responsible for delivering on those priorities, are shown in the table on page 77.

Bromsgrove Partnership operates a Board and four Theme Groups and it is those Theme Groups which are the delivery arm of the Partnership. Theme Groups will decide the best way to meet the agreed priorities and their measures of success. Any barriers to delivery which they face will be dealt with by the Board. As many of the issues being tackled overlap across more than one Theme Group, all cross cutting challenges and identified gaps will be considered at Board level to ensure a truly effective and cohesive partnership approach is taken.

The Trunk is the Bromsgrove Partnership’s Areas of Highest Need Project and is a multi-agency partnership which began in 2009. EPIC, a community interest company, was commissioned by Bromsgrove Partnership to run the Trunk and it is now delivering a programme of learning, skills acquisition, support activities and community resources for the residents of Charford and Sidemoor primarily with an outreach programme for Catshill residents. We will continue building on the project’s success to ensure sustainability for the future. With many organisations seeing a reduction in resources, Bromsgrove Partnership believes good partnership working is now even more crucial. Therefore, we will continue to work hard to meet the existing and future needs of our local community in the most effective and efficient way.
### Priorities | Key Outcomes | Theme Groups
--- | --- | ---
**Economic Growth** | ● Regeneration of the town centre  
● Effectively market Bromsgrove District  
● Encourage business growth (including retention of businesses) | Economic Development  
Theme Group

**Balanced Communities** | ● Reduce alcohol misuse and smoking, encourage healthy diet and exercise and improve perception of mental health issues  
● Implement an age well scheme and focus on falls prevention  
● Deliver accessible, localised and sustainable services for vulnerable neighbourhoods via The Trunk (Areas of Highest Need Project)  
● Provide positive activities for young people | Balanced Communities  
Theme Group

| | ● Reduce the fear of becoming a victim of domestic burglary  
● Maintain safe clean streets by tackling night time economy and reducing graffiti  
● Protect communities by tackling domestic abuse, youth related anti-social behaviour and supporting vulnerable people | Bromsgrove Community  
Safety Partnership

**Environment** | ● Reduce CO2 emissions through improved energy efficiency in housing and businesses  
● Explore improving biodiversity and nature in key strategic sites, and how land use influences carbon emissions/carbon sinks  
● Ensure shared priorities are delivered in a cohesive way e.g. environmentally sustainable town centre  
**Historic Environment** | Better Environment  
Theme Group
In addition, the Strategic Planning Team proposes to ensure that Bromsgrove’s Sustainable Community Strategy recognises the historic environment as a finite and non-renewable environmental resource.

The historic environment is the repository of a wealth of information about how people interacted with their surroundings in the past. For this reason alone it should be sustained for the benefit of people in the future.

Local Enterprise Partnership

Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) are currently being set up to deliver, amongst many things, coordinated economic stability and growth across areas which are typically bigger than one District Council. Bromsgrove District Council is currently a member of 2 LEP’s, one which focuses on the greater Birmingham and Solihull area and some of the surrounding Districts, and another which deals with issues within Worcestershire. The nature of where Bromsgrove District is within the region means it is important to look in all directions for new partnerships which can help the town centre to flourish. These LEPs are now beginning to take shape with Bromsgrove District Council’s Leader being a board member of the greater Birmingham LEP, and whilst not a board member similar representation on the Worcestershire LEP also exists to ensure the District’s interests are fully represented.

5.1.2 Other regeneration strategies, projects or schemes impacting on the Conservation Area and surroundings

Portas Pilot

A multi use ‘community hub’ will be added to the high street if Bromsgrove is successful in its bid to become a Portas Pilot Town.

The Town Centre Regeneration Steering Group submitted a bid in April 2012 to become one of 12 high streets that will receive a slice of £1 million of government funding through its retail advisor Mary Portas.

Bromsgrove’s “super bid”, which means it is on behalf of many local stakeholders, aims to complement wider moves to create more community assets in the Town Centre. With a major revamp of Bromsgrove’s public realm pending, which will include the creation of a special event space as well as encouraging more outdoor café seating areas, a new community hub could be another feature of a growing centre that more people will want to visit, creating business.

Winning towns are set to be announced in May 2012. Part of the bid process was a requirement to create a video about the general high street - search www.youtube.com for “Bromsgrove Portas” to view the short youth-focused video created for the partnership by students of NEW College, Bromsgrove
Vacant Retail Space

We are reviewing and promoting the potential for converting empty shops into a wide range of temporary uses. Empty spaces within Bromsgrove Town Centre make perfect places for short, temporary projects that embrace the meanwhile - the time between the last commercial activity and whatever comes next. Closed shops can provide space for:

- Pop-Up shops
- Community activities like exhibition spaces and information points
- Art in Shop Windows exhibitions
- Local archaeological collections - there will be two community digs in Bromsgrove scheduled for Easter and Summer, 2013

By contacting the owners of empty retail units the District Council hopes to secure their premises for artistic groups and individuals to display their work. One of the best means of animating Town Centres during the economic downturn is by using the arts to make them attractive and vibrant places. The objective is to help regenerate the Town Centre and at the same time give the appearance of productivity making the units more attractive to potential purchasers and improving the area for shoppers and visitors. Empty shops will provide the space for celebrating the locally distinct, culturally diverse and creatively rich nature of Bromsgrove’s town centre.

Vacant Upper Floors

The aim is that the District Council will enable the development of new private sector dwellings within the town centre which will help meet the local area agreement themes:

- Meeting the needs of young people - through the provision of more housing options for young people in the district.
- Economic success that is shared by all - increasing the residential element of the town centre will help support the Town Centre economy both day and night.
- Communities that are safe and feel safe - having a residential presence in the Town Centre will contribute towards a passive surveillance of the town centre and help to discourage anti-social behaviour.
- Stronger communities – by offering young people a choice to stay in the district rather than finding cheaper accommodation in adjoining areas will contribute towards them being able to access their support networks thereby developing stronger communities.

Currently we have an imbalance in our housing market in that there is insufficient affordable housing to meet the identified needs of the district. In particular there is insufficient affordable housing for young people resulting in an outward migration to cheaper surrounding areas such as Redditch and Birmingham. In the town centre the average house price, according to Zoopla, is between £188,607 and £218,021, with the cheapest houses being just under £100,000. These figures are likely to fall however, as a result of the continuing recession.
In response to a growing need for new housing, the District Council is continually focussed upon exploring opportunities for new housing developments and also making the best use of existing accommodation within the district.

The Countywide Housing Strategy 2011-2015 *The right home, at the right time, in the right place* has indentified the priority to make:

**Better use of existing homes** and sets the action to achieve this as being:

- **Develop a countywide toolkit for bringing empty homes back into use, including:**
  - improving informal advice and encouragement through practical measures such as flats above shops, working with RPs (Registered Providers) to purchase or lease and to use enforcement powers but as a last resort

The Strategic Housing Team at Bromsgrove District Council has also set their strategic vision to guide the Council’s approach to housing as being:

**Making best use of existing accommodation by improving the quality and accessibility, and addressing the in-balance in the housing market through the provision of more affordable housing.**

Whilst the District Council has always looked where possible at opportunities to encourage empty properties back into use, it’s lack of resources has meant that this has been on a more reactive basis and therefore has had limited success.

In a Housing Market Study of Bromsgrove that was jointly commissioned by Bromsgrove District Council and Bromsgrove District Housing Trust it was identified that:

“.... the challenges facing the district in creating a more balanced housing market - especially to improve the choice of housing for local people - the priorities for intervention (include):

- **to stimulate the supply of private sector homes, for example, through bringing empty properties back into use and by developing flats over shops, including giving consideration to making Private Sector grants and loans directly to landlords to stimulate such activity.”**

As part of this, work has started in conjunction with the Town Centre Regeneration Project to identify available space above shops in the town centre that could be potentially converted into residential premises, to assist in the regeneration of the centre and also to contribute towards meeting the unmet housing need of the district.

It has been identified that there are 174 premises in the town centre which have no residential accommodation in the floors above. Bromsgrove District Council has undertaken a survey of all freeholders of units in the town centre to identify what this available space is used for and to ask them whether they would consider what options and assistance would encourage them to consider conversion opportunities, such as:

- Financial assistance to convert empty space.
- Advice on what options may be available to maximise potential.
- Opportunities to assist in privately renting residential space.
- Opportunities to assist in renting space for commercial use.
- Provide opportunities for medium to long-term leasing of empty space.
It is hoped that by entering into dialogue with owners, officers will be able to discuss the most suitable and advantageous option with owners. It is anticipated that as part of this, owners may need to take advantage of the financial assistance available to convert space. Currently, the only grant that is available to owners is the Empty Homes Grant which is funded through Bromsgrove District Council’s Discretionary Grant budget. This grant is available up to a maximum of £5,000, must be match funded by the applicant who must agree to give the Council nomination rights to that property for a period of 5 years. The grant is also repayable if the property is disposed of within 10 years, which allows the funding to be recycled for further schemes.

Since the grant has been available it has had limited take up, which is felt to be due to the fact that the owner must give the Council nomination rights and also that £5,000 is not enough to cover works required. In addition to this the budget for Discretionary Grants has been significantly cut in recent years with further projected cuts expected, which means that there will be significant limitations on the number of grants available in the future.

These cuts will make it increasingly difficult to offer owners of empty space the financial assistance required to encourage them to do the works to convert empty space into residential accommodation.

The Strategic Housing Team has developed strong links with the private rented sector as part of their role to encourage the development of this sector. As part of this, therefore, they are prepared to assist owners of empty space to make them aware of their options when converting empty space with the intention to make it available to privately rent. These options will include identifying current local need, and taking into consideration issues such as Housing Benefit changes, newly emerging trends, rent ability and rental amounts in the town centre. The team has also agreed to offer owners the option to maximise from the District Council’s Step Up Private Tenancy Scheme which will help landlords to find suitable tenants for their properties.

The District Council’s Private Sector Housing Team currently have a responsibility to inspect private properties within Bromsgrove District to ensure that they conform to the Housing Health and Safety Rating System as part of the Housing Act 2004. We are conscious therefore that as part of the administration of any future grant with respect to the conversion of empty space into residential accommodation that we show due regards to this legislation. The Private Sector Housing Team have agreed that during the grant application that they will review all plans and schedule of works to ensure that they comply to the standards that they would expect. They have also agreed to be able to make themselves available to attend a site inspection if required to ensure that owners of empty space in the town centre are given specific tailored advice to maximize the potential of the property in line with the current housing market trends.

