



Worcester
CITY COUNCIL



LOWESMOOR

Conservation Area Appraisal

February 2017



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01 Introduction

The Lowesmoor Conservation Area was designated in 1989 and is an area of 5.8 hectares located immediately to the north-east of Worcester city centre. The boundary was extended in 2000 to include Lowesmoor Trading Estate, the site of the former vinegar works now St. Martin's Quarter. Its origins as a Medieval suburb are evident and the area is clearly divided from the historic city by the site of the former city defences now the City Walls Road. The area contains some impressive Victorian industrial buildings and earlier Georgian residential and commercial properties.

A Conservation Area is defined in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Designation helps to ensure that an area identified for its architectural and historic significance is managed and protected appropriately.

Conservation is the management of change to a significant place in a way that will best sustain its heritage values, while recognising opportunities to reveal or reinforce those values for present and future generations. The conservation area appraisal is a means of identifying and assessing what the special architectural or historic interest of an area is and how this contributes to the character of the place. The appraisal should be a material consideration in planning applications and should be read in conjunction with the management proposals for the conservation and enhancement of an area.



Lowesmoor



Pheasant Street sign

National planning policy, as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), draws attention to the desirability of preserving and enhancing heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance which, subject to appropriate assessment and justification, can also include adaptation and change. Paragraph 137 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within conservation areas to enhance or better reveal significance, and proposals that preserve those elements which make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of heritage assets should be treated favourably.

The local planning authority's overall plans to deliver the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) 2016-2030 and city improvements in line with the emerging City Plan will mean that areas in the City, including conservation areas, will continue to experience changes to support improved access and development opportunities. The future of Lowesmoor for the City is important and any proposed changes will need to be both accommodated and also support conservation of the heritage importance of the area. It is therefore important that the sustainable management of the Lowesmoor Conservation Area meets both present and future needs.

The Conservation Area lies just to the northeast of the city centre and Lowesmoor itself has historically formed one of the primary routes to and from the city to the east. The area was originally developed as a result of city growth and opportunity, something which continues to this day.

Lowesmoor has the characteristics of a medieval suburb transformed by the city's Georgian expansion in the late 18th/early 19th century and by the completion of the Worcester to Birmingham Canal in 1815 when it became the centre for industry, trade and commerce within the city for over half a century. In the southern part of the conservation area the surviving Victorian industrial buildings of the Hill Evans Vinegar Works and Grainger's Porcelain Works exist within the context of new retail development.

The conservation area is split into two distinct character areas: Lowesmoor (Character Area One) and St. Martin's Quarter (Character Area Two), each with its own characteristics defined by its current and past uses and activities. The character of each area is described in more detail in the following sections of this document and should be read in conjunction with the management and enhancement proposals.



As part of the appraisal process, the existing conservation area boundary was inspected. It was found that the boundary generally followed a justifiable line and that adjacent areas of historic interest are already within a conservation area - either the Historic City Conservation Area or the Canal Conservation Area. However, some alterations of the boundary and have been implemented.

1. The removal of part of the northern section of the conservation area. The land to the north of Sansome Place retains no historic structures and has been comprehensively redeveloped for housing in the early 21st century.
2. The inclusion of Nos. 51-54 George Street and No. 2 St Paul's Street. Nos. 51-54 George Street are

shown on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1886, and No. 2 St Paul's Street on the Ordnance Survey map of 1902. The buildings are the sole surviving fragment of the rows of terraced houses on the southern side of St Martin's Gate and George Street. These solid brick Victorian terraces are pleasingly decorative with stone detailing to the door and window heads of foliate pattern. They make a positive contribution.

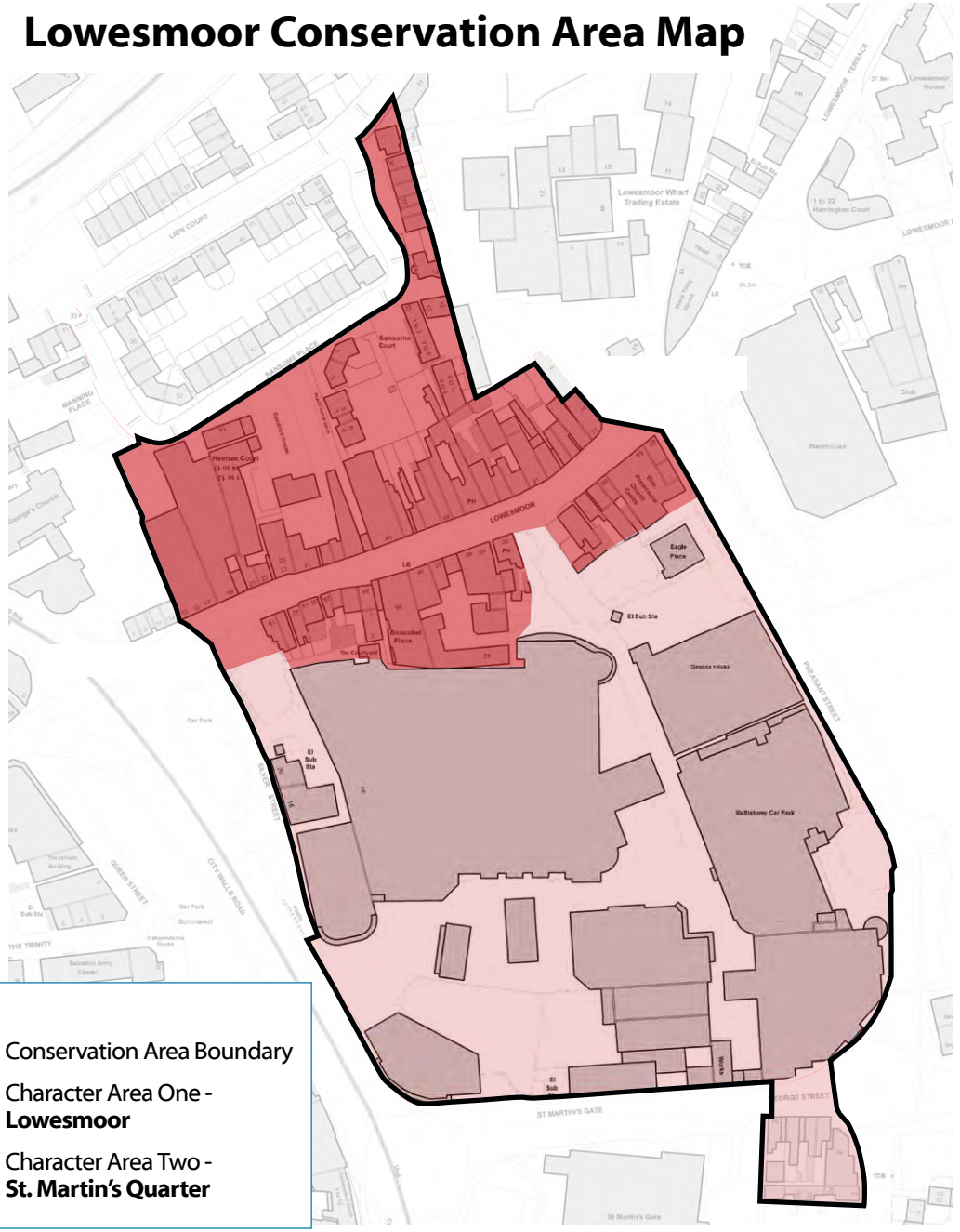
3. Transfer Nos.3 and 3A Lowesmoor Wharf out of the Lowesmoor Conservation Area into the Canal Conservation Area. This building has a character more in keeping with the canal wharf than with that of Lowesmoor.



51-54 George Street



Lowesmoor Conservation Area Map



Key

- Conservation Area Boundary
- Character Area One - **Lowesmoor**
- Character Area Two - **St. Martin's Quarter**



02 Historic Development

What was once a rural area of low lying marsh just outside the City Walls in medieval times, was transformed first by the city's Georgian expansion and then quite dramatically by the completion of the Worcester and Birmingham Canal in 1815. Lowesmoor became the centre for industry, trade and commerce and continued to be the busiest part of the city for 50 years or more.

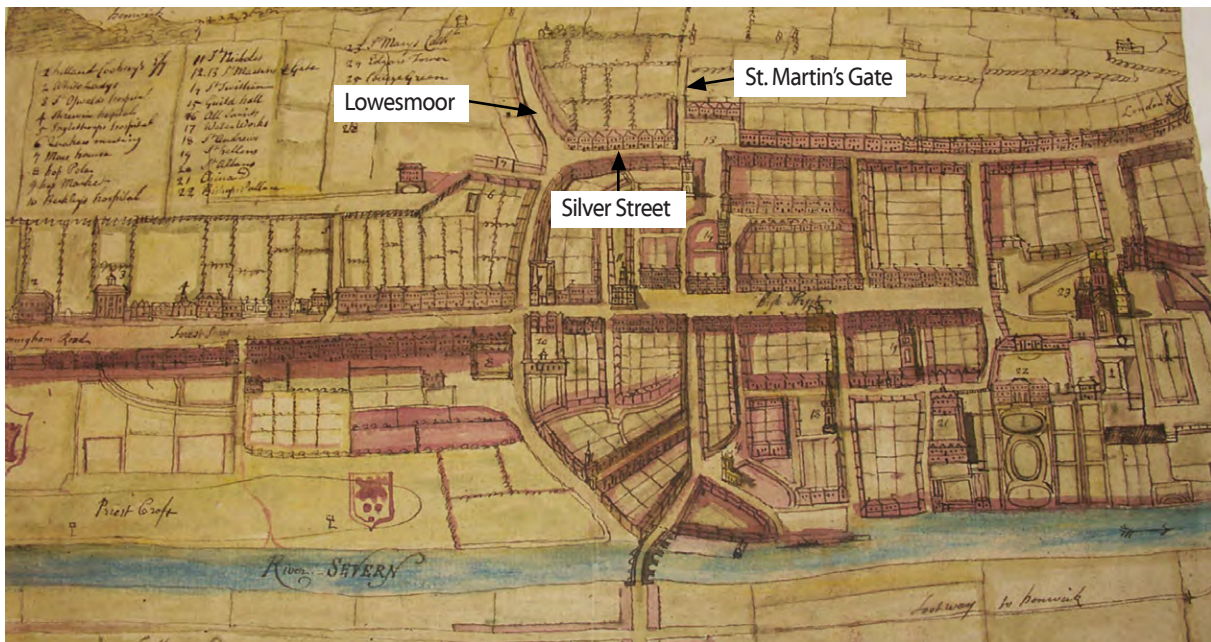
The settlement of Lowesmoor became established as a suburb in the 13th century, in the immediate hinterland of the expanding city of Worcester. The suburb takes its name from the badly drained ground in the area and was originally known as 'Loosemoor'.

