

# THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT OF BROMSGROVE TOWN CENTRE, WORCESTERSHIRE: A BASELINE SURVEY





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# The historic environment of Bromsgrove town centre, Worcestershire: a baseline survey

Tom Rogers, Shona Robson-Glyde and Hal Dalwood

## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Circumstances of the heritage appraisal

Bromsgrove District Council requested an archaeological appraisal of Bromsgrove town centre to support the aims of the Bromsgrove Townscape Heritage Initiative. A Brief was prepared by the Planning Advisory Section of Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service, detailing the requirements for this desk-based project (HEAS 2012). A project proposal (Worcestershire Archaeology 2012)

was prepared and this document conforms both to the brief and to the proposal. The main body of this report is an assessment of the historic character of Bromsgrove, with particular potential to the value (and potential value) of the heritage assets of the historic town centre. The report was undertaken in support of the aims of the Bromsgrove Townscape Heritage Initiative project.

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### 1.2 Scope of this report

The focus of the survey undertaken for this report was the historic town centre of Bromsgrove (Fig 1). The study area was defined in the Brief, and encompasses the

extent of the Townscape Heritage Initiative, as well as all of Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area and part of St John's Conservation Area (Fig 2).

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### 1.3 Aims and objectives

The aim of this report is to provide good-quality, detailed information on and understanding of the historic environment of Bromsgrove. The report is intended to act as a resource for the Bromsgrove Townscape Heritage Initiative project team, owners of buildings within the THI boundary, and the people of Bromsgrove. The THI will provide grant assistance to for repairs, improvements and conversion works to historic buildings in the High Street and Worcester

Road, as well as improving the public realm in the High Street.

The aims and scope of the project were to:

- collect relevant information relating to the archaeological potential of Bromsgrove town centre;
- assess the potential significance of any archaeological remains and the built heritage.

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### 1.4 Authorship and acknowledgements

The principal authors of this report were Tom Rogers and Shona Robson-Glyde. The project

manager responsible for the quality of the project was Hal Dalwood.

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### 1.5 Relationship with other relevant plans

Bromsgrove was surveyed during the Central Marches Historic Towns Survey, an extensive urban survey of smaller historic towns in Worcestershire and adjacent counties. The CMHTS report on Bromsgrove (Buteux 1996, WSM 19704) has formed the background for

subsequent archaeological investigations in the town, and is the point of reference for curatorial archaeological advice from Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service to Bromsgrove District Council. However the scope of the CMHTS survey was limited, and in



particular historic buildings were not considered in detail, and the cut-off date was 1800. The new survey has addressed the historic buildings of Bromsgrove in detail, and also considered the potential for 19<sup>th</sup> century archaeological deposits.

Bromsgrove District Council has recently prepared Conservation Area Character Appraisals for the two conservation areas in Bromsgrove: the town centre and the St John's area (Bromsgrove District Council 2011a and 2011b). Bromsgrove District Council has also drawn up an Area Action Plan, a spatial plan for the town centre, currently in draft form

(Bromsgrove District Council 2011c). That document was produced by the District Council as a basis for consultation on the next stage of preparing the Bromsgrove Town Centre Area Action Plan as part of the Bromsgrove District Local Development Framework. A broad engagement with local communities, stakeholders and developers was undertaken in the preparation of the document and a Vision with objectives for the future of the town was proposed. The plan put forward seven Strategies (TC1-TC7) to achieve a suitable regeneration of the town centre and ten sites (TC8-17) with development potential were identified (discussed below).

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## 2 Archaeological and historical sources

### 2.1 Historical Sources

An account of the historical development of Bromsgrove was published in the *Victoria County History of Worcestershire* (VCH 1913), which remains an important source. A modern study of Bromsgrove is focused on the medieval economy of the town, and considerably expands the scope of the VCH account (Dyer 2000). The important nail-making industry in Bromsgrove has been studied (Kings

and Cooper 1999). Other secondary sources include work by Richards and Richards (1983 and 1988) and Foster (ed, 1981). Much historical information about the town was gathered by the Cotton Brothers in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, whose extensive collection resides in the Archives and Heritage Section of Birmingham Central Library.

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### 2.2 Archaeological sources

An archaeological characterisation of Bromsgrove was published in 1996 (Buteux 1996). Subsequently a number of archaeological fieldwork projects have been

undertaken in Bromsgrove (the reports are available online from the Worcestershire HER).

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### 2.3 Cartographic sources

Nineteenth century maps, including the tithe map of 1839 (WRO BA 1572 f760.45) and the Ordnance Survey first edition 1:2500 maps (*Worcestershire 25" sheet XV.16* (1886)), were used to aid in the identification of remains and

the definition of components. Furthermore the Turnpike map of 1823, the Bromsgrove Glebe map of 1811, and a plan of the proposed line of Market Street from the Cotton collection are reproduced in Richards and Richards (1988).

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## 3 Setting

### 3.1 Topography, geology and soils

The urban area of Bromsgrove is located at NGR SO 958 706 in Bromsgrove District. The modern settlement of Bromsgrove comprises a large area of 20<sup>th</sup> century housing and industrial

development around the medieval and post-medieval core. The historic core of Bromsgrove lies at a height of between 95m and 80m OD in the valley of the Spadesbourne Brook which



runs from the Lickey Hills northeast of the town. It joins the Battlefield Brook in Sanders Park at the western end of the town centre to form the River Salwarpe.

The soils in Bromsgrove have not been mapped but lie in an area of mainly typical brown earths of the Crediton association to the north and Bromsgrove association to the south (Soil Survey of England and Wales, Ragg *et al*

1984). The underlying geology consists of Triassic Bromsgrove Sandstone (British Geological Survey 1:50,000, sheet 182).

Information on the geoarchaeology of Bromsgrove can be derived through interpretation of borehole data, which are extensively available in the town (Fig 4). The data is considered in detail below (Section 5).

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## 3.2 Communications

### 3.2.1 Road

Bromsgrove is centred on the former Roman road from Droitwich to Wall. This is still the main route to the town centre from the south west, approaching the town as the A38 and continuing as the Worcester Road into the town as the High Street through the centre, then as the Birmingham Road to the north-east. The town centre is now bypassed to the south by the continuation of the A38 which leaves the Worcester Road to the south west of the town and joins the Birmingham Road to the north-east. The major part of the High Street (northeast of New Road) is now pedestrianised and traffic now passes through the town centre along Market Street which runs parallel to the High Street to the north. The town is also joined from the west by the A448 Kidderminster Road which meets the High Street via St Johns Street and the Market Place, Stratford Road which joins the north eastern end of the High Street at

The Strand and Stourbridge Road which joins the Strand from the north.

Bromsgrove is also served by the M5 motorway to the west of the town and the M42 motorway which starts to the north of the town.



*The High Street looking south from The Strand*

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### 3.2.2 Railway

Bromsgrove station lies about a mile to the southeast of the town centre and connects

the town to the Birmingham to Gloucester line.

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## 4 Historic environment: archaeology and buildings

### 4.1 Early occupation evidence (pre-urban)

#### 4.1.1 Prehistoric period

Evidence for prehistoric activity in the vicinity of Bromsgrove is confined to some scant individual finds. Two flint flakes are recorded as having been found at Beacon Hill on the southern edge of the town (WSM 41827) and two flint implements were recovered during an

evaluation at North East College off Slideslow Drive in 1998 (WSM 30450). A Bronze Age copper alloy spearhead is recorded from the parish of Bromsgrove on the Portable Antiquities website (WSM 38486; PAS ID: WMID 2498).

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#### 4.1.2 Romano-British period

The Roman road from Droitwich (*Salinae*) to Wall (*Letocetum*) is the historic thoroughfare through the town now followed by modern roads: Worcester Road, High Street and Birmingham Road (Fig 3; WSM 30529). Further evidence for Roman activity is restricted to scarce individual finds. There is reference to a Roman coin being found amongst other tokens

and coins (WSM 21484) discovered in 1778 and the Portable Antiquities Scheme records five Roman coins from the parish (WSM 38486). A single residual Roman pottery sherd was recovered during an archaeological evaluation at Bromsgrove School on Worcester Road in 1998 (WSM 30063).

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#### 4.1.3 Early medieval to 12<sup>th</sup> century

Bromsgrove is suggested as the site of an Anglo-Saxon minster church (WSM 19680) on the evidence of a documented prosperous estate recorded in Domesday Book and the unusually large medieval parish of St John's with its five dependent chapels (Bond 1988, 134). The position of St John's Church (WSM 01365) on a small hill overlooking the Roman road, slightly detached from the historic settlement core along the Roman road, may reflect an early medieval origin for the church and this would seem the likeliest location for the suggested minster (Buteux 1996), analogous to the hilltop minster church at Hanbury, which may date from the mid-7<sup>th</sup> century (Dyer 1991, 19). A possible area of the minster precinct, defined by modern boundaries and based on topographical analysis of the site, can be outlined (Fig 3) but there is no archaeological evidence to confirm this interpretation, and the absence of any documentary evidence for minster status is significant.

During the refurbishment of the (now unlocated) Crown Inn (WSM 19678) in the High Street in 1778, a timber building was exposed and 'daggers and things' were also recovered (Anon 1909, 93). The timbers were reportedly carved in 'ecclesiastical style' (Richards *et al* 1981). This evidence and the fact that a lane leading to Crown Close to the rear of the Inn was known as Nun's Way (Richards *et al* 1981) led to the supposition that the Crown Inn had been a religious house. However there is no documentary or archaeological evidence to back up this suggestion. When the National School was built to the east of the church in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century it was noted that although no earlier stonework was discovered, the

foundations were dug entirely into 'made-up' ground (Buteux 1996).

Bromsgrove was referred to as *Bremesgraf* in 11<sup>th</sup> century copies of supposedly 9<sup>th</sup> century charters. In 1086 the manor was referred to as *Bremesgrave*, in 1259 as *Bremmisgrave*, and by 1441 as *Bromsgrove*. The placename means 'the wood belonging to Breme', from an Anglo-Saxon personal name (Mawer and Stenton 1927; Gelling 1992, 170).

Research into the origins of the settlement at Bromsgrove has focused on the significance and status of the settlement before the conquest. The estate was a royal manor and had an enormous rural territory with 18 subsidiary settlements (or berewicks), as described in Domesday Book, which stretched for 12 miles from south to north and included much of southwest Birmingham (Thorn and Thorn 1982, 172b; Dyer 2000, 9). A church was clearly in existence by 1086, because a priest is recorded in Domesday Book, and the prominent position of the church together with the size of the estate has led to the suggestion that the church at Bromsgrove was a minster - an early church foundation in the diocese of Worcester (Slater 1982, 180; Bond 1988, 134; Buteux 1996). However, some doubt has been cast on the suggestion of a minster church at Bromsgrove, due to the absence of either definite documentary evidence for a minster or of other distinctive indications of minster status in the documentary record (Dyer 2000, 11).

The first element of the placename is the same as that of *Bremesbyrig* or *Bremesburh*, the name of a new royal fortification recorded in the Anglo-Saxon chronicle for 910, and it has been suggested on the basis of the similarity in the

placename that this burh was located at Bromsgrove, established in a position to control a strategic north-south route (Slater 1982, 180; Bond 1987, 112). However there is no strong supporting evidence for this identification, and it has been suggested that *Bremesburh* was in fact a location in the Welsh Marches, and not at Bromsgrove (Dyer 2000, 11). It is possible that Bromsgrove developed as a trading centre before the Conquest, based around an unofficial regular market where peasants sold crops and animals to raise cash

(Dyer 2000, 12). The royal manor was leased to Hugh Bardulf in 1200 with the right to hold a weekly market on Wednesdays, which may have legitimised a formerly unofficial arrangement (Dyer 2000, 12). However such markets developed in many rural settlements, and the permanent population of peasants at Bromsgrove was certainly small. There is no evidence that a permanent community of traders developed at Bromsgrove before the mid-13<sup>th</sup> century.

#### 4.1.4 Implications for early medieval to 12th century archaeology

be reflected in the survival of buried remains in the vicinity of the church. The precinct may be expected to have enclosed the higher ground around the church but it may have extended further down the slope, perhaps extending as far as Kidderminster Road to the west, the Spadesbourne Brook to the south and into the area east of the church now occupied by St John's Court Nursing Home (originally the 19<sup>th</sup> century vicarage). There is no archaeological evidence for Anglo-Saxon activity except for a reference to 'made up ground' observed during the construction of the National School.

Apart from some individual finds of artefacts there is little evidence for prehistoric activity in the area of Bromsgrove. The finds represent what might be seen as a 'background' spread, indicating that while prehistoric people were present in the landscape, there was no particular focus of activity. Similarly the Roman material is scant and there is no evidence pointing to a Roman settlement beneath the later town. There is a low potential for the survival of the road itself beneath the current street surface or for related features such as roadside ditches which may underlie street frontages. There is conjectural evidence that there was a minster church at Bromsgrove, which would

### 4.2 Medieval (1200-1500)

#### 4.2.1 Medieval economic history



Worcester Road looking south

It was in the later 13<sup>th</sup> century that Bromsgrove developed into a town. The impetus for growth was the transfer of Bromsgrove parish church to the control of Worcester Priory in 1232-7, along with the rectory manor and its extensive landholdings and income from tithes (Dyer 2000, 13). The priory's manor house was east of the church, while the vicarage and the manor's mill stood in the valley: the vicarage occupied a large plot next to the Roman road (Dyer 2000, 14 [n 49]). There is a significant absence of documentary evidence for either townspeople or urban holdings associated with either the priory manor or the royal manor before 1245. The granting of a market on Tuesdays in 1250 (perhaps because the Wednesday market had fallen into abeyance) may be significant. The period 1250-1275 saw Bromsgrove develop as a small urban community of traders and craftsmen, from the evidence of inhabitants with occupational



surnames such as Baker, Draper, Dyer and Tailor (Dyer 2000, 13-14). The development of the town was influenced by the landholdings of the two manors: the royal manor owned the land to the east of the main road (the Roman road), and the rectory manor (owned by Worcester priory) held the land on the west of the road. Houses were built on both sides of the road in 1281, and it has been suggested that two new streets (St John's Street and Stratford Road) were laid out to direct east-west through traffic to the High Street and the newly-created market place; these acts of urban planning and the encouragement of trade would have probably been the result of a joint initiative by the Priory of Worcester and the officials of the royal manor (Dyer 2000, 14, 17-19). The suggested medieval reorganisation of the street system is a matter of interpretation of the cartographic evidence. The growth of the town was fairly rapid, and by c 1300 there were 80 plots or more (Dyer 2000, 21). In 1295 the town was represented by two MPs at parliament (VCH 1913). An annual fair was established in 1317, but the lords of the town did little to promote urban growth, and Bromsgrove did not receive a charter (Dyer 2000, 27).

Bromsgrove was one of a number of small market towns in medieval Worcestershire, and although it lacked a borough charter, it had a well-developed urban economy in the high medieval period, partly due to its position on a major long-distance road connecting the important regional centres of Bristol and Coventry, both of which were substantial medieval towns (Dyer 2000, 3-5, Fig 1). The population of Bromsgrove may have reached 400 by the early 14<sup>th</sup> century (Dyer 2000, 28). Bromsgrove attracted new inhabitants throughout the medieval period, mostly from nearby rural settlements (Dyer 2000, 29, fig 3). A wide range of trades and crafts are indicated by occupational surnames, including Baker, Barker (= tanner), Carpenter, Draper, Dyer, Fleshewer (= butcher), Mason, Smith, Sutor (= shoemaker) and Walker (= fuller), a fairly typical range of occupations for a small market town (Dyer 2000, 29-30). There appear to have been a number of craftsmen involved in clothmaking, but it was not a highly-developed specialism of the town (Dyer 2000, 30-31). Tanning and leatherworking (shoemakers, saddlers and



*The Strand from the south*

glovers) were certainly important crafts, and the products could be traded outside the local area (Dyer 2000, 31).

