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Hereford City

Historic Area Assessment for Herefordshire Council

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Contents

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Description and purpose of report

This report constitutes a Historic Area Assessment of the central part of the city of Hereford. The geographical extent of the appraisal area is shown on Map 1. However in order to present a full understanding of the area defined, aspects of the study address features relating to the wider setting of the city and its surroundings.

The report considers the historical development of the heart of the city and goes on to make an assessment of the overall area as far as physical form, environment, traffic and communications and the historic environment are concerned. The report then summarises information concerning a series of study areas which were identified as part of the brief, and concludes with overall comments on the significance of the city, and statements concerning strengths, weaknesses and opportunities.

The purpose of the report is to provide a body of evidence on which to draw in the creation of forward plans for the area concerned. These forward plans will form part of the Local Plan for Herefordshire.

1.2 Extent of report study area

The heart of Hereford city lies within a triangle defined by the present railway line to the north and east, the River Wye to the south and a former (but now disused) railway line to the west. This constitutes the main part of the study area for this report, but for completeness, the area extends to the south of the river to include St Martin's Street with playing fields to the east and land to the west as well as the Broomy Hill area of the city to the west of the centre and along the north bank of the river. This overall area is shown on Map 1 (on the following page).

For the purposes of the more detailed appraisal, this overall area has been subdivided into separate zones, identified generally according to the character of the area contained within each zone. These subdivisions are shown in Map 2 (on the following page). The level of analysis for each of the zones varies as described in the following section and this report contains a separate section containing the analysis for each of these separate zones.

1.3 Methodology and reporting levels

The brief for the preparation of this report requires that the appraisal be carried out in accordance with the methodology and recommendation of the Historic England publication 'Understanding Place : Historic Area Assessments' first published in 2010, but revised and re-issued in April 2017.

'Understanding ….' discusses the importance of characterisation of places as well as the concept of 'significance' in decision making. A key part of its recommendations concern the methods employed for assessing the character and significance of places as well as their constituent components – buildings, open spaces, street surfaces, landscape, signage etc.

It proposes three levels of assessment which will be appropriate in different circumstances – ranging from Level 1, the quick assessment which might be made following a drive through of the place, through to Level 3, which is a 'building by building' approach looking at the structure materials and development of each element within the identified area. Between these is an intermediate Level 2 which is defined as 'rapid.' The detailed methodology employed is described more fully in Section 8.0, Notes on appraisal method.

Within the study area, the Council has already defined the particular character areas to be considered. These are as shown on Map 2, already referred to.

The brief for the Hereford Historic Area Appraisal required differing levels of assessment for the various areas as set out below:

Edgar Street	Level 1
Broomy Hill	Level 1
King George V playing fields	Level 1
Portfields	Level 1
Eign Gate	Level 2
City Centre	Level 2
Cathedral	Level 2
Urban Village	Level 3

The detailed assessment and reports for each of these areas are included as Part B of this overall report.

1.4 Use of existing reports and documentation

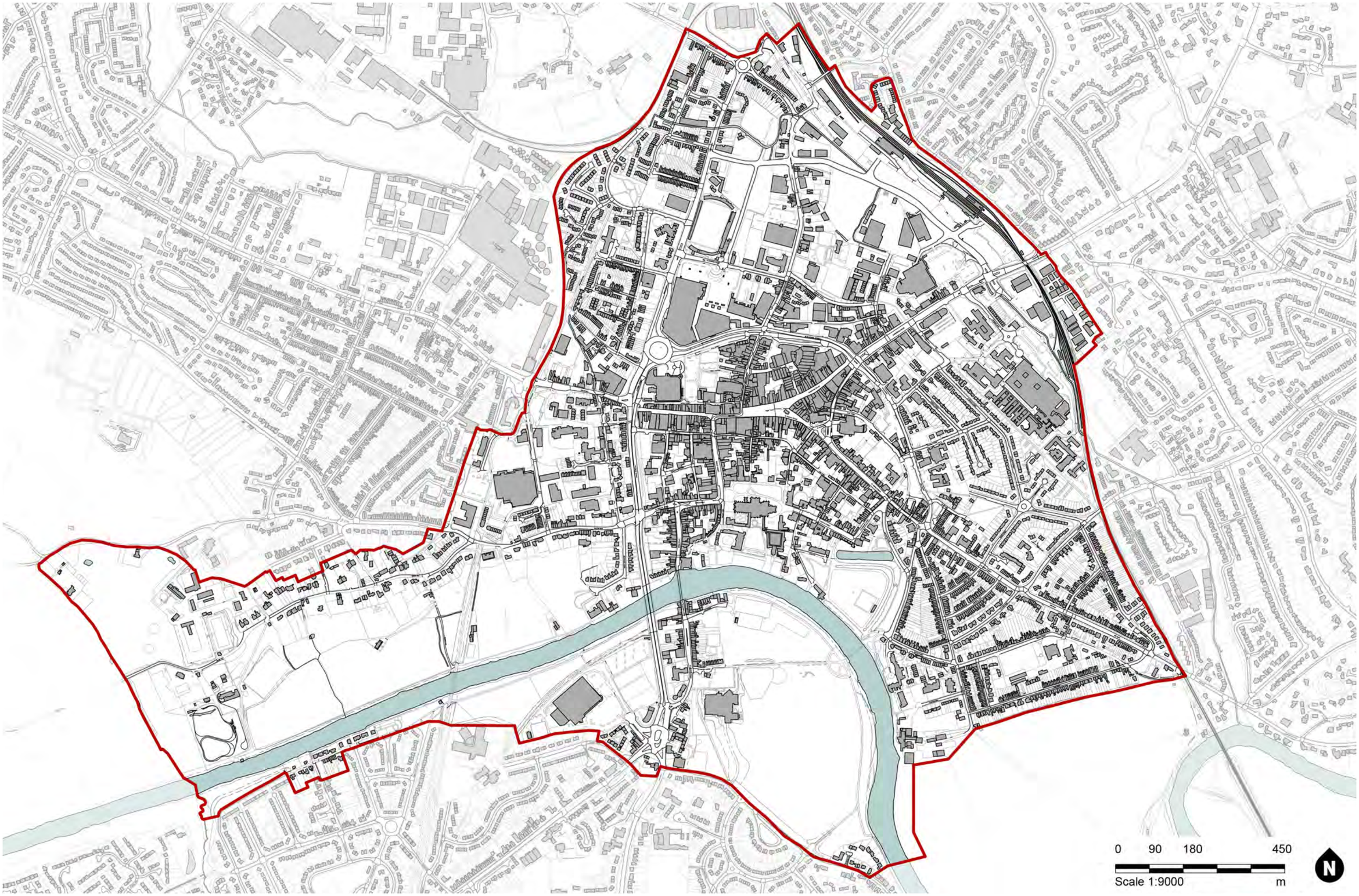
As may be expected there exists a substantial body of reports and documents on the city of Hereford, relating generally to the history and development of the city and also to the Planning Context. A number of these were referred to specifically in the briefing for this study for use as reference documents.

In particular there exists a number of area assessments carried out by members of the Conservation and Planning departments. Where appropriate and relevant the authors of this study have made reference to these. In some cases where it aids understanding, and for ease of reference, text or mapping from these reports have been reproduced within this report. In each case the source is referred to, particularly where it is important to distinguish authorship and or date.

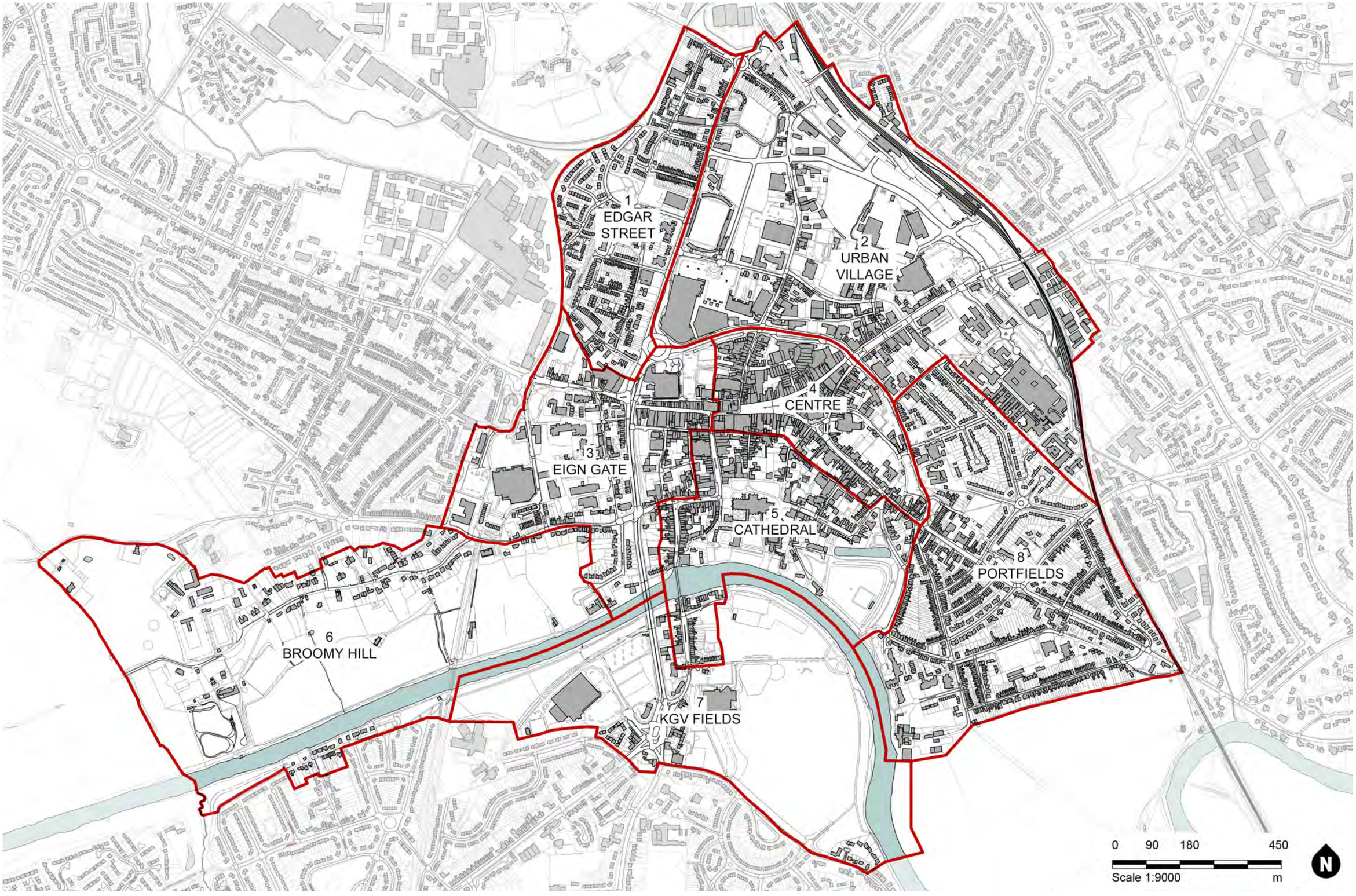
In some cases maps or text have been incorporated but with relevant information up-dated so that, in general this report provides an assessment of the area which is relevant and up to date.