In the medieval period Worcester thrived as a major production centre for woollen cloth and other craft products and an expanding population was housed in extramural suburbs such as Lowesmoor. Speed's map shows medieval Lowesmoor as a linear route which stretched for a distance of about 200 metres



Speeds Map 1610

east from the city defences along a principal road into the city from the north east. The map shows the medieval pattern with Silver Street leading north from St. Martin's Gate to a right-angled junction with Lowesmoor. Turning left reached the minor Trinity Gate, while the main route headed north-east toward Rainbow Hill and Droitwich. The eastern plots of Silver Street ran parallel to the south side of Lowesmoor with no common back fence line and a number of garden crofts behind the frontage.



Doharty's Plan 1755

Early development was confined to the plots bordering the principal east-west thoroughfares of Lowesmoor and St Martin's Gate, while the land between remained as open fields until the later part of the 18th century. The suburb continued to grow as an industrial area until the 1640s when the need to defend the city during the Civil War led to the wholesale levelling of the area and the character of the medieval suburb was largely lost. No houses in Lowesmoor are known to have survived the destruction, but a small number have survived from the period of rebuilding in the late 17th century following the Civil War; (Nos.18-20 Silver Street, and Nos. 32 to 34 Lowesmoor).

Despite the material destruction of medieval Lowesmoor, Doharty's plan of 1755 shows the pattern

of the suburb to be little altered from this period and the medieval street pattern and building plot divisions are clearly visible. Young's Plan of the City and Suburbs of Worcester show Lowesmoor as a widened street which narrows where it meets the rear boundary of the Silver Street garden crofts. This early cartographic evidence suggests that the plots to the north of Lowesmoor developed fairly regularly with rectilinear plots running to a back-fence line parallel to the street. Plots to the south of Lowesmoor came secondary to the those plots on the east side of Silver Street and were much shorter as they used the croft boundaries of the Silver Street plots as their back fence line. The existing kink in the street line frontages indicates the former back-fence line of the most northerly Silver Street plot (Baker and Holt, 2004).



Young's Plan of the City and Suburbs of Worcester 1779

The 18th century was a period of rapid growth and prosperity for Worcester and the suburbs were gradually redeveloped. In Lowesmoor, 18th century reconstruction accounts for some consistency in the style of the houses, and the absence of any major 17th century buildings. A number of surviving buildings along Lowesmoor were erected during this period, such as Nos. 13-17, Nos. 21-23 and Nos. 55-57. The Worcester Royal Infirmary was established in the existing 17th century buildings on Silver Street between 1745 and 1769 but by 1770 had become so crowded that it was moved to new premises. The building then became home to a boys' school from the 1820s until the 1860s.

The arrival of the Worcester and Birmingham Canal in 1815 further accelerated development in Lowesmoor. During the early part of the 19th century the city began to slowly develop eastwards, infilling towards the canal, and housing development continued along Lowesmoor during this period. Eaton's plan of 1816 shows the industrial development of Grainger's Porcelain Works on land to the south east of Lowesmoor. The Works were established in 1801 by Thomas Grainger, fronting St. Martin's Gate and extending around the recently laid out St. Martin's Place and Pheasant Street to the east.



The industrial development in Lowesmoor had the benefit of direct access to the Canal via Lowesmoor Wharf and later the railways, transforming the area into a principal focus of industrial activity in Worcester by the mid-19th century. With the great increase of activity in the area, amenities for workmen and merchants developed, including the speculative back-to-back housing in Pheasant Street, and the development of a large number of inns and commercial hotels in Lowesmoor. Historically seven public houses existed in Lowesmoor, with many more in the immediate vicinity, to serve the large number of workers associated with the numerous adjacent industries. The Flag on the south side of Lowesmoor is the former 19th century Turk's Head pub and No. 24 Sansome Place was the Elephant and Castle. A number of other pubs have been demolished in Lowesmoor including the Crown and Anchor on the corner of Lowesmoor and Silver Street, and the Boat Inn which was rebuilt as a funeral directors in the 1960s.

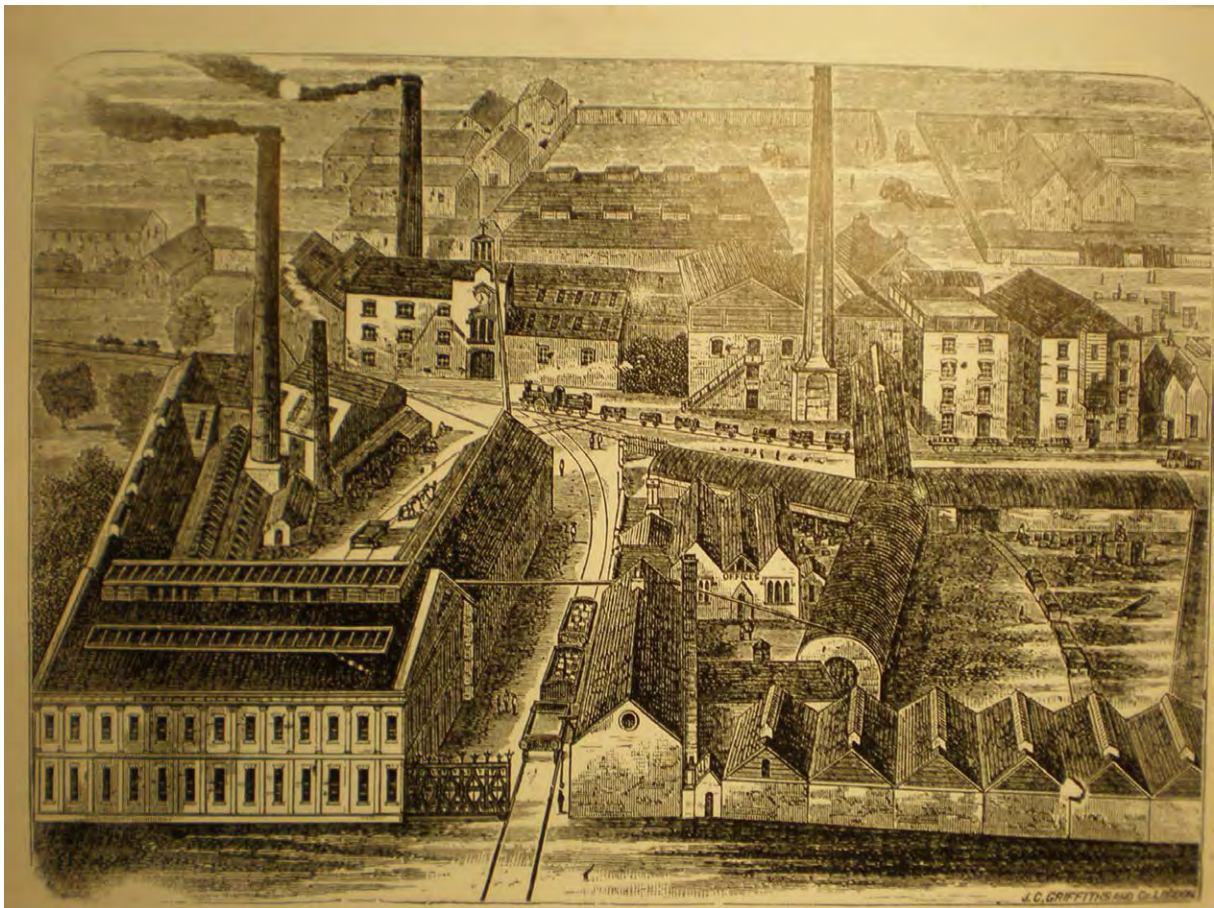


Nos. 13-17, Lowesmoor and the Boat Inn, 1950s

Although Vinegar manufacturing is recorded on Silver Street in 1781 it was the establishment of The Worcester Vinegar Works of Hill, Evans and Company in the early part of the 19th century which saw significant industrial development in Lowesmoor. The firm was established in 1830 on land between Lowesmoor and St Martin's Gate by William Hill and Edward Evans, and was carried on by Thomas Rowley Hill and Edward Bickerton Evans. Dewhirst and Nichol's 1838 survey of Worcester and Environs is the first to ascribe a name to the north-south route through the site, annotated as 'Factory walk' (later becoming Factory Street/St Martin's Street). The industrialisation advanced apace through the early 19th century and the Vinegar Works gradually expanded production on the Lowesmoor site through land acquisition and new development; the buildings of the works were historically disposed in an irregular formation across the site, reflecting the piecemeal acquisition of land as the manufactory expanded over the century.



Crown and Anchor pub, 1950s



19th century engraving of the Vinegar Works from the collection of H.W. Gwilliam

A large new filling shed was built in 1870 and a railway branch line was opened in 1872 to connect all the main production sheds to the mainline Midland and Great Western Railway systems through Shrub Hill Station; the train that ran on this branch line was known as the 'Vinegar Express'. By the end of the 19th century the buildings covered about seven acres with an extensive network of underground vaults and were thought to be the largest of their kind in the world.



Inside the Filling Shed, 1890s

The First Edition O.S. map of 1886 (appendix Two) shows the full extent of the industrialization in the area including small-scale industry such as tanneries and tin works which occupied some of the back plots along Lowesmoor, continuing a use pattern established in the medieval suburb. Formal routes through the industrial sites of the Vinegar Works and Grainger's such as Factory Street and St. Martin's Street were now firmly established and terraces (now demolished) lined both sides of Pheasant Street and bordered the northern end of St Martin's Street, just outside the factory gates. Grainger's Porcelain Works was purchased by the Worcester Royal Porcelain Company in 1889 and the Works extended to include a new showroom.