However a more important aspect of the economy, involving a greater proportion of the population, was the preparation and sale of food and drink to travellers passing through the town on the main road, together with inn-keeping to provide overnight accommodation for travellers (Dyer 2000, 31-2). Bromsgrove was positioned on a major route and catered to a wide range of customers. One significant element was long-distance haulage from the quay at Worcester to Coventry, carrying wine in particular, and other traffic included pack-horses taking salt north from Droitwich and probably livestock from Wales to Coventry, with its large urban population (Dyer 2000, 35-6). There is evidence that Bromsgrove was the centre for specialised agricultural production, with both local oats and pigs transported to Worcester and elsewhere, indicating high quality produce (Dyer 2000, 37-8).

The medieval townspeople came under the jurisdiction of two manorial courts, and it is not clear under what arrangements the day-to-day affairs of the townspeople as a body were conducted, although clearly successful arrangements were made (Dyer 2000, 43-44, 60). Bromsgrove remained a small market town throughout the medieval period, without any specialist industries, and there is little evidence for the decline seen in other towns in the late medieval period (Dyer 2000, 57-8).

#### 4.2.2 Medieval urban morphology



*The High Street looking south towards the Market Place*

The medieval street system (WSM 19682) was based around the southwest to northeast route between Worcester and Birmingham, on the line of the Roman road (WSM 30529). This road was referred to by Leland in the mid-16th century, and it was the town's main thoroughfare until the 20th century. The roads to Kidderminster and Stourbridge to the west and the Stratford/Alcester and Old Station Roads to the east are probably of medieval date, as are various smaller back lanes, including the present Windsor Street, parallel to the High Street. Between the church and the main thoroughfare, Hanover Street, St John's Street and Worcester Road are all identified as medieval streets (Buteux 1996, 5; Dyer 2000, map on pg. 18).

Bromsgrove shows clear signs of medieval urban planning. The form of the medieval town was based around a street market, and is typical of the 'new, commercially centred urban landscapes' that were created during the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> century across Europe (Lilley 2002, 146). The street market (the High Street and St John's Street) formed the kernel of the medieval town, characteristically a large street that was wide enough to accommodate traders' stalls, lined with long narrow plots with rear access. These features (together with the market hall in the market place and town crosses on the approach roads) were purposeful design elements, and contributed to creating a distinctive topography that signalled to medieval visitors and travellers through the town that Bromsgrove had the status of a town and not a village. These deliberate design elements have been identified in a study of the forms of Staffordshire's medieval towns (Slater 2005).

The earliest built-up area of the town is likely to have been between the church and the High Street. Plots enclosed by Hanover Street, St John's Street and Worcester Road (WSM 19683) with frontages on St John's Street and Worcester Road (WSM 19684) would have backed onto the Spadesbourne Brook which would have operated as the water supply to industries as well as a sewer (Buteux 1996). It is probable that the northern side of St John's Street continuing into the Kidderminster Road was also built up in the medieval period (WSM 19698) although this may represent a later encroachment onto church land (Buteux 1996).

It is also likely that the eastwards extent of Worcester Road (WSM 19685) formed part of the early settlement. A 15th or early 16th century building (WSM 01399) occupied the site of 23-27 Worcester Road until its demolition in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This seems to have been the location of the manor house of the manor of Dyers. This was first mentioned in 1557 and was separate from Bromsgrove Manor. Courts were held yearly in the manor house until it was demolished in 1777 (WSM 21483; Anon 1909, 85; VCH 1913, 26-27).

In the later medieval period the town probably expanded along plots laid out either side of the High Street (WSM 19687 to the north and WSM 19688 to the south). The Rectory Manor (WSM 21482), described in 1778 as a small stone building then leased to a 'huckster and nail factor' (Anon 1909, 85) stood on the north side of the High Street close to Mill Lane. It is depicted on the 1886 Ordnance Survey map and survived until 1928 when it was demolished to make way for Bryant's Garage (Richards *et al* 1981). A fragment of stonework with a plinth, surviving in the wall of no. 97 High Street, may be a part of this building (WSM 01428). This may suggest that the medieval town extended this far along the High Street, but the manor house may have stood in its own grounds to the west of the built-up street frontage.

To the west of the High Street was glebe land, assigned to support the parish priest of Bromsgrove, and remained so until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. These 26 acres are depicted on the parish Glebe map of 1811 (reproduced in Richards and Richards 1988). The Town Mill, which stood to the north of Mill Lane (Fig 3),

belonged to the Rectory Manor. The parish tithe barn (WSM 49048) stood on the north side of Church Street (formerly Holy Lane) and is also depicted on the 1811 Glebe map and the Tithe map; it was demolished in 1844 (Richards *et al* 1981).

On the west side of the main road, the rear boundary of the tenement plots was formed by the leat of the mill (WSM 19681) and the Spadesbourne Brook, while to the east (WSM 19688) the back boundaries were less regular. The Crown Inn (WSM 19678) which was demolished in 1875 stood on the site of 43-45 High Street. J Lacey, writing in 1776, noted that during the inn's refurbishment in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, great wooden pillars were revealed when floors were removed (Richards *et al* 1981). John Cotton sketched the timbers revealed during a later conversion in 1860 which he likened to those of the Guesten Hall of Worcester Priory (built in 1320). A Parliamentary Survey of Bromsgrove Rectory of 1649 lists the Crown Inn as church property.

**Church** (WSM 19710). The church lies on a small hill to the west of the town, overlooking the valley of the Spadesbourne Brook and the town. The earliest fabric within the church (WSM 01365) dates to the 12th century. The extent of the medieval churchyard is not known but may have extended further than the current churchyard.

**Market place** (WSM19686). A weekly market was first granted in 1200 (VCH 1913, 21). The market was held in the wider part of the High Street between Church Street and Worcester Road, and the open area of St John's Street leading to the church and crossed by the Spadesbourne Brook. A market house, possibly medieval in origin, is shown on the 1839 tithe map together with the 'great cross' standing before it (WSM 19668; VCH 1913, 21).

Three other crosses are recorded as having stood in the medieval town. These were St John's Cross at the junction of St John's Street, Hanover Street and Kidderminster Road, Black Cross in Worcester Street, and Welch Cross at the eastern end of the High Street (Anon 1909, 92).



*St John's Church from Hanover Street car park*



*Position of Town Mill at the end of Church Street*

**Industrial buildings.** Three mills are referred to in the Domesday Book entry for Bromsgrove, worth 13 shillings and 4 pence. One of these is likely to have been the Town Mill (WSM 19681) which stood at the Mill Street crossing of the Spadesbourne Brook with a millpond upstream to the north-east.

Town Mill was also known as the King's Mill, because James I reserved both the mill and its rental when he granted Bromsgrove Manor in 1612 (Richards *et al* 1981, 81). The pool for the mill is clearly shown on the 1811 plan of Bromsgrove Glebe. On the Tithe Map of 1839 the leat and pool are shown to the east of the brook. The fact that the leat defined the rear of the burgage plots west of the High Street probably indicates that the mill was established by the time this part of the town was developed in the 12<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> centuries.



### 4.2.3 Medieval archaeological events

Medieval deposits and artefacts have been uncovered at several locations in the centre of Bromsgrove:

- An archaeological evaluation (WSM 26932) carried out at a site in Recreation Road in 1998 recovered a small amount of medieval pottery.
- A watching brief undertaken in 1994 on the construction of a manhole shaft north of the new market hall (WSM 31097) revealed a section comprising seven layers and part of a sandstone wall which is likely to be medieval in date by association with 13th to 14th century cooking pot.
- Residual medieval pottery was recovered during an evaluation at North Bromsgrove High School in 2005 (WSM 34489). It was concluded that the area had been agricultural in nature prior to the construction of the school.
- The 'made-up' ground observed in the 19th century at the site of the National School (WSM 19712; Anon 1914, 108) may have referred to medieval material.

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### 4.2.4 Implications for medieval archaeology

The survival of medieval archaeology in Bromsgrove is very much conjectural at this stage, as little fieldwork has been carried out within the area of the medieval town. There is a potential for medieval remains of earlier church buildings both beneath and immediately around the church itself. The extent of the medieval churchyard is not known and may have extended further than it does currently. Made ground recorded on the site of the National School may have referred to medieval stratigraphy, some of which may survive in the vicinity of the former school building or in Crown Close to the east.

The plot of land defined by Hanover Street, St John's Street and Worcester Road, currently a car park, was an important part of the medieval town and a 13<sup>th</sup> to 14th century wall has been shown to survive to the north of the former Market Hall brief (WSM 31097). Medieval deposits should be anticipated to survive across

this area. Medieval building footings may also survive beneath buildings on Worcester Road and the High Street and evidence for backplot buildings, domestic occupation and small-scale industrial activity may survive to the rear.

There is a potential for the survival of the footings of the original market building which stood in the market place as well as the stone cross beneath the current road surface. Footings and surfaces associated with the tithe barn may survive at the western end of Market Street.

There is a potential for the survival of the Town Mill (WSM 19681), mill pool and other water management features on the north east side of Mill Street. Furthermore, medieval remains of Blackmore Mill (WSM 01375) may survive between Birmingham Road and School Drive. More generally there is a potential for the survival of other waterlogged medieval remains in the vicinity of the Spadesbourne Brook.

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### 4.2.5 Medieval extant buildings

The plan of medieval Bromsgrove (Dyer 2000, 18) shows that by 1500 the centre of the town was laid out on narrow burgage plots. This would suggest that a large number of medieval buildings existed in the town, although very little evidence has survived. A number of medieval buildings have been demolished in the centre and remains of medieval buildings have been identified in places around the town.

A wall containing medieval stonework with a plinth (WSM 1428) survives at 97 High Street. This has been interpreted as remains of the 'Rectory Manor House' (WSM 21482). However it has also been suggested that this is reused stonework in the lower courses of a post-medieval building.

The only complete medieval buildings surviving in the town are the church (WSM 1365) and the lych gate (WSM 17514).





*St Johns Church*

St John the Baptist's church is a Grade I listed building. It dates from the 12<sup>th</sup> century but is predominantly 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century. It is a large

red sandstone church with a spire 'dominating views from miles around' (Brooks and Pevsner 2007, 191). To the southeast of the church, set within the churchyard walls, is the Grade II listed timber-framed lych gate. This is medieval in origin but has had much of the timber replaced, probably in the 17<sup>th</sup> century as it is dated to 1656 (Pevsner and Brooks 2007, 193).

These few remains of surviving medieval buildings do not give a good view of the medieval town of Bromsgrove. When combined with the known demolished medieval structures, only an idea of the high status buildings of the town can be seen. These appear to have been constructed, in the main, of stone with some timber-framing. The domestic properties of the town, and lower status buildings, are more likely to have been constructed in timber-frame possibly standing on rubble stone foundations.

### 4.3 Post-medieval (1500-1800)

#### 4.3.1 Post-medieval economic history

Bromsgrove remained a small market town through the early post-medieval period, and its economy was based on a range of crafts and the provisioning and accommodation of travellers. Bromsgrove never acquired a borough charter and the manor was in royal hands until the early 17<sup>th</sup> century (VCH 1913, 23). In 1533 Bromsgrove was one of the towns in Worcestershire in which cloth was permitted to be manufactured, and a flourishing trade in narrow cloth and friezes had developed (VCH 1913, 20-1). Leland visited the town c 1540 and described it as 'just one street ... it has quite a good weekly market, and depends to some extent on its cloth trade. The town centre is reasonably well paved' (Chandler 1993, 515). The 1690 poll tax recorded a wide range of occupations among the inhabitants of the town, including tradesmen such as mercers and chandlers, provisioning (eg butcher, baker, maltster, victualler), textile and leather industries (eg clothier, glover, tanner, currier, weaver, flaxdresser, feltworker, tailor and shoemaker), other crafts such as blacksmith, locksmith, ropemaker, cooper, bellowsmaker and nailer, and a few individuals in the

professions, including a schoolmaster and a doctor (Broomfield 1991). This evidence reflects the continued economic prosperity of Bromsgrove, as well as the development of its 'cultural role' providing a limited range of services to the local landowning families, a common phenomenon in small market towns across England (Reed 1995).

In the late 18<sup>th</sup> century there were about 400 houses in the town, which was run by a group of elected officials comprising a bailiff, a recorder, aldermen, and other officers, although they had no legal power (VCH 1913, 20). Cloth production continued to be an important industry into the 18<sup>th</sup> century, which included the weaving of linen and linsey (VCH 1913, 21). However the principal industry by the late 18<sup>th</sup> century was nail-making, which started in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century and continued until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Nailmaking was a widely-distributed industry in north Worcestershire and the west midlands in the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Court 1938, 24) and nailers are documented in Bromsgrove from the early 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards (Kings and Cooper 1999, 14). Nailmaking became predominant by 1778 with

up to 900 people involved in all stages of the industry, specialising in the manufacture of small nails and tacks produced in numerous

small workshops (Kings and Cooper 1999, 15-21).

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### 4.3.2 Post-medieval urban morphology

The most useful cartographic source for the expansion of Bromsgrove in the period 1500-1800 is the 1839 Bromsgrove Tithe Map (WRO BA 1572). This depicts the town little changed in plan from the single street which Leland described in 1540, although now expanded along its length. The medieval plots at the core of the town (WSM 19683, WSM 19684, WSM 19685, WSM 19687, WSM 19688, WSM 19698) continued in use but now buildings extended to the northeast on both sides of Birmingham Road (WSM 19695, WSM 19696), west of Hanover Street (WSM 19699) and along Worcester Road to the southwest (WSM 19700, WSM 19701, WSM 19702). The area of the town known as The Strand at the eastern end of the High Street, at the junction of Stourbridge and Birmingham Roads, was established as a wide street in which a small freestanding building (WSM 19690) is depicted. This was the public weighing machine and its keeper's cottage, erected in 1796, which appear in a photograph reproduced in Richards

*et al* (1981) to have been hexagonal brick buildings.

Standing buildings and records of demolished buildings are testament to the fact that many medieval buildings were either replaced or substantially altered during this period. These are described in more detail below.

To the south of the High Street, the narrow plots continue to a very disjointed back lane, roughly on the line of the modern Windsor Street. South of this, between Hill Street and the Stratford Road, the land as far as Ednall Lane was divided into small parcels probably representing paddocks or orchards. A small area of rectangular parcels with individual buildings to the west of Factory Lane probably represents nailmakers' workshops and it is likely that these new tenement plots, as well as those of medieval origin, would have contained large numbers of buildings relating to small-scale industries, particularly cloth and nail manufacture (Buteux 1996).