The key documents referred to are as follows (with short designations used in references):

Hereford Rapid Townscape assessments	6 documents all in draft, dated March 2010	HRTA 1 - 6
The Historic Townscape of Central Hereford	Hereford Archaeology Report 266 dated February 2010	HTCH
Edgar Street Design Framework	November 2007	ESDF
Herefordshire Council Town Centres Study update	December 2012	HCTCSU
Archaeological Characterisation of Edgar Street Grid	September 2007	ACESG



Map 1 - Extent of area



Map 2 - illustration of subdivisions

Part A

General Characteristics of City centre

2.0 Topography, watercourse and flood risk

2.1 Landform of the city area

Map 3 (see following page) shows the immediate geographical context of Hereford. The heart of the city is located on a plateau on the north bank of the River Wye, with an area of rising ground to the west and with a crescent shaped ridge of higher ground to the east and north separated from the city by the watercourse of the Yazor Brook.

The southern part of the city is located on the flood plain of the Wye, but with rising ground as one leaves the city in a southerly direction.

The city is located by a crossing point of the river and this is probably its raison d'etre. There is some evidence of a Roman crossing at this point, but certainly from Saxon times on it has been a key bridging point for the river. The next crossings are about four miles upstream at Bridge Sollars and ten miles downstream at Ross on Wye.

Although the underlying geology is Old Red Sandstone of the Devonian period, the surface landforms in the area of the city are formed by glacial deposit and so are variously of till or gravel which has been extracted commercially not far from the city.

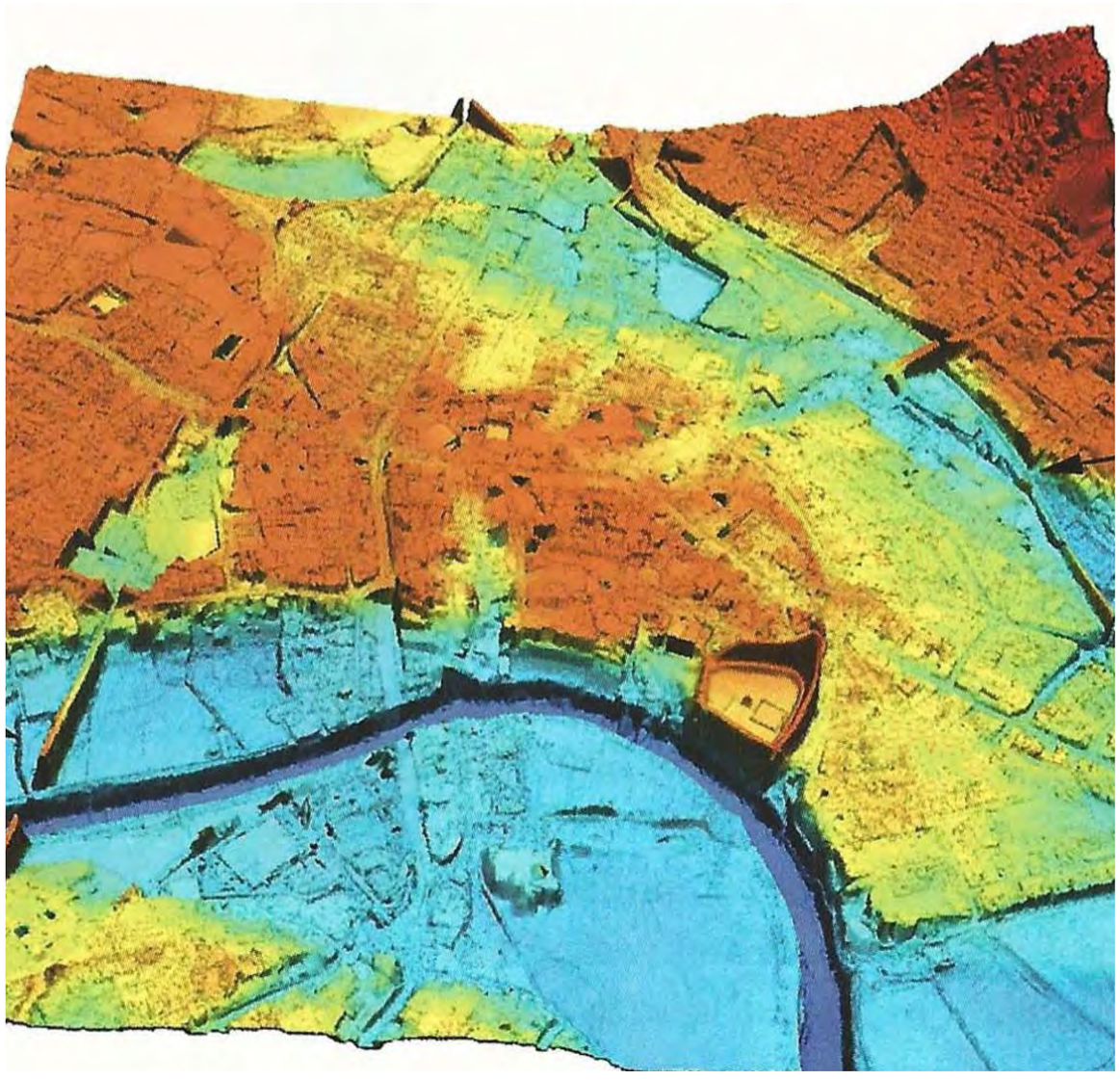


FIG 1: Lidar image of the city with buildings removed

2.2 Watercourses, water supply and land drainage

The principal watercourse in the city and, indeed, in the county is the River Wye, flowing from the Welsh mountains to the sea where it joins the Severn estuary. Hereford is at about its mid-point between source and sea. The water is of generally very high quality as, apart from run-off from agricultural operations there are no potential pollution sources up-stream of the city.

The city obtains its water supply largely from water extracted from the river just upstream of the city and this is cleaned and returned to the river at a sewage plant just to the south east.

A secondary, and much smaller watercourse is that of the Yazor Brook which flows from hills to the north west of the city in a broad valley which is then constrained somewhat is it circuits the city to the north, joining the river Wye immediately to the east of the city centre. This brook has been utilised in the past as a natural sewer and also as a source of water for the city ditch, particularly to the east where it abuts the castle and formed an open moat. It was also dammed at the point near where it joins the main river as there is a sharp fall in its bed and it powered a corn mill.

The town and castle ditches have been filled in and the only open water remaining is a short stretch to the north of the castle known as Castle Pool.

2.3 Flood risk

The watercourses (primarily the River Wye) are shown in the lightest blue; shown on Map 4, Flood risk. Zone 2 (medium blue) indicate areas where there is Medium probability of flooding, rated between 1:100 and 1:1000 annual likelihood (1% - 0.1%). Zone 3 (dark blue) indicates areas where there is a High probability of flooding, rated greater than 1:100 likelihood in any single year. Zone 3 includes land where flood water is designed to be stored during flood events to ameliorate risk downstream

Minor flooding of the Yazor Brook has occurred in the past as result of local heavy rainfall. This has resulted in some damage and disruption of traffic within the city. A recently constructed alleviation scheme consists of a conduit pipe to the west of the city which captures excessive flow and conducts it directly to the river.

Inundation of the land around the River Wye is a fairly regular winter event and, whilst there is relatively little property damage, there has been major disruption of the main north-south traffic flows at the large interchange roundabout in the St. Martins area of the city.

Recent flood alleviation measures have included the construction of raised walls and earth banks in the playing fields area to south of the river.

Location and topography

High

Low

Height above sea level

N

0 90 180 450

Scale 1:9000 m

Map 3 - Topography

Map 4 - Flood risk

3.1 Foundation and Saxon settlement

Hereford traces its origin to a settlement alongside a river crossing. It is possible that there was a Roman river crossing just to the south of the present Bishop's palace – an area known as palace ford. The city was at a confluence of Roman routes running north-south and the following map (Fig 2) shows the known Roman routes as well as some projected, with the developed Saxon and medieval roads superimposed. The focus of the roads on the site of the city gives an indication of its local importance as a river crossing point.

The following text, which gives a narrative of the development of the city to medieval times as currently understood, is taken from HTCH. A diagrammatic map of the city which shows the significant features of this early development is included as Map 5a.

The origins of Hereford remain enigmatic. There is an increasing body of evidence for Roman activity, including buildings and occupation of some kind in the vicinity of the present cathedral.

c.676AD. The probable foundation of the cathedral. The current orthodoxy is that it was founded next to a crossroads at the junction of a north-south route (approximating to Broad Street) heading for the Palace Ford across the Wye, and an east-west route represented by King Street and Castle Street. Contemporaneous burials were taking place on the St Guthlac's site (later Castle Green) to the east.

Late 8th century/early 9th century. Undefended settlement developed in the Victoria Street/ Berrington Street area, possibly within a local planned framework of north-south streets, one excavated west of Berrington Street, the latter implied by excavation to be of the same date.

9th century. The first defended town, its gravel and clay rampart and ditch demonstrated by excavation on the west and north sides but the putative eastern side returning down the eastern side of the Cathedral Close remaining u nproven.

c.900AD. The town was refortified with a turf, clay and timber rampart extended well to the east (proved by excavations at Cantilupe Street) to include the St Guthlac's site. The defences were strengthened by stone walls later in the 10th century.

Late 10th to 11th century. There is evidence from both the west and east sides of the city for the neglect or abandonment of the defences before an episode of refurbishment involving the re-excavation of the ditch to the west and the provision of a timber fence or palisade on the east. These may be associated with the documented refortification of the city in 1055 and the extension is shown in Map 5b. Recent C14 dates from the Bishop's Meadow Row Ditch south of the river suggest it may date from the same episode.

