



BROMSGROVE TOWN

CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

APRIL 2012



BROMSGROVE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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This is a consultation draft of the Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area Character Appraisal. Comments are welcome and should be sent to the Strategic Planning Team, Bromsgrove District Council, Burcot Lane, Bromsgrove, B60 1AA.

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PART 1 CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

1.0 INTRODUCTION



- 1.1 The purpose of a Conservation Area Character Appraisal is to identify the factors and features which make an area special, based on an in-depth assessment of an area's buildings, spaces, evolution and sense of place. This is the first step in developing a management plan for the continued preservation and enhancement of a Conservation Area. An appraisal evaluates the positive, neutral and negative features of the area and suggests opportunities for improvement. It is not unusual for the boundary of a Conservation Area to fluctuate over time as the area evolves, and an assessment of the current and potential boundaries is normally part of the appraisal process.
- 1.2 The Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area was originally designated by Worcestershire County Council in 1968 containing "Area A High Street" and "Area B St John's". The boundary was extended in 1983 and again in 1989 to include the Spadesbourne Brook, the Strand, Crown Close, 9-15 New Road, 64-78 Worcester Road and Hanover Street. At some point the use of Areas A and B ceased and the area is formally designated as one complete Conservation Area.
- 1.3 An appraisal of the Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area was carried out in July 2009 in accordance with the guidance given by English Heritage in their 'Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals' publication. As a result the boundaries of the Conservation were reconsidered and revised. The area around St John's Church was removed from the Conservation Area and a new St John's Conservation Area created. The area from Hanover Street to Bromsgrove School was removed because this area has a limited relationship with the rest of the Town Centre and all valuable historic buildings are already listed.

- 1.4 A further appraisal was carried out in December 2011 in light of the Application for Townscape Heritage Initiative funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The appraisal has been carried out in accordance with the most recent guidance from English Heritage 'Understanding Place: Conservation Area, Designation, Appraisal and Management' (2011). Although produced by the Council, local societies and residents will be encouraged to contribute to and comment on the draft document. This will result in a well rounded assessment of the area incorporating local knowledge, perceptions and suggestions.
- 1.5 The draft appraisal will be made available on the Council's website, in the local library, at the Customer Service Centre in the Dolphin Centre and the Council House to ensure that it reaches a wide audience. There will also be a small exhibition in the main foyer of the local library to explain the purpose of the document and collect local comments.
- 1.6 Map 2 identifies positive, neutral and negative buildings within the Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area. This is not an exclusive list and omission of any particular building should not be taken as an indication that it has no value. Positive buildings make a notable contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and are usually good examples of historic buildings with only minor alterations or additions. Neutral buildings make a limited contribution and are generally the much altered historic buildings, but may provide opportunities for enhancement. Negative buildings are those properties which detract from the character and appearance of the conservation area, where replacement with a new building would be encouraged, subject to compliance with other planning policies.





Aerial view of Bromsgrove Town Centre

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2.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 2.1 A Conservation Area is defined in the 1967 Civic Amenities Act as “an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”. It is not the purpose of a Conservation Area to prevent development, but to manage change in a positive and proactive way that benefits current and future generations.
- 2.2 Conservation Area status means that a special form of Planning Permission called Conservation Area Consent is required for the total or substantial demolition of any building over 115m³ in size, the demolition of a boundary wall over 1m in height next to the highway or 2m elsewhere and the removal of any agricultural building constructed before 1914. There is a general presumption against the loss of buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. Additional controls are also placed over trees within the area, meaning that an owner must submit a formal notification of works to the Council six weeks before starting work.

2.3 The primary legislation governing Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This legislation includes certain statutory duties which the Council as Local Planning Authority must uphold. S69(1) of the Act requires Local Planning Authorities to designate any areas which they consider to be of special architectural or historic interest as Conservation Areas, and under s69(2) to review such designations from time to time. The Council has a further duty under s71(1) to formulate and prepare proposals for the preservation and enhancement of its Conservation Areas from time to time.

2.4 When assessing applications for development within designated Conservation Areas, the Local Planning Authority must pay special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Areas under s72(1) of the Act. This does not mean that development will necessarily be opposed, only that this should not be detrimental to the special interest of the wider Conservation Area. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) contains more specific guidance relating to development in the historic environment.

2.5 The Bromsgrove District Local Plan adopted in 2004 contains a series of specific policies relating to the historic environment (see Appendix 3). These policies help guide the Local Planning Authority when assessing planning applications, to ensure that new developments and alterations preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. The Council is also in the process of producing an Area Action Plan (AAP) for the town centre which sets out the Council objectives for housing, employment, transport, retail etc over the next 15-20 years. The Conservation Area Character Appraisal will form a key part of the evidence supporting the AAP.



Manchester House, High Street



Manchester House, High Street

3.0 DEFINITION OF SPECIAL INTEREST



83-95 High Street



Slug and Lettuce, High Street



58-66 High Street

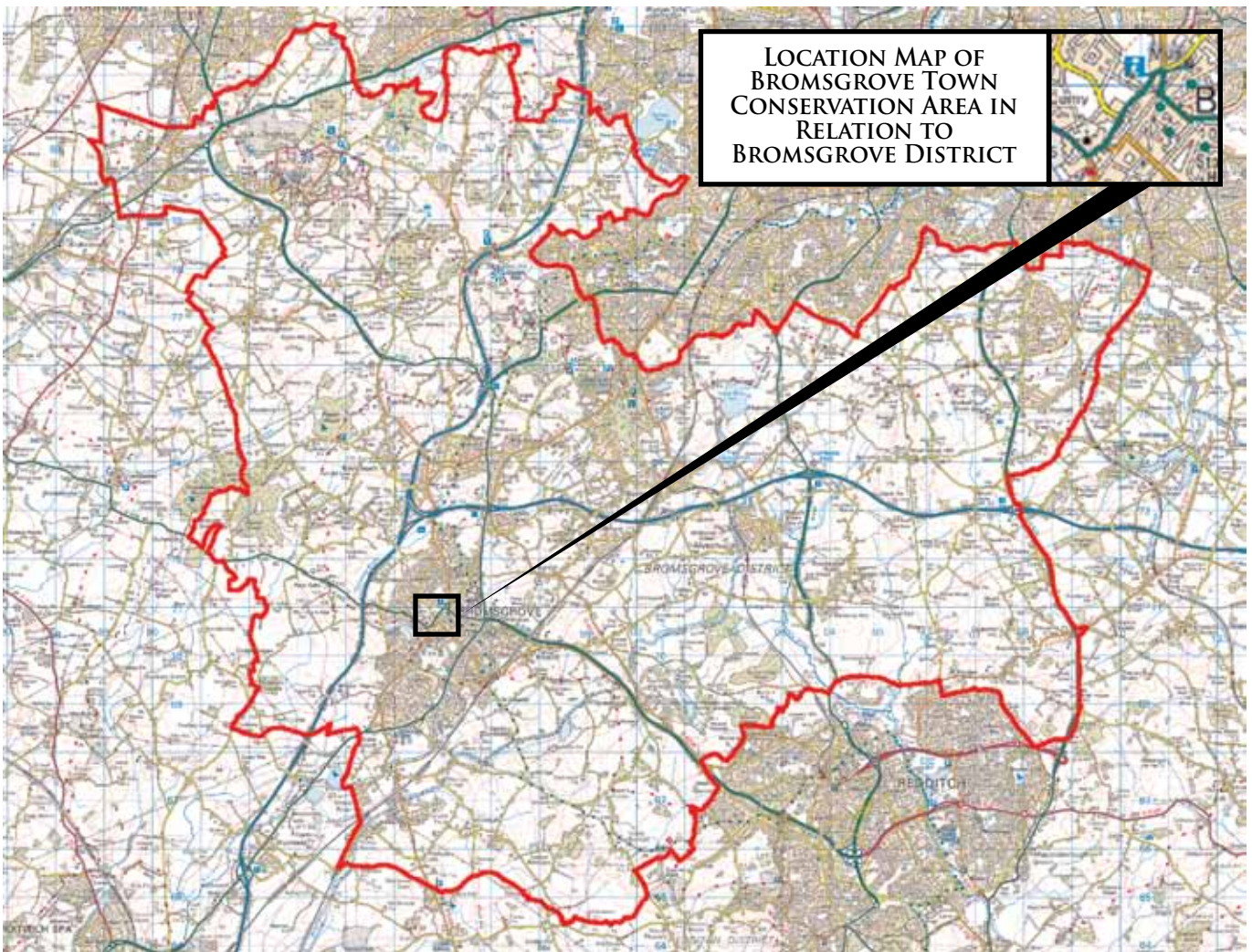
- 3.1 The special interest of a Conservation Area is defined by more than its appearance and includes the atmosphere, texture, sense of place and setting as well as more obvious qualities such as groups of historic buildings. Notable buildings and the spaces between buildings set an overall context for an area, but a designated Conservation Area should be more than just a collection of attractive buildings
- 3.2 The Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area contains an assortment of notable historic buildings dating from predominantly the 18th and 19th centuries but with some earlier surviving timber framed buildings. A range of architectural styles is represented from English vernacular, to restrained Georgian and more elaborate Victorian Gothic buildings. This variety of elevational treatments and styles demonstrate high quality construction and craftsmanship, giving a rich texture to the town centre, and are tangible reminders of the town's past prosperity. The medieval street pattern, based upon the older Roman Road from Droitwich, the original market place and the remains of some burgage plots have all survived.
- 3.3 The narrowness of the historic building plots, varied rooflines and the overall height of the buildings give an overall impression of vertical emphasis, and a strong sense of enclosure. The more modern developments unfortunately detract from this being generally set back from the established building line, sometimes a storey lower and include detailing which gives a horizontal rather than vertical emphasis. These infill sites do at least give opportunities for redevelopment in the future without requiring the loss of more historic buildings.