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Bromsgrove Town Centre Accessibility Audit

The aim of this study carried out on Wednesday, 20th July 2011 by the Worcestershire Association of Service Users (WASU) was to undertake an objective assessment of the current town centre streetscape, focussing on the ability of people and/or goods and services to reach places and facilities. Elements such as ground surface quality, interaction with traffic, obstructions or trip hazards to pedestrians and lighting provision (including shop windows and floodlit buildings) were explored to produce an overall qualitative assessment of the town centre. This is now helping us to understand the way in which the public spaces are used, identify existing gathering points and desire lines and highlight issues which are hindering pedestrian movement.

The full results of the Accessibility Audit received in September 2011 has influenced our public realm strategy for the town centre, and supported the aims of the Town Centre Area Action Plan to ensure our regenerated town centre promotes the spirit of the Disability Discrimination Act whilst creating a safe and welcoming environment.

The study addressed the following issues using photographs, plans and illustrations as appropriate:

- Identify existing problems for mobility impaired and sensory impaired users and suggest options for improvements
- Highlight existing barriers to permeability and circulation
- Suggest opportunities to improve through-movement of pedestrians
- Assess the adequacy of existing signage provision and the ability of user groups to orientate themselves
- Identify hotspots of street clutter and suggest options to rationalise these
- Explore the potential for reintroduction of cycle access to the High Street including dedicated cycle paths
- Investigate existing CCTV and lighting provision and any gaps in coverage which need to be addressed

Better access to Bromsgrove’s shops and public buildings is a need for disabled people who live in or visit Bromsgrove and in Summer and Autumn 2010 we held a consultation to ascertain views on an official award scheme for shops and businesses who provide excellent access and customer service for disabled people across Bromsgrove. In total there were 231 replies, all very positive.

Nominations for the 2011-2012 Bromsgrove No Barriers Disabled Access Awards closed on 13th May. Over 20 nominations were received for 14 businesses and service providers in Bromsgrove ranging from retail outlets and sports centres to market traders and day care providers. The nominations were considered by a panel of disabled volunteers who visited those businesses nominated or contacted them for further information to confirm the nominations received.

The panel met on 20th June 2011 to agree the final list of award winners who were then invited to a presentation by the Council Vice Chairman, Cllr. Mrs C. Spencer, on Saturday 25th June. The awards give recognition to those who make positive efforts to assist disabled people and will demonstrate to disabled customers that those businesses or services are accessible to them. An Access Guide for Disabled People is in production for Bromsgrove showing the businesses and services who have been awarded recognition under the Bromsgrove “No Barriers”- Disabled Access Awards Scheme.
Bromsgrove BID Initiative

It is proposed to introduce a Business Improvement District (BID) in Bromsgrove Town Centre as a central mechanism for funding maintenance and ongoing investment in the fabric of the town centre. A BID is a partnership between a local authority and the local business community that supports the long-term sustainability of the town centre. A committee is formed that develops and takes forward projects and services that benefit the trading environment and the public realm.

Non-domestic rate-payers within a BID area pay for the BID through a supplement on their rates bill. A BID proposal will state whether all rate payers will be charged or if the charge only applies to a particular group. Businesses will decide via a ballot whether the BID should be established and the amount of the levy.

The potential implementation of a BID, combined with Bromsgrove District Council’s role as the Local Planning Authority means that good practice measures introduced through the THI will be supported in the long term.

New Technology Park

The Central Technology Belt runs from Aston University to Malvern Hills Science Park. The Belt is home to the Universities of Aston, Central England, Birmingham and University of Worcester. There are Science Parks at Aston, Birmingham and Malvern with developing Technology Parks at Bromsgrove, Longbridge and Pebble Mill. Malvern is the site of QinetiQ’s electronic and signals research and development facility.

The Central Technology Belt aims to harness the potential of the region for existing and incoming businesses. The success of this activity will help to diversify the manufacturing activity in Worcestershire and offer opportunities to a trained workforce.

Development is currently taking place on the Bromsgrove element of the technology belt with more expected in coming years bringing new employment opportunities into the town. Along with other strategies identified it is envisaged that development that takes place as part of the technology belt will help to strengthen Bromsgrove’s position within the region and provide additional people who will regularly use the town centre.

Bromsgrove Town Centre Transport Study - Parking

A number of the car parks in and around Bromsgrove Town Centre are council controlled and as such the highways authority has been asked to develop a parking strategy. This strategy is in development and is considering how to make the best use of Council owned sites and also consider the impacts of other Town Centre car parks, and in particular the different charging regimes that are operated.

It is acknowledged that the cost of parking and the method of payment can have a significant impact on the choices people make when choosing where to shop or spend leisure time. The creation of a thriving market town relies on people choosing Bromsgrove at all times of the day, and every day throughout the week and if the parking regime does not encourage this then the ability of the wider strategy to be implemented will be harmed. It is with this in mind that the council is committed to reviewing the parking regime on Council-owned car parks, and controlling through planning conditions new non-council owned car parks. The aim being to ensure that excessive prices, or inappropriate charging times such as evenings and weekends don’t become a barrier to regenerating the town centre. This review will take place to inform the development of the Town Centre AAP and as such any changes will be made.
Bromsgrove Museum

Situated near the town centre on Birmingham Road Bromsgrove’s Museum is now closed. Within it you would once find displays of local crafts and industries, including glass, salt and nail, and the Bromsgrove Guild, an organization of craftsmen founded in 1894. This Guild of highly-skilled craftsmen had its finest hour when commissioned to design and make the gates and railings of Buckingham Palace. Another popular exhibit is a street scene of Victorian shops.

A request has now been received, however, from the Norton Collection Museum Trust to be granted a 12-month option to purchase the Bromsgrove Museum building for the sum of £285,000 which would enable third parties to commit funds to the project on a more secure basis. Negotiations with the Trust and the original donor have been very positive and Cabinet members have acknowledged the value of the Museum and their desire to maintain the provision thereof to the community of Bromsgrove.

The Cabinet has determined through the business plan provided by the Norton Collection Museum Trust that the proposed project would benefit the Town Centre and enable the Council to further the objects of the Museum Trust.

Bromsgrove in Bloom

Heart of England in Bloom will be a key objective for Bromsgrove District Council and there is a desire to achieve recognition within the Campaign. It is therefore our intention to seek funding and support for future years’ submissions which will allow us to develop and strengthen our abilities to meet the Heart of England in Bloom criteria. Although 2012 will hopefully be our first year entering the competition we are striving to ensure that the ethos of the competition and the diverse manner in which it can be incorporated becomes part of our normal working practices. The competition is in keeping with the Council’s core objects in providing a clean, green and safe district. Within the town centre we are likely to consider:

- pole-mounted 2-tier baskets
- 3-tier planters
- wall-mounted planters baskets
- dedicated and skilled horticulturists to maintain the town centre and other key sites in the district
- cleanliness of streets and roads within the town - no litter, graffiti or dog fouling
- excellent marketing and promotion of In Bloom campaign
- excellent local and national media coverage
- continued encouragement and support of local schools for the In Bloom campaign
- dialogue with local villages, e.g. Belbroughton, Dodford
- support and sponsorship from local business
There will be high visibility impact planting that not only provides a traditional-style, formal landscape theme but softens the impact of a mixture of architectural styles and colours in and around the conservation area. We will seek to use low maintenance and drought tolerant plants such as Geraniums, Begonias, Ageratum and Cineraria. The planters will all have water reservoirs in them which will help with lowering the watering maintenance that is required. They will also serve a practical use in that they will be mobile and capable of being removed or rearranged should the town space be required for an event.

We will use a number of media to broadcast Bromsgrove in Bloom to the public, such as:
- Together Bromsgrove - quarterly magazine delivered to every household in the district
- Friends Groups
- Press releases in local papers
- Worcestershire Walks Magazine
- Public consultation in areas were projects are to be carried out
- Bromsgrove District Council Website
- Letter / leaflet drops
- Staff and councillor roadshows
- Facebook and Twitter
- Local radio
- Notice boards around parks and allotments

Sanders Park is Bromsgrove’s Premier Park attracting over 350,000 visitors per year. The park, located close to the town centre of Bromsgrove, was opened in 1968 and covers 16.3 hectares to the west of Bromsgrove linking to countryside beyond.
Naturalisation of the Spadesbourne Brook

The Spadesbourne Brook rises in the Lickey Hills to the north and flows south through the town. The length of the Brook envisaged for enhancements runs from All Saints Church in Burcot Lane to Brook Lane in Sanders Park and is 2.15 kilometres in length. It runs past the existing Council House, through NEW College land behind Birmingham Road, past the Strand, along Market Street through the Bus Station, and across the historic market site into Sanders Park.

Parts of the Brook are naturalised, including areas between Birmingham Road and School Drive, and at the bus station. However, the majority of the Brook has been re-routed, culverted and effectively relegated to function as a storm drain through the Town Centre, hidden from view, and sometimes covered entirely by access roads to properties. Even in its urban context the brook contains some plant and animal life, and the water quality is good and clear. However it fails to provide any real amenity value for users of the town centre and its ability to support a wider variety of plants and animals is reduced by its unnatural form.

The Environment Agency has confirmed, however, that Spadesbourne Brook currently supports dispersed colonies of water voles (a protected species) to the north and south of the town centre. However, the water voles and other wildlife find traversing the culverted sections of the brook difficult and cannot create habitats at certain sections due to the concrete sides.

The naturalisation of Spadesbourne Brook is a key component of the Land use (TC2) Movement (TC3) Public Realm (TC4) Urban Design (TC5) and Historic Market Site (TC8) strategies of the AAP. The relocation and naturalisation of specific parts of the brook will allow for greater use by the community.

It will ensure that shoppers in the high street are never more than a few minutes away from an attractive area of green and open space and it will improve permeability and legibility within the town centre. It will include relocation and naturalization of the watercourse where possible, a raised water level, improved flood capacity, a habitat appropriate for many plants and animals including water voles, high quality paving, seating areas, new trees and planting.