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### Post-medieval urban Components

**Market place.** The marketplace (WSM 19686) continued in use throughout the period 1500-1800. A Tuesday fair was established in 1792 (VCH 1913) and the market building (WSM 19665) shown on the Tithe map and 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey map in the marketplace may have been constructed in this period. The Town Hall (WSM 19663) stood adjacent to the market place and in the 18th century was reserved for the use of wool sellers and dealers during the time of the fair (Anon 1967). This building was pulled down in 1832 when a replacement was built, but a sketch drawn by John Cotton (from the memories of others) depicts a timber-framed hall with a stone base and wooden pillars (Richards *et al* 1981). A set of stocks (WSM 19662) are recorded as standing

underneath the former town hall on the right side, near the entrance from the market. These were made of oak and had a whipping post attached (Richards *et al* 1981). They were also removed in 1832. A bridge (WSM 19666) was built at the point where the market place crossed the Spadesbourne Brook in 1755 but it was demolished before 1913. A building known as Roundabout House (WSM 49051) stood in the marketplace; it was a warehouse in later years but it is conjectured to have originally been a mill. A pond known as George Pool or Tin Pool (WSM 49054), which was in Crown Close, was possibly the millpond. Roundabout House was demolished in 1898 (Richards and Richards 1988).

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### Post-medieval religious buildings

The churchyard (WSM 19660) contains tombs dating between 1617 and 1857 when the new cemetery was laid out to the north (van der Toorn 1976). It is surrounded by a sandstone retaining wall (WSM 45897) which is undated.

A number of nonconformist chapels were established in Bromsgrove in this period. In 1700 a Baptist meeting house was built and licensed at the rear of Humphrey Potter's house in the High Street (WSM 21481). The location of this has not been identified, but it is possible that the Baptist Church on the High Street mapped in 1886 is on the same site.

A Quaker meeting house and burial place (WSM 21485) in Hanover Street was noted in an assessment of 1690 although its exact location is not known. In 1778 John Lacey noted that although the Society of Friends

congregation was very small, they had a burial place to themselves (Anon 1909, 66). In the 19th century it was recorded that 'in the flourishing days of the Society there was a meeting house and burial ground in Hanover Street which is now used by Messers Grey as a workshop and timber yard' (Anon 1909, 87).

In 1693 a Congregationalist Meeting House is registered as newly 'adjoining the foldyard of Mr Blick' (Anon 1909, 63). The present chapel (WSM 01899) is mainly of 19th century date, although it does contain parts of earlier structures (RCHME 1986).

A Presbyterian meeting house with burial ground is also documented in 1778 (Anon 1909, 66, 75), but this has also not been located.

### Post-medieval charities and poor relief.

Almshouses in St John's Street (WSM 21486) were mentioned in Parish Records in 1708 and in 1778 John Lacey noted that a number of charitable bequests had been 'laid out in building the almshouse in St John Street and the workhouse' (Anon 1909, 81). The exact location of the almshouses is not known.

A workhouse (WSM 21487) is mentioned in parish documents between 1738 and 1772. It

was bought from John Southhall for £126 in 1728 to be used as a workhouse. Parish records show £350 was borrowed to repair and enlarge it. The building, originally known as 'Cock Hall' stands at the junction of The Strand and Stourbridge Road. By 1738 it had 35 inmates, rising to 71 by 1743 (Anon 1909).

### Post-medieval industrial buildings

The medieval Town Mill (WSM 19681) on Mill Lane continued to be used throughout the period 1500-1800. When the remainder of the Manor of Bromsgrove was given away by James I in 1609, the mill was retained, hence its other name of King's Mill (Richards *et al* 1981). Blackmore Mill (WSM 19670) may have had medieval origins but may equally have been built in this period and certainly functioned throughout. On the 1839 Tithe map it is shown on the north-eastern edge of the town with a pond (WSM 19670) formed from the Spadesbourne Brook.

To the south west of the town centre in Watt Close, a cotton mill known at times as Buck House (WSM 19692) is shown on the Tithe Map and 1831 Ordnance Survey plan next to a

large factory pool (WSM19676) of some 3.3 hectares. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century the mill manufactured linen yarn and an 1808 indenture demonstrates that by that date it had had a steam engine for some years.

A Rope Walk, a long passage for the production of rope (WSM 19671) appears on Tithe map and 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey map at the where Recreation Road now meets Market Street.

The Button Factory (WSM 19672) on Willow Road was originally a cotton mill known as Sidemoor Mill and it possibly contained a steam engine in the 18th century (Cook and Williams 2003).



An early 18th century bell foundry situated somewhere on The Strand (WSM 01409; Anon 1909, 78) is documented but its location is not known.

The name of the Crabmill Inn (49052) which stands on the Birmingham Road probably refers to a cider press which may have been powered from the nearby Spadesbourne Brook but equally may have been horse powered.

#### 4.3.3 16th century extant buildings



1 High Street



Former Hop Pole Inn, 1 New Road



108 and 110 High Street

There are few remaining 16<sup>th</sup> century buildings in the centre of Bromsgrove, although those that have survived are good examples. At the junction of High Street, Market Place and Worcester Road is a double gable timber-framed building, No. 1 High Street (WSM 1395). The building dates to c 1600 and is grade II listed. It originally had four gables, all with the same geometrical framing, but two of these were destroyed when the adjoining building was constructed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The timber-framed former Hop Pole Inn, now 1 New Road, used to stand on the High Street but was taken down in the 1860s and rebuilt when New Road was created. The building is Grade II listed and was built in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century, with the date of 1572 found on one of the timbers.

Although it has been reconstructed this was done with the majority of the original timbers being left intact, including the geometrical framing of the frontage gables. An elaborate Victorian Gothic porch with heraldic shields was added along with a further facsimile bay.

In 1881, W A Cotton wrote of the taking down of the Hop Pole Inn *'it is a thousand pities that the road was not taken a little higher up ... so that so fine a piece of original street architecture could have been saved to the town'* (Cotton 1881b, unpaginated page 23).

Further north along the High Street is another grade II listed timber-framed building: 108 and 110 High Street (WSM 2009 and 2010). The building, dated to the late 16<sup>th</sup> century, is now two shops but was originally one house. It is jettied and has four storeys, the ground floor now under built, with twin gables. It is formed of close-studded timber work with diagonal bracing at first floor level.

The ornate framing of 1 New Road and 1 High Street are indicative of the prosperity of the town in this period. As has been discussed, the 16<sup>th</sup> century saw the Bromsgrove cloth industry begin to expand and prosper, therefore

providing a good economic base for growth and providing available capital to show off with early use of this type of ornate framing.

#### 4.3.4 17th century extant buildings



*The Black Cross Inn, 70-72 Worcester Road*



*89 High Street*

Seventeenth century buildings in the centre of Bromsgrove are lot more common than those of earlier dates, and it is possible that further timber-frame buildings of this date survive behind the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century frontages of the High Street. There are a number of buildings of this age that stand out in the centre of Bromsgrove. The Bromsgrove Grammar School House on Worcester Road (WSM 1903 and 6614), a Grade II listed building, was built around 1695. Unusually for Worcestershire, where timber-frame building is more common at this period, it is a brick structure of three storeys with a stone base and quoins. The building was originally the King Edward VI Grammar School.

It was raised in height by the addition of the third floor in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and during World War II it was requisitioned for use by the Tank Board, Ministry of Supply and India Office.

Also on Worcester Road is the Grade II listed Olde Black Cross Inn (WSM 1916). This building has two gables, the largest of simple framing and earlier 17<sup>th</sup> century date with the smaller gable showing more elaborate framing and dating to the later 17<sup>th</sup> century. This building used to stand close to the medieval Black Cross and it is believed that King Charles I hid in the building after being defeated at the Battle of Worcester.

On Kidderminster Road stands Housman Hall (WSM 1368), formerly Perry Hall. This listed grade II building has 17<sup>th</sup> century origins but has been partly rebuilt in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The building was once occupied by A E Housman and his family. Adjoining this building are the remains of the former Perry Hall (WSM 1366). This picturesque, ruinous, brick wall is 12 feet high with stone quoins, moulded string course, and transomed mullioned window openings with semi-circular headed doorways. Just around the corner to the south east, at 14 St John's Street (WSM 17515), is a well-constructed sandstone building with a timber-frame gable. Carved into the tied beam of the gable is the date 1674 and the initials RD.

No. 49 High Street (WSM 17511) is a Grade II listed building of the late 17<sup>th</sup> century. This building has a stucco covered façade with a moulded stone eaves cornice and a first floor bay window. The rest of the 17<sup>th</sup> century buildings in the centre of Bromsgrove are further north on the High Street and on The Strand. A number of 17<sup>th</sup> century buildings can be found on the west side of the High Street, clustered together. These are 85 High Street (WSM 1996), 87a High Street (WSM 2004), 89 High Street (WSM 2005) and 89a High Street. They are all Grade II listed buildings. No. 85 is a timber-framed structure that was re-fronted in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century although some of the timber-framing is still visible on the interior of



the structure. No. 87a is of late 17<sup>th</sup> century date. Its frontage has been covered in stucco but it is likely that the timber-frame still survives behind this covering. No. 89 is also a late 17<sup>th</sup> century structure but completely different in character from the adjoining 87. This is a red brick building with stone dressings and a stone date plaque marked 1699. To the rear of 87 and 87a are a number of outbuildings (WSM 2017) that are also 17<sup>th</sup> century in date. To the rear of 89 is the one and a half storey 89a High Street (WSM 39858). This building is constructed partly of timber-frame and partly of red brick with some stone. Although of 17<sup>th</sup> century date it also has 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century fabric.

Nos. 114 and 116 High Street (WSM 49030), on the east side of the street, is an unlisted probable 17<sup>th</sup> century building. High on the façade is a memorial to Bromsgrove Oddfellows killed in World War I. Although the façade is 19<sup>th</sup> century brick with margin light sash windows, when the memorial was being erected timber-framing was revealed beneath the brickwork (Richards and Richards 1983, 79).

The 17<sup>th</sup> century buildings on The Strand stand together on the west side of the street, opposite the point where it branches to the east. Nos. 21 and 23 (WSM 39853) and 25 and 27 (WSM 39852) are both Grade II listed buildings. Nos. 21 and 23 were formerly The Mitre Inn. The building was re-fronted in the 18<sup>th</sup> century but

this hides a 17<sup>th</sup> century timber-frame. An illustration of its original appearance has been given in Richards and Richards (1983, 82). Nos. 25 and 27 is a timber-framed structure that was also re-fronted in brick in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Although there are a small number of surviving 17<sup>th</sup> century buildings in the centre of Bromsgrove, when taken with the demolished buildings a good cross-section of the building types of the town at this period can be seen. The higher status structures are represented with buildings such as Perry Hall (WSM 1368) and the school building (WSM 1903 and 6614). The smaller structures of 14 St John's Street (WSM 17515), constructed of sandstone, and 89 High Street (WSM 2005), constructed of brick, show the status of their owners. The number of smaller or lower status structures is quite high for a town of this size and suggests that in the 17<sup>th</sup> century there was a marked increase in fortunes to allow the rebuilding of the medieval structures and the construction of a large number of new buildings. The town would have consisted of a wide street lined with timber-framed two and three storey buildings interspersed with some higher status structures of brick or stone. The timber-frame behind the frontage of 114 and 116 High Street (WSM 49030) begs the question, how many other apparently later buildings are hiding earlier structures?

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#### 4.3.5 18th century extant buildings



*Davenal House, 28 Birmingham Road*

The majority of surviving 18<sup>th</sup> century buildings in the centre of Bromsgrove seem to be clustered towards the north end of the town. The furthest north of these buildings are 41 and 43 Birmingham Road (WSM 48938), a pair of

unlisted houses, formerly one house. To the south of this are 31 and 33 Birmingham Road (WSM 2023 and 2024), a pair of early 18<sup>th</sup> century houses, with cased sash windows, that are Grade II listed. A little further south and on the opposite side of the road is Davenal House, 28 Birmingham Road (WSM 2018). This Grade II listed house is of mid-18<sup>th</sup> century date and is described as the most notable building on Birmingham Road (Brooks and Pevsner 2007, 2005). It is an impressive three storey structure typical of its period and with a good door surround of Doric pilasters and pediment.

A cluster of 18<sup>th</sup> century buildings still exist on The Strand, at the north end of the High Street. Strand House (WSM 21487) was built around 1701 and is Grade II listed. It is quite a simple building with segmental headed windows

flanking a central door. However it was converted and extended in 1728 for use as the town workhouse and after the Union Workhouse was opened in 1838 it became a tannery. Nos. 24 and 26 The Strand (WSM 2021 and 2022) are also Grade II listed and early 18<sup>th</sup> century. Without the addition of the modern shop front to the ground floor, this building would have been a good example of this period of architecture.

Nos. 20, 22 and 24 The Strand (WSM 48941)

are not listed but date to the late 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The central part of this row of buildings was

formerly the Pheasant Inn. Photographs of the

building before it was restored can be found in

*Bromsgrove Now and Then* (Richards and

Richards 1988, 34). The Queen's Head, 1 The

Strand (WSM 17524) is a Grade II listed, late

18<sup>th</sup> century building with sash windows and a

projecting cornice. It was altered in the 19<sup>th</sup>

century and again in 1907. On the opposite side

of the road to this are 6, 10 and 12 The Strand

(WSM 2014 and 2015). These buildings are

Grade II listed, are late 18<sup>th</sup> century in date and

were formerly Midland Red Motor Services.

They stand adjacent to 2 and 4 The Strand,

Strand Centre, an unlisted building of 18<sup>th</sup>

century date that was re-fronted in the early 20<sup>th</sup>

century. It was formerly the Assembly Rooms

and Theatre before it was turned into a

shopping arcade in the 1980s.

The High Street has a number of 18<sup>th</sup> century

buildings that are listed but there are also

surviving unlisted 18<sup>th</sup> century buildings.

Starting with the east side and in the north, the

first building of this date encountered is 132-

136 High Street (WSM 48948). It is an

unprepossessing building of painted brick with

stucco voussoirs and keystones over the

windows. No. 120 High Street (WSM 2013) is

Grade II listed. This building has lost its ground

floor frontage but the upper part of the building

is very good. It has painted stone dressings

with a central camber headed window and the

roofline has a central pediment. Further south

along the street are 104 and 106 High Street

(WSM 17512), another Grade II listed 18<sup>th</sup>

century building. Again the ground floor

frontages have been replaced with modern

shop fronts with the upper floors remaining

intact. No. 74 High Street (WSM 1924) is of mid

18<sup>th</sup> century date and was formerly listed. It has

stone quoins, eaves cornice, string course and



24 and 26 The Strand



2-4 The Strand

keystones with sash windows set in moulded cases. Nos. 48 and 50 High Street (WSM 1981 and 1982) is grade II listed and also has stone quoins and eaves cornice with sash windows. Continuing south, an impressive 18<sup>th</sup> century building is encountered, 22 and 24 High Street (WSM 1974 and 1975). This Grade II listed house that was then divided and is now a restaurant on the ground floor. Each floor has six sash windows in moulded cases and the first floor windows all have cast iron balconettes. The facade also has stone Doric pilasters and entablature with further pilasters to the fourth floor and eaves cornice. A little further along the street is 18 High Street, also grade II listed. It is painted with stone quoins, architraves and cornice. Adjacent to this building is 14 and 16 High Street (WSM 1970 and 1971) which is also



grade II listed. It was originally one house that was then divided and is now a restaurant on the ground floor. It is simpler in design than its neighbour with only rusticated quoins and voussoirs. The last 18<sup>th</sup> century building on the east side of the street is 2 and 4 High Street (WSM 1967). This is again grade II listed and was originally a single house. It has moulded stone key blocks and cornice with rusticated quoins and a simple parapet.