4.0 ASSESSMENT OF SPECIAL INTEREST

4.1 Location and Setting

The Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area is located in the centre of the town, which itself lies in the South West of the District of Bromsgrove, approximately 15 miles South West of Birmingham and 15 miles North East of Worcester.

The Spadesbourne Brook defines the boundary to the West of the Conservation area (although the more recently realigned Market Street is now the more obvious boundary) and the predominately 20th Century Windsor Street is the boundary to the East. The medieval street pattern, including burgage plots and the Market Place (where the High Street is noticeably wider) are still visible. The High Street follows the main south west/north east Roman Road from Droitwich.



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The town centre lies in the valley of the Spadesbourne Brook, with the ground rising to St John's in the south west and up Station Road and Stratford Road to the south east and north east. The immediate surrounding area to the Conservation Area is largely built up, leaving the Conservation Area totally ingrained within the larger market town. To the south west is the St John's Conservation Area, centred around the Church of St John, which sits on top of a hill overlooking the centre of Bromsgrove, and can also be seen several miles away as well as from the Town Centre Conservation Area. The two conservation areas are separated by Market Street which forms a 'bypass' around the town centre. The buildings along its north side provide a contrast to those of both conservation areas being large detached units and include the Grade II listed St John's Nursing Home, a large Asda supermarket, the recently constructed St John's Health Centre (in a dominant modern style) and the Grade II listed, Wrenian Baroque, Parkside School. The area immediately around St John's Church and stretching down to Market Street is predominately green, comprising the grounds to the St John's Nursing Home, which was originally constructed as the vicarage to the church. To the rear of the churchyard is the cemetery. Beyond the church to the south west, further along the Kidderminster Road is Sanders Park. To the south east of the Town Centre Conservation Area is the largely Victorian residential area off New Road and the main Bromsgrove School Campus. To the north east is the Victorian/interwar residential area off the Stratford Road and Birmingham Road.



4.2 Historic Development and Archaeology

The main axis of the town is the Roman Road from Droitwich, which probably formed part of an older saltway. Bromsgrove was probably the site of an Anglo Saxon Minster. A 'reeve' (an official elected annually by the serfs to supervise lands for a lord) and a 'beadle' (a parish constable of the Anglican Church often charged with duties of charity) are recorded as being employed in 1086 which indicates that Bromsgrove was an important Royal manor. The town of Bromsgrove developed in the second half of the 12th Century, with the right to have a weekly market being granted in 1200. The town would seem to have been very prosperous at this time, however this prosperity diminished shortly afterwards.



Historic maps taken from Council archives

In 1533 records show that Bromsgrove had an established trade in narrow cloth and friezes, and as early as the 16th century cloth manufacture was Bromsgrove's chief industry. This industry was due in part to the large number of mills sited in Bromsgrove and supplied by water streaming off the Lickey Hills. The linen and cloth industries thrived into the 18th century alongside, from the 17th century, the manufacture of nails, which later became the predominant industry. Bromsgrove continued to flourish in the 19th century, with nail production and button making being the main industries. The completion of the Lickey Incline in 1840 allowed the town to be connected to Birmingham by rail.

The High Street and immediate vicinity clearly exhibit a number of medieval elements. The churchyard lies immediately to the West of the town on an area of raised ground overlooking the main road. This area may have been the site of an earlier Anglo Saxon Church, but the earliest remnants in the existing Church date from the 12th century. The street system in and around the High Street is very clearly medieval, consisting of the main South West /North East route between Worcester and Birmingham which is the High Street itself. From this road two roads go off to the West (Kidderminster Road and Stourbridge Road) and one to the East (Stratford Road). These roads are probably of medieval date along with Hanover Street and St John Street, which lead to the Church. The 1839 tithe map shows many small lanes leading from the High Street to the backs of burgage plots, many of which are medieval in origin, with narrow frontages to the High Street. It also indicates that the High Street, Worcester Road and The Strand were almost completely developed by 1840. In addition it would appear from the tithe map that the infilling of medieval burgage plots behind the main street frontage with courts and yards was also well underway, however there would appear to be fewer lanes leading through to the rear of the High Street, but small accessways by the time of the first Ordnance Survey in 1883. Both maps show that the area beyond the High Street was predominately rural and agricultural. New Road was cut through in 1865 and significant development can be seen in the 1883 Ordnance Survey Map.

The weekly market, originally granted in 1200, was probably held in the wider part of the High Street, a common feature of medieval high streets. The street market was re-established in 2008 following the closure of the Market Hall, but is largely located towards The Strand end of the High Street with occasional specialist farmers' and continental markets.





Street Market, High Street



St. John's Church from Worcester Street



Rear of High Street

4.3 Architectural Quality and Built Form

4.3.1 Plan Form

The High Street, Worcester Road and The Strand follow the main south west/north east route between Worcester and Birmingham, which was originally part of the Roman Road from Droitwich, resulting in Bromsgrove having a linear plan form. This is particularly noticeable in area photographs and early maps. The remaining street pattern has a medieval influence, with the much wider market place at the south eastern end of the High Street and still evidence of the narrow burgage plots to the rear of the High Street and The Strand mainly on the west side. Later development on the eastern side of the High Street has largely obliterated the remains of the burgage plots. At intermittent intervals, particularly on the west side of the High Street are some of the original alleyways of varying width leading to the rear of High Street buildings, a reference back to the burgage plot and rear courts of buildings used as workshops etc.

4.3.2 Views

The elongated pattern of development within the town centre means that it is not possible to view the Conservation Area in its entirety from any one point. Key views can be identified however within each character zone, and from outside the Conservation Area boundary through to the main retail areas (see Map 2). Views of the Grade I listed St John's Church are also possible from gaps between the buildings on Worcester Road and from the Market Place. Unfortunately, the poorly landscaped area on Mill Lane detracts from views through to the Spadesbourne Brook. The view from High Street to Market Place has been spoiled by the loss of the old Town Hall in the 1930s and its replacement with a bulky modern office building.

4.3.3 Prevailing and Former Uses

The original medieval burgage plots resulted in a number of narrow units, with significant ancillary accommodation to the rear, some now in unconnected uses. Many of the rear workshops were originally part of the nailmaking industry in Bromsgrove. The upper floors of some buildings (particularly at the southern end of the High Street) are relatively grand indicating that they were originally constructed as houses for wealthy merchants. Unfortunately many of the ground floors have been altered extensively and often unsympathetically to accommodate modern retail uses.

The buildings within the Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area are now predominately in retail use with a mixture of A1, A2, A3, A4 and A5 uses - traditional retail, financial institutions and some pubs and cafes at around floor level. Some upper floors are in ancillary use, office space and storage; many others are vacant which has led to some condition and maintenance problems. Worcester Road is very much a secondary street to the High Street, with smaller local retail units.

4.3.4 Overall Character

Many of the buildings in the Conservation area, particularly in the High Street are of extremely good quality in terms of architecture, although this is rarely evident at ground floor level, but can be observed from looking at the upper floors. Several historic styles and periods are represented. The oldest buildings are 16th Century, mainly timber framed. There are also a number of timber framed buildings that were refronted at a later date but the evidence of the structure remains internally or to the rear. There are a numerous good examples of later periods of architecture, Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian. There are also a significant number of vernacular buildings characterised by being two or three storey, the upper storey comprising an attic space with a dormer window. In excess of 50 buildings are listed (see map 2) and an equally significant number of unlisted buildings can be described as making a positive contribution to the streetscape.

Although the area has an overall character as a complete Conservation Area, four main character zones can be identified.

Zone 1 contains the primary shopping area along the High Street. Zone 2 is centred on The Strand, which is physically separated from the rest of the Conservation Area by the busy junction at Stratford Road. Zone 3 stretches along Worcester Road from the junction with Market Place and has a tighter building line with narrower building plots than along High Street. (Zones 1 and 3 do blur together on the Eastern side of the High Street). Finally Zone 4 are the two small areas to the east of Windsor Street on Chapel Street and New Road.



Some examples of key buildings are identified in the assessment of each character zone and also in Map 2 attached as an appendix. It should be made clear that this is not a definitive list and as trends in conservation change some buildings which are now identified as having a neutral or negative impact could be more valued in the future. The identification of specific buildings in this document will not prejudice the determination of an application for Conservation Area Consent or redevelopment by the Local Planning Authority.

4.3.5 Zone 1: The High Street

The High street comprises the main area in the Conservation Area. It includes the former Market Place of the town at the junction of St John's Street and the High Street, where the road is notably wider. Although the market has recently moved back to the High Street it is currently held at the other end of the High Street around the junction with Mill Lane. The High Street is the principal retail street with shops, cafes, restaurants, banks and pubs. The High Street is almost completely pedestrianised with vehicular traffic passing only along the stretch between New Road to the junction with St John Street and Worcester Road. Delivery vehicles still have access to the High Street. The earliest buildings date from as early as the 16th century, although the majority are 18th and 19th century, with a significant number of 20th century buildings.