Pheasant Street, 1950s

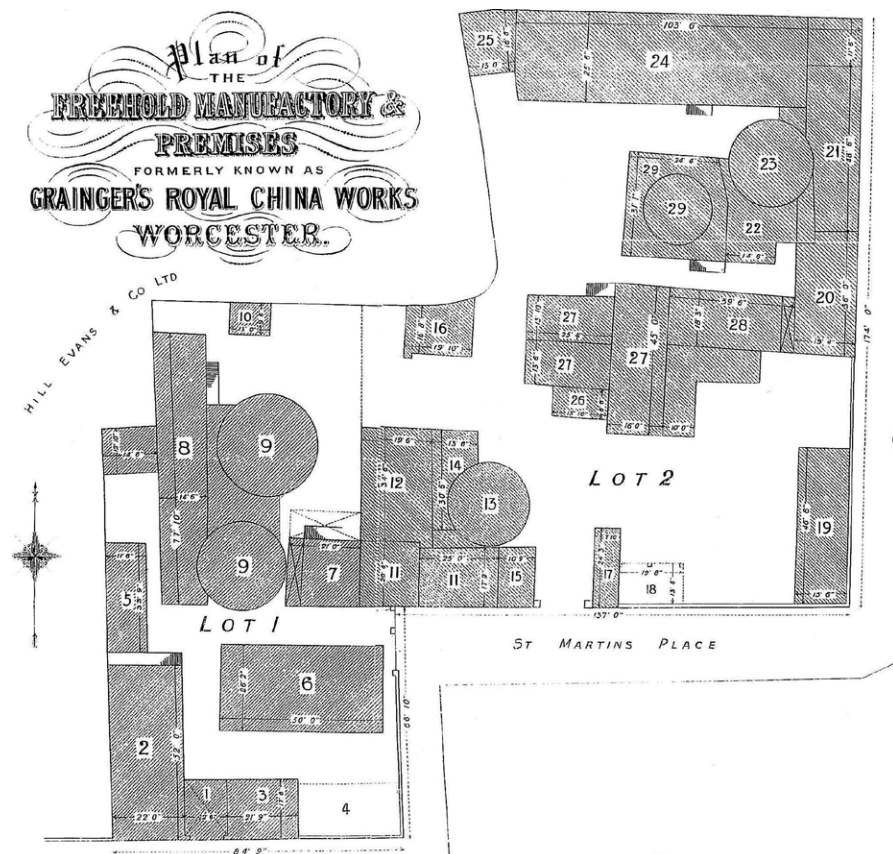


Many of the Georgian houses along Lowesmoor were altered by the late 19th century to incorporate shop fronts to the ground floor and the later built Victorian houses were constructed with shop fronts. By the turn of the century the character of mixed use retail and residential buildings was firmly established along Lowesmoor.



Lowesmoor houses and shop fronts, 1950s

During the 20th century the area saw many significant changes; Grainger's Porcelain Works was put up for sale in 1903 and the Hill and Evans Vinegar Works was taken over by Holbrook in the 1960s with production at the works ceasing by 1964. In 1968 the site became an industrial estate (Lowesmoor Trading Estate), with the demolition of some of the buildings and the removal of the equipment. Some industrial uses continued on a diminished scale across the whole site, however by the late 20th century the area had declined leaving many of the industrial buildings either abandoned or in a dilapidated state.



Site plan of Grainger's Royal China Works, 1903



Aerial photograph of Vinegar Works, 1921



Creation of the City Walls Road 1972

Road widening schemes at the east and west ends of Lowesmoor, most notably the construction of the City Walls Road in 1972, significantly altered the road layout of Lowesmoor. The west side of Silver Street was demolished as part of the scheme, along with nearly all of the east side (only Nos. 18-20 survive), creating an impact on the settlement pattern and a divide between Lowesmoor and the City Centre. The terraced houses along Pheasant Street were also demolished in the 1970s as part of a road widening scheme at the eastern side of Lowesmoor, further altering the road layout in the area.

Significant redevelopment of the Lowesmoor Trading Estate began in the early 21st century through a major retail development scheme and the creation of what is now St. Martin's Quarter. A number of the buildings of both the Vinegar Works and Grainger's were lost as a result of this development and the overall industrial character of the site altered quite dramatically. Alongside the newly developed areas however there remain numerous reminders of the historic use of the site through the retention of the most historically significant industrial buildings which include the New Filling Shed, the Granary, the Fermenting House, the Counting House and Grainger's building as well as the vaults below.



03 Archaeology

Until recently, there had been very little archaeological work in the Lowesmoor area. Since 2000, this has changed dramatically, with a number of small evaluations, watching briefs and building recording projects along Lowesmoor itself, and an extensive programme of work on below ground archaeological remains and standing buildings associated with the development of St Martin's Quarter.

Archaeological investigation has added greatly to the understanding of the suburb, as well as throwing light on the character of the area in earlier times. Although always a marginal, marshy area (as indicated by the street name), this has since Roman times been one of Worcester's main industrial zones.

The line of the Roman road from Droitwich, also marked by Rainbow Hills, crosses the site on its way to the centre of the small town of Vertis. Pebble and slag surfaces found at two locations on this alignment are thought to be part of this road. The road may have divided at Lowesmoor, with another line heading towards the northern part of the Roman town. Ditches divided the surrounding land into fields, and provided some drainage, and there is evidence of ironworking towards St Martins Gate.

Remains of medieval houses have not been found, but there is much evidence of industrial activity in the backplots. It is no coincidence that kiln- and furnace-based industries found a home here, outside



Excavated section through ditch of Civil War bastion

the crowded walled city. A wide range of medieval and post-medieval kilns have been found here, producing tiles, bricks and later on clay pipes. Pottery may also have been made in the area, and lime-burning and ironworking were also carried out. Of particular interest was a medieval tile kiln, closely associated with waster floor tiles (damaged during manufacture), decorated with designs which can



be matched at Worcester Cathedral. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the scale of the industries grew, with one bank of kilns of the early seventeenth century extending to nearly 20m in length. A large stone wall defined the ends of the plots on the south side of Lowesmoor, and came to form the wall of the nineteenth century cellars.

The Civil War demolition of the suburb has not been proved by archaeological excavation, but remains of a very large earthwork bastion which defended St Martin's Gate have been found and were excavated during the development of St Martins Quarter.

The industrial character of the area intensified after the Civil War. By the late eighteenth century, much larger industrial concerns included a vinegar works and various chemical works. In the early nineteenth century these were joined by the Grainger porcelain manufactory, of which part of a kiln hovel and the late nineteenth century showroom survive above ground, while the elaborate kiln substructures remain below ground. From 1815, the Worcester and Birmingham Canal was available to assist industries in this area, including the massive Hill, Evans vinegar and wine manufactory. This saw further growth with the coming of the railways, including a spur line to serve the vinegar works itself. Many of the vinegar works buildings were lost in the period between the closure of the works in 1963 and the St. Martin's Quarter development, but enough still survives to allow the process to be followed, and several of the principal buildings have been incorporated into the development.



Rebuilt kiln hovel



04 Townscape Character

Lowesmoor is a wholly urban conservation area surrounded by built development on all sides. Adjacent to the Historic City Conservation Area to the west and bordered to the east by the Worcester and Birmingham Canal Conservation Area, the area is characterised by two main phases of development .

Lowesmoor Conservation Area includes two distinct character areas which both contrast with and complement one another. The main thoroughfare of Lowesmoor has the character of a traditional shopping street with retailers on both sides and a generally tightly-knit urban form where terraces and rows of continuous development follow a clear back of pavement building line. The former industrial area and retail development of St. Martin's Quarter to the south has a looser, more unplanned layout attributed to incremental development over a period of time.

The Conservation Area feels somewhat isolated from the surrounding townscape by the roads which encompass it; Pheasant Street to the east, George Street and St Martin's Gate on its southern flank and the City Walls Road and Silver Street to its west. This isolation is particularly noticeable on the west side where land clearance has produced a busy traffic intersection and large areas of car parking which has created a barrier to the flow of pedestrian movement to and from the city centre.



Land clearance to the west of Lowesmoor along Silver Street

Despite an overall decline in the area during the late 20th century, new retail development in St. Martin's Quarter in the early part of the 21st century has brought an element of regeneration to the area.



Character Area One - Lowesmoor

The spine of the conservation area is the east-west route of the street of Lowesmoor characterised by close-knit rows of buildings representative of the late 18th and early 19th century red brick terraces of Worcester. The road is narrow and the dense built character gives it an enclosed feel. To both the north and south sides of the road buildings are sited on established burgage plots and are in mixed retail and residential use with shop fronts generally of a low scale and plots widths narrow.

Remnants of the medieval plot pattern create narrow throughways and intimate enclosed spaces which provide few but interesting breaks in the otherwise continuous building line. A number of rear courtyards have been lost but there is a rare surviving example of a 19th century 'backland courtyard' at Nos. 42-44 Lowesmoor where a gated arch provides access to the former Albany China works and views into the historic courtyard add interest to the street scene. The building line along the south side is further broken up by what was St. Martin's Street now the entrance to St. Martin's Quarter and the adjacent No. 54 Lowesmoor is an anomaly in the building pattern, set back slightly from the established building line behind railings.

To the north side of Lowesmoor the buildings take on a fairly regular planned form running to a back fence line parallel to the street. Development to the south side is slightly more haphazard with shorter plot lengths, having historically developed secondary to the rear plots along Silver Street. The alignment of the frontages bends slightly in response to the street line, the curve in the street corresponding to the rear back-fence line of historic Silver Street plots.



Entrance to St. Martin's Quarter

The majority of the building stock is distinctly Georgian in appearance with some later Victorian buildings. Typically of two bays in width and three storeys in height, the buildings are semi-detached or terraced and are grouped as a continuous linear development along both sides of the road. While not of uniform design, there is a visual continuity created in the street scene through the building line, characterised by the simple elements of Georgian and Victorian architecture, most notably the use of classical elements of proportion and placement of openings.



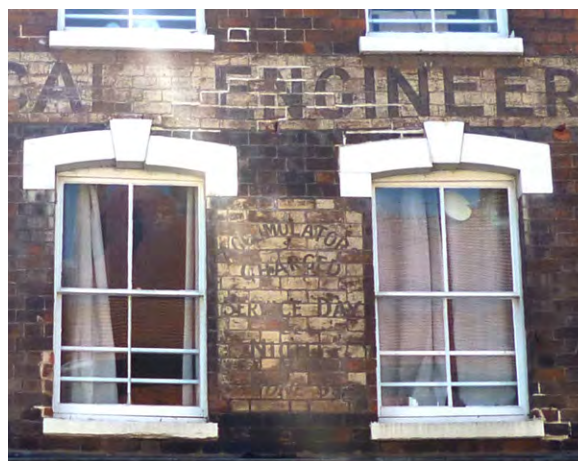
The buildings are cohesive because of their similar heights, materials and styles; variety comes in plot widths, roof and eaves line and incident is added by chimney pots and stacks. Originally houses, many of these buildings now support retail use at ground floor level, expressed externally by shop fronts ranging in date from the 19th century to the present day. Nos. 25-27 offers a marked contrast to the street scene with its black and white double-gabled frontage and decorative mock timber-framing applied in the 1920s.

