

4.2.3 Civic Centre


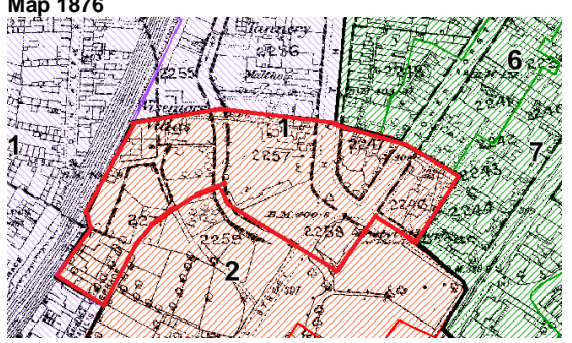
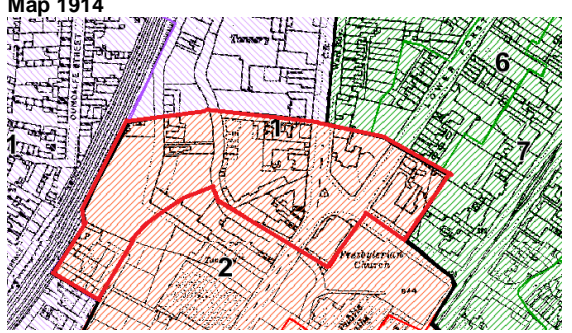

1870's Ordnance Survey mapping of the town clearly shows the historic evolution of Walsall's centre by the mid part of the Industrial Age, which had largely informed the modern day street patterns and composition familiar today.

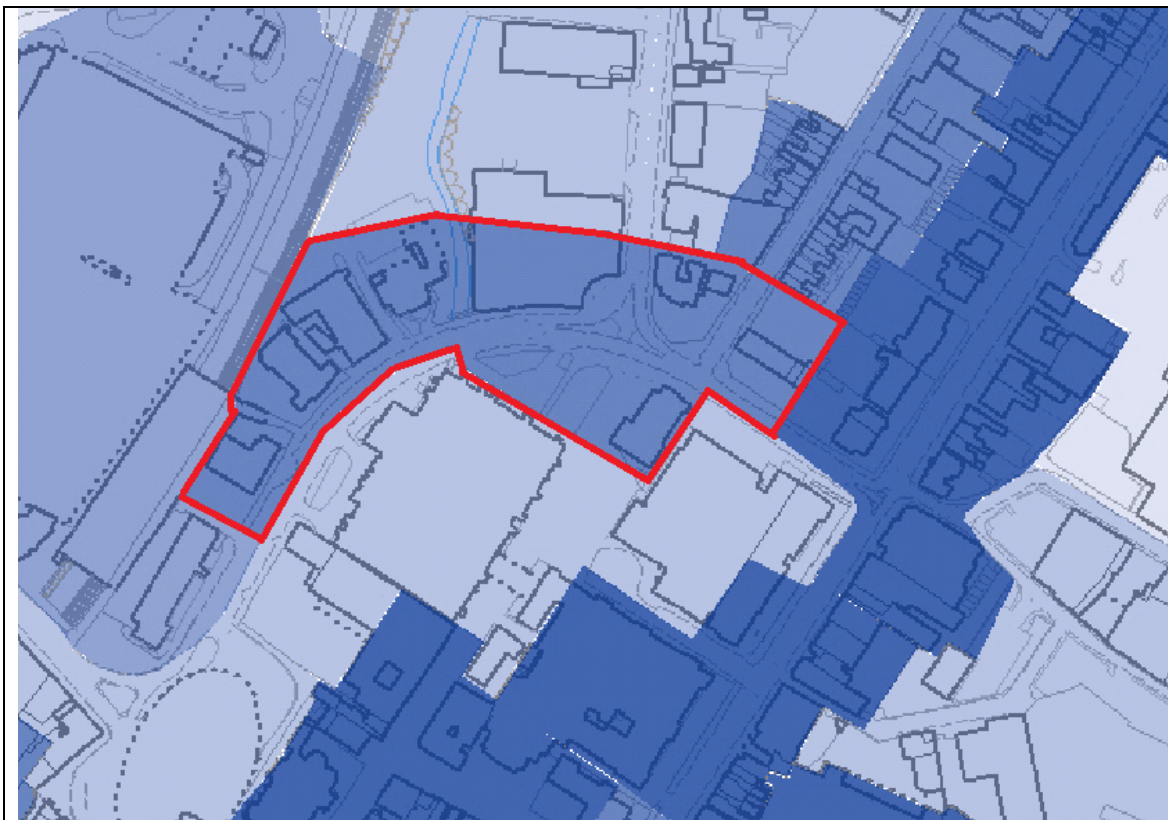
Taking The Bridge as the centre of the modern town, there are broadly two distinct halves to the town centre, the civic quarter and middle class district to the north east, and a generally more industrial area with major transportation infrastructure to the north and south west.

The area of Bradford Place, Bridge Street and Park Street is the main area of commercial and retail activity in the town centre, and this area is a hub of activity for residents and visitors alike, as well as being the key transport interchange within the town centre. The area comprises modest scale 2-3 storey built development including an eclectic mix of 19th century architectural styles ranging from neo-classical, to gothic revival and French Renaissance, including attractive Victorian buildings such as the Victorian Arcade and Globe House. Elsewhere early 20th century faience, brick and terracotta facades provide stripped classical and art deco contributions to the street scenes

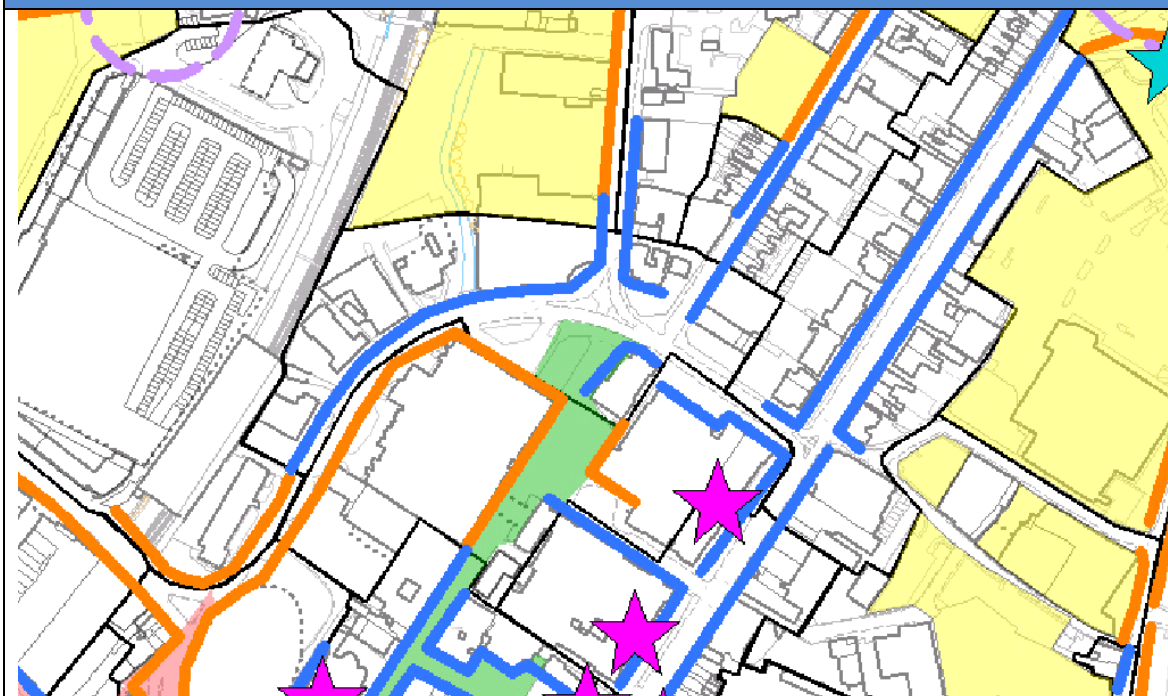
4.2.3.1 Hatherton Road

<p>Character area: Civic Centre – Hatherton Road</p>	<p>Sub character area ref: CC1</p>
<p>HUCA: C2</p>	<p>Survey date: 9th July 2014</p>
<p>Overview and relationship to adjacent sub areas:</p> <p>A section of modern 20th century road forming a new artery linking through the town centre proper. This planned street has an arrangement of high quality buildings of civic scale and proportions that range from the late 19th century through to the post war period.</p> <p>Whilst principally around the curved form of the street itself, the area links to a sequence of urban spaces to the south. As such, whilst the northern side of the street comprise a formal arrangement of building along a street, to the south buildings are orientated so that they have a number of relationships with the surrounding open spaces.</p>	
<p>Building types:</p> <p>There is built form from a range of periods:</p> <p>Late 19th century: A pair of large semi-detached houses, a detached villa and a church of classical, Italianate and gothic styles respectively.</p> <p>Inter war: A number commercial buildings influenced by stripped classicism and art deco architecture of the 1930's.</p> <p>Post war: large office buildings with repetitive concrete floor plates and utilising system build architecture and brutalism.</p>	
<p>Connections and urban grain:</p> <p>The street dates to the early 20th century, where a route was driven through this undeveloped area to the rear of the town hall, linking a small cul-de-sac with Lichfield Street, culverting the brook and screening the railway.</p> <p>Along the northern side of the street, buildings sit within plots, separated from the street by enclosure and landscaping.</p> <p>The Civic Centre (to the south) provides a set back from the street, along with a sequence of open spaces that link into the surrounding historic streets and create civic and functional spaces, with servicing dominating important frontages.</p>	
<p>Uses:</p> <p>The area is predominantly a business district, with offices being the core use. Other uses also exist here, including a crèche, church and clinic.</p> <p>The commercial nature of the area has resulted in this being the centre of the town centres being the destination for professional services, and seeing greater activity during weekdays.</p>	

<p>Predominant materials:</p> <p>Materials vary according to the period of the building. The use of stucco render towards the eastern end of the area, is linking it to the Regency style of properties along Lichfield Street. The use of red clay brick is used for the Victorian buildings, with some stone dressing included for decoration. Roofs are of Welsh slate.</p> <p>The inter war buildings favour a brown brick in conjunction with reconstituted stone, concrete and faience. Roofs are tiled.</p> <p>Post war buildings are constructed buff sand faced bricks with spandrel panels.</p>	
<p>Positive characteristics:</p> <p>The use of excellent examples of late 19th century and early 20th century architecture. An array of high quality well executed buildings that positively address the street scene from behind low walls and railings.</p> <p>Generous street widths and provision of large swaths of open space. The survival of a number of mature trees along the street and into the open spaces that help give the area an established character and balance the extensive amount of hard landscaping.</p> <p>Generally good condition of buildings and occupancy levels.</p>	<p>Map 1876</p> 
<p>Negative characteristics:</p> <p>The poor relationship between post war architecture and the surrounding landscaping, in particular the user of parking and service bays, dominating over open spaces.</p> <p>The excessive highway engineering solutions used to deliver the junction of Hatherton Street and Hatherton Road, which disrupts that setting of a number of buildings and natural pedestrian movement.</p>	<p>Map 1914</p> 
<p>Statement of significance:</p> <p>The area comprises an important link around the inner northern side of the town and is lined by some handsome buildings of modest architectural quality.</p> <p>The church offers a good eye-catcher that terminates Lower Forster Street, the Challenge Building provides a positive enclosure to the corner of Hatherton Street and Hatherton Road, and the sequence of buildings along the northern side of the street have a civic merit that is rare for the period of development.</p>	<p>Map 1977</p> 
<p>Sensitivity: 2</p> <p>The area comprises a complete townscape of buildings of positive character other than the post war office block at the junction with Lower Forster Street. The highway functions as a gyratory and dominates the character of the area segregating the civic quarter from the belt of development running up to the ring road. Therefore the buildings are generally sensitive to change and the public realm is not.</p>	

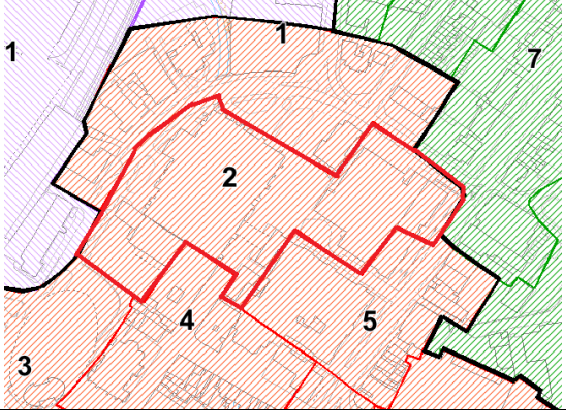






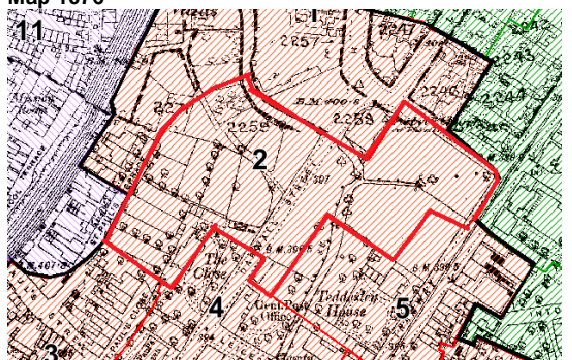
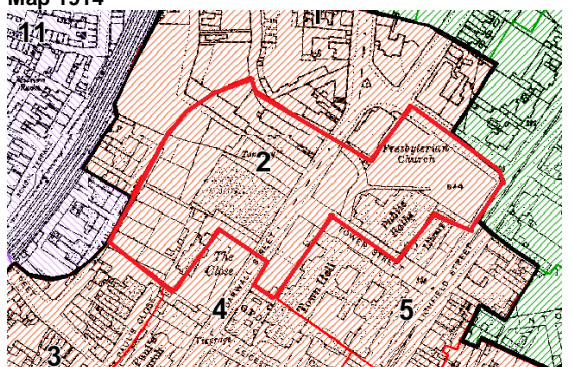

Capacity for change: There is a high capacity for change to the public realm and highways whilst the buildings could be incrementally changed based on the quality of the alterations. Significant alterations to the post war office block at the junction with Lower Forster Street is welcomed.

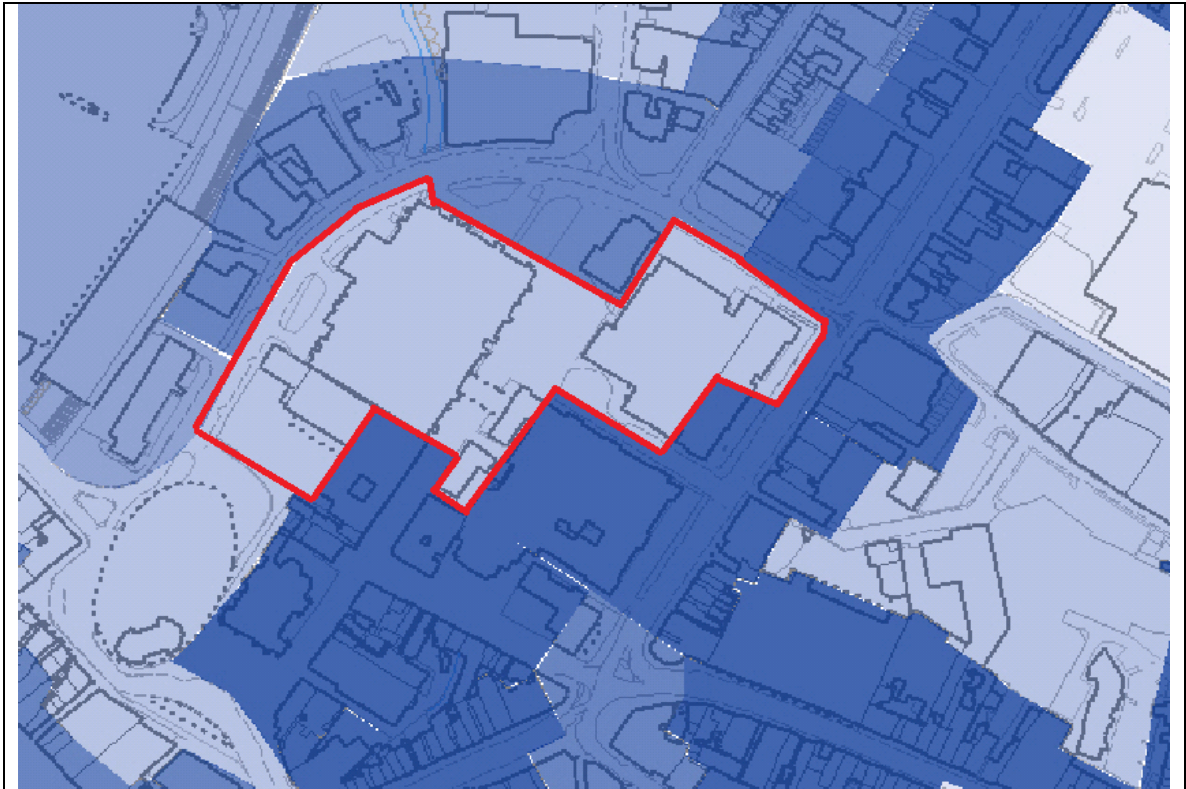


Opportunities: There are limited opportunities for new development although frontages to the street could be strengthened around the junction with Lower Forster Street.

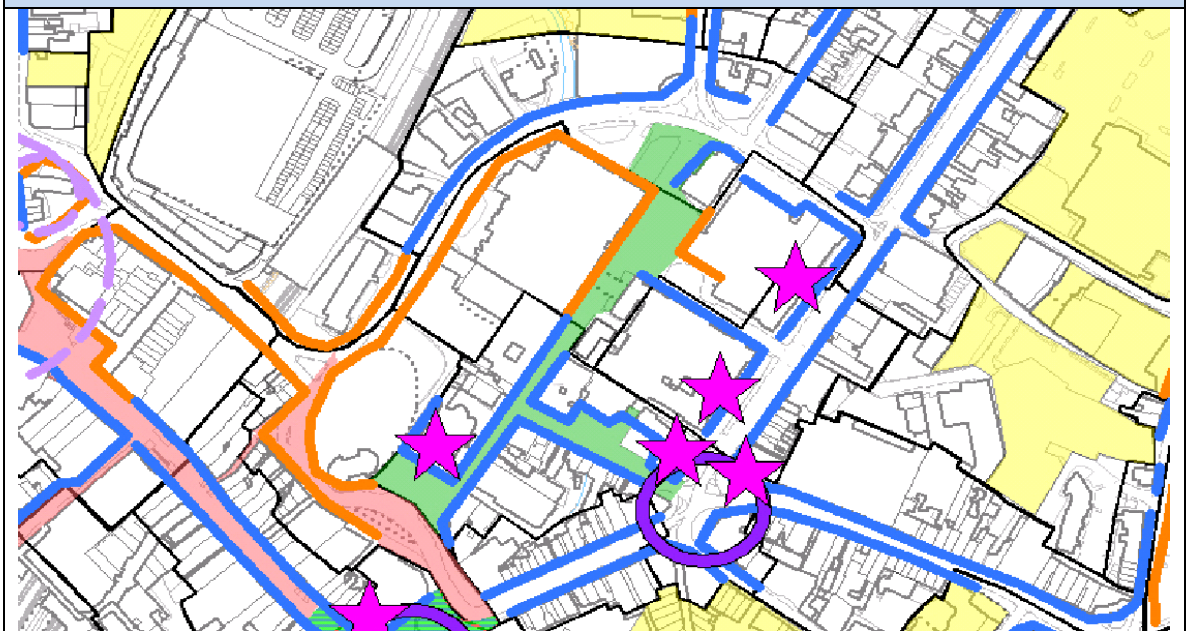
4.2.3.2 Civic Centre

<p>Character area: Civic Centre – Civic Centre</p>	<p>Sub character area ref: CC2</p>
<p>HUCA: C3</p>	<p>Survey date: 9th July 2014</p>
<p>Overview and relationship to adjacent sub areas:</p> <p>A key functional area of the town centre comprising a very high level of business and leisure activity.</p> <p>Largely comprising largely modern buildings around modern spaces, the area forms a link between a number of critical sub character areas, linking the office, retail and civic areas together.</p> <p>The buildings are amongst some of the largest and most dominant buildings in the town centre and are largely utilitarian, having a poor relationship with the surrounding streets.</p>	
<p>Building types:</p> <p>All buildings date to the post war era although they are of different architectural styles.</p> <p>The museum is an exemplar use of Le Corbusierian construction. The abstract application of solid to void ratio sitting over an entirely glazed ground floor has a quality that is akin to the International style of modernism.</p> <p>The Gala Baths is more typical of post war leisure construction, with panels of glazing and cladding.</p> <p>The Civic centre is a good example of brutalism, with an almost fortified design of soaring vertical proportions and megalithic profile.</p>	
<p>Connections and urban grain:</p> <p>Streets have been replaced by pedestrianised zones, creating continuous swaths of paving that is softened by the retention of mature trees.</p> <p>Servicing is a significant feature and is parking, turning heads and forecourts.</p> <p>The area was designed at a time when the clear separation of people and vehicles was in vogue and the prominence of service areas and link bridges is typical.</p>	
<p>Uses:</p> <p>The prominent uses are offices, but other uses exist including leisure and the post office sorting centre.</p> <p>These uses connect with adjacent areas, such as the museum links to the library and other civic functions along Lichfield Street and the post office sorting centre linking with the bus station and car parking to the west.</p>	

<p>Predominant materials:</p> <p>The area promotes not only the use of modern materials, but good examples of the application of modern cladding.</p> <p>A 'travertine' style stone cladding is used on the museum is unique in the town and sets the high order nature of the building, elevating it above other buildings in the street.</p> <p>The baths comprises a mix of more experimental materials and has little regard for the surrounding context. The cladding appears as part of the experimental nature of building materials from the age.</p> <p>The mass of brickwork on the Civic Centre works well with the mass of the building and adds weight to the buildings dominance.</p>	
<p>Positive characteristics:</p> <p>The design of the urban realm is of good quality, offering purposeful spaces that generate activity, whilst also being neutral in this otherwise busy cluster of buildings.</p> <p>The museum is an exceptional piece of modern design and delivers a high quality corner to the Lichfield Street / Hatherton Road junction</p>	<p>Map 1876</p> 
<p>Negative characteristics:</p> <p>The buildings are of a modern design that does not facilitate a good level of activity in the street scene, being relatively inward looking.</p> <p>The scale of the buildings and the scale of the open spaces does generate a turbulent microclimate and there is a poor relationship between these two key environmental components.</p> <p>The dominance of service yards, turning bays and parking has a significant impact on the character of the area making it feel very utilitarian. Of particular impact is the prominence of servicing on otherwise important frontages.</p>	<p>Map 1914</p> 
<p>Statement of significance:</p> <p>The area provides important links across this section of the town centre and hosts a number of important business and leisure destinations.</p> <p>The buildings and open spaces comprise an important backdrop to the Town Hall and Council House.</p>	<p>Map 1977</p> 
<p>Sensitivity: 4</p> <p>The area is dominated by post war development of whilst of good design quality, interacts poorly with the surrounding public realm. The area has low sensitivity, but is sensitive in terms of its impact over adjacent historic areas.</p>	



Capacity for change: There is a substantial capacity for change to all of the built form other than the museum frontage onto Lichfield Street which is exemplar and of architecture surpassing the other buildings in the area, contributing positively to the setting of the Lichfield Street Conservation Area. Redevelopment would seek to limit scale to the existing parameters of site buildings.