The linear street is lined with individual buildings which sit tight against each other at the back of the former pavement. The building line is only broken by the modern development on the east side of the High street, which was set back in the hope of achieving a road widening scheme in the post war era prior to the pedestrianisation scheme. The only breaks in the buildings occur where Church Street and New Road meet the High Street and Mill Lane cuts across it. There are a few pedestrian exits from the High Street to rear parking areas and rear buildings. At intermittent intervals, particularly on the west side of the High Street are alleyways of varying widths leading to the rear of buildings, a reference back to the burgage plots and courts of buildings to the rear used as workshops. Properties are mainly three storeys in height, with a few two storey with attic space and on the west side a significant number of two storey buildings, although generally they are 20th century buildings. These are however of various scales and designs which has created a lively street scene.



West side of High Street, South End



82-102 High Street



View of High Street from South

Buildings range largely in date from the 18th to the 20th century with a handful of older buildings, and are now all in commercial use. The older buildings, particularly those at the south end of the High Street were probably originally constructed as merchants houses, with ground floors being later converted into shop units and upper floors being converted into ancillary uses, sometimes offices or residential. A significant number of upper floors are vacant. Other buildings were quite possibly constructed as shops with living accommodation above. The 20th century units are generally purpose built as retail premises.

Many of the High Street buildings are of extremely good architectural quality and a variety of historic styles and periods are represented. Many of the 18th century buildings and early 19th century are large in size indicating status, particularly at the southern end of the High Street. They are typically more than four bays wide, some as wide as six bays, and over three storeys in height, one being a full four storeys. Although they have all lost their original ground floor frontages, their large first floor windows reflect high internal floor to ceiling heights. The principal elevations of most of the 18th and many of the early 19th century buildings reflect classical architectural influences of the period with symmetry and verticality in the elevations including sash windows, stone quoins and keystones, as well as some stone capped parapets and cornice detailing. One building has impressive stone pilasters to its upper three floors. The Victorian buildings are less grand but many are three storeys in height and several are two or three bays wide. They often have more simple detailing such as stone cills and rubbed brick lintels, but there is some polychromatic brick work and timber detailing to gables. The oldest buildings date from the 16th century and are timber framed, some of which have been re-fronted at a later date - but evidence of the earlier structure remains internally or to the rear. There are also a significant number of vernacular style buildings characterised by being two or three stories high, the upper storey comprising an attic space with a dormer window.

There are a number of 20th century buildings which have been integrated into the street scene with varying degrees of success. Most are two or three stories in height, with sometimes the third floor added in the roof space in a vernacular style.



23-29 High Street



91-93 High Street



134-136 High Street



To the rear of the High Street spaces and buildings are ill defined. There is evidence of the original burgage plots in places, but backland development over a number of years has destroyed many plots, and where major redevelopment has occurred on the High Street several plots have been completely lost. This has resulted in the west side of Windsor Street and parts of the east side of Market Street lacking any real character as they primarily comprise service entries to High Street buildings. However to the rear of the west side of the High Street (east side of Market Street) some plots have surviving historic workshops and other ancillary buildings which have been converted to new uses, although others are unused. These features are evidence of Bromsgrove's manufacturing history and development and are part of its special interest and character, although in most cases they have little or no relationship with the High Street frontages.



A significant number of buildings on the High Street are listed. The unlisted buildings are generally from the 19th and 20th centuries. The older unlisted buildings reflect their context in terms of their size and form, retaining most of their architectural features. Most of them make a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area. The quality of the 20th century buildings is more variable. With some an attempt has been made to fit into the street scene particularly in terms of height, verticality of upper floors windows and materials. Some, notably the 1950s buildings at 62 - 68 High Street, are of a distinctive architectural period, with sufficient detailing to add interest to the street scene. Some of the 20th century buildings can therefore be described as having a neutral impact on the character of the conservation area. Other modern units, particularly the development around Mill Lane and the buildings at the north east end of the High Street do not make a contribution to the character of the High Street but detract from it.



Slug and Lettuce, High Street

Due to the High Street now being the main commercial street in Bromsgrove, most shop fronts and signage have been replaced, many with little thought for the architecture of the individual buildings, or their historical context, and clearly detract from the architectural quality of the street scene.

Zone 1: High Street Key Buildings

The High Street character zone contains a high number of notable listed and unlisted historic buildings. 126-130 High Street (Grade II listed) was built in 1851 in blue brick with pale buff diaper pattern brickwork, tiled roof and stone mullioned windows. The timber bargeboards have both trefoil and quatrefoils patterns and add significant interest to the upper level of the building. 120 High Street (Grade II listed) is an 18th century building in the Georgian style with a low pitched pediment, moulded cornice and camber headed dormers. The ground floor has unfortunately been compromised by the addition of a modern shop front which is not in keeping with the character of the building

The exterior of Lloyds TSB Bank at 112 High Street (Grade II listed) dates from the early 19th century and has a classical stone portico and Doric columns, although its interior was entirely remodelled while retaining its exterior walls in 1970.

This building forms a key group with No's 104-112 High Street including the timber framed 16th century building at No's 108-110 High Street. This was constructed in 1533 and is the oldest building in the Conservation Area, although it has some later 19th century alterations including the shop fronts. This building was once the Unicorn Inn and the horn details can still be seen on the gables now adorned by Victorian bargeboards

Opposite Lloyds bank is a fine collection of 18th and 19th century buildings which have significant group value as well as being individually Grade II listed. The Red Lion PH at No.77 includes what was once the Roper Nail Warehouse to the rear, which originally formed part of a historic courtyard bordered by nail workers' cottages.

The timber framed former Hop Pole Inn on New Road (Grade II listed) was originally built in the High Street in 1572 but was later dismantled and relocated to this site in 1865. The upper floors retain the original framing with central jettied gable and carved bargeboards, but various features were added upon its reconstruction including the Victorian Gothic style porch and the chimneys.

The Golden Cross Hotel, 20 High Street (unlisted) was originally a 18th century coaching inn, but was substantially rebuilt in 1932. The brass menu holders on the front elevation were designed by the Bromsgrove Guild.

1 High Street (Grade II listed) dates from the early 17th century, as evident in its fine timber framing with fleur-de-lis motifs, but has been altered throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. The shop front is particularly unsympathetic and the building's setting adjacent to a major road junction has seriously compromised its significance.



108-112 High Street



Hop Pole, New Road



The Golden Cross, High Street



1 High Street

4.3.6 Zone 2: The Strand Architectural Character



The Strand



2 Stourbridge Road

Historically The Strand was a continuation of The High Street, and this becomes clear when looking at the aerial photographs and maps. Some of the listed buildings still have a 'High Street' address. Unlike the majority of the High Street, The Strand is open to vehicular traffic and forms part of the main route through Bromsgrove for traffic coming down the Stourbridge and Birmingham Roads and heading towards the Stratford Road. This has not only cut The Strand off from the High Street, but crossing from one side to the other is also difficult. The Spadesbourne Brook is now submerged beneath the road, historically there was a bridge. The road layout has undermined the group value significantly although the retention of the island containing the Grade II listed building, adds some coherence and connection between the two sides of the Strand. This area was the horsefair end of the town, which is probably why the horse trough was placed here. The small public space created in front of 2 Stourbridge Road with the reinstated 'Sanders Horse Trough' is underused because of the lack of pedestrian links and unattractive position in the centre of a busy road.

Like the High Street the buildings sit tightly against each other at the back of pavement. There is a small gap between 12 and 16/18 where Cupitts The Jewellers is set back, just beyond this road splits with The Strand continuing north east towards the Birmingham Road, although there is no vehicular access to this road, and the Stourbridge Road running off to the North. This leaves 2 Stourbridge Road, a large two storey building terminating The Strand on the east side before the junction with Market Street/Stourbridge Road/Birmingham Road. There is also access to the side of the Queens head Pub leading to the buildings at the rear.

Properties in The Strand comprise a mix of predominately 18th and 19th Century buildings all in commercial use, although unlike the High Street there are some offices uses in addition to the retail units and the public house. Upper floors to the retail units are a mix of ancillary uses or vacant.

The buildings in The Strand comprise an eclectic mix of largely historic buildings. The buildings on the north west side of the street are predominately small scale, two storey properties, beneath steeply pitched tiled roofs, in a vernacular style. The Queens Head provides a contrast being a larger scaled building, three storeys with a later two storey side extension. It is more similar in scale and height to the buildings opposite, although they still exhibit a vernacular style. Further along The Strand towards the Birmingham Road the buildings comprises more simple early 19th century properties, culminating in a larger 18th century building in a vernacular style. This character zone terminates the Conservation Area boundary and is notable in views through and into the wider Conservation Area, contributing to its setting. The varied roofline and use of dormer windows adds interest to this group of notable historic buildings, many of which have benefitted from an earlier restoration and have had timber sliding sash windows reinstated.