Notably different in architectural style are Nos. 69-71. This early 20th century building holds a key focal point at entrance to the former canal basin and forms a visually strong corner building entering the conservation area from the east.

Throughout the townscape a number of buildings have painted brickwork such as at Nos. 32-34 and No. 43. Whilst not an original feature some buildings were painted in the late 19th/early 20th century and painted signage became a distinctive feature of this period with good examples still visible at Nos. 42-44.



Nos. 25-27 is a marked contrast in the street scene



Remnants of historic painted advertisements

Lowesmoor widens at the east and west ends, where the cohesive terraced streetscape begins to break down as the result of land clearance and redevelopment. To the east the street widens out at a busy road junction giving good views up Lowesmoor Terrace, although the scale and historic settlement pattern has been lost to large-scale modern retail development on Pheasant Street. Evidence of the settlement pattern at the western end of Lowesmoor and along Silver Street has been generally obliterated; virtually all of this part of the suburb was demolished during the 20th century causing a loss of distinctiveness in the street layout.

Modern paving materials dominate throughout the character area, with roads of tarmac and pavements a mixture of tarmac and concrete with cast concrete kerbs. The tightly grained character of Lowesmoor has dictated that much of the open space tends to be of an urban nature, restricted to hard standing car



parks in the main most of which are found to the rear of the buildings along the north side of Lowesmoor offering the potential for positive enhancement. More traditional paving surfaces are visible to the rear courtyard of Nos. 42-44 which retains some of its historic brick paved surfaces.



Traditional paved surfaces, Nos. 42-44

Lowesmoor is a busy thoroughfare and as such has a number of street and traffic signs with several pelican crossings at both the east and west ends of the route. There is a variety of 20th century street furniture along Lowesmoor, with no design consistency between individual components; modern galvanised steel street lights tower over the historic buildings and interrupt the roof scape, and there are some modern black plastic rubbish bins and a number of satellite dishes to the front elevations of some buildings. Some traditional hanging signs do still exist, most notably at the Pig and Drum public house, and a traditional post box is found set into the wall of number 40.



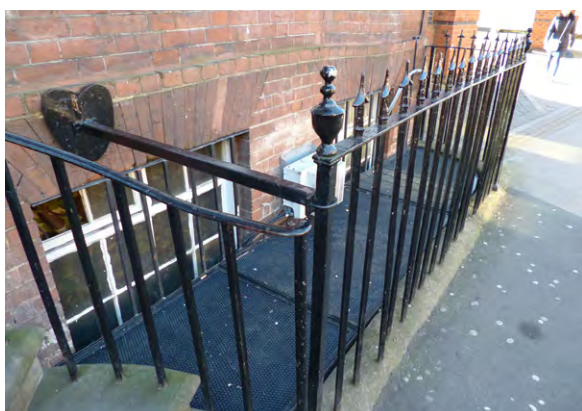
Traditional hanging sign at the Pig and Drum



Traditional post box



There is no dedicated public green space in this character area and with retail use at ground floor level the rear plots of most of the buildings tend to be uncultivated. The narrow plots and back-of-pavement building line means that there is little in the way of boundary treatments along Lowesmoor, although rear plots tend to be defined by substantial brick boundary walls. Good examples of iron gates and railings are found at No. 54 Lowesmoor (Grade II Listed) and No. 24 Sansome Place and there are some traditional style bollards on Black Horse Walk and along Lowesmoor itself.



Grade II listed railings, 54 Lowesmoor

Views along Lowesmoor are linear to both east and west and are pleasing, with the groupings of listed buildings of various heights and design framing the street scene enhanced by the subtle changes in the direction of the road. Good views up Lowesmoor Terrace are available from the eastern end of Lowesmoor and looking toward the city from the west the view is more open as the building line disappears.



Traditional bollards, Black Horse Walk

To the north of Lowesmoor the character of the settlement pattern alters dramatically and the area beyond the medieval plot line has now been taken up by a 21st century development of townhouses on Sansome Place. The built character feels less dense here as there are some front gardens and laid brick driveways creating more of a sense of space between and around the buildings. Historic buildings are mostly domestic and include some 19th century terraces along the east side of Sansome Place. Other key buildings in this area include the locally listed Heenan Court and No. 24 Sansome Place, both are detached and set in some open space, although this tends to be private parking areas.



Character Area Two - St. Martin's Quarter

To the south of Lowesmoor the character of the space alters significantly at the rear of the medieval plot boundaries and the buildings differ widely in style and appearance. When the conservation area boundary was extended in 2000 this area was defined as being industrial in character due to the large number of 19th century brick-built industrial buildings; the remnants of the Hill and Evans Vinegar Works and Grainger's Porcelain Works.

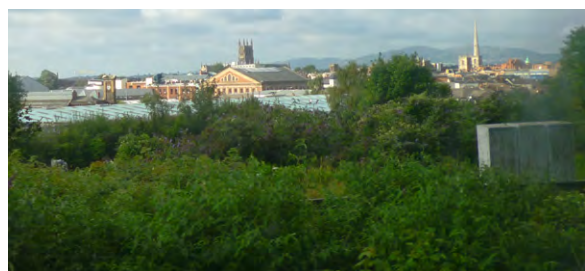
Many of the industrial buildings were demolished in the early 21st century to make way for a scheme of large scale retail development, including a large Asda store, which had a significant impact on the use of this area. A number of historically significant industrial buildings were retained and incorporated into the scheme and these now provide a tangible link to the former industrial use and character. Today, the character of the site, renamed St. Martin's Quarter, is almost wholly retail.



St. Martin's Quarter

Alongside the modern retail units of St. Martin's Quarter the New Filling Shed of the former vinegar works holds a prominent position; this key historic

building forms a distinctive landmark in the townscape and remains the largest building on the site. Located with its rear gable wall facing onto Pheasant Street, the building has a front elevation along St. Martin's Walk. From both sides this building towers above its neighbours and dominates the skyline. The building can be seen from outside the conservation area with clear views gained from Rainbow Hill and Tolladine Road, and glimpse views from Shrub Hill Station. Approaching Worcester by train from the north an outstanding view of the Filling Shed is afforded set against the backdrop of Worcester city and the Malvern Hills; this middle distance view helps to locate the building within its wider context.



View of Filling Shed from the north-east



There is an enclosed feel to some parts of this character area emphasised by large scale buildings, both old and new. This is particularly apparent looking north along St. Martin's Walk (formerly St. Martin's Street) where the buildings tend to face in on themselves and views here are enclosed. A good view into the heart of St. Martins Quarter is from Lowesmoor along St Martin's Walk, where the New Filling Shed once again dominates and forms an impressive sight.



View along St. Martin's Walk



View of Filling Shed from Lowesmoor

The scale of retail development dominates the townscape of this area when viewed from the west. Although large retail units continue the historic building line along Silver Street, they do little to enhance the setting of the Grade II listed Nos. 18-20 Silver Street and the building is dwarfed by the scale of the development beyond. At the junction of City Walls Road and St Martin's Gate a late 20th century building does nothing to enhance this prominent corner site.

St. Martin's Gate defines the southern boundary of this character area and retains some low scale industrial buildings in commercial use. Street frontage consists of continuous brick side elevations broken up by yard entrances to workshops. The only surviving building of Grainger's Porcelain Works lies to the east of St. Martin's Gate and forms an active frontage in the townscape. The building, now used as offices, formed part of the formal entrance to the factory site and although much smaller in scale than many of the surrounding buildings, it continues to create a prominent entrance to St. Martin's Quarter from George Street.



Frontage of the the old Grainger's Porcelain Works



There are some good areas of open space within St. Martin's Quarter defined through the public realm enhancements carried out as part of the development scheme. Public space is defined through paved areas which create a flow through the site and link Lowesmoor, St. Martin's Gate and Silver Street with St. Martin's Quarter. Consideration has been given to the spaces between the old and new buildings and although new materials have been used throughout the site there has been some attempt to maintain a traditional approach through the use of blue and buff brick pavements. In addition the historic function of the site has been recognised and sections of the paving scheme incorporate a visual reference to the former track lines of the railway which served the works.



Track lines incorporated into paving scheme

The quality of the street furniture is demonstrably higher in St. Martin's Quarter than along Lowesmoor itself. Again, whilst modern materials have been used, some thought in terms of design and siting has been shown. Street lighting is modern in design but has been sited where it does not overshadow the historic buildings and has been used to incorporate signage. Finger post directional signs and substantial 'stone-like' benches contribute to a more traditional feel within the development and complement the character of the spaces.

Green space within the area is restricted to some small grassed areas and there has been some tree planting within the site which goes some way to enhance the public realm. The excessive use of modern silver bollards throughout site however, does little to contribute to historic character.



Modern benches, St. Martin's Quarter



Restored iron railings, St. Martin's Walk

There are few boundaries in St. Martin's Quarter, the result of a predominantly industrial and commercial character. Notable boundaries include the restored historic iron railings which define the entrance to the Asda store, and the brick boundary wall alongside the former filling shed, rebuilt with traditional materials.



Brick boundary wall, Filling Shed



Townscape Map



Key

- Negative Building
- Neutral Building
- Historic Gates and railings
- Trees/Groups of trees
- Important boundary walls
- Green Space
- Historic Surface
- L Landmark Building
- F Focal Building
- Key Views/Vistas
- Long Views



05 Built Environment and Architecture

The Lowesmoor Conservation Area has a legacy of diverse building types, architectural styles and materials which has given rise to a complex and interesting character that is on the whole visually interesting and satisfying.

The area contains many buildings of architectural and historic interest, a high proportion of listed buildings and many others which make a positive contribution to the area's historic character and appearance. There are 29 Grade II listed buildings in the conservation area, the majority of which are shops and residential properties situated to the north and south sides of Lowesmoor but which also include the Elim Pentecostal Church and the New Filling Shed of the former Hill Evans Vinegar Works. List descriptions for all buildings can be found at **Appendix One**.

A number of other buildings contribute positively to the local character and appearance of the area and although not nationally designated are buildings of townscape merit and/or of local value judged as making a positive contribution to the conservation area. Some buildings are recognised as locally listed heritage assets considered as good, relatively unaltered examples of their type, where original materials, details and the basic historic form have survived and contribute positively to the street scene of the conservation area.



Nos. 18-22, Lowesmoor



Nos. 64 and 66, Lowesmoor



Character Area One - Lowesmoor

The Georgian terraces that line Lowesmoor form a cohesive group of buildings, most of which are modest with simple but distinctive features. Many features are traditional and, although not always original, contribute to the overall character of the area.