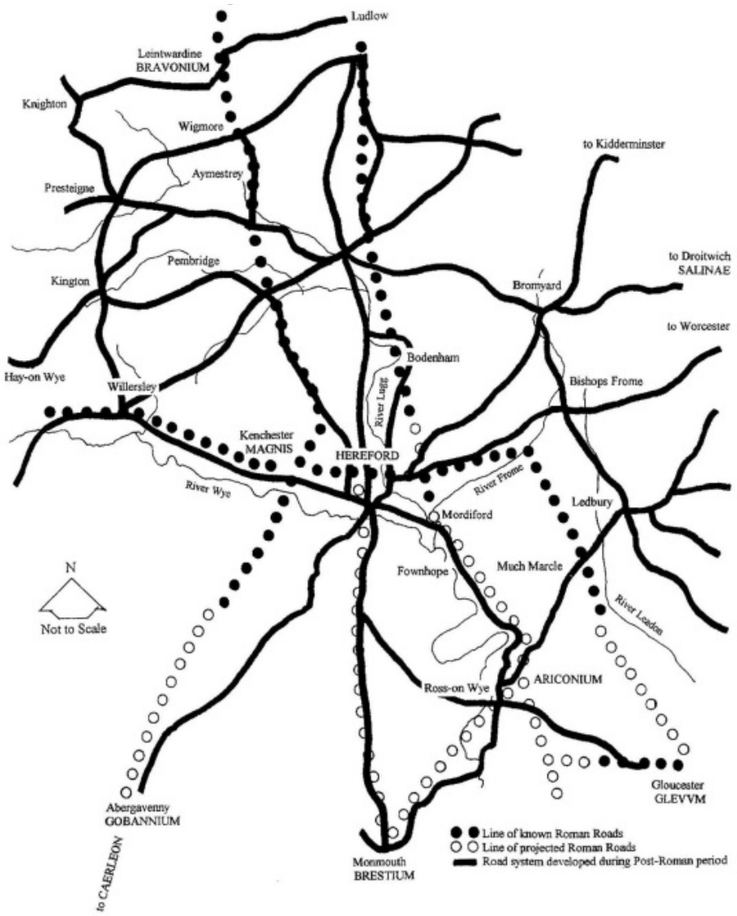
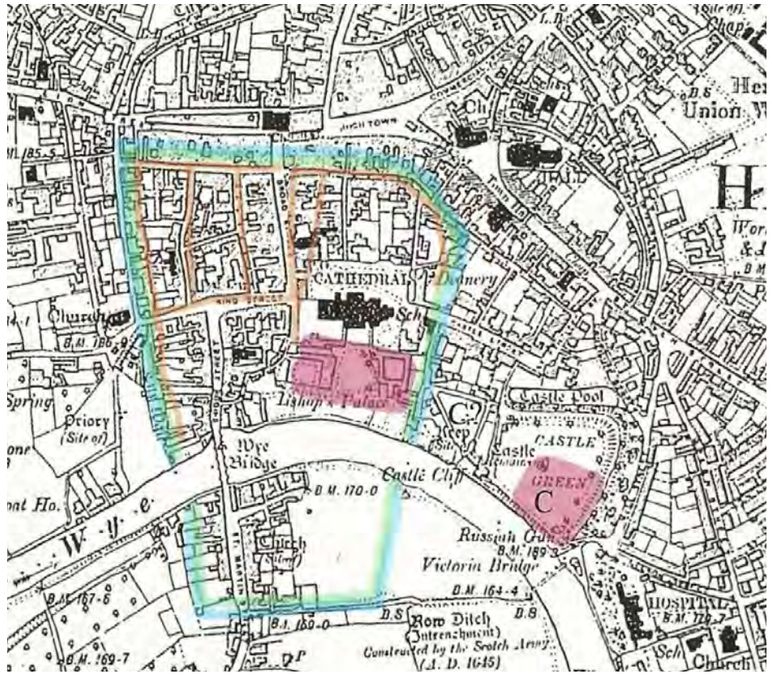
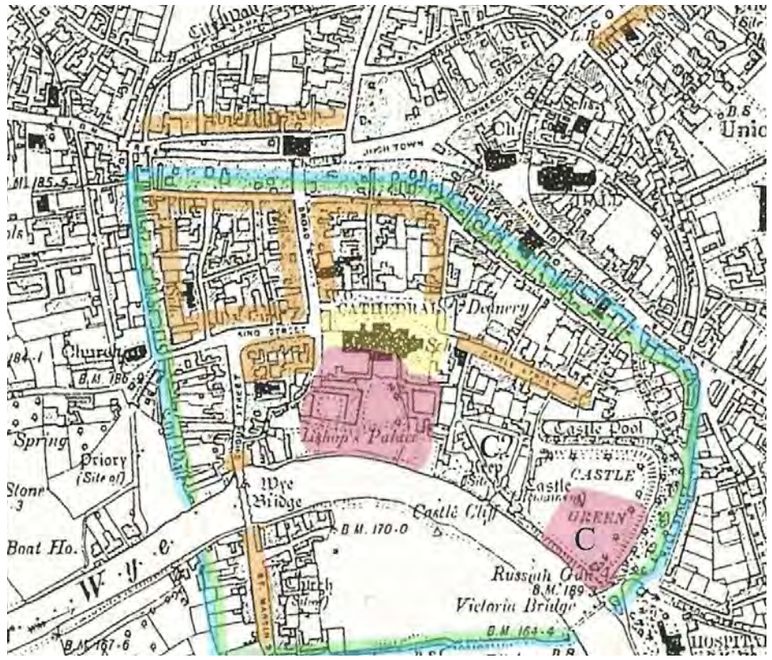


Fig 2 - Local road network focussing on Hereford



Map 5a - The early settlement of Hereford



Map 5b- The extent of the city prior to the Norman Conquest

3.2 Medieval enlargement

The castle was built following the Norman Conquest. From the 1070s a new market place (High Town) was established outside the old defences, and this rapidly became the new commercial core of the city

In the late 12th century, new defences were built to enclose the newly-developed market – the High Town area, re-using the western and eastern sides of the old perimeter but establishing a new line further north. At first of earthwork and timber construction, this line was fortified in stone from the 13th century on. These are the fragmentary city walls visible in Victoria Street, Newmarket Street, Blueschool Street and Bath Street. Fig 3 shows how the city would have looked following this enlargement. It also shows the city's gates and the royal castle to the east of the cathedral.

As the city was enlarged and enclosed a series of medieval gates was constructed known (in clockwise sequence from the south) as St. Martin's Gate (or Bridge Gate), Friar's Gate, Eign Gate, Widemarsh Gate, Bye Street Gate and St. Owen's Gate.

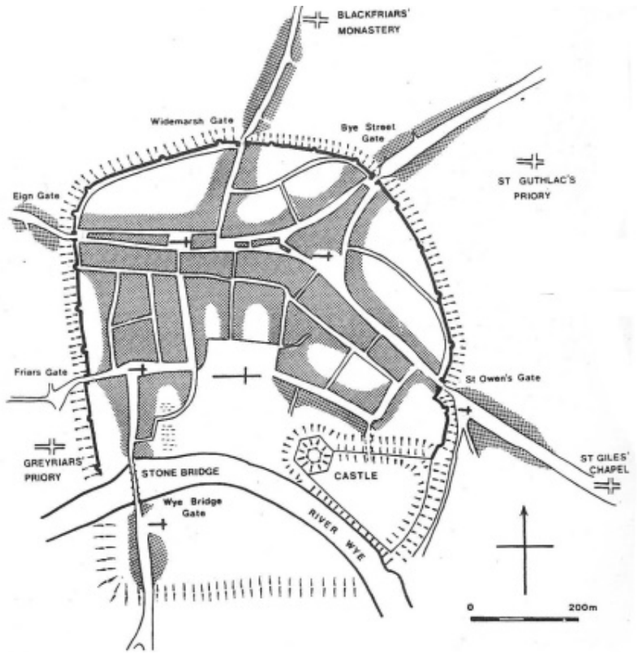


Fig 3 - Hereford in the early 13th Century

Fig 4 - A view of how Hereford casle may have looked (from the north)

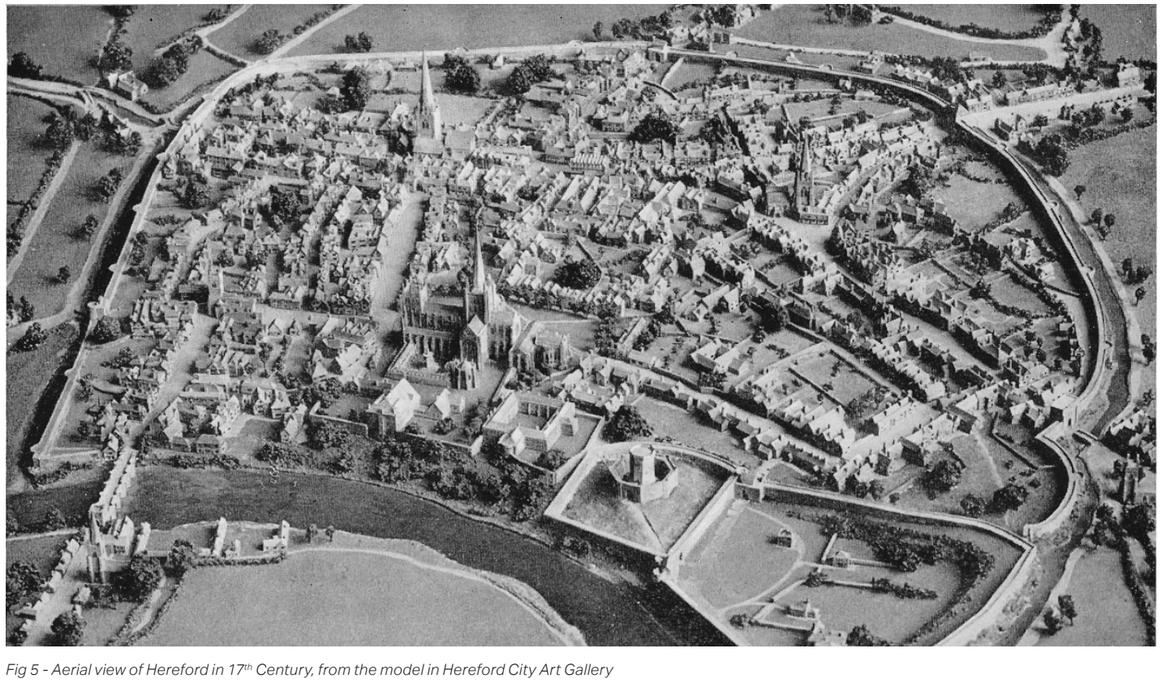


Fig 5 - Aerial view of Hereford in 17th Century, from the model in Hereford City Art Gallery

3.3 Early suburban development

As with many medieval walled cities there was distinct advantage in retaining building development within the walls, both (in the earlier periods) for reasons of security and defence, but also due to the legal freedoms which pertained within the walls. Hence sub-urban development (outside the walls) remained limited until such time as pressures for expansion grew sufficiently strong.