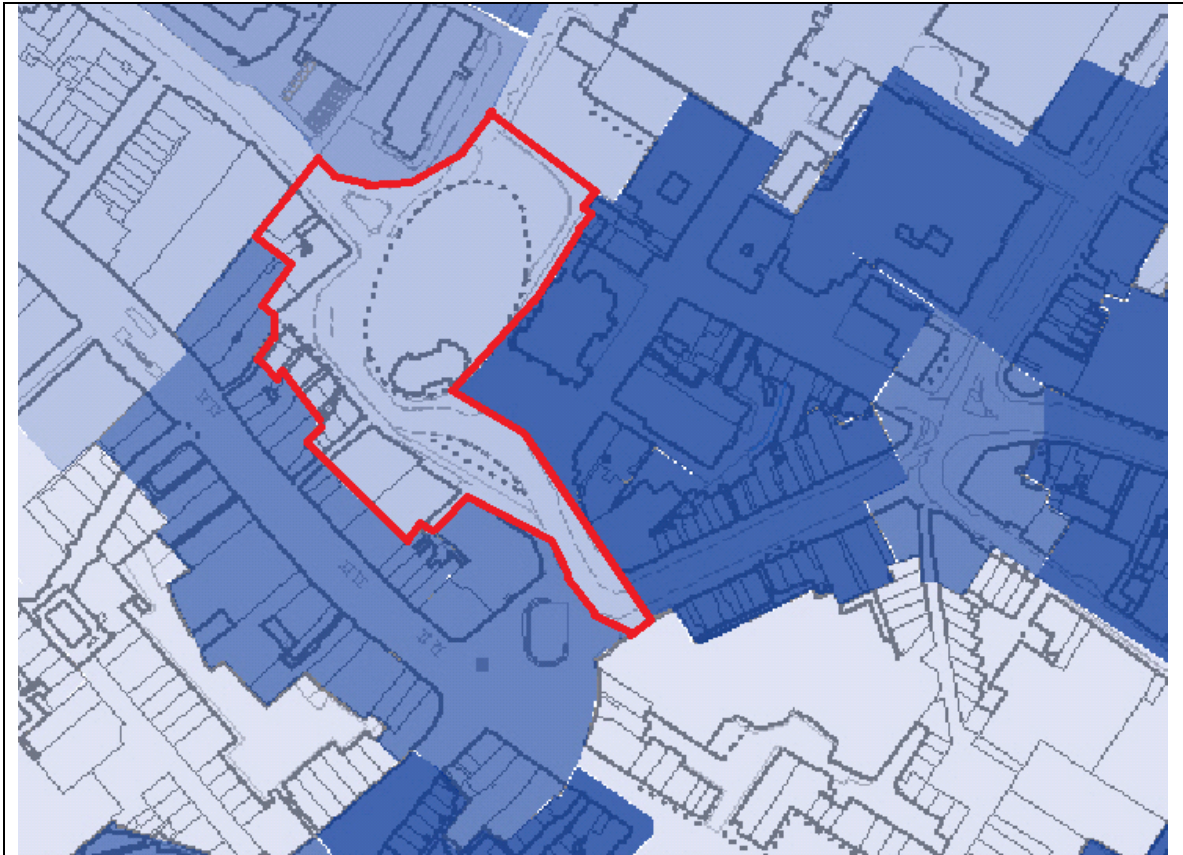


Opportunities: There are limited opportunities due to the occupancy of most of the buildings, however, a variety of uses would likely be supported should these sites become available.

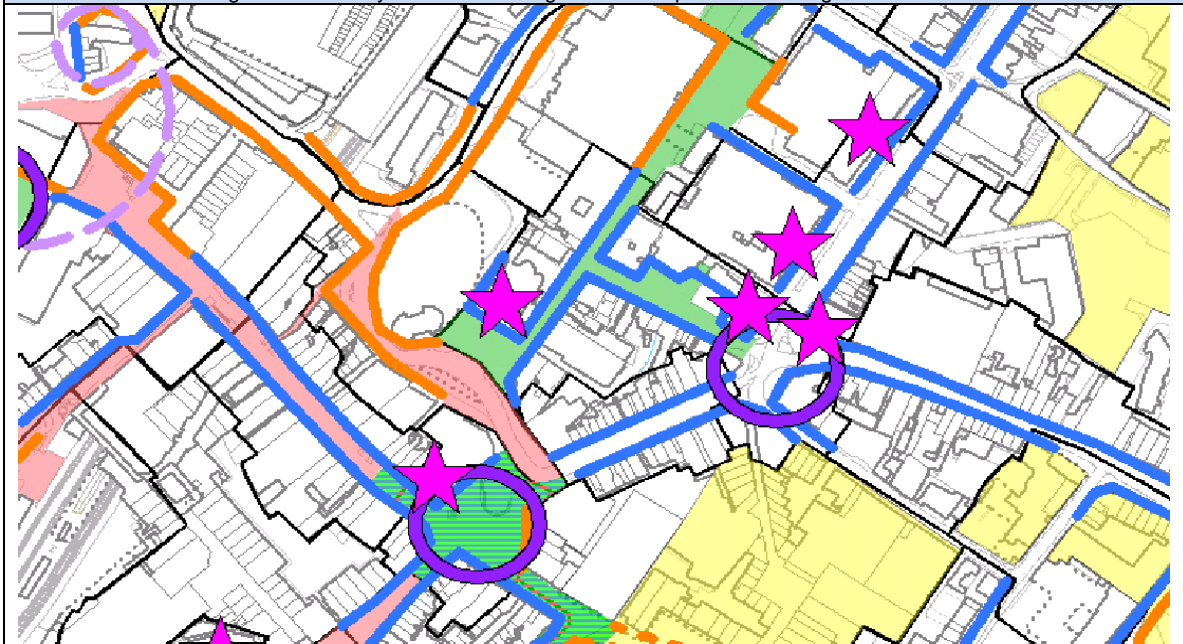
4.2.3.3 Bus Station

<p>Character area: Civic Centre – Bus Station</p>	<p>Sub character area ref: CC3</p>
<p>HUCA: T4</p>	<p>Survey date: 9th July 2014</p>
<p>Overview and relationship to adjacent sub areas:</p> <p>An arrival point into the town that forms an interchange hub between modes of travel. It also is a crossroads of difference directional travel through the town.</p> <p>The area caters for a busy section of through traffic and localised activity, which makes it a focus within the town.</p> <p>From the bus station the town is seen in the round and there are a number of interesting juxtapositions between buildings and spaces.</p>	
<p>Building types:</p> <p>The 1930's stripped classical building adjacent to Butlers Passage is typical of this tradition with its over sized ventilator/clock tower and Neo-Georgian grandeur. Its symmetry has a commanding presence over the street and relates to other similar buildings along Hatherton Road.</p> <p>The bus station is a bold innovative structure with a successful 360-degree frontage. Its massive roof with portals and a green roof is supported on slender columns and gives it substantial presence without enclosing space and giving views though towards the Bridge.</p> <p>Other than Park Street Arcade, building are of little merit and comprise post war functionality.</p>	
<p>Connections and urban grain:</p> <p>The main sweep of the street is a busy public transport corridor, as well as a through route from Bridge Street round to Hatherton Street. This gyratory does not dominate pedestrian movement, which comprises two strong routes (1) Leicester Street through to Park Street Arcade, and (2) Hatherton Street through to Butlers Passage. Pedestrian activity along the pavement between Butlers Passage and the Park Street Arcade is also sustained by shops that utilise the pavement for the display of wares.</p> <p>The bus stations open sided form and circular appearance allows for multiple access points on foot and links to St. Pauls Square.</p>	
<p>Uses:</p> <p>The bus station is the principle source of activity in the area and this is supplemented by the edge of the shopping district that lines the western side of the area and connects through to Park Street.</p> <p>The intensity of activity in this area helps sustain the vitality of Leicester Street, which would otherwise be separated from the main retail function of the town.</p>	

<p>Predominant materials:</p> <p>The use of modern construction in this area has resulted in an extensive amount of glass, steel and concrete. But the quality of the architecture has ensured this is positive. The high quality polished concrete of the bus station contrasts positively with St. Paul's church and has given the area a vibrant appearance during the day and night.</p> <p>The 1930's building is a mix of brick and reconstituted stone and the copper ventilator (clock turret) introduces a degree of established heritage to the area.</p> <p>The rear of Park Street comprises a line of buildings comprise a mix of render, brick, metal and concrete.</p>	
<p>Positive characteristics:</p> <p>The hub of activity and movement through this space generated by the bus station sustains this area, but more importantly sustains the uses in this direction, away from Park Street and the primary shopping frontage.</p> <p>The mix of shops and cafes, utilise the wider pavement in the area around Butlers Passage entrance and the through flow of pedestrians from the Civic centre further heighten the vitality of this area.</p> <p>The group of modern and distinct historic buildings that work together to form strong and abstract compositions of townscape that reveal themselves in stages and make the connections through the area interesting.</p>	<p>Map 1876</p> 
<p>Negative characteristics:</p> <p>The condition of Butlers Passage and the Park Street Arcade are poor and whilst providing vital links fall short of further attracting movement through from Park Street.</p> <p>The use of road side railings and their poor integration into the public realm channel the direction of pedestrian movement and contrast with the wider architectural and urban design merits of the area.</p> <p>The appearance of the buildings to the rear of Park Street, are limited in the amount of activity they generate and are of poor architectural quality for such a public frontage with strategic views towards them.</p>	<p>Map 1914</p> 
<p>Statement of significance:</p> <p>The area is a key arrival point into the town with onward destinations in all directions (through to the main shopping area, the Civic Centre, up to Town End and the waterfront, as well as towards the Bridge and along Bridge Street).</p> <p>The bus station itself is an iconic piece of modern design and is a landmark throughout the town. It is a building that operates well before and much later than the closure of the shops and surrounding offices and sustains a degree of surveillance that animates the town.</p>	<p>Map 1977</p> 
<p>Sensitivity: 4</p> <p>The area comprises a building of sound architectural quality considering its purpose, however its retention in its current form along with the gyratory road network does not prejudice change.</p>	

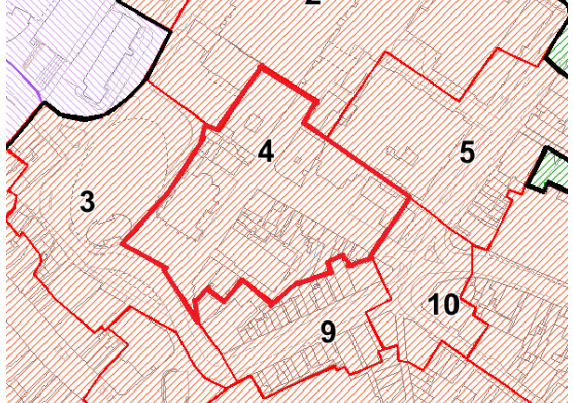






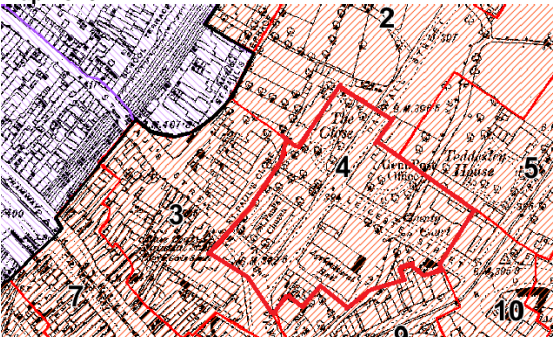
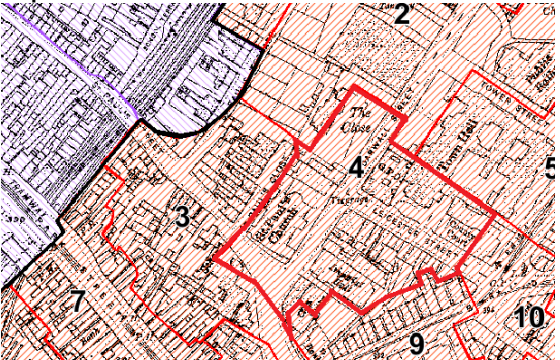
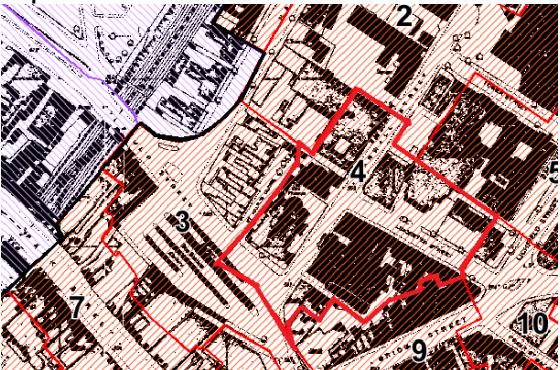
Capacity for change: There is a need to strengthen the enclosure of the street and improve connectivity in order to encourage better links between the civic quarter and the retail core of the town. Improvement to the façades of the rear of the Park Street buildings would visually link the areas together and improve the setting of St. Pauls.

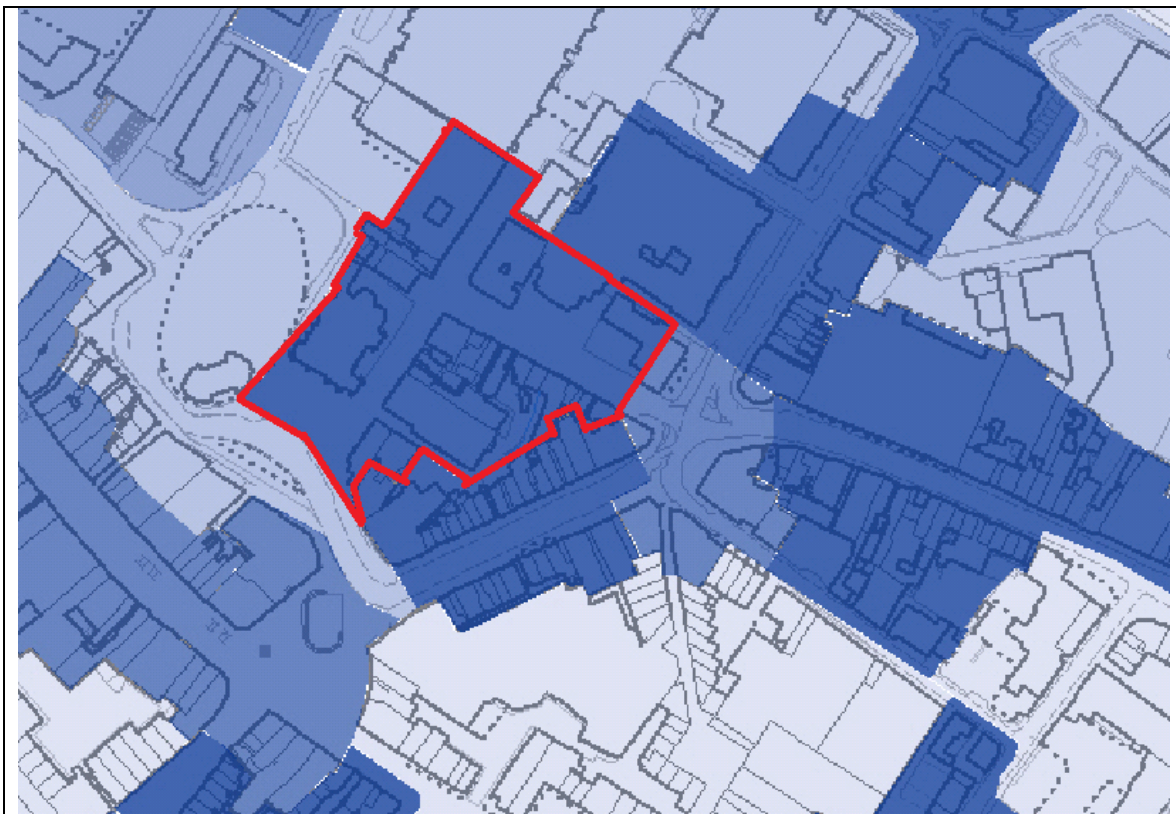


Opportunities: There are limited opportunities to develop the area other than highway improvements.