The buildings predominantly date from the late 18th/ early 19th century with some later exceptions and are characterised by stylistic features from the late Georgian and early Victorian periods, such as windows and door cases. The majority of the buildings were modified through the 19th century, as the ground floors were converted for retail use with the addition of timber shop fronts and many have since been altered to accommodate modern shop frontages; nevertheless they remain otherwise virtually intact and confer upon the area a unique and interesting character.

Along Lowesmoor the oldest building is Nos. 32-34, which has timbers and brickwork dating from the 17th century and is thought to have been constructed shortly after the Civil War. Originally one dwelling the building had been converted into two dwellings by the late 18th century and has 19th and 20th century alterations including a late 19th century shop front. Listed Grade II, the building is of painted brick and tile, a low two storeys with two roof dormers and four irregularly spaced bays.



Nos. 32-34, Lowesmoor



Nos. 13-17, Lowesmoor



Late 18th century buildings can be found to the north side of Lowesmoor. Nos. 13-17 Lowesmoor is a substantial Grade II listed terrace which provides a gateway building from the west and forms a key view when looking north along Silver Street. The terrace is characteristically Georgian in style with an elegant but plain facade and the use of classical elements of proportion, symmetrical elevations and sash windows. Used as a glove factory during the 19th century, the ground floor has good traditional shop fronts which were renewed in the 20th century.

Nos. 21-23 and Nos. 55-57 Lowesmoor are more modest late 18th century houses, altered in the late 19th century to ground floor shop fronts. The buildings are Grade II listed and retain elements of their historic shop fronts in the form of pilasters, console brackets, blind boxes and fascias. Both buildings retain traditional sash windows and giant roof slates are a distinctive feature of Nos. 55-57 although the upper floors of No.55 are currently in a poor condition.

Typical rows of early 19th century houses with late 19th century shop fronts are found at Nos. 31-37 and Nos. 43-51 Lowesmoor, all Grade II listed. No.47 is slightly lower in roof scale with a later dormer which adds interest to the roof scape and the majority of the buildings retain examples of well-proportioned sash windows of either eight-over-eight or six-over-six to the first floor and four-over-four or three-over-three at second floor level.

Shop fronts, advertisements and signs are a significant architectural feature of Lowesmoor and reflect its prevailing commercial nature. Simple 'bookend'



Nos. 43-51, Lowesmoor

consols typical of the late 19th century shop front, some slightly more decorative and large plate glass shop windows all typify the Victorian shop front. Although the shop fronts have been much altered in the 20th and 21st centuries, many surviving elements of their 19th century origins remain. No. 51 in particular retains a good historic shop front with tiled plinth, pilasters, fascia and cornice and two traditional doorways survive with moulded surrounds and pediment. Good examples can be seen at Nos. 18-22, 28 and 47 and 51, although some modern day paint colours and stuck on fascia boards detract from character.



Shop Front, No. 51



An eye-catching building is the locally listed Nos. 25-27 Lowesmoor, a 19th century house and shop with a double-gable and decorative mock timber-frame frontage applied in the 1920s. The building has an unusual kink at the vertical centreline street elevation and has been a fish and chip shop since at least the early 20th century.

The Pig and Drum public house at No. 53 Lowesmoor was formerly the Alma. This Grade II listed pub dates from the early 19th century and has a good traditional door case and hanging sign.



Nos. 69-71, Lowesmoor

Completing the building line to the north side of Lowesmoor Nos. 69-71 is a locally listed building of c.1900 built by architects Yeates and Jones as a purpose designed office and shop. Of two storeys, the building is brick with stone dressings under a slate roof with a pedimented gable to the front elevation. Curved in plan, the brickwork is enlivened by piers and

panels beneath first-floor window sills in addition to stoneware detailing of shop front. The building has distinctive two-over-one slender sliding sash windows positioned in groups of two and three.



Nos. 28-30, Lowesmoor

To the south side of the street the Grade II listed Nos. 24-30 Lowesmoor form a cohesive group of early 19th century houses with late 19th century shop fronts and sash windows to the upper floors. Nos. 28-30 in particular is a good example of a Georgian House with a later added shop front; No. 28 retains its character as a house with a surviving ground floor sash window and doorway with semi-circular fanlight (now blocked up) whilst No. 30 has a well-preserved shop front.



Nos. 18-22, Lowesmoor

Examples of Victorian buildings are found at Nos. 18-22, a terrace of good townscape value which contributes positively to the overall character of the street. Forming a gateway building to the south side of Lowesmoor, the terrace dates to the second half of the 19th century and retains two-over-two sash windows with decorated moulded stone lintels, scroll-shaped corbels, and good 19th century shop fronts. The shop fronts are larger in scale than those of the earlier Georgian buildings and appear to be contemporary with the terrace.

Nos. 42-48 is a mid-late 19th Century terrace of three storeys over eight bays symmetrically disposed with surviving two-over-two sash windows, stone lintels with keystone and the remnants of 19th century painted advertisements on the façade. The terrace has a surviving arched opening to No. 44 which leads to an enclosed rear courtyard.

The Elim Pentecostal Church is the only building in religious use within the conservation area. This 1830s chapel was set up to cater for the spiritual and physical welfare of the local watermen and dock labourers following the construction of the Worcester and Birmingham Canal. Grade II listed, the chapel is an imposing single-storey building with an attractive stuccoed classical façade. Set within the tightly knit building line of brick terraces the building creates a notable variation and contrast in the street scene in relation to both scale and tone.



Elim Pentecostal Church

No. 54 and No. 64 Lowesmoor are examples of buildings which still retain their original Georgian 'house' facade. No. 54 is Grade II listed and is noticeably taller in the street scene being of three storeys in height plus attic and set over a basement.



The raised ground floor is approached up a flight of steps sheltered beneath a deep porch which surrounds a Georgian door case, set back from the established building line of the street behind a front area enclosed by a set of historic railings. These subtle but slightly grander displays of architecture indicate a building of higher status reflected in the built form and architectural embellishments. The additional height and elongated sash windows give this building a vertical emphasis. No. 64 is a Grade II listed building sited adjacent to the chapel with traditional sash windows, dentilled eaves and fanlight.

Completing the building line to the south side of Lowesmoor No. 66 is an early 19th century house and shop of three storeys. The building is locally listed with its eastern side elevation fronting Pheasant Street and is of red brick under hipped slate roof with sash windows and a good shop front.

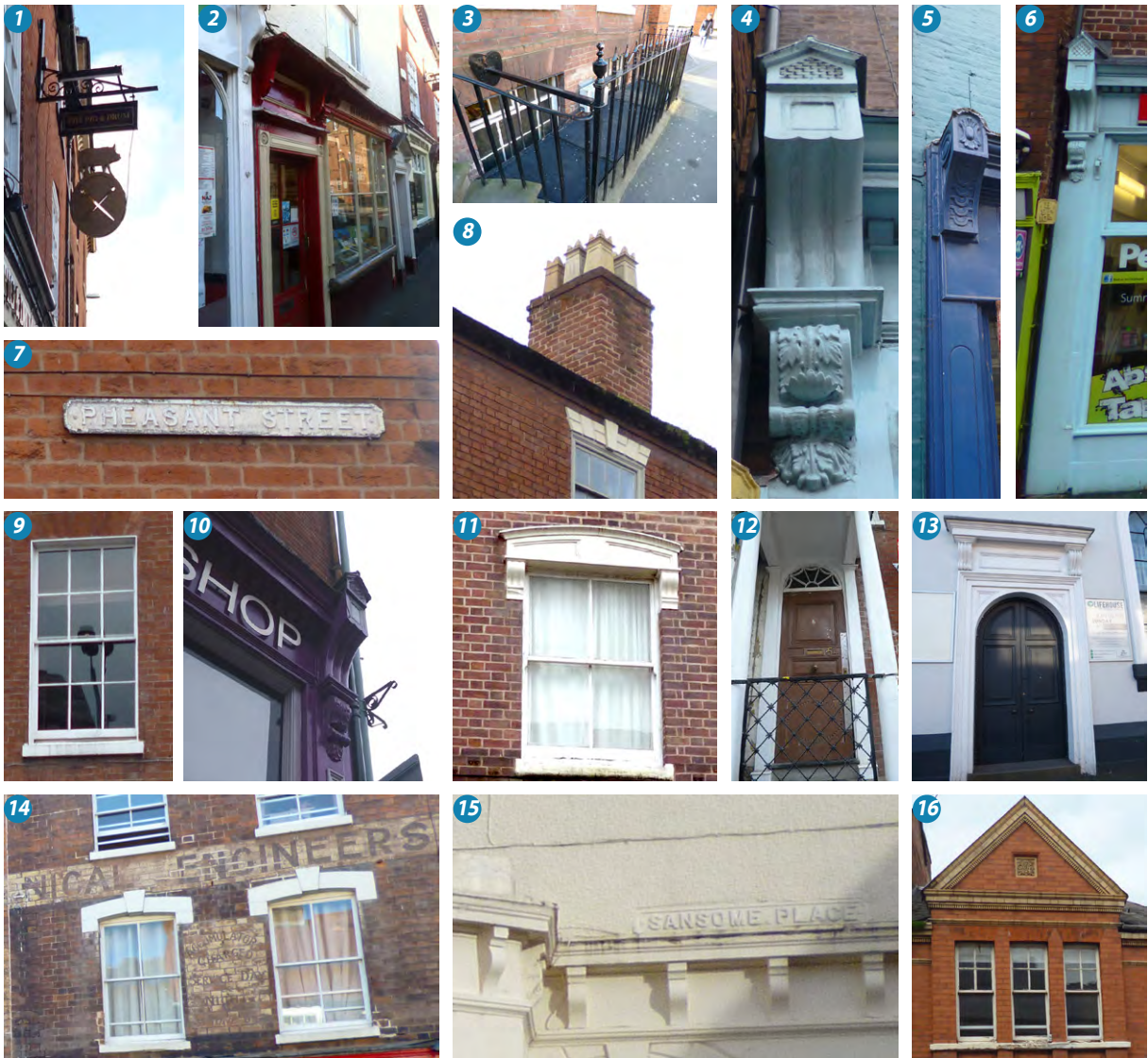
In the north part of the conservation area Sansome Place contains a number of historic buildings which form part of the character area of Lowesmoor through both style and former use. The mid-19th century Holy Trinity School, now Heenan Court, is a locally listed building. Renovated in 2013 the building has two front-facing gables with decorative barge-boarding and includes new build apartments to rear of the site. No.24 Sansome Place is the former Elephant and Castle public house which is now divided into flats. A good group of terraces about the conservation area boundary to the northeast and contribute to historic character.



