

Wolverhampton City Centre Conservation Area Management Plan



Wolverhampton City Centre Conservation Area Management Plan

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Prepared by: www.heritageregeneration.co.uk for

WOLVERHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL

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1.0 Context

1.1 Purpose of the Conservation Area Management Plan

The Conservation Area Management Plan for the City Centre Conservation Area provides supporting information for the Wolverhampton City Centre Conservation Area Appraisal (updated 2015) and the current emerging City Centre Area Action Plan by focusing on the key heritage opportunities identified for Townscape Heritage assistance.

The aim is to clarify practical management opportunities to provide guidance for property owners and occupiers, local authority policy making and implementation, and all other agencies and communities that use or have an interest in the area.

Key priorities are:

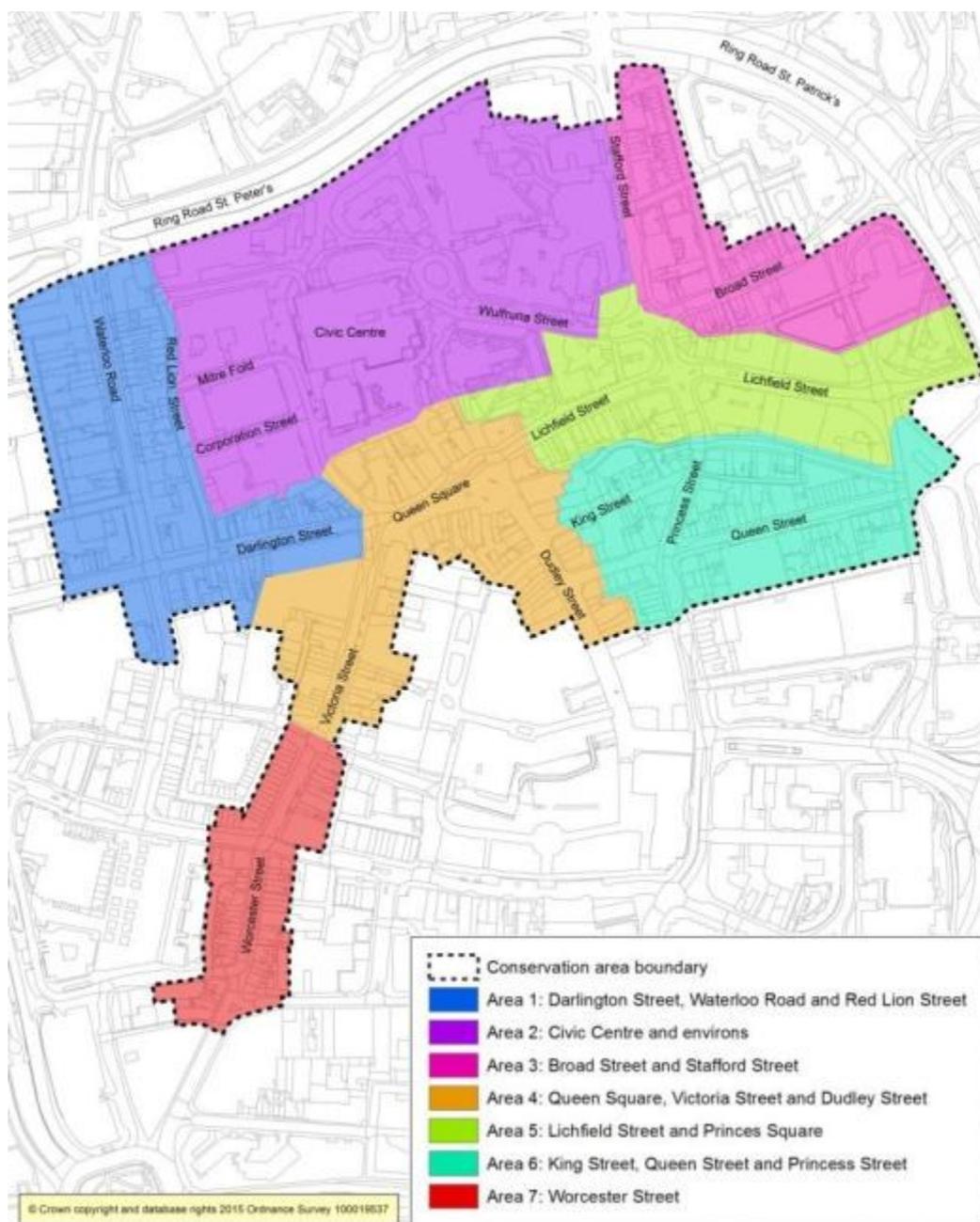
- *to ensure the protection and regeneration of the built heritage;*
- *to ensure sustainable development can be achieved with economic support;*
- *to provide guidance for property owners and community interests;*
- *to present a framework for local authority management and control;*
- *to offer a basis for community involvement;*
- *to encourage and provide guidance for the implementation of the Townscape Heritage Scheme, and to ensure that outside the Scheme area the management of the Conservation Area respects and repeats its achievements.*

The following principles will provide the basis for the policy and management recommendations identified in this document:

- *the importance of understanding the significance of historic places;*
- *the recognition that the historic environment is a shared resource;*
- *participation for all in sustaining the historic environment;*
- *that significant places should be managed to sustain their values;*
- *that decisions about change must be reasonable, transparent and consistent;*
- *documenting and learning from decisions and changes is essential.*

1.2 Characteristics of the City Centre Conservation Area

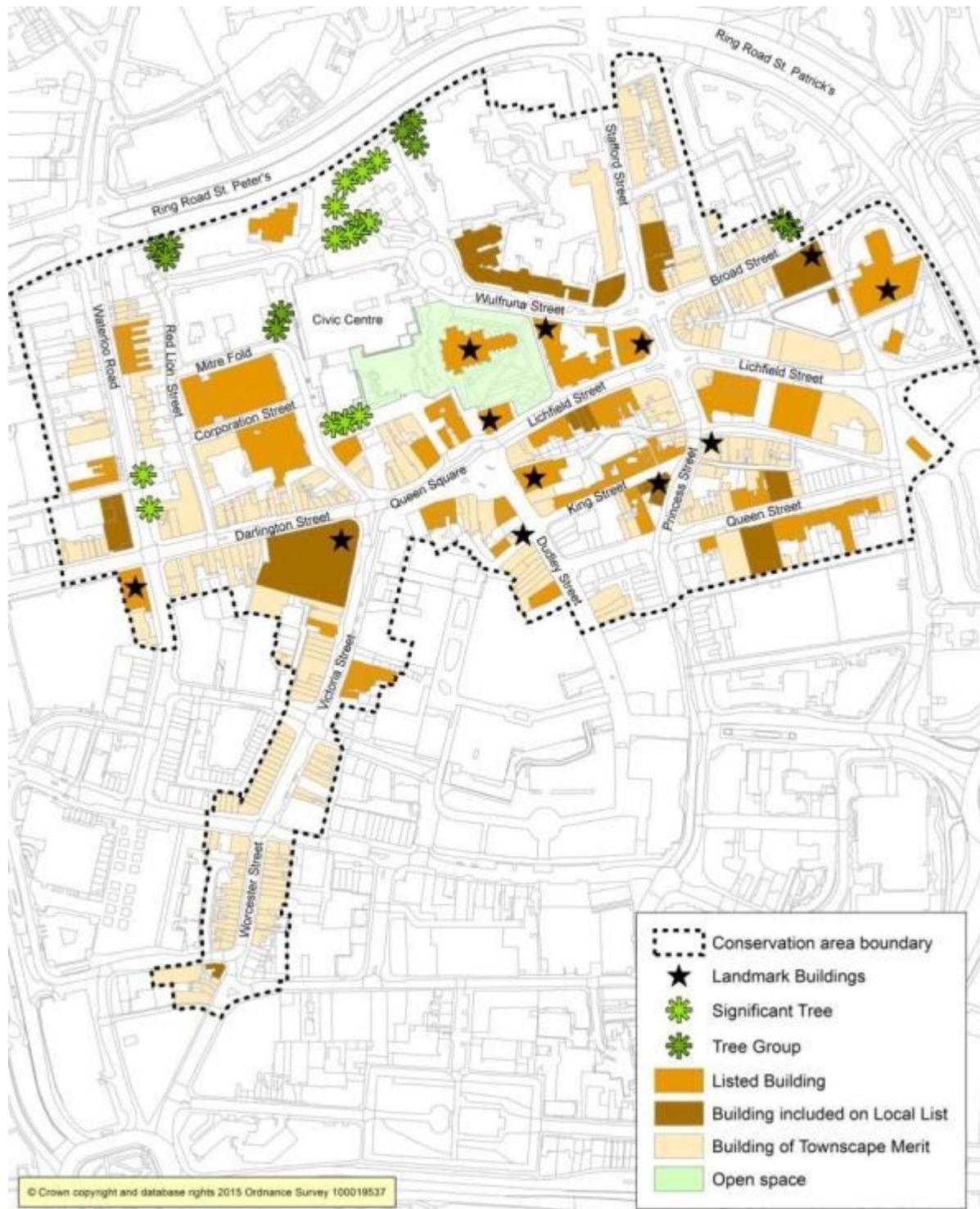
Wolverhampton City Centre Conservation Area covers a large area within the Ring Road - particularly the northern half, with an added southern arm along Worcester Street. This includes the city's historic core around St Peter's Church and Queen Square, but excludes the Mander Centre and the Wulfrun Centre, two modern shopping malls. Much of the area is identified in the emerging City Centre Area Action Plan as the main part of St Peter's – the distinctive historic, cultural and civic heart of the city. The City Centre Conservation Area Appraisal (updated 2015) describes its characteristics by identifying seven Character Areas which reflect their relationship of history, use and architectural character.