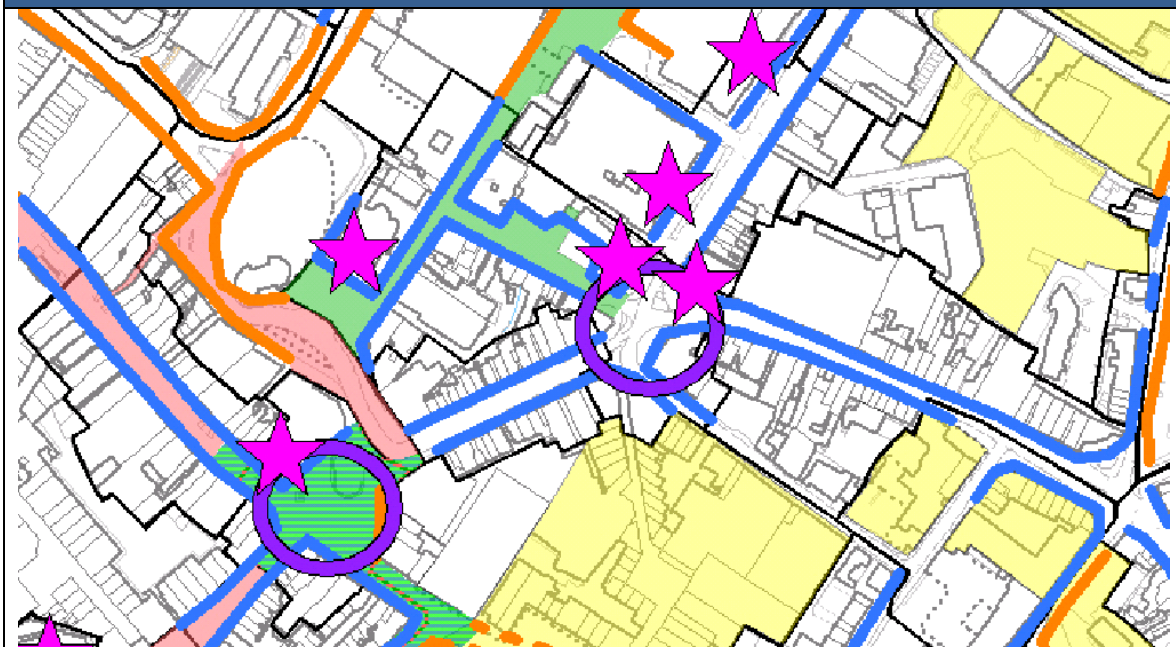
4.2.3.4 Leicester Street

<p>Character area: Civic Centre – Leicester Street HUCA: MX1</p>	<p>Sub character area ref: CC4 Survey date: 9th July 2014</p>
<p>Overview and relationship to adjacent sub areas:</p> <p>A series of pedestrianised streets and open spaces that form a relatively unaltered townscape since the 1920's.</p> <p>The area contains a diverse mix of high order buildings of exceptional quality and historic significance.</p> <p>The public realm links in with that around the Civic Centre (to the north), its buildings link to other civic buildings along Lichfield Street (to the east) and its shopping and leisure function links to that of Bridge Street and the Bridge itself (to the south).</p>	
<p>Building types:</p> <p>A number of grand civic buildings employing Edwardian Baroque, Grecian and Neo-Georgian forms of classicism, parades of shops using an eclectic mix of Italianate and Dutch influences, a Neo-vernacular picture house and an Gothic Revival church in the Early English manner.</p> <p>Buildings have elevated ground floors and are between two and four storeys in height. The array of architecture used has resulted in a highly modelled skyline which forms a series of juxtapositions along streets and between streets.</p>	
<p>Connections and urban grain:</p> <p>Buildings are largely sited at back of pavements and enclose streets and open spaces. The tight sequence of buildings on individual plots has resulted in modest buildings have an elevated vertical scale to them.</p> <p>The public realm is new and comprehensive and runs uninterrupted through to the area around the Civic Centre.</p> <p>The neutral modern design of Darwall Street and the square in front of St. Paul's allows for the historic architecture to be better appreciated. The formation of pavement cafes and private beer gardens has resulted in a series of intimate and civic areas of public realm.</p>	
<p>Uses:</p> <p>A number of significant buildings in the area, built for a specific use, have lost that use and have been converted to the predominant uses in the area, which is retail and food and drink. This includes the cinema, church and court house. Whilst the diversity of uses has decreased, the area remains relatively vibrant and is one of the destinations during the night time economy.</p> <p>Some vacancy has become established along Leicester Street, however, this has not damaged the vibrancy of this area.</p>	

<p>Predominant materials:</p> <p>The area comprises a significantly high proportion of stone buildings for the town. This reflects their significance as important civic and religious buildings. The stone is a mixture of red, brown and buff sandstone.</p> <p>Other buildings are constructed in red brick and dressed in sandstone. Roofs are largely slated in Welsh and Westmorland slate.</p> <p>Some of the later buildings from the early 20th century include areas of render and planted timber which adds to the rich architectural diversity of the area.</p>	
<p>Positive characteristics:</p> <p>The predominantly high quality of architecture on most sites throughout the area. The employment of high quality materials and the array of contrasting design.</p> <p>The quality of the public realm delivered through using a modern aesthetic and quality paver. The public realm forms open spaces that are of a civic quality that are multi functional.</p> <p>The presence of a number of landmark buildings such as ST. Pauls Church that links positively to other parts of the town including the bus station and visual links to 'The Bridge'</p>	<p>Map 1876</p> 
<p>Negative characteristics:</p> <p>A degree of vacancy and some poor quality signage.</p>	<p>Map 1914</p> 
<p>Statement of significance:</p> <p>The area comprises a group of historic streets lined by fine, high quality historic buildings that strongly define open spaces and form good links through to the adjacent surrounding network of street.</p> <p>An area that reflects local building materials, styles of architecture and the rich patina of development during the industrial 19th century.</p>	<p>Map 1977</p> 
<p>Sensitivity: 1</p> <p>The area falls entirely within a conservation area and contains a number of listed buildings and buildings of excellent mid/late 19th century and early 20th century pedigree. These structures hold together forming an excellent piece of public realm that has a contemporary and high quality finish.</p>	




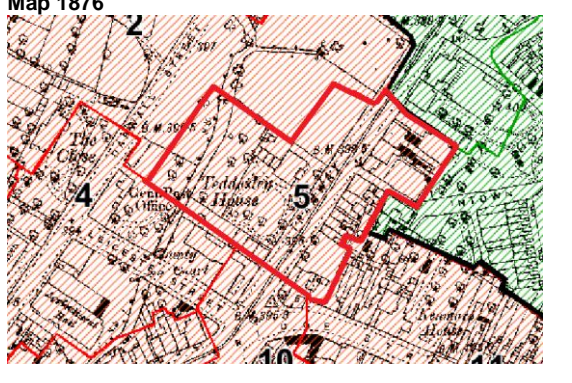
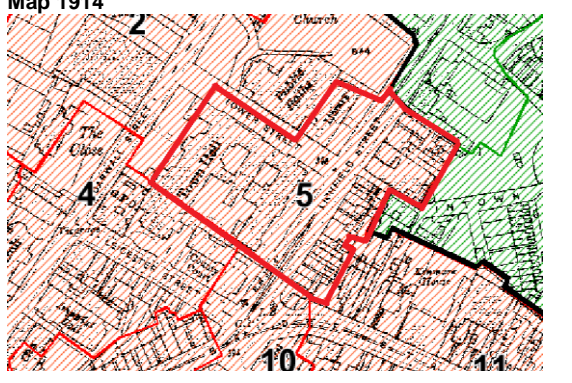
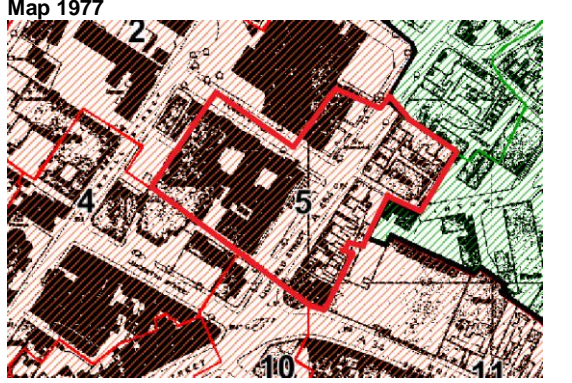
Capacity for change: There is little scope for change other than incremental changes of use and associated alterations.

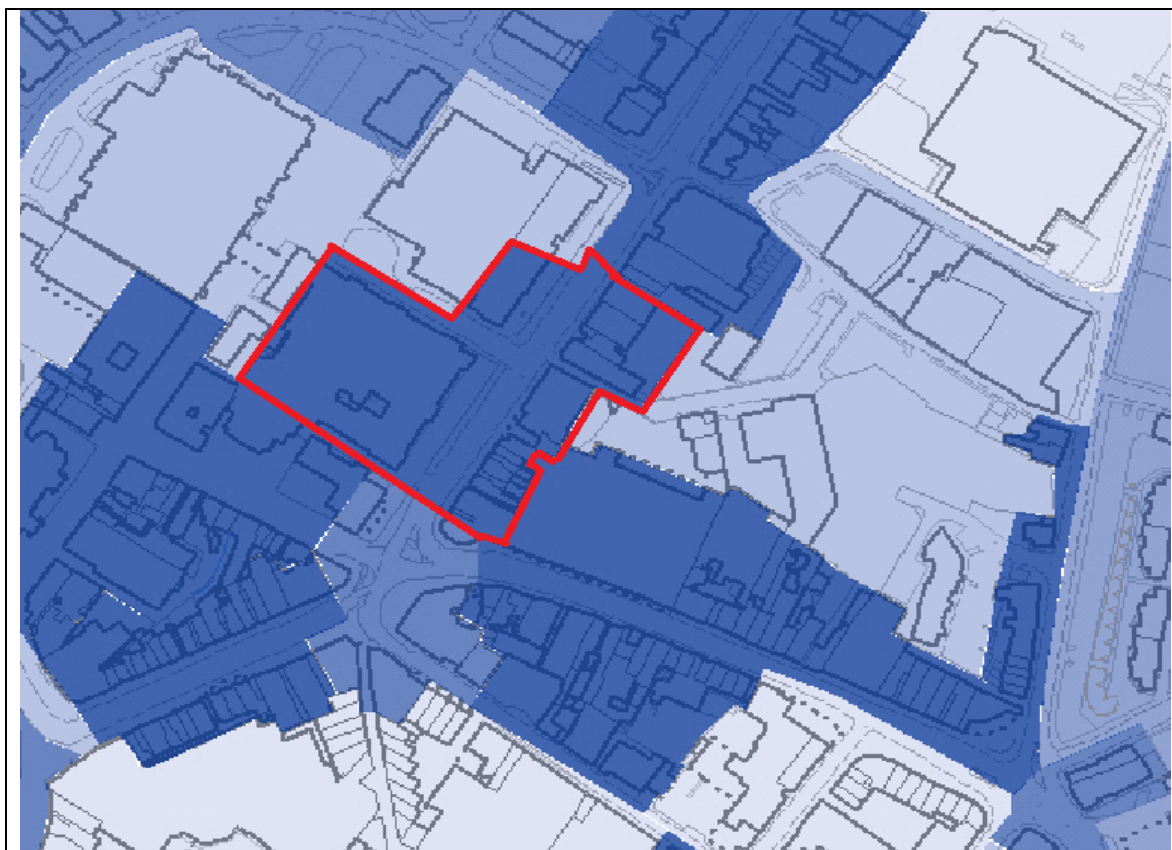


Opportunities: There are no obvious opportunities in this area.

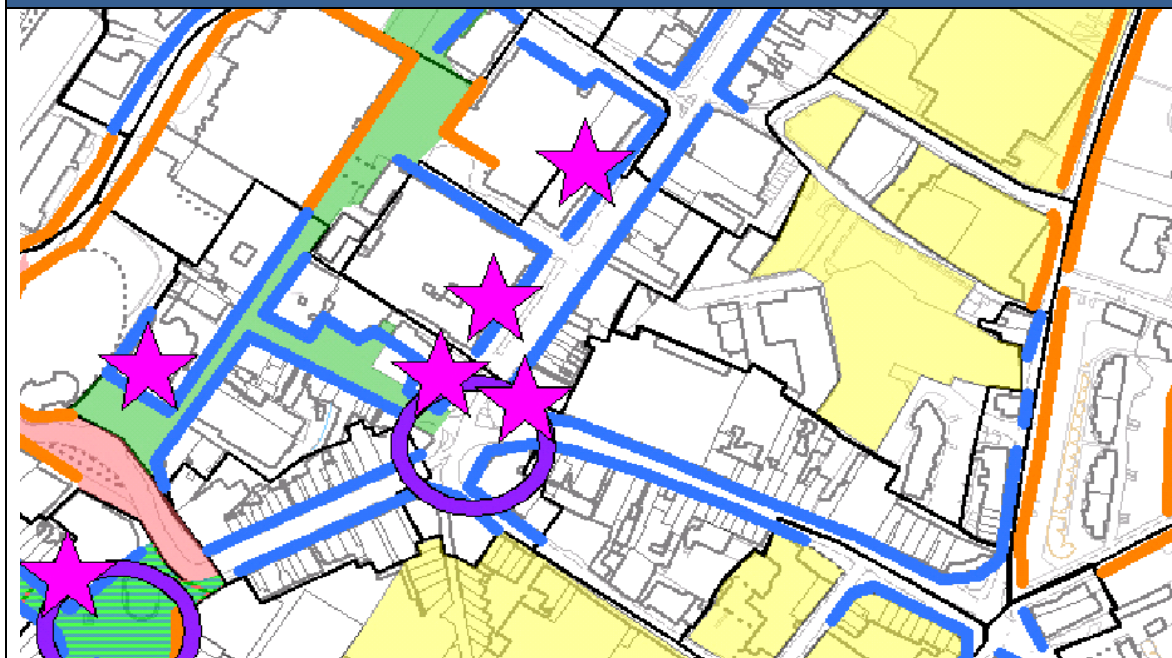
4.2.3.5 Council House

<p>Character area: Civic Centre – Council House</p>	<p>Sub character area ref: CC5</p>
<p>HUCA: MX1</p>	<p>Survey date: 9th July 2014</p>
<p>Overview and relationship to adjacent sub areas:</p> <p>The location of the town's principal building. The Council House reflects the seat of local government and the civic heart of the town. Its association with the surrounding library, museum, town hall and court house collectively make this a major destination within the town and its civic heart.</p> <p>The buildings substantial campanile and imposing architecture provide a clear marker across the town and its relationship to the formal thoroughfare of Lichfield Street gives it a formal setting at the head of the towns only planned civic boulevard leading up to the Arboretum.</p>	
<p>Building types:</p> <p>The principal building style is Edwardian Baroque (Council House and library) which comprises a heavy and fluid interpretation of the late 17th and early 18th century. The deep modelling applied to elevations, fuses sculpture, with structural and decorative components.</p> <p>Buildings on the east side of Lichfield Street are earlier (late 19th century) and comprise a typical eclectic mix of architectural design work that is indicative of the free application of architectural taste of the time. A jumble of pilasters, architraves, balustrades and gables use French Revival, Jacobean and Flemish styles.</p> <p>Post war modern concrete framed structures also exist.</p>	
<p>Connections and urban grain:</p> <p>Lichfield Street is the only complete planned speculative street in the town centre (Bradford Street is too altered to claim this title).</p> <p>The streets ordered alignment and closes in as it enters this southern stretch with buildings aligning at back of pavement except for those on the western side comprising the civic quarter. These buildings sit back from the street behind an apron so as to heighten their significance and in the case of the Council House an enclosure of classical bottle balustrade walling topped with cast iron lampposts forms a semi public space between the building and the street.</p>	
<p>Uses:</p> <p>A collection of civic, educational, cultural and commercial uses. The west side of the street comprises the shop front to the civic quarter of the town, whilst the east side comprises an area of shops and offices. Similar to Bridge Street (to the south) buildings in this area take the form of chambers, where a private suites of offices are accessed over them in a formal arrangement.</p>	

<p>Predominant materials:</p> <p>The older building in the area are some of the finest in the town and similar to those in Leicester Street and Darwall Street use the best building materials available.</p> <p>Either buff sandstone is used as an ashlar or in conjunction with a smooth red brick with sharp arises and tight joints. Other polished stone such as granite is also employed for detailing.</p> <p>Roofs are slated in Welsh slate and dressed in lead.</p> <p>The post war development comprises a reinforced concrete frame with glazing and composite spandrel panels.</p>	
<p>Positive characteristics:</p> <p>The completeness of a significant section of historic townscape including buildings, landscaping and uses.</p> <p>The dominance of the Council House as a major civic building and its relationship with flanking civic structures including the library and court house. The wider relationship of historic buildings (despite their variations) looking south along the street into Bridge Street.</p> <p>The survival of historic street furniture including walling and lampposts.</p>	<p>Map 1876</p> 
<p>Negative characteristics:</p> <p>The low level of occupancy in buildings along the east side of the street that appear empty and in decline.</p> <p>The low quality of commercial signage and shop fronts that fail to reflect the civic quality of buildings on the western side of the street.</p> <p>The poor quality surfacing of the apron in front of the Council House, along with modern traffic railing in front of the library.</p>	<p>Map 1914</p> 
<p>Statement of significance:</p> <p>An area that defines the civic heart of the town, with an accumulation of fine buildings of civic stature depicting the pride, wealth and industriousness of the 19th century town.</p> <p>A section of planned townscape where building hierarchy relates to its position and arrangement in the street. Where building height is controlled and mindful of the role of the Council House over all else.</p> <p>An established area of retained structures, trees and landscaping found nowhere else in the commercial centre of the town.</p>	<p>Map 1977</p> 
<p>Sensitivity: 1</p> <p>The area falls entirely within a conservation area and contains a number of listed buildings and buildings of excellent mid/late 19th century and early 20th century pedigree. These structures hold together forming an excellent piece of public realm that has a contemporary and high quality finish.</p>	

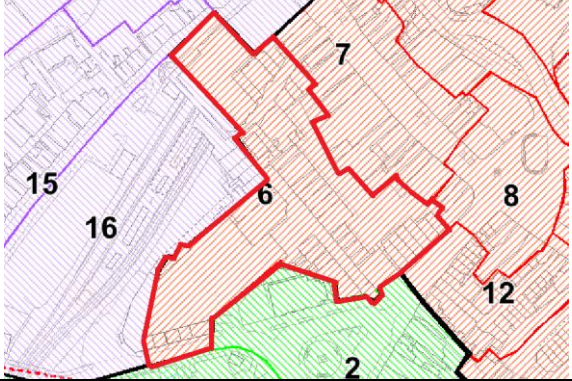






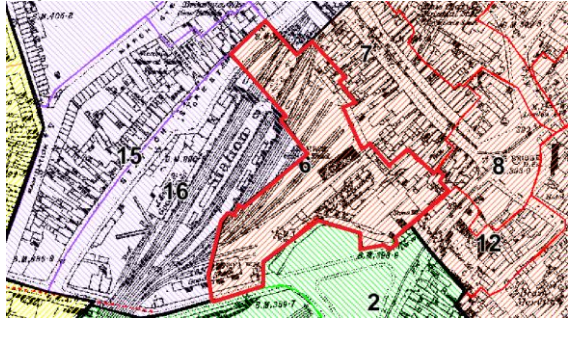
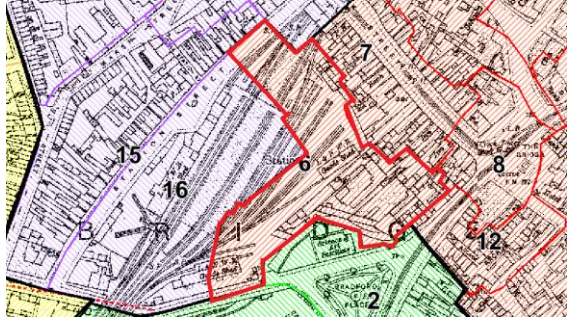
Capacity for change: There is little capacity for change besides re-elevating or fully redeveloping the post war office building opposite the Tower Street junction.



Opportunities: Few opportunities in this area, other than the post war office building opposite the Tower Street junction.

4.2.3.6 Saddlers Centre

<p>Character area: Civic Centre – Saddlers Centre</p>	<p>Sub character area ref: CC6</p>
<p>HUCA: RE4</p>	<p>Survey date: 9th July 2014</p>
<p>Overview and relationship to adjacent sub areas:</p> <p>A large structure forming a mall that internalises a large section of the town centre. Other than a short parade of shops onto Bradford Street, it is largely faceless, fusing to the rear of the Park Street shopping frontage and sitting over the railway.</p> <p>Large blank frontages exist along Bridgman Street and Station Street and form a sheer boundary with adjacent areas.</p>	
<p>Building types:</p> <p>The structure dates to the 1970's and comprises a concrete framed multi-storey complex that is clad in a modern brown brick.</p> <p>The method of construction sits around bays of a frame and these are expressed through the brickwork. The internal function of the building requires few external windows and its scale has resulted in a series of stepped block arrangements with parapets screening swaths of flat roofing.</p> <p>Some effort has been made to scale down the building on Bradford Street and employ an example of simplified post modernism to address this section of historic street.</p>	
<p>Connections and urban grain:</p> <p>The structure dominates an entire block of the town, straddling infrastructure and building up to the street edge, save for an area of steps, ramps and heavily engineered landscaping on Station Street (leading into the station) no effort is made to connect the site to the surround areas.</p> <p>The building does constitute a mall and access points do exist through the station, from Park Street and from Bradford Place. The internal street arrangement is entirely divorced from the presence and character of the wider town.</p>	

<p>Uses:</p> <p>The mall caters for two levels of shops and cafe/restaurants. These are largely centralised with the servicing separating them from the wider town. In addition there is a large multi-storey car park and the train station that dominate the south and western aspects of the building, which are the most visible from the open areas of railway land.</p>	
<p>Predominant materials:</p> <p>The entire structure is handled in modern brown brick which receives little expression through fenestration, modelling or relief.</p>	
<p>Positive characteristics:</p> <p>The building sustains a significant shopping mall experience within the town centre rather than in an out of town location.</p>	<p>Map 1876</p> 
<p>Negative characteristics:</p> <p>The building covers a significant section of the town centre and introduces a large blank elevation along 50% of its external frontage. Other than along a short section of Bradford Place, the handling of the architecture is entirely utilitarian and is harmful to the setting of fine Georgian and Victorian buildings along Station Street and the Institute of Art and Industry on Bradford Place.</p> <p>The ticket hall of the towns railway station (a major arrival point) is lost within the structure and is located to the rear in an area not easily found through urban design and public realm alone.</p>	<p>Map 1914</p> 

Statement of significance:

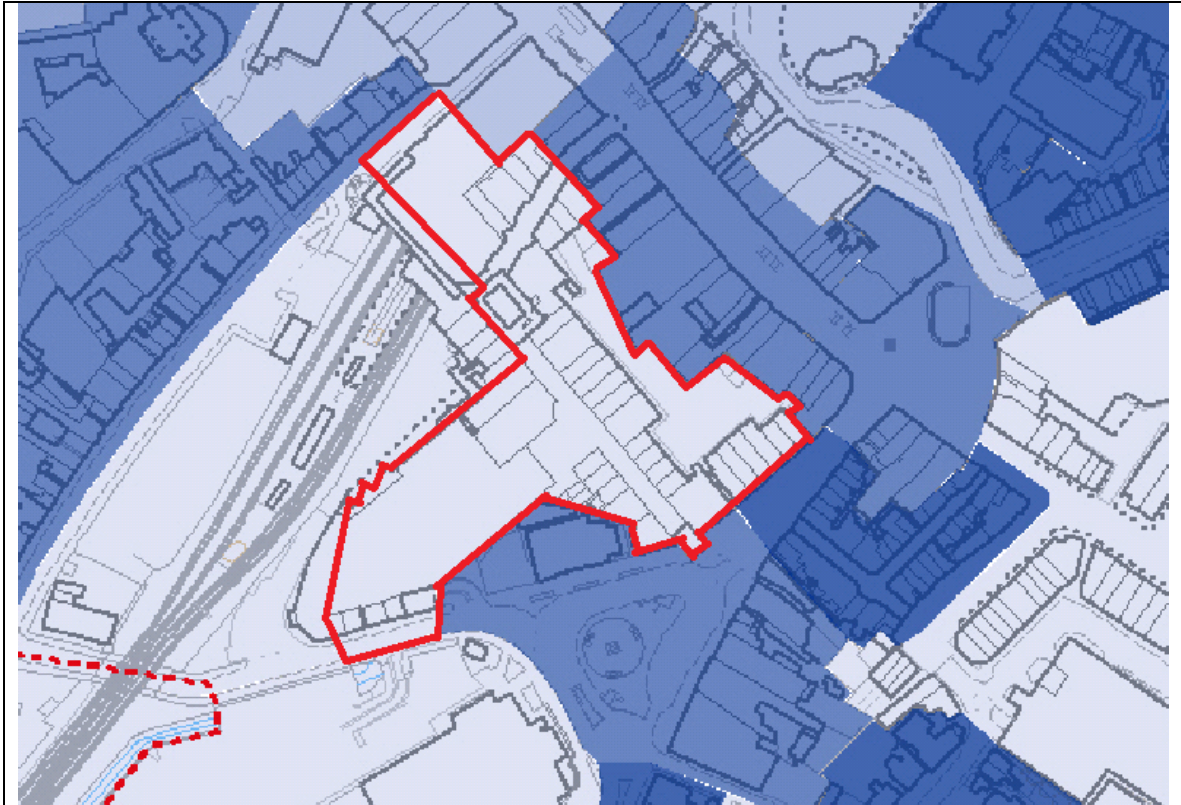
The building is located in the heart of the town shopping district and functions as the arrival point of visitors by rail.