To the rear of the north west of The Strand there is some evidence of the original burgage plots and a number of ancillary buildings remain or have been rebuilt to a similar scale. The age of the older buildings on this stretch is more apparent from the rear, where timber framing is visible. The general setting is not enhanced by a large surface car park situated between the rear yards and Market Street. To the northeast side the rear plots are less visible but would appear to contain ancillary buildings and extensions of various ages.

The 18th century buildings in the Strand are all listed, as well as the Victorian Queens Head Public House. Most of the unlisted buildings make a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area, being of a similar scale and style.

The commercial location of The Strand has resulted in a proliferation of signage, particularly on the corner of Stratford Road and a balance needs to be sought to adequately advertise retail business on the edge of the Town Centre with preserving the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Zone 2: The Strand Key Buildings

The Queens Head PH is Grade II listed and dates from the early 19th century with a later extension to left hand side. The central stone door case with pediment and a carved depiction of Queen Alexandra (Queen consort to Edward VII and dowager Queen until her death in 1925) indicate the pub probably had alterations and modifications between 1901 and 1910. There are recessed 16 pane sliding sashes above with rather heavy rusticated lintels. The row of buildings next to the Queens Head (beyond the 1970s pastiche infills) at No. 25-27 The Strand are also Grade II listed, and were once timber framed but have been now re-fronted in red brick. Remnants of the timber frame have been found at the former Mitre Inn, a 19th century cider house which has now been converted to offices.



The Queens Head, The Strand



2 Stourbridge Road



The Strand



28 Birmingham Road and the Museum



The Strand

2 Stourbridge Road, in an island in the centre of the Strand, is now the offices of Thomas Horton but was originally built in 1701 as a gentleman's residence known as Cock Hall. In 1723 the building became the town's first workhouse and then a tannery - possibly the reason why this part of the town was once known as Rotten Row. The horse trough in front of the building was recently reinstated to its original position, after several years in Sanders Park.

On the other side of The Strand is a range of listed and unlisted historic buildings dating from the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, unfortunately let down by the blank frontage to No's 22-24 and poor quality signage to the retail units. The Grade II listed building at No's 6 to 12 The Strand dates from the 18th century with added Victorian dormers and surviving timber sliding sash windows. The adjacent building at No's 2 to 4 The Strand (now the Strand Centre) is a 20th century mock classical building, which wraps around the corner into Stratford Road terminating views out of the High Street.

Further past The Strand facing onto Birmingham Road is the former Town Museum and the Grade II listed building at No. 28 which is now a doctor's surgery. The Museum closed in 2009 and a new use for the building has yet to be found. This area was looked at for removal from the Conservation Area boundary, but discounted as there is still a historic connection with The Strand.



Horse Trough in front of 2 Stourbridge Road

4.3.7 Zone 3: Worcester Road Architectural Character

Worcester Road is a continuation of the High Street running south west from the High Street after Market Street /St John Street. There is vehicular access to the street but only one way from Market Place to Hanover Street.

The street is lined with individual buildings which generally sit tight against each other at the back of the pavement. The building line is broken by George Road and then by the Dog and Pheasant, half way along the street, which is set back from the building line, with an adjacent gap created by the access to the pub's rear car park. The gaps created allow views across to St John's Church to the south west as well as the Marker Hall site, immediately to the rear of Worcester Road. On the east side of Worcester Road the buildings again follow the back of pavement building line which is only broken by a modern development of shop units adjacent to Station Road which step back and the car showroom on the other corner, which has been excluded from the conservation area.

The properties on Worcester Road comprise a mix of largely 18th and 19th century buildings, with some modern retail and office buildings, which have attempted to reflect the scale and design of their neighbours. The buildings along Worcester Road are now almost entirely in commercial retail use at ground floor level, with a mix of ancillary storage, office and residential use above. It is likely that the buildings at the southern end of Worcester Road were originally constructed as residential but ground floors have gradually been converted to retail use.

The majority of the buildings on Worcester Road are 19th century, three storeys in height and one bay wide. Although simple in appearance they all exhibit some level of detailing including stone cills and decorative lintels. The narrow form of the buildings and the sense of verticality is enhanced by narrow sash windows to first and second floors, many of which have survived. The east side of Worcester Road has a significant number of two storey buildings, some more vernacular in appearance with dormer windows to attics and overall comprises more of an eclectic mix, which has produced a more varied appearance.



West side of Worcester Road



Corner of St. John's and Worcester Road



28-40 Worcester Road

This side of the road does noticeably increase in height to three storeys as it approaches the High Street, and the scale of the buildings also increase to two or three bays in width. Also located on this side of the road are the 'Lurve' Nightclub with an art deco frontage and the Hyundai garage, a new car showroom. Both buildings being considerably larger in foot print and scale than their neighbours. In addition on the corner of Worcester Road and St John Street is a dominant 1950's building, highly visible given the prominent location where the High Street is at its widest, and where it turns the corner into St John's Street. This building is somewhat out of character with those surrounding it.



41-47 Worcester Road

As with the High Street, spaces to the rear are ill defined. Some of the ancillary buildings which were once an important feature of Bromsgrove remain, but their original use is not apparent, and many are now in a poor state of repair. To the east side there has been some modern development which would appear to sit on the footprint of older buildings. The presence of the remains of these older buildings are evidence of Bromsgrove's history and development and are therefore part of the special interest and character of the conservation area.

Six buildings on Worcester Road are listed, all 18th century, located on the east side. The unlisted buildings are predominately Victorian, and particularly on the west side of the street are of a similar scale and style. Many have retained their period details, although a number of windows have been lost, and therefore most of them make a positive or neutral impact on the character of the High Street.

Worcester Road is very much a tertiary retail street and like the High Street and The Strand most of the shop fronts and signage has been replaced with little thought for the impact on the overall street scene, and they clearly detract from the quality of the High Street.

Zone 3: Worcester Road Key Buildings

There are only a few listed buildings in this part of the Conservation Area, interspersed with attractive unlisted historic buildings and some more neutral additions.

No.7 Worcester Road is Grade II* listed and forms a notable group with 3 and 5 Worcester Road which are Grade II listed. No.5 is now known as Kembrey House and converted to offices. The building dates from the late 18th century and has interesting 18th century gothic venetian windows on the ground and first floor and a pedimented doorpiece with Doric columns to the ground floor.

The group of unlisted buildings at No's 4 to 16 Worcester Road are mostly three storeys with a variety of architectural detailing at upper levels. Unfortunately the character of some of these buildings has been undermined by the poor quality shopfronts below, but they do retain sufficient architectural interest above ground floor to be worthy of retention.

No's 33, 35 and 37 Worcester Road are Grade II listed and were probably refronted in the 18th century but show indications of older buildings behind. The fine timber shopfronts date from the early 20th century and add interest to the wider streetscene. Consent has recently been granted to link No's 33 and 35 into one restaurant unit, preserving the external appearance of two individual units whilst bringing the building back into economic use.

The larger terrace of unlisted buildings towards the end of the Conservation Area have been harmed by the introduction of PVC windows to the upper floors and a series of inappropriate modern shopfronts and poor quality signage. A few original sash windows remain, window openings have not been altered and other period details still exist. They therefore currently make a contribution, albeit limited, to the Conservation Area.



5 and 7 Worcester Road



33, 35 and 37 Worcester Road



6 Worcester Road



New Road from the West



Chapel Street

4.3.8 Zone 4: New Road/Chapel Street

The two small areas around New Road and Chapel Street were considered for removal from the Conservation Area boundary in the 2009 review of the Conservation Area. This was discounted as they do contain some interesting historic buildings. Tudor House is the re-sited Hop Pole Inn taken down in 1840 and rebuilt in the 1867 to make way for New Road, and its two adjacent houses built at the same time are an important group indicative of the Victorian approach to buildings conservation and historical revival styles. The area beyond Tudor House on New Road includes two detached Victorian villas which retain their original sliding sash windows, number 15 New Road being particularly intact with all its original fenestration, barge boarding and porch and front door details. These properties could potentially be at risk of demolition if the conservation area protection was removed. On Chapel Street can be found two Grade II listed buildings - the Congregational Chapel and associated Sunday school plus an unlisted terrace 19th century terrace unfortunately undermined by the addition of PVC windows. The Congregational Church dates from 1833 and is in the Greek Revival style with a stuccoed façade and large arched windows (with a small non-conformist graveyard behind). The former Sunday School (now the United Reform Church Hall) was built in 1852 and is single storey, red brick building with blue brick dressings and tall arched windows similar in style to the church windows. No15 Chapel Street retains plasterwork designed by the Bromsgrove Guild on the ground floor.

4.3.9 Building Materials

Much of the character of Bromsgrove comes from the variety of the building materials used, especially in the detailing. The earliest buildings typically use materials that were available locally while the materials used in later buildings reflect the increasing availability of materials from further afield and changing architectural fashion. Although the buildings are essentially constructed from the same materials, there is much variation in the detailing to the buildings using other materials to provide interesting variations in the elevations as a whole. The retention of these traditional materials is important to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Walls

The predominant walling material in the conservation area is red brick. However to the rear of the High Street one finds buildings and the remains of boundary walls constructed in the local red/buff sandstone. There are a few timber frame buildings, and timber framed rear elevations with either wattle and daub, and brick infill panels. In addition some brick buildings have been painted and white stucco and render has also been used in a few cases.