Map 1. Conservation Area boundary and Character Areas within the Inner Ring Road.

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Map 2. below, presents a townscape analysis of the Conservation Area identifying the numerous statutorily listed buildings, locally listed buildings, and those of Townscape Value throughout the area. In conjunction with the inherent heritage qualities of the area, including notable streetscapes they demonstrate the historic importance of the Conservation Area and the need to protect and manage this valuable resource.



Map 2. Conservation Area boundary and townscape analysis

1.3 Townscape Heritage scheme

A Townscape Heritage scheme aims to make a lasting difference for heritage, people and communities by identifying a balanced portfolio of projects that together have the potential to regenerate and transform those parts of conservation areas in need of investment. The purpose is to halt and reverse the decline of the historic area by creating an attractive, vibrant and interesting street where people will want to live, work, visit and invest. This will be achieved by funding physical works to repair and enhance the historic area in order to encourage business confidence, by providing local people with the opportunity to learn new skills, and by inspiring the local community to take an interest in and get involved with their townscape heritage.

The Queen Street Gateway Townscape Heritage scheme is located within Character Area 6 of the Conservation Area Appraisal, however by demonstrating the benefits of heritage regeneration it is anticipated that it will encourage wider improvements throughout the Conservation Area. The eligible properties have been identified as those buildings that are important in the historic townscape. With improvement they will benefit the local economy and have the potential to be self sustaining. Properties have been selected that are in greatest need of repairs and/or replacement of heritage detail, or have vacant floor space which can be reused.

The Townscape Heritage area has been drawn to include those properties on Queen Street, between Princess Street and Pipers Row, which present significant architectural interest and have the greatest need for investment in the built fabric: The Wolverhampton City Centre Conservation Area Appraisal (updated 2015) provides a full appraisal of the Townscape Heritage setting.



Queen Street showing the location of the selected Townscape Heritage properties



2.0 Conservation issues

2.1 General conditions

The protection and improvement of the historic buildings within the Conservation Area is fundamental to the future of the local economy and as a means of enhancing the townscape. Although some of the historic townscape has been replaced, with other areas damaged, much has been retained, and in order to halt the decline there are a number of considerations for the future of the built heritage that need to be addressed. This Conservation Area Management Plan builds on the specific local strengths and inherent qualities of the area to ensure that opportunities for its future are realised. The current concerns and problems that are identified below require action to ensure the potential benefits for the residents, businesses, and visitors to Wolverhampton city centre are achieved.

The following SWOT analysis identifies key issues affecting the local economy, and which impact on heritage need, and will inform the management of the Conservation Area.

Strengths:

- the significance of the location and role of the conservation area as part of Wolverhampton city centre – an enhanced heritage environment attracts quality shopping and offices, improves the pedestrian experience and increases economic and sustainability potential;
- the historical importance of the conservation area including the location of the original medieval settlement, which developed in the late 18th and early 19th centuries to become a place of some prestige, providing a location for notable local institutions, and expanded and rebuilt during the Victorian and Edwardian periods to become a notable heritage environment;
- the importance, variety and number of listed and locally listed buildings, and those identified as being of townscape value;
- the integrity and completeness of the historic street pattern of the area, reinforced by the consistency of the building line and overall scale and massing of buildings;
- the landmark buildings providing focal points of interest;
- the recently completed street works and new traffic management regime.

Weaknesses:

- economic difficulties created by increasing overheads, access difficulties and changing market demands;
- low profitability of some businesses discouraging appropriate use and maintenance;
- visual impact of rear elevations, vacant upper floors and poorly maintained buildings;
- historic shop fronts removed and replaced with inappropriate designs and materials;
- shop signs typically dominating shop frontages and disrupting the intended architectural compositions;
- poor quality replacement materials and detailing on many buildings and boundaries;
- lack of appropriate maintenance and care for heritage details;
- inappropriate design and materials of some new development;
- unauthorised works and breaches of planning controls;
- unsightly storage of waste;
- alterations to buildings showing lack of conservation and historic design concerns, including metal roller shutters and alarms, etc;
- limited public awareness of the historic significance and the contribution that the heritage buildings and terraces make to the character of the area.

Opportunities:

- improvement of historic building maintenance, repairs and management;
- further sensitive regeneration of key sites and townscapes – particularly of rear areas;
- viable reuse of underused and vacant floor space;
- increase in general city centre economic viability;
- sustainability of selected areas by targeting niche markets;
- marketing of city centre heritage with interpretation initiatives;
- more effective planning and design controls and guidance;
- promotion of living above the shop;
- preparation of development briefs for the repair and regeneration of key sites;
- the on-going conservation area regeneration potential to attract continued investment into the area and secure its long term future;
- to build on and reinforce local distinctiveness.

Threats:

- continuing competition from on-line retailing and other nearby areas of the city centre;
- economic difficulties for shops/businesses, which may discourage further private investment;
- unused floor space leads to sense of neglect and decline;
- resistance to appropriate controls on historic building maintenance and alterations;
- inappropriate designs of new infill buildings, extensions, shop fronts and alterations;
- long term vacant floor spaces within key heritage buildings;
- on-going deterioration of fabric with detrimental impact upon impressions of the area;
- erosion of local distinctiveness by poorly specified enhancements;
- lack of resources to continue implementation of higher quality public realm, etc;
- poor quality skills and knowledge of traditional building techniques and materials;
- increasing traffic movement and inappropriate parking.

Much of the built form of the Conservation Area is exceptional in the continuity and integrity of the streetscapes forming attractively scaled streets and urban spaces, characterised by a mix of Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian buildings and occasional modern buildings, some appropriate in their setting and others introducing inappropriate designs. The building lines are mostly set immediately adjacent to the street creating a strong sense of enclosure, and the fine architecture provides an indication of the prosperity of the area when first developed.

Particular concerns relate to the more fringe locations where commercial demand is limited and property is potentially “at risk”, with examples of poor maintenance and repair, underuse and vacancy to upper floors, and where the loss of heritage detail is particularly noticeable to shop fronts and signage.

The whole area has suffered from the gradual loss of architectural detail. Many of the heritage properties, even those occupied and in reasonable structural condition, have lost original windows, doors, chimneys, shop-fronts, and iron work is missing or damaged. Although some of these original features have been replaced with inappropriate materials, there is now an opportunity to reinstate lost details using Townscape Heritage grant aid with similar problems elsewhere in the Conservation Area addressed through planning guidance and controls. The Townscape Heritage scheme will provide an exemplar to encourage improvements elsewhere.

The Wolverhampton City Centre Conservation Area Appraisal (updated 2015) provides a full description of the wider historic qualities of the area, and the heritage need for protection and improvements.



Listed Giffard House 1726 and adjoining St. Peter and Paul's Church 1826



Roofscape viewed from Princess Alley

2.2 Positive issues and assets

The special heritage characteristics of interest that need to be protected and enhanced include:

- **the overall character and setting of the Conservation Area:**

Wolverhampton city centre expanded from a medieval layout. The expansion of the city in the late C18th and C19th has resulted in an interesting mix of building types and designs which tell the story of how each Character Area grew and developed.



South side of Queen Square where an attractive mix of building styles, forms, materials and ages integrate to create a notable heritage townscape.



Princes Square, part of the medieval town centre, has four corner buildings that are grouped to emphasise its prominent location – most notably the Royal London Building.

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- **townscape groups of buildings:**

The continuity of historic buildings combine to create attractive streetscapes throughout the Conservation Area. In particular, the examples of Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian terraces are notable for their elegance and townscape impact.



Edwardian terrace of shops on Worcester Street



Claremont Terrace, listed grade II, 22-32 Waterloo Road

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- **landmark buildings:**

Landmark buildings provide legibility and locational context within the Conservation Area. They tend to be the larger buildings of significant architectural interest located at key sites, such as street corners, and therefore provide important pivotal markers for the urban townscape.



Corner of Princess Street and Berry Street . Methodist Church 1900 Darlington Street



Royal London Building, Princes Square.

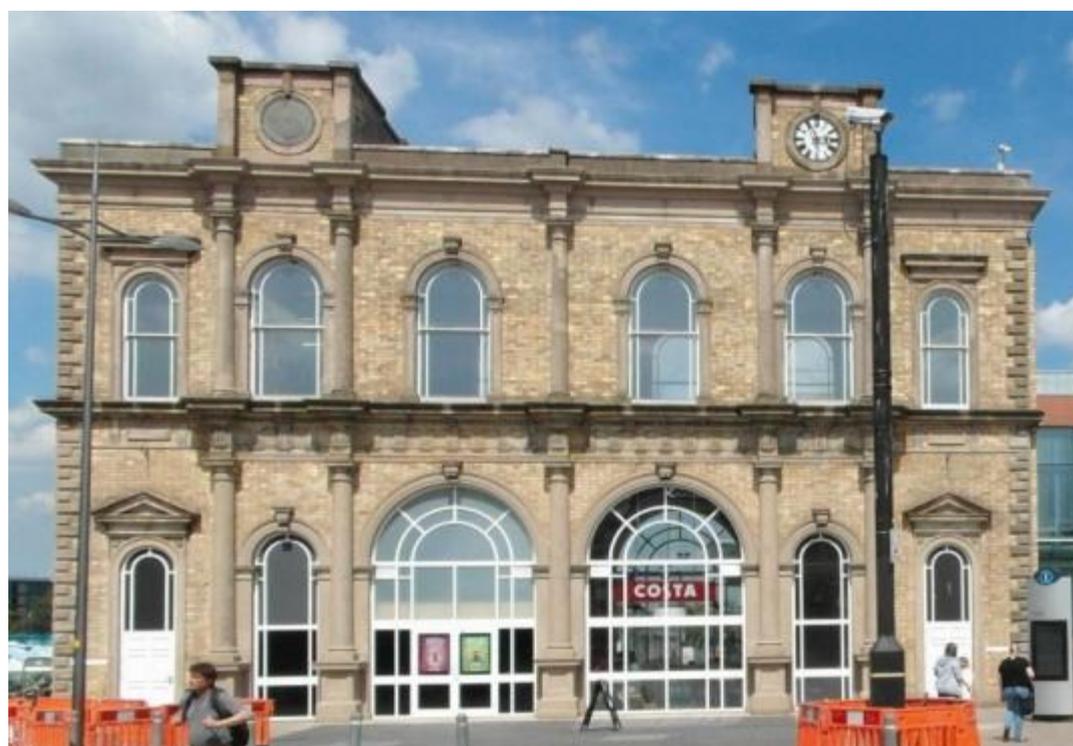
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- **Reuse of historic buildings:**

The reuse of vacant historic buildings can have a significant locational impact which enlivens the streetscapes. This is particularly important along backland routes to open up the area for increased economic activity and public uses.