The naturalised watercourse will be designed with full consideration of highways and public safety requirements and developed in line with other key public realm areas to provide a holistic approach to design and access throughout the town centre. The Brook will form part of a green corridor running along Market Street providing links to other areas of the town. Access requirements will be maintained and utilities and other services will be moved where necessary. Where the watercourse is relocated, existing culverts may be utilised to improve flood capacity. Existing trees and planting will be retained where possible or replaced with like-for-like specimens where removal is necessary. The water course will be engineered to allow wildlife, including water voles, to traverse its length and to allow for the creation of new habitats to assist with the ongoing protection of biodiversity assets.
The Brook is in both public and private ownership, naturalising and in some cases relocating the Spadesbourne Brook will be achieved via different approaches dependent on whether the section is part of a development site or not. Other sections at locations that are not development sites such as the section running parallel to Crown Close will be funded from sources including (but not limited to):

- European Commission: Environment Funding
- Natural England Biodiversity Fund
- Biffaward grants
- SITA trust: Enriching Nature Programme
- Big Lottery Fund: Community Wildlife
- Heritage Lottery Fund
- WREN: Biodiversity Action Fund
- Veolia Environmental Trust
- Big Lottery Fund: Changing Spaces / Community Spaces
- Esmee Fairbairn Foundation: Biodiversity Strand

**Public Realm Improvements**

The town centre public realm upgrade is central to strategic aim one of the Regeneration Programme, namely, a revitalised and attractive town centre. The scheme objectives will be achieved through the following design principles:

- **Paving** - durable and sustainable natural materials such as granite and York or Pennant Sandstone that are in keeping or contrast positively with the character and appearance of the conservation area
- **Lighting** - a scheme which ensures public safety but minimises street clutter and highlights the high quality architecture and attractive soft landscaping along the high street
- **Public safety** - safety considerations will be integral to all design proposals
- **CCTV** - an effective CCTV network that ensures public safety but minimises street clutter
- **Accessibility** - ensure straightforward navigation and movement and enable an easy flow into key spaces and from one micro destination to another
- **Physical definition** - use paving materials to create visually different linear and spatial zones that are recognisable as distinct areas within an overall coherent design
- **Market** - a defined optimum layout to include dedicated speciality market areas and ensure an unfettered carriageway and an ease of pedestrian movement in, around and through the town centre on market days
- **Street entertainment** - defined open areas of varying sizes for the purposes of displays, street theatre, musical performances, dancing, busking etc.
- **Trees and soft landscaping** - to be integrated within the design and located to provide an avenue and reinforce rather the compromise or diminish the linear open nature of the high street
- **Street furniture** - minimise street furniture such as bollards, signage, lighting, CCTV columns and notice boards. Designate street café areas. Cluster benches, planters and remaining furniture within linear zones defined for the purpose
- **Gateway sites** - must be defined as welcoming and an entrance to the town centre to provide a sense of arrival
- **Shared services** - define using subtle level changes and the use of contrasting colours and textures. In this way they are shared services only in so much as they can be used by vehicles and pedestrians and are part of a common materials palette
**Shared services** - define using subtle level changes and the use of contrasting colours and textures: In this way they are shared services only in so much as they can be used by vehicles and pedestrians and are part of a common materials palette.

**Public highway** - discharge defined functional and technical requirements as are necessary to fulfil its function as a highway in respect of the prevailing Traffic Regulation Order that may apply to it.

**Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs)** - to facilitate TROs used to define the necessary (time bound) vehicular access movements defined by consultation including decisions on:

- Service Vehicles
- Market Vehicles
- Blue Badge Vehicles
- Emergency Vehicles
- Taxis
- Cycles

**Parking and Loading Bays / Taxi Ranks** - as required to facilitate TROs.

**Carriageway** - a demarcated and distinct straight carriageway constructed to accommodate TRO defined vehicular traffic and designed using natural materials to create an avenue down the high street.

**Maintenance** - the design will not be unduly or unnecessarily compromised by future maintenance liabilities, which will be mitigated from a construction and financial point of view.

The Partners in the Public Realm Upgrade are Worcestershire County Council (WCC) and Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) and the scope of works covers a range of schemes to be carried out during 2012 and 2013.

**Figure 3: Schematic of Project Governance Structure for public realm upgrade**
Bromsgrove High Street Market

Moving the market onto the high street has been a success in terms of increased activity in the Town Ccentre. However, at the moment the public realm is not designed or adequately constructed for it. Stalls have to be laid out around trees, bollards and bins. The uneven surface compounds these problems. The result is that the market appears somewhat ramshackle and accessibility on market days is extremely difficult for all users of the high street.

Street Café Quarter

The enhancement of the public realm will also help facilitate a new café quarter at the southern end of the High Street near the junction with Worcester Road. Such an improvement can support and extend the concentration of bars and restaurants in that area. Similar but smaller zones could then be created in other suitable areas of the town. Strict licensing agreements will be used and a common design of seating, tables and canopies etc will be imposed to ensure consistency and uniformity.
The new public realm design will ensure that the principles of ease of movement down the high street will be maintained on market days. To accommodate this, a revised layout has been devised to optimise use of the space and to improve upon the appearance and scale of the market.

Permanent fixing points and services will be installed to ensure safe operation of markets and create opportunities for staging other events in the future.

Our design brief for Bromsgrove High Street Market adheres to the following principles:

- The venue will be run as a stalls-provided market with marquee-type fabric stalls provided by the management - providing stalls rather than allowing a trader-erect market attracts larger numbers of traders and enables control to be maintained over their appearance
- At full capacity the Market will stretch the full length of the high street from Worcester Road (Poundland) to the Strand (Argos) - the current designation of the highway as pedestrian-priority will be supplemented by additional Traffic Regulation Orders on trading days to restrict service deliveries
- The estimated maximum number of stalls on the High Street will be 80 catering for, say, 50 individual businesses - the recommended colour of the covers is a mixture of bright red, yellow or blue stripes on a white background with transparent side curtains
- The user-types, i.e. the range of products allowed to be sold on the market will be strictly-controlled by management. This is essential to both maintain quality standards and ensure the variety that attracts shoppers - maintaining the correct balance of trades also avoids conflicts between traders wishing to sell the same lines as adjacent shopkeepers
- It is intended to increase occupancy of the general Market and introduce additional events e.g. a fortnightly antiques and bric-a-brac market, or farmers’ market on a Saturday or Sunday - trading hours will be extended (particularly in the winter months) by improving lighting provision for stalls and improved welfare facilities for traders
- The minimum number of bollards, lighting standards, CCTV masts, bicycle racks, litterbins etc is desirable - they impose constraints on trader numbers and revenue. The street is too narrow to accommodate raised flowerbeds
- The design will recognise the importance of accommodating historic features newly reinstated, for example, medieval stocks and Hallelujah Lamp as well as the extant Housman statue and cherub, etc
- The appearance of the paving on non-trading days is the primary concern for designers - we recommend natural, more traditional materials with an inherently non-slip finish suitable for wintry conditions and mechanical cleaning
- A Traffic Regulation Order will be required to prevent service deliveries to shopfronts on trading days - we have proposed 0300 - 2300hrs on trading days
5.2 Scheme Outcomes and Benefits

5.2.1 Capital Projects

Buildings:

The selection of the Capital Projects has been based on the findings of the:

- Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (appendix 11)
- the historic photographic survey (appendix 14)
- the condition and cost surveys of the town centre and the potential THI area (appendix 12)

The selected THI area is slightly smaller than that proposed in the THI Stage 1 bid to enable the investment to create a more significant heritage townscape impact and to focus on the oldest parts of the town centre.

Within the selected THI area - parts of the High Street and Worcester Road - potential projects were identified on the basis of age, historic qualities and characteristics, heritage need for repair and replacement, and the townscape impact and group value.

- Project sheets for each of the selected buildings have been prepared which include current and historic photographs (appendix 14).

81 properties have been identified as being eligible projects within the THI scheme. The eligible projects have been categorised as Priority Plus, Priority and Reserve. Although the round-one bid had identified 3 critical projects (22-24 High Street, 73 High Street and 75 High Street) it was subsequently felt that these should revert to Priority Plus or Priority projects as a further review did not identify their characteristics as warranting a critical designation.

This further review of the 81 properties to enable prioritisation as critical, priority and reserve has led to the recommendation that it is not appropriate to identify any buildings as Critical projects as none satisfy the requirements on:

- their historic and design value
- the importance of their location and group value to the overall heritage townscape
- the need for urgent works to protect key heritage buildings

As a result, the selected buildings have been identified as either Priority Plus (P+), Priority (P) or Reserve (R) to reflect the proposed efforts to ensure their inclusion in the implementation of the initiative.

- 15 properties are priority plus
- 38 properties are priority
- 28 properties are reserve

It is estimated that the THI scheme can realistically target over 30% of the eligible projects during the 5-year life span of the programme (see section 5.3.1). This will have a significant impact on the town centre, both visually and economically, while at the same time being achievable. The management of the scheme will clearly wish to target those properties which have been assigned as Priority projects, although it is difficult to ascertain exactly which property owners will come forward for a grant. Properties from the Reserve list will be targeted if necessary.
There are nearly 50 statutorily Listed grade II properties within the THI area. Of the 81 properties identified as eligible, nearly 40 are Listed - about 50%. The majority of the eligible buildings date from the mid to late 19th century. The age and type of properties found within the THI area reveals the growth and development of Bromsgrove during the prosperity of the 19th century through to gradual decline in the late 20th century.

The majority of the buildings are considered to be fair in condition. The defects associated with these buildings mainly relate to:

- lack of routine maintenance
- inappropriate past repairs
- vacancy

Whilst many are not currently in a serious state of disrepair, if their condition is left to decline then further deterioration and loss of historic fabric is inevitable.

There are a number of buildings whose condition is considered as poor, and have been identified as priority projects. If urgent action is not taken to halt their decline, then there is likely to be significant and irreversible loss of historic fabric.

Grant aid is needed to reverse the decline in the condition of these properties and to encourage viable uses as few owners are able to count on the success of their businesses to fund the improvements that are needed to protect the heritage.

These surveys identify the types and seriousness of the problems affecting the historic building stock within the Bromsgrove THI area. The works required to arrest further deterioration of the fabric, to reverse inappropriate repairs and alterations undertaken in the past, and to bring vacant floor space back into use are listed for each eligible building.

The THI scheme will provide an opportunity to replace inappropriate shopfronts and windows in order to reinstate the original or historic composition of the buildings. Building repairs will typically include replacement of roof tiles/slates, repairs to defective flashings (various buildings) and replacement of rainwater goods with cast iron, etc.

Although often minor in nature and having a low visual impact, collectively these repair works will make a major contribution to securing the future use of many of the town’s buildings. Through addressing water penetration, in particular, repair works will help to halt the slow deterioration taking place, particularly to the upper floors of buildings.