The west side of the High Street also has a number of 18<sup>th</sup> century buildings surviving. Starting back at the north end of the street the first building encountered on the west side is 91, 91a and 93 High Street (WSM 2007 and 2008). This grade II listed building of early 18<sup>th</sup> century date has six windows to the first floor, each of sashes with moulded cases, cills and key stones. It also has a dentilated eaves cornice and stone quoins. A little way along the street lies the formerly listed 81 and 83 High Street (WSM 1995). This building has had the ground floor façade completely rebuilt whilst retaining the sash windows, key stones and moulded cornice of the 18<sup>th</sup> century on the upper floors. The Red Lion Inn, 73 and 75 High Street (WSM 1993 and 1994) is grade II listed. It is a substantial structure of three storeys that retains a large amount of painted stone dressings including the central, semi-circular stone pedimented entrance door with architrave. Adjoining this is 69 and 71 High Street (WSM 1991 and 1992). Also grade II listed, this building has undergone substantial change to the exterior.

To the immediate south of 69 and 71 is 67 High Street, Shakespeare House (WSM 1990). This elegant 18<sup>th</sup> century three storey building is grade II listed. Its ground floor frontage has been replaced but the upper floors have survived with stone cills, quoins, key blocks, cornice and parapet coping stones. On the corner of High Street and Church Street is 61 High Street, an unlisted late 18<sup>th</sup> century building. It is heavily stuccoed but with interesting windows to the first and second floors.

Further along the street to the south is HSBC Bank, 47 High Street (WSM 1980). This grade II listed structure of late 18<sup>th</sup> century date has a completely stuccoed ground floor.



67 High Street



Former the Golden Lion Inn, 7 Worcester Road

The upper two floors are plain brick with painted quoins and cornice. 29 and 31 High Street (WSM 1978 and 1979) were originally one building. It is grade II listed and has prominent rusticated quoins, key stones and cornice. The adjoining 25 and 27 High Street (WSM 1976 and 1977), also grade II listed, is in a similar style but both structures have had their ground floor facades completely replaced. This design is also seen on 7 and 9 High Street (WSM 1972 and 1973), another grade II listed building. This is also the last 18<sup>th</sup> century building on this west side of the High Street.

On the Worcester Road there are a small number of 18<sup>th</sup> century buildings. No. 3 Worcester Road (WSM 17518), a grade II listed building with dentilated eaves cornice and cased sash windows. Adjacent to this, 5 Worcester Road (WSM 1919), is a narrow three storey grade II listed building with cased sash



1 Hanover Street

windows, key blocks and moulded cornice. 7 Worcester Road (WSM 1911), now known as Kembrey House, was formerly the Golden Lion Inn and is grade II\* listed. It was built in the 1770s after the Manor of Dyers on the site was demolished (Cotton 1881b, unpaginated page 30). Its architectural style is typical of this time with ogee-topped Venetian windows and a pedimented door case with Doric pilasters.

Nos. 33, 35 and 37 Worcester Road (WSM 17519) is a grade II listed row of three shops. It has early 20<sup>th</sup> century shop fronts but the first floor retains its cased sashes and heavy dentilated eaves cornice.

No. 1 Hanover Street and 62 Worcester Road (WSM 3326) appears to be a more traditional late 18<sup>th</sup> century house. It is grade II listed and has string bands at inter-floor levels with a moulded cornice. The door case has pilasters with a rectangular fanlight over the door. It is believed to have originally been two nailers' cottages that were converted to a single dwelling and extended upwards. Close to these buildings is 41 Worcester Road (WSM 49046). This small, narrow, two storey brick building has an 18<sup>th</sup> century frontage but it the pitch of the roof of the raking angle of the eaves line suggests that it could be hiding an earlier structure.

Another grade II listed building is 87 and 87a Worcester Road (WSM 1922 and 1923). This building has sash windows in segmental head openings with key blocks. The final 18<sup>th</sup> century structure on the road is a row of four houses, 129, 131, 133 and 135 Worcester Road (WSM 48993). This simple row of houses dates to the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and has segmental head window and door openings and a dentilated eaves cornice.

Around the church there are also has a number 18<sup>th</sup> century buildings. The Church Steps (WSM 45902), leading from St John's Street to St John the Baptist Church, are of early 18<sup>th</sup> century date constructed of brick with sandstone ashlar walls. 10 St John's Street (WSM 1906), at the bottom of Church Steps, is of early 18<sup>th</sup> century date. It is red brick with stone quoins, moulded lintel band and moulded cornice and segmental pediment to central doorway.



Church steps



10 St. John's Street





16 St John's Street

16 St John's Street (WSM 1397), the Wishing Well, was formerly the Shoulder of Mutton Inn. It is reputedly one of Bromsgrove's oldest pub and was recorded as early as 1610 as a coaching inn (Richards in Foster 1981, 24). This building probably has 18<sup>th</sup> century origins but has been greatly altered. A photograph of it in c1905 shows that it had been at least re-fronted in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century with Victorian

Gothic brickwork (Richards and Richards 1983, 38) but this has now been covered up. 22 St John's Street (WSM 17516), St John's House is grade II listed. It has sash windows with stuccoed flat arches and key blocks.

As can be seen, 18<sup>th</sup> century buildings have survived across much of Bromsgrove town centre. However a closer look shows that they are concentrated in the more northern part of the town with less surviving in the historic core of the town - the junctions of High Street, Worcester Road and Market Place. This suggests that the owners of buildings in this area of the town centre had more disposable income to replace their older buildings with newer ones in the later periods, in keeping with the fashions of the day. Away from the High Street, whole streets of 18<sup>th</sup> century houses were demolished in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, for example 75-133 Birmingham Road, and replaced with modern houses or office buildings.

#### 4.3.6 Post-medieval demolished buildings

The following buildings, now demolished, are recorded on the Historic Environment Record as dating from the period 1500-1800. Many were recorded in a 1948 list of buildings conducted by the Ministry of Local Government and Planning, Bromsgrove Urban District, but in the intervening period they have been demolished.

##### High Street

- High Street (WSM 01968)- A seventeenth century, two storey timber framed building
- 8 High Street (WSM 01969) – A seventeenth century or earlier timber framed building with an eighteenth century frontage formed of two storeys and three bays
- 80 High Street (WSM01988) – An eighteenth century building of red brickwork with stone quoins and a moulded stone cornice.
- 82 High Street (WSM 01989) – An eighteenth century brickwork building of two 2 storeys & attics and four bays. Red brickwork with stone quoins and a moulded stone cornice.
- 92 High Street (WSM 01997) – A building of colour washed brick with an ornamental stone cornice and the date 1693 recorded on an ornamental plaque. With sash windows in moulded cased frames, large nineteenth century glass shop windows and an eighteenth century six panel door.
- 94 High Street (WSM 01998) – Similar to WSM 01997 but with an obscured plaque
- 96 High Street (WSM 01999) - Similar to WSM 01997 also with an obscured plaque
- Green Dragon, 76 High Street (WSM 01929), - An 18<sup>th</sup> Century building of colour washed brickwork with rusticated stone quoins and a moulded stone cornice and string course.
- Hop Pole Inn (WSM 01915) – Site of the original Hop Pole, moved in c1863
- 103 High Street (WSM 01400) – timber framing was revealed in this building when it was demolished in 1968.

### Worcester Road

- 81 Worcester Road (WSM 01920) - An 18<sup>th</sup> century building of, two storeys with cottage type casements.
- 83 Worcester Road (WSM 01921) - A pair of probably an early 17<sup>th</sup> century properties with twin steep pitched gables and a simple projecting bay on the ground floor.
- 27-31 Worcester Road (WSM 01925) – A 17<sup>th</sup> century property with 18<sup>th</sup> century rebuilding. Part timber frame, part rebuilt in colour-washed brickwork.
- Cruck House 23-27 Worcester Road (WSM 01399) - Surveyed by F W Charles prior to demolition. Built as single 'hall' type house with solar crosswing in early 16<sup>th</sup> century, a stone building added perhaps a century later. Internally divided into three properties, one with a shop.

### The Strand/Birmingham Road

- 15 Birmingham Road (WSM 02026) – A 17<sup>th</sup> century or earlier timber framed property with a gabled projection with curved bracing.
- 75-133 Birmingham Road (WSM 03371) – A range of simple 18<sup>th</sup> century two-storey red brick cottages with camber headed

windows with simple metal casements. Demolished in 1979.

### Hanover Street

- Nos. 29,37,39,41,43,47,49 Hanover Street (WSM 01926, WSM 01927, WSM 01928, WSM 01961, WSM 01962, WSM 01963, WSM 01964, WSM 01965, WSM 01926) - An early to middle eighteenth century terrace of plain brick dwellings with a brick string band at first floor level and metal casement windows and gabled dormers. This row which included weaver's shops and nogshops was demolished in the 1960s.

### St John's Street.

- 10 St John's (WSM 01910) – An 18<sup>th</sup> century property of two storeys three bays and facade on both W & S sides with a painted stone cornice and three sash windows.

### Other

- Dwelling, Kidderminster Road (WSM 01366) – A picturesque ruinous wall of a 17<sup>th</sup> century house with mullioned windows.
- 2-6 Station Street (WSM 01427) – A 17<sup>th</sup> century or earlier range with walls of sandstone and a projecting plinth.

#### 4.3.7 Post-medieval archaeological events

Post-medieval stratigraphy has been recorded in a number of archaeological interventions spread across the town.

- An excavation carried out in 1960 between High Street and St John's Street (WSM19661) revealed several post-medieval layers. The earliest deposit contained pottery and tobacco pipes dated from 1640 to 1670 while a second deposit was dated 1660-1710.
- Salvage recording in 1995 at RMC House, Church Lane (WSM19712) revealed a quarry, possibly relating to the brickworks known to have existed to the southwest of Bromsgrove in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. This was infilled, probably during the earlier 19<sup>th</sup> century, before being covered by a thick layer of sand, before

the construction of the National School immediately to the southwest.

- During a watching brief in 1994 on the site of a new Market Hall (WSM 20645) evidence was found for 16<sup>th</sup> century deposits, and late 17<sup>th</sup> or early 18<sup>th</sup> century buildings which may have burnt down. These buildings may have re-used earlier masonry. It was also noted during the watching brief that pre-17<sup>th</sup> century deposits survived behind the St John's Street frontage (WSM 20645; Cook 1994). This market hall is now demolished and the site is in use as a carpark.
- Post-medieval pottery was also recovered from the watching brief on the construction of a manhole shaft north of

the Market Hall, referred to in section 4.2.3 above (WSM 31097).

- During a site visit to works to the rear of 18 High Street (WSM 30516) a section was drawn of undated but probably post-medieval deposits.
- Two trenches were excavated in an evaluation undertaken in 2002 at 8-16 Worcester Road (WSM31883). Two main episodes of garden or cultivation soil deposition were identified dating to the 16th and the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. It was thought that these may be associated with clearance for tenement plots. Subsequent to these episodes of deposition a period of building on the site was probably associated with back plot activity within the tenement plot.
- A watching brief was undertaken in 2005 at The Button Factory in Willow Road (WSM 32987). It determined that the earliest development of the site was at the end of the 18th century, prior to which the area appears to have been semi-wet with a slow flowing watercourse to the east.
- Post-medieval pottery sherds, tile and clay pipe fragments were recovered from the evaluation at North Bromsgrove High School in 2005 (WSM 34489) although these were interpreted as stray finds within agricultural land.
- In an archaeological evaluation undertaken at land off Stourbridge Road (WSM 40522), post-medieval features were recorded comprising a ditch, which had been recut and backfilled with pottery dating to the earlier 18th century, and a pit containing brick, tile and burnt material with pottery of a similar date.

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#### 4.3.8 Implications for post-medieval archaeology

Limited archaeological fieldwork within the town has demonstrated that well-preserved stratified post-medieval deposits survive within the town centre, although the sample is not large enough to draw any conclusions about the extent and fragility of these deposits. These are likely to survive both in open areas such as car parks and beneath more modern buildings.

Additionally sub-surface evidence for post-medieval backplot activity, both small-scale industrial and domestic in nature is likely to be preserved to the rear of frontages in the form of building footings and/or pits, surfaces and layers. Much of the land to the rear of buildings is currently used as yards and car parks.

Extensive 20th century development has meant that many of the boundaries of the post-medieval town as well as the buildings themselves have disappeared. Whilst some 16th to 18th century buildings on street frontages have survived, those on the back plots which contained a great deal of evidence for industrial activity have disappeared almost entirely.

Post medieval sub-surface remains of both the Town Mill and Blackmore Mill are likely to survive as well as remains relating to the tanning industry.

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### 4.4 Nineteenth century

#### 4.4.1 19<sup>th</sup> century economic history

Bromsgrove flourished in the 19th century and the town expanded. Bromsgrove remained a market town through the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Worcester Road, High Street and the Strand remained the principle occupied area, and the range of private houses, businesses and shops lining the main street are documented in trade directories, ranging from bakers, grocers and shoemakers through more specialist shops (eg

milliners) to lawyers and auctioneers (Pigot 1828-9, 858-9). The nail industry developed under the control of a small group of nailmasters, the number rising through to the 1860s (Kings and Cooper 1999, 32-34). Production was undertaken at a household level, and the growth of the industry led to the development of rows of cottages with attached nailshops on side roads and in courts on the

backplots of properties on the main road (Kings and Cooper 1999, 42-45). The other industries, including button making, cloth production, glass making and brass founding, occupied purpose-built factory premises on land away from the main street.

The Birmingham and Gloucester Railway Company's line from Cheltenham to Gloucester was opened in 1840 and later in the same year on the completion of the Lickey Incline Plane

the town was linked with Birmingham. The station was one mile from the town and necessitated the building of New Road in 1865 to replace the steep and narrow Old Station Road (Anon 1967).

Bromsgrove District Council was created in 1858 (VCH 3, 21). The nailmaking industry declined from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century due to competition from cheaper machine-made products (Kings and Cooper 1999, 21).

#### 4.4.2 19<sup>th</sup> century urban morphology

Bromsgrove expanded rapidly during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, largely to the east, prompted in part by turnpike improvements to the High Street in 1806 (Richards *et al* 1981, 43) and the arrival of the railway.

The town as depicted on the 1839 Tithe Map has been described in Section 3.3.2 above. Comparison with the 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey of 1903 is a useful illustration of the development of the town through the middle and later years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The central street pattern of the town in 1903 was little changed. The emphasis was still very much on Worcester Road and the High Street as the main thoroughfare of the town and the long narrow plots depicted on the tithe map are very much intact though backplots were largely built over with small domestic and industrial outbuildings. New Road running east from the High Street was a marked addition to the street pattern and is the focus of the town's expansion

to the east where it was joined by large suburban roads such as College Road and The Crescent.

To the west expansion was less marked. Apart from the addition of the cemetery and the beginnings of some suburban development along Bromsgrove Road and along the Kidderminster Road, the Spadesbourne Brook and Church Lane delineated the edge of the urban area on this side. This was largely because until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century 26 acres of land in this part of the town was still owned and let by the church. However in 1881 the Ecclesiastical Commissioners began to sell some of the glebe land including Rectory Manor and the Town Mill to the Local Board for the creation of Market Street through land belonging to the Manor. The course of the stream was straightened during these works (Richards *et al* 1981, 32).