Reuse of traditional homes and industrial buildings as a restaurant on King Street.



Queen Building, former formal entrance to station.

- **Decorative heritage detail:**

Particularly mouldings, use of materials and ironwork - introduces character and interest which enlivens many historic buildings throughout the Conservation Area.



North side of Queen Square, listed grade II.



Former Co-op Building, 176-180 Stafford Street.

2.3 Negative concerns and problems

The key negative concerns and problems within the Conservation Area are:

- **Inappropriate building alterations, repairs and lack of maintenance:**

Building neglect and poor maintenance and repairs are resulting in a loss of some of their traditional heritage qualities that are gradually changing the overall historic townscapes. The main examples are:

- lack of maintenance and inappropriate and poor quality replacement materials;
- loss of heritage details and materials including poor quality repairs;
- use of inappropriate roof materials;
- replacement of traditional shop fronts/signage with inappropriate designs/materials;
- replacement of traditional timber windows, either with those of an inappropriate design in timber, or of an inappropriate material such as uPVC;
- removal of historic mouldings and other details;
- removal of chimney stacks and pots;
- addition of security equipment, aerials and satellite dishes, and external wiring;
- extensions and outbuildings or boundary walls of inappropriate design, scale and materials.



Loss of chimney stacks/pots; change of window frames - breaks streetscape rhythm.



Loss of heritage mouldings and detail with introduction of uPVC windows, and new window frame designs changing the character of the building and streetscape.

- **Impact of inappropriate replacement shop frontages and signage**

The removal of the traditional shop fronts and their replacement by those of inappropriate design and materials, frequently featuring garish and oversized signage has the most significant adverse visual impact on heritage buildings within the Conservation Area. The eye level impact of the variety of bright colours of signs and the use of large open areas of shop front is at odds with the traditional forms of the historic buildings and has led to a dilution of the original design and a loss of heritage character.



Examples of the adverse impact of poor quality fascia signage on Broad Street that detract from the heritage buildings and streetscape.



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Severe damage to the historic streetscape created by three redeveloped shops on Dudley Street.



- **Impact of shop shuttering on the heritage streetscape:**

The use of external roller shutters is particularly harmful outside trading hours when the building frontages become faceless and uninviting.



Examples above on Queen Street and below on Broad Street where roller shutters detract from the heritage qualities of the building and create an uninviting street scene.





Oversized fascia damages the heritage streetscape.

- **Impact of vacant buildings and underused upper floors:**

There are a number of examples of vacant and underused floorspace – particularly to upper floors - where the absence of occupation does little to encourage preventative maintenance, which cumulatively and over time will diminish the visual quality of the historic environment and discourages new investment in neighbouring buildings. Economic incentives may be necessary to assist in encouraging reuse.



Example of an attractively detailed but unused heritage building on Wheeler's Fold, with bricked up entrance to the ground floor and empty floorspace above.



Vacant upper floors on Darlington Street.

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- **Impact of derelict buildings on streetscape and local economy:**

Derelict and poorly maintained buildings not only have a detrimental impact on the local heritage streetscape but they can also have an adverse effect on the economic viability of nearby properties and consequently their maintenance.



Derelict property at entrance to city centre on Worcester Street



Derelict properties on Victoria Street detract from the viability of adjoining premises.

- **Impact of inappropriate new development designs:**

New development can introduce inappropriate visual forms that detract from the historic streetscapes. Some examples of late 20th century infill development in the Conservation Area are of inappropriate design quality, materials and detailing, and fail to integrate with either adjacent heritage buildings, or the townscape overall. Contemporary design solutions that have proper regard to context will however be encouraged.



An extreme example with a replacement building of an inappropriate form, scale, design and materials on Berry Street that both damages the fine historic setting and breaks up the rhythm of the heritage townscape.

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- **Loss of historic buildings:**

The loss of significant historic buildings has damaged the historic environment with replacement buildings rarely achieving a quality comparable to those buildings now lost.



The redevelopment of the terrace of shops between Queen Street and Berry Street at the junction with Piper's Row, demonstrates the loss of the heritage streetscape and the impact of insensitive designs.

These are other examples of buildings and townscapes lost through city centre redevelopment:



*In the distance the Empire Palace / Hippodrome 1898 lost to fire in 1956
On the right, Queen's Arcade, top of Victoria Street, replaced by Mander Centre*



Townscape loss through removal of upper floors and cupola with heritage detail at junction of Lichfield Street and Queen Square.



3.0 Development policy

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3.1 Development policy and design principles

The positive assets previously described require protection, while negative issues require resolution or mitigation. The application of conservation planning policy and design guidance, both generic and local, will therefore be considered as a priority. Conservation Area wide design advice and site specific recommendations, will be linked to the emerging City Centre Area Action Plan, and following public consultation will become a material consideration in the determination of planning applications within each Character Area.



Princess Street – a mixture of architectural styles and materials – from mid C19th to late C20th, creates an attractive streetscape with sympathetic scale and well designed buildings.

3.2 Policies for renovation of existing buildings

The following notes highlight the primary considerations for the maintenance or replacement of heritage features within the Conservation Area, and development control procedures that may assist.

Approach to repairs and alterations:

Throughout the Conservation Area and the Townscape Heritage area in particular, design guidance encourages tenants and owners to repair original elements in preference to replacement. Advice on how repairs and alterations should be carried out is available from the following:

- Websites: www.ihbc.org.uk/stitch_in_time/index.htm / www.maintainyourbuilding.org.uk
- Council documents: Wolverhampton City Centre Conservation Area Appraisal (updated 2015), and Wolverhampton SPG No. 5 Shopfronts and Signage

The proliferation of relatively minor building alterations has the effect of incrementally eroding the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Inappropriate modern alterations can adversely affect the subtlety, balance and proportions of building elevations and can also physically damage the fabric of historic buildings.

Important original features threatened by such alterations include shop fronts, timber sash and casement windows, doors and door cases, cast iron railings, rainwater goods, and chimney pots and stacks. It is therefore important that property owners and occupiers adopt the correct approach to repairs and the replacement of these features.

In the first instance, regular maintenance should be carried out to prevent, or at least delay, the need for more significant repairs. Repairs should only be undertaken when considered necessary to slow down the process of decay and without damaging the character of the building. In the vast majority of cases, a traditional approach to repair should be adopted, replacing decayed material on a like for like basis.

In certain circumstances decay may be so advanced that the fabric is beyond repair, and the replacement of the features may then be necessary. Care should be taken to avoid the unnecessary loss of historic fabric. For example, the discrete insertion of modern draft seals can greatly enhance the performance of casement and sash windows in respect of thermal and acoustic performance together with ease of use.



Terrace of Edwardian shops on Worcester Street that provide a good example of the visual benefits of retaining and reinstating traditional shop frontages and windows, including distinctive 1st floor oriel windows, creating a fine heritage streetscape

Guidelines for external repair and alteration work:

The following examples provide guidance based on conservation principles, and further advice is available from the Historic Environment Team at Wolverhampton City Council. Appropriate designs and materials will enhance the value of the property and improve the local townscape.

Windows and doors

Wherever possible existing windows and external doors should be retained and carefully repaired. Most original windows in the older buildings are of a timber sliding-sash design. If replacement is unavoidable, new windows should be accurate replicas of the original design with particular attention paid to sections and profiles of glazing bars and meeting rails. The profiles of uPVC window frames and glazing bars cannot successfully match original timber windows, and their installation will be resisted. Windows and doors should be painted and not stained. The size and proportions of the openings should not be altered and, importantly, reveals or setbacks should be retained to maintain the perceived 'depth' of the elevation.



An example of the shops on Queen Street where good maintenance of first floor windows has retained the frames and reveals, and replacement second floor windows have repeated the designs to protect the appearance of the building and streetscape.

Roofs

In order to maintain the historic form of buildings it is essential that traditional pitched roofs are retained. For traditional buildings within the Conservation Area, slates and clay tiles are the original, and still the predominant materials. In order to maintain the integrity of the historic roofscape, materials appropriate to the context of individual buildings should be retained. Because of their visual impact, and potential to overload historic roof structures, concrete tiles are considered inappropriate as a replacement material on historic buildings and their use will not be supported. New roof lights, and where possible, aerials, dishes and photo voltaic panels should be confined to rear elevations or be concealed within internal roof slopes.



Lichfield Street roofs showing the visual interest of chimney stacks and pots.

Chimneys and pots

Where necessary chimneys should be reinstated or rebuilt accurately to their original height and profile, and in materials to match the existing, which in Wolverhampton is mostly of brick. Original clay pots should be replaced appropriately or reinstated where necessary.