Map 1977

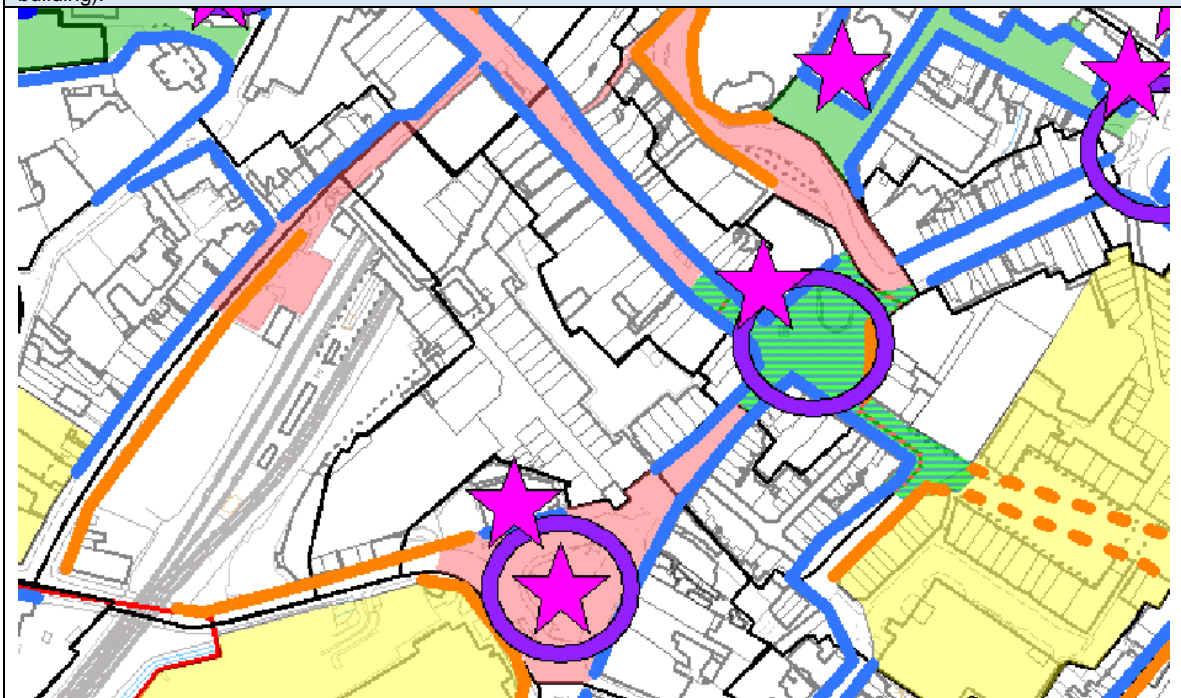


Sensitivity: 5

The area comprises 1970's mall development behind the principal retail frontage and is largely exposed towards the railway line and station. It is functional utilitarian architecture that contributes negatively towards the station as a gateway arrival point within the town.

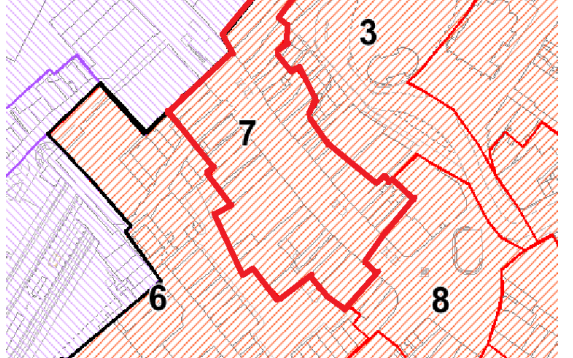






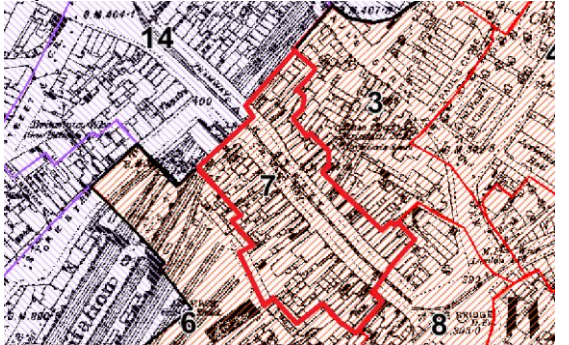
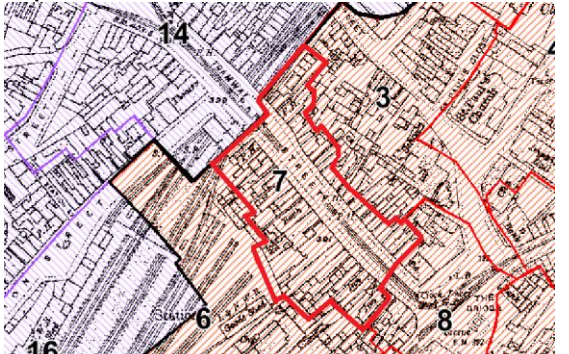

Capacity for change: There is a substantial capacity for change particularly should it deliver a stronger frontage towards Bradford Place and a more appropriate form of development around the Institute of Science and Art (Grade II listed building).

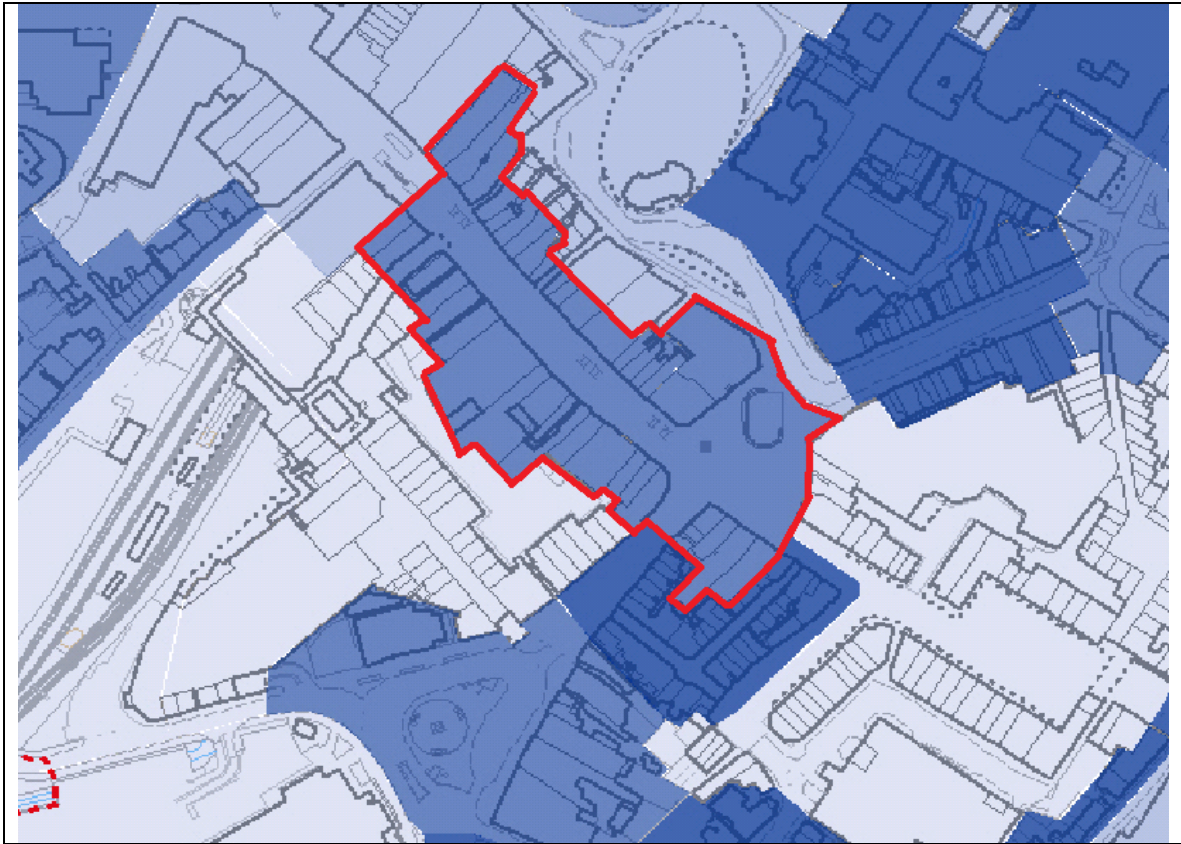


Opportunities: There is a significant opportunity to either redevelop the site independently or in conjunction with a larger development plot involving the station and car park fronting Straton Street.

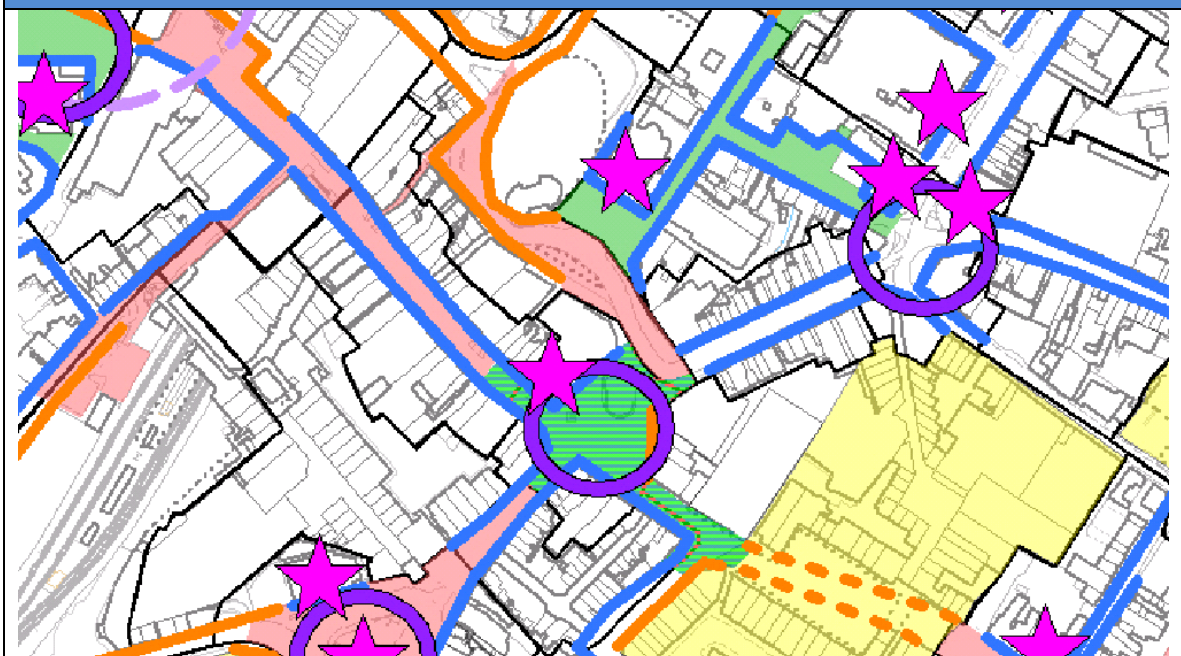
4.2.3.7 Park Street (East)

<p>Character area: Civic Centre – Park Street (East)</p>	<p>Sub character area ref: CC7</p>
<p>HUCA: RE3</p>	<p>Survey date: 9th July 2014</p>
<p>Overview and relationship to adjacent sub areas:</p> <p>The area comprises the central section of the main shopping street in the town between The Bridge and Town End.</p> <p>Whilst an historic thoroughfare, the street has seen radical redevelopment throughout the 20th century, particularly during the 1930's and the 1960s. A consistency is nonetheless maintained in building height and the gently curvature of the street.</p> <p>In addition the road has been pedestrianised and functions as a shopping area most closely with the shopping mall (to the south).</p>	
<p>Building types:</p> <p>Three principal periods of development:</p> <p>19th Century: Some Georgian shops and late 19th century classical eclectic buildings with heavy applied decoration.</p> <p>1930's: Larger buildings forming chambers over groups of shops. Employing prominent styles of the time including stripped classicism and art deco. Strong, powerful, dominant, symmetrical, stylised forms.</p> <p>1960's: Similar redeveloped to the 1930's developments, however, utilising the system build technology of the post war era. Clad frames.</p>	
<p>Connections and urban grain:</p> <p>The retention of the early formation of the street as it extended down from the Medieval town (centred around the church) and over The Bridge and towards Town End. This gently organic alignment of the street has survived redevelopment, although 20th century rebuilding has fused plots together, damaging the tighter earlier grain of the town.</p> <p>The thoroughfare of the street itself is prominent, however, links through to the modern shopping mall to the south are heightened by steps and large engineered planters and a projecting canopy, however more intimate links to the north are made through Butlers Passage and the Park Street Arcade.</p>	
<p>Uses:</p> <p>The street is dominated by shops and fast food outlets. Few upper floors are used as offices or storage in connection with the ground floors or as residential accommodation. This poor uptake of upper floors in connection with pedestrianisation and limited uses as part of the nighttimes economy results in a very discrete difference in character between the day and evening.</p>	

<p>Predominant materials:</p> <p>The 19th century buildings are predominantly constructed in brick with some stone or terracotta dressing.</p> <p>1930's buildings are steel frames clad in a variety of masonry from brick and terracotta, to metal and render.</p> <p>1960's buildings are largely concrete frames clad in concrete and composite panels in conjunction with curtain glazing.</p> <p>Parapets are a prominent architectural solution and as such roofing materials are not visible.</p> <p>Red brick and black top paving to the public realm.</p>	
<p>Positive characteristics:</p> <p>A vibrant day time economy, where units are all occupied at ground floor level.</p> <p>A number of good quality 1930's buildings with theatrical leanings referencing ancient Rome and Egypt and delivered in conjunction with jazz motifs in the form of exceptional art deco.</p>	<p>Map 1876</p> 
<p>Negative characteristics:</p> <p>A large number of poor quality post war buildings, largely due to poor quality materials rather than design alone.</p> <p>Very poor quality shop fronts and signage.</p> <p>High level of vacancy above shops in conjunction with pedestrianisation has resulted in a threatening lack of surveillance during the evening economy.</p> <p>Very poor quality public realm strategy as a result of poor quality and inappropriate materials and over engineered steps and ramps.</p>	<p>Map 1914</p> 
<p>Statement of significance:</p> <p>Survival of an early piece of street layout, retaining its organic form, connecting the medieval heart of the town to the later industrial part of the town.</p> <p>An important connection through the main stretch of the towns retail core.</p>	<p>Map 1977</p> 
<p>Sensitivity: 2</p> <p>The area comprises a conservation area based on it being the historic route between the medieval town on Church Hill and Town End. It retains a number of imposing 19th and early 20th century buildings on historic plot forms and retains the organic alignment of the street.</p>	

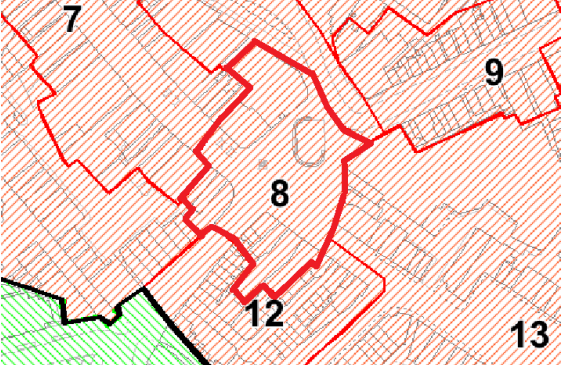






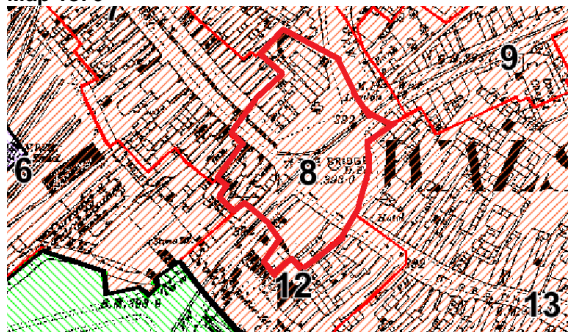
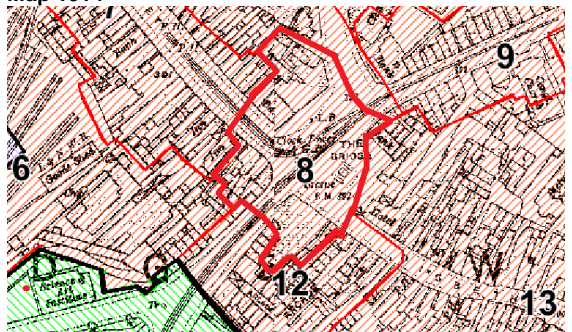
Capacity for change: There is a moderate capacity for change through the redevelopment of individual sites subject to buildings being of quality design and retaining the existing scale and plot form.



Opportunities: There are limited opportunities in this area other than the redressing of post war architecture that fails to make a positive contribution to the area.