Map 6 (Speed's map of 1610) is the first significant map of the historic city and shows the main named streets and gates as well as a representation of the beginnings of sub-urban development. This is mostly set out as lines of property (early ribbon development) alongside the approach roads to the city. It also shows the two monastic settlements – White Friars to the west and Black Friars to the north.

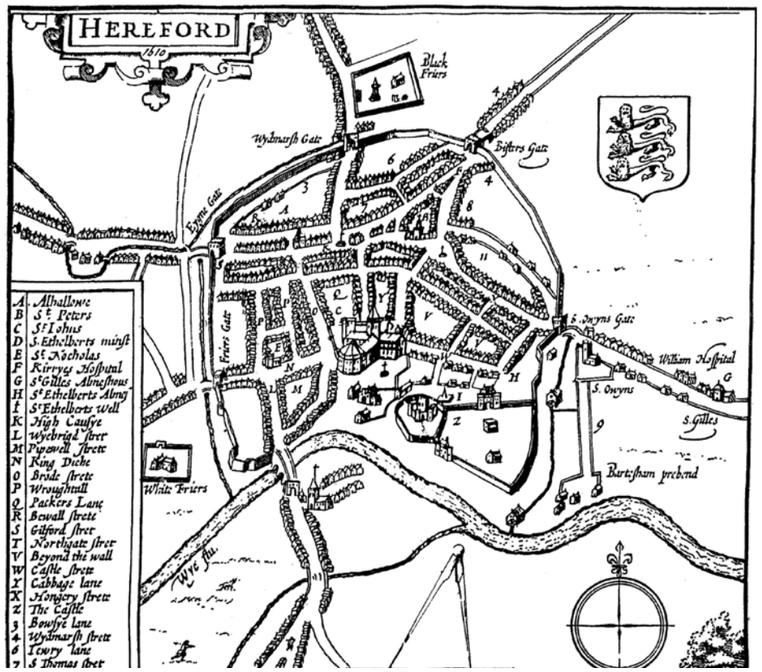
3.4 Eighteenth century Hereford

Hereford still relied on its network of local roads and lanes for transportation; however the condition of many of these roads was dire. The heavy Herefordshire clay, with a lack of sound rock strata beneath meant that in the winter roads were quagmires and in the summer heavily rutted dust tracks. In 1726 the city council petitioned parliament to bring in a bill for the repair of highways, their wish being fulfilled by the creation of a turnpike trust controlling the main thoroughfares from Gloucester and through to South Wales. Three years later the Hereford Trust was established to improve the main routes into the city and a ring of toll gates was established around the city.

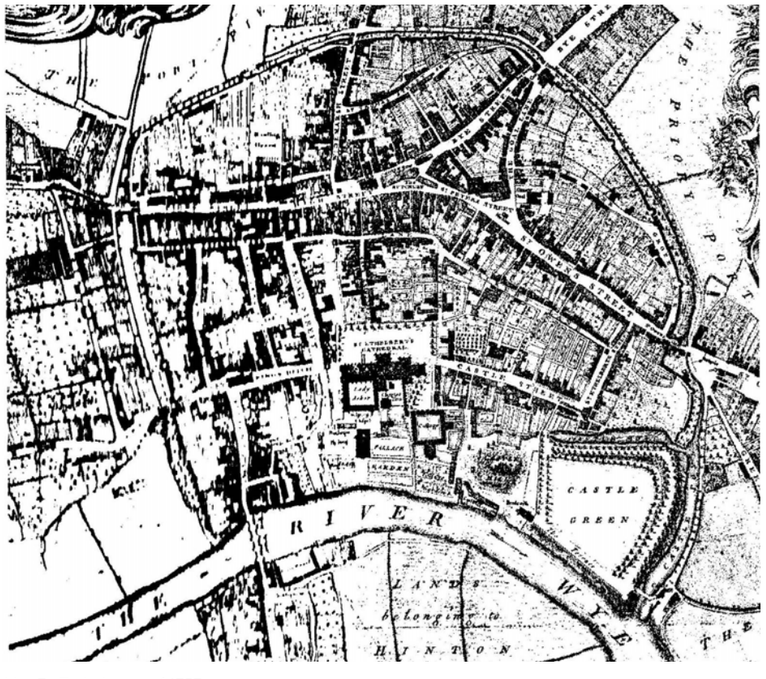
It is fortunate that there exists a very detailed plan of the city from the mid-18thC that by Isaac Taylor of 1757, the central portion of which is reproduced as Map 7. This map shows a city whose layout has changed hardly at all since the Speed map. Important details shown on the map are the intact city walls and gates, the surviving castle mound, the medieval bridge and the relative density of building around the area now known as High Town with its market hall and Butcher's Row. The Castle Green is shown laid out as a formal pleasure grounds with tree lined walks and a viewing terrace overlooking the river. The beginnings of change are shown by the appearance of a Coal Wharf on the south bank of the Wye, whereby coal from the Forest of Dean could be offloaded from barges and distributed for domestic heating instead of wood.

The River Wye had been used since medieval times for transporting materials, chiefly stone, timber and grain. Indeed the stone for the construction of the cathedral had been transported in this way from quarries in the south of the cou nty during the medieval period. However the river has always been very unreliable and unpredictable for water transport. It consists of alternating deeps and shallows, through which boats had to be hauled unless the river was in flood. In 1695 the second Rivers Wye and Lugg Navigation Act aimed to create a navigable Wye, which had not been achieved under the first Act of 1662. Financing was transferred to the county, the 'mills with their weirs and fishing weirs were to be removed and the shallow places deepened' and provision was made 'for the building of warehouses or storehouses on the site of Hereford Castle'. Between 1696 and 1700 great improvements were made and river trade began in earnest, with a small boat-building industry on the river bank. As well as coal the main traffic up-river was the relatively new trade in bricks for construction, while exports included timber, hop-poles, bark, lime, cider and grain. Horse-drawn barges were introduced in 1811 following the creation of a tow-path.

Coal remained a major import and the ability to import South Wales coal into the city was greatly facilitated by the completion of a long-planned horse-drawn tramway in 1829, with its terminus adjacent to the river bridge (see Fig 7).



Map 6 - Speed's map of 1610



Map 7 - Taylor's map of 1757

Fig 6 - Widemarsh toll gate in about 1860

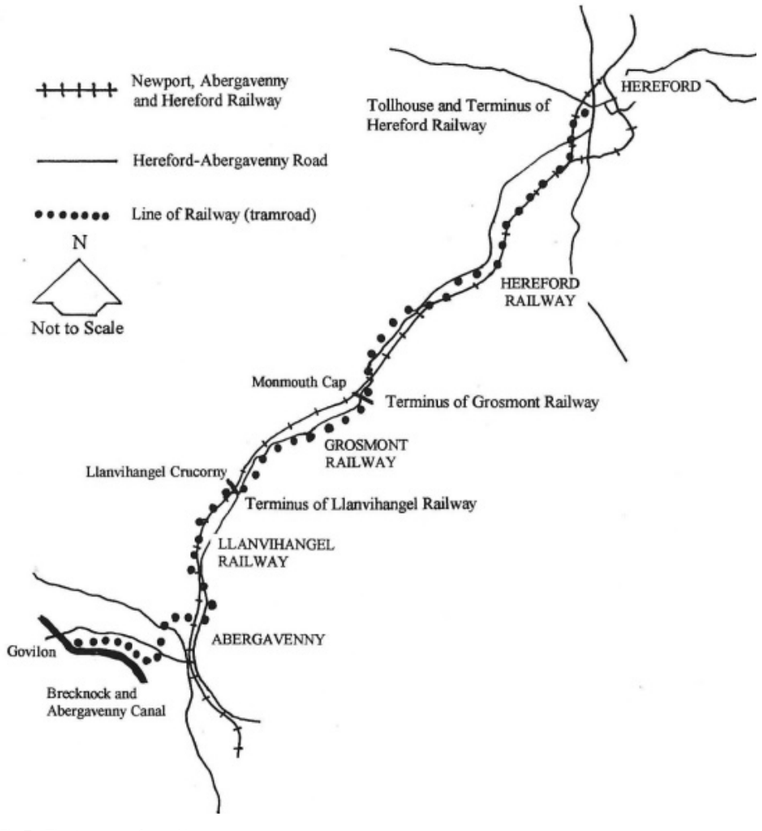


Fig 7 - The tramway from Abergaven

The tramway (shown as a dotted line on the above map) connected the Abergavenny basin of the Brecknock and Abergavenny Canal to the coal yard on the south bank of the Wye at Hereford. It ran close to the existing turnpike road and the route was subsequently taken over by the Newport, Abergavenny and Hereford Railway.

The 18thC saw a great change in the visual character of the city, with the beginning of a great re-building (or in many cases re-fronting) of houses in brick. Not only was it more fire-proof, though Hereford was spared any major fires, but it also provided the medium for the expression of the newly-fashionable classical architecture. A number of grander Georgian houses in the desirable St. Owen's Street remain, as well as the Mansion House in Widemarsh Street. But it is the rather more ubiquitous terrace houses, of three storeys in Castle Street and the city centre and of two-storeys elsewhere which are key contributors to Hereford's late Georgian character.

3.5 Arrival of the canal and railway

The lack of good transport connections has been (and probably remains) a brake on the economic development of Hereford city. Herefordshire red clay soils are notoriously troublesome as the basis of roads which frequently descended into quagmires, so water was always preferred for bulk transport but, as discussed, the river Wye was not always co-operative.

Although distant from the main canal network of West Midlands, a canal was planned and constructed from the late 18thC onward. It provided a parallel route to the river Wye, connecting to the Severn south of Gloucester and taking a circuitous route eventually arriving at a canal wharf to the north east of the city centre in 1845. Imported Scandinavian timber was one of the main commodities transported by water and it is no accident that the city's largest remaining builders' merchants are still located in Canal Yard. However the construction of the canal was very late in the 'canal age' and the railways were already superseding canals in many parts of the country. The canal therefore was not a great commercial success and was superseded by the railway which arrived at Hereford within a few years of the canal's completion.