Shopfronts and signage

Surviving traditional shopfronts should be preserved and original features retained and restored wherever possible. Replacement shop fronts and their signage should display good proportions, well considered detailing, and quality materials. They should respect the period of the building, but simplicity of design often produces more convincing results than an excess of 'Victoriana'. Detailed drawings, particularly of joinery construction, should accompany applications for proposed new shop fronts.

Ironwork

Decorative ironwork, such as railings and balconies should be retained and carefully repaired. The accurate reinstatement of ironwork to the original pattern and detail in authentic materials, usually wrought or cast iron, will be encouraged.



Traditional Edwardian shop front design on Worcester Street retaining pilasters, stall riser, recessed entrance with tiled floor, corbels and fascia but with inappropriate signage



Attractive listed terrace on Waterloo Road damaged by loss of balcony ironwork and railings, with unsightly notices.

3.3 Policies for new development in heritage areas

Where new development is proposed it is important that it is guided by sound principles of urban design, consistent with the legislative requirements to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and its setting, and to have regard to the special interest and setting of listed buildings.

Individual infill developments reflect the style and approach to design of their eras, but where they have respected the principles of the historic building line, and of the scale, massing and form of their neighbours, they are generally successfully absorbed into the streetscape.

Some of the notable and large scale recent developments introduce structures of inappropriate scale, materials and design that have a detrimental impact on the traditional streetscapes, the wider heritage setting and the environmental qualities of the Conservation Area. The impact of proposals on the wider setting of the Conservation Area cannot be ignored, for example, although outside the conservation area the Mander Centre and Mander House have an adverse visual impact on the surrounding historic buildings. Similar situations have been repeated in the case of individual buildings within the conservation area, and future decision making should ensure that such impacts are not repeated.



In other cases, even the most modern designs of new development sit comfortably within their heritage setting. This example of the Art Gallery on Wulfruna Street demonstrates important principles including the choice of appropriate scale, materials and colour.

All forms of new development within each Conservation Character Area should:

- preserve and reinforce the distinctive pattern of traditional development, including street patterns, open spaces and trees, plot boundaries and boundary treatments;
- have regard for existing building lines and the orientation of existing development;
- respond to the particular rhythm and articulation of the overall elements of the streetscape and of individual buildings in terms of bays and openings that break up the façade;
- reinforce the distinctive character and grain of each Character Area through an informed understanding of the forms, styles, features and materials of its buildings. Pastiche forms of development, and the superficial echoing of historic features in new buildings should be avoided;
- respect the scale and massing of surrounding buildings. It is essential that new development should respect the scale of existing buildings in terms of height, overall massing, roofscape, floor levels and sizes of window and door openings;
- maintain key views and vistas within, into, and out of the Character Area;
- where possible, minimise the visual impact of parked vehicles and the provision of parking areas on the streetscape and landscape setting of historic streets and buildings.

Where new development is proposed for areas adjacent to the conservation area, it will be equally important for care and consideration to be given to the impact of the design, detailing, and siting. Where appropriate, all forms of new development should respect the principles listed above, having particular regard to:

- ensure new development within the conservation area continues the local scale, form and materials, thereby reinforcing the distinctive architectural character of the immediate context;
- consider the impact of new development on key streetscapes, views and vistas, and that these will be evaluated by contextural streetscene drawings; visual impact assessments, and virtual and/or physical models.

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- ensure that new road layouts and parking arrangements have a limited impact on the streetscape qualities of the locality and incorporate sensitive layouts, designs and landscaping that reduce areas of tarmac and lines of parked cars.

Within the conservation area, good quality, contemporary designs can be appropriate, however incongruous and poor quality schemes, or development which appears promising at the application stage, but fail to deliver quality materials and detailing once on site should be avoided. A comprehensive design and access statement, visual impact assessment, contextual streetscene drawings and virtual and/or physical models will be required for all new development. Close attention will be paid to the satisfactory discharge of any conditions attached to planning approvals for the purposes of ensuring quality outcomes.



The futuristic design of the bus station adds to its heritage townscape context with a simple, contrasting yet good quality building which avoids the use of pastiche design.



A new development on Lichfield Street attempts to respect the prevailing colour but the height and severe roofline detracts from the heritage streetscape.



4.0 Design guidance

More specific guidance is identified for the key topics which have great importance for conservation management throughout the Conservation Area. These include the general impact of shop frontages and signage; the rear access routes and service areas; and the public realm and street lighting.

4.1 Shop frontages and signage

As many of the properties within the Character Area have ground floor retail uses, the impact of the shop frontages and signage is of fundamental importance to the protection of the appearance of the historic townscape. The Wolverhampton City Centre Conservation Area Appraisal (updated 2015) and the Wolverhampton Shopfronts and Signage SPG 5 1996, provide detailed design advice, but in addition the following notes emphasise important points of guidance appropriate to the conservation area.

Repairing and reinstating traditional shopfronts:

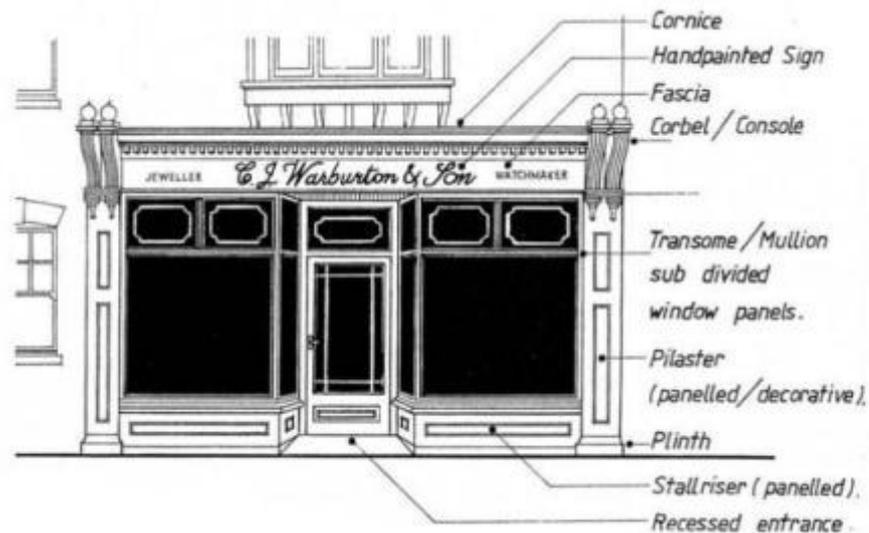
The retention of shop fronts within an urban setting has a significance beyond the obvious desire to retain the heritage features of buildings and streets within the area. Shops, and more importantly shop frontages, provide an 'active edge' to the street which gives life and vitality to the area and provides the interest and variety. Visible, active shop fronts and display space should be retained.

As with all forms of development discussed in this document, consideration of the context and setting of the shop front is the starting point for any proposals for repair and reinstatement. This includes the relationship to the wider streetscape, and also to the building elevation as a whole.

The traditional shop front forms a 'frame' for the window display, comprising the fascia above, stall riser below and pilasters to either side. The proportions of each component should form a balanced composition. Entry to the building may be central or to one side depending on the width of the property, and internal lay-out. The fascia should be finished at the top with a cornice moulding and contained on each side by a console or corbel, which acts as the capital to the pilasters.

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The key elements of the classical shopfront design are shown below:



Diagrammatic example of a traditional shop front design.

Existing traditional shopfronts, or surviving components, should be retained and repaired wherever possible. Original features may be concealed beneath later facings. Where shopfronts have been completely lost but photographic evidence of their original design exists, a detailed replica is most appropriate. Where no evidence of the original exists, a modern design that follows the principles of the original 'framing' could be used. Where appropriate, windows might be sub-divided vertically by mullions, and/or horizontally by a transom rail to achieve proportions that are consistent with the character and context of the building.



Replacement shopfronts to original Edwardian design on Worcester Street.

External roller shutters

Within the conservation area, a number of premises have secured the shopfront at night with external roller shutters. These have a detrimental impact on both the shopfront design and on the street scene as a whole. Planning permission is required for external roller shutters in the Conservation Area. Steel roller shutters are normally required where there is a very high risk of theft or damage. However, roller shutters inhibit activity and are not an attractive addition to the street scene. They have a deadening effect, as light from the shop window display is prevented from spilling into the street, and create the impression of a town with problems. Well-lit shopfronts help assist in the creation of a safe night-time or dusk environment.



Example of severe visual damage to historic buildings on Broad Street – whether the shutters are up or down.

External steel roller shutters with protruding roller boxes that would have an adverse impact on the character of the Conservation Area will be strongly resisted. Where appropriate, alternative security measures, including the use of toughened glass or internal metal lattice grills, should be considered.

Fascias, signs, canopies and blinds:

Reducing and minimising unnecessary clutter is an important over-arching principle in the design of fascias, canopies and blinds.

The dimensions and proportions of the fascia are a critical component of the overall character and appearance of the shop front. The fascia board should, generally, be no deeper than 400mm, and should be kept below the level of upper floor windows. Adhering to these dimensions will help ensure that the fascia does not obscure any significant design or architectural details of the building.

Signage should be restrained with minimal lettering, which should be of an original style, and at a minimum of 2.1 metres above ground level. Hand painted or individually fixed lettering in simple styles on wooden fascias are preferable, and perspex, plastic or box type signs should be avoided. Lighting should not project significantly and should be discrete and fully integrated within the overall design of the shop front. Projecting box signage which incorporates internal illumination is unacceptable, and will be strongly resisted.

Historically the widespread use of retractable canvas blinds and canopies was a distinctive element of the Victorian retail frontages. The reinstatement of such traditional features will be encouraged, however care must be taken to ensure that the canopy housing is sensitively integrated within the overall shop front design.

Where separate buildings have been combined to form a single unit, each building should maintain its own distinct frontage thereby maintaining the rhythm and proportions of the streetscape. The same fascia should not be carried across both facades.