Restoration of architectural features will typically include reinstatement of traditional shopfronts and windows. Together with signage and windows, inappropriate shopfronts are considered to have had the most detrimental impact on the character of the conservation area.
The effects are evident on both High Street and Worcester Road - the main shopping streets in the THI area. Even where efforts have been made to reflect the character of the area in new work, the gradual replacement of original detailing with poorly observed repairs has led to erosion of detail. Throughout the THI, work will focus on reinstating shopfronts and signage to a scale and design and with materials appropriate to the age of the building and its function. Special attention will be paid to recreating details such as console brackets and pediments where there is evidence of their authenticity. Where it is possible to restore an original shopfront, this will be the preferred solution.

The majority of the listed buildings in the THI area retain their original or historic windows and works will focus on restoration to full working order. Elsewhere, inappropriate uPVC or top-hung windows will be replaced principally with vertical sliding sashes appropriate to the building. In some cases, window openings have been enlarged or reduced so that they are not only detrimental to the building but interrupt the regular pattern of fenestration in the townscape. Here, the objective will be to reinstate the proportions of the original opening so that the rhythm of fenestration is restored.

Urgent action is needed to protect and restore this important historic area and it is important to note that the town centre was added to the national ‘Heritage at Risk’ register prepared by English Heritage in July 2010.

As there is no certainty about the proportions of different types of properties that will apply for assistance, so in order to estimate outcomes, it is only possible at this stage to assume an average percentage as a basis for monitoring. Therefore for guidance and monitoring purposes only, it can be assumed that:

- Of the total 81 properties, 67 are shops (usually with room for storage or offices above and a few with accommodation), 5 are offices, 3 are public houses, 4 are restaurants, 1 is a club and there is 1 Post Office
- It is expected that about 32% (see Section 5.3.3) of the eligible properties in the area will be improved with grant aid
- 26 properties are expected to be improved during the THI including 22 shops, 1 or 2 offices and 2 or 3 public houses/restaurants/clubs
- Of the 81 eligible buildings, 18 have vacant historic floor space that could be brought back into use. As a result, it can be expected that up to 6 properties with vacant floor space can be reused.
- Of the 81 eligible buildings, 53 have been identified as requiring replacement or reinstatement works. As a result, it can be expected that up to 17 traditional shop fronts will be restored.

Gap Sites:

No gap sites within the THI area have been identified as suitable for redevelopment. Though the heritage townscape are interrupted by inappropriate modern development, there are no significant empty plots that disrupt the historic views that need to be included in the THI.
Improvements to the Public Realm:

An area of High Street between Housman Square and New Road will be upgraded through the THI scheme. This is a long strip of 183 x 12 metres, or 2,196 sqm. To repair this section to a basic, non-conservation area standard would cost £210,450 including site clearance, trenching and tarmac. However, under the THI scheme this pedestrianised section of primary shopping frontages can be upgraded to more costly conservation standards by the laying of a central carriage way of granite setts with pavements either side of Yorkstone/Pennant Sandstone flags. Normally, at £587,450, this would be cost-prohibitive to most local planning authorities but with grant aid of 100% to fund the difference – i.e. £377,000 – the works can be carried out using local, skilled contractors working to a detailed specification and conservation-proof schedule of works.

5.2.2 Maintaining and managing the conservation area during the lifetime of the scheme

Article 4 Directions

An Article 4 (1) Direction has not been proposed for the town centre as there are no dwelling houses to which the removal of permitted development rights might apply. High Street and Worcester Road form a linear assortment of shops, restaurants, public houses, offices, cafes and banks, etc. either with vacant floors above or else flats or storage.

However, the Council has produced design guidance to instruct owners and agents on appropriate alterations or replacement features. The 2 documents below (appendix 19) should assist, alongside other measures, with the preservation and enhancement of the conservation area:

- Maintain your Building
- Shopfronts and Advertisements Design Guide

Area of Special Control

This measure had been investigated so that stricter controls might be placed upon advertisements in the conservation area. After careful consideration, however, the decision has been made not to adopt this measure. It was felt that sufficient control was already in place by virtue of the conservation area status and the Shopfronts and Advertisements Design Guide. Areas of Special Control are more generally prevalent in National Parks and other significant rural areas such as North Yorkshire, Norfolk, Devon and Cornwall.

Discontinuance Notices

This measure might well be expedient where a particular advertisement is disfiguring either the conservation area or the setting of a listed building. We will try to bring about an improvement in the appearance of the conservation area through the removal of, for example, illuminated box signs and their replacement with more suitable signs. If we consider that any signage is out of keeping with the remaining original features of the shopfront surround then that may merit the serving of a Discontinuance Notice.

Other Enforcement Action

A Section 215 Notice and an Urgent Works Notice are being prepared, with guidance from English Heritage, for 22-24 High Street. This building is Grade 11 Listed and described as a priority plus (P+) project in the THI scheme – formerly it was on the THI Stage 1 Critical list.
Staff Resources

The Development Control and Strategic Planning Teams have responsibility for managing and maintaining the conservation area. The Conservation Officer and the 3 Officers of the Planning Enforcement Team will be responsible for addressing planning enforcement issues in the conservation area.

5.2.3 Community Activities

Many community activities were highlighted in the first-round bid and during the development phase many more activities have since been identified. The sum of £50,000 has been allocated for complementary initiatives and these will be carried out each and every year of the scheme. The responsibility for developing and delivering training, education and community projects will fall to:

- The Project Officer (and other District and County Council officers)
- North East Worcestershire (NEW) College in partnership with SPAB
- The Historic Environment and Archaeology Service at Worcestershire County Council
- Community groups with an interest in the future of the high street

Key to the success of the THI scheme is that local people become involved in the various complementary initiatives running alongside the town centre revitalization. It is essential that community groups care about their heritage, and heritage maintenance matters, and that they understand the regenerative aims of the THI scheme. An informed and engaged public is far more likely to encourage the fostering of a renewed sense of civic pride.

As well as some of the local groups on the Steering Group many more community players will be needed to deliver the activities we have envisaged for the scheme. Help will be required from the Bromsgrove Photographic Society, town trail supporters and guides, volunteers for In Bloom, building preservation trusts, Earth Heritage Trust helpers and members of archaeological societies etc. There will be opportunities for the whole community to get involved particularly since the THI consultation events showed just how keen members of the public are to participate in activities that celebrate Bromsgrove’s unique and special character. It seems that many are fascinated by their town’s history and the look of the high street shops in old photographs (many of which can now be reinstated) - the Bromsgrove Rousler, published every December, is a much read journal.

The main complementary initiatives we have planned are listed below:

- **Community Digs (Dig Bromsgrove) - £29,200**

  A community dig is proposed for Mill Lane, a triangular area of land bounded by shops on 2 sides. The land is in private ownership and permission has been sought from the owners as well as the shopkeepers bordering the site. It is expected that a vacant shop reasonably close to the dig area might serve to advertise the archaeological activities, any findings discovered, plus other relevant information.

  In addition to the Mill Lane site another dig is proposed for Sanders Park in the area once occupied by the cotton mill/button factory (Buck House). The two digs will be timetabled in two consecutive phases – Mill Lane during Easter and Buck House in the summer 2013. It is anticipated that geophysics technology will be required at both sites. Another digging operation is currently under review in the vicinity of St. John’s Church where traces of Anglo-Saxon artifacts may be sufficient to tempt the makers of Channel 4’s Time Team.
Heritage in the Park Open Day - £1,500

A major public event to present results of the excavations detailed above, an opportunity to engage the public in the investigations at Mill Lane and Buck House. The event is scheduled for the end of August 2013 in Sanders Park. Points of interest include:

- Tours of the excavation led by staff and volunteers
- Historical re-enactors - especially the Ermine Street Guard but also medieval and Victorian themes
- Traditional rural crafts
- Hands-on medieval archery and swordsmanship
- Exhibition of finds
- Links - Avoncroft/Worcester Archive Source Project/Museum on the Move (van)/Worcester HER/etc
- Handling sessions and displays of artifacts from excavation with interpretation by archaeologists
- Mock excavation area
- Activities for people to take part in, including creating artworks based on objects seen or reconstructions of the archaeological site
- Balloons for children to take away with them to carry the ‘message’ into Bromsgrove and into homes
- Promotional leaflets for all visitors to take away from the digs. These will also be distributed by local libraries and museums and by tourist information centres. The leaflets will display generic information about the digs and exhibition as well as details of the Open Day itself
- Advertisements in Bromsgrove/Worcestershire papers and in Together Bromsgrove, What’s On (including website) and Worcestershire Now
- On BDC/WCC website
- Press releases

The Open Day will be co-ordinated with the District Council’s Events Team, primarily the Marketing/Promotions and Events Officer and the Arts Development and Special Events Officer.

Art-based project - £1,000

It is hoped the medieval stocks and the 1840s Hallelujah gas lamp will be reinstated as part of the new public realm works. These will be used to inspire art work, drama and poetry leading to a publication, a performance and an exhibition in the public library.

Oral History - £1,000

We will work with older people to record their memories and stories of the town centre and how it has changed over time. This will be an inter-generational event whereby young people will be skilled up to record the oral histories of older people in the community.

Bromsgrove Town Centre Walks - £300

We aim to work with Bromsgrove Society, the Housman Society, the Victorian Society and local community groups to create a trail of places identified as being of local interest or importance. The emphasis will be on places of significance to the community as well as obvious civic or religious buildings. Groups will research these places not only creating a leaflet but also giving guided walks to the general public. An additional element to this will be setting up a training scheme for local young people to become guides for the trail.
**Heritage Interpretation Panels - £3,000**

One will be sited in the vicinity of the medieval stocks and Hallelujah gas lamp. Another is proposed for Housman Square able to give information on the community dig scheduled for Easter 2013.

There is also a third panel under consideration at the Strand end of the high street which may focus on Bromsgrove’s nailmaking past.

**Heritage Open Days - no cost**

The Project Officer has registered Bromsgrove District Council for Heritage Open Days 6 - 9 September 2012. There will be buildings open to the public, including free entry to local National Trust properties and the Avoncroft Museum as well as townscape trails and events and activities aimed at bringing local history and culture to life.