The arrival of the railway in Hereford is a complex story involving a number of railway companies, operating on different rail gauges and approaching the city from different directions. Commercially there was no overwhelming incentive for rail companies to serve the city as there was no great volume of exports or imports, nor was there a large passenger traffic potential. It is said that Hereford was the last major town of comparable size in England to be connected to the railway network. First initiatives to establish a rail connection were made in 1836 with a proposal to connect to Gloucester, running near to the canal route. Debates as it the merits of various routes went on through into the 1840's. Alternative proposals emerged, using either a route designed by Brunel under the auspices of the GWR or a different route under a locally run private rail company emerged. However such was the complexity of the processing of bills through parliament – a national phenomenon – that by 1844 four further schemes were tabled. It was not until 1850 that the first sod of the Shrewsbury and Hereford railway was cut near Barr's Court, the route finally opening on 6th December 1853. The various railway companies – the GWR, the Newport Abergavenny and Hereford, the Shrewsbury and Hereford, the Worcester and Hereford and the Brecon and Hereford, each sponsoring lines radiating out of Hereford had for many years failed to agree how to achieve connections between their systems and it wasn't until the 1890s that the railways of the city finally achieved a settled working layout.

As each company had its own route into the city, so each wanted its own station and so, at one stage, the city had five railway stations, although only two – Barton and Barr's Court survived into the 20th century.

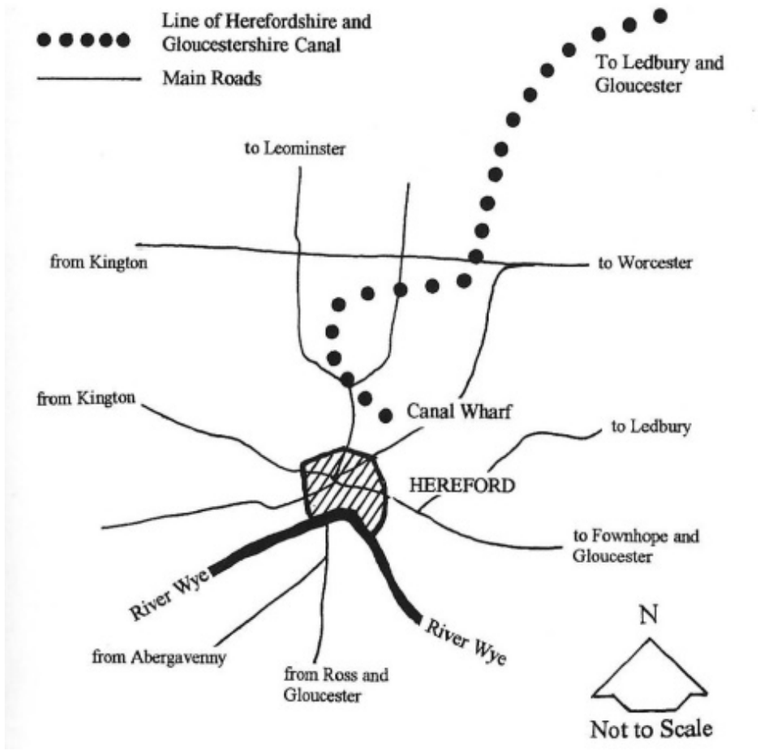


Fig 8 - Map showing route of canal

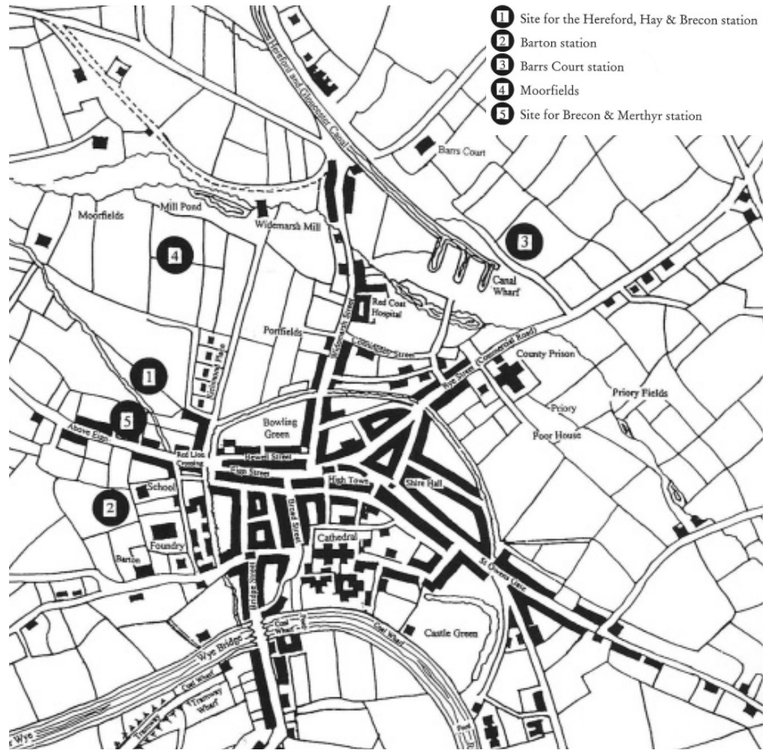


Fig 9 - Diagram showing the location of the rail company's stations

Fig 10 - Market Hall - late 16thC heavily altered in 1770 and demolished 1861

3.6 Victorian modernisation

In common with many medieval cities, the centre of Hereford had become a noxious, congested and generally insanitary place by the middle of the 19thC. In 1853 the town council commissioned an engineer to survey the city and draw up plans for a cemetery, water works and a drainage system. The removal of the cattle market from the city centre was also planned. Livestock markets have always formed an essential part of Hereford's economy and whereas stock trading used to take place in the streets, in 1855 an independent livestock market was established to the north of the city on land between the newly laid out Edgar Street and Blackfriar's Street, thus removing the congestion of animals, as well as their smell away from the city streets. All this planning formed the basis of the 1854 Hereford Improvement Act. Tenders for the work were awarded in April 1855, the contract being carried out by Mr William Moxon of Dover who completed the work with the exception of the cemetery in October 1856. The water works were subsequently modified and expanded.

Apart from these works, street were widened, the medieval gates demolished and High Town paved, thus creating a more healthy and airy environment within the city. These, along with other social and environmental improvement measures transformed the character of the city centre more radically than any change which has happened since, though to a degree it paved the way for later improvements.

There is no doubt that one of the great losses of this effort was the grand timber framed medieval market hall which stood in High Town and whose location is marked in the street paving. Figure 10 shows the late Medieval Market Hall prior to 'modernisation'.

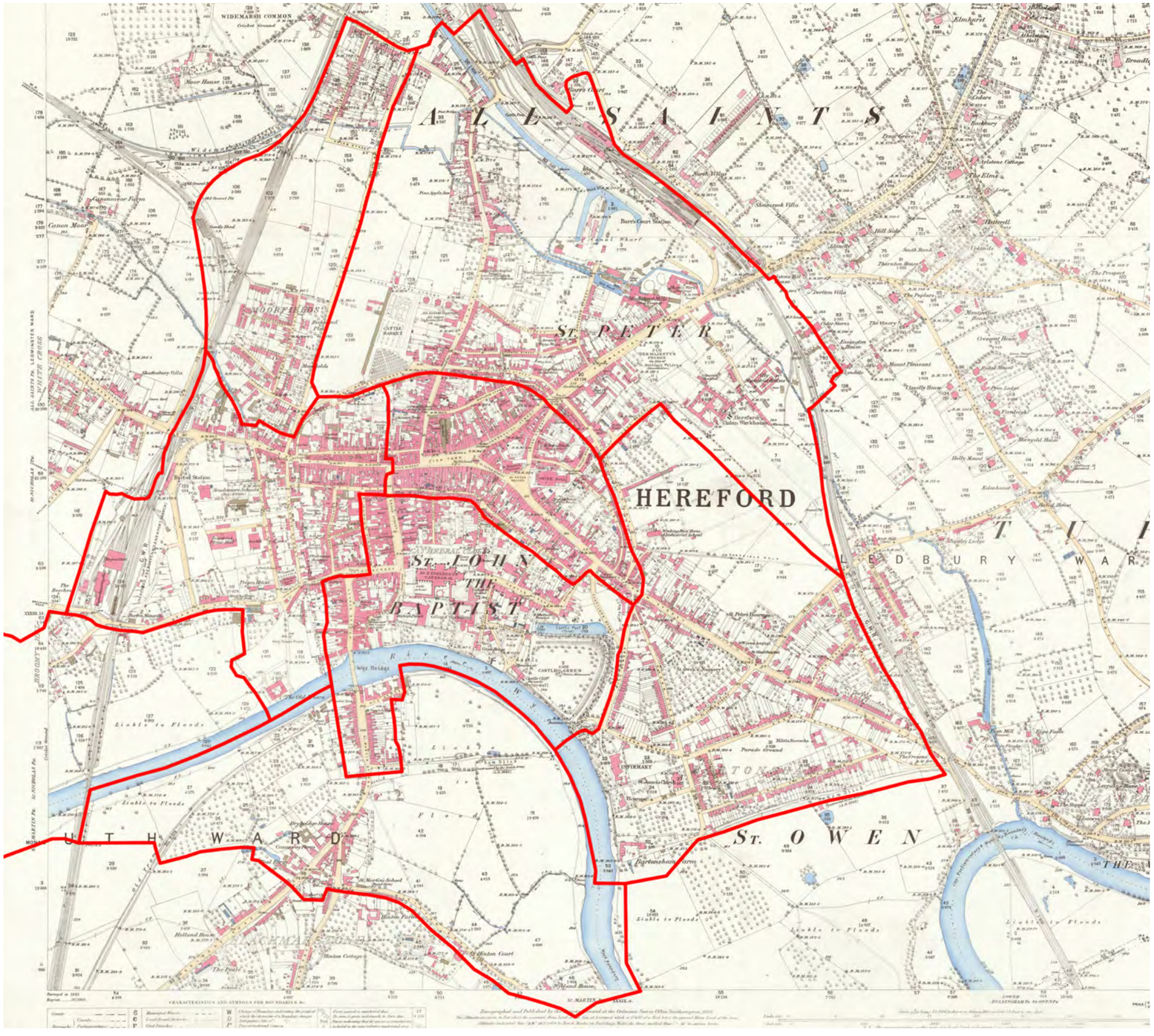
Map 8 (25" 1888) shows the combined effect of the arrival of the canal and railways along with the Victorian modernisation on the appearance of the city centre.

3.7 The arrival of industry

Located as it is, fairly distant from major population centres and potential markets, and with its own transportation difficulties, Hereford never experienced any major industrialisation during the 19thC. Such industries as existed were founded on local resources – bricks and tiles using local clay, cider using locally grown apples, brewing from locally sourced grain and small scale industries associated with animal husbandry – butchery, tanners etc.

A major boost to industry was provided by the establishment of a munitions factory to the south of the city during WW1. This was a great source of local employment and, in due course spawned supporting industries and enterprises. The production of munitions was resumed on the site for WW2 and, more recently, with the clearance of the site it has been a location for the establishment of a business and industrial park.