Damage to a listed building on Victoria Street where an oversized and unattractive fascia crosses two units and part of the windows, damaging the integrity of the historic frontage.



This shop within a listed building on Lichfield Street shows the impact of the removal of the traditional shopfront and replacement with an insensitive design and poor materials. The oversized fascia and dominating colours obliterates the framing of the shopfront and affects the rhythm of the heritage streetscape.

4.2 Rear access and service areas

Behind the formal frontages there are, throughout the conservation area numerous examples of rear access lanes, service areas, and pedestrian alleyways, often called ‘folds’ These include Wheeler’s Fold, Princess Alley, Victoria Passage, Lichfield Passage and Red Lion Street. They provide a notable feature that makes an important contribution to the historic character and distinctiveness of the conservation area, providing evidence of the layout of the medieval town, and creating a more intimate townscape setting for those surviving historic buildings.

In most cases, there has been little recognition of the heritage value of these areas, with some inappropriate designs of new development, and alterations that lack an appreciation of the potential qualities of the local streetscape and environment.

Although often concealed from the primary roads and historic townscapes, these routes often provide important reminders of the local economy from earlier times. The mixture of traditional buildings in poor condition, cleared sites, and newer buildings of inappropriate design, often create unattractive environments. It is important to recognise that these areas are within the conservation area and that the prospect of improved environments might encourage renovation, viable uses and improved maintenance, thereby protecting surviving heritage and maximising opportunities for their transformation into attractive areas for niche activities.



Wheeler's Fold



The narrow entrances into Wheeler's Fold and Princess Alley, above, suggest the townscape interest and potential for future opportunities and improvements. The views below, show how they open into cleared sites with unattractive boundaries and uncontrolled uses.

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Berry Street



Blossom's Fold, Darlington Street



Victoria Passage, Victoria Street

4.3 Public realm and lighting

The public realm has the potential to make a significant contribution to the appearance, use and enjoyment of the conservation area. By creating a sensitively designed, high quality and attractive streetscape, a better stage is set for the appreciation of the attractive historic townscapes throughout Wolverhampton city centre. A Streetworks Strategy is being prepared to inform a new Public Realm Design Guide. This will provide a comprehensive management framework for the enhancement of the public realm, sustaining a co-ordinated approach to design and materials.

Old photographs show uncluttered streetscenes. Present day requirements, including those of vehicular access and parking, servicing and pedestrian routes with their accompanying street furniture and signage, create new requirements, where there are often few traditional solutions that can lead to an uncoordinated and cluttered streetscape.

The treatment of the spaces between the buildings are critically important to the overall quality and character of the area and need to follow sound principles of urban design, respecting the heritage qualities described in the Conservation Area Appraisal (amended 2015). To avoid the visual confusion that can arise as a consequence of variety of overly fussy design solutions, a simple palette of materials, signage and street furniture should be considered across each Character Area.

Specific issues to be addressed include:

- Context - an appreciation of the local setting and identity of an area coupled with a sympathetic choice of materials and details, which respond to and reinforce the local character of the place;
- Creating spaces and places - the degree of openness or enclosure of a space, together with its scale, form and massing, confers character and identity and reinforces perceptions of safety, security, comfort, variety and interest;
- Traffic management-the impact of traffic management measure such as signing, lining and traffic calming can introduce an often unnecessary cluttered appearance, which detracts from the quality of the townscape. A coordinated approach that seeks to rationalise such provision, and where appropriate achieve dispensation from Department of Transport standards should be encouraged;

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- Encouraging activity - active frontages help promote on-street activity and vibrancy and in addition provide over-looking and natural surveillance to spaces and streets;
- Variety and interest – as with the buildings in a street scene, the public realm requires careful consideration of the balance between uniformity and variety, thereby ensuring a range of opportunities and settings for a variety of users, amenities and social groups.

The objective should be the implementation of public realm designs where the sensitive use of appropriate materials enhances the heritage setting. Subtle designs are necessary to avoid the introduction of an overly dominant public realm. Careful attention should be paid to the selection and siting of the street signage, bollards and furniture.



A simple palette of materials and designs using setts and paviments define spaces with a consistency of colour and quality surface materials on King Street. These surfaces are suitable for the heritage townscape and greatly improve the setting for this historic terrace.



Some roads within the conservation area have yet to benefit from any improvements to the public realm and demonstrate the visual impacts of the use of tarmac road and pavement surfaces, poor maintenance and patched repairs, double yellow lines and excessive traffic signage.

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The introduction of trees into suitable selected locations provide interest and a softening of the urban streetscape – examples above on Pipers Row, Queen Street and the end of King Street.



Sensitive designs and materials for traffic management that respect their heritage settings introducing new granite floorscapes to widened and realign footways, with the reuse of original kerbstones.





5.0 Management recommendations

5.0 Management recommendations

5.1 A Strategy for Action

The emerging City Centre Area Action Plan to 2026 incorporates a Vision Statement which provides relevant and important guidance and a strategy for action with outputs that have informed the Conservation Area Management Plan.

The Vision for the City Centre:

By 2026 Wolverhampton will have a:-

“vibrant, walkable, attractive, family-friendly city centre full of opportunity and potential. A city centre which is compact enough to be welcoming and accessible, but large enough to boast some of the UK’s best retail, leisure and cultural facilities. Wolverhampton will be a renowned university city made for living, learning, working and enjoyment with the best streets and public spaces, combined with excellent public transport - in short, an innovative city centre of opportunity with enterprise to delight, achieve and thrive.”

Policy Area 15. states that:-

“Opportunities for heritage-led regeneration within the historic core should be a high priority for the Area Action Plan to help improve the image of the City and to promote the city centre’s distinctive offer. The challenge of the AAP is not only to ensure that the rich heritage of the city centre is protected, enhanced and promoted, but that this heritage provides inspiration for new development. Heritage assets offer opportunities for their sensitive and complementary integration into high quality designed new developments, as recognised in the City Centre Prospectus.”

A detailed Historic Landscape Characterisation Study of the city centre was carried out to identify the buildings and areas for protection, improvement and enhancement as part of the evidence base for the development of the Area Action Plan.

The regeneration of the city centre will set the standard for sustainable development – including the protection and reuse of the heritage, while strengthening the local economy and providing equal opportunities for employment, education and training.

This Vision and the strategic policies provide a basis for the management priorities in this Conservation Area Management Plan.

5.2 Conservation Measures

All Council departments and other agencies involved in decisions affecting change within the Conservation Area should understand the significance of both the conservation area designation and the particular requirements of the Townscape Heritage scheme as an exemplar. The aim will be to work corporately with approaches that ensure all development decisions are appropriate within this historic context and will not damage the heritage fabric or appearance of the area.

Further procedures and additional management arrangements need to be identified to implement the following recommended policy measures, in order to maintain the character of the area and to ensure consistent decisions – see Section 6.

5.2.1 Townscape Heritage management

The Heritage Lottery Fund supports partnerships of local interests that aim to regenerate economically disadvantaged historic areas for the benefit of local residents, workers and visitors. The Townscape Heritage programme provides funding towards schemes that make a lasting difference for heritage, people and communities and helps communities improve the built historic environment of conservation areas that require investment.



Queen St: most buildings shown in this photograph are included in the TH scheme

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The Townscape Heritage scheme for Queen Street is made up of a portfolio of projects that together have the potential to regenerate and transform a part of the conservation area that is in need of investment. The aim is to halt and reverse the decline of the historic townscape by creating an attractive, vibrant and interesting locality where people will want to live, work, visit and invest. This will be achieved by funding physical works to repair and enhance selected buildings in the historic area in order to encourage business confidence, to provide local people with the opportunity to learn new skills, and to inspire the local community to take an interest in and get involved with their townscape heritage. This should support the economic and social improvement of the wider historic area in accordance with broader regeneration strategies. The management of this scheme will be the responsibility of Wolverhampton City Council advised by a diverse number of community organisations serving on the Queen Street Gateway Townscape Heritage Partnership.

5.2.2 Statutory and Local Listing in the Conservation Area

Conservation Area designation provides added protection for the many heritage buildings and their streetscape settings, which individually do not possess the qualities necessary for statutory listing. The local list includes buildings of local historic or architectural interest, townscape value, and group value, or visual interest as part of the setting of a listed building. The townscape appraisal map in Section 1.2 also identifies those buildings of general townscape merit where there is a presumption against demolition or inappropriate redevelopment.

Listed buildings:

There are over 70 listed buildings within the Wolverhampton City Centre Conservation Area. They have importance because of both their architectural and historic interest and their significance in the local townscape, and include; late 19th century and early 20th century civic buildings; 19th century industrial buildings; 19th century and early 20th century commercial and retail buildings; and domestic buildings from the 18th and 19th centuries. Although there is a significant focus along Lichfield Street and around Queen Square, there are throughout the Conservation Area many other fine examples.-see Section 1.2.



Listed Grade II – The Chubb Building, 1898, Fryer Street – an industrial landmark.



Lichfield Street – Grand Theatre Listed Grade II and Art Gallery Listed Grade II.*

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Buildings of Local Importance: (see map in section 1.2)

Throughout the Conservation Area there are a variety of other buildings of significant heritage interest and quality. Buildings of local architectural and historic interest have been identified by Wolverhampton City Council in order to provide a measure of additional protection to non-statutory listed buildings of significant merit. Examples include:

- 2/5 Princess Street – corner of King Street, the former Staffordshire Building Society
- Amar House, Broad Street;
- Express and Star Building, 51 Queen Street



Local list buildings: 2/5 Princess Street and University of Wolverhampton, Wulfruna St

In addition, the City Centre Conservation Area Appraisal (updated 2015) identifies a significant number of properties within the Conservation Area that are considered to be of Townscape Merit – see map in Section 1.2. Locally listed buildings and those of Townscape Merit can be recorded on the Council’s Historic Environment Record, which then becomes a “material consideration” in the determination of any planning application.