**Architectural Competition - prizes to be awarded by the Bromsgrove Society (cost to scheme £500)**

Architectural students from Birmingham will be invited to enter a competition aimed at looking at appropriate ways of screening the rear of high street properties facing Market Street which marks the south west boundary of the Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area and is a main thoroughfare through the town. Creative skills in design will be called for as well as an understanding of the dimensions and context of the buildings and the practicalities of the project. Eligibility to this competition will embrace students who are currently training at University. A coloured sketch of the proposed design will give the judging panel the best possible impression of what the finished work will look like. The Competition will be judged by a panel of Judges appointed by the Bromsgrove Society and the 1st Prize will be £1,500

**Bromsgrove Summer School - no cost**

The Project Officer is scheduled to give a talk at the Bromsgrove Summer School on 12 July 2012 on the future of Bromsgrove high street. The programme of lectures runs for 3 days and is housed in school buildings provided by Bromsgrove School. The organizers of the event are trustees of Bromsgrove Society. Another talk will be given by archaeologists working on Bromsgrove’s proposed community digs

**Bromsgrove Now and Then - Photography Competition 2012 - £500**

In order to enter competitors will submit 1 to 3 photographs that they think reflect unique and interesting perspectives on heritage in Bromsgrove town centre. A specific definition of heritage will not be prescribed but in 5 years time a second competition will be held to highlight just how the High Street has changed.
The competition opening date will be in September 2012 and the winning images in each category will be decided by the Steering Group and Bromsgrove Photographic Society. The winners and a selection of shortlisted entries will make up an exhibition to be held at a venue in Bromsgrove town centre in the autumn 2012. There will be a first prize and two runners up prizes in three age categories, Adults 21+, Youth 13 - 20 years, Junior 7-12.

There will also be a number of other activities as identified by the Project Officer during his day-to-day management of the scheme, for instance:

**THI Newsletters**

A dedicated, well-written and illustrated newsletter will be issued every spring and autumn with the first one scheduled for September 2012 when the scheme is launched. The second issue will go out in the spring 2013. THI newsletters will have information on:

- Opportunities to influence and be involved in the THI scheme
- Progress of the THI scheme
- Before and after photos, rectified photography
- Memories or comments on particular buildings or areas
- Individual histories of buildings
- News stories
- Project documents
- Architects’ drawings
- Investment information
- Entertainment and leisure
- E-newsletter sign up
- Events information
- Questionnaires
- Consultation feedback
- Contact details

THI newsletters will be hand-delivered to local shopkeepers and small businesses within the THI boundary as well as being freely available at sundry events and local centres such as the Artrix art venue, St John’s Church and school and district libraries. The newsletter may even be distributed at the same time as the Bromsgrove Society newsletter as an enclosure.

**Press Releases**

There will be press releases every month during the course of the THI and details of these will be copied beforehand to our grants officer.

**Upgrading the THI Website - Building a Better Bromsgrove**

The amount of change which is proposed over the next 2-3 years in Bromsgrove means that an effective way of getting accurate information to and from the public is crucial. The potential for a successful THI scheme is another imperative to increase awareness and allow for the easy and effective on-line engagement with interested parties.
The Regeneration Programme therefore requires a greater web presence in the form of a dedicated website or set of web pages. The website will be branded differently and sit outside the Council’s current website, but linked to it.

The site will serve to market Bromsgrove as a prime location for inward investment and act as hub of information for the public and all other stakeholders. The Bromsgrove THI will be a major part of the website and will play its part in:

- Attracting property owners, retailers and the public to engage in the Bromsgrove THI
- Attracting new retailers to Bromsgrove
- Attracting shoppers to Bromsgrove
- Acting as a medium for consultation with Bromsgrove Residents
- Providing up-to-date and accurate information for all stakeholders

The new website, due to be launched in May 2012, though heavily supported by the District Council will nonetheless have its own identity. We expect to include:

- Opportunities to influence and be involved in the THI scheme
- Progress of the THI scheme
- Interactive maps and images for every building in the THI scheme
- Before and after photos, rectified photography, facility to upload pictures (Flickr)
- Memories or comments on particular buildings or areas
- Individual histories of buildings
- News stories

- Blogs and links to social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter
- You Tube videos
- Project documents
- Architects’ drawings
- 3-D visuals
- Investment information
- Entertainment and leisure
- Download (PDF) facilities links to partner websites
- Sponsorship banners
- Easy use content management system for non-IT staff
- E-newsletter sign up
- Events information
- Questionnaires
- Consultation feedback
- Contact us facility (e-mail enquiries and questions)

Some Primary Objectives

You Tube - we will seek to plan, design, produce, distribute and evaluate 3 pieces of THI-based creative, factual, digital content suitable for online broadcast.

Interviews in the High Street - we will speak to as many people as possible about Bromsgrove town centre as part of our commitment to consultation - gathering ‘words’ descriptions,’ ‘perceptions’ and ‘ideas’ about the town. By conducting street interviews on different days, and with different ages and backgrounds, we expect to find a useful way to engage with people who live, work and shop in Bromsgrove.
Interviews, as planned, will form an educational project to demonstrate the effective engagement of key, hard-to-reach 16-19 year-olds - as digital media consumers such an age group will be more ready to engage with a format they have both a familiarity and understanding with. It is expected that Bromsgrove School/NEW College students will interview passers-by using their own equipment and then the THI Project Officer will receive their edited films.

Output - our aim will be three 2/3 minute films based on Bromsgrove THI issues, released on a staggered schedule. Filmed at locations on High Street and Worcester Road these short films will include historical information as well as interviews with young people and various other audiences. The videos will be embedded into a redesigned heritage page (Building a Better Bromsgrove) but originated from a THI/HLF/BDC/WCC branded You Tube channel. The initiative will be supported with press releases and a magazine piece.

Rectified Photography

There exists a great selection of b/w photos from 1943, taken at an oblique angle on High Street and Worcester Road and we have plans to straighten these up, or rectify them, make them linear and then colour them in. The images produced will be fitted onto a scaled shopfront elevation. A rapid EDM survey of the street elevations will be required to create an accurate basis for rectifying the photographs (see above).

The process will make selling the idea of the THI grant scheme more acceptable to wavering shopkeepers. There may also be an application for the technique in the development of an Unlocking Bromsgrove's Past project such as Stourport has achieved after research carried out by their local civic society.
New Business Start-up Programme

A Business Start-up Programme, which is an initiative consisting of business training and grants, has assisted a number of independent stores that have opened in the High Street. Bromsgrove District Council has a proactive policy aimed at filling shops when they become available. The quarterly ‘Industrial and Commercial Property Guide’ is produced and forwarded following any enquiry for commercial property. Likely prospects are also canvassed when a premise is known to be closing.

Building Preservation Trusts (BPTs)

Worcestershire Building Preservation Trust has been wound up and a proportion of its trustees have joined the West Midlands Historic Buildings Trust. It is hoped that either this Trust or a newly-constituted one dedicated to Bromsgrove District will take on a building, or buildings, in the High Street should any become available. While works are on site there will be a unique opportunity to involve members of the public, perhaps timetabled to link with the Heritage Open Days programme held annually in September as discussed above. In addition, the trustees of the campaign to re-open Bromsgrove Museum are in talks with the Charity Commission and the Architectural Heritage Fund to consider setting themselves up as a single-trust BPT able to drawn down grants and low interest loans.

5.2.4 Training Activities

Training activities are a key component of the THI scheme and we have established a busy programme of traditional building skills courses catering for a wide cross-section of the community. Courses will be tailored specifically to the needs of homeowners, contractors and sub-contractors and 16 - 19 year old students, though others, architects/surveyors etc. will be encouraged to attend.

Our aim is to create a traditional building skills base in Bromsgrove which might act as an exemplar to enliven and stimulate debate and practical support to the local heritage industry.

The training courses will be held either at North East Worcestershire (NEW) College or Avoncroft Museum and feature:

- masterclasses in brickwork, plastering and joinery
- general maintenance for historic buildings
- seminars on the need of older buildings to breathe
- up-skilling of contractors, sub-contractors and college trainers
- a reappraisal of apprenticeships and the entry of 16 - 19 year olds into the heritage industry

Where required, specialists procured by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) will be bought in to run courses.

A Contractor Survey will be undertaken to determine what experience contractors have of working on historic properties (see appendix 16):

- if they felt they lacked any skills in terms of heritage construction/conservation techniques
- if they would like any training to either improve or learn new skills
- what length of training was most preferable.

The outcome of this survey will help shape the type of training we are likely to offer.
Homeowners are generally aware that they lack the appropriate skills to properly care for their historic buildings so with this in mind, in addition to the dedicated traditional building skills courses, the Conservation Officer has written and published *Maintain your Building* (appendix 19), a guide to repairing and safeguarding the historic environment.

**Construction Training**

**NEW College - 16 to 19 year olds (£3,500)**

- The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) has been approached to run tailor-made courses for NEW College. These courses will cover a number of introductory conservation topics but will also include practical elements such as lime mortar specification and timber sash window repair.

- SPAB have much experience in running courses for THI schemes and will be procuring local craftspeople to deliver the courses. At NEW College, which caters for 16 - 19 year olds, there are currently three construction courses available to students - bricklaying, plastering and wood occupations/carpentry - and the aim is to deliver masterclasses in all 3 of these. The specific craft skills most likely required on projects within the THI area will engage bricklayers, carpenters, decorators, lead workers, roofers (in both slate and tile), stonemasons and specialists in lime. In consultation with the Assistant Principal Learner Experience at NEW College it is envisaged that masterclasses will take place over three consecutive Fridays during the winter term 2013.

- The Council’s Conservation Officer and the THI Project Officer will also provide a series of half-day seminars on building repair, conservation techniques, urban design and architectural history.

**NEW College - Continuing Professional Development (CPD) - £4,000**

- The THI aims to provide places to local contractors, sub-contractors and other practitioners supporting them to up-skill in relevant areas. It is expected that the Contractor Survey will highlight the need for courses aimed at developing new traditional buildings skills amongst the current construction work force.

- Heritage specialists procured by SPAB will be contracted to run these courses, using the facilities at NEW College. Courses will take place on weekdays during the summer months, 2013.

**Homeowner Training – Avoncroft Museum - £5,500**

These courses will be hosted by Avoncroft Museum. The THI aims to provide places to domestic homeowners to increase their awareness of the need for skilled craftspeople to work on historic buildings. We have sought to provide education regarding the need for sympathetic conservation and repair. The homeowners’ introduction to the repair of old houses will highlight the need for regular maintenance and bring practical and straightforward advice on maintenance and repairs to everyone charged with maintaining an historic property. SPAB have been approached to run this course too and will again procure local craftspeople. In consultation with Simon Carter, Director of Avoncroft Museum, it is envisaged that courses will take place over three consecutive Saturdays during the late spring 2013. As above the Conservation Officer and the THI Project Officer will provide half day seminars on heritage themes.
We aim to keep the training programme under constant review and seek ways to continue the courses in traditional building skills beyond the life of the THI scheme in 2017. We will keep an open mind on the type of courses on offer and investigate new skills training regimes in consultation with our partners at NEW College, Avoncroft Museum and the SPAB.