4.2.3.8 The Bridge

<p>Character area: Civic Centre – The Bridge</p>	<p>Sub character area ref: CC8</p>
<p>HUCA: RE2</p>	<p>Survey date: 9th July 2014</p>
<p>Overview and relationship to adjacent sub areas:</p> <p>The historic heart of the town, where the medieval high street extended down the hill from the church and bridged the brook. Following culverting of the brook, the bridge was replaced by an area of open space that retained its earlier associations with the crossing, by being known as The Bridge.</p> <p>Now a hard landscaped urban square surrounded by buildings and effectively forming the heart of the town where Bridge Street, Bradford Place, Park Street and Digbeth meet. Civic public art (the Sister Dora statue, the concrete hippo and the town fountain) is located here and part of the town’s market extends into this space.</p>	
<p>Building types:</p> <p>A desperate group of building surround this space including a few nodescrript 19th century buildings, a Edwardian bank, and a host of 1970’s buildings.</p> <p>The Grade II listed bank is a fine example of early 20th century Edwardian Baroque that employs a significant scale over older more modest buildings.</p> <p>A significant number of brutalist buildings encircle the southern side of the square, masking the Victorian Arcade as well as leading into Bridge Street.</p>	
<p>Connections and urban grain:</p> <p>The form of The Bridge has changed over time with the widening of its early organic formation into a public square and then the loss of later more formal civic buildings, resulting in a more abstract form.</p> <p>Plots have been fused together in the redevelopment of the southern aspect of the square and this has damaged the intimate relationship of development around this open space.</p> <p>This public space flows into Park Street, Digbeth and Bradford Place, but is screened from Bridge Street by trees and a raised podium on which the town fountain is placed.</p>	

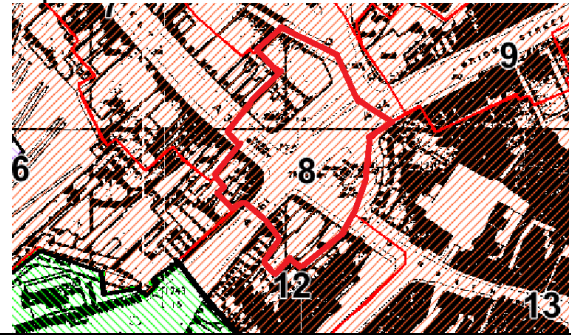
<p>Uses:</p> <p>The principle use of The Bridge is a gathering and meeting space, with the town fountain, hippo sculpture and the Sister Dora statue being local landmarks. The market extends from Digbeth into the square and gives it the vitality of a town market square. It is anticipated that this will become the principal home of the market in the future.</p> <p>The buildings that surround the square play host to a variety of shops and professional services, but are largely secondary to the activity within the square itself.</p>	
<p>Predominant materials:</p> <p>The building materials around The Bridge are as disparate as the buildings themselves. Older buildings comprise a mix of red brick, stone and stucco render, with the listed bank being constructed from Portland stone.</p> <p>Modern buildings are constructed from reinforced concrete, concrete panels, painted render and brown brickwork.</p> <p>The public realm continues that of the wider town centre along the Park Street – Digbeth alignment, which is brick pavers and black top. Within the area of the square itself the public realm has been upgraded to a natural sandstone York flag, which continues over the fountain podium.</p>	
<p>Positive characteristics:</p> <p>A vibrant space filled with diverse activity and enclosed by a number of high quality buildings that define its form as the historic heart of the town. The historic functioning of this open space is further highlighted by the contribution of the space as part of the market, and its visual form as the junction of Bridge Street, Bradford Place, Park Street and Digbeth Street.</p>	<p>Map 1876</p> 
<p>Negative characteristics:</p> <p>Poor application of public art, public realm and planting has segregated the space from Bridge Street and disrupted the natural connectivity through visual links in the direction of the main civic part of the town.</p> <p>Poor quality buildings play an important role in enclosing the space (mainly along its southern aspect) and have deteriorated that vitality of the space through their oppressive design and lack of surveillance.</p>	<p>Map 1914</p> 

Statement of significance:

The natural central point within the town. A critical crossroads in the town centre that links a number of arteries that dissect the main inner districts of the town.

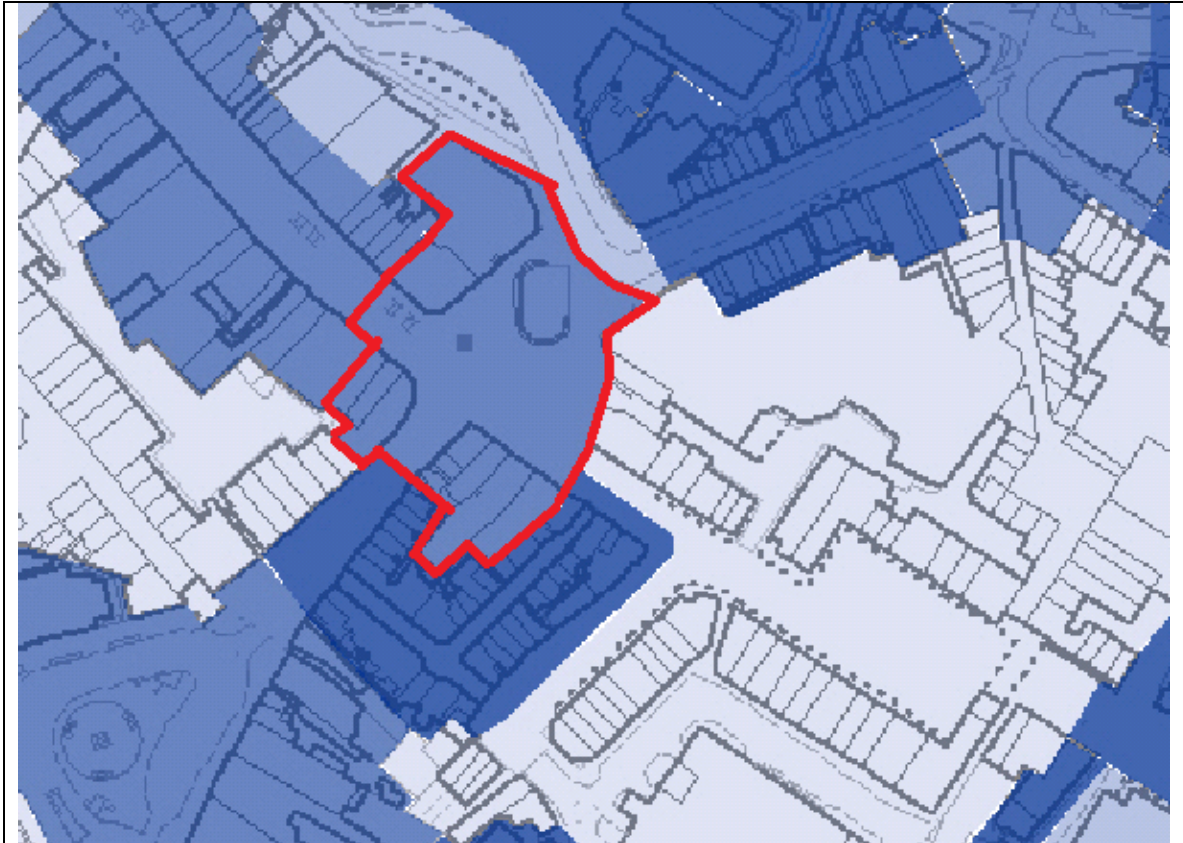
The formation of a large open space that is a focus for activity and meeting which relates to an historic bridge crossing within the town.

Map 1977

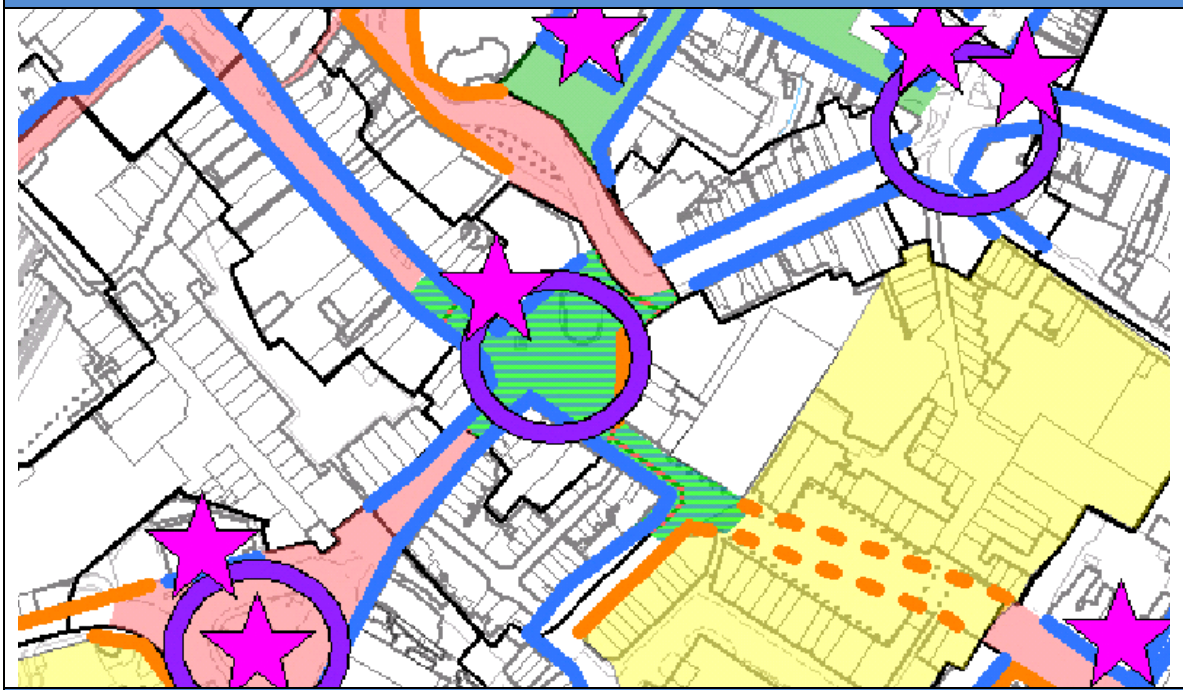


Sensitivity: 2

The area is an important historic destination and has a mixture of both positive and negative buildings enclosing it. The imposing Portland stone Edwardian Baroque banking hall on the corner with Park Street as well as the façade are both Grade II listed and the area falls within the Bridge Street Conservation Area. The public realm is disjointed and there is therefore a juxtaposition between the quality of built form, urban grain and open space.

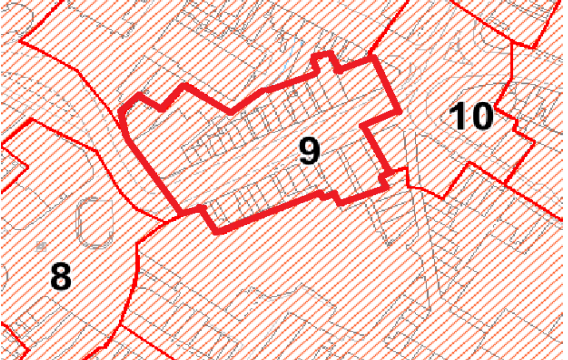








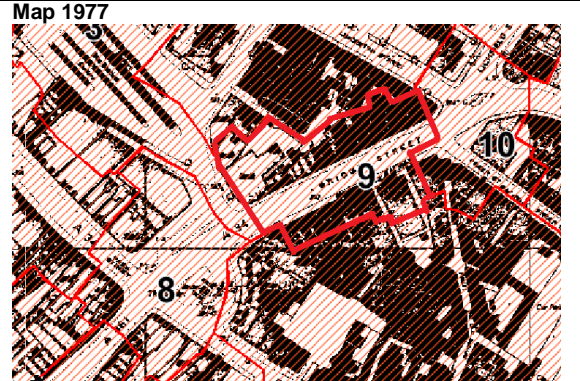
Capacity for change: The area would benefit from carefully planned incremental change that does not fundamentally alter its character but help reveal the areas qualities as a central meeting space.

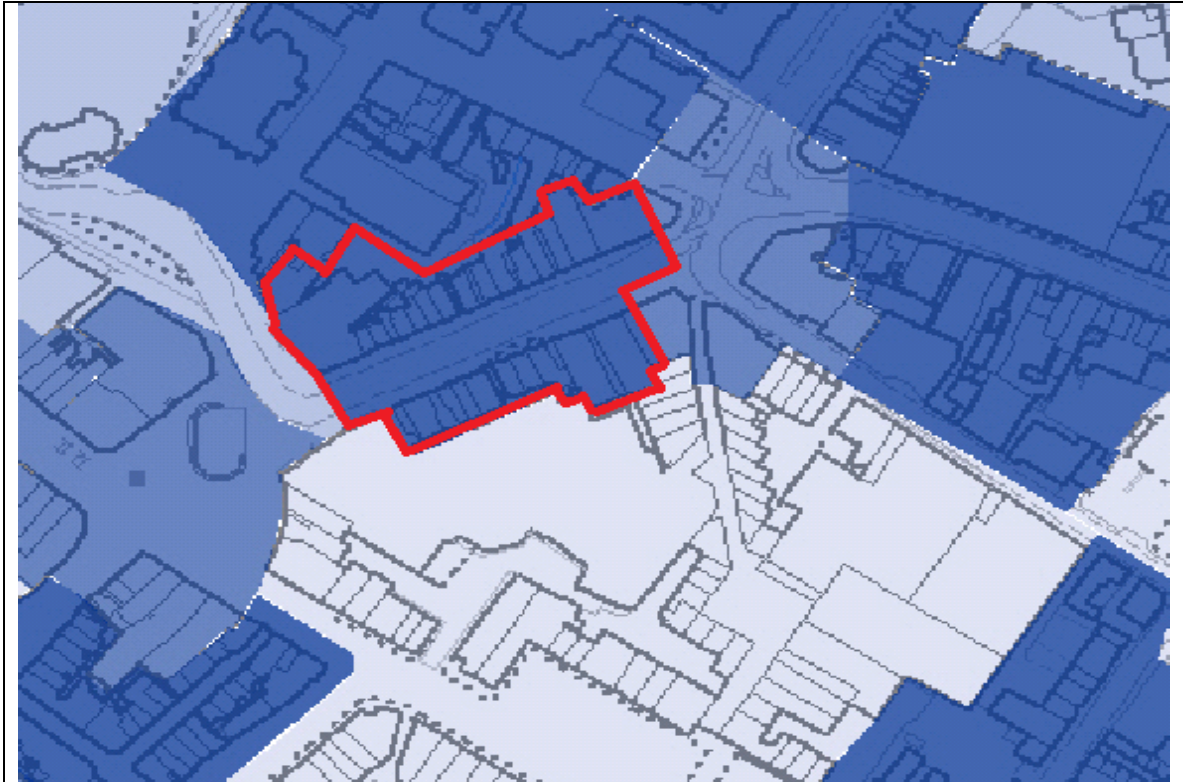


Opportunities: The area is currently the subject of the redevelopment of the town market which explores better use of 'The Bridge'. Strengthening week architecture and poor building frontages along the eastern side of the space is also important.

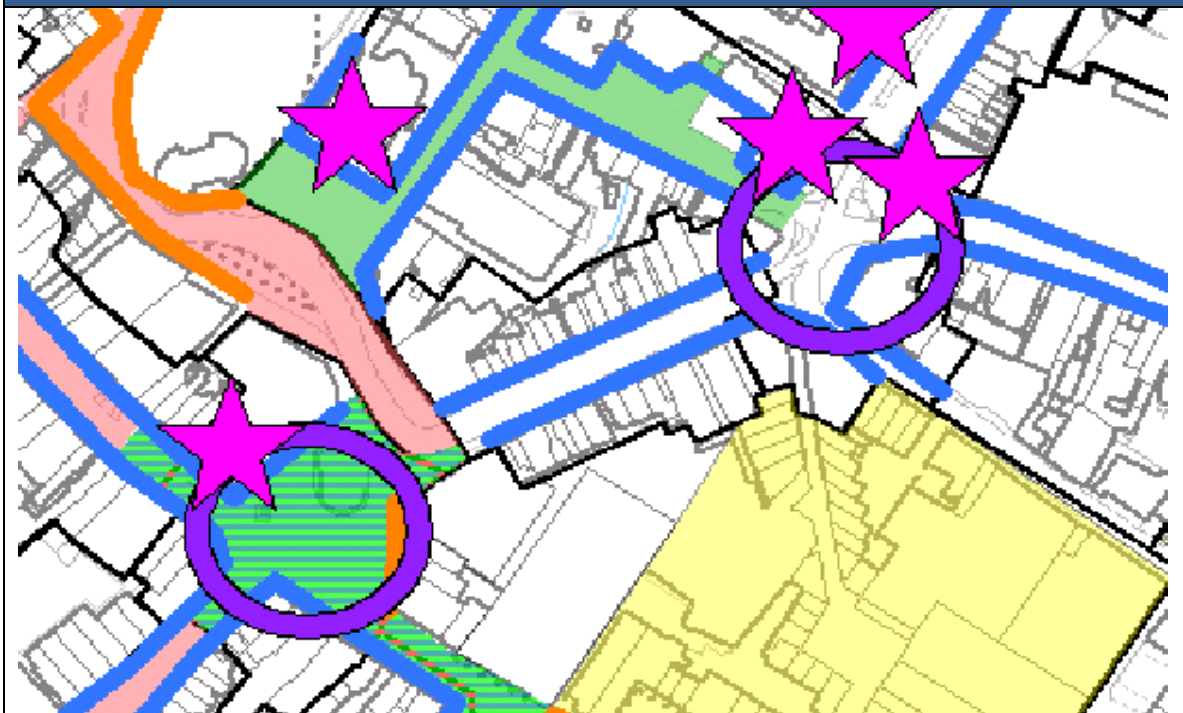
4.2.3.9 Bridge Street (West)

<p>Character area: Civic Centre – Bridge Street (West) HUCA: RE2</p>	<p>Sub character area ref: CC9 Survey date: 9th July 2014</p>
<p>Overview and relationship to adjacent sub areas:</p> <p>A relatively complete 19th century retail street in the heart of the town centre, comprising a northern spur leading off to the north from 'The Bridge'.</p> <p>The street has a degree of consistency in the delivery of high order architecture that links two strategic junctions in the town. Whilst 'The bridge' to the south links through to the retail centre proper, the confluence of streets to the north (with Leicester Street and Lichfield street) provides a connection through to the civic quarter of the town.</p>	
<p>Building types:</p> <p>Most buildings are of a high order architecture exploring the varied application of the neo-classical styles popular towards the latter part of the 19th century.</p> <p>Most buildings are three-storeys in height, with clear architectural ordering throughout. Styles vary greatly from the weighty application of Italianate, baroque, baronial, gothic and French renaissance on the northern side of the street, to the lighter neo-Georgian, Arts and Crafts and modern on the southern side.</p> <p>The profile of balustrades, turrets, chimneys and gables define roofscapes, whilst elevations carefully carved up with heavy ground floor commercial bases sat under chambers above.</p>	
<p>Connections and urban grain:</p> <p>Plot widths vary along the street as redevelopments unified sites during the 19th century. All sit at back of pavement, which in conjunction with the height of buildings and the modest width of the street create a tight urban street of a density not repeated elsewhere in the town.</p> <p>Either end of the street, the area is terminated with open spaces. To the eastern end is the junction around Lichfield street and Leicester Street which provides a good terminus with high quality buildings, but a poor space dominated by traffic and landscaping. To the west 'The Bridge' terminates the view, but this is screened by trees and the road swings north detracting from this visual connection.</p>	
<p>Uses:</p> <p>The street is principally a shopping street, although other subsidiary uses such as bars are now also present. A mix of professional offices are also present.</p> <p>Upper floors are largely chambers and whilst vacancy is partially an issue, this is not currently deleterious.</p> <p>The Old Square redevelopment is taking place behind the southern side of the street taking in the modern building fronting onto the street.</p>	

<p>Predominant materials:</p> <p>The street has one of the greatest mixes of high quality building materials in the town centre. Many of the earlier buildings are constructed either completely in stone (red or buff sandstone) or in red brick heavily dressed in stone.</p> <p>Later buildings on the southern side of the street use Bath stone and Portland Stone as well as faience (a type of glazed terracotta) and concrete.</p> <p>Roofs are either tiled in red Drednoughts or slated in Welsh slate and feature lead clad dormers and even a copper coupler.</p>	
<p>Positive characteristics:</p> <p>A townscape of high quality historic buildings that hold a consistency in scale and height, but charge the street with a dynamic array of architectural styles, building materials and rhythm.</p> <p>The difference in architectural language on each site serves to emphasise the quality of each building. Each building is confidently handles in genre and is of noted quality. This is more than just a collection of modest buildings of quality, but buildings of exceptional design.</p>	<p>Map 1876</p> 
<p>Negative characteristics:</p> <p>There is a degree of vacancy that exists on the street, which emphasises the fact it does not comprise a primary retail frontage.</p> <p>A number of ill proportioned shop fronts, poor quality signage and excessive security measures compromise the character of the street at street level.</p>	<p>Map 1914</p> 
<p>Statement of significance:</p> <p>An important historic thoroughfare that connects the civic part of the town and the handsome Georgian districts to the north, with the medieval core of the town and its premier shopping street.</p> <p>A street of buildings that comprise a diverse and well executed mix of buildings that reflect the success of the town during the 19th century and reflect the former wider quality of architecture to the east, now lost.</p>	<p>Map 1977</p> 
<p>Sensitivity: 1</p> <p>The area comprises an exceptional stretch of 19th century architecture expressing the eclectic tastes of the period as well as more refined early 20th century development. It all falls within the Bridge Street Conservation Area and comprises sound townscape qualities of street enclosure and building scale ratio to street width.</p>	

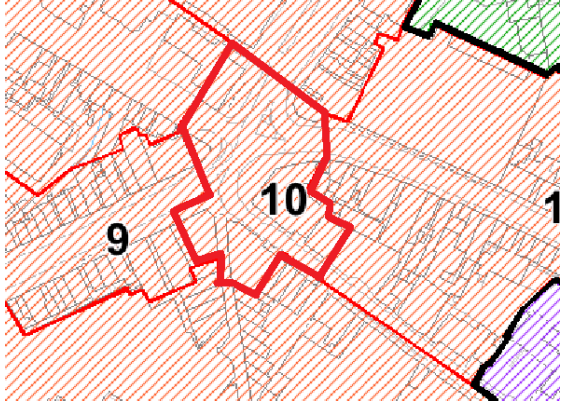







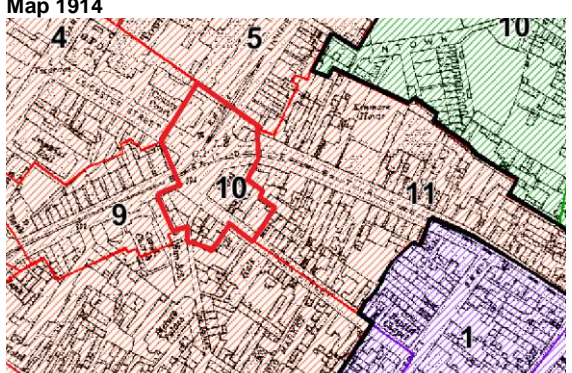

Capacity for change: There are few aspects of the area that would benefit from change other than the post war office building on the south side which accommodates the service access into Old Square Shopping Centre.