Building of Townscape Merit - Britannia Hotel, Victoria Sq, on corner of Lichfield St.

5.2.3 Conservation Guidance

The future protection of the Conservation Area will require further detailed policy and technical guidance to ensure change and development is appropriate to its heritage context and has the potential to encourage economic development. Existing documents containing design guidance that relate to the City Centre Conservation Area include:

- emerging City Centre Area Action Plan to 2026: Issues and Options report 2013;
- Wolverhampton Unitary Development Plan 2006;
- Wolverhampton Partnership: City Centre Prospectus 2012;
- City Centre Conservation Area Appraisal (amended 2015);
- City Centre Historic Landscape Characterisation Study 2009;
- Wolverhampton Shopfront Design Guide SPG 5. 1996;
- other SPDs: see <http://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/article/2424/Supplementary-Planning-Documents-and-Development-Briefs>.

These provide general guidance for the city centre area including the City Conservation Area, and will be a material consideration in the evaluation of proposals for development throughout the Conservation Area.

In addition, there is a specific need for the preparation of detailed Planning Guidance Notes covering all of the conservation areas within the City centre, setting out the guiding principles, and illustrating good practice. The following list identifies priority topics for specific guidance within the city centre:

- **Shop front design guide:** to update the current SPG 5. prepared in 1996;
- **Public realm design guide:** a streetscape manual with Conservation Area specifications for paving, parking, signage, street lighting and furniture, etc;
- **Advertisements:** with recommendations on scale and design when used on shops, commercial properties and stand-alone hoardings within the Conservation Area;
- **Aerials, pv panels and dishes:** advice on location and scale of apparatus;
- **Security: shutters/alarms/security lighting/CCTV cameras:** to suggest appropriate locations with preferred designs and installations for different property types;
- **Needs of disabled:** advice on accessibility around the public realm and into public / private buildings.



Amar House, Broad Street – locally listed and identified as a landmark building.

5.2.4 Sustainability

The refurbishment and reuse of existing buildings is often more sustainable and more likely to diminish impacts on the environment than starting from scratch with a cleared site.

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Listed buildings, locally listed buildings and buildings within conservation areas are exempt from compliance with the relevant part of the Building Regulations (Part L) to the extent that such requirements would unacceptably alter the character and appearance of such buildings - the aim being that these buildings should achieve improved efficiencies, as far as reasonably practical without prejudicing their character, and increasing risk of deterioration. Thermal performance overall however can be improved without detracting from the character of the building or the Conservation Area as a whole.

Opportunities where improvements can be made to both environmental and energy efficiencies with the historic buildings of Wolverhampton city centre include:

- environmental sustainability in historic refurbishments through appropriate design;
- the use of secondary glazing or slim section, inert gas evacuated double glazed units such as the Histoglass / Slimlite brands;
- restoring historic features rather than replacing;
- utilising insulation materials that breathe and avoid the build-up of moisture;
- locally sourcing labour and materials;
- limiting waste by the re-use of materials;
- small scale renewables;
- high efficiency condensing boilers and flue gas recovery;
- biomass boilers;
- micro combined heat and power;
- waste water heat recovery;
- smart metering.

The HLF publication *Planning Greener Heritage Projects, 2009* includes guidance and information on a wide range of aspects of sustainability in relation to heritage buildings and the provision of new buildings within a heritage context. A copy of the document can be viewed on the HLF website - www.hlf.org.uk and the information covers topics including:

- energy efficiency;
- renewable energy;
- water;
- building materials;
- construction waste;
- soil;
- biodiversity;
- local transport.

Proposals on alterations and development should be based on 'whole life costs'. This means that decisions should be based not just on initial capital cost, but also on the costs of renovation, maintenance and day-to-day operation over the expected lifetime of an asset.

Ideally, part of 'whole life costing' or 'whole life value' should take account of impacts that are not fully reflected in financial evaluations, or which are difficult to measure in financial terms – particularly carbon impacts. This means considering social and environmental costs associated with the design, construction, operation, decommissioning and (sometimes) the re-use of a building or the building materials at the end of its useful life.

The Sustainable Traditional Building Alliance seeks to promote and deliver a more sustainable traditional built environment by assessing and understanding the real performance and impact of traditional buildings, and to develop guidance for the refurbishment and management of traditional buildings. The Alliance has recently produced a Sustainable Retrofit Wheel (www.responsible-retrofit.org/wheel/) It depicts more than 50 measures that can be used in the retrofit of traditional buildings and evaluates their performance and potential interaction.

English Heritage's publication *Energy Efficiency and Historic Buildings* has been produced to help prevent conflicts between energy efficiency requirements in Part L of the Building Regulations and the conservation of historic and traditionally constructed buildings. The advice also acts as "second tier" supporting guidance in the interpretation of the Building Regulations. The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) has also produced a comprehensive *Briefing on Energy Efficiency* for old buildings.

5.2.5 Maintenance of Heritage Buildings

Regular maintenance of a building is the best and most economical way of conserving its fabric. Looking after a building is the responsibility of owners and occupiers. A building that is looked after will retain its value, avoiding the need for extensive repairs. Protection from water and damp penetration is the most important issue and therefore roofs, gutters and down pipes should be the first to be repaired.

Correct repairs include re-pointing of damaged brick and stonework in matching mortar, re-roofing in natural slate and restoration of historic shop fronts. Reinstatement might include the re-provision of boundary walls and railings that have been removed or the reinstatement

of chimney stacks and pots, which can have such a significant impact on the skyline and roovescape of a street.

Owners of large buildings should consider developing a maintenance plan based on annual visual inspections and a detailed survey every five years. A maintenance plan will be a prerequisite to the grant aiding of repairs.

Day-to-day maintenance

Building owners and occupiers should ensure that the following tasks are carried out on a regular basis:

- **Clearing leaves** especially after the autumn, is probably the single most important task that owners and occupiers can take with particular focus on gullies and rainwater goods. A period of heavy rainfall is the best time to identify faults;
- **Controlling plant growth** which can accelerate decay and sometimes cause structural damage. Ivy should be killed by cutting near the ground and allowing it to wither before attempting to remove its roots from the wall;
- **Removing bird droppings** which contain damaging salts. However, there are health and safety issues involved and large deposits should be removed by a specialist firm;
- **Looking for insect attack and fungal decay** both of which can be caused by damp penetration and poor ventilation;
- **Checking ventilation** to ensure that any grills which ventilate the spaces under floors are not blocked. Lack of ventilation may lead to conditions in which fungal decay can take hold;
- **Clearing snow** which can accumulate in gutters and other areas, allowing moisture to bridge flashings and damp proof courses, should be cleared using wooden or plastic shovels.

Minor repairs and maintenance

The following are examples of minor works of repair and maintenance that would normally be carried out by a local builder:

- Repairs to roofs including slipped slates and dislodged flashings;
- Repairs of eaves, gutters and down pipes;
- Rodding and inspection of underground storm water drains;
- Re-pointing of stonework and patch repairs to renders and stucco;

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- Repainting of external woodwork (every five years depending on paint system);
- Repairs to cracked glazing and the replacement of loose putty.



Example in the Character Area of a small problem, which if left unattended, could result in significant damage to the wall and cast iron down pipe with much greater cost.

The Council and other agencies will be responsible for:

- cyclical maintenance of historic buildings in public ownership;
- the maintenance of the public realm, including;
 - maintenance of trees
 - maintenance of roads and paths plus clearance of litter
 - maintenance of street furniture (bollards, signs, benches and bins)
 - maintenance of street lighting.

5.3 Planning Control Measures

The granting of permission or consent, under one or more of the following provisions, will usually be required within the Conservation Area.

Planning Permission:

- In respect of development proposals within conservation areas Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, requires local planning authorities to “pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of that area.” In considering the granting of planning permission for proposals affecting the setting of a listed building, Section 66 of the same Act requires that the local planning authority “shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building, or its setting, or any feature of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.”
- Therefore works of alteration or extension that will have a material effect upon the external appearance and use of buildings or land, and which fall outside the definition of permitted development as set out in the General Permitted Development Order 2015, will normally require the submission of a planning application. Also the total or substantial demolition of a non-listed building within a conservation area normally requires planning permission. Where necessary planning applications will also need to be accompanied by applications for listed building consent.

Listed Building Consent:

- Section 7 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 stipulates that “no person shall execute or cause to be executed any works for the demolition of a listed building or its alteration or extension in any manner which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest, unless the works are authorised.”
- Therefore any works proposed in connection with a listed building or within the curtilage of a listed building, that will affect its special interest as a building of architectural or historic importance, will require listed building consent.

Advertisement Consent:

- Section 220 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 makes provision for restricting or regulating the display of advertisements “so far as it appears to the Secretary of State to be expedient in the interests of amenity and public safety.”

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Regulations made under the Act may control the dimensions, appearance, and position of advertisements that may be displayed, the sites on which they may be displayed and the manner in which they are to be affixed to land. The law requires the consent of the local planning authority to be obtained for the display of advertisements of any class specified in the Regulations. The Advertisement Regulations are complex and within conservation areas more limiting, in particular with respect to illumination which requires express consent.

- Therefore advertisements falling within the scope of the Control of Advertisement Regulations 2007 will require Advertisement Consent.



A group of damaged heritage buildings on the east side of Victoria Street that require sensitive rehabilitation through the application of available planning controls to secure the restoration of traditional architectural features and rhythms; the reuse of vacant floor space; the removal of unsightly signage, and replacement shopfronts of appropriate design.