5.2.5 Benefits for People

Our broad objective is to enjoin the local community in improving the quality of life and sense of well-being of everyone in Bromsgrove and the wider district. We wish to empower key individuals and groups to share in the responsibility of maintaining and developing the rich potential of Bromsgrove. During the 6-week public consultation period we were encouraged by the determination of many residents to bring back good old Bromsgrove, a thriving market town they were once proud to boast of. We will seek to help them achieve their aspirations by:

- Making the high street attractive again by reinstating traditional shopfronts onto pre-WW1 buildings of townscape merit
- Encouraging the establishment of niche retailers in the town centre
- Repaving the high street in Yorkstone/Pennant Sandstone flags and granite setts and improving access for people with disabilities
- Revamping the street market and introducing a new events space in the town centre
- Bringing vacant upper floors back into profitable use for residential and commercial purposes thus increasing activity and shopping etc. on the high street
- Encouraging cafes and bars to spill out onto the street and create a metropolitan or continental café-like culture
- Raising the profile of architecture, heritage and culture of the town through new town trails, street activities and the attention received by the reinstatement of the medieval stocks and Hallelujah gas lamp
- Encouraging shopkeepers and small businesses to become members of the THI Partnership Steering Group where they will have a forum to debate and advise on matters of commerce and the vitality of the town centre

A measure of the outcomes we are likely to achieve include:

- 16 - 19 year olds on construction courses at NEW College will have received unique masterclass training in traditional building skills and, as a result, discovered the real value of our historic building stock. They will have also understood the wider options available to them in the heritage construction industry
- NEW College Construction Staff will have acquired new skills in building construction, an expertise that will improve the overall quality of training and widen their options as building professionals
- Contractors and sub-contractors will learn how to adapt their working methods to enable them to win tenders on historic building projects
- Development Control Officers at the District Council will become increasingly familiar with the technical specifications and detailed drawings associated with THI grant-aided projects.
- Environmental sustainability will be foremost when checking specifications and schedules of work for THI grant-aided projects, a debate will be instigated in to just how far the needs of historic integrity should override the requirement for Part L of the Building Regulations
5.2.6 The Environmental Effect

The THI scheme will have the following positive effects on the environment:

- Improvements to the public realm in the High Street, including improving the quality of the paving in the pedestrianised area, improving the quality of shop fronts and reducing street clutter
- Involvement of the local community in the Town Centre public realm improvements
- Implementation of a regular maintenance programme for the High Street
- Re-landscaping/culverting of the Brook and improving the environmental quality of the surrounding area - restoring the natural habitat of the Brook as much as possible in order to enhance biodiversity

Of the 81 eligible projects 11 are likely to receive grants over £50,000 (table 5 on page 105) - 6 of these are priority plus projects, 4 are priority and 1 is in reserve. 9 properties have a re-use element while the remaining 2 require modest repair and reinstatement works, including shopfronts.

We have read and understood HLF guidance on Planning Greener Heritage Projects and are aware of the need to:

- recommend natural insulation materials for stall risers where traditional shopfronts are reinstated
- advise on draught proofing, weather stripping and secondary glazing for windows and doors
- specify lime on all building projects where modern cements are now generally used
- pay particular attention to reducing and recycling waste, in particular during the public realm works when the current brick paviors will become redundant

- source eco-suppliers, especially for oil-based paints
- insist on timber that is a well-seasoned, good quality joinery softwood from a well managed source approved by the Forestry Commission, for example, larch, western red cedar, Douglas fir or British Columbian pine

Our A5 booklet on specification requirements for grant-aided work (appendix 10) fully details the green agenda we propose for THI grant-aided projects. Additionally, we will guide applicants and their agents to the English Heritage site Climate Change and your Home.

5.3 Scheme delivery and costs (see table 5 on page 105)

5.3.1 Delivering the action plan.

THI target programme:

The key targets are:

1. to implement projects which require the full public sector Common Fund and result in lever age of private sector finance at the levels identified in Table 6 within the 3/5 year life of the THI scheme
2. to ensure that a significant percentage of the Priority Plus projects are completed within this timescale, with particular efforts to ensure that approvals are given and implementation commences within 2 years
3. to encourage owners of Priority Plus and Priority projects to apply for grant aid, leaving some opportunities for Reserve Projects, to ensure that all of the Common Fund identified for capital building projects is approved within three years
Table 5: showing which projects are likely to receive grants over £50,000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Occupancy</th>
<th>Works</th>
<th>Cost (£)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22-24 HS (P+)</td>
<td>Vacant 1, 2 &amp; 3 floors</td>
<td>Re-use inc modest repair &amp; reinstatement</td>
<td>314,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-4 HS (P+)</td>
<td>Occupied</td>
<td>Modest repair &amp; reinstatement</td>
<td>114,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 HS (P+)</td>
<td>Vacant 1 &amp; 2 floors</td>
<td>Re-use inc modest repair &amp; reinstatement</td>
<td>192,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>134-136 HS (P+)</td>
<td>2nd floor vacant</td>
<td>Re-use inc modest repair &amp; reinstatement</td>
<td>91,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89-91 HS (P)</td>
<td>Vacant 1 &amp; 2 floors</td>
<td>Re-use inc modest repair &amp; reinstatement</td>
<td>85,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67 HS (P+)</td>
<td>2nd floor refurbishing</td>
<td>Re-use inc modest repair &amp; reinstatement</td>
<td>91,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33-35 HS (P+)</td>
<td>Vacant 1 &amp; 2 floors</td>
<td>Re-use inc modest repair &amp; reinstatement</td>
<td>131,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 HS (P)</td>
<td>Occupied</td>
<td>Modest repair &amp; reinstatement</td>
<td>93,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 HS (R)</td>
<td>Vacant 2 &amp; 3 floors</td>
<td>Re-use inc modest repair &amp; reinstatement</td>
<td>97,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tudor House, New Street (P)</td>
<td>Part vacant</td>
<td>Re-use inc modest repair &amp; reinstatement</td>
<td>112,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 WR (P)</td>
<td>Vacant 1 &amp; 2 floors</td>
<td>Re-use inc modest repair &amp; reinstatement</td>
<td>101,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

P+ = Priority plus  P = Priority  R = Reserve

Approval of projects are expected to be spread throughout the first 3 years from receipt of the HLF contract to proceed, with implementation and expenditure from the Common Fund expected to spread over five years.

The targets for approvals should aim at:
- a minimum of 15% of the Common Fund during year 1
- a minimum of 50% of the Common Fund by the end of year 2
- the expectation of 100% of the Common Fund by the end of year 3 though the UK’s current economic climate may challenge this target

Table 6 on page 106 sets out an indicative budget and programme for approvals for the first 3 years of the THI.

The targets for completion should aim at:
- a minimum of 20% expenditure of the Common Fund at the end of year 2
- a minimum of 40% expenditure of the Common Fund at the end of year 3
- a minimum of 70% expenditure of the Common Fund at the end of year 4
- 100% expenditure of the Common Fund by the end of year 5

The outline programme presented in the table below identifies annual expenditure based on approvals:
- Potential properties given approval in year 1
- Annual expenditure on Education & Training (see section 5.2 for detailed breakdown)
- Annual expenditure on Staffing & Publicity (see section 2.2 for detailed breakdown)
- Identifies the minimum targets for each year
# Table 6: Bromsgrove THI Budget for Grant Approvals & Common Fund expenditure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grant Rate</th>
<th>60% Building Repairs</th>
<th>85% Replace Architectural features</th>
<th>Have 55% Vacant floor space</th>
<th>100.00% Public Realm Comp Initiatives Staff etc</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Cumulative Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 1 Properties</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46, High Street</td>
<td>16,000</td>
<td>75,000</td>
<td>101,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>192,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-4 High Street</td>
<td>9,200</td>
<td>45,000</td>
<td>60,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>114,200</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 Worcester Road</td>
<td>17,000</td>
<td>31,000</td>
<td>53,500</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>101,500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Street Public Realm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complementary Initiatives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staffing &amp; Publicity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>45,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub Total to end year 1</strong></td>
<td><strong>42,200</strong></td>
<td><strong>151,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>214,500</strong></td>
<td><strong>260,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>667,700</strong></td>
<td><strong>667,700</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum target for year 1 approvals (15%)</td>
<td>62,500</td>
<td>79,500</td>
<td>61,500</td>
<td>260,000</td>
<td>463,500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Year 2 Properties              |                       |                                    |                             |                                               |             |                  |
| Estimated Building Repair approvals in Year 2 (35%) | 146,000               |                                    |                             |                                               | 146,000     |                  |
| Estimated Heritage Detail approvals in Year 2 (35%) |                         | 185,500                             |                             |                                               | 185,500     |                  |
| Estimated Vacant Floorspace approvals in Year 2 (35%) |                         | 143,500                             |                             |                                               | 143,500     |                  |
| High Street Public Realm       |                       |                                    |                             |                                               | 200,000     |                  |
| Complementary Initiatives      |                       |                                    |                             |                                               | 15,000      |                  |
| Staffing & Publicity           |                       |                                    |                             |                                               | 45,000      |                  |
| **Sub Total to end year 2**    | **188,200**           | **336,500**                        | **358,000**                 | **520,000**                                   | **1,402,700** | **1,402,700**   |
| Minimum target for approvals to end of year 2 (50%) | 208,500               | 265,000                             | 205,000                     | 337,500                                       | 1,016,000   |                  |

| Year 3 Properties              |                       |                                    |                             |                                               |             |                  |
| Estimated Building Repair approvals in Year 3 (<50%) | 228,800               |                                    |                             |                                               | 228,800     |                  |
| Estimated Heritage Detail approvals in Year 3 (<50%) |                         | 193,500                             |                             |                                               | 193,500     |                  |
| Estimated Vacant Floorspace approvals in Year 3 (<50%) |                         | 52,000                              |                             |                                               | 52,000      |                  |
| Complementary Initiatives      |                       |                                    |                             |                                               | 10,000      |                  |
| Staffing & Publicity           |                       |                                    |                             |                                               | 45,000      |                  |
| **Sub Total to end of year 3**  | **417,000**           | **530,000**                        | **410,000**                 | **575,000**                                   | **1,932,000** | **1,932,000**   |
| Minimum target for approvals to end of year 3 (100%) | 417,000               | 530,000                             | 410,000                     | 575,000                                       | 1,932,000   |                  |
| Complementary Initiatives + Staffing, etc. for Year 4 and 5 | 10,000                | 90,000                             | 100,000                     |                                               |             |                  |
| **end of year 5 TOTAL**        | **417,000**           | **530,000**                        | **410,000**                 | **675,000**                                   | **2,032,000** | **2,032,000**   |
**Year 1 Potential Building Projects:**

Potential Year 1 projects include both Priority Plus projects and buildings where there is a likelihood of early action as the owner has expressed particular interest in immediate implementation involving THI funding. The following properties have been selected from discussions with the owners and the local experience of the THI Project Officer, Development Control Officers and the Conservation Officer and their confidence that the projects will start during year 1:

- Vacant corner site - 46 High Street
- Motorworld - 2-4 High Street
- M &M’s Hair Shack - 46 Worcester Road

There is confidence that these buildings will come forward in Year 1 though an accurate summary of the likely Common Fund expenditure on all the buildings to be approved during Year 1 is not currently feasible. If any of these projects do not proceed during year 1, alternative properties are certain to be considered as there was a backlog of unsatisfied expressions of interest. Accurate estimates of the projects likely to be given approval or likely to start is currently impossible. A Year 2 programme will be prepared at the end of Year 1 with the Annual Report when there should be further information on expected progress. Potential Year 1 projects and their likely costs are shown below, but the primary aim will be to achieve the target for total approvals listed in table 6 for Year 1.