Opportunities: There are few opportunities in this area

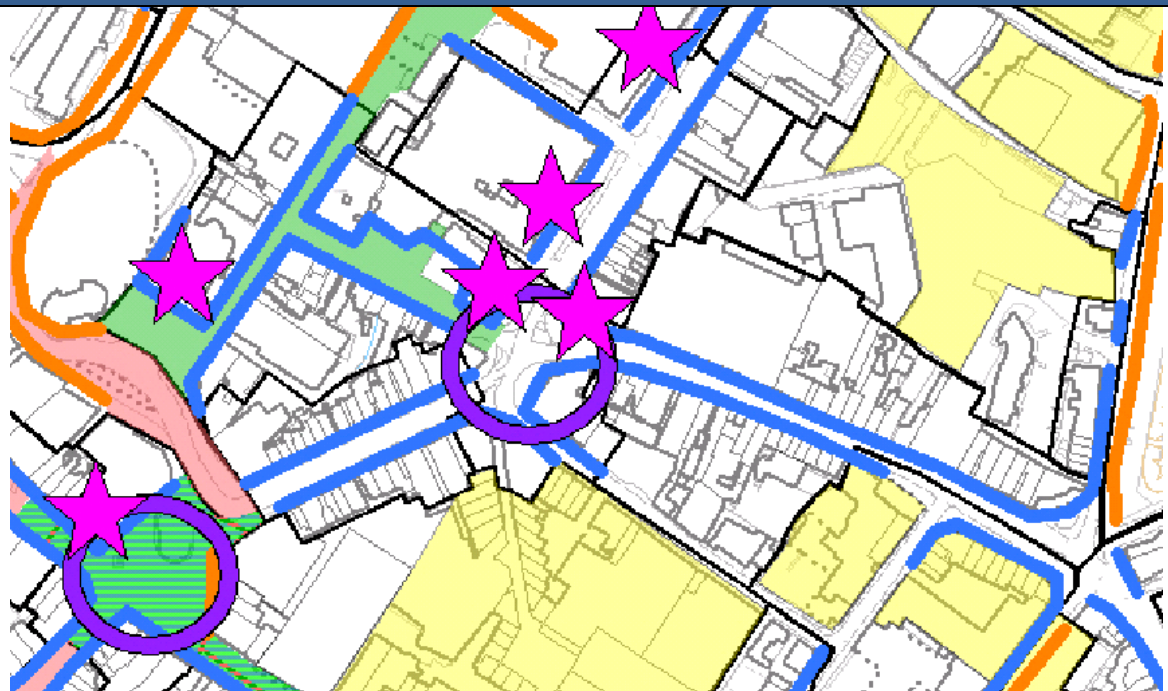
4.2.3.10 St. Matthew's Hall

<p>Character area: Civic Centre – St. Matthew's Hall</p>	<p>Sub character area ref: CC10</p>
<p>HUCA: RE2</p>	<p>Survey date: 9th July 2014</p>
<p>Overview and relationship to adjacent sub areas:</p> <p>A confluence of streets in the heart of the extended 19th century town. A circus of buildings linking the area of civic and municipal governance, to trade, commerce and industry.</p> <p>This intersection is surveyed by some of the towns finest buildings and fed into by two of its grandest streets, however its poor urban realm, dominated by highways and impervious landscaping has damaged its overall character.</p>	
<p>Building types:</p> <p>Whilst there is no consistency between any of the buildings, they each successfully mark the corner on which they sit. Each illustrates a particular architectural movement, which together delivers a group of buildings with significant civic value. Central to this are the chambers on the corner of Bridge Street and Lichfield Street and the former Courthouse on the corner of Lichfield Street and Leicester Street. The former comprises a French Renaissance structure with heavy pilasters a mannerist gable and mansard roof, whilst the latter emulates a Grecian temple. Other building comprise modest Italianate structures, Neo-Georgian chambers and post war offices.</p>	
<p>Connections and urban grain:</p> <p>An intersection of five streets and a passageway (mall) that lead into a planned open space that reads as a circus.</p> <p>Whilst the highway network have been entrenched into walled corridors, the remaining buildings, other than the former courthouse, sit tightly around the remaining public realm to form the enclosure around this open space.</p> <p>The Courthouse is typical of many 19th century Grecian temple designs as it sits within a tight enclosed apron on land that serves as a semi private enclave.</p>	
<p>Uses:</p> <p>A disparate mix of food and drink, professional offices and retail surround the space, however, the vacancy of the building that occupies the corner of Bridge Street and Freer Street has a significant impact on the character of the area, impacting on the critical level of activity that the space warrants.</p>	

<p>Predominant materials:</p> <p>Each building has a very different application of materials. These include stucco render, brick and terracotta, painted brick (for the 19th century buildings), Portland stone (for the early 20th century building) and brick with spandrel panels (for the post war building).</p>	
<p>Positive characteristics:</p> <p>The formation of a civic space that links a number of prominent streets and acts as a gateway into the civic quarter of the town. In particular, the space is important in providing a forecourt to the Grecian temple-like structure of the former courthouse.</p> <p>The buildings positively charge each of the corner sites around the circus and have been designed to transfer façades from one street to the next. Three of the buildings positively terminate the streets that lead into this space (Courthouse to Bridge Street, Leicester Buildings to Lichfield Street, and The building on the corner of Bridge Street and Lichfield street to the view down Bridge street from The Bridge).</p>	<p>Map 1876</p> 
<p>Negative characteristics:</p> <p>The series of dwarf walls with raked cobble bases integrates these structures into the swaths of ill conceived hard landscaping to comprise the public realm. They close down the openness of the space and inhibit users from experiencing the formerly clear corridors of movement from one street to another.</p> <p>The long term vacancy in the area has had a significant impact on the area as a destination hub in its own right.</p>	<p>Map 1914</p> 
<p>Statement of significance:</p> <p>A significant confluence of streets in the heart of the extended 19th century town. A circus of buildings linking the area of civic and municipal governance, to trade, commerce and industry.</p> <p>A piece of townscape that has the potential to become a destination with set piece architecture that has a civic presence.</p>	<p>Map 1977</p> 
<p>Sensitivity: 2</p> <p>The area is an important historic confluence of street and has a mixture of both positive and negative buildings enclosing it. The area falls within the Bridge Street Conservation Area, however, the public realm is disjointed and there is juxtaposition between the quality of built form, urban grain and open space.</p>	




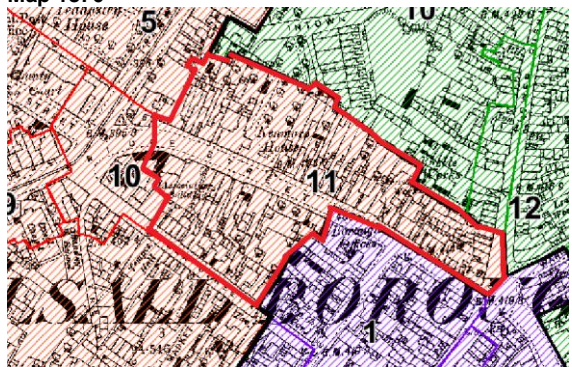
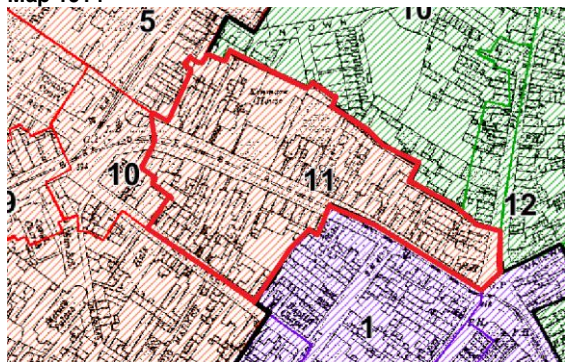
Capacity for change: There is significant capacity to change the public realm and highway to improve connectivity across Bridge Street.



Opportunities: There are opportunities to redevelop the post war building on the corner of Leicester Street and the building on the corner of Freer Street and Bridge Street which is a natural focal point in this part of the town centre.

4.2.3.11 Bridge Street (East)

<p>Character area: Civic Centre – Bridge Street (East)</p>	<p>Sub character area ref: CC11</p>
<p>HUCA: RE2</p>	<p>Survey date: 9th July 2014</p>
<p>Overview and relationship to adjacent sub areas:</p> <p>The main access into the town centre from the south, continuing from Ablewell Street and Birmingham Road beyond.</p> <p>It leads directly into the major intersection in front of the former court house and the civic quarter.</p> <p>Characterised by the steep gradient leading down into the town and the narrowness of the streets form which is defined by the tight dense arrangement of the building lining it. The area comprises a mix of commercial premises, shops and small workshops.</p>	
<p>Building types:</p> <p>Both Bridge Street and Freer Street have a mix of buildings largely dating between 1860 and 1930. The older commercial buildings favour Italianate and gothic architecture and are formed along handed plans, some with set back upper floor accommodation.</p> <p>Latter 19th century premises form part of the areas redevelopment and comprise parades of shops, which increase in scale into the 20th century.</p> <p>Building heights range between two and three-storeys and have a strong commercial ground floor presence.</p>	
<p>Connections and urban grain:</p> <p>The character area is of linear form and comprises a principal access into the town from the south, continuing from Ablewell Street and Birmingham Road. Buildings are sat at back of pavement and often comprise the unification of formerly smaller plots into larger redevelopment sites.</p> <p>Freer Street retains more of its 19th century heritage, albeit in fragments, with voids existing between building.</p> <p>The steep topography of the area has resulted in stepped footprints between sites to accommodate the falling gradient.</p>	
<p>Uses:</p> <p>The area comprise the hub of the night-time economy, with a number of large nigh clubs that dominate the western end of the street. So significant is this concentration of the night-time economy that the street is closed during the weekend evenings.</p> <p>Shops, professional offices, restaurants and fast food outlets supplement this main use and balance out the day-time economy.</p> <p>Vacancy is partially an issue in this area, particularly across upper floors of buildings.</p>	

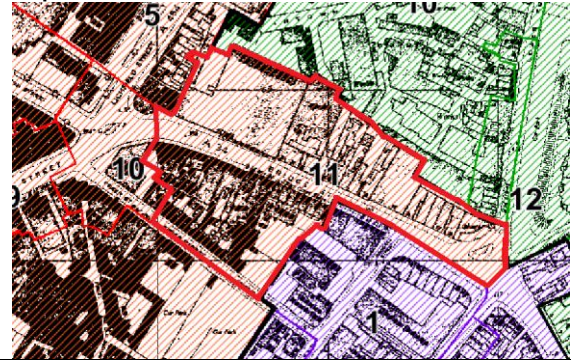
<p>Predominant materials:</p> <p>Most buildings are constructed in red clay brick and dressed in either blue bricks, stone, reconstituted stone, concrete or render.</p> <p>Polycrome work is more common on the 19th century stock, where are render and concrete is a more common substitute on the 20th century buildings.</p> <p>Some crital windows and timber sashes survive and roofs are largely clad in slate.</p> <p>Some 20th century anomalies of brown brick, half timbering and render do also exist.</p>	
<p>Positive characteristics:</p> <p>The area comprises a dense and compact arrangement of buildings that tightly define an historic thoroughfare into the town.</p> <p>Many buildings have architectural pedigree and retain numerous historic features such as some of the town's finest surviving historic shop fronts.</p> <p>A mix of uses that ensure the street is more vibrant than other parts of the town centre during the evening.</p>	<p>Map 1876</p> 
<p>Negative characteristics:</p> <p>There is a degree of long term vacancy in the area that juxtaposes poorly with the vibrant mix of uses that survive.</p> <p>Some of the buildings along the southern side (towards the western end of the street) are in poor condition and have not been well maintained and suffer from insensitive alterations.</p>	<p>Map 1914</p> 

Statement of significance:

The area is an important artery into the town, it plays host to a townscape of historic buildings which individually have merit, but together form a holistic piece of townscape that is typical of the period of its development.

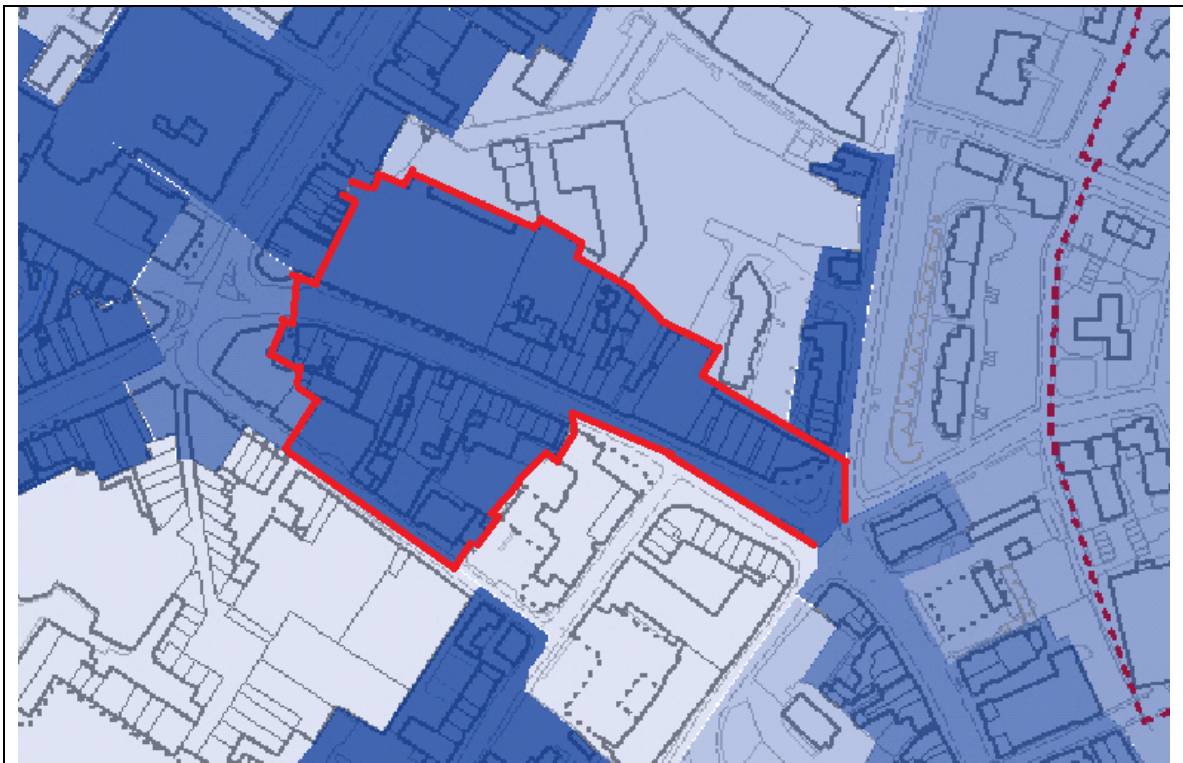
The shops and show rooms contain rare survivals of original shop fronts and display an array of typical heavy application of affordable decoration through imaginative and affordable use of materials.

Map 1977

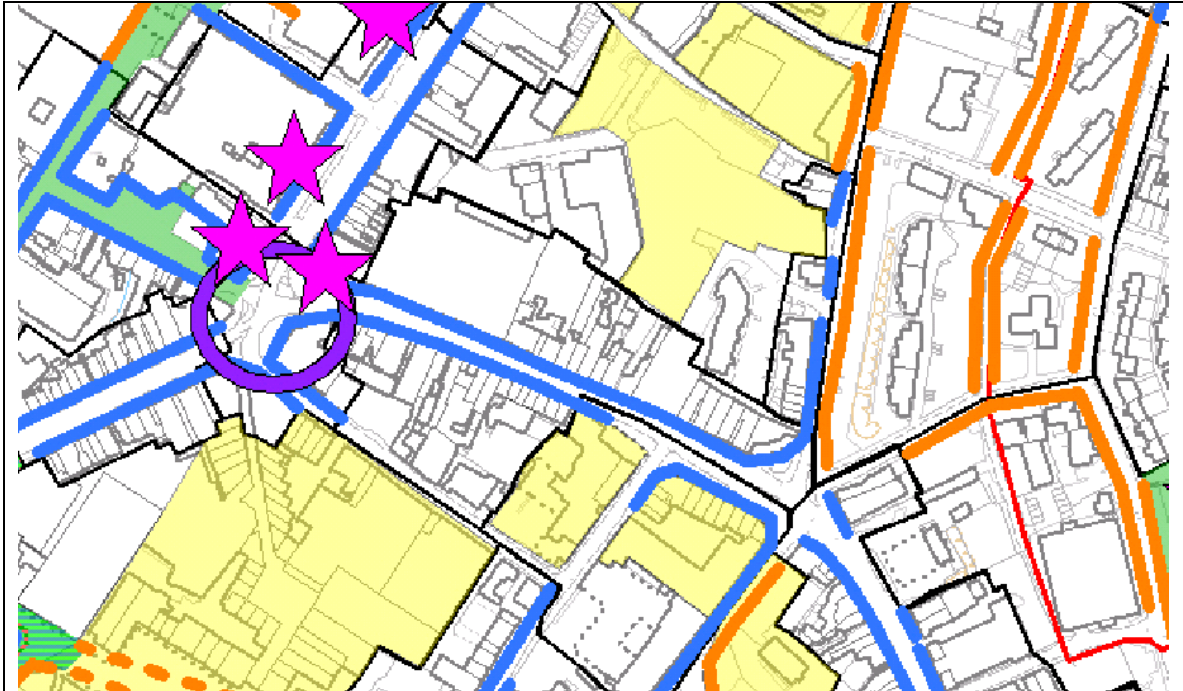


Sensitivity: 1

The area comprises an historic thoroughfare forming part of the Bridge Street Conservation Area and hosting a number of imposing early 20th century commercial buildings as well as smaller Victorian structures. A sound piece of townscape forming an principal gateway into the town.



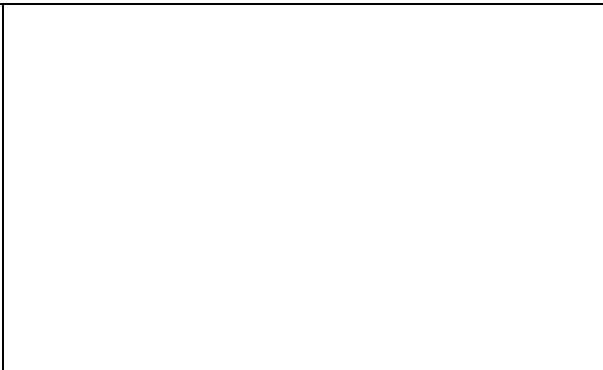

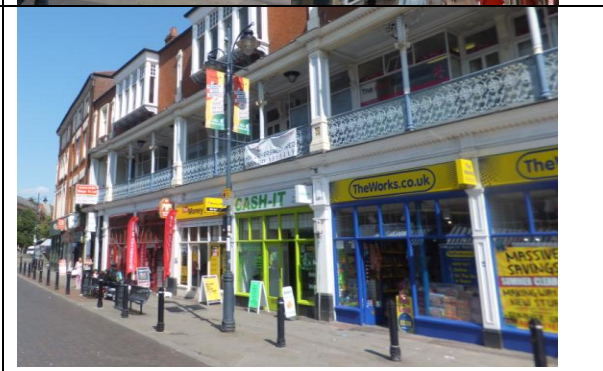

Capacity for change: There is limited capacity for change considering the quality of the majority of buildings in the area and the completeness of the urban form.