Also in consequence of WW2, Hereford found itself the location of a major industrial enterprise precisely because of its position away from main industrial centres which were the focus of enemy attack. The company of Henry Wiggin, later to become part of the International Company of Canada, established a main production facility on the north edge of the city for the manufacture of nickel alloys, much used in jet engines. At its peak the factory employed about 3,500 people.



Map 8 - 1st Edition 25" map 1888

3.8 New residential areas

As Hereford experienced only very limited expansion of trade and enterprise during the Industrial Revolution, there was no great pressure to increase housing provision. In the Georgian period the city's housing need was met by residential development within the city walls and also, to a limited degree in the suburb of St Martin's to the south and along Edgar Street to the North West.

The only planned Victorian housing developments of any scale, and that modest, are the area known as Portfields, immediately to the east of the city centre, on Barrs Court Road adjacent to the railway station, at Moorfields just to the north west of the city and on land immediately to the west of the Barton station site around Stanhope Street and Ryelands Street. These developments are shown in their early stages of growth on Map 8. These developments generally consist of a series of streets of two-storey tightly packed brick terraced houses set either side rather narrow streets. These houses accommodated those employed on the railways, in the growing service sector and in the hospitals and civic offices. Being late 19thC, although rather dense, the houses are of good construction quality and now provide desirable homes for smaller families or starters.

For the genteel, houses were built on the higher ground to the north and north east of the city, around Aylestone Hill and to the west of the city centre in the area known as Broomy Hill and alongside the road leading west to Whitecross. Houses in these locations had the benefit of being away from the busyness of the city and smoke of the railway and those on higher ground had the benefit of good distant views, across the river Wye and its valley and for some, as far as the Welsh hills. Map 9, the 2nd edition 25" to the mile shows the extent of the city in 1929.

In 1909 Hereford City Council constructed a small estate on the principles of the Garden City movement on land just to the north of the main railway station. 85 houses were built alongside tree-lined avenues and most of the houses were provided with indoor bathrooms, which was, for then quite ground-breaking. Figures 11 and 12 show the 'Garden City' houses. Small numbers of houses were built in other areas prior to WW1, but immediately after there was an expansion of social housing provided by the city council when about 550 houses were built in different locations close to the city, including those at Portfields, part of this study area.

Immediately post WW2 however there was a rapid expansion of housing provision around the city on most sides, except for the flood plain area of the river, when the total number of new homes provided was bout 1800. Large numbers of Local Authority houses were built on the estate known as the College on higher ground to the north of the city, with privately developed estates to the north and east. There was a considerable expansion of housing to the west of the city in the area known as Whitecross, while to the south there was massive growth on open, rising ground south of the flood plain area.

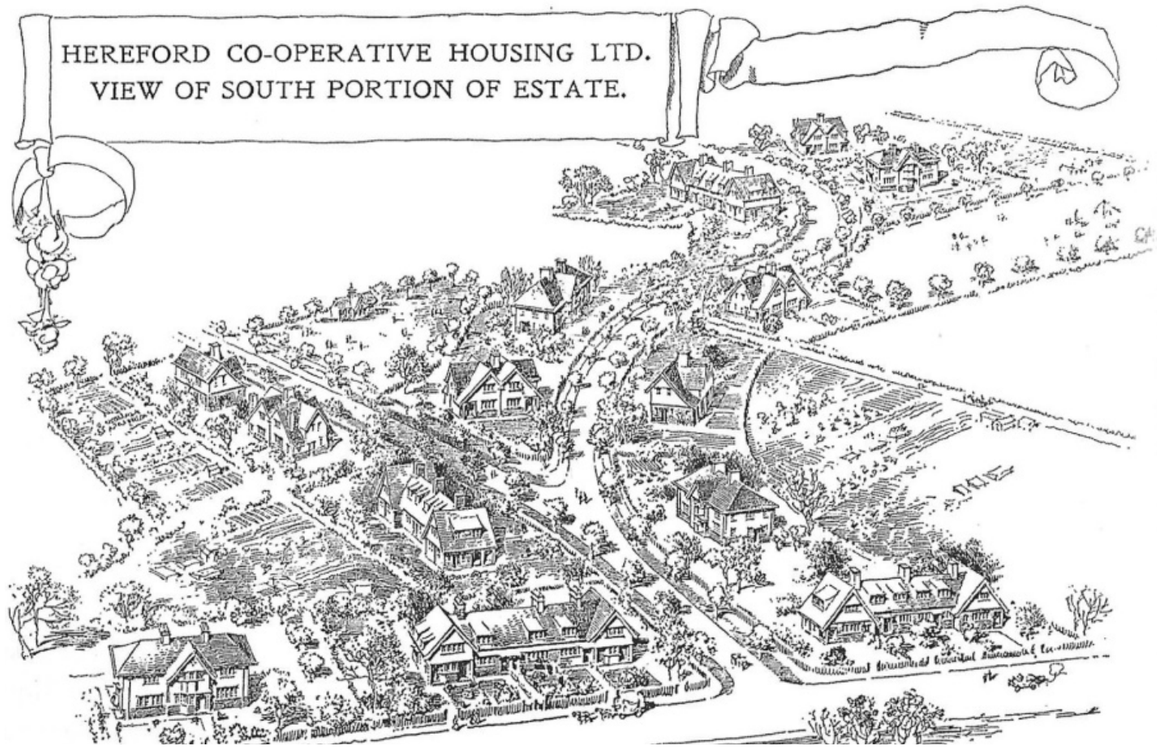


Fig 11- A drawing promoting the Garden City suburb before the First World War

Fig 12- Housing in the Garden City suburb (left) and Portfields (right)

3.9 The Problems of traffic

The rapid expansion of the population, combined with the considerable increase in car ownership and use inevitably led to problems of traffic congestion in and around the city. The most pressing problems were in the city centre, where large numbers of cars, buses and commercial vehicles were using streets largely unchanged in form since the medieval period. The experience for both motorists and pedestrians alike was unpleasant, and in some places to a degree dangerous and it was perceived that the traffic situation was impacting on the retail trade. The medieval Wye Bridge provided a major bottle-neck. In 1938 the number of vehicles using the bridge daily was almost 5,500, by 1954 the number had risen to almost 9,500 and in 1965 more than 24,000 vehicles were using the bridge daily.

An enlightened city engineer took the matter in hand and a significant scheme of alterations to streets, as well as the creation of new, was put in hand. Through traffic was largely banned from the city centre, with service vehicles subjected to time limits or restricted to certain less busy trading streets. At the same time, the wide area of low quality property outside the city wall was cleared to make an inner ring road. Hereford lies on the A49 north-south trunk route and the significant volumes of traffic which this route carries have had to be accommodated within the road system. As part of the improvements the trunk route was taken out of the city centre, where it passed through the medieval core and over the medieval bridge, by providing a by-pass immediately to the west. Opportunity was taken at that time to make the remains of the city walls more visible, helping to give a visible rationale for the route. Work started on the new bridge in 1964, with the bridge opening in 1967 and the whole new road system was completed by 1969

The removal of the traffic from the centre of the city and the consequent pedestrianisation of much of High Town effected a major improvement in the environment of the city and encouraged traders to modernise or redevelop premises. The major new stores from this period were Marks and Spencer in High Town, replacing the former and much-lamented Greenlands and Woolworths in Eign Gate. The local firm of Franklin and Barnes built a new store at the junction of the ring road with Commercial Road which was considered (locally) the height of elegance. This building now looks somewhat forlorn and unloved and awaits further attention.

3.10 The present day

In moving from the 1960s to 2018 among the most significant changes to the fabric of the city have been the removal of the north-south railway link to the west of the city and the development of large scale supermarkets on sites surrounding the city centre.

Tesco was the first supermarket in the city, using a site in Commercial Street, but with the need to expand and the trend to leave the city centre, the company acquired the former Bewell Street brewery site and so developed on the edge of the city centre with good access from the new inner ring road.

In the 1980s a redevelopment of the area between High Town and the inner ring road, known as Maylord Orchards was carried out. Although adding usefully to the retail area of the city the development has had mixed fortunes, particularly having lost its anchor store.

The removal of the railway line with Barton station and all the associated sidings and good yards resulted in the creation of extensive 'brownfield' sites as they are now known. The old Barton station site and adjoining land became the location of the city's Sainsburys store, whilst the area to the north of Eign Street has been developed as housing association and private housing, adding considerably to the city's housing stock.

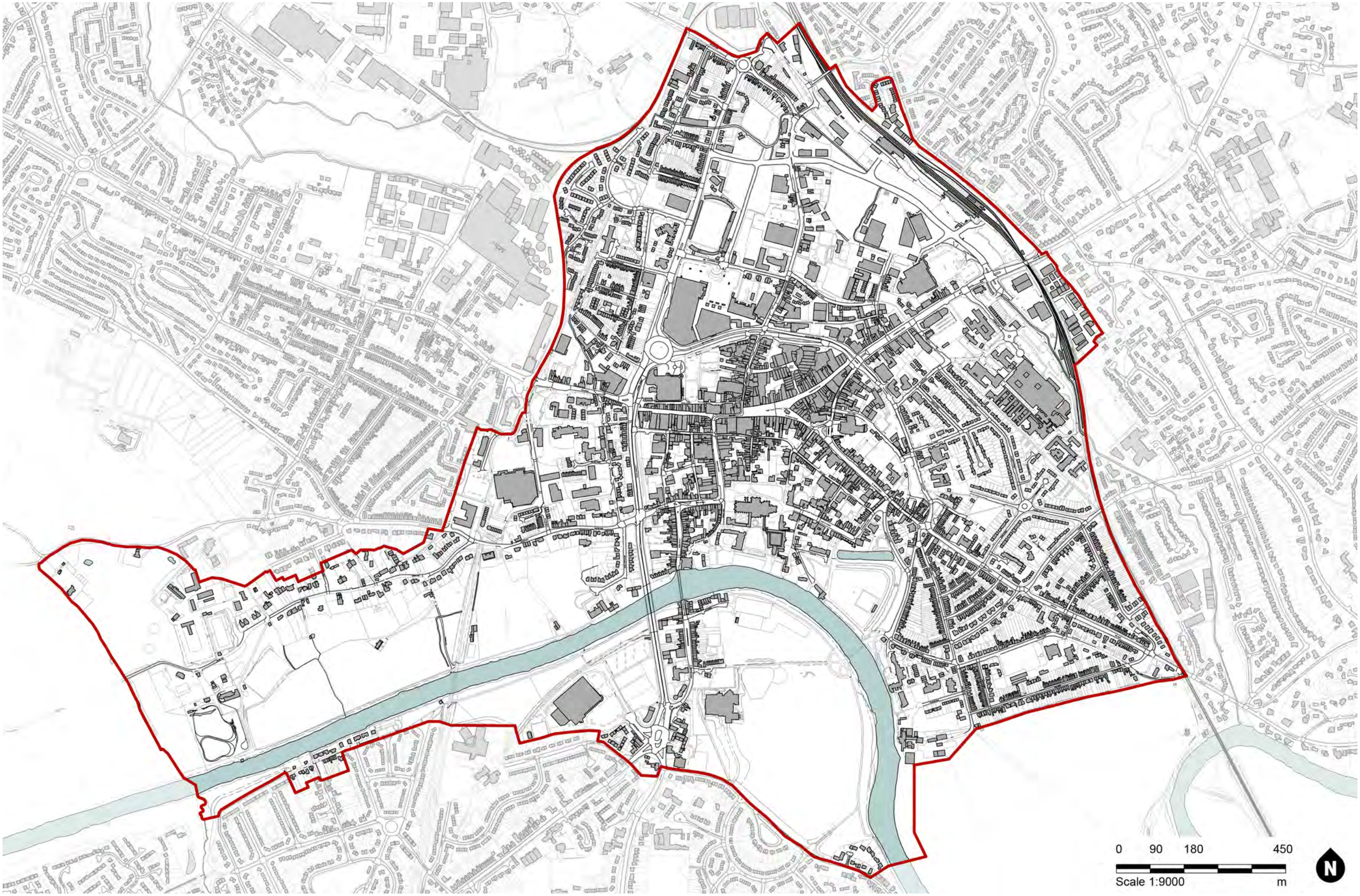
As each major route into the city became the location and access point for a supermarket so Morrisons located their store on the Commercial Road approach to the city and, most recently Asda located just south of the river bridge.