The following listing provides an indication of the potential approval of expenditure on likely projects - including contingencies, etc. but not VAT, and the HLF contribution if the buildings listed above are approved in Year 1:

---

### 46 High Street

Eligible project costs for repairs to structure and fabric, replacement of architectural heritage detail and vacant floor space - approximately £192,000:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eligible costs</th>
<th>% grant</th>
<th>Potential grant</th>
<th>HLF contribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Structure &amp; Fabric</td>
<td>£ 16,000</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>£ 9,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heritage Detail</td>
<td>£ 75,000</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>£ 63,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant Floor Space</td>
<td>£101,000</td>
<td>ave 55%</td>
<td>£ 55,550</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grant requirement calculated from figures above: £ 128,900

### 2-4 High Street

Eligible project costs for repairs to structure and fabric, replacement of heritage detail and vacant floor space - approximately £114,200:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eligible costs</th>
<th>% grant</th>
<th>Potential grant</th>
<th>HLF contribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Structure &amp; Fabric</td>
<td>£ 9,200</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>£ 5,520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heritage Detail</td>
<td>£ 45,000</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>£ 38,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant Floor Space</td>
<td>£ 60,000</td>
<td>ave 55%</td>
<td>£ 33,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grant requirement calculated from figures above: £ 76,770
46 Worcester Road

Eligible project costs for repairs to structure and fabric, replacement of heritage detail and vacant floor space - approximately £225,500:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eligible costs</th>
<th>% grant</th>
<th>Potential HLF contribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Structure &amp; Fabric</td>
<td>£17,000</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heritage Detail</td>
<td>£31,000</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant Floor Space</td>
<td>£53,500</td>
<td>ave 55%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grant requirement calculated from figures above: £65,975

With approval of the sum for these potential year 1 projects of over £270,000 from the Common Fund, the total will be above the year 1 target of 15% approvals.

It must be emphasised that the above list and costings indicates potential Year 1 projects and that there will also be variations to the individual costings of the listed projects when detailed condition appraisals for each building are carried out. At this stage this is only an indicative list and cannot be considered a detailed programme. Once the THI starts, the THI Project Officer will define a potential programme of likely properties after the public meetings to launch the initiative.

Actual expenditure on these projects is even more difficult to determine. This will depend on the actions and timetable of individual owners. We are certain that at least one project will be underway and some grant will have been paid towards capital expenditure on construction.

Year 1 Public Realm expenditure:

Assume actual expenditure during year 1 will be £200,000 - 50% of the total £400,000 for the Public Realm. (see section 3.7 for breakdown and justification of costs)

Year 1 Education and Training expenditure:

Assume actual expenditure during year one will be £15,000, with another £15,000 during year 2, £10,000 during year 3, and the final £10,000 during years 4 and 5 - a total of £50,000 (see section 5.2 for breakdown and justification of costs)

Year 1 Staffing and Publicity:

Staffing costs over the five years will total £200,000 and £25,000 to be available over the 5 years for other overheads including publicity, exhibitions and publications. This is averaged out at £45,000 per year. (see breakdown and explanation in section 2.2)
### 5.3.2 Risk Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk</th>
<th>How likely is the event?</th>
<th>How serious would the effect be?</th>
<th>Consequence</th>
<th>Action you will take to help prevent the risk</th>
<th>Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THI Project Officer leaves job early</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Delivery of the scheme might get delayed. Community engagement suffers. Knowledge drain</td>
<td>Keep Project Team up-to-date with progress. Maintain records so that project not over-reliant on one individual. Start recruitment process asap.</td>
<td>Lead Partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External funding not secured or reduced</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Scheme unable to proceed or greatly reduced in scope</td>
<td>Retain close relationship with County Council match funder</td>
<td>Lead Partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty in persuading owners to take up grants</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Under-spend. Buildings left un repaired. Impact of scheme reduced</td>
<td>Continuous engagement with owners of eligible properties - site visits, promotional events. Increase level of grant as last option</td>
<td>Lead Partner, Project Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of community engagement</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Loss of support and lack of interest in grants</td>
<td>Base the project officer within the heart of the community and organise a series of consultation events &amp; other community activities, making sure that the community is represented in the THI Partnership Steering Group</td>
<td>Lead Partner, Partnership Steering Group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 5.3.2 Risk Management continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk</th>
<th>How likely is the event?</th>
<th>How serious would the effect be?</th>
<th>Consequence</th>
<th>Action you will take to help prevent the risk</th>
<th>Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of local conservation skills</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Sub-standard work which does not meet conservation standards. Reduced impact on townscape. Possible breach of contract</td>
<td>List of able and experienced contractors drawn up. Programme of skills training for local companies. Detailed specifications of works approved by District Council. Regular monitoring and management of work - by architect and by applicants. Payments stopped for poor work</td>
<td>Lead Partner, Project Officer, Partnership Steering Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead partner approves poor quality developments in conservation area that detract from THI scheme</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Reduced impact of the THI scheme. Conservation area not enhanced</td>
<td>Ensure development control is aware of scheme aims. Inform council members and officers of the aims of scheme. Education/skills training for development control team. Good contacts with local press and public groups to inform public opinion</td>
<td>Lead Partner, Project Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unexpected additional works revealed during the delivery phase</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Results in extra costs &amp; possibly to fewer projects being tackled, reduced impact of scheme</td>
<td>Produce detailed surveys of critical projects and those eligible projects where the risk is greatest during the development phase to reduce cost uncertainty. Try to gain internal access to estimate costs of projects in need of structural repairs.</td>
<td>Lead Partner, Project Officer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 5.3.2 Risk Management continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk</th>
<th>How likely is the event?</th>
<th>How serious would the effect be?</th>
<th>Consequence</th>
<th>Action you will take to help prevent the risk</th>
<th>Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adverse change in property market</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Businesses and property owners see no advantage in applying for a grant and investing their own money</td>
<td>Difficult to address, but generally important to develop a good understanding of the local property market and a clear vision for the area to help businesses/owners understand what the scheme is about and how they can benefit</td>
<td>Lead Partner, Project Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THI-funded public realm brief not sensitively adhered to by Highways Authority</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Regeneration strategy, vision for the area and implementation of conservation area management plan put at risk</td>
<td>Joint working with county highways department, input from relevant county/district departments into conservation area management plan, shared vision</td>
<td>Lead partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of staff resources</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Unable to deliver scheme to its full potential</td>
<td>Reaffirm high level commitment to the scheme from all members of the Partnership Steering Group and appropriate budgetary provision. Obtain commitment from all key council departments/teams that staff resources will be made available.</td>
<td>Lead Partner, Project Team</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.3.3 The eligible costs and the common fund

The total expected cost to complete all potential eligible works to the selected buildings in the THI area could total almost £3.9 million. The expected funds available to carry out these works including both Common Fund and private owners contribution should total over £2.0 million. After deducting an expected £675,000 required for works to the public realm, complementary initiatives and staff training costs (see section 5.3.1), this could enable a local take-up of grants for property improvements of £1,357,000 - about 32% of the works to the eligible properties.

An explanation of these totals is presented below following the valuations, building condition and cost surveys of all eligible properties within the proposed THI boundary:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total estimated approx cost for all eligible properties</td>
<td>£3,858,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assume expenditure on 32% of properties</td>
<td>£1,234,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add total average (at 2.5yrs) inflation over 5 yrs of 10%</td>
<td>£123,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likely cost of expected building works</td>
<td>£1,357,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approx likely total expenditure on properties during THI period</td>
<td>£1,357,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assume on average over 30% of costs are funded by owners</td>
<td>£432,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remaining funds available for properties from THI Common Fund</td>
<td>£925,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenditure on Public Realm</td>
<td>£400,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add overheads, staffing and publicity costs over 5 yr</td>
<td>£225,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add Complementary Initiatives + education and training costs over 5 years</td>
<td>£50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total of Common Fund required for the THI over 5 years</td>
<td>£1,600,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This assumes that the total expenditure over 5 years on:
- THI properties (Common Fund Grants+ owners contribution) will be: £1,357,000
- + public realm                                                           £400,000
- + complementary initiatives and staffing, etc                             £275,000

Total THI expenditure (THI Common Fund + owners contribution) = approx £2,032,000
The assumption that over 30% of costs will be funded by owners is based on the findings for proposed grant rates set out in section 3.6 and on tables 7 and 8 on pages 114 and 115. Grant rates have been derived from valuations and set at the minimum amount needed to achieve results.

The condition and cost surveys include sums built into project costs for each property that cover fees, preliminaries and contingencies.

As all of the selected THI properties are in commercial ownership they should all be able to reclaim VAT, and therefore additional sums are not included in this appraisal to cover this cost.

The Common Fund contribution to public realm works and gap site developments is limited to a maximum of 25%. Staff costs and overheads are less than 15% of the common fund, with complementary initiatives less than 5%.

The percentage of properties that will be able to be funded by the Common Fund grants will be reduced by inflation over the 5 year period, so the assumption is presented above that over the 5 years we can expect budget costs to increase by inflation of 10%.