Roofs

Roof coverings are predominately plain clay tiles of a red/brown hue. The tiles are largely machine made probably from the 19th century, with some examples of surviving earlier handmade tiles. There are a few examples of slate. Some of the more modern buildings have concrete tiles in a similar colour to the clay tiles.

Windows

Window frames are generally timber. Some buildings have frames that are flush with the external brickwork, typical in early Georgian architecture. There are also examples of vernacular buildings with dormer windows in the attic space, as at 89 to 93 High Street.

Shop fronts

A few historic timber shop fronts remain some with their original traditional roller blinds. The majority of shopfronts however are of a modern design constructed in either timber or aluminium.

Road Surfaces

Road surfaces are tarmac and pavements are a mix of block paving, concrete paviors and tarmac. Kerb stones are predominately concrete, but some natural stone kerbs have survived in The Strand. The alleyways and rear access ways are predominately of block paving, although some original blue bricks survive.

Local Detailing

A large number of buildings have decorative detailing in stone including keystones, quoins and window detailing, notably on the high status buildings at the Market Place end of the High Street, but even the later Victorian buildings have stone cills and lintels to break up their elevations. There are some examples of decorative brickwork, notably the Slug and Lettuce PH which is constructed in blue brick with light brick polychromatic detailing (unusual for the area). The Lloyds Bank in the High Street makes use of sandstone but only in detailing, it is predominately red brick. There are also a number of buildings to the rear of the High Street constructed in sandstone. Archaeological studies would seem to indicate that these buildings were more numerous, originally they were houses and workshops.



42 Worcester Road





4.3.10 Important Trees and Green Spaces

The Conservation Area only has one significant green space around the Bus Station area and the adjacent section running along Crown Close/Market Street to the Market Place junction. Whilst this area is of considerable amenity value relative to the built environment of the rest of the town centre, the effect is reduced considerably at times due to the close proximity of the busy traffic running along Market Street and the considerable noise and dust that results.

The Spadesbourne Brook runs along the whole length of the Conservation Area from the rear of properties on The Strand down to Hanover Street in the South-East. The larger part of the brook course has been heavily canalised and culverted with several sections disappearing completely. Despite this, the brook still retains considerable value for biodiversity and provides an essential wildlife corridor through the town centre for a number of species including Brown Trout and Water Voles, both of which have been recorded where the course passes through the Bus Station site.



Only about 10% of the channel within the Conservation Area is naturalised and of both wildlife and amenity value. 30% of the course is hidden within closed culverts beneath roads & buildings and 60% in steep sided canal sections providing little opportunity for wildlife habitat other than that 'passing through'. Within this, the naturalized area at the Bus Station site provides an important 'stepping stone' for wildlife using the corridor but this 1km section still forms fairly hostile territory for most species. Naturalisation of additional sections of the brook course would greatly improve this situation and increase the biodiversity value both locally and for wildlife habitats further up and down the brook. In particular, aiding and allowing Water Vole colonies to intermix can be a vital factor in their survival.

Three other areas within the Conservation Area boundary are notable for their amenity value as a result of their possession of both some tree cover together with seating areas. These are the area adjacent to Strand House and Cupitts Jewellers, a small area on the corner of Market Place and Market Street, and the High Street itself. At the two sites at The Strand and the Market Place, the presence of large mature trees provides a contrast with the built environment and a shading and cooling effect on hot summer days. The trees also contribute significantly to improved local air quality. The amenity of all three sites suffers considerably however, from traffic noise & dust as a result of their close proximity to major roads through the town centre.

Along the High Street itself, a number of trees were planted over the last 30 years as part of past improvements. Although nearly 50% of the trees originally planted had been lost and not replaced, those that remained contributed to the amenity of the area by providing shading and improved air quality in summer, a medium for Christmas lights in winter, and visual amenity all year round. The trees were causing a few problems, however, such as the obscuring of site lines for both amenity value and CCTV purposes, maintenance and issues of encroachment close to nearby buildings, and the effects of roots on paving and surfacing. For the most part, these problems were the consequence of poor planning, design and tree species selection in previous years which resulted in incompatible positioning of trees, CCTV cameras and other street furniture.

As part of a major programme of street enhancement works in the High Street, all the remaining trees in the High Street were removed in February 2012. They are to be replaced by a greater number of trees, of a more appropriate species, during 2012/13.



5.0 CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Bromsgrove is fortunate in having retained a significant number of its historic buildings, even though this is not immediately apparent at ground floor level. There are, however, features that compromise or detract from its character and appearance. These include:

The Public Realm

The existing poor quality public realm affects both the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and detracts from its historic setting. At present there is a mix of brick pavoirs and concrete paving slabs throughout the Conservation Area and some oddly random strips of buff concrete paving. There is no obvious pattern or delineation between 'pavement' and 'road space', and a lack of maintenance has resulted in a rather shabby appearance. Vehicles still use the High Street for deliveries which has resulted in a proliferation of protective barriers and bollards, to the detriment of the wider street scene.

The existing street furniture appears to be randomly located, with street signage, bins, seating and trees obscuring some of the possible views through the Conservation Area. Most of this was installed in 1995 and has been poorly maintained adding to the run down appearance of what should be an attractive retail area.

In general the public spaces within the Conservation Area have a tired feel that detracts from the appearance of the historic buildings.

Shop fronts and signage

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



High Street



High Street



2-4 High Street

Historic Market Site

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

The redevelopment of this site requires to be carefully considered, as it could set the tone for high quality contemporary design which complements the wider historic context of Bromsgrove.



Historic Market Site

Modern Infill

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



99-115 High Street

Historic buildings in a poor condition

Under investment in building repair and maintenance of some buildings on the High Street and Worcester Road detracts from the appearance of the Conservation Area and results in the long-term risk of loss of historic building fabric. Currently only one building, 20- 22 High Street, can be described as being a 'Building at Risk'. However the vacant upper floors of a number of others are also giving cause for concern.

Loss of Historic Detailing

A number of properties, particularly on Worcester Road, have had replacement windows in uPVC or aluminium. Window replacements with new ones of a different design, detail, materials or finish, erodes local building detail, which is an essential part of the distinctive character and appearance of the conservation area.

Traffic Management

The traffic management measures in The Strand have had a significant impact on this part of the Conservation Area. The layout of the road system connecting Stourbridge Road/ Birmingham Road and Stratford Road has created a visual and physical intrusion in the Conservation Area, severing the two sides of The Strand, and The Strand from the High Street. Overall this section of the Conservation Area is unfriendly to pedestrians. It has fragmented these historic spaces, undermining their architectural and historic integrity and the visual quality of the historic environment as well as detracting from the setting of the historic buildings.



Rear of High Street



Rear of High Street

Rear Historic Areas

A number of historic buildings to the rear of buildings on the High Street and Worcester Road still exist, and some have been refurbished and gained new uses. Many are underused or vacant, and are generally in a poor condition but are highly visible from Market Street. The presence of these buildings, are evidence of the town's history and development and are part of its character and interest. In their current state they therefore detract from the character of the Conservation Area.

Spadesbourne Brook

The Spadesbourne Brook is a neglected feature of the Conservation Area. Although some sections are culverted, there are significant stretches which are visible, and the brook still provides an essential wildlife corridor through the town centre. A number of the visible sections are heavily overgrown and in their current state do not contribute to the character of the conservation Area.

Neutral Areas

There are some parts of the Conservation Area which, in their present form, neither enhance nor detract from its character or appearance, these areas are indicated on Map 2. Generally they comprise the modern developments which have respected the character of the conservation area in terms of their scale and form, or the historic buildings which have lost some of the historic detail, this is particularly true of some of the buildings on Worcester Road.

Locally important Buildings

Bromsgrove has a wealth of historic buildings but only just over 60 of them are listed or designated heritage assets. Many of the other historic buildings are of local importance but not national importance. The establishment of a local list would identify these important local historic assets.

6.0 SUMMARY OF ISSUES

The appraisal has highlighted the following problems and pressures in the Bromsgrove Town Centre Conservation Area

- The Public realm
- Shop front and signage
- Market Hall Site
- Modern infill
- Historic buildings in poor condition
- Loss of historic detailing
- Traffic Management
- Rear historic areas
- Spadesbourne Brook
- Locally Important Buildings

The Management Plan in the next section considers how these might be addressed to ensure the continuing preservation and enhancement of the character and appearance of the conservation area.

PART 2 MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

1.1.1 The purpose of this Management Plan is to provide a clear strategy for the management of Bromsgrove Town Centre Conservation Area in a way that will protect and enhance its character and appearance. It should be read in conjunction with the Bromsgrove Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal (January 2012) in which the character and special interest of the Conservation Area was identified, along with the features and other issues that currently compromise or detract from its character and appearance.

1.1.2 Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Local Planning Authorities to draw up and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of its conservation areas. The Management plan is intended to provide guidance to those involved in dealing with development and change not only within the Conservation area but also in respect of its setting. The Plan sets out policies to maintain and reinforce the character of the Conservation Area, and also to guide and manage change and in particular to respond to the negative features and threats to the character which have been defined in the appraisal. It also outlines the resources required for implementation and provides for monitoring and review. The Management Plan has been prepared in accordance with national policy contained in PPS5 'Planning for the Historic Environment' and follows the most recent guidance from English Heritage 'Understanding Place: Conservation Area, Designation, Appraisal and Management' (2011).