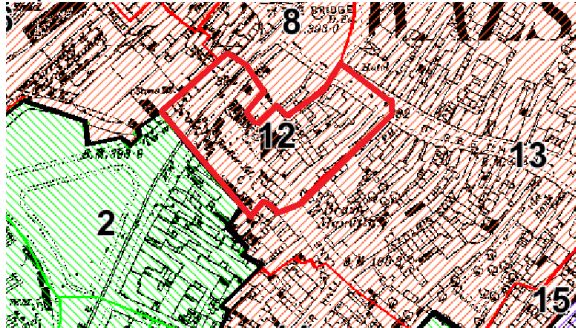
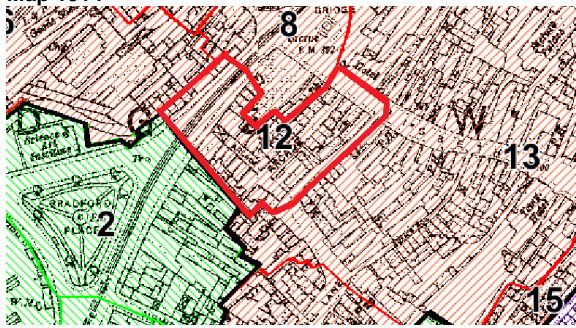



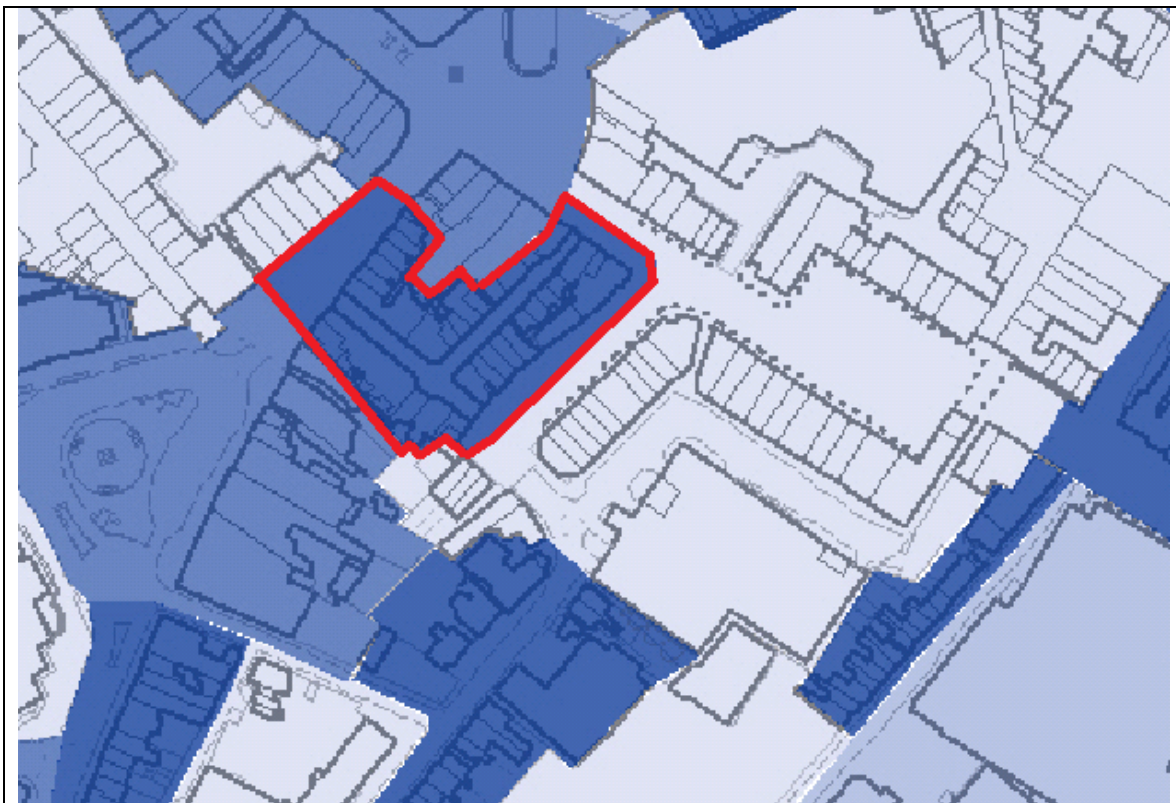
Opportunities: There are few opportunities other than the bringing back into use the upper floors of buildings.

4.2.3.12 Victorian Arcade

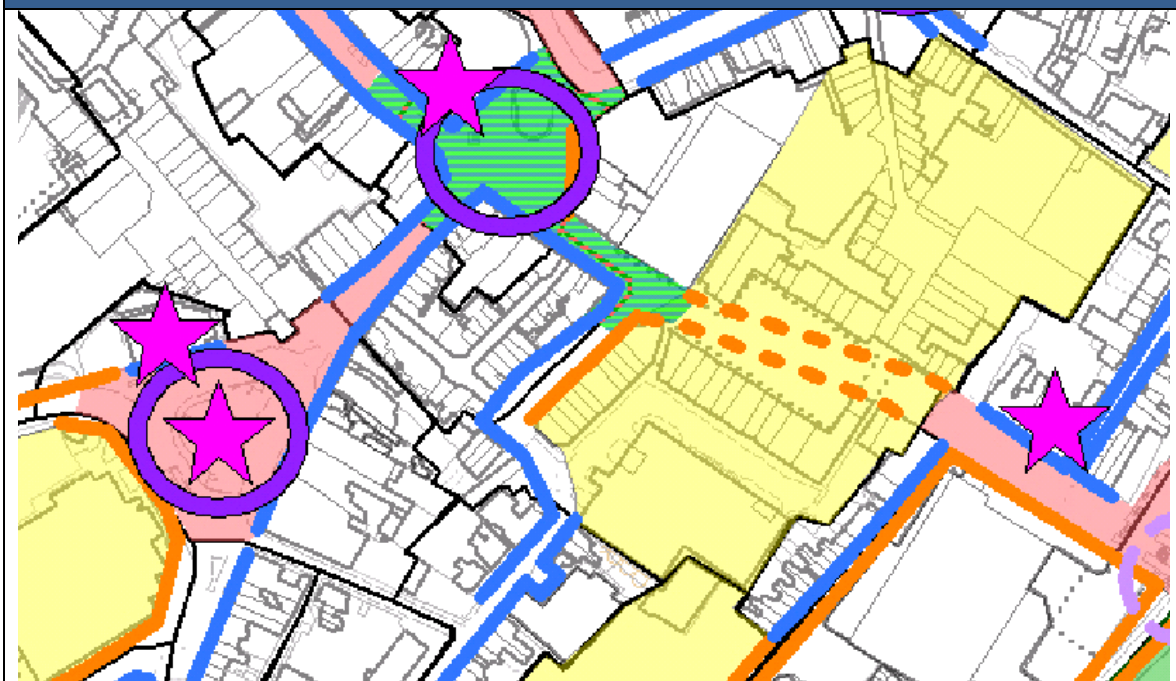
Character area: Civic Centre – Victorian Arcade	Sub character area ref: CC12
HUCA: RE2	Survey date: 9 th July 2014
<p>Overview and relationship to adjacent sub areas:</p> <p>A complete piece of speculative redevelopment at the close of the 19th century in the heart of the town, overlooking 'The Bridge' and fronting three streets between which it occupies the majority of the urban block.</p> <p>The building responds to three very different character areas in a very subtle way and creates a new internalised street system that adds an intermit layer of connectivity within the town.</p> <p>The building does not appear as a whole externally, but as individually designed parades of shops, divorced entirely from one another and the interior.</p>	
<p>Building types:</p> <p>A shopping arcade dating to 1895-7. The Bradford Place façade heralds the Edwardian age with its elevated three-storey arrangement with a recessed first floor shopping gallery emulating the 'rows' of Chester. The second floor boasts deep oriel windows which along with the decorative ironwork, are characteristic of the pavilions of 1900-10.</p> <p>The Lower Hall Lane elevation is scaled down to a modest two-storey structure with a mansard roof. The large windows in this low elevation creates intimacy.</p> <p>The Digbeth entrance is high Victorian, and although damaged by later remodelling, relates to the Italianate</p>	

<p>glazed interior arcading and central dome.</p>	
<p>Connections and urban grain:</p> <p>The 'T' shaped arcade forms a pedestrian connection between Digbeth, Lower Hall Lane and Bradford Place and a street environment that originates in the arcades of Milan and were popularised in northern Europe in the late 18th and 19th century.</p> <p>The building fills an entire urban block and its internal pedestrian realm flows seamlessly into the more open pedestrianised spaces that have been created in the surrounding streets.</p> <p>The individual premises within the building retain a sense of intimacy and of earlier individual development plots.</p>	
<p>Uses:</p> <p>As a shopping arcade the building is exclusively retail, although that now includes the wider retail offer of food outlets, cafes and professional offices. The chambers above function both in association with the shops, but also as independent chambers.</p> <p>The buildings external units function seamlessly with the wider shopping area of the town centre, and occasionally extend through to the internal face of the arcade.</p>	
<p>Predominant materials:</p> <p>The building is a steel frame structure and elements of this remain exposed in the Bradford Place first floor gallery and the skeleton of the glazed arcade roof and dome. The building is principally clad in red clay brick and is dressed in decorative stucco plaster, forming pilasters, window architraves, entablatures and shop fronts.</p> <p>Timber joinery has been retained in windows and shop fronts, whilst the roof is slated.</p> <p>The glazing is particularly fine around the dome, with clear storey windows containing stained glass of an exceptional quality.</p>	

<p>Positive characteristics:</p> <p>An intimate arrangement of shops that sit within the heart of the medieval retail part of the town.</p> <p>A mix of cafe culture and shopping in a traditional covered arcade that differs from the modern retail experience found across the rest of the town centre.</p> <p>An exceptional building of high Victorian design at the point of transition to a more romantic Edwardian design.</p>	<p>Map 1876</p> 
<p>Negative characteristics:</p> <p>The building is closed during the evenings and does not contribute to the night-time economy.</p>	<p>Map 1914</p> 
<p>Statement of significance:</p> <p>Whilst not the only arcade in the town, the Victorian Arcade represents the height of shopping in the 19th century as a fashionable activity. The sumptuous Italianate design elevates the consumer process as a leisure pursuit.</p> <p>The arcade illustrates the rise of the middle classes and affluence within the town if a retail offer could be sustained in this format.</p>	<p>Map 1977</p> 
<p>Sensitivity: 1</p> <p>The area consists of a single structure comprising a Grade II listed shopping arcade within the Bridge Street Conservation Area. It is a highly sensitive part of the town centre consisting of an intimate internal street with a due active frontage through onto Bridge Street and Lower Hall Lane.</p>	





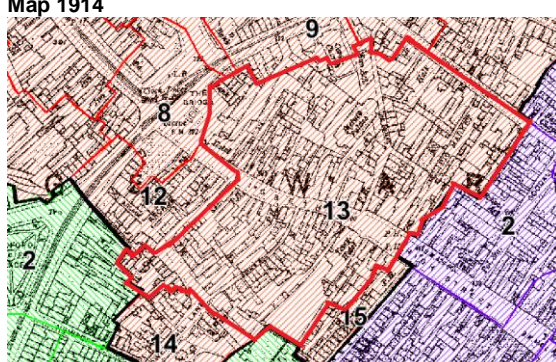

Capacity for change: There is very limited capacity for change other than the change of use of individual premises.

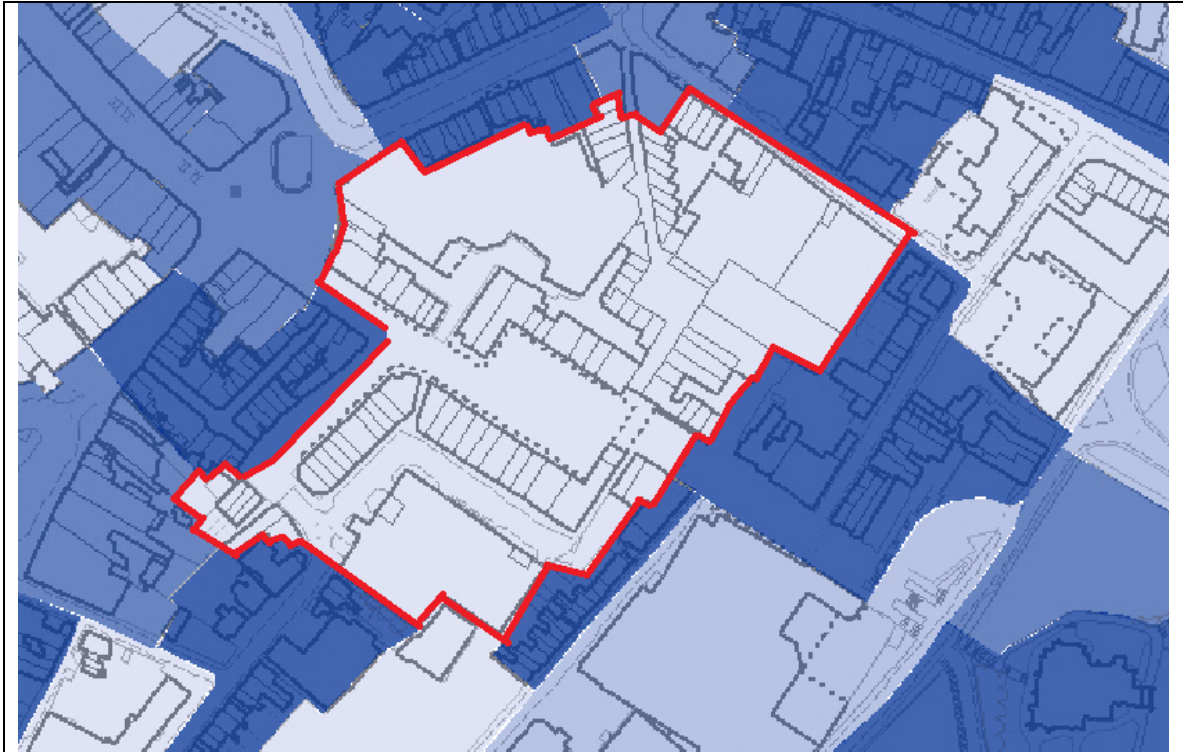


Opportunities: There are no opportunities for development.

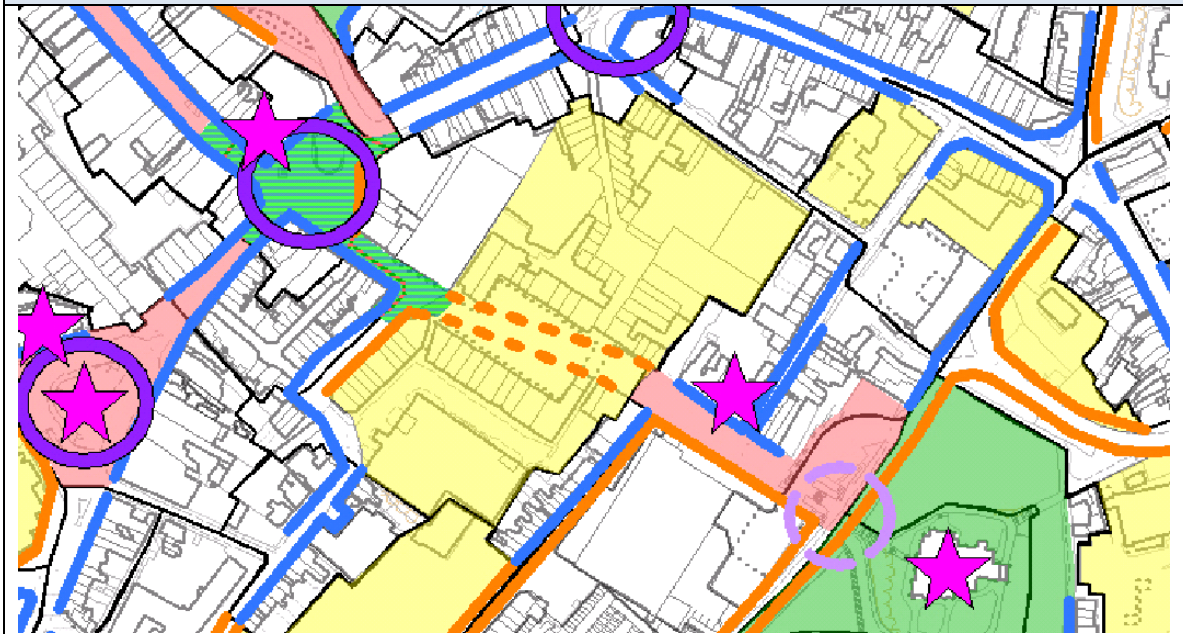
4.2.3.13 High Street

<p>Character area: Civic Centre – High Street</p>	<p>Sub character area ref: CC13</p>
<p>HUCA: RE4</p>	<p>Survey date: 9th July 2014</p>
<p>Overview and relationship to adjacent sub areas:</p> <p>The area straddles the main street that runs down from the medieval nucleus of the town. Comprehensive redevelopment in the 1960's and 70's resulted in realignment of the roads and building plots and all historic buildings have been replaced.</p> <p>The historic connections through to neighbouring areas survive and buildings front onto historic routes and as such the redevelopment is less aggressive than seen in other towns and the post war precincts fit well with the wider town.</p>	
<p>Building types:</p> <p>The area comprises a number of building phases dating between the late 1950's through to the early 1970's.</p> <p>All development is at two-storeys and comprises various iterations of post war modernism including genres from the International Movement and The Festival of Britain.</p> <p>Designs are based on the principles of system build around the modular frame and this has resulted in long parades of architecture that repeats the same composition.</p> <p>Flat roofs, cladding, canopies and abstract solid to void arrangements are the nub of the designs.</p>	
<p>Connections and urban grain:</p> <p>The redevelopment removed the organic flow of High Street as it swept down from the church to The Bridge and replaced it with a more orthogonal arrangement of aligned streets, accommodating the link into The Bridge with the formation of a new open square in the public realm.</p> <p>The arrangement of buildings are largely based on right-angles and have removed all reference to historic plot formation.</p> <p>An arcade has been formed through to Leicester Buildings and is typical of post war mall architecture.</p>	
<p>Uses:</p> <p>The area is designed as a retail area with shops and associated cafes, restaurants and professional offices at ground floor with servicing and storage to the rears and at first floor. Some blocks comprise maisonettes above the shops.</p> <p>The area comprises significant vacancy as a number of application for significant retail development are either being implemented or about to be implemented.</p> <p>A significant part of the market utilises this space, however, this is likely to be relocated further west onto The Bridge in the future.</p>	

<p>Predominant materials:</p> <p>comprises concrete and steel frames onto which concrete or brick cladding is erected or hung over. Timber, metal and plastic windows and localised areas of timber boarding.</p> <p>The new developments under construction use the same modern aesthetics of system build, but incorporate higher quality materials such as reconstituted stone, terracotta and curtain glazing in aluminium frames as well as frameless.</p>	
<p>Positive characteristics:</p> <p>An area of the town that links Church Hill to the town centre's retail core.</p> <p>It successfully integrates post war development into the heart of a medieval town without significantly altering the historic planning and street layout of the area.</p>	<p>Map 1876</p> 
<p>Negative characteristics:</p> <p>A number of poor quality buildings with blank frontages, exposed service yards and access gates. Decaying building fabric such as experimental concrete cladding, roof trims and canopies.</p> <p>A dominant pallet of concrete and ceramic materials that do not reflect the heritage or quality of the town centre.</p> <p>Large expanse of public realm that is delivered in poor quality materials and has a poor microclimate.</p>	<p>Map 1914</p> 
<p>Statement of significance:</p> <p>Church Hill Area with the town centre proper (The Bridge and Park Street).</p> <p>Hosts a number of buildings that successfully depict the spirit of post war Britain in the Black Country.</p>	<p>Map 1977</p> 
<p>Sensitivity: 5</p> <p>The area comprises post war development that sits at odds with the grain of the wider town of which none is considered worthy of retention.</p>	

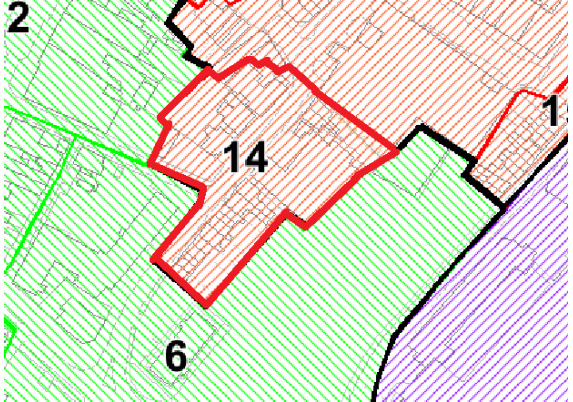






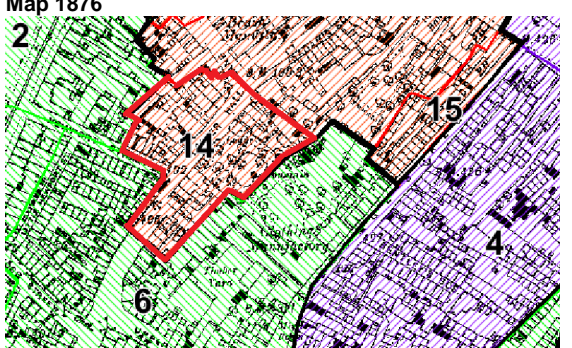
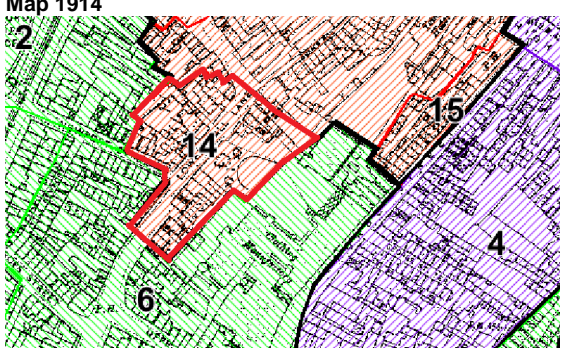

Capacity for change: There is a substantial capacity for change, not only to the built form but also to the public realm, chiefly the closing down of the wide open precinct so as to reform the historic alignment of Digbeth and High Street. The scale of development could be up to three-storeys.