**19<sup>th</sup> century marketplace.** The marketplace continued in use through the 19<sup>th</sup> century for the Tuesday market established in 1792 and June Fair continuing until 1913 (VCH 1913). In 1832 a new town hall (WSM 19664), described in the Victoria County History as a 'dreary building coated with unpainted stucco' was built in Worcester Street, at the corner of the Market Place (WSM 19668) where it stood until 1928. It replaced both the medieval market cross (WSM 19668), the old Town Hall (WSM 19663) and the stocks (WSM19662).

**19<sup>th</sup> century religious buildings.** A Methodist chapel of 1883 is recorded as having stood on New Road (WSM 01901) and in 1833 a

Congregational Chapel (WSM 01899) was built in Chapel Street.

**19<sup>th</sup> century charities.** Three pairs of Almshouses (WSM 19667), were erected on the Alcester Road in 1820, 1825, 1842 and 1883 (VCH, 20). These were demolished in 1981.

In 1838 a Union Workhouse was opened on the West side of Birmingham Road to replace Cock Hall in the Strand. When the new Union Workhouse opened in 1838, the old work house became a tannery, which was owned by Ben Tandy in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

**19<sup>th</sup> century industrial.** Between 1825 and c 1880 the Town Mill was leased by the Rectory Manor to The Earl of Plymouth but in 1883 the



mill and its pool were sold to the Local Board of Bromsgrove for £350 (Richards and Richards 1988) to allow the construction of Market Street. The pool was subsequently drained and the building's demolition was recorded in a sketch by John Cotton (Richards and Richards 1988).

Buck House was a linen yarn spinning mill (WSM 19692) and stood at the edge of Bromsgrove in what is now Sanders Park. It was known as The Cotton Mill in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and was used for this purpose. A leat is shown connecting the mill to the Spadesbourne Brook on the 1886 Ordnance Survey plan. Sandstone ashlar can be seen revetting the bank of the Spadesbourne Brook which served as an outflow at this point (Buteux 1996). It was used as a cholera hospital during the 1832 epidemic (Richards *et al* 1981). In 1853 it was bought as a disused spinning mill and at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was used to store sheepskins. The mill was demolished in 1892 and is marked as disused on the 1903 Ordnance Survey plan. A pencil sketch of 1868 reproduced in Richards and Richards (1988) depicts the corner of a four storey factory complex. The Cotton Pool shown on the 1<sup>st</sup> edition OS map is very much diminished compared to that shown on the Tithe map. It survives partially as an ornamental pond within Sanders Park.

**Blackmore Mill** (WSM19691) continued in use throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century and on the 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey map it is shown as a Corn Mill. By the time of the 1<sup>st</sup> edition survey of 1886 the mill pond depicted on the tithe map of 1839 had been filled in. The mill itself may have been abandoned some years earlier.

In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century a glassworks (WSM01406) operated from 22-26 Sidemoor. This was set up by two brothers, the

sons of William Crawford a nailmaker at the rear of his house. The firm which traded as Crawfords Flint Glassworks specialised in cruet sets but also made lamp chimneys, ruby jugs with flint handles, cream jugs, vases and various fancy articles. Four furnaces are recorded. The business failed in 1897.

**Sidemoor Mill** (WSM19674) became redundant around 1810 and was left empty for some years. In the mid 1820s a button works was founded within the building which was extended in 1829. This building was known locally as 'Button Castle'. A leat between Button Castle and Factory Pool (WSM 19674) is shown on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> edition Ordnance Survey maps.

When the Union Workhouse was built in 1838, the former workhouse on the Strand (WSM21487) was converted into a tannery owned by Mr Tandy. The former name of the lower end of Stourbridge Road, Rotten Row may imply that this industry was already established in this part of the town. A tannery known as Jakeman's (WSM 49049) which stood on the west side of the brook was also demolished for the construction of Market Street. This is depicted on a Bromsgrove Local Board map in the Cotton Collection (and reproduced as a tracing in Richards and Richards, 1988) which shows the line of the proposed new road.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey a long building extending from the south side of St John's Street to the brook is shown as a malthouse. Immediately to the south the word Brewery covers a group of houses across the brook, although it is not clear to which the label refers. On the second and third editions the building itself is marked as Brewery.

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#### 4.4.3 19<sup>th</sup> century extant buildings

Bromsgrove town centre contains a large number of 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings, some listed but mostly unlisted. In the northern most part of the assessment area, the Hope Pole Inn, 78 Birmingham Road, (WSM 48935) is early 19<sup>th</sup> century in date. The brick building has sash windows and mid 19<sup>th</sup> century bay windows. It is shown with painted advertising signs on its walls in 1905 (Richards and Richards 1983, 92)

and in a closer photograph in 1915 (Richards and Richards 1988, 35). Close to the Hope Pole is the Hephzibar Primitive Methodist Chapel, Birmingham Road (WSM 1896). This distinctive building of red brick with yellow and blue brick decoration and semi-circular headed windows was constructed by the local builder Philip Bowater in 1861.





56-62 Birmingham Road



48-52 Birmingham Road



126-128 High Street, The Slug and Lettuce

To the immediate west of the Chapel is 56, 58, 60 and 62 Birmingham (WSM 48936). This row of unlisted houses dates from the mid-late 19<sup>th</sup> century and is Victorian Gothic in style. Each of the doorway openings has two-centred arches with circle and trefoil tracery and the windows have pointed arches and cill bands.

Another row of houses of this date is 48, 50 and 52 Birmingham (WSM 17523). These early 19<sup>th</sup> century houses are grade II listed and are much more classical in style. No. 52 has chequered brickwork, sash windows with corniced hood on volute brackets and a door with pilasters. No.

48 and 50 have sash windows with corniced hoods and a semi-circular headed doorway with wide fanlight.

On the opposite side of the road is 45 Birmingham Road (WSM 48937), an early 19<sup>th</sup> century house with segmental arched windows and a door with fluted pilasters. A little way along the road is 35 and 37 Birmingham Road (WSM 48939). This pair of brick houses is early-mid 19<sup>th</sup> century in date. No. 35 is mostly intact, with its sash windows and moulded doorcase of fluted pilasters and bulls-eye roundels. It also retains its rusticated stucco voussoirs over the windows. 37 has been altered but the moulded terracotta eaves cornice runs across both properties. Adjoining Davenal House is 26 Birmingham Road (WSM 45611). This small early-mid 19<sup>th</sup> century two storey structure used to be the Bromsgrove Museum but before this it was the coach house for Davenal House.

Moving further along the road there is 16-18 The Strand (WSM 48942). It is a mid 19<sup>th</sup> century house that is now a jewellers shop but with much of the external detail intact. The frontage has a central semi-circular headed doorway with radial fanlight flanked by two early 20<sup>th</sup> century bay windows. It also has large sash windows with cornices on scroll brackets. Around the corner on Market Street is a range of warehouses, 18, 20 and 22 Market Street (WSM 48944 and 48945). These buildings were constructed in 1899 by Braziers for John B Wilson and Sons. The red brick building is distinctive with darker red cill and lintel bands and window arches and cills. The main part of the warehouses remains virtually unaltered, as can be seen by the photograph of 1901 in *Braziers: Builders of Bromsgrove* (Richards 1996, 96). Still visible on the north western elevation is the white and black painted sign saying 'John B Wilson and Sons Grocers'.

Bromsgrove High Street has a number of surviving 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings; a small number of them are listed. The first building you encounter on the east side of the street as you walk from the north end of the town, is 126, 128 and 130 High Street (WSM 17513).

This grade II listed building is mid 19<sup>th</sup> century in date. It was built for Dr George Horton in 1851 (Brooks and Pevsner 2007, 204) in Victorian Gothic style and is very distinctive

because it is constructed entirely of blue brick with yellow brick diaper patterns. The gothic style is continued with stone mullioned windows and arrow-slits in the tall gables. Even the bargeboards are pierced with trefoil and quatrefoil designs.

A short way down the street is 112 High Street, Lloyds TSB Bank (WSM 2011). This building, also grade II listed, is of early 19<sup>th</sup> century date. The façade is very much intact with tall sash windows with camber heads, bolection moulded stone architraves and carved keystones. Near the corner of High Street and New Road is 52 High Street (WSM 1983). This is a grade II listed building of early 19<sup>th</sup> century date. Although the ground floor now has a modern plate glass shop front the sash windows with moulded hoods on scroll brackets of the upper floors are intact.

On the opposite corner of High Street and New Road is 46 High Street (WSM 2000). Also grade II listed, this early 19<sup>th</sup> century building is heavily stuccoed on the façade and has sash windows to the upper floors with the ground floor being of modern brickwork. Adjacent to this is 44 High Street (WSM 48952). This early to mid 19<sup>th</sup> century building has a traditional style modern ground floor but with intact upper floors. It has flat pilasters at the edges of the structure and a plain frieze at the eaves. This style is also used on 38 High Street (WSM 48954). It is of the same date as 44, early to mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, and has the same flat pilasters and eaves frieze. The ground floor is early to mid 20<sup>th</sup> century and has a coach way to the right. The upper floor windows are sashes with bracketed cornices, with the exception of a first floor bay window. The narrow 40 High Street (WSM 48953), dates from the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. Its ground floor shop front is of early 20<sup>th</sup> century date. The original bay window of the first floor has been replaced as has the second floor sash window but leaving the frieze and bracketed cornice intact.

Further along the street is 12 High Street (WSM 48960). This early to mid 19<sup>th</sup> century building has a traditional style ground floor with margin light sash windows to the upper floors. The first floor windows retain its moulded cornices on moulded brackets and architraves.

The final 19<sup>th</sup> century building on the east side of the street is 10 High Street (WSM 48961).



112 High Street



10 High Street, former Market Place Post-Office

This mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century structure was formerly the Market Place Post Office. It was designed by the Bromsgrove architect and artist John Cotton and built around 1866 (Brooks and Pevsner 2007, 203). It is a very distinctive narrow building of Italianate style, constructed of red brick with yellow brick bands, cornice brackets and window arch details. The first floor window is a timber oriel structure with dentilated cornice and moulded coving.

Moving to the opposite side of the High Street and starting in the north again, the first building of 19<sup>th</sup> century date you come across is 121 High Street (WSM 48946).





121 High Street



11-13 High Street

This building dates from the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century and is one of the few structures in the town centre that has retained its original ground floor. Adjoining this building is the original Post Office, 119 High Street (WMSM 49042). The building is shown in a photograph of 1911 (Richards and Richards 1983, 81) although the small current building is all that survives of the larger structure shown in the photograph. The rendered façade has a large window with three tall lights with semi-circular tops; these are visible on the photograph. The extension to this Post Office is now the main Post Office building 117 High Street built in 1937.

A little way along the street is 95 High Street (WMSM 2006). This building is grade II listed and early 19<sup>th</sup> century in date. It has rusticated floor façade is a modern replacement. 87 High Street (WMSM 2003), also a grade II listed building, is mid 19<sup>th</sup> century in date. It has sash windows with frieze and bracketed cornice. A moulded eaves cornice is still intact along with scroll brackets at the corners. 65 High Street (WMSM 48949), further south, is a mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century building with sash windows and dentilated eaves cornice. This adjoins the early 19<sup>th</sup> century 63 High Street (WMSM 48950). This building is stucco covered and has lugged architrave window surrounds to replacement windows with decorative gables at the roofline. 59 High Street (WMSM 17522), just on the opposite side of Church Lane, is of late 19<sup>th</sup> century date. It is a Victorian Gothic style building with quoins, mullioned windows and cill bands. The window arches have stone hoodmoulds and keystones and there is a first floor bay window on the High Street façade.

No 33 and 35 High Street (WMSM 17510), further south along the street, is a grade II listed, early 19<sup>th</sup> century building. Its ground floor façade has been completely replaced with a modern shop front but above this a re two further floors with multi-light sash windows, cill bands and moulded cornice. 23 High Street (WMSM 48955) is a mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century building of Italianate style. The eaves are supported on long brackets with dentilation between them. The window arches are moulded terracotta with keystones and the cills are of stone on short brackets. They yellow brick bands across the front of the façade. 15 High Street (WMSM 48956) is also of mid 19<sup>th</sup> century date. It has a modern shop front on the ground floor with three further storeys showing sash windows and arches with keystones.

The adjacent building, 11 and 13 High Street (WMSM 48958), The Rousler pub, was designed by John Cotton and built in 1871 (Brooks and Pevsner 2007, 203). It is in the Victorian Gothic style with bands of blue brick and stone hoodmoulds with keystones. The parapet of the building is balustrade above a dentilated eaves cornice. It has a central projecting bay with a, now blocked, Diocletian window at the top. The ground floor façade has been replaced with a frontage of a sym pathetic design.



Manchester House, 3-5 High Street



3 and 5 New Road

The final building of this date on the west side of the street is 3 and 5 High Street (WSM 48959), Manchester House. This building was constructed in 1887 and has a stone date plaque as a record. The ground floor façade was completed rebuilt in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Above this are four first floor bay windows topped with cast iron balconettes. The roofline has two mock timber-frame gables with purlins on corbelled brackets.

On Church Street, 1 Church Street (WSM 48967) is of mid 19<sup>th</sup> century date. Although it is heavily rendered and the ground floor altered, the architectural details of the window arches and moulded eaves cornice are intact. At the corner of Church Street and Crown Close is 12 Church Street (WSM 48971). This late 19<sup>th</sup> century building was formerly Satchwell's Forge and has a name plaque saying 'Satchwell's Shoeing Forge'.

3 and 5 New Road (WSM 49043) lie adjacent to the 16<sup>th</sup> century former Hop Pole Inn (WSM 1914), 1 New Road. The building was constructed in the 1880s by William Jeffrey Hopkins as a bank manager's residence. He also reconstructed 1 New Road and it was used

as a bank. 3 and 5 New Road are red brick but have a large gable constructed in timber-frame in the same style as the earlier building.

9 and 11 New Road (WSM 48965 and 48966) are mid 19<sup>th</sup> century in date. This pair of red brick houses has yellow and blue brick detailing around doors and windows. Adjacent to these are 13 (WSM 48963) and then 15 New Road (WSM 48962). These two buildings are of 1870s-80s date and are red brick urban villas set back from the road. 15 has a projecting central part with fretted barge boards and decorative windows whilst 13 is distinctive with its shutters.

Away from the High Street and New Road, are a number of buildings to the east. On the corner of Chapel Street and Windsor Street is the Congregational Chapel (WSM 1899). This grade II listed building was constructed around 1832. It is a Grecian Revival style structure, stucco covered and tall semi-circular headed windows. The façade has fluted Doric columns around the entrance with entablature and a projecting gallery window. The north side of the building still has some sandstone from the earlier late 17<sup>th</sup> century chapel on the site (Brooks and Pevsner 2007, 195). Across Chapel Street from the chapel is the Sunday School (WSM 1907) built for the church in 1852. This grade II listed, E-plan building is of red brick with blue brick detail around the semi-circular head windows and blue brick diaper-work.

Further along Chapel Street is Wendron House (WSM 39855). This grade II listed building was formerly called The Mount and was the property of James Green a Bromsgrove nail master. The façade of the building is of most importance. It is stuccoed and has two two-storey semi-circular bay windows. Moulded string courses run between each of its three storeys and there are moulded architraves to the first floor windows.