5.3.1 Permitted Development and deemed advertisement consent

Planning permission is required for most works that have a material effect on the external appearance of a building or change the use of land. Under Section 59 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 the Secretary of State can make Development Orders that effectively grants planning permission (sometimes with conditions) for certain types of development to land and buildings in particular uses, and in these circumstances no further

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permissions are necessary. These are known as “permitted development rights” and are set out in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development Order) 2015.

Dwelling houses (but not flats) enjoy broad permitted development rights - such as the replacement of windows and doors, roofing materials and the addition of porches, whereas commercial properties and flats benefit from fewer such rights. Most of the buildings within the conservation area are in commercial use, or where residential, fall outside the definition of a dwelling house. Those limited permitted development rights for commercial properties, and flats mainly relate to painting, boundary treatments, CCTV installations and extensions to rear elevations. Many minor developments to these sorts of properties therefore require permission, including the replacement of windows and doors, changes to roofing material and the addition of dormers and rooflights to any roofslope.

Directions made under Article 4(1) and 4(2) of the General Permitted Development Order provide local planning authorities with a mechanism to remove certain permitted development rights, where this is considered to be “in the interests of public amenity”. Such additional controls are considered appropriate where the character of an area of acknowledged importance is threatened, especially as a consequence of the cumulative impact of small scale unsympathetic works. For example, in the case of dwelling houses the replacement of windows, doors and roof coverings may be brought within the scope of planning control, with the objective of controlling works that would be damaging or inappropriate to the amenity of the conservation area as a consequence of the loss of features of architectural interest. Although the area has few dwelling houses, and the commercial properties have limited permitted development rights, the making of an Article 4 Direction across the whole of the conservation area would provide increased protection. Article 4 Directions cannot be applied retrospectively.

In order to protect the character and appearance of the conservation area, the Council will ensure that available existing controls are utilised consistently and to their full extent, and in parallel will seek to increase awareness amongst property owners of their responsibilities. It will be important to encourage owners to repeat traditional designs when any replacements are considered.

The advertisement control regime has a similar system of “deemed consents”. There are several classes of advertisement granted deemed advertisement consent by the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisement) Regulations 2007 (as amended). Advertisements displayed in accordance with these classes of deemed consent do not require further advertisement consent from the council.

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Shop signage and hoardings are covered by the advertisement regulations. Many types of advertisement for commercial premises benefit from deemed consent, including - subject to limits of height and letter size non-illuminated fascias.

The Council may also consider the designation of an Area of Special Control under Regulations 20 and 21. This would introduce further control over the display of illuminated advertisements, and in respect of non-illuminated advertisements would apply more restrictive dimensions to the size of lettering; the overall area of advertising on a frontage, and the height above street level where this might be displayed.

The Council may also consider the use of Discontinuance Notices under Regulation 8. Discontinuance Notices require the removal of advertisements already benefiting from deemed consent, but only where this is considered to cause “substantial injury to the amenity of the locality.”

A public consultation exercise will be required to explore issues such as which classes of advertisement to control and to identify the additional responsibilities and benefits for owners and occupiers of properties within the conservation area.



Advertising signage introduced onto a listed building in Queen Street.

5.3.1 Enforcement Strategy

The Council has various powers available to address breaches of planning control and the neglect of property.

Where there has been a breach of planning control, and it is considered expedient the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 makes several provisions:

- To issue a **Stop Notice** under Section 171 where it is considered expedient for work to cease immediately;
- To issue an **Enforcement Notice** under Section 172/173, stating what actions are necessary to remedy a breach of planning control by: ensuring compliance with a permission; discontinuing a use; or restoring land /buildings to their former condition;
- To issue a **Breach of Condition Notice** under Section 187 to secure compliance with planning conditions;
- Where work has been undertaken to a listed building without consent or is not in compliance with a consent, Section 38 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 provides for the service of a **Listed Building Enforcement Notice**. The Notice can require that a building be restored to its former state, or where impractical to a condition necessary to alleviate the effect, or to bring the building to a state it would have been in if the terms of any consent granted had been complied with;
- Chapter V of the same Act makes provision for the **Prevention of Deterioration and Damage**;
- Section 48 provides for a **Listed Building Repairs Notice** specifying the works considered reasonably necessary for the proper preservation of the building;
- Where works are urgently needed to preserve an unoccupied listed building or unlisted building that contributes to the character and appearance of a Conservation Area, Section 54 permits the Council to undertake works that afford temporary

support and shelter, contingent on the preliminary service of an **Urgent Works Notice**;

- In the case of land adversely affecting the amenity of a neighbourhood, Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 grants powers to require the proper maintenance of the land (including buildings), commonly known as **Tidy Land Orders**.
- In respect of defective premises prejudicial to health or a nuisance, and ruinous and dilapidated buildings Sections 76 and 79 the Building Act 1984 provide respectively powers to remedy defects, and require an owner to execute works of repair or restoration or demolition (which within Conservation Areas would require planning permission);
- Section 220 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1980 makes provision to remove or serve a **Discontinuance Notice** in respect of advertisements displayed in contravention of Regulations.

A strategic pro-active approach to compliance and enforcement, rather than one responsive to complaints is more likely to deliver a cohesive vision for the Conservation Area. In pursuit of this objective the Council will, as appropriate consider taking action in accordance with these provisions by:-

- Taking enforcement action against unauthorised development and alterations—including the use of breach of condition notices, enforcement notices, stop notices and listed building enforcement notices;
- To prevent deterioration to buildings by the service of Repairs Notices, Urgent Works Notices and pursuing Compulsory Acquisition;
- Taking action to improve the condition of land and buildings by serving Section 215 Tidy Land Notices, and Section 76 Defective and Section 79 Dilapidated Building Notices;
- Taking action against advertisements by Section 224 notices for the removal and discontinuance of unauthorised advertisements, and Section 225 for the removal of placards and posters;

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- To make Building Preservation Notices which extend Listed Building control over unlisted buildings for an interim period, prior to listing, and requesting Spot Listing;
- Designation of Archaeologically Sensitive Areas as part of the preparation of the Local Development Plan to ensure consideration of potential archaeological issues at an early stage.

5.3.3 Mechanisms for monitoring change

A periodic review of the Conservation Area Appraisal and this Conservation Area Management Plan will be required to take account of changes as a consequence of new development and any new priorities and proposals.

A key tool to monitor changes could include a dated photographic survey of buildings within the Conservation Area. Regular updates supported by development control information will identify most development changes. The photograph / survey sheets for each eligible Townscape Heritage property provides a good starting point which can be expanded to cover all properties in the Conservation Area.

Further historic research relevant to the Conservation Area will be beneficial. The use of historic maps, drawings, paintings or engravings and old photographs may be used to inform the accurate restoration of heritage properties and townscapes.

Wolverhampton City Council, including the Historic Environment Record, the Wolverhampton Museums, Galleries and Archives Service with assistance from members of the Wolverhampton Civic and Historical Society and the representative agencies on the TH Partnership should ensure that a systematic collection of information on the changing historic character within the Conservation Area is assembled.



Thornley Street terrace of workers' cottages gradually converting to shop and office uses

5.4 Community Involvement

The success of this document, and ultimately, the regeneration of the Conservation Area's heritage, must lie with many different people and organisations, working together in partnership. It is essential that views and opinions are sought from those who live, work and visit the city centre, and from the local and national organisations which have a responsibility towards the well-being of the area.

A concern of this Management Plan will be to incorporate local education and training measures as they will be necessary to sustain a conservation-based approach for the long-term management of the area.

Wolverhampton City Council is keen to ensure that supporting initiatives build on, and reinforce the objectives and achievements of the Queen Street Townscape Heritage scheme, the City Centre Area Action Plan and the Community Learning Strategy for the City with a view to encouraging a greater awareness and understanding of the significance of local heritage, the importance of conservation, and to promote a sense of civic pride in the city- across the widest community. A number of initiatives are proposed and described below which will primarily be based on:

- public awareness and participation initiatives;
- education and training opportunities.

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The expectation is that local education and training opportunities will support and promote a conservation led approach to the longer term management of the area, following the completion of the Townscape Heritage scheme. A series of activities will engage new and existing audiences in various ways, and will facilitate community access and participation in key cultural organisations in the city.

The introduction of new digital media will further encourage engagement with new and particularly younger audiences. The conservation building skills activities will introduce new content within the Further Education sector and new skills to existing tradesman, which will act as a catalyst for further expanding the learning and skills offer in the city.



Activities have been developed for the Queen Street Townscape Heritage Scheme in consultation with Wolverhampton Museums, Galleries and Archives Service, Friends of the Archives, Wolverhampton Civic and Historical Society, Wolverhampton Literary and Philosophical Society, The Wolverhampton Historic Building Preservation Trust, local schools and in-house educational advisers, Wolverhampton College, Birmingham City University, the National Heritage Training Group and the Traditional Sustainable Building Alliance. These formats can be repeated throughout the Conservation Area.

5.4.1 Community consultation and engagement

Key to the success of the conservation initiatives will be greater public awareness. Together the Appraisal and the Management Plan provide guidance for the determination of planning applications, assist in the formulation of planning policies and associated supplementary planning guidance; and in particular, assist the public to recognise the benefits of the Conservation Area and their own responsibilities.

The Queen Street Gateway Townscape Heritage Partnership will assist the Council in monitoring the Scheme, and offer a continuing source of advice on planning and other applications that could affect the Townscape Heritage scheme area. The aim will be to extend this assistance throughout the Conservation Area.