1.1.3 The Management Plan is an update to the draft proposals prepared in November 2009. It has been updated to take account of the Council's bid for Townscape Heritage Initiative funding to secure the regeneration of Bromsgrove Town Centre.





1.2 Public Consultation

Public Consultation will take place between 2nd February and 15th March.

1.3 Status of the Management plan

The Management Plan will be used as a technical document to provide guidance for owners and businesses in the conservation Area. It will inform and guide the development control process and policy formation and assist with the implementation of the Townscape Heritage Initiative scheme in the Town Centre. It is intended that following a period of public consultation it will be formally adopted as a material planning consideration by Bromsgrove District Council.

2.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 The Management Plan lies within a framework of local and national planning policy for the historic environment. General planning policies and proposals for the control of development and use of land within Bromsgrove Town Centre can be found in the Bromsgrove District Local Plan (Adopted in January 2004), The Draft Bromsgrove Core Strategy and the Bromsgrove Town Centre Draft Area Action Plan.

2.2 The key objectives in the Bromsgrove District Local Plan in respect of the preservation and enhancement of the character or appearance of the conservation area are; S35A, Development in Conservation Areas; S36, Design of Development in Conservation Areas; S37, Demolition in Conservation Areas; S38, Protection of Buildings of Merit; S41, Listed Buildings in Shopping Areas; S42, Shopfronts in Conservation Areas; S43, Traffic Calming Schemes; S45, Improvements to Conservation Areas and S47, Advertisement Control. Copies of the Local Plan are available on the Council's website at www.bromsgrove.gov.uk or from the Council House in Burcot Lane, Bromsgrove, B60 1AA.



- 2.3 Key Policies in the Draft Bromsgrove Town Centre Action Plan (published in January 2011) include;
- Upgrading the public realm and Primary Shopping Zone to a high quality including resurfacing and refurbishing the High Street.
 - Preserving and enhancing the Conservation Area's character and appearance.
 - Wherever viable renovating, refurbishing, rejuvenating or redecorating the Town Centre's historic buildings.
 - Utilising the natural assets in the Town Centre to provide enhanced green and open spaces including the Spadesbourne Brook and Recreation Ground.
 - Ensure a safe environment for all and a Town Centre enjoyable for everyone.

The key policies are contained in TC5, Urban Design and Conservation.

- 2.4.1 In 2004 Bromsgrove District Council adopted SPG 2, Shop fronts and Advertisement Design Guide. In respect of the Conservation Area the aim of the guidance is to encourage shopfront design and advertisements which preserve and enhance the character and significance of the Conservation Area. This document is to be revised and updated shortly.

- 2.4.2 The Council is committed to plan led development and the plan making process, it has produced draft plans for both the whole district in the form of the draft Core Strategy and also a more detailed Town Centre Area Action plan. Both of these plans are progressing towards the advanced stages of production, it is hoped once the current reforms of the plan making system are published both plans can be progressed quickly to the final stages and formal adoption.

- 2.5 This policy framework, along with national policy guidance contained in PPS5, 'Planning for the Historic Environment' and the English Heritage Guidance Document PPS5 Planning for the Historic Environment: Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide will be used to further the preservation and enhancement of the character of the Conservation Area.



3.0 SUMMARY OF SPECIAL INTEREST, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES



3.1 Special Interest

The Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area contains an assortment of notable historic buildings dating from predominantly the 18th and 19th centuries but with some earlier surviving timber framed buildings.

A range of architectural styles is represented from English vernacular, to restrained Georgian and more elaborate Victorian Gothic buildings. This variety of elevational treatments and styles demonstrate high quality construction and craftsmanship, giving a rich texture to the town centre, and are tangible reminders of the town's past prosperity.

The medieval street pattern, based upon the older Roman Road from Droitwich, the original market place and the remains of some burgage plots have all survived.

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

3.2 Challenges and Opportunities

3.2.1 The appraisal has highlighted the following problems and pressures in the Bromsgrove Town Centre Conservation Area

- The Public realm
- Shop front and signage
- Historic Market Site
- Modern infill
- Historic buildings in poor condition
- Loss of historic detailing
- Traffic Management
- Rear historic areas
- Spadesbourne Brook



4.0 MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

4.1 Introduction

The following strategies have been identified as ways in which to protect and enhance the character and significance of the Conservation Area, by addressing the negative features identified above.

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

4.2.1 Public Realm

- The existing poor quality public realm affects both the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and detracts from its historic setting. At present there is a mix of brick paviors and concrete paving slabs throughout the Conservation Area and some oddly random strips of buff concrete paving. There is no obvious pattern or delineation between 'pavement' and 'road space', and a lack of maintenance has resulted in a rather shabby appearance. Vehicles still use the High Street for deliveries which has resulted in a proliferation of protective barriers and bollards, to the detriment of the wider street scene.
- The existing street furniture appears to be randomly located, with street signage, bins, seating and trees obscuring some of the possible views through the Conservation Area. Most of this was installed in 1995 and has been poorly maintained adding to the rundown appearance of what should be an attractive retail area.
- In general the public spaces within the Conservation Area have a tired feel that detracts from the appearance of the historic buildings.



High Street



High Street

4.2.2 Proposed Action

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

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

- These actions are in accordance with S35A a) and b) of the Bromsgrove District Council Local Plan and TC5.2 of the Draft Area Action Plan.



120 High Street



48-50 High Street

4.3.1 Shop fronts and Signage

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

4.3.2 Proposed Action

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

- Assess proposals against local and national policies in respect of listed buildings and conservation areas, and SPG 2, Shopfronts and Advertisements Design Guide 2004, until the revised Shopfront Design Guidance is produced.

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

- These actions are in accordance with S.41 and S.42 of the Bromsgrove Local Plan (2004) and TC5.8 of the Draft Area Action Plan (2011)

4.4.1 Historic Market Site

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

4.4.2 Proposed action

- Pay particular attention to siting, scale and design of any new development proposals that come forward for this site in accordance with local and national policies in respect of conservation areas, to ensure that any new scheme enhances the setting of the Conservation Area.
- This action is in accordance with S.35 A (b) of the Bromsgrove Local Plan and TC5.2, TC5.3, TC5.4, TC5.5 and TC 5.6 of the Draft Area Action Plan (2011).

4.5.1 Modern Infill

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

4.5.2 Proposed Action

- Seek improvements to buildings where opportunities arise through development/redevelopment proposals particularly at key sites including Mill Lane and 138 to 140 High Street.
- New proposals will be assessed in accordance with local and national policies in respect of conservation areas, to ensure that any new scheme achieves better integration into the historic environment and enhances the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- Encourage the preservation of important views within the townscape and preserve vistas towards historic buildings.
- Seek to preserve the architectural design of modern infill buildings when these are of a high quality and add significance to the streetscape
- This action is in accordance with S.35 A (b) of the Bromsgrove Local Plan and TC5.2, TC5.3, TC 5.4, TC 5.5 and TC 5.6 of the Draft Area Action Plan (2011).



Historic Market Site



118 High Street



115 High Street



22-29 High Street



89 High Street



42 Worcester Road

4.6.1 Historic buildings in a poor condition

- Under investment in building repair and maintenance of some buildings on the High Street and Worcester Road detracts from the appearance of the Conservation Area and results in the long-term risk of loss of historic building fabric.
- Currently only one building, 20- 22 High Street, can be described as being a 'Building at Risk'. However the vacant upper floors of a number of others are also giving cause for concern.

4.6.2 Proposed Action

- Seek retention of historic fabric where opportunities arise through development proposals.
- Identify Buildings at Risk and develop a strategy for their repair, including the potential use of Section 215, Urgent Works Notices and Repairs Notices to improve the condition of some of the most at risk properties in the Conservation Area.
- Investigate initiatives to make use of the upper floors such as 'Living above the shop', in conjunction with the Housing Section at Bromsgrove District Council, or a local housing association.
- Produce guidance on the maintenance of historic buildings for property owners.
- This action is in accordance with S. 38 of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan and TC 5.2 of the Draft Area Action Plan (2011).

4.7.1 Loss of Historic Detailing

- A number of properties, particularly on Worcester Road, have had replacement windows in uPVC or aluminium.
- Window replacements with new ones of a different design, detail, materials or finish, erodes local building detail, which is an essential part of the distinctive character and appearance of the conservation area.

4.7.2 Proposed Action

- Address unauthorised alterations to buildings through enforcement action where appropriate, in accordance with our enforcement policy.
- Undertake a photographic survey of all the properties in the Conservation Area. This will provide a record of the condition and appearance of each property, which would be useful in any future enforcement situations.
- The reinstatement of historic detailing will be encouraged where opportunities arise through development proposals.
- We will consider the need for an Article 4 Direction to bring any permitted development works under planning control, to ensure that the special qualities of unlisted buildings of local significance are protected.
- This action is in accordance with S. 38 of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan and TC 5.2 of the Draft area Action Plan (2011).

4.8.1 Traffic Management

- The traffic management measures in The Strand have had a significant impact on this part of the Conservation Area.
- The layout of the road system connecting Stourbridge Road/Birmingham Road and Stratford Road has created a visual and physical intrusion in the Conservation Area, severing the two sides of The Strand, and The Strand from the High Street.
- Overall this section of the Conservation Area is unfriendly to pedestrians. It has fragmented these historic spaces, undermining their architectural and historic integrity and the visual quality of the historic environment as well as detracting from the setting of the historic buildings.