Expenditure at this level should have a significant impact on the appearance of the heritage properties in the Bromsgrove town centre THI area and will create new floor space and assist with local economic regeneration. In combination with other regeneration initiatives, this will improve the image of the centre, assist local market demand from surrounding areas and support the sustainability of the wider town centre.

The following tables 7 and 8 (on pages 114 and 115) set out the THI financial arrangements and allocations with a presentation of funding by agency, and as the THI Action Plan summary.

Table 7 (page 114) showing financial arrangements identifies the breakdown of potential expenditure and grant availability by category of works and funding organisation. The % of these totals provided by the HLF THI funds is also presented. The breakdown between agency and types of work is indicative. Table 8 (page 115) shows a breakdown of the same figures in the format requested by the HLF as the THI Action Plan summary.

Most of the proposed THI selected buildings are shops. Of the total 81 properties, 67 are shops (usually with room for storage or offices above and a few with accommodation), 5 are offices, 3 are public houses, 4 are restaurants, 1 is a club and there is 1 Post Office. It is expected that about 32% (see Section 5.3.3) of the eligible works in the area will be improved with grant aid.

As there is no certainty about the proportions of different types of properties that will apply for assistance, it is only possible at this stage to assume an average percentage as a basis for monitoring. Therefore for guidance only, it can be assumed that:

- 26 properties are expected to be improved during the THI
- including 22 shops and traditional shopfronts
- 1 or 2 offices
- and 2 or 3 public houses/restaurants/clubs

The following tables 7 and 8 (on pages 114 and 115) set out the THI financial arrangements and allocations with a presentation of funding by agency, and as the THI Action Plan summary.
Table 7: Bromsgrove THI Financial Arrangements/Allocations (£000s/rounded)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eligible THI Works</th>
<th>HLF</th>
<th>Worcs CC</th>
<th>Broms DC</th>
<th>Total THI common fund</th>
<th>THI grant %</th>
<th>private sector</th>
<th>Total eligible cost</th>
<th>% common fund allocation between category</th>
<th>HLF grant % of total common fund</th>
<th>HLF grant % of total eligible cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Building repairs to structure and fabric</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>417</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B Restoring architectural features</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C Bringing vacant historic floor space back into use</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>ave 55%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D Gap Sites</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E Public Realm</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>400</td>
<td></td>
<td>400</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F Complementary initiatives</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G Staffing/Publicity</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>225</td>
<td></td>
<td>225</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>1600</td>
<td>432</td>
<td>2032</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 8: Bromsgrove town centre THI Action Plan summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Category of work</th>
<th>B. Total Eligible costs</th>
<th>C. THI Common Fund</th>
<th>D. Grant Rates</th>
<th>E. HLF contribution to THI grant</th>
<th>E. % Common Fund allocation between category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Repairs to buildings</td>
<td>417,000</td>
<td>250,000</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>250,000</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restoring architectural features</td>
<td>530,000</td>
<td>450,000</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>450,000</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bringing vacant historic floor space back into use</td>
<td>410,000</td>
<td>225,000</td>
<td>55% average</td>
<td>225,000</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New-buildings for gap-sites</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public realm works</td>
<td>400,000</td>
<td>400,000</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complementary initiatives</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff costs and overheads</td>
<td>225,000</td>
<td>225,000</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>225,000</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>2,450,000</td>
<td>1,900,000</td>
<td>950,000</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.3.4 Partnership funding for the scheme

The proposed Common Fund - the total public sources of finance, has been based on the following totals being available over the 5 year construction period without annual constraints on expenditure:

- £1,200,000 available from the HLF
- £400,000 available from Worcestershire County Council

The resulting Common Fund total will be £1,600,000

The funding for the public realm works (Section 3.7) is expected to be completely used during years 1 and 2.

All other expenditure will be funded by the HLF THI grant. Drawdown of the total is expected to occur over the 5 years of the project approval and implementation stages. See below for an indicative drawdown:

Table 9 below identifies the likely fund scenario for the next 5 years:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding Source</th>
<th>2012/13</th>
<th>2013/14</th>
<th>2014/15</th>
<th>2015/16</th>
<th>2016/17</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heritage Lottery Fund</td>
<td>80,000</td>
<td>240,000</td>
<td>320,000</td>
<td>360,000</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>1,200,000</td>
<td>75.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worcester County Council</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>400,000</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Common Fund</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>350,000</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>400,000</td>
<td>1,600,000</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 6

Exit Strategy and Success Measures
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Exit Strategy and Success Measures

6. Exit Strategy and Success Measures

6.1 What is our Exit Strategy?

When the THI scheme completes in 2017 it is expected that the Partnership Steering Group will continue to meet and further the goals and aims established over the preceding 6 years. There will be much discussion at that time on what means there are to ensure that the good works achieved by the THI continue into the future. From the perspective in 2012 we can forecast that the following measures should be observed:

- Ensure that the Conservation Area Management Plan, the Shopfronts and Advertisements Design Guide and the Maintain your Building guidance act upon development control to regulate quality and enhance the planning regime. The use of Discontinuance and Amenity notices should be carefully considered.
- Seek statutory powers from the Conservation Officer and Planning Enforcement Officers where breaches have been identified.
- Explore the potential for a further grant-aided scheme to further the work of the THI.
- Remain in close contact with specialist builders, architects and surveyors through various fora to ensure that new-found traditional building skills do not dissipate. Pay particular attention to NEW College and Avoncroft Museum, always investigating new training opportunities and the continuance of extant courses.
- Seek to share the THI programme of events and activities with the dedicated District Council Events Team so that long before the scheme has ended the 2 programmes have naturally coalesced.
- Maintain contact with the shopkeepers and small businesses and continue to offer them conservation advice. Always seek to include landlords and tenants when seminars, workshops and other heritage-themed events are advertised.
Implementation in the THI area

The timetable of repairs and reinstatement works and the bringing back into profitable use of vacant, historic upper floors will especially succeed where owners and tenants can:

- Appreciate the viability of reinstating missing architectural features, such as shopfronts
- Understand the benefits of re-using vacant floor space which may not be seen as viable unless proper advice from experienced agents and surveyors has been given
- Fund their percentage of the costs.

The THI scheme will not succeed in its aims unless there is high priority private sector investment. Property owners need to be interested in the future of the high street and in the economic prosperity of the town as a whole. When the scheme is launched in September 2012 there will be a further, more intensive round of individual consultation with landlords and tenants. It would seem that there needs to be continual assurances from the District Council that the vision in place for the town centre, as identified in the Area Action Plan as well as the THI and public realm proposals, is a real objective and not the product of some protracted talking shop. We are fortunate that some good works have already taken place around the town centre, for example:

- New state of the art public conveniences at the bus station
- The reinstatement of a traditional shopfront at 65 High Street under the outgoing frontage Improvement Scheme - project out to tender at time of writing

6.2 How will we measure and evaluate the success of our scheme

The THI Project Officer will have overall responsibility for drafting the evaluation report and questionnaire. These will be written up with the complete agreement of the Strategic Planning Manager, Project Team, Partnership Steering Group, tenants and landlords, contractors and sub-contractors, architects and surveyors and community volunteers on the various outreach events.

We have been amassing data and statistics since before the Bromsgrove Town Centre Draft Area Action Plan in 2011 and all this accumulated information will be fed, where appropriate, into our THI evaluation. As of April 2012 our evidence includes:

- A full survey of the condition and value of all THI-eligible buildings on the high street
- Brief minutes of meetings between the Project Officer and the owners and tenants of grant-eligible properties
- Attendance at National Maintenance Week (November 2011)
- A photographic survey of all 81 THI-eligible properties on the high street. A further survey is updating the photographic record of every historic building within Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area. This work is supplemented by an up-to-date Land Registry record of all THI properties
- A survey of every town centre business as collected for the Town Centre Health Check 2011. This document also includes data on vacancy rates, types of retailer and footfall
- A survey of local builders and their skills sets/deficiencies
- Meetings with the Worcester Association of Service Users and Bromsgrove Disability Action group
From September 2012 our evidence will gradually grow to include:

- Data on the number of courses and events etc. we oversee, the number of people taking part in these and their individual feedback
- More data on the meetings between the Project Officer and the owners and tenants as THI project proposals are firmed up
- Financial records showing the grant drawn down month by month

In light of an enforcement audit of Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area and the establishing of a proactive enforcement regime we will be gathering further evidence on:

- How many enforcement breaches there are
- How many enforcement cases are investigated
- How many enforcement cases are successful

The anticipated outputs of the THI scheme will be reported annually by the Project Officer and the following information will be collected:

1. Approvals during previous year
2. Implementation started on site during previous year
3. Completion of projects during previous year
   a) Number
   b) Floor space of buildings (sq ft)
   c) Facades with heritage features (no.)
   d) Vacant floor space brought back into use (sq ft)
      - residential (habitable rooms)
      - commercial (sq ft)

   e) Financial summary identifying
      - costs including construction/fees/interest/other
      - the expected change in values and development profit
      - leverage of private sector expenditure
   f) % of total Common Fund approved
   g) % of total HLF THI funds approved
   h) Assessment of progress on Priority + Projects
   i) Project benefits
      - identified use of converted floor space
      - net new jobs expected to be created
      - jobs expected to be safeguarded
      - people benefiting from project
      - heritage outputs
   j) Before and after photographs (for each implemented project)

Meetings will be held every 2 weeks between the Project Officer and the Strategic Planning Manager to flag up any issues for concern and to ensure that the THI is progressing to plan. Particular attention will be paid to monitoring and achieving designated outputs. In addition to a yearly report, quarterly reports will be sent to the HLF following their referral to the Project Team and Steering Group. All such reporting will be key to informing the content of the Evaluation Report and providing a summary document of lessons learned.

Once the THI scheme has concluded there will be further opportunities for monitoring through an appraisal of planning and listed building applications.
The Project Officer will collect all evaluation data and, according to the guidance provided by the HLF, submit evaluation feedback by way of:

- an evaluation report - containing quantitative and qualitative data which tells the story of the scheme and contrasts early aspirations with the real outcomes
- an evaluation questionnaire

The evaluation will be available on the District Council website and published copies will be sent to the THI Partnership Steering Board, Cabinet members and senior officers at the District and County Councils. In addition, the Project Officer will promote the findings of the THI evaluation at conference seminars and regional/national conservation events. Talks to the Bromsgrove Summer School and Bromsgrove Society both during and after the scheme will help disseminate information on both anticipated and achieved outputs.