

Report to: Planning Committee, 18th July 2024

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 2024 Heritage at Risk Register and approve it for publication.

2. Background

- 2.1 The last review was made in July 2023.
- 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, paragraph 196). Worcester's local Heritage at Risk Register includes listed buildings and structures, as well as heritage assets on the local list, plus one unlisted asset.
- 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 20 July 2023. Since publication, officers have monitored progress and reviewed other assets for potential inclusion in the Register. One asset has been removed from the Register and 2 added, and the Priority of 2 has been downgraded.
- 3.2 Work progresses well at the Ice Works in Bromyard Road (HaR 20), where the remaining 12 units in the historic building are scheduled to be available for lease or sale in October 2024. Three other buildings with approvals (Har 4; Har 16 & Har 18) will remain on the Register until their successful completion. Schemes for HaR 12, HaR 15 and HaR 19 are currently out to tender.
- 3.3 One asset remains problematic. Nos.55-57 Lowesmoor (HaR 7). These are in split ownership. However, some repairs are underway, and advice is being offered on suitable replacement and new windows.

- 3.4 Nos. 1 & 1a and 3 Angel Street (HaR 9), the Scala Theatre (HaR 19) and the Corn Exchange (HaR 12) are within the Future High Street area through which opportunities for enhancement have proven successful. Nos.1 & 1a Angel Street are now part occupied and the ground floor shop unit has been let, thus it has been removed from the HaR; No.3 Angel Street remains on the 2024 Register.
- 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, so, 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). Two additional City buildings appear on SAVE's 2024 register: these are the former Gaumont cinema/theatre at 21 Foregate Street (HaR 22), which is Locally Listed, and a former Farrier's Shop at 24-26 Bath Road (HaR 24), which currently has no heritage designations.
- 3.6 A listed wall at College Green (HaR 15) 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. A structural engineer inspected the site in May 2024 and a detailed programme of repair work will go out to tender in July 2024.
- 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 through joint working with colleagues in Enforcement, Housing, Property Management and Property Standards has produced an urgent works programme, which is currently at the design stage. 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 closely.
- 3.8 Reflecting the above changes, an updated Heritage at Risk Register has been produced for 2024 and is attached as an **Appendix**.
- 3.9 It is proposed to continue to monitor all entries on the Heritage at Risk Register on an ongoing basis, update actions, and to review the register annually.

Ward(s): All Wards
Contact Officer: Paul Collins 01905 722129
paul.collins@worcester.gov.uk
Background Paper: Heritage at Risk in Worcester – 2024 Register