The Queen Street Gateway Townscape Heritage Partnership comprises:

- The Wolverhampton Business Improvement District (BID) Company - a local private sector led organisation whose role is deliver the improvements that businesses want within the BID area, with dedicated funding provided by an addition levy on the business rates;
- The Wolverhampton Civic and Historical Society - a voluntary society dedicated to promoting the history and heritage of Wolverhampton. The group monitors development proposals to ensure they do not adversely affect the character and image of the city, organises an annual programme of lectures and undertakes specific projects such as the erection of blue plaques;
- Wolverhampton Partners in Progress - a business group dedicated to the promotion of the City, such as the Wolverhampton Design Awards, and the implementation of schemes of improvement;
- Wolverhampton College - the local tertiary college with a large and well resourced construction training department, and is a key partner in the delivery of skills training;
- City of Wolverhampton Regenerating Buildings Preservation Trust - the local building preservation trust, having previous experience in the restoration of properties in King Street, and the conservation of the City's war memorials;

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- Wolverhampton Society of Architects – the local group of RIBA registered architects, organising an annual lecture series, and promoting various events and initiatives.
- The Friends of the Archives - a local volunteer group dedicated to supporting the Wolverhampton Archive Service and the promotion and undertaking of research projects drawing on this resource. A key partner in the community outreach programme and the provision of information for the proposed app tour of the city;
- Wolverhampton Cultural Arts - a recently formed community group dedicated to the promotion of Asian culture-particularly through the medium of music and dance.

The wider remit of these organisations will be supported by the Council to promote and extend the review and pro-active promotion of the conservation aims and other heritage initiatives proposed for the Townscape Heritage scheme, and throughout the City Centre Conservation Area.

This will provide opportunities through the Friends of the Archives group for the public to get involved first hand in researching the history of selected streets in the Conservation Area, their buildings and the communities who have lived and worked there in the past, with the aim to collect the wealth of stories relating to the development of Wolverhampton. These stories can be told through various media, ranging from traditional exhibitions, publications, tours and through to enhanced web content and an innovative smartphone application.

Community engagement activities will be designed to encourage participation by as wide a range of people as possible in terms of age, ethnicity and physical ability. It is envisaged that the resources produced as a result of the project will be made widely available through a range of media. The aim is for people to learn about their heritage and by focusing on the conservation area, more information about the heritage of the City will be made available to a wider audience.

5.4.2 Education and training

An associated element of the Management Plan will be to ensure that local education and training measures will maintain a conservation-based approach for the long-term management of the area.

Wolverhampton City Council is keen to ensure that:

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- appropriate conservation skills are available in the authority and the community;
- there is a proper awareness and understanding of the area's conservation value;
- conservation standards are implemented to ensure protection and enhancement;
- owners' responsibilities are understood.

The Townscape Heritage Activity Statement developed in consultation with the Wolverhampton Museums, Galleries and Archives Service and Wolverhampton Civic and Historical Society describes the proposed activities that can provide a model for wider use throughout the City centre.

A diverse programme will be developed to promote enjoyment and appreciation of the heritage of the City Centre Conservation Area. The aim will be to raise the profile of the historic streets to encourage local people to take pride and recognise their attractions which can be promoted to a wider audience as a visitor destination.



As there is limited visitor interpretation currently available about the Conservation Area, actions are required to increase public awareness of its history and heritage. Methods will be devised with the assistance of the Museums, Galleries and Archives Service, who have extensive experience of community engagement and working with schools.

The following education and training measures are to be considered for implementation:

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- appropriate training and development for the Council's conservation, planning and regeneration staff with cross departmental training initiatives;
- member education and training events;
- use of established Officer and Member regeneration working groups to address conservation related issues;
- the expansion of existing academic courses with new provision at Wolverhampton College to include training places for local contractors and tradesmen on building skills courses with conservation techniques and appropriate retrofit techniques;
- learning opportunities for property owners and occupiers focussing on maintenance and working in collaboration with the Sustainable Traditional Building Alliance, demonstrate how energy efficiency can be improved without compromising heritage significance;
- training for local community groups and organisations represented on the Queen Street Townscape Heritage Partnership;
- open days for owners of historic buildings, including participation and promotion of an annual Open Doors event to raise awareness of the area's special character;
- preparation of heritage material including oral histories, photographs and archival sources describing the Conservation Area with a programme of interpretation, which may include walks, school visits, etc;
- the development of digital content, accessible via a smartphone application and the web;
- use of the Council's Bulletin with an expansion of the Council's Conservation and Design webpages to promote access to and improve the understanding of the historic built environment;
- and, easy access and local availability of the Conservation Area Appraisal and this Conservation Area Management Plan.

These aims can be delivered through a range of events and training activities to make certain that:

- owners' responsibilities and benefits are understood;
- conservation standards are implemented ensuring the protection and enhancement of the heritage.



5.4.3 Equalities impact assessment

In order to ensure the Council's commitment to promote equality of opportunity for all citizens, Equality Impact Assessments will need to be prepared for the implementation of all significant policies and projects identified in this Management Plan.

Equality and Community Cohesion Impact Assessment or Equality Impact Assessments are an important part of the Council's commitment to promote equality of opportunity for all Wolverhampton citizens.

The Council needs to consider diversity when developing, delivering and reviewing policies and services to ensure the needs of all citizens are met. Equality Impact Assessments provide a systematic process to doing this and will help to improve service delivery and employment practice.

Action to implement any of the proposed Conservation Management Plan policies and projects will require such an impact assessment.



C19th terrace shops in charity use on north side of Darlington Street that retain their traditional shop front designs and window details.



6.0 Implementation

6.0 Implementation

6.1 Resources for implementation

The proposed actions are based on the potential level of resources available for the City Centre Area Action Plan and the Queen Street Townscape Heritage scheme. Wolverhampton City Council will monitor and review the necessary resources to sustain the historic environment and manage the Townscape Heritage scheme within the wider Conservation Area. Where appropriate and funds are available, the Council will coordinate such works with all involved agencies to achieve the heritage aims and to ensure the beneficial impact of a conservation led approach to economic development and regeneration.

Priority management time and skills will be required:

- from all agencies supporting the Townscape Heritage scheme and working in the wider conservation area,
- to implement the decision making procedures and policy changes,
- to ensure effective monitoring and enforcement,
- to prepare technical guidance and to inform and involve the community;
- to ensure appropriate conservation skills are available in Wolverhampton City Council and the community;
- there is a proper awareness and understanding of the area's conservation value;
- conservation standards are implemented to ensure protection and enhancement;
- owners' responsibilities are understood.

These aims can be delivered through a range of events and training activities - section 5.4.2.

Additional capital funding will be needed to ensure appropriate heritage standards for both public and private expenditure on the built environment. Many of the necessary actions and intended outcomes are more likely to be levered through the provision of grant aid and on that basis, opportunities for funding will continue to be explored and investigated through partnership working with other service areas and stakeholders. This will include the potential for grant aid from the Heritage Lottery Fund Townscape Heritage scheme and Wolverhampton City Council.

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The emerging City Centre Area Action Plan – to be adopted in 2015, sets out a programme of projects and actions for central Wolverhampton which include initiatives for all of the conservation area.

The emerging Area Action Plan emphasises the importance of working together to deliver and identifies the partnership between the public sector agencies, local communities, community representatives and key landowners as critical resources for delivery of the central area improvements. It recommends refurbishing existing space, bringing space back into use and creating new commercial floorspace with scope for retail and community uses, together with significant capacity for the appropriate use of upper floors. This accords with the implementation aims of the Townscape Heritage scheme in Queen Street.

In addition to Wolverhampton City Council funding towards city centre initiatives and with the Heritage Lottery Fund on the Queen Street Townscape Heritage scheme, other agencies will be involved in the local regeneration initiatives which may be supported by a Community Infrastructure Levy, a city wide levy on new development floorspace designed to ensure that the community infrastructure requirements of new development are met.

6.2 Action programme summary

The following actions have been identified in this document for early implementation to further the awareness and achievements of conservation in the City Centre Conservation Area with the Queen Street Townscape Heritage area as an exemplar.

Planning Policy & Strategy:

- the Council to support this Conservation Management Plan;
- the Council to ensure policies and guidance in this document are linked to and supported by the emerging City Centre Area Action Plan to 2026;
- the Council to prepare a programme for those responsible for monitoring change.

Community involvement:

- confirm that a role of the Queen Street Townscape Heritage Partnership and the Civic and Historical Society will be to assist the Council in monitoring the effectiveness of heritage initiatives - see section 5.4.1;
- introduce conservation education and training programmes;
- training and development of Conservation and Regeneration Staff – see 5.4.2;
- training for Members and Officers – see section 5.4.2;
- training for property owners, architects and contractors – see section 5.4.2;
- increase conservation and development control awareness – see section 5.4;
- information day for owners of heritage properties;
- Wolverhampton City Council. conservation website pages development;
- include a specific Historic Environment Strategy as part of the emerging Area Action Plan to include Heritage At Risk; and
- local availability of the City Centre Conservation Area Appraisal and this City Centre Conservation Management Plan document.

Planning Measures:

- update local list of heritage properties to inform emerging Area Action Plan;
- review potential for Article 4 (1)&(2) Directions limiting permitted development in the conservation area;
- prepare a revised shop-front SPG;
- prepare Buildings at Risk Strategy for those heritage buildings identified at risk or vulnerable; and
- condition assessment of Council owned land/buildings within the Conservation Area.

Framework for Design Standards:

- prepare programme for preparation of Planning Guidance Notes on conservation issues, starting with a revised Shop Front Guidance – see section 3.2.3;
- ensure opportunities for, and importance of Enforcement Measures are understood and implemented throughout the conservation area – see section 3.3.1;
- promotion of Planning Guidance Notes and websites www.ihbc.org.uk/stitch_in_time/ www.maintainyourbuilding.org.uk;
- preparation of site specific development briefs where appropriate – see section 2.5;
- prepare a public realm and traffic management strategy to undertake exemplar street works for the Conservation Area.

Wolverhampton City Centre Conservation Area Management Plan

For further advice or information, please contact:

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