As in many city centres, the creation of large supermarkets meant that there remained almost no city centre food shops until M&S ventured into that market.

The most recent significant development in the centre of the city has been the removal of the livestock market to an 'out of city' site and the redevelopment of its site by British Land into a development known as the Old Market. With a Waitrose as an anchor store and with other significant brands this appears to have been a successful enterprise and, contrary to the much expressed local opinion, does seem to be having an overspill in lifting retail trade in the city centre also. Inner Widemarsh Street the street which links the Old Market to High Town has had its fortunes transformed.

Map 10 is a section of the current OS map for the city and shows its current configuration.

Map 9 - 2nd Edition 25" map 1929



Map 10 - Extent of area

4.0 Pattern of existing built form

4.1 Density and grain (Map 11)

The map (map 11) which accompanies this section shows the footprint of buildings in and around the city centre shown in black, whilst open space, which could be roads, parking, service areas or green space, is left white. This representation of the built form helps to understand density – the proportion of built up land, as well as grain – the patterns of development.

The highest proportion of black on the map is concentrated on three main areas – the city centre (within the walls, but particularly around High Town), an area to the east where the new hospital building is prominent and, significantly, an area to the North West which is a large industrial section of the city.

Outside these areas the density falls off rapidly to a rather low level and extensive type of development which is suburban housing running along the frontages of the grid of streets.

The area of lowest density (and it is very low) is the area around the river and along the line of the railway and an area to the north. These areas match closely the areas of flooding risk shown on Map 4.

Looking more closely at the area within the city walls there are two areas where density is low (apart from the cathedral – Castle Green area) and these are the Tesco car park and the large area of surface car parking between Bath Street and Gaol Street.

The grain of the city is the pattern which the development makes. Again, there is significant variety of grain. A telling feature is the way the grain appears just to the south of the city centre. Characteristically it shows city blocks with buildings all around the street frontages and with open spaces in the middle. This is very typical of cities, where the land value is in the frontage. However the pattern breaks down in many areas where consistency of this pattern would be expected. The area west of Broad Street is fairly central and yet the courtyard pattern is broken up. Similarly, in the area north east of St. Owen's Street but within the city walls the pattern dies away.

The grain to the east of the city centre is of two main types representing the Victorian and early 20thC housing developments. Within these two types there is remarkable consistency.

To the north of the centre it is possible to trace the line of Widemarsh Street, but whereas the north and south ends of the street have a consistency of development pattern, in the centre section the pattern breaks down.

In planning new development and infill, the predominant density and grain of the area as a whole provide useful starting points.

4.2 Building heights (Map 12)

The plotting of building heights within an exercise conducted at this scale and within the overall briefing context cannot be an exact science. The data recorded on this map has been taken from direct observation, from photographs and from on-line visual sources. However, even though it is based on much careful estimation, rather than exact measurement, the information does provide (literally) an extra dimension to the understanding of the built fabric of the city. It must also be noted that the heights are those of the structures themselves and do not take account of the base floor level of each, so it is not an absolute height. This is significant in the Broomy Hill area, where the land is higher and immediately south of the river where the land is lower than the average level of the city. See the landform map for clarification on this point.

What the data does reveal is that the city centre is predominantly of three-storey structures (or equivalent height) surrounded by buildings which are generally of two storeys in height.

Traditionally building height has been a reflection of land value and commercial pressure, though modified by the limits of building technology in constructing tall buildings. The generally modest height of Hereford's buildings reflects the interpretation that the city had never experienced the levels of commercial activity found in some other cities, particularly those where there was a greater level of industry or financial enterprise.

The few buildings of four and five storeys are mostly of recent date and are generally located where they do not affect views of the city's landmark buildings.

The landmark buildings referred to are those marked in red and are generally those with a tall tower or spire. They include the main city churches and cathedral and the Broomy Hill water tower. In addition the Butter Market tower and the Town Hall break the skyline from a number of directions.

In forward planning it would be desirable to secure the views of these landmark buildings when seen from key viewpoints outside the city. See Section 6, the city in view.

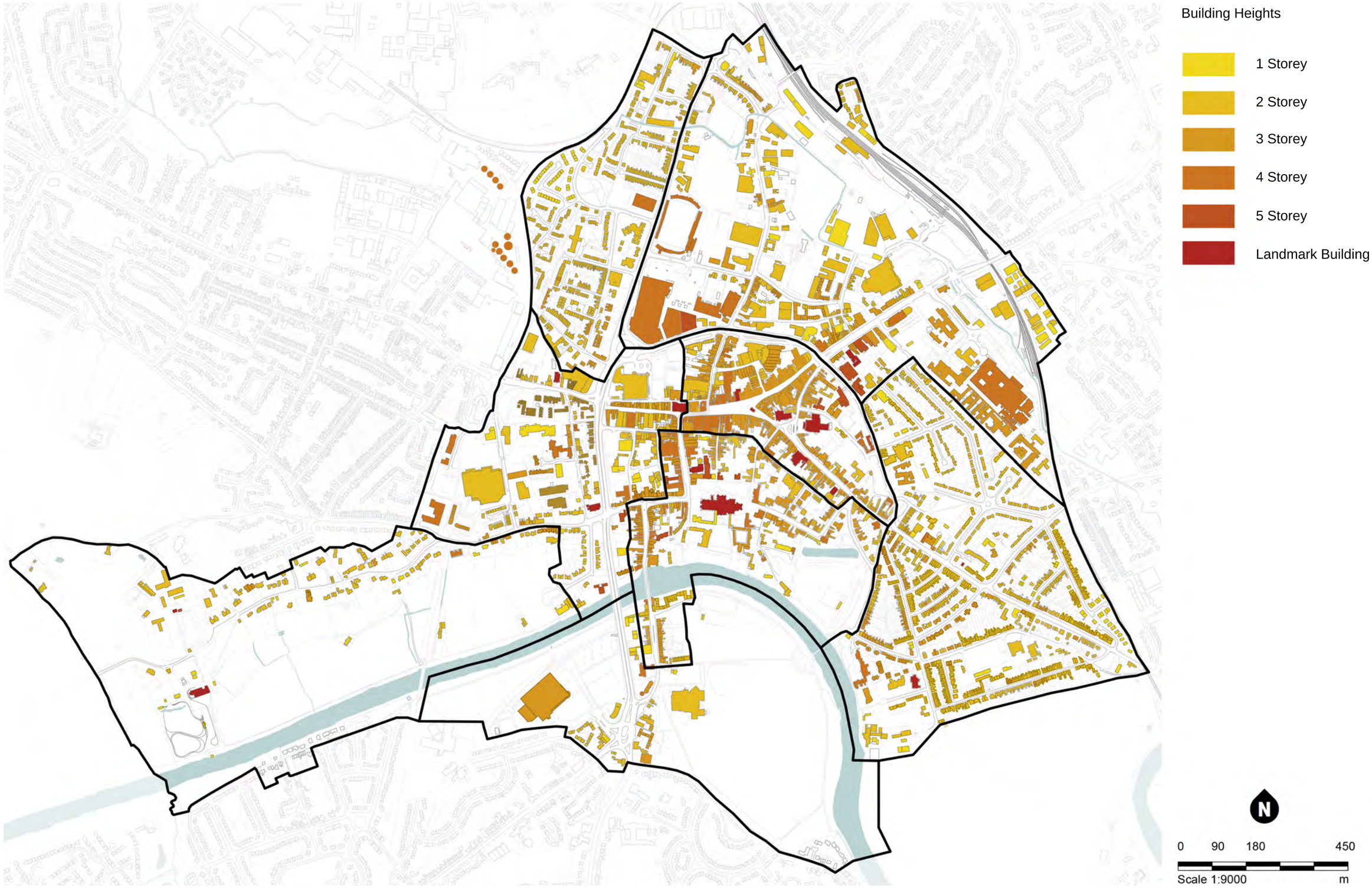
4.3 Green spaces (Map 13)

The Green spaces map reveals that, although the centre of the city is dense with buildings, there is a surprising amount of green space within easy reach of the centre. Comparison of this map with the flood risk map shows a strong coincidence of the dark blue on the former map with the green on this, thus revealing the reason why these green areas remaining undeveloped.

The open spaces are a real asset to the city and many are connected via footpaths and cycle routes creating a recreational network. Enhancement of these routes and creating additions to them would enhance the recreational value of the spaces and also increase the interconnections between parts of the city and help reduce congestion, if only to a marginal degree.

By their very nature it is unlikely that the land liable to flooding will be developed and hence 'lost' as green space, whereas more active measure and policies are needed to safeguard the open spaces within the more densely developed parts of Hereford. Opportunities to create, or designate more green space should be sought, though by the nature of things within the city they are more likely to be 'pocket park' spaces rather than any large scale green areas.