52-60 Worcester Road



The Strand



Rear of the High Street

4.8.2 Proposed Action

- Work with other departments at Bromsgrove District Council and Worcestershire County Council to devise a traffic scheme which will give more priority to pedestrians. Improvements to the pavement widths, parking layout, road markings and surface materials would soften the appearance and enhance the setting of the surrounding historic buildings.
- This action is in accordance with S. 38 of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan and TC 5.2 of the Draft Area Action Plan (2011).



Rear of the High Street

4.9.1 Rear Historic Areas

- A number of historic buildings to the rear of buildings on both sides of the High Street and Worcester Road still exist, and some have been refurbished and gained new uses. Many are underused or vacant, and are generally in a poor condition and those on the west side of the High Street are highly visible from Market Street.
- The presence of these buildings, are evidence of the town's history and development and are part of its character and interest. In their current state they therefore detract from the character of the Conservation Area.

4.9.2 Proposed Action

- Investigate the possibility of carrying out historical research into these buildings and identify ways they could be repaired and brought back into use.
- This action is in accordance with S. 38 of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan and TC 5.2 and TC 5.3 of the Draft Area Action Plan (2011).



Spadesbourne Brook

4.10.1 Spadesbourne Brook

- The Spadesbourne Brook is a neglected feature of the Conservation Area.
- Although some sections are culverted, there are significant stretches which are visible, and the brook still provides an essential wildlife corridor through the town centre.
- A number of the visible sections are heavily overgrown and in their current state do not contribute to the character of the conservation Area.

4.10.2 Proposed Action

- The Bromsgrove District Council are committed through the Area Action Plan to the naturalisation of Spadesbourne Brook. Work on this is ongoing.
- This action is in accordance with S. 35 A a) of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan and TC 6.1 of the Draft Area Action Plan.

4.11.1 Locally Listed Buildings

- Bromsgrove has a wealth of historic buildings but only just over 60 of them are listed or designated heritage assets.
- Many of the other historic buildings are of local importance. The establishment of a local list would identify these important local historic assets.

4.11.2 Proposed Action

- Introduce local criteria for identifying important unlisted buildings across the District including the town centre.
- On the basis of criteria draw up a list of locally important buildings or heritage assets.
- This action is in accordance with 5.38 of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan and TC 5.2 of the Draft Area Action Plan (2011).



5.0 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND TRAINING

5.1 Community Engagement

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

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

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

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

5.2 Bromsgrove District Council is committed to widening local knowledge and heritage skills.

- When appropriate, and subject to resources, the Council will develop, with stakeholders and the local community, a Heritage Training and Education Plan. Many activities would establish a legacy of materials for future use.

- Bromsgrove District Council will take advantage of the free training provided for its planning staff through the Historic Environment Local Management Initiative (HELM)

- Bromsgrove District Council will improve the awareness of heritage issues through the annual Heritage Open Days Programme, held in September each year.



6.0 PUTTING THE PLAN INTO PRACTICE: RESOURCES, MONITORING AND REVIEW

6.1 Resources

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

6.2 Monitoring

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

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

6.3 Review

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

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

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

General advice on all matters related to the historic environment, including Conservation areas and listed buildings can be obtained from the Conservation Officer at Bromsgrove District Council.



APPENDIX 1

List of properties within the revised Conservation Area Boundary

Davenal House Surgery, 28 Birmingham Road
Former Bromsgrove Museum, Birmingham Road
St. James Court, The Strand
1-27 The Strand (odds)
2-26 The Strand (evens)
Strand House, 2 Stourbridge Road
18-22 Market Street (evens)
1-135 High Street (odds)
2-140 High Street (evens)
2-12 Mill Lane
1-6 Chapel Street
1-15 Church Street (odds)
4-12 Church Street (evens)
1,2,4,5,6 New Road
Cleggs Entry (to rear of 15 High Street)
2-6 Market Place
1 George Street
1-55 Worcester Road (odds)
2-60 Worcester Road (evens)

APPENDIX 2

Listed buildings within the revised Conservation Area Boundary

1 High Street (Grade II)
2 & 4 High Street (Grade II)
7 High Street (Grade II)
9/9a High Street (Grade II)
14 High Street (Grade II)
16 High Street (Grade II)
18 High Street (Grade II)
22 High Street (Grade II)
24 High Street (Grade II)
25 High Street (Grade II)
27 High Street (Grade II)
29 High Street (Grade II)
31 High Street (Grade II)
33 High Street (Grade II)
46 High Street (Grade II)
47 High Street (Grade II)
48 High Street (Grade II)
49 High Street (Grade II)
50 High Street (Grade II)
52 High Street (Grade II)
67 High Street (Grade II)
69 High Street (Grade II)
71 High Street (Grade II)
73 High Street (Grade II)
75 High Street (Grade II)
87a High Street (Grade II)
89 High Street (Grade II)
89a High Street (Grade II)
91 & 93 High Street (Grade II)
95 High Street (Grade II)
104 & 104a, 106 High Street (Grade II)
108 & 110 High Street (Grade II)
112 High Street (Grade II)
120 – 122 High Street (Grade II)
126 – 130 High Street (Grade II)
26 The Strand (Grade II)
The Queen's Head, 1 The Strand (Grade II)
6 to 12 The Strand (Grade II) is listed as 146-148 High Street
21 & 23 The Strand (Grade II)
25 & 27 The Strand (Grade II)
Strand House 68 & 70 The Strand (Grade II)
3 Worcester Road (Grade II)
5 Worcester Road (Grade II)
7 Worcester Road (Grade II*)
33, 35 & 37 Worcester Road (Grade II)

APPENDIX 3

Bromsgrove District Local Plan - adopted January 2004

S20 Main Shopping Location
S23 Shopfront Enhancement
S24 Retention of Traditional Shopfronts
S24A Original Features on Shopfronts
S25 New Shopfronts
S26 Shopfront Fascias
S27 Standards of Fascia Design
S27A Projecting Signs
S27B Design and Materials within Conservation Areas
S35A Development in Conservation Areas
S36 Design of development within Conservation Areas
S37 Demolition in Conservation Areas
S39 Alterations to Listed Buildings
S39a Demolition of Listed Buildings
S41 Listed Buildings in Shopping Areas
S42 Shopfronts in Conservation Areas
S43 Traffic Calming Schemes
S44 Reinstatement of Features in Conservation Areas
S45 Improvements to Conservation Areas
S46 Areas of Special Advertisement Control
S47 Advertisement Control
C17 Retention of existing trees
C19 Tree Preservation Orders
C36 Preservation of Archaeological Resources
C37 Excavation around Archaeological Remains
C38 Development Criteria for Archaeological Sites
C39 Site access for Archaeologists
E4 Extension to existing Commercial Uses
E9 Criteria for New Employment Development
E10 Retail or Recreational Uses on Employment Land
RAT4 Retention of Open Space
RAT33 Visitor Facilities
ES2 Restrictions on Development where Risk of Flooding
ES11 Energy Efficiency in Buildings