Heenan Court



No. 24, Sansome Walk



1. Hanging sign, Pig and Drum

2. Traditional shop front, No. 51

3. Metal railings to No. 54

4. Shop front detail, No. 22

5. Shop front detail, No. 32

6. Shop front

7. Street sign, Pheasant Street

8. Chimney Stack, No. 35

9. Window, No. 54

10. Shop front detail, No. 18

11. Window, No. 22

12. Doorway, No. 54

13. Doorway, Chapel

14. Painted signage to No. 40

15. Street sign, No. 24, Sansome Place

16. Windows, No. 69



Character Area Two - St. Martin's Quarter

Industrial Victorian architecture dominated this character area with the development of the Vinegar Works followed by Grainger's Porcelain in the 19th century. In contrast to the relatively simple domestic architecture of the buildings along Lowesmoor, many of the surviving industrial buildings which now form part of this character area display elaborate and decorative features and provide a pleasing contrast in architectural style.



Former industrial buildings of the Vinegar Works now incorporated into the retail development

The Grade II listed New Filling Shed is the most striking building of the former Vinegar Works and recalls the heyday of Victorian industrial building. Built c.1870 this large-scale building was given the most extravagant architectural treatment of all the buildings on the factory site, the expanse of red brick enlivened with yellow brick pilasters, stepped frieze and modillion cornice. The building contains a single volume, which would originally have contained the large vats of liquid vinegar, with two tiers of windows and a slate and glass roof. Now known as Dancox House and used as an army base, the building represents part of what was one of the largest works of its kind in the world.

Directly opposite the filling shed is the former mid-19th century counting house of the Vinegar Works which was restored to serve as the entrance to Asda. Built in a Victorian Gothic style, the well-executed brickwork is interspersed with stone detailing, such as the tracery of the oriel windows and the ogee-arched door. Other surviving industrial buildings in the area consist of the former granary which is currently derelict and the fermenting room which has been sensitively redeveloped into a retail outlet, although the top floor with original tank awaits reuse. Whilst these buildings display an understated architectural style some interesting detail such as dentilled eaves, segmented brick lintels and projecting blue brick sills add interest to this group of historic buildings.



Beneath Asda lies a fine series of brick vaulted cellars covering a substantial area below what was the vinegar works site. The cellars were used by the Works until it closed in the 1960s and have had various uses including an air raid shelter during the Second World War and a fabric shop. Currently unoccupied The Vaults, as they are now known, are locally listed and survive as a strong reminder of the former use of this site.



Brick vaulted cellars



The New Filling Shed



The filling and dispatching room is an enormous hall...it is one of the largest single rooms in the kingdom...the great vats...are probably the most conspicuous and impressive parts of the equipment. One of these vats, standing among many of slightly smaller size is 100 feet in circumference and 32 feet high having a capacity of 114,821 gallons (Worcester Daily Times, 1903).



There are two surviving structures of Grainger's Porcelain Works; the former warehouse and timekeeper's office, now in use as modern offices, and the kiln hovel. One of the later structures of the works, built in 1890, the office building is the most intact and architecturally elaborate of the Grainger's structures, its façade articulated by the many brick lintelled openings, recessed panels and a pedimented gable with a central oculus. On an L-shaped plan, the building was constructed in part as the display rooms for the wares also serving for the dispatch of goods made here. To the rear of the building the partial remnant of a kiln hovel, associated with the porcelain works, is the sole surviving remnant in Worcester. Demolished by 1941, the kiln was once one of five.

Nos. 18-20 Silver Street is the oldest surviving building in the conservation area, and the only remaining

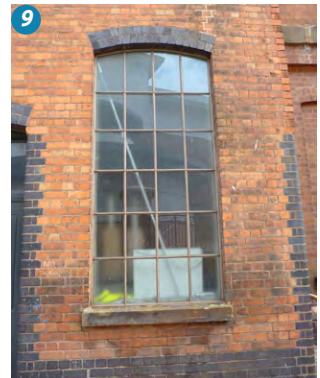
historic building on Silver Street. Built originally as two brick houses in the 17th century and used as the infirmary in the 18th century, this Grade II listed building was originally two storeys with an attic lit by five dormers. To the rear of No.18 is a structure of brick with timber framing to the gable ends, also of two storeys and attic with two dormers. A good central door case to the front elevation was inserted in the early 19th century and by the late 19th century the building had a timber shop front and was recorded as an ironmongers. In the 1950s the upper floor and roof was demolished and replaced with an asbestos roof. The building is currently in an extremely poor condition but work is underway in 2017 to convert the building into a mixed residential and commercial use with the upper floor and dormers reinstated as part of the scheme.



Grainger's offices



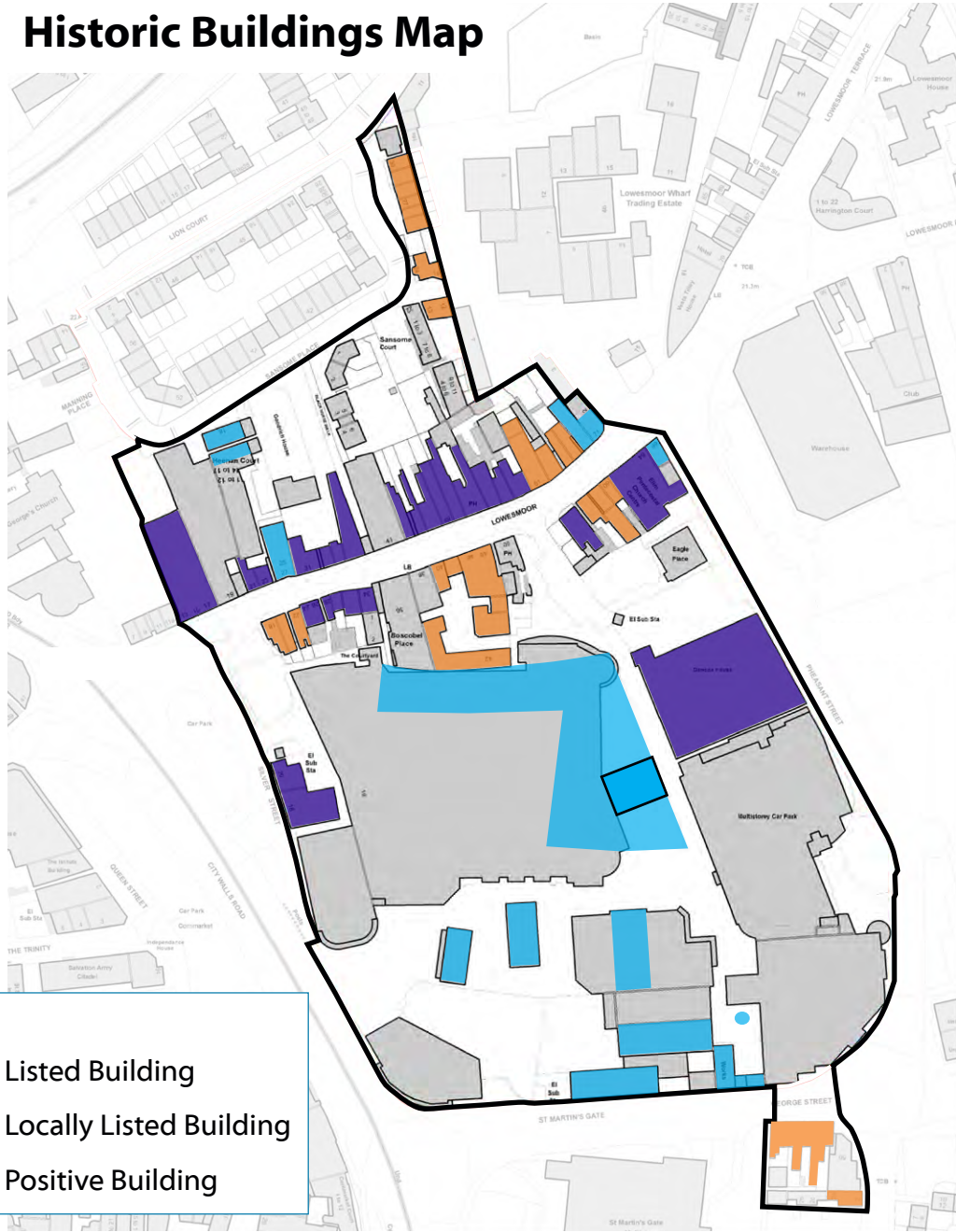
Nos. 18-20, Silver Street






1. Pedimented gable, Grainger's 4. Doorway, Old Vinegar Works 7. Window, Fermenting House 10. Ironwork detailing to railings, St. Martin's Walk
 2. New Filling Hall 5. Doorway, Granary 8. Archway, Grainger's 11. Victorian Gothic detail, Counting House
 3. Oriel window, Counting House 6. Brick detailing, Old Vinegar Works 9. Window, Old Vinegar Works 12. Iron railings, St. Martin's Walk



Historic Buildings Map



Key

-  Listed Building
-  Locally Listed Building
-  Positive Building



06 Management Proposals

The management proposals set out a framework for managing change in, and the conservation and enhancement of, Worcester's conservation areas, to ensure that they retain the special qualities that led to their designation. It helps to fulfil the Council's duty under Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to prepare proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas. These proposals are particularly relevant where there is pressure for development and where cumulative change may be affecting the character or appearance of the conservation area.

Planning applications affecting conservation areas will be determined with regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012), the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP), and the approved conservation area management proposals, and having regard to advice from the Council's Conservation Area Advisory Committee. The NPPF is supported by the Government's Planning Practice Guidance: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment (2014).

The key factors that give Lowesmoor Conservation Area its special interest are identified in the Character Appraisal. These are the things that make up the character and appearance of the area "which it is desirable to preserve and enhance" through

management action. Development opportunities which preserve the character and enhance, or better reveal the significance of, the conservation area will be looked upon favourably by the council. Those proposals that threaten the identified character of the area will be resisted.

Any new development should reinforce the character of Lowesmoor as identified in the conservation area appraisal, and be sympathetic to the historical evolution of the area. Consideration should be given to the significance of the historic buildings and their setting, the historic layout and street pattern, significant spaces, scale and massing of existing and proposed buildings, and the employment of suitable building materials and architectural features.