On Ednall Lane is a Victorian Gothic Sunday School (WSM 1900). This was built in 1888 adjacent to a now demolished Victorian Gothic Baptist Chapel of 1866-7. The Sunday School is red brick with yellow brick pointed window and door arches and a moulded brick eaves cornice.



are distinctive with first floor bay windows and pierced barge boards. The windows are groups of three sashes with shaped heads and the ground floor has early 20<sup>th</sup> century shop facades. Adjoining these buildings are 34, 36, 38 and 40 Worcester Road which are of mid-19<sup>th</sup> century date. This row of three storey brick buildings has yellow brick string bands and part stuccoed window arches with stone gills. This street frontage of 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings continues with 42 Worcester Road (WSM 48979) and then 46 and 48 Worcester Road (WSM 48980), 42 Worcester Road is early to mid 19<sup>th</sup> century in date. It was originally one property although it now has two shops to the ground floor. The first floor sash windows have jugged lintels with key blocks and the second floor has over sailing eaves. The ground floor has a late 19<sup>th</sup> century shop front. 46 and 48 Worcester Road are a pair of early 19<sup>th</sup> century, three storey brick buildings. The segmental headed window openings all contain their original sash or casement windows.

Across the road are a number of buildings of the same age. The small, narrow, two storey, brick building of 43 Worcester Road (WSM 48978) is early 19<sup>th</sup> century in date with an early 20<sup>th</sup> century bow window on the ground floor. Adjoining this is 45 and 47 Worcester Road (WSM 48981) which are mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century in date. This matched pair of two storey, brick houses have modern dormers that have cut the eaves level. Over the road from these buildings are 11, 13 and 15 Worcester Road (WSM 48974). This is a row of brick built houses with 11 being truncated pre 1880s. It was probably two houses originally. The ground floor has now been rebuilt with the upper floors still showing the yellow brick detailing around the windows and blue brick flat pilasters. Across the road are 14 and 16 Worcester Road (WSM 45899). This pair of distinctive, red brick, houses of 1890 date are under a single gable roof. They are now shops and have had the ground floors replaced. The first floor has two large depressed arches flanking a limestone date stone and underneath a moulded brick string course.

Further along the street are 28, 30 and 32 Worcester Road (WSM 48975) and 34, 36, 38 and 40 Worcester Road (WSM 48976). The mid-19<sup>th</sup> century 28, 30 and 32 Worcester Road



28-32 Worcester Road

A large number of 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings are found in the Worcester Road area. A concentration of these is found on the grounds of the Bromsgrove School and along Station Street and The Crescent. Beginning at the north end of Worcester Road, though, the first 19<sup>th</sup> century building that you come across is 1 Worcester Road (WSM 49045). This brick mid 19<sup>th</sup> century building was the premises of Weaver and Guest, grocers, for the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The ground floor of the building has been totally rebuilt but leaving the upper floors intact.

Close to this, on the opposite side of the road, are 8, 10 and 12 Worcester Road (WSM 48973). This three storey painted brick building is also mid 19<sup>th</sup> century in date. The sash windows on the upper floors have bracketed cornices and there is a moulded cornice at eaves level. Over the road from these buildings are 11, 13 and 15 Worcester Road (WSM 48974). This is a row of brick built houses with 11 being truncated pre 1880s. It was probably two houses originally. The ground floor has now been rebuilt with the upper floors still showing the yellow brick detailing around the windows and blue brick flat pilasters. Across the road are 14 and 16 Worcester Road (WSM 45899). This pair of distinctive, red brick, houses of 1890 date are under a single gable roof. They are now shops and have had the ground floors replaced. The first floor has two large depressed arches flanking a limestone date stone and underneath a moulded brick string course.

converted with an unusually pitched roof. Adjacent to these two are a short terrace of houses of the same design, 54, 56, 58 and 60 Worcester Road (WSM 48984). The red brick houses are early 19<sup>th</sup> century in date and all have three storeys. They all have stucco arches to their first floor windows and shop fronts on the ground floor. 56 has an early 20<sup>th</sup> century bow window shop front. On the corner of Worcester Road and Hanover Street are 64, 66 and 68 Worcester Road (WSM 48985). These three buildings, formerly four, are two pairs of early 19<sup>th</sup> century brick houses. 68 was formerly two houses and now has a large modern shop front.

A little way along the road is 72 Worcester Road (WSM 48986). This building was formerly a pair of houses of mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century date but now forms part of the 'Olde Black Cross Inn'. The ground floor has the remains of early 20<sup>th</sup> century shop fronts incorporating a 'black cross' symbol and the first floor has two large semi-circular head openings. Adjacent to this is 74 Worcester Road (WSM 48988), a mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century, two storey, brick house. Although the ground floor has been replaced with a modern shop front the first floor windows are still intact with multi-pane upper sashes and margin lights in the lower sashes. 76 and 78 Worcester Road (WSM 48988) are early 19<sup>th</sup> century in date. This pair of single storey, with converted roof space, brick houses has now been converted into two shops.

Further along the road to the south west, and on the opposite side, are 105, 107, 109, 111 and 113 Worcester Road (WSM 48989). This is a terrace of houses of Victorian Gothic style, built in 1879. All of the houses are built of red brick and are of two storeys, with the exception of the three storey 113, which is also gable end on to the road. The window and door arches of all of the houses are of yellow brick, along with string bands between the floors. A stone plaque marked 'W.L 1879' can still be seen on the outside of the 111. Adjacent to 113 are 115 and 117 Worcester Road (WSM 48900). These two red brick early 19<sup>th</sup> century houses were part of a longer row, but are now the only survivors. They are simple with little decoration only a dentilated eaves cornice. A little way along the road are 129, 131, 133 and 135 Worcester (WSM 48993). This row of houses is late 18<sup>th</sup> century in date and has segmental openings to

the doors and windows on the ground floor with rectangular windows to the first floor. The row was originally longer, joining up with 117 Worcester Road.

Moving over the road again, are 118, 120 and 122 Worcester Road (WSM 48991). This is a trio of two storey, red brick early 19<sup>th</sup> century houses with segmental window arches, stone steps up to the front doors and dentilated eaves cornice. Adjoining 122 is 124 Worcester Road (WSM 48992) which is a mid 19<sup>th</sup> century painted brick house on the corner of Worcester Road and Factory Lane. It has been considerably altered by the ground floor modern shop front. On the same side of the road, further along the street is 134 and 136 Worcester Road (WSM 1917 and 1918). These two properties, of early 19<sup>th</sup> century date, were formerly one house. They have a symmetrical façade of three storeys constructed of red brick with stone details. They have a central door, flanked by two storey high canted bay windows, with an architraved sash window above which is a decorative stone key block. A little further along is 144 Worcester Road (WSM 48995). This early to mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, three storey house has been divided into two properties. It has a recessed central door with bay windows to each side and the original sash windows have survived on the left hand side of the house.

The last two buildings on Worcester Road itself that are worthy of being mentioned are 165 Worcester Road (WSM 48996) and 173 Worcester Road (WSM 48997). 165 Worcester Road was formerly an inn but is now a business property. It is an early to mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, two storey brick building that has been painted with a central door with flat pilaster surround. It has a canted bay window and the sash windows all have multi-lights. 173 Worcester Road, Walter's House, was built around 1890-1900. It is red brick and distinctive with large bay windows, with stone mullions, and a slate covered, gabled dormer window in the hipped roof above bracketed over-sailing eaves.

Just off Worcester Road are a cluster of 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings within the grounds of Bromsgrove School. Nearly all of the buildings were constructed by the Bromsgrove builders Braziers, who had a unique relationship with the school. The first of the buildings constructed



*Model Cottages, 1-6 Watt Close*

was the Old Chapel (WSM 49001). This small building, constructed in 1850, is of yellow brick with trefoiled lancets and was designed by Henry Day. It has a chancel added in 1867 which was designed W J Hopkins. This was the only building not constructed by Braziers. The first of the structures built by them was Big School (WSM 49000) in 1882. Big School was designed by John Cotton and is red brick in Queen Anne style with two shaped gables, pilasters and string courses. Lyttleton House (WSM 49002) was built in 1893. This structure, designed by Lewis Sheppard, completely absorbed an earlier classroom of 1844-5. The brick building is arranged around three sides of a courtyard with stone mullioned windows and string courses. In 1898, the Sheppard designed L-shaped Millington Laboratory (WSM 49005) was built. This brick structure has tall windows and is similar to the more ostentatious Big School. The last building of the 19<sup>th</sup> century at the School was Gordon House (WSM 49006), designed by John Bilson of Hull. The building is red brick, well-proportioned, with stone mullioned windows and brick string courses.

Away from Worcester Road itself are a number of buildings of 19<sup>th</sup> century date. On Sanders Road is 1 to 6 Westbourne Terrace (WSM 48977). A terrace of houses built around 1890 to 1900, they back onto Sanders Road. They are all of red brick and two storeys. A little further away are 1 to 6 Watt Close, Model Cottages (WSM 48988) which are off Factory Lane. These cottages were built in 1892. They are red brick two and a half storey buildings with yellow brick string bands and stone plaques saying 'Model Cottages 1892'.

On and around Station Street are 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings worthy of notice. Moving up Station

Street, the first building you come across is 1 Guild Court (WSM 49008). This building formed part of the former Police Station, now a house, and is mid 19<sup>th</sup> century in date. The feature of the building is its stonework around the door and windows. Over the road from this building is the Bromsgrove Guild building (WSM 49009). This structure was built in the 1890s and early 20<sup>th</sup> century and was the base of the Bromsgrove Guild craftsmen. It has the large multi-light windows typical of a building used for industrial processes.

A little further up the road is Ednall Lane which crosses Station Street. To the left the street contains 5, 7 and 9 Ednall Lane (WSM 49016). These red brick two storey houses were built in the 1890s and have semi-circular head doorways and blue brick string bands. To the right of Station Street, Ednall Lane continues with 10 and 12 (WSM 49011) which are around 1890 to 1900 in date. The buildings are a pair of typical suburban semi-detached houses with side entrances and bay windows. Opposite this is 11 and 13 Ednall Lane. This building forms part of the range of buildings that are The Court House (19 The Crescent, WSM 49014) and Police Station (17 The Crescent, WSM 49037). All of the buildings are red brick, have stone details and appear to have been designed and built as a distinct unit.

At Ednall Lane, Station Street becomes The Crescent. The first building on the left, opposite The Court House, is 20 The Crescent (WSM 49015). This late 19<sup>th</sup> century, two storey red brick house has a central porch and decorative ridge tiles and finials on its gabled roof. Adjacent to this is 16 and 18 The Crescent (WSM 49031), a pair of late 19<sup>th</sup> century, red brick suburban houses with full height canted bay windows. 12 and 14 The Crescent (WSM 49032) are a pair of Victorian Gothic style, 1890s, houses with canted bay windows topped with black balconets outside the first floor windows. The doorways are off to the side. 8 and 10 The Crescent (WSM 49033), a pair of houses built in the 1880s, are also in Victorian Gothic style. They have two-centred window and door arches, blue brick string bands are yellow brick diaper work on the gables. 4 and 6 The Crescent (WSM 49034) are very similar to 8 and 10 with the blue brick string bands and yellow brick diaper work on the gable. On the opposite side of The Crescent are the mid to





10 Hanover Street



12 Hanover Street



St John's Court, former Vicarage

late 19<sup>th</sup> century 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11 The Crescent (WSM 49036). The buildings have all had extensions built against their road side elevations and the frontages, with semi-circular arched doorways, facing onto gardens. 1 to 6 South Crescent (WSM 49035) runs off The Crescent. It is a terrace of mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century houses with ground floor bay windows and flat head first floor windows. The first in the row, 1, has a bay window with stone mullions and a semi-circular head first floor window.

Away from Station Street, along Hanover Street, are two small 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings. 10

Hanover Street (WSM 49039) and 12 Hanover Street (WSM 49040) are next to the canalised Spadesbourne Brook. They are both built of brick, are mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century in date, have had an industrial use and 12 has the appearance of a mill.

The area around St John's Church also has a number of 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings worth mentioning. To begin with the former vicarage and then Council Offices, now St John's Court (WSM 1902) on St John's Street is mid 19<sup>th</sup> century in date and grade II listed. This brick building has stone dressings in 17<sup>th</sup> century style with geometric gables. Close to this are 12 St John's Street (WSM 49023) and 12a So John's Street (WSM 49024). Both two storey brick buildings are early 19<sup>th</sup> century in date, although 12 has a mid 20<sup>th</sup> century extension to join the two buildings together. 12a has a good bow window on the ground floor. Around the churchyard is a sandstone ashlar wall (WSM 45897) that is 19<sup>th</sup> century in date and within the churchyard are memorials and gravestones of the same date.

The Chance Family Memorial (WSM 45898) is a sandstone monument. A pair of gravestones (WSM 46432) commemorates the deaths of two railway enginemen who died when the boiler of their train exploded.

To the south west of St John's Church, Kidderminster Road contains more 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings. 7 Kidderminster Road (WSM 49025) dates to the early to mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. It has chequerboard brickwork with stucco window and door arches. Adjacent to this is 9 and 11 Kidderminster Road (WSM 49026). A matched pair of mid 19<sup>th</sup> century houses with pointed, shouldered door arches and stepped stucco window arches. A little way along the street is 17 Kidderminster Road, The Coach House (WSM 49027). It is mid 19<sup>th</sup> century in date, completely rendered with stucco arches and key blocks to ground floor windows. Next door to this is 19 Kidderminster Road (WSM 49028) of mid 19<sup>th</sup> century date. It is marked on the Ordnance Survey first edition map as a public house. 21 Kidderminster Road (WSM 49029) is a small brick structure of early to mid 19<sup>th</sup> century date. It has segmental arched windows and a dentilated eaves cornice. On the opposite side of the street is 18 Kidderminster Road (WSM 49017), the Bromsgrove Unionists Club.

The brick building has timber gables and was formerly known as 'Oakdene'. It was built in 1887 and was designed by John Cotton.

On Church Lane are the former Church Schools (WSM 49018 and 49019). The school building (WSM 49018) was built in 1833 and was designed by William Lea of Beoley. This two storey building has moulded, lugged architraves around the window. Adjacent to it are further classrooms and teacher's residence (WSM 49019) which were added in 1871. They are in keeping with the school building and have segmental arched windows but no architraves. 11 and 11a Crown Close (WSM 49022 and 49021) are to the east of the church and over the road from St John's Court. The buildings are both early to mid 19<sup>th</sup> century in date. 11 Crown Close (WSM 49022) is a single storey building with a lean-to across its façade. Adjoining this building is 11a Crown Close (WSM 49021) which is taller, two storeys, and has segmental

head openings. Both buildings are now businesses but their appearance and location suggest that they may be surviving industrial structures.

19<sup>th</sup> century buildings have survived across much of Bromsgrove town centre in large numbers, more so than other periods. A closer look shows that the 19<sup>th</sup> century structures are concentrated in the southern part of the town with more surviving in the historic core of the town - the junctions of High Street, Worcester Road and Market Place. This suggests that the owners of buildings in this area of the town centre had more disposable income to replace their older buildings with newer ones in the later periods, in keeping with the fashions of the day. In the southern part of the town can also be seen the patterns of 19<sup>th</sup> century growth with suburban villas and houses being constructed away from the historic core but still within the influence of the town.

#### 4.4.4 19<sup>th</sup> century demolished buildings

The following buildings, now demolished, are recorded on the Historic Environment Record as dating from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Many were recorded in a 1948 list of historic buildings in Bromsgrove Urban District conducted by the Ministry of Local Government and Planning.