Appendix 3 continued

Worcestershire County Structure Plan

CTC.5 Trees and Woodlands

CTC.6 Green Open Spaces and Corridors

CTC.8 Flood Risk and Surface Water Drainage

CTC.17 Archaeological Sites of Regional or Local Importance

CTC.18 Enhancement and Management of Archaeological Sites

CTC.19 Areas and Features of Historic and Architectural Significance

CTC.20 Conservation Areas

CTC.21 Reuse and Conversion of Buildings

D26 Office Development

D31 Retail Hierarchy

D43 Crime Prevention and Community Safety

APPENDIX 4

Glossary

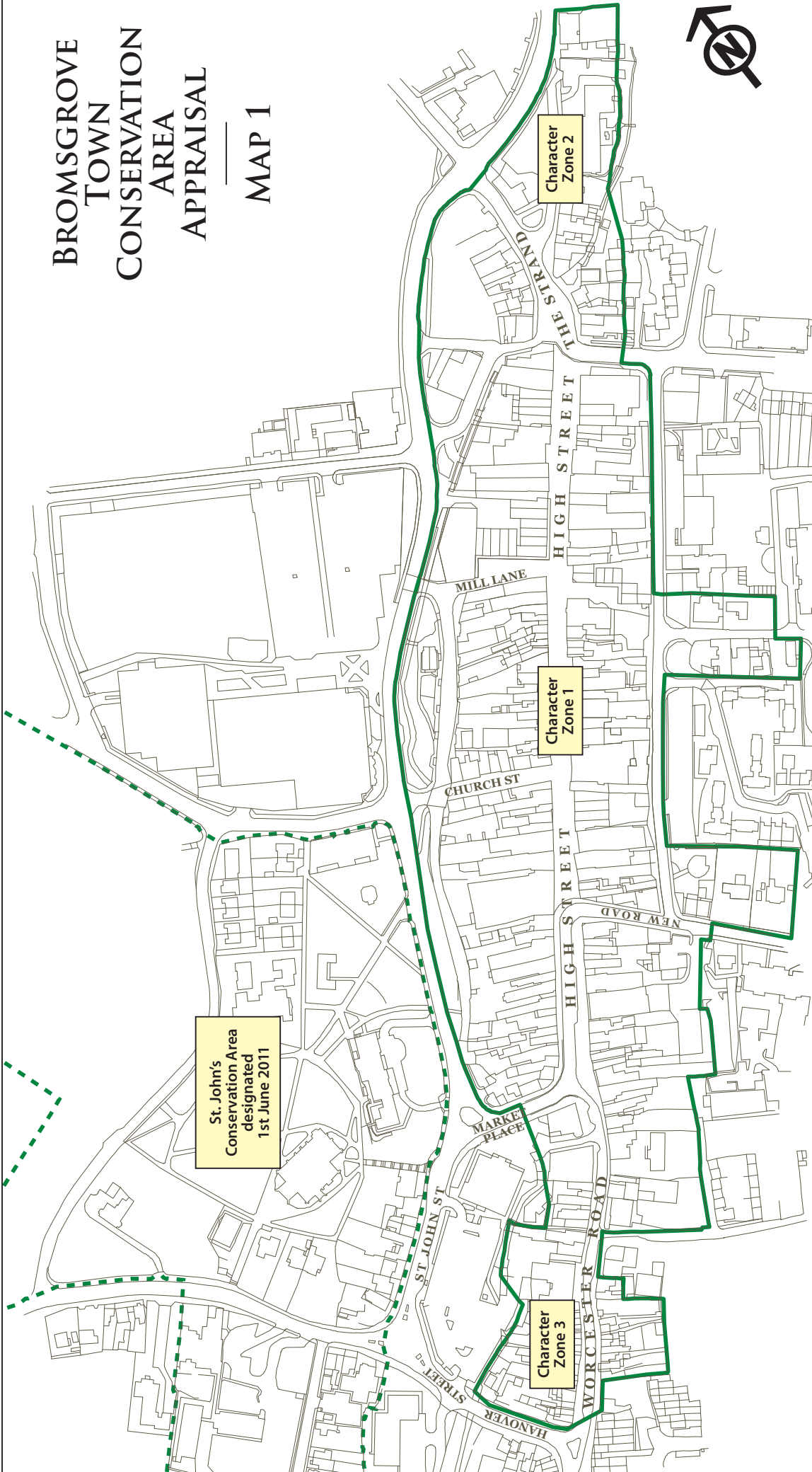
Listed Building	A building of special architectural or historic interest included on a national register. English Heritage is responsible for adding new entries to the statutory list.
Conservation Area	An area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which, it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Local authorities are responsible for designating new Conservation Areas.
Bargeboards	An angled decorative timber board at eaves level (see Slug and Lettuce, 126-130 High Street)
Burgage plot	A medieval term describing a long strip of land, with the narrowest section facing the street
Camber headed	A slightly curved window head
Canalized	Contained with artificial man-made sides
Classical	An architectural style from ancient Rome and Greece, revived in the Georgian period. Detailing is simple and refined with columns, moulded doorcases and sash windows. (see Davenal House, 28 Birmingham Road)
Cornice	Projecting moulding often found at eaves level, or as part of a pediment
Culvert	A man-made channel beneath a road or building
Diaper pattern	Repetitive decorative arrangement of bricks, often in diamond shapes or squares.
Doorcase	A moulded case or frame lining a doorway
Doric columns	The plainest of the three types of columns found in classical architecture, with simple vertical flutes and an unornamented capital. (The three types are Doric, Ionic and Corinthian)
Dormer	A window projecting from the roof (see 33-37 Worcester Road)
Edwardian	Dates from 1901-1910
Fleur-de-lis	A stylised lily with three pointed leaves (see 1 High Street)
Georgian	Dates from 1714-1830
Gothic	An architectural style from 12th to 16th centuries but revived in the late Victorian period. Typical details include elaborate tracery, heavily mullioned windows and pointed arches.
Jettied gable	Projecting upper storey overhanging the lower floors, often a feature of timber framed buildings (see former Hop Pole Inn, New Road)
Keystones	A wedge shaped block found at the centre of an arch (see 120 High Street)

Glossary continued

Medieval	Dates from 950-1547
Mullioned windows	Vertical posts separating the sections of a window, usually in stone or timber
Naturalize	Make more natural
Pediment	Low pitched moulded triangle often found over doorways or windows and at roof level. (see Strand Centre, 14-18 The Strand)
Polychromatic brickwork	A feature of Victorian Gothic architecture, using a variety of alternating colours of brickwork
Portico	A feature of classical architecture, moulded projecting hood on supporting columns to form an open sided porch (see Lloyds TSB Bank, 112 High Street)
Quatrefoil	A tracery detail in the shape of a flower with four lobes separated by cusps. A trefoil has three lobes.
Quoins	Angular often slightly raised stones added to the corner of a building (see 18 High Street)
Regency	Dates from 1810-1820
Rusticated	Roughened texture added to stonework with sunken joints (see The Queens Head PH, The Strand)
Stucco	An external plaster finish, often finely textured
Tannery	A building where animal skin and hide is tanned
Venetian window	A window with three openings, the central one of which is arched and wider than the others
Victorian	Dates from 1837-1901
Wattle and daub	Sticks and twigs interwoven to form a panel packed with plaster and then limewashed. Commonly found in timber framed or thatched buildings.

BROMSGROVE TOWN CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

MAP 1



KEY

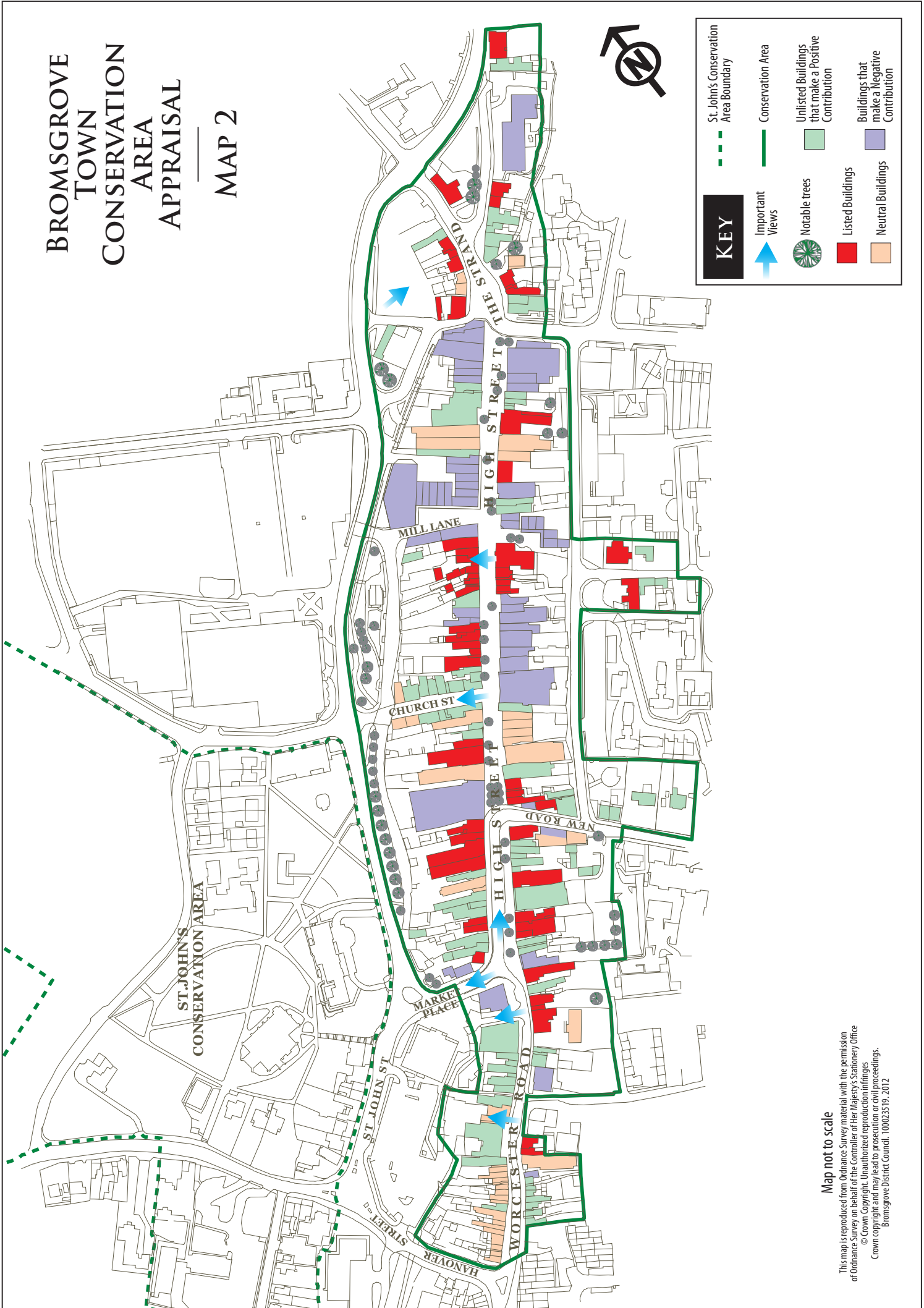
- St. John's Conservation Area Boundary
- Conservation Area

Map not to scale

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BROMSGROVE TOWN CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

MAP 2



Map not to scale

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