Overall the buildings in the Lowesmoor Conservation Area are in good condition, however there have been a number of changes over the years which have impacted on the character and appearance of the area, in particular the redevelopment of St. Martin's Quarter. Change on this scale can alter the character of an area, the effect being that the overall character of the conservation area is threatened along with its reason for designation in the first place. There are also a small number of buildings which are in poor condition in Lowesmoor, and as a result the conservation area is currently on the Historic England, Heritage At Risk register.

The particular issues affecting the Lowesmoor Conservation Area at present can be summarised as follows:

- Poor condition of some listed buildings having a detrimental effect on the appearance of the conservation area
- A high proportion of listed buildings within the conservation area with unauthorised satellite dishes
- A number of unauthorised shop fronts and signage
- Development and cumulative change impacting on the industrial character of St. Martin's Gate
- Lack of maintenance and repair threatening historic architectural features
- Empty shop units and some poor quality public realm

In order to manage change in the conservation area individual management proposals which address these issues are identified below. Successful management of the area can only be done through responsible action and individual management proposals which address these issues and it needs to be considered in the context of the area as a whole. These management proposals will seek to offer appropriate action in order to preserve elements that positively contribute to character and actively seek to provide achievable enhancement solutions. As part of the overall management proposals for Lowesmoor, Worcester City Council are proposing to apply for Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) funding through the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). If successful this scheme could contribute to funding which would enhance the conservation area through working with owners/occupiers and other stakeholders. A successful scheme could see a number of negative issues in the conservation area addressed.



North side of Lowesmoor



	Issue	Action	Responsibility
<p>1</p> 	<p>Lowesmoor Conservation Area is currently on the Historic England Heritage At Risk Register.</p>	<p>Submit application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for funding towards a Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) for Lowesmoor.</p>	<p>Conservation Officer</p>
<p>2</p> 	<p>Nos. 55-57 Lowesmoor and Nos. 18-20 Silver Street are Grade II listed buildings identified as at risk on Worcester City Council's Heritage At Risk Register.</p>	<p>Use statutory powers such as S215 Amenity Notices. Consideration should also be given to serving an urgent works notice for Nos. 18-20 Silver Street. These buildings should be seen as a priority for repair and enhancement in any successful future THI scheme.</p>	<p>Conservation Officer Enforcement Officer</p>
<p>3</p> 	<p>Alteration of shop fronts - many modern additions/material impacting upon historic character.</p> <p>Particular attention should be paid to enhancement through better shop front design.</p>	<p>Consistent use of Worcester City Council's SPD Shop Front Guidance in planning applications. Identify unauthorised works and submit to planning enforcement team.</p>	<p>Planning Officers Enforcement Officers Conservation Officer</p>



4



Issue	Action	Responsibility
<p>Inappropriate modern materials and/or alterations/ loss of historic fabric impacting upon historic character. There are no Permitted Development rights for flats and/or shop fronts and therefore the control of loss or change of historic fabric can be guided through the planning system.</p>	<p>Offer guidance and support to house and shop owners to promote a better awareness of what 'like for like' repairs/ replacements are. When alterations are proposed, actively encourage the replacement of poor quality materials and/ or inappropriate appearance with more suitable. Identify any unauthorised works and notify the planning enforcement team. Identify particular examples for THI Scheme.</p>	<p>Conservation Officer Planning Officers Enforcement Officers</p>



5



Issue	Action	Responsibility
<p>A number of areas of negative impact exist including out of character 20th century buildings, poor infill development, areas of hard standing car park and some gap sites.</p>	<p>Promote development of these areas which will preserve historic character and enhance the appearance of the conservation area paying regard to the emerging Conservation Area Character Appraisal. Development which incorporates good quality design will be looked on favourably.</p>	<p>Planning Officers Conservation Officers</p>

6



<p>Empty units in a number of shops and upper floor flats.</p>	<p>Work with economic development and regeneration and housing to encourage the active use and occupancy of properties in Lowesmoor. Encourage investment in the area through promotion of THI Scheme.</p>	<p>Planning Officers Conservation Officer ED Officers Housing Officers</p>
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7



Issue	Action	Responsibility
<p>Derelict historic buildings. Unoccupied buildings are at risk from deterioration and decay.</p>	<p>The Local Planning Authority will look favourably on proposals which promote sustainable and adaptive re-use of identified buildings through the planning system and encourage sensitive redevelopment which respects the character of the building and the contribution it makes to the conservation area.</p>	<p>Planning Officers Conservation Officers</p>

8



<p>The scale and proximity of large scale modern retail units in relation to historic buildings and their setting.</p>	<p>Attention to the scale and massing of buildings in planning applications. Respect for the scale of historic buildings and their setting in relation to new development.</p>	<p>Planning Officers</p>
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9



Issue	Action	Responsibility
<p>Traffic along Lowesmoor is heavy. The area has been identified as having high pollution levels and a Traffic Order is in place to restrict use at peak times.</p>	<p>Enforcement of Traffic Order</p>	<p>Parking Enforcement Officers Police Officers</p>

10



<p>Street lights are tall and modern and tower over historic buildings. A number of unnecessary signs creating clutter. A number of unauthorised satellite dishes on frontages of listed buildings and TV aerials on roofs.</p>	<p>Liaise with highways to identify and remove unnecessary signage. Future replacement street lights to be of traditional design and carefully located to ensure they do not obscure historic buildings or features. Work with enforcement team to remove unauthorised items.</p>	<p>Conservation Officer Enforcement Officer Highways</p>
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11



Issue	Action	Responsibility
<p>Potential loss of further historic industrial buildings through development proposals.</p>	<p>May mean reconsideration of this character area as forming part of the conservation in future reviews.</p>	<p>Conservation Officer</p>

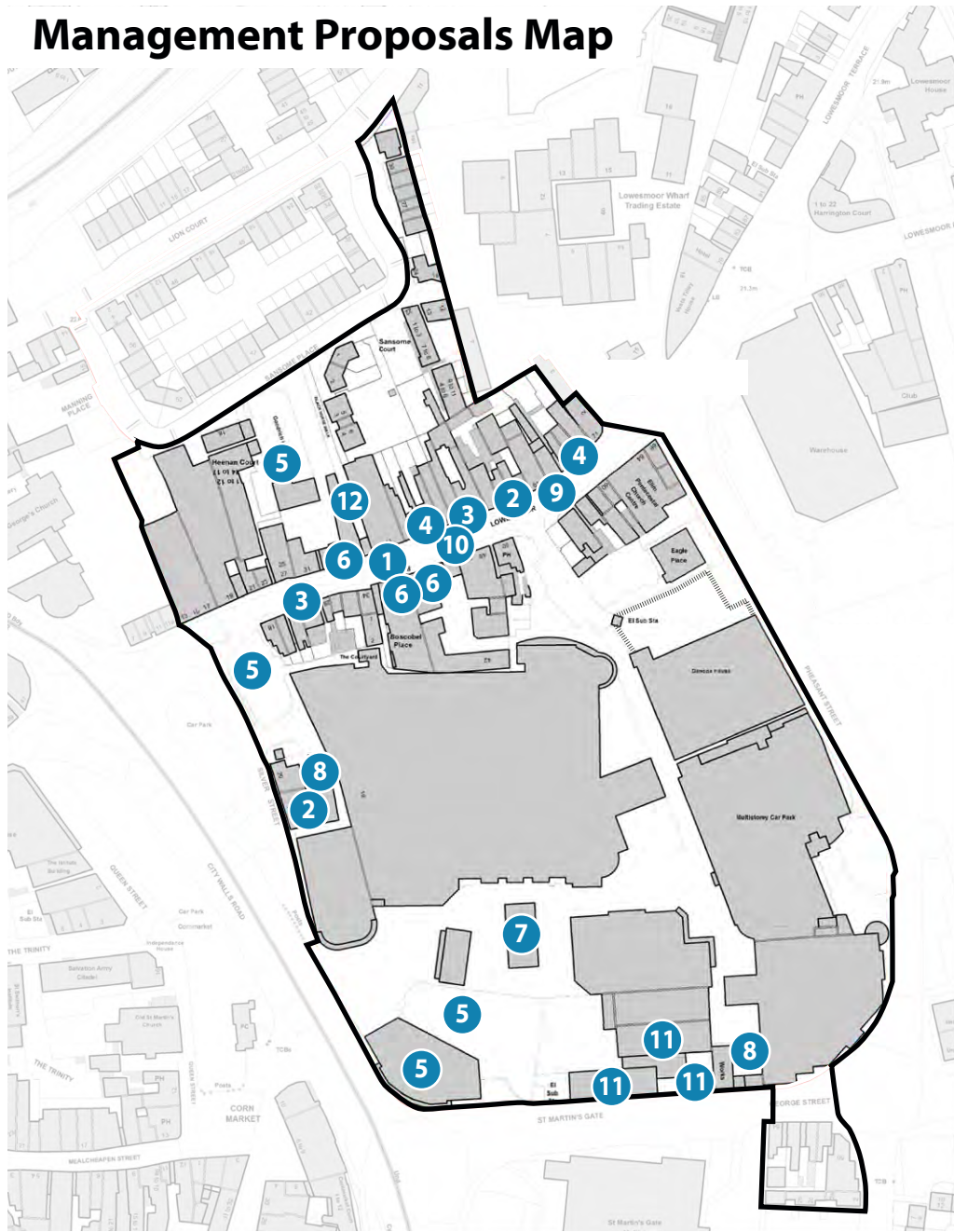
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<p>Some poor quality public realm exists to the rear of plots in Lowesmoor including poor quality wall condition on Black Horse Walk, poor lighting and paving. Noted for some anti-social behaviour.</p>	<p>Recommend as priority improvement for future THI Scheme. Liaison with Highways to plan for better lighting and rubbish removal.</p>	<p>Conservation Officer Highways</p>
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Management Proposals Map





07 Appendix One - Listed Buildings

The following buildings in Lowesmoor are Grade II listed. Follow the link to view the list description at the National Heritage List for England.

- 1389972 **13,15 and 17 Lowesmoor**
- 1389973 **21 and 23 Lowesmoor**
- 1389974 **24-30 Lowesmoor**
- 1389975 **31, 33 and 35 Lowesmoor**
- 1389976 **32, 34 and 34A Lowesmoor**
- 1389977 **37 Lowesmoor**
- 1389978 **43 and 45 Lowesmoor**
- 1389979 **47 Lowesmoor**
- 1389980 **49, 51A, 51B and The Pig and Drum (No. 53) Lowesmoor**
- 1389981 **No. 54 Lowesmoor and attached railings**
- 1389982 **55 and 57 Lowesmoor**
- 1389983 **64 Lowesmoor**
- 1390177 **18-20 Silver Street**
- 1389984 **Elim Pentecostal Church**
- 1390121 **The Old Vinegar Works**

Locally Listed Buildings

The following buildings in Lowesmoor have been identified as being of local significance and character.