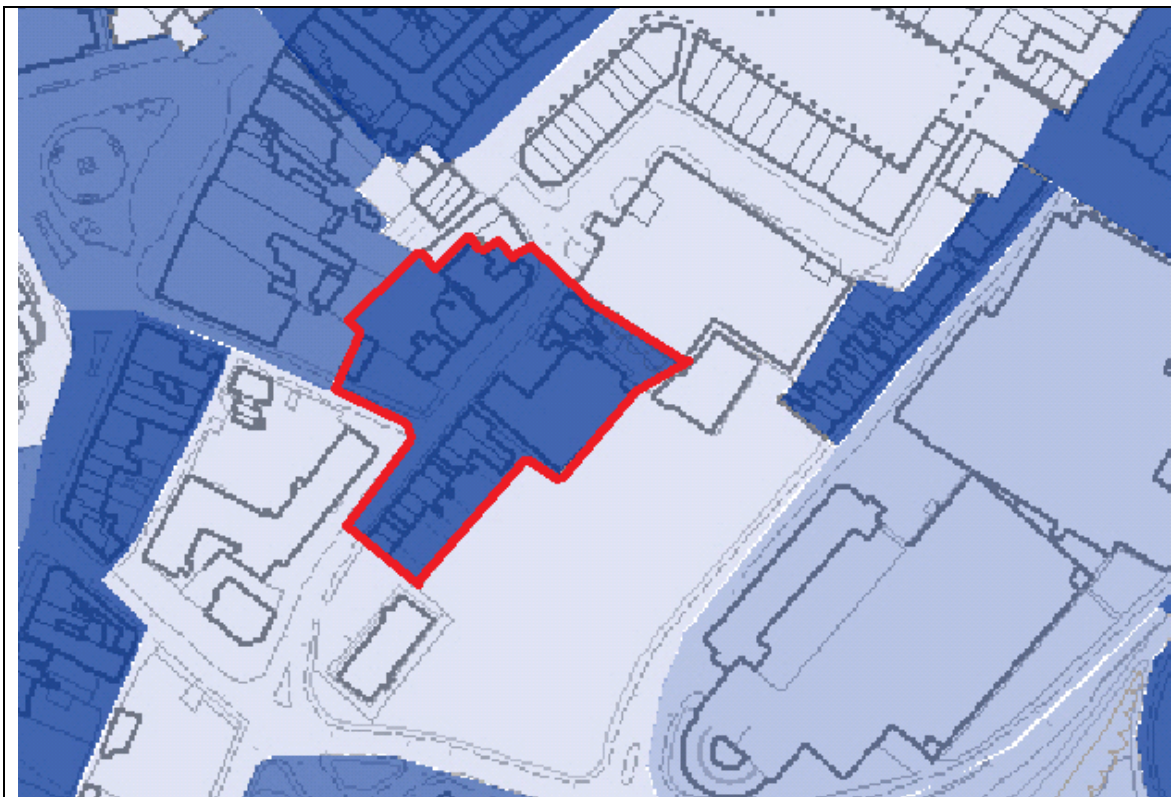


Opportunities: There is a significant opportunity to redevelop the entire area either piece meal in association with a masterplan or comprehensively.

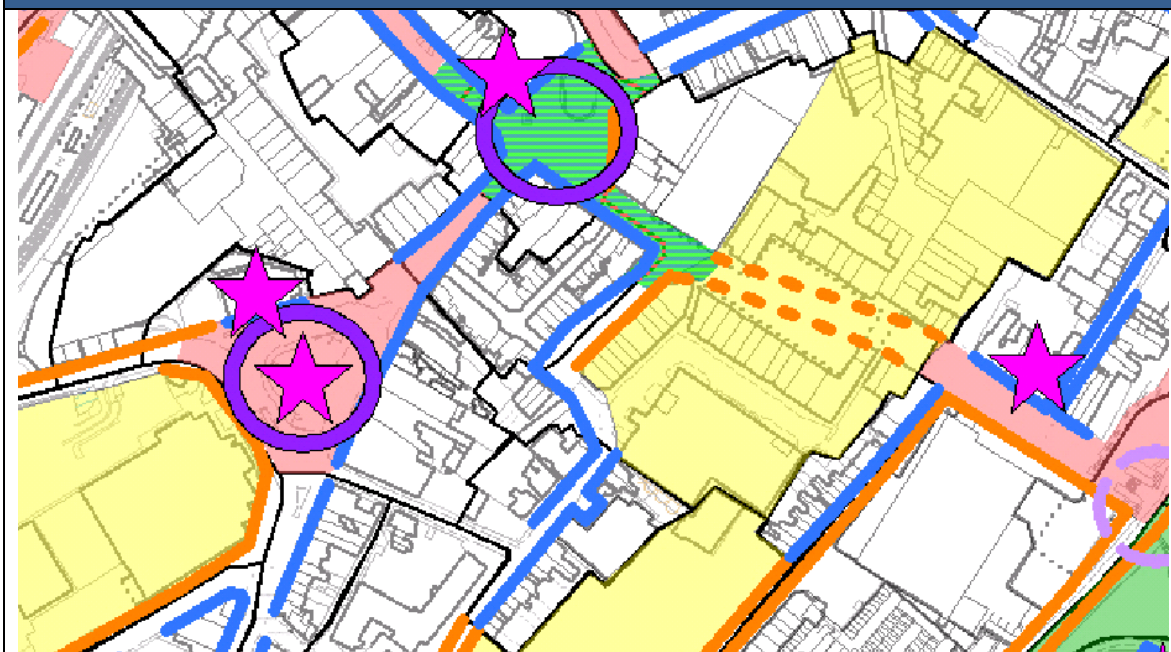
4.2.3.14 Lower Hall Lane

<p>Character area: Civic Centre – Lower Hall Lane</p>	<p>Sub character area ref: CC14</p>
<p>HUCA: RS1</p>	<p>Survey date: 9th July 2014</p>
<p>Overview and relationship to adjacent sub areas:</p> <p>A small intimate street that that has a number of phases of development, but retains its special character comprising a mix of residential and commercial activity.</p> <p>The mix of Georgian, Regency and Victorian town houses and villas sits within an area of trade and light industry in close proximity to the town centre proper and forms a transition towards the inner suburbs.</p>	
<p>Building types:</p> <p>The area comprises a number of building periods:</p> <p>Georgian: A pair of three-storey brick town houses with round arch entrance fan lights and stone flat arched windows.</p> <p>Regency: A pair of two-storey double fronted stucco rendered villas with round arch entrance fan lights.</p> <p>Victorian: A terrace of two-storey double fronted terrace houses with coach entrances through to rear yards, Tuscan entrance porticos and rusticated flat arch windows.</p> <p>Modern: New elevated contemporary building with steep pitched warehouse-like roofing and abstract window arrangement.</p>	
<p>Connections and urban grain:</p> <p>The town houses and terraces sit at back of pavement and enclose the street, whilst the villas are set back to heighten their elevated social status, although these have deteriorated to hard surfaced aprons, which form an extension of the footpath, with only bollards to define the boundary.</p> <p>Crossovers through coach entrances link the public and private spaces of industry and commerce.</p> <p>The modern studio development incorporates a front yard that again emulates the semi-public spaces of historic industrial development.</p>	
<p>Uses:</p> <p>A mix of residential and commercial activity where industry and domesticity coexisted.</p> <p>A few shops to the southern end of the street survive, but otherwise the entire area is now largely converted to offices and training.</p> <p>The new building (known as Goldmine) comprises training and business space and this now dominates the character of the street as the building is a significant destination in its own right.</p>	

<p>Predominant materials:</p> <p>Brick is the dominant building material with render also featuring strongly. Brickwork laid in Flemish and English bond and is dressed with painted stone and plaster architectural detailing, architraves and window and door surrounds. Stone steps into buildings survive as do a significant number of timber sash windows.</p> <p>Some walling has the traditional slag by-product applied to it as decorative panelling.</p> <p>Roofs are slated in Welsh slate although metal sheeting with standing edge seams is used on the Goldmine building.</p>	
<p>Positive characteristics:</p> <p>An attractive array of late 18th and early to mid 19th century Georgian and Victorian buildings. The buildings employ the neo-classical principles of Georgian refinement, control and balanced proportions of vertical and horizontal lines.</p> <p>The Goldmine building contrasts abruptly with the historic design and proportion of buildings in the area, but through its use of materials and industrial references, employs an aesthetic that heightens the characteristics of its neighbouring buildings.</p>	<p>Map 1876</p> 
<p>Negative characteristics:</p> <p>The street is suffering from significant vacancy and this impacts on the areas vibrancy.</p> <p>Buildings are in reasonable condition, but the land around them are in a state of poor maintenance and deterioration. Tarmac has been employed liberally to cover land and many historic boundary treatments have been lost.</p>	<p>Map 1914</p> 
<p>Statement of significance:</p> <p>An exceptional stretch of lower middle class residential development in an area of unplanned townscape. The area comprises the next social ranking down from Lichfield Street and Bradford Street, where industry is threaded amongst the residential developments.</p> <p>The intimate interrelationship between domestic activity and back of house commerce and industry survives here in an early format, similar, but not as evident as in Station Street and Stafford Street.</p>	<p>Map 1977</p> 
<p>Sensitivity: 1</p> <p>The area comprises a host of Grade II listed Regency town houses forming an intimate residential neighbourhood in close association with the towns traditional industries. The townscape is complete and also contains unlisted Regency villas and new contemporary development.</p>	

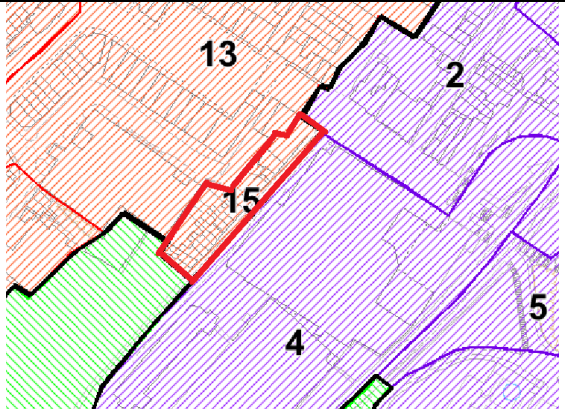






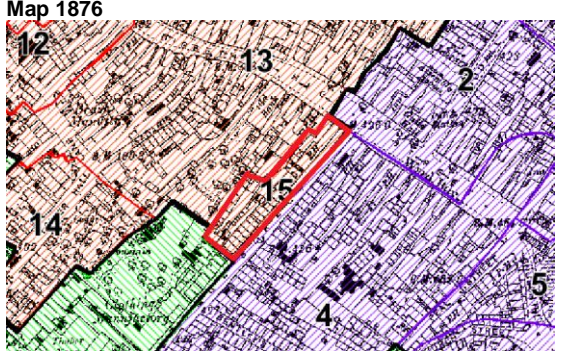
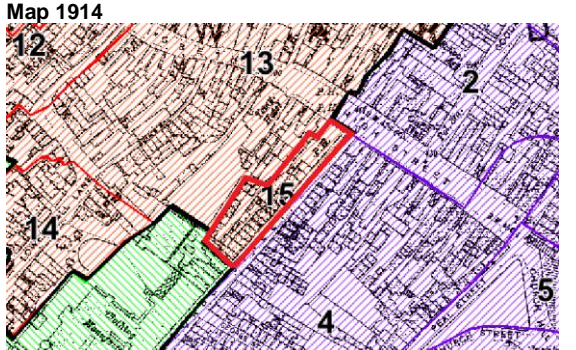
Capacity for change: There is little capacity for change other than the 1960's structure on the northern corner (where the street angles towards the Victorian Arcade) and the vacant site on the corner of Newport Street where buildings need to conform to the established building lines of the villas on the northern side of the street.



Opportunities: These are small and limited to sites that will likely need to be linked to adjacent sites. Many of the buildings are vacant and could be used for a variety of uses.

4.2.3.15 George Street

<p>Character area: Civic Centre – George Street</p> <p>HUCA: RE1</p>	<p>Sub character area ref: CC15</p> <p>Survey date: 9th July 2014</p>
<p>Overview and relationship to adjacent sub areas:</p> <p>A speculative row of Regency style buildings in a planned shopping parade. These are likely some of the earliest purpose built shops in the town and herald the aspirations of the town in the early 19th century to emulate places such as Royal Leamington Spa and other fashionable Regency resort towns.</p> <p>The tight urban grain continues into the later Victorian development either end, but is completely lost to the south on the site of the lost Shannon’s Mill and opposite on the site of the new superstore.</p>	
<p>Building types:</p> <p>The main parade comprises a terrace of buildings that consist of subtle handling of symmetry. Although an even number of bays (10) the architects has employed a sequence of sash windows centred on each property with light handed modelling to create an almost Palladian composition across the elevation. Towards either end are a pair of blind round arches accommodating blind windows that have an abstract niche quality to them, with a nod to the work of Sir John Soane.</p> <p>Other buildings are more typical of late 19th century Victorian architecture, with segmental or flat ached windows, string courses, banding and pilasters.</p>	
<p>Connections and urban grain:</p> <p>The buildings sit at back of Pavement and whilst they constitute 19th century speculative redevelopment, the narrow individual plots and ownerships of early development create a more intimate character.</p> <p>Plots to the north increase in width with the later 19th century development and the long side elevation of the former public house on the corner with High Street.</p> <p>The tightness of the urban form encloses the street, but is weakened by the whole scale loss of townscape around it.</p>	

<p>Uses:</p> <p>A parade of shops facilitating a range of retail and associated uses. Above are the shop keepers accommodation which are not accessed independently.</p> <p>The building to the southern and northern end of the area are vacant.</p>	
<p>Predominant materials:</p> <p>The main terrace is stucco rendered, whilst other building are brick dressed in moulded and rubbed brick.</p> <p>Roofs are slated in Welsh slates and original timber joiners to windows, eaves and soffits survive.</p>	
<p>Positive characteristics:</p> <p>A complete set piece of regency architecture comprising a vibrant mix of retail premises. The street has a rhythm to it that is simple and intimate.</p> <p>The buildings in this area comprise architecture of high quality and across the upper floors retain all original detailing, joinery and materials.</p>	<p>Map 1876</p> 
<p>Negative characteristics:</p> <p>Vacancy and dereliction is a problem from either end of the street which is threatening the vitality of the majority of the street.</p> <p>The poor application of gaudy signage, security measures and shop front alterations that has undermined the overall quality of the architecture of these buildings and imposed a deteriorating environment.</p>	<p>Map 1914</p> 

Statement of significance:

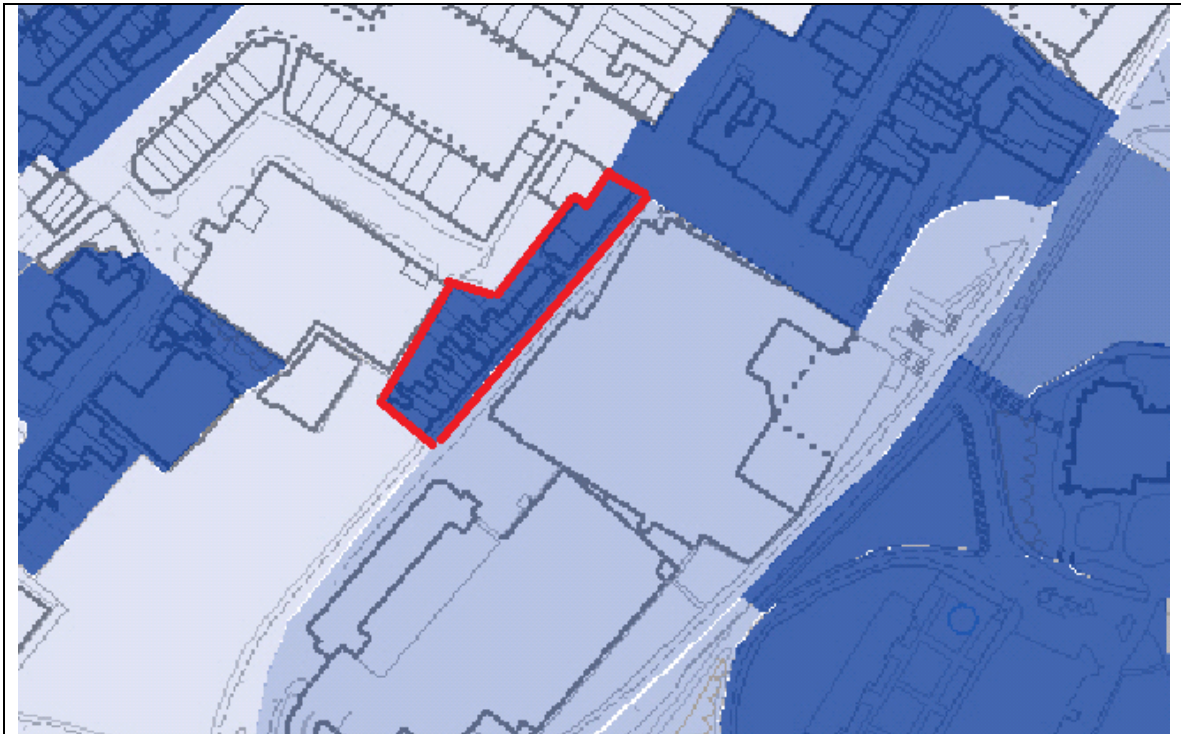
The shops in the main parade likely comprise the earliest example of purpose built shops at the time of shops becoming a fashionable leisure pursuit. The terrace emulates Regency spa resorts and would have been a polite shopping destination for residents of Bradford Street and Lichfield Street, built around the same time.

A unique retail development that is divorced from most town centre development in a Black Country town centre, illustrating the prosperity of the town in the early 19th century.

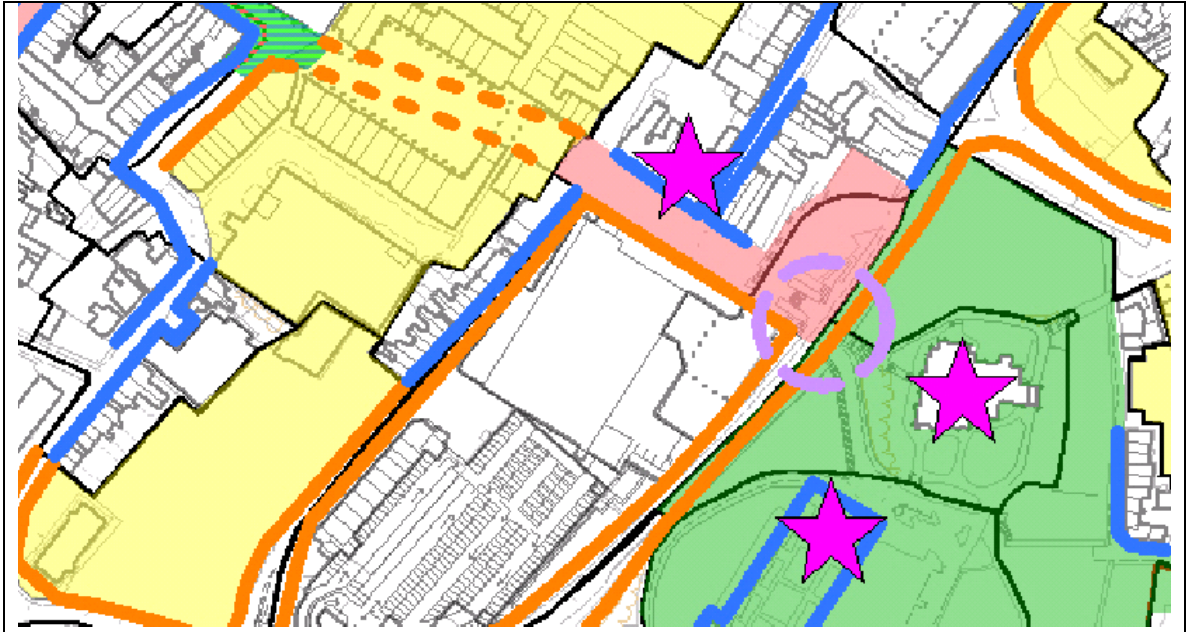


Sensitivity: 1

The area comprises a terrace of 10 Grade II listed Regency commercial premises as well as later Victorian commercial premises either side. The area retains the original urban grain of the wider area and has a sensitive domestic scale to it, lost in the surrounding streets (other than Lower Hall Lane).



Capacity for change: There is limited capacity for change other than the change of use and bringing back into use the existing buildings.



Opportunities: There are no opportunities in this area for new development.