



Report to: Planning Committee, 20th July 2023

Report of: Corporate Director – Planning and Governance

Subject: HERITAGE AT RISK IN WORCESTER: UPDATE AND REVIEW

1. Recommendation

1.1 That the Committee note the contents of the 2023 Heritage at Risk Register and approve it for publication.

2. Background

2.1 The last review was made in July 2022.

2.2 The Heritage at Risk Register forms an important part of Worcester's positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay, or other threats (NPPF, para 190). Worcester's local Register includes grade II listed buildings and structures, as well as heritage assets on the local list.

2.3 The national Heritage at Risk Register, compiled by Historic England and published each autumn (as a series of regional registers), deals only with selected asset types: grade I and grade II* buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Registered Battlefields, Registered Parks and Gardens, and Conservation Areas. Where an asset appears on the national register it is also included in Worcester City Council's Register.

2.4 It was agreed that the Heritage & Conservation Team would provide yearly updates to Planning Committee regarding Heritage at Risk.

3. Information

3.1 An updated Heritage at Risk Register was approved for publication by Planning Committee on 28 July 2022. Since publication, officers have monitored progress and reviewed other assets for potential inclusion in the Register. No assets have been removed from or added to the Register, but the Priority of 8 has been downgraded.

3.2 Work progresses well at the Ice Factory in Bromyard Road. Three other buildings with approvals (Har 4; Har 16 & Har 18) will remain on the Register until the successful completion of their schemes. Applications for HaRs 12 & 19 are imminent.

3.3 One asset remains problematic. Nos.55-57 Lowesmoor are currently in split ownership. The West Midlands Historic Buildings Trust have shown some interest in taking on No.55, but both properties lie within the Lowesmoor Conservation Area, which is also at risk. Discussions have been held with Historic England over a grant scheme for the area.

- 3.4 1, 1a and 3 Angel Street, the Scala Theatre and the Corn Exchange are within the Future High Street area through which opportunities for enhancement are ongoing. Worcester City Council has also purchased both the Scala Theatre and the Corn Exchange, and a detailed scheme for their joint use has been developed.
- 3.5 Independently from Worcester City Council, SAVE Britain's Heritage produces its own register of Heritage at Risk in the City. Seven of the nine buildings included upon SAVE's register are already on the City Council's version, and, for completeness, in 2022 it was decided to add the remaining two buildings off SAVE's register to this version, to provide a single point of reference for Heritage at Risk in the City. The buildings are 13 The Tything (HaR 16) and St Cuthbert's Chapel (HaR 17).
- 3.6 A listed wall at College Green collapsed in January 2021. The Cathedral authorities are working on reinstating the wall, and although scheduled monument consent has been granted for the works, implementation of these has been delayed. However, the remaining wall has been consolidated and the dislodged material stored securely.
- 3.7 In the case of two sites, intervention by the Council's Planning Enforcement Team has led to progress towards work being undertaken. Contact has been established with the owner of No.3 Green Hill Bath Road (HaR 8 – added in 2020) and a 90-day order issued on 07 June 2023 for works to commence. Similarly, discussions with the owner of No.3 Trotshill Lane East (HaR 14 – added in 2021) have led to the resumption of work to the building. In both cases the works required, and progress upon them, is being monitored.
- 3.8 An updated Heritage at Risk Register has been produced for 2023 and is attached at **Appendix 1**. It is proposed to continue to monitor all entries on the Heritage at Risk Register quarterly, update actions, and update the register on a yearly basis.

Ward(s): All
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Background Papers: Heritage at Risk in Worcester 2023