- **Nos. 25-27 Lowesmoor**
- **No. 66 Lowesmoor**
- **Nos. 69-71 Lowesmoor**
- **Heenan Court (former Holy Trinity School)**
- **Former Vinegar Works Buildings: The Granary, The Fermenting House, The Counting House and the underground cellars.**
- **Former 'Grainger Porcelain Works'**



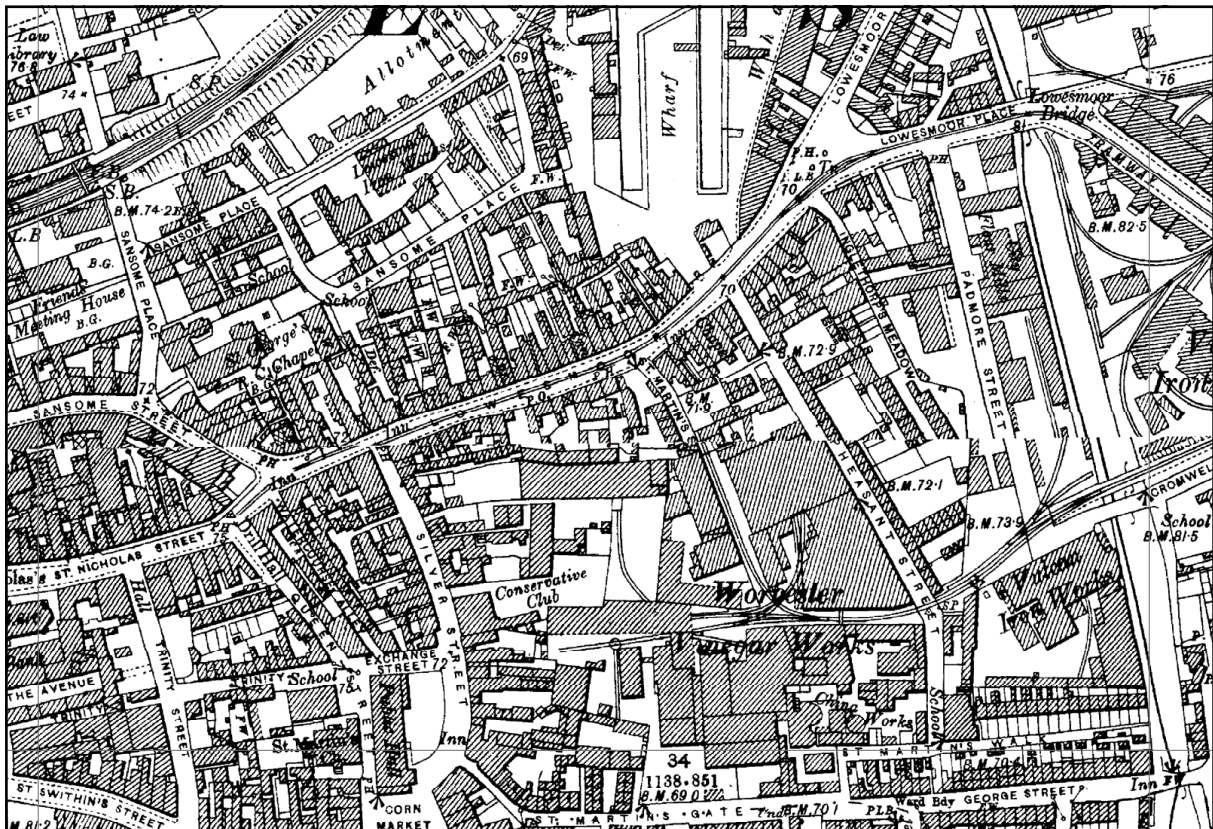
08 Appendix Two - Historic Mapping

1st Edition Ordnance Survey, circa 1886



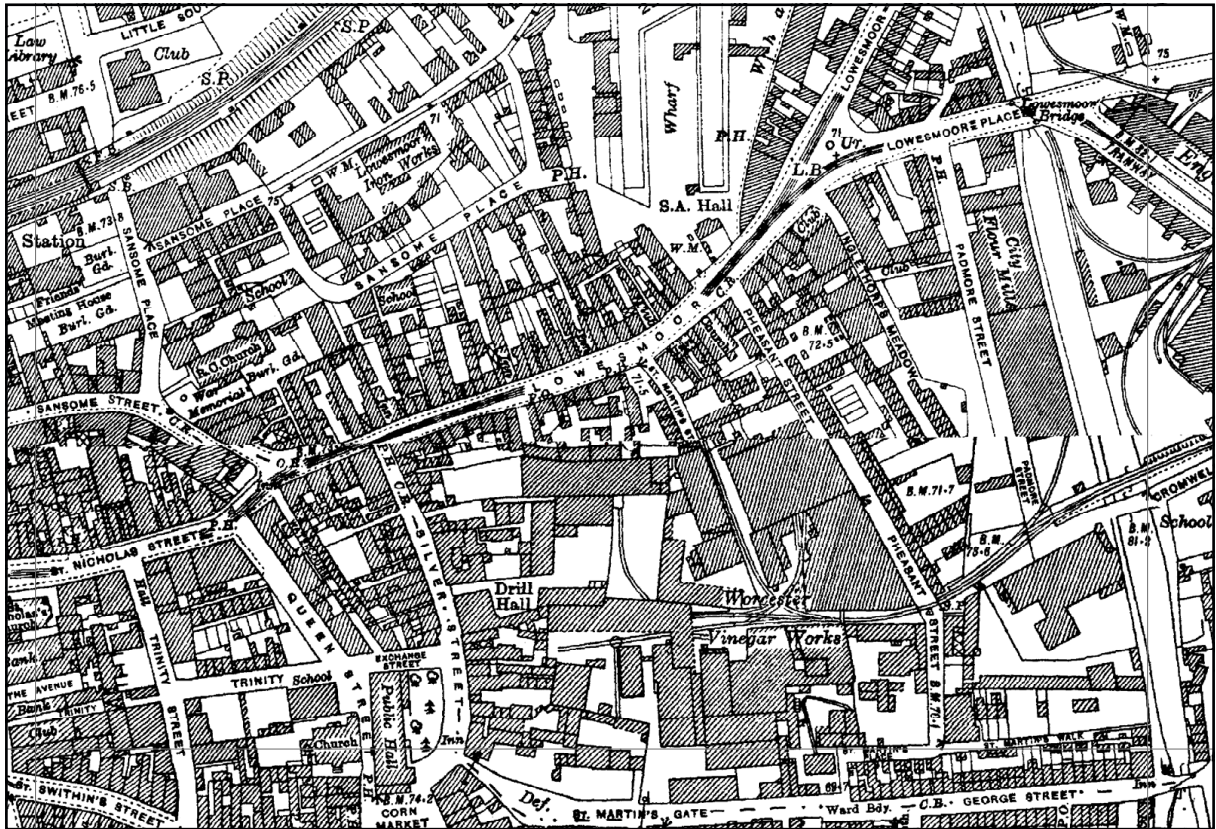


2nd Edition Ordnance Survey, circa 1901



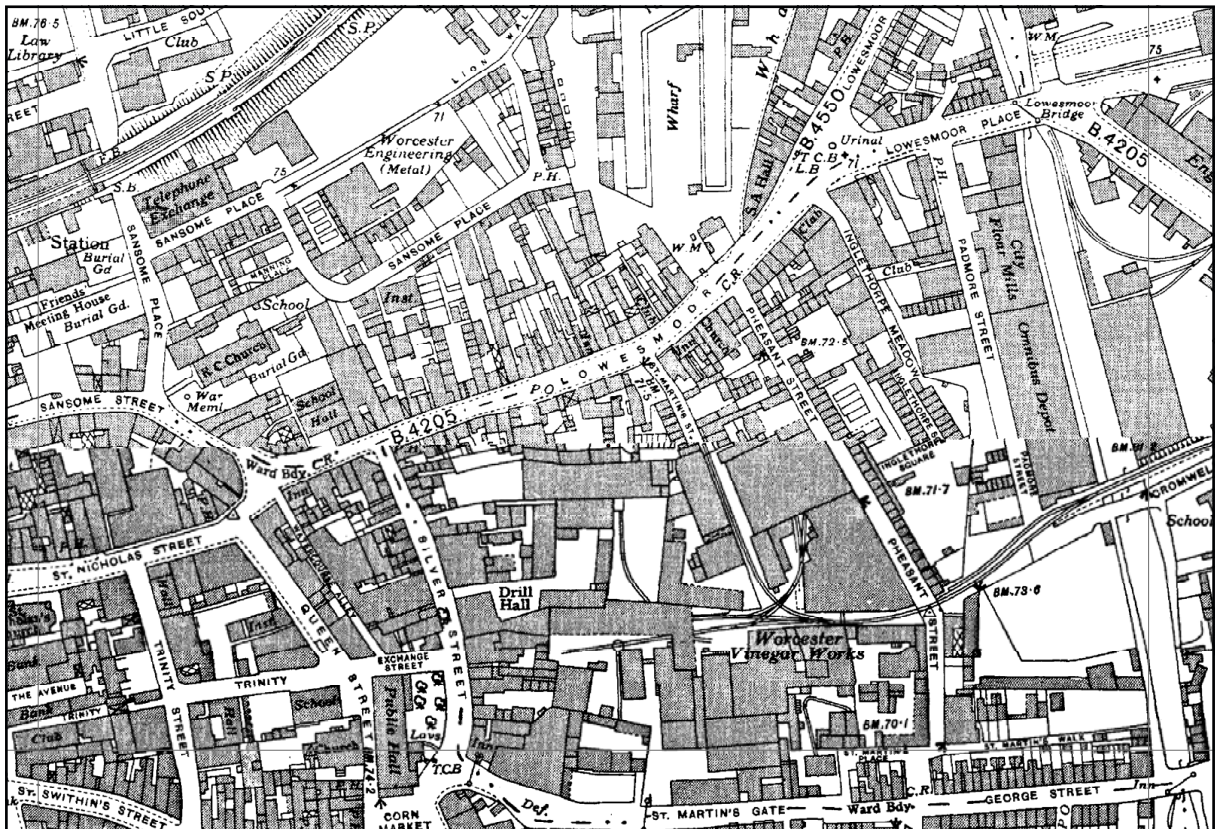


3rd Edition Ordnance Survey, circa 1928





4th Edition Ordnance Survey, circa 1940





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