- 37 High Street (WSM 01985) – An early nineteenth century property of four storeys and ten bays with a stucco façade and a large plate glass shop front.
- 78 High Street (WSM 01987) - An early nineteenth century building of three storeys and five bays with a facade in plain brickwork, projecting eaves with

moulded wood soffit and a large plate glass shop window.

- 118 High Street (WSM 02012) – An early nineteenth century Grecian revival building of two storeys and three bays with a stucco façade, moulded string course at first floor level and a low pitched roof.
- Hexagonal weighing machine (WSM 19690) which stood at the Junction of the Strand and Stourbridge Street. Demolished by 1927

#### 4.4.5 19<sup>th</sup> century archaeological events

- Evaluation in 1998, Recreation Road, Bromsgrove (WSM 26932) revealed field boundaries that existed on late 19<sup>th</sup> century mapping, and which were replaced in the 20th century by a new arrangement of roads, buildings and green open spaces.
- In an archaeological evaluation in 1998 undertaken at Bromsgrove School on Worcester Road (WSM 30063), a series

of ditched boundaries, possible exterior yard surfaces and demolition debris was found in two trenches. These correlate with cartographic evidence for a row of 19th century (or earlier) cottages on the Worcester Road frontage.

- A quarry, possibly relating to the brickworks known to have existed to the south-west of Bromsgrove in the late 19th century was recorded during salvage

recording in 1995 at RMC House, Church Lane (WSM 19712). This was infilled, probably during the earlier 19th century, before being covered by a thick layer of sand, before the construction of the National School immediately to the southwest.

- An evaluation at a site in Recreation Road revealed post-medieval field boundaries that existed in the 19th century and which were replaced in the 20th century by a new arrangement of roads, buildings and green open spaces.

- The watching brief at The Button Factory, Willow Road (WSM 32987, referred to in section 4.3.3) also revealed 19th century activity. A reservoir was created on the western side of the building, fed by a watercourse which was scoured and straightened slightly. It seems to have rapidly silted up, possibly when electricity replaced steam power. The site was also levelled and hardcore laid down and buildings added on the space surrounding the original structures.

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#### 4.4.6 Implications for 19th century archaeology

In the marketplace there is potential for the survival of the buried remains of the town hall (WSM 19664) which stood between 1832 and 1928.

As well as the demolished buildings listed above, it is likely that 19th century houses were amongst the large areas of cleared during the 20th century in areas such as St John's Street. Furthermore, it is clear by comparison of the tithe map and the Ordnance Survey editions that development of the backplots behind the High Street and Worcester Road frontages took place largely in the 19th century. These areas were generally cleared in the 20th Century and there is a High potential for the survival of buried remains of these buildings and related activity.

There is a potential for the survival of below ground remains of the Methodist chapel which stood on New Road (WSM 01901) and three pairs of almshouses (WSM 19667), on the Stratford (formerly Alcester) Road.

There is a potential for survival of 19th Century industrial remains at the site of the Town Mill and for remains of the large corn grinding complex at Blackmore Mill both of which operated in the 19th century, in the tanneries which operated in the Stourbridge Road area and in the brewery which stood on the south side of St Johns Street. Furthermore buried remains of No 12 Hanover Street, which

There may be remains of the 19th Gas Works which operated to the north of Worcester Road into the 20th Century.

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### 4.5 Twentieth century

#### 4.5.1 20th century economic history

In the late 19th century the hand-made industry was in decline due to competition from industrialised manufacture in other towns in the West Midlands. The founding of the Bromsgrove Guild of Applied Arts in 1898 developed into a successful enterprise employing many craftsmen (Brooks and Pevsner 2007, 191). During the 20th century the town centre saw extensive change. In the late

1930s many of the houses in the town centre were demolished as the result of a slum clearance scheme (Leadbetter 1946, 14). During the late 20th there was redevelopment along the High Street, with many older buildings replaced with new shops, which have been labelled as 'the usual commercial ill-assortment' and 'mediocre' in terms of their architecture (Brooks and Pevsner 2007, 203-4).

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#### 4.5.2 20th century urban morphology

The streetscape of the town changed dramatically in the later half of the 20th Century

with large scale clearance of housing. The street pattern in the town centre did not



however did not change significantly. This may be a consequence of the sudden post-war expansion of the town which necessitated new through routes which bypassed the town centre.

### 20<sup>th</sup> century industrial

At Hedges Mill (WSM 49050), south of Davenal house on the Birmingham Road a single water wheel was used by William Hedges to power some light machinery and pump water to his house which stood adjacent.

Blackmore Mill (WSM 19691) became a bicycle factory in 1896 owned initially by the Lillie Cycle Company and later by C Cound who produced a model called the 'Spadesbourne'. For the major part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century it was a laundry but ended life as an engineering works. It was demolished in 1986 (Richards and Richards 1988, 51).

### 4.5.3 20<sup>th</sup> century extant buildings

The 20<sup>th</sup> century saw a large amount of development in Bromsgrove, with whole swathes of historic buildings and fabric being demolished and replaced with new structures. However a few of the buildings that were constructed are worthy of mention here as they add to the appearance and historic nature of the town centre. The most northerly of these structures lies at the end of Stourbridge Road, at its junction with The Strand. The former Parkside Middle School (WSM 29372) is a Grade II listed building which was built between 1909 and 1912. It was designed by G H Gadd with A V Rowe and has been described as 'Wrenian Baroque' in style. It is a large, symmetrical, red brick building with stone dressings and including a rusticated stone centrepiece doorway. Immediately over the road from the school is 8 Stourbridge Road, Parkside Motors (WSM 48940). This was built in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and has impressive stone surrounds to each of its six first floor windows. The edges of the building, and around one of the windows, also have rusticated pilasters.



*Parkside School*

Around the corner on Recreation Road is the Drill Hall (WSM 27357). Although this building is currently in a poor state of repair it is historically important. It was built in 1914 and was designed by A V Rowe. Its central entrance gateway, semi-circular arched, is topped with the crest of the Worcestershire Regiment and is flanked by canted, battlemented, projections and Neo-Georgian wings. It was used by the British Red Cross Society during World War I and then as the HQ for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Worcestershire (Bromsgrove) Home Guard in World War II. A little way along Recreation Road is Bromsgrove Clinic (WSM 26576), a 1930s building used a first aid post during World War II.

On the High Street, and its side streets, there are a very small number of 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings of note. Moving north to south along the street the first building you would come across is 117 High Street, the Post Office (WSM 48947). This extension to the original post office (119 High Street) was built in 1937, a date which is marked on the rectangular fanlight over the door, 'G R 1937'. The ground floor has a wooden façade and the central window on the first floor still has its original clock in place. Further south along High Street, Church Street joins from the west. There are two 20<sup>th</sup> century structures worthy of mention on the street. 6 and 8 Church Street (WSM 48968 and 48969) are a pair of Edwardian Arts and Crafts buildings of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The two buildings, built as a matched pair, are red brick with stone door and window surrounds and have banded brick pilasters. Across the road from this is 11 Church Street, Coronation House (WSM 48970), built in 1937. It is red brick with a large concrete door lintel marked



*The Golden Cross, 20 High Street*



*4-6 Worcester Road*

with 'Coronation House 1937' and full height concrete fluted pilasters.

New Road joins the High Street from the east further south than Church Street. 8 New Road (WSM 48964) is an early 20<sup>th</sup> century red brick villa, now a business premises. The central door has a large semi-circular arch and is flanked by canted bay windows with dentilated cornices. The last 20<sup>th</sup> century building in the High Street worth noting is also probably the most impressive. 20 High Street, The Golden Cross (WSM 48957), was rebuilt in 1932-3 by Braziers for Mitchells and Butlers and designed by Watson and Johnson of Birmingham. The building is three storeys high and has Deco detail on its stuccoed façade including the inter-floor frieze and clocked marked with 'Golden Cross'.

Moving onto Worcester Road, the first 20<sup>th</sup> century building you come across is 4 and 6 Worcester Road (WSM 48972). This early 20<sup>th</sup> century structure was built as a department store and it still retains its original glazing on the first floor. On the opposite side of the street, and further along, is 39 Worcester Road (WSM 48977). This was a 1930s cinema with the

façade being built in 1934 by Braziers. Its fluted pilasters, quoins and rusticated coursing are typical of cinema style of the time. Much further along Worcester Road is the early 20<sup>th</sup> century post box (WSM 45900) outside 134 Worcester Road. This is marked with G R for King George V.

At Bromsgrove School, the development started at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century continued in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century with more buildings being constructed by Braziers. In 1913 the Headmaster's House (WSM 49003) was added to the courtyard range of Lyttleton House, creating a quadrangle of buildings. The Headmaster's House, designed by Arthur Bartlett, was built in a similar style as Lyttleton House with gabled brick and stone mullioned windows. John Bilson of Hull, who designed Gordon House also designed Kyteless (WSM 49004) and Routh Hall (WSM 49007); all three of which are arranged around Gordon Green. Kyteless was built by Braziers in 1913-14 and is a large classroom with broad mullioned-and-transomed windows. Routh Hall, built by Braziers in 1926-7, also has broad mullioned-and-transomed windows and also has a central cupola on the roof. Probably the most important building constructed by Braziers at the School is the grade II listed Memorial Chapel (WSM 1905). This building was constructed in 1931 to designs by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott. It is constructed of pale brown brickwork with Clipsham stone dressings. It is a fusion of Arts and Crafts and Gothic styles with tall traceried windows and a large oak beam roof.

Moving away from Worcester Road itself, the suburban development of the town that began in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century continued in the 20<sup>th</sup> century to the south east of the High Street and Worcester Road. On the corner of Ednall Lane and Station Street is 8 Ednall Lane, Hollymere (WSM 49010). This red brick house was constructed in 1912 and has blue brick details around the windows and a stone plaque with the name and date of the house on it. Further along the road are 14 and 16 Ednall Lane (WSM 49012) and 18 and 20 Ednall Lane (WSM 49013). These two pairs of houses are the same as 10 and 12 Ednall Lane, built in 1890-1900, but were built a few years after in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The area around the church also contains two buildings worth mentioning. 18 Church Street and 2 Crown Close (WSM 49020) are a pair of early 20<sup>th</sup> century semi-detached brick houses. They have pairs of segmental arched windows and a moulded brick string course. Adjacent to

this is 4 and 6 Crown Close (WSM 49041), also of early 20<sup>th</sup> century date. This pair of semi-detached houses is different. It has ground floor bay windows, hipped roof and eaves on brackets.

#### 4.5.4 20<sup>th</sup> century demolished or disused buildings

The following 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings are recorded on the HER as having been demolished or disused.

WSM 27640 Air Raid Shelters, Market Street

WSM 29372 School used as Civil Defence Headquarters

WSM 29375 Site of Drill Hall, Church Street

WSM 29416 Royal Observer Corps Post Alcester Road

WSM 33051 Air Raid shelter Button Factory

WSM 36576 Clinic, Recreation Road used as First Aid Post

WSM 36667 Site of Fire Station, Church Street

#### 4.5.5 20<sup>th</sup> century implications of 20<sup>th</sup> century archaeology

The main focus of research into 20th century material culture in Worcestershire has been the 'Defence of Worcestershire Project' which has conducted wide-ranging research into buildings

and installation built during WWII (Wilks 2007). The projects work is reflected in some of the recorded buildings and structures listed above.

## 5 Geoaerchaeological evidence

### Nick Daffern

#### 5.1 Topography, geology and soils

##### 5.1.1 Bedrock Geology

The entire study area is underlain by the Bromsgrove Sandstone Formation of the Sherwood Sandstone Group consisting of red, brown and grey sandstones interbedded with red and brown siltstones and mudstones. Formation occurred approximately 234 – 248 MA (million years ago) in the early Triassic Period when Central Britain was a hot, arid

landlocked desert lying approximately 10 – 20° north of the equator, the present day latitude of the Sahara Desert. The rocks of the Bromsgrove Sandstone Formation were deposited by long, braided river systems transporting material northwards from the Malverns, Mendips, Dartmoor and North-Western France.

##### 5.1.2 Superficial geology

Undifferentiated alluvium deposited by the Spadesbourne Brook is identified within the BGS mapping consisting of "Normally soft to firm consolidated, compressible silty clay, but can contain layers of silt, sand, peat and basal gravel. A stronger, desiccated surface zone may be present."

There are also drift deposits of the third (main) river terrace of the River Severn (formerly

known as the Holt Heath member). The dating of these deposits is controversial at present. It has previously been hypothesised that these gravels correlate with the Wasperton Sand and Gravel Member of the Avon Valley dating to the Mid Devensian although Maddy et al (1991) assigned them a post Last Glacial Maximum date. The latter has been questioned by recent OSL dating at Holt Heath which suggests that they may in fact have been deposited earlier



than this and can in fact be dated to MIS5d – 5b (~110 – 90Ka) (Tony Brown, pers comm). If the latter is shown to be true and the acceptance of the proposed early Devensian occupation of

Britain from Dartford (Wenban-Smith *et al* 2010) then these deposits have the potential for early Devensian archaeology although the likelihood of this would be very small.

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### 5.1.3 Soils

The soils in this area are mapped by the Soil Survey of England and Wales (1983) as being those of the 541b Bromsgrove formation consisting of "well-drained reddish coarse

loamy soils over soft sandstone, but deep in places. Associated fine loamy soils with slowly permeable sub-soils and slight waterlogging. Risk of water erosion."

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## 5.2 Borehole data

### 5.2.1 Methodology

A total of 76 borehole records from the British Geological Survey (NERC) Borehole record viewer (<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/data/boreholescans/home.html>) were investigated to establish the nature and possible potential of deposits underlying the study area for the Bromsgrove Townscape Heritage Initiative project (Fig 4).

The records were viewed and recorded in order to filter out unnecessary information, standardise the units of measurements and allow imprecise or poorly recorded logs to be

discarded. The ground surface heights above Ordnance Datum (AOD) were recorded where possible but this information was not present in the majority of cases.

Unfortunately, the majority of the boreholes were focused in a line through the middle of the study area with only areas TC 8, TC 16 and TC 12 containing borehole data. Despite this the available data has provided a northeast to southwest transect approximately following the valley of the Spadesbourne Brook through the study area.

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### 5.2.2 Results

The results of the borehole analysis are presented below. The investigation of the borehole records show that the surface topography is matching the undulations of the underlying solid geology with the Bromsgrove Sandstone Formation dipping from the north-east (83.77m AOD – BH SO97 SE340) to the south-west (79.10m AOD – BH SO97 SE519). Sandstone was encountered as shallowly as 2.24m BGS (below ground surface) in BH SO97 SE524 and as deep as 6.40m BGS in BH SO97 SE342 although typically geology was encountered between 3.50m – 4.50m BGS.

Overlying this were gravels of the third Severn terrace (formerly the Holt Heath member) although these gravels were restricted to the northeast of the study area, north of Recreation Road around The Strand. The reason for this concentration is that the gravels have been truncated, reworked and transported by the Spadesbourne Brook during the Holocene.

Alluvial deposits associated with the Spadesbourne Brook were abundant and were encountered in virtually all boreholes. Unfortunately the descriptions vary (based upon the subjective nature of borehole recording) as do the depths and thicknesses and therefore no detailed spatial patterns could be ascertained. On average the upper boundary of the alluvium lay 1.02m BGS with the base of the alluvium lying at 2.08m BGS with an overall average thickness of 1.06m although, as a general rule, alluvium was thickest to the north-east of the study area.

Organic deposits were recorded in nineteen of the boreholes which can be divided into two groups, organic alluvium and organic overburden/fills. The latter generally consist of black sandy and/or clayey silts with frequent rubble, CBM and/or ash with occasional to rare organics. The nature of the deposits is unclear and they may be modern in origin although as

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these fills are undifferentiated (ie all human occupation layers are lumped together under one stratigraphic unit), there is the possibility that they may represent earlier domestic refuse and/or cess deposits of medieval or post-medieval date.

The organic alluvial deposits can be typified as being soft, dark brown or black silt or rarely organic sand and/or gravel. The organics that were identified were mainly focused in the north-east of the study area around Market Street and The Strand where the Spadesbourne Brook enters the centre of Bromsgrove town centre.

Overburden was present across the majority of the area with an average thickness of 1.02m of made ground per borehole. The nature of this made ground/overburden varied with no discernable spatial pattern with clinker, ash, tarmac, sandstone, concrete and ceramic building material (CBM) eg brick and tile, being the predominant constituents.

Unfortunately in the case of clinker, ash and CBM, no information is given as regards colour, dimensions or features and therefore they cannot be utilised as a means of giving a temporal framework to the stratigraphy of the boreholes.

### 5.2.3 Limitations

The main problem with utilising the borehole logs is that the recording of these logs is subjective i.e. level of description and/or accuracy will vary depending on the aims of the project, the methodology utilised (i.e. rig type) and the quality of the geotechnician. In the author's experience, potentially significant archaeological or palaeoenvironmental layers/lenses will not be recorded. This is either based on their perceived modern age and becoming "fill", "overburden" or "made ground"

or that they are deemed too thin and/or insignificant to be relevant from a geotechnical or construction point of view and are grouped in with other alluvial units.

The other main issue with these boreholes is that there is no flexibility in the location investigated as the methodology is solely reliant upon existing datasets although fortunately in this instance, a south-west to north-east transect along the Spadesbourne Brook was created.

## 6 Palaeo-environmental evidence

### Liz Pearson

#### 6.1 Introduction

Only one instance of environmental remains being recovered from Bromsgrove was noted at the time of the CMHTS report (Pearson 1996, 10, 13), an excavation between St John's Street and the High Street (WSM 19667; Whitehouse 1960). Here a layer accumulated between c 1640 and 1670 contained an assemblage of unidentified animal bones. Since the CMHTS report, environmental remains recovered include small assemblages of animal bone recovered during fieldwork (but not reported on by a specialist: WSM 19661, 27153, 30450, 31883 and 34489) and waterlogged wood identified from early post-medieval deposits on

land to the rear of 8 – 16 Worcester Road (WSM 311883, Rudge 2002). Dark humic deposits were also noted on this site. The wood was also not subject to specialist analysis.

There has been little archaeological fieldwork or recorded observation during construction or demolition work in the town, and there is little excavated evidence for the survival of biological remains. Consideration of the soil conditions and topography, however, give some indication of the potential for environmental archaeological research.

#### 6.2 Potential

Good survival of organic remains preserved by waterlogging are known to exist outside the historic town centre at Oakhalls (Stratford Road) where two ponds survive as earthworks: peaty deposits relating to these were revealed during fieldwork (Edwards *et al* 2000). The ponds are thought to be part of a manorial complex. Borehole logs (Section 5) show that organic alluvial deposits exist alongside the Spadesbourne Brook which runs through the town to the west of the High Street. Here, mill ponds are shown on 19<sup>th</sup> century maps associated with the Town Mill, (WSM 19681 is thought to relate to this mill) and Blackmore Mill (WSM 19691), both possibly dating from the medieval period and Cotton Mill (WSM 19692) of 18<sup>th</sup> century date. These features, and organic deposits within the Spadesbourne Brook valley have the potential to provide information relating to the surrounding natural environment. They are currently being incorporated into a GIS layer within the Worcestershire HER, as the result of an ongoing project which has digitally mapped small wetland sites in selected areas of Worcestershire.

In features associated with tenement plots, domestic and industrial waste may also be well preserved. The greatest potential for recovery of significantly large assemblages of human bone is the graveyard associated with St John's Church, and adjacent, the southern boundary of the large town cemetery which borders the project area on the south-west side. The soils are likely to be slightly acid, and therefore only limited survival of animal bone and molluscs can be expected.

As few environmental remains have been recovered in Bromsgrove, any environmental material would be of interest. This could provide information on diet, living conditions and agricultural or industrial economy. Future excavation should include a policy of sampling and wet-sieving deposits in order to recover plant, insect, molluscs and small animal remains in conjunction with hand-collection of larger items. Where appropriate, particularly where waterlogged deposits are predicted to exist (see above), specialist sampling for soil and pollen analysis may be required.

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## 7 Artefactual evidence

### Derek Hurst

The CMHTS report on Bromsgrove noted in 1996 that little artefactual evidence was available for the town of Bromsgrove (Hurst 1996, 10, 13) as follows:

There is an antiquarian reference to a possible Roman coin (WSM 21484), while the earliest authenticated finds from the study area are sherds of medieval pottery recovered during a watching brief on the new Market hall site (WSM 20645). Post-medieval finds include an assemblage from a site at the corner of the High Street and St John's Street (WSM 19661; Oswald 1960, Whitehouse 1960) dating to the 17th to early 18th century, and another dating to the 16th to 18th century from the site of the new Market Hall (WSM 20645). The former comprised a wide range of artefacts; pottery, clay pipe, glass, leather, and metalwork. A reference to the demolition of the Crown Inn in High Street (WSM 19678; Anon 1909) mentions 'daggers' and other finds, but no dating information is available. Most of the artefacts have not been located.

There have been few archaeological observations in the town, and so the quality of the

buried artefactual evidence is not known in any detail.

**Period discussion.** On the present evidence, even if the Roman coin find (WSM 21484) is authentic, it is likely that this is a stray find. The medieval pottery is from a single site (WSM 20645), and constitutes too small a group for any detailed interpretation. In contrast the post-medieval artefacts have been more common, and seem to constitute a typical domestic group. The survival of leather suggested that there may be some potential for waterlogged conditions, which greatly increases the quality of archaeological deposits.

Overall the pottery is a medium-sized group (about 400 sherds). Pottery fabric types, and hence provenances, have not been identified, and so there was little archaeological evidence for economic links. Oswald (1960) identified most of the clay pipes as being products of Broseley in Shropshire.

**Comparison with documentary evidence.** The possibility of pottery and tile production in 13th century Bromsgrove has been noted, based on



the evidence of personal names (Hurst 1990, 247-8). Other documentary evidence suggests that there were several industries based in the town in the post-medieval period. These included textiles in the 16th to 18th century, nail manufacture and glass making in the 17th to 19th centuries, bronze founding in the 18th to 19th centuries, and rope making in the 19th century. Some of these industries are notable for leaving little artefactual evidence in the archaeological record (eg rope making), but others may be expected to be well represented archaeologically (eg iron and bronze working). The presence of these industries suggests that some post-medieval deposits may be substantial.

The present review is an update of the 1996 results and is based largely on the published reports of about 16 archaeological interventions from 1994 onwards (information from Worcestershire HER). No additional search of written documentary sources or museum collections was undertaken as part of this current review.

While more prehistoric finds have now appeared there have been less than three worked flints at the most at a time (WSM 27153, 29559, 30450) and, where more Roman material has appeared, it is just a few sherds (WSM 27153, 30063), and even these were residual (ie had been redeposited in later contexts). Medieval finds remained sparse, and none were of earlier medieval date (ie they were all broadly 13th/14th–16th century; WSM 26932, 27153, 29559, 31883, 30450). Post-medieval pottery, and a range of other typical finds of the period, occurred more widely, as might be expected, but only in such minimal quantities, so that even these sometimes drew surprise from the archaeologist (Williams 2005).

It is also being increasingly recognised that distributions of finds made by metal detectorists can provide valuable evidence for past activity, now that these data are being collected and collated under a national system (the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS)). To date ten objects have been thereby recorded for Bromsgrove as follows: a Bronze Age spearhead ([WMID2498](#)), Roman lead spindle whorl ([WAW-8BF611](#)), 5 Roman coins ([WMID4621](#), [WMID2990](#), [WMID2472](#), [WMID2473](#), [WMID2474](#)), a medieval coin ([WAW-283A47](#)), a post-medieval cloth-seal ([WMID793](#)), and a die ([WAW-1115B8](#)). Full details of these on the PAS database were not available, so the detailed

circumstances and locations etc of these finds cannot presently be discussed, though in the case of the Bronze Age spearhead this was reputed to have been found in association with a peat deposit (Dalwood 2000), suggesting that it might represent a votive offering in a formerly boggy area in line with other metalwork finds of the period. Sometimes, therefore, the PAS data may help provide some insight to the nature of past landscape at Bromsgrove and its use. And, in future, the PAS evidence might increasingly give a better clue to the general context of specific field interventions, as more evidence accumulates.

Archaeological review of artefactual evidence has, therefore, tended to confirm the earlier impression (in 1996) that, apart from occasional (essentially ?stray) finds of earlier date (prehistoric, Roman), there was relatively little activity in the Bromsgrove area until the later medieval period. This general impression of scarcity is now additionally compounded by negative findings even on sites expected to generate evidence of post-medieval industrial activity (ie Goad and Darch 2003; Williams 2005), and in the latter case the overall shortage of even pottery was especially commented on. And so it seems fair to say that the minimal quantities of artefactual material, even in the post-medieval deposits, is a particular feature of the evidence reviewed, with several sites even drawing a complete blank (eg Williams 2004).

Overall, therefore, few archaeological artefacts have come light from archaeological interventions since the publication of the above statement in 1996, and, where they have, they largely seem to suggest the same conclusions as were drawn before. However, it may well still be a mistake to read too much into the finds evidence from fieldwork interventions alone to date (and as summarised above), as clearly key parts of the town have never been subject to modern archaeological investigation, while the PAS data for the area is still relatively limited, and so it could be premature to make too much of this at present as well. Accordingly the present conclusions should remain provisional, though with the same picture intact after nearly 20 years of further research, then the chance that the right conclusion was reached in 1996, does seem to have increased significantly.

## 8 Statement of historic urban character

### 8.1 Town summary

#### 8.1.1 Historic environment overview

This detailed review of evidence relating to the historic environment of Bromsgrove reveals that there is considerable survival of historic buildings and buried archaeological remains. A range of historic building styles remains within the town, although often refronting has not been sympathetic and often the quality and potential of these properties is not fully appreciated.

In the mid to late 20<sup>th</sup> century Bromsgrove saw massive expansion in part due to town's proximity to the Birmingham and the West Midlands conurbation. During this period there

was considerable demolition and rebuilding of the town centre, much of it to facilitate the use of the car which resulted in open space in the centre which had not previously existed. Many properties fronting the High Street were demolished and back plots were cleared and opened up as car parks. There is therefore much potential for the survival of sub surface archaeology but the potential of this archaeology has yet to be realized through excavation.

#### 8.1.2 Historic environment designations

**Conservation areas** There are two conservation areas within the town, which have benefited from recent Conservation Area Statements. The Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area was designated by Worcestershire County Council in 1968. This included both the town and area round the church. However, following a reappraisal in 2011, the St John's area was designated as a separate conservation area.

#### **Scheduled Ancient**

**Monuments** There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments

in the town centre of Bromsgrove.

**Listed buildings** There are 60 listed buildings in Bromsgrove town centre. These range from the 12<sup>th</sup> century St John's Church to the Bromsgrove School Memorial Chapel built in 1931. The majority of the listed buildings are on the High Street with 33 out of the 60 fronting onto the street itself.

#### 8.1.3 Historic building materials

The buildings of Bromsgrove are typical of the types and style of buildings to be found across the whole of north Worcestershire and the use of the building materials is also typical of Worcestershire. Worcestershire has a wide variety of natural building materials available across the county. As such, the buildings of Worcestershire display this variety within the style and decoration. However, at different periods, certain building materials were more prevalent, whether through fashion or ease of use, and the buildings of each period are more

likely to show this prevalence. The natural building materials around Bromsgrove were timber, oak and elm were common in the area; sandstone, from the Bromsgrove Sandstone Formation; and brick, formed from the local clays.

Timber was the most common building material in the medieval period and was used for the construction of most buildings, from the smallest, rudest, structures of a single room to more costly, high status buildings such as the

Merchant's House, now at Avoncroft Museum but formerly in Worcester Road, and 108 and 110 High Street. The use of timber continued into the post-medieval period with large and small timber-framed buildings being constructed throughout the later 16<sup>th</sup> century and 17<sup>th</sup> century. The former Hop Pole Inn, now 1 New Road, is dated to 1572. It has a large amount of decorative timber work, not including the additions of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century when it was moved from its original position on the High Street. 1 High Street, dated to around 1600, has geometrical framing with 'fleur-de-lys' motifs. On the High Street, much of the 17<sup>th</sup> century timber-framing has now been hidden behind brick façades. The style of timber-framing, and its widespread use in the medieval and early post-medieval period, is a building style and technique that echoes that used across the county.

The local sandstone, from the Bromsgrove Sandstone Formation, was used in the medieval and post-medieval periods for the very large structures of high status. St John's Church is the obvious example of this. The church was built originally in the 12<sup>th</sup> century but the predominant fabric today is 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century. Grafton Manor is also constructed of sandstone and can mainly be dated to the later 16<sup>th</sup> century. The local sandstone was also used for smaller buildings and boundary walls throughout the post-medieval period and into the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. However, the nature of the local stone often required that it was used for mass walling and not for the detailed stonework of mouldings such as tracery, mullions, plaques or crests. The stone used for this purpose was often limestone which occurs elsewhere in Worcestershire and therefore would not have to be transported great

distances. This same Oolitic Limestone, from the south of Worcestershire, was also used in conjunction with brickwork from the 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards, again for the detailed mouldings. This use of stone for the construction of large, high status, buildings can be seen across Worcestershire, for example for many years Worcestershire Cathedral would have been the only stone building in the city. Also the use of limestone for the detailed mouldings can also be seen on other buildings in the county.

Whilst brick was being used for buildings in the medieval period, it is very rare to find this in Worcestershire because of more easily accessible building materials, such as timber. It is really only in the 17<sup>th</sup> century when brick began to be used in the County. Brick is a very common material in Worcestershire due to the widespread clay that is used to make brick. Brickworks became more common in the later 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, but previous to this it was not uncommon to find bricks being made on the building site during construction. In Bromsgrove, the earliest brick can be found in buildings dating from the late 1600s, for example Bromsgrove Grammar School House is dated to 1695 and 89 High Street is marked with the date 1699. The use of brick became more common from the 18<sup>th</sup> century and it also became fashionable. Timber-frame buildings would be replaced with brick or, as it was cheaper, they would be merely re-fronted. This is visible on the High Street of Bromsgrove where a number of structures have evidence of timber-frame behind their brick frontage. With the development of brick manufacture in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, more elaborate brick buildings could be constructed and often included highly moulded brickwork, such as the former vicarage and Council Offices St John's Court.

#### 8.1.4 Archaeological potential

The archaeological potential for the Bromsgrove town centre may be summarised as follows:

1. There is moderate potential for the survival of prehistoric or Roman waterlogged deposits on the Spadesbourne Brook. The current brook has been straightened and channelled but former courses may survive as
2. There is a low potential for the survival of features associated with the Roman road

palaeochannels and here there is potential for the survival, not only of deposits suitable for plant macrofossil and pollen analysis from which past environments can be reconstructed but also wooden structures related to water management.