Map 11 - Density and Grain



Map 12 - Building heights

Map 13 - Green Spaces

5.0 Circulation, traffic and communications

5.1 Pedestrian and cycle routes (see Map 14)

This map is based on one produced by Herefordshire Council as an aid to residents and visitors.

Much of the heart of the city has been formally pedestrianised (which in effect means that service vehicles can have access but during limited hours) or has a predominantly pedestrian use. This means that much of it has a good 'feel' and that walkers and shoppers can generally move around without too much concern for the presence of vehicles. One of the consequences is however that there are a number of streets which have much of the character of pedestrian streets, being narrow and with restricted visibility, yet are service streets or are used for access from one side of the city to another. West Street – East Street is the key instance of this, but to a lesser extent Bewell Street and also Union Street fall into this category. It would be helpful to the historic character of this city, to pedestrians and to the overall environment if this anomalous situation could be resolved.

The map itself shows another anomalous feature. It shows a good network of pedestrian and / or cycle routes outside the inner ring road and a network of footpaths in the city centre but there are almost no easy connections between the two networks. It would be desirable to build safe links across the ring road to make the city more available for cyclists and pedestrians.

The map also shows a riverside route on the south bank, but nothing on the north side. There is a riverside path west of the rowing club and east of the former General Hospital site but these are not joined. It would be beneficial to make this connection with a well-constructed riverside walkway, though this would be something of an engineering challenge.

5.2 Vehicular traffic (see Map 15)

The impact of vehicular traffic on the city is considerable and this map helps to illustrate some of the particular problems. It is a snapshot in time and is based on the perceptions of the team involved in the production of this report. It is not based on any scientific analysis or traffic count system. However human perception is important as a gauge as, in the case of traffic it is on the perceptions of speed, safety, noise and pollution that people make their judgements. Such judgements may include (among many other decisions) choice of transport, choice of route as a pedestrian, where to shop, desirability of property (or otherwise),

The principal traffic routes through and around the city are indicated. The tone used indicates perceptions of congestion and traffic flow. Where flows are greater and/ or there is greater traffic congestion a stronger red colour is used. In areas where the flow is lower and generally more free, green tones are used.

Parts of the city are perceived to be particularly noisy due to traffic. This is partly to do with volume and the way traffic moves with stopping and starting at junctions giving rise to more noise. It is also affected by the containment of streets, where the presence of taller buildings causes reverberation effects. Noisy areas are identified on the map.

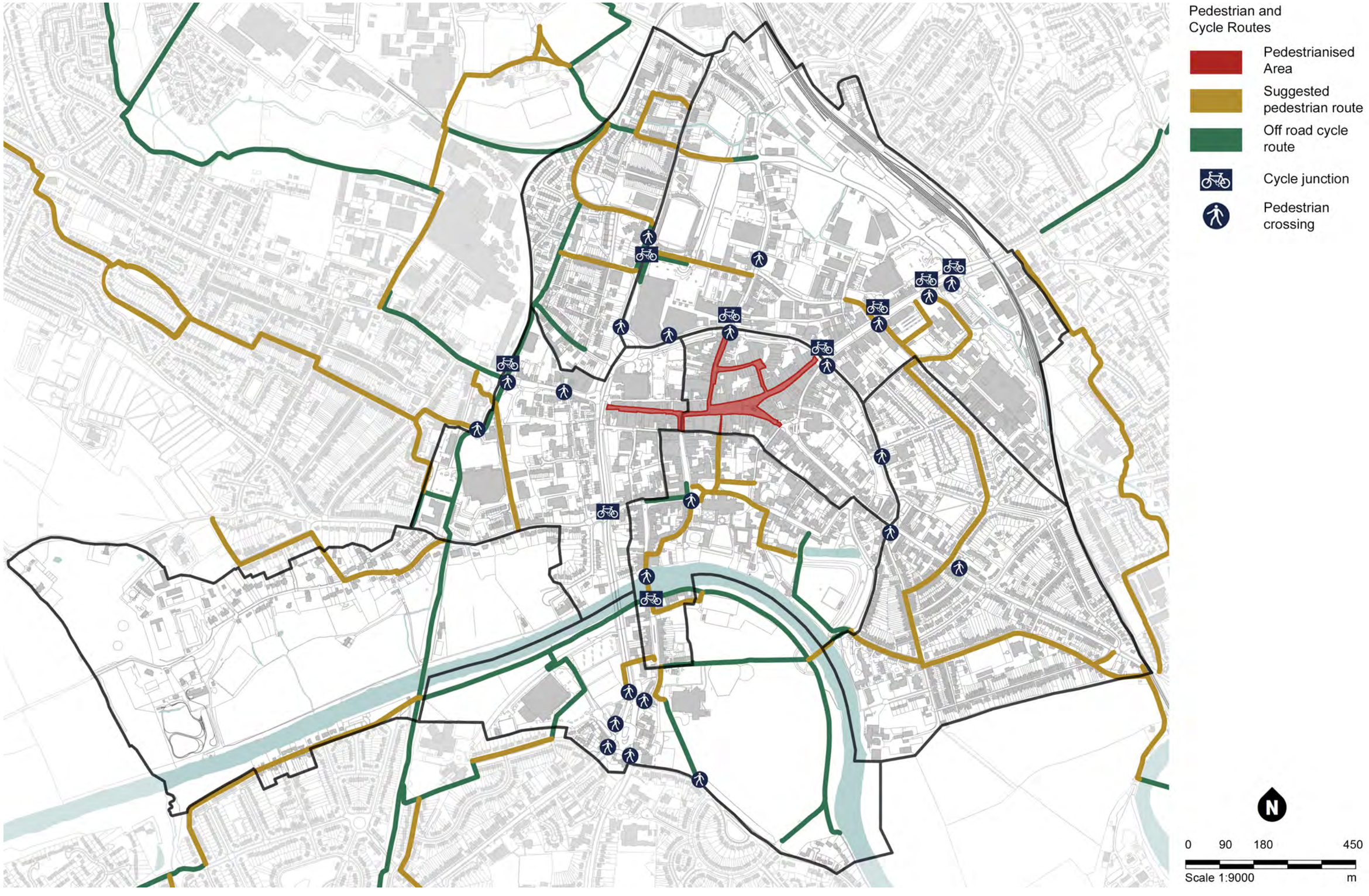
The other traffic effect is that of atmospheric pollution and the evidence base for Herefordshire's Core Strategy identifies the locations shown as having unacceptable levels of pollutants.

5.3 Public transport (see Map 16)

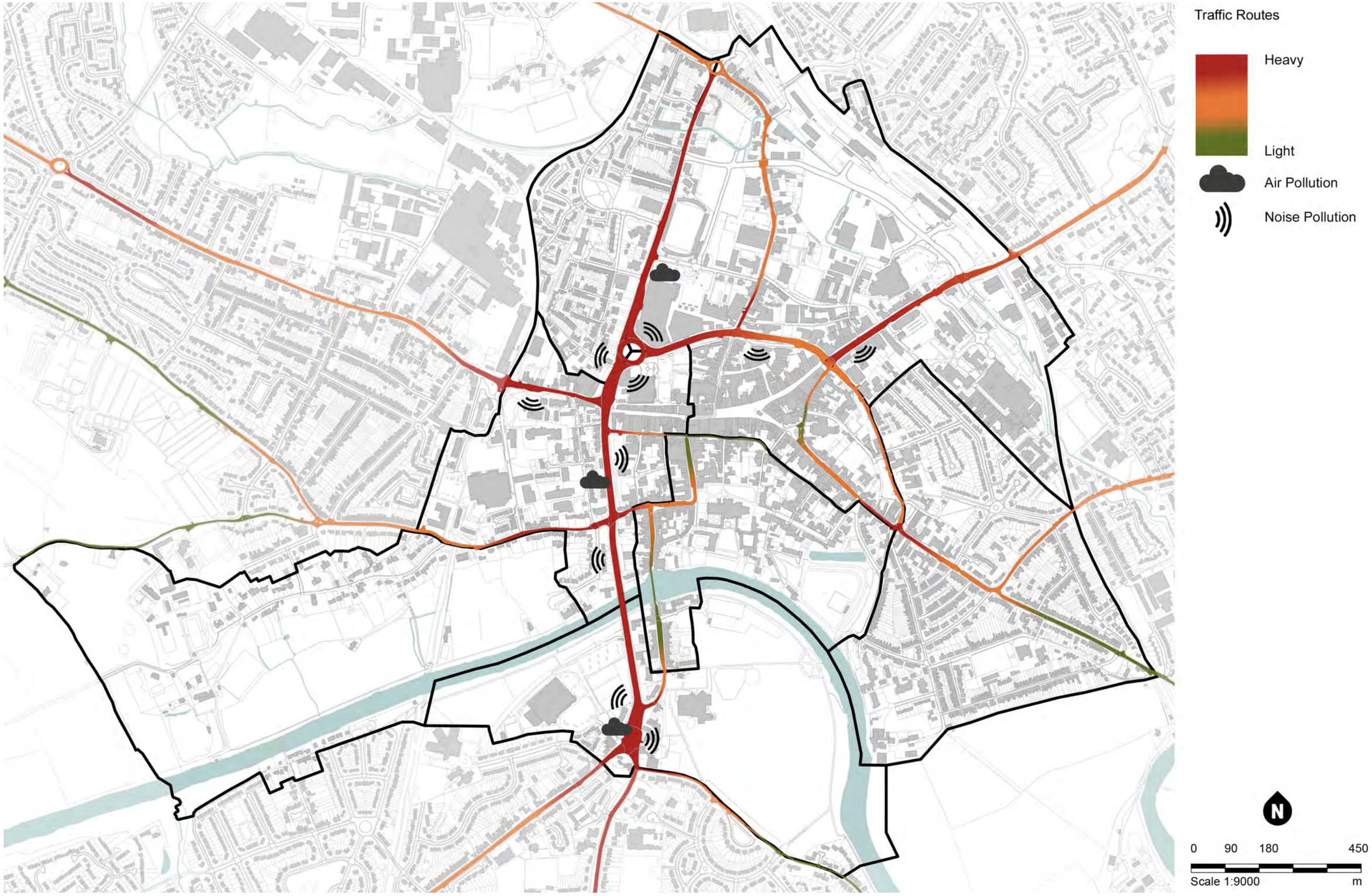
This map shows a broad network of bus routes generally radiating from the inner ring road with some incursions into the city. The railway system is focussed on the city's mainline station at Barr's Court Road, to the north east of the city centre.

Plans are under way for the establishment of a transport hub at the station site serviced by long distance and local buses, trains, taxis and a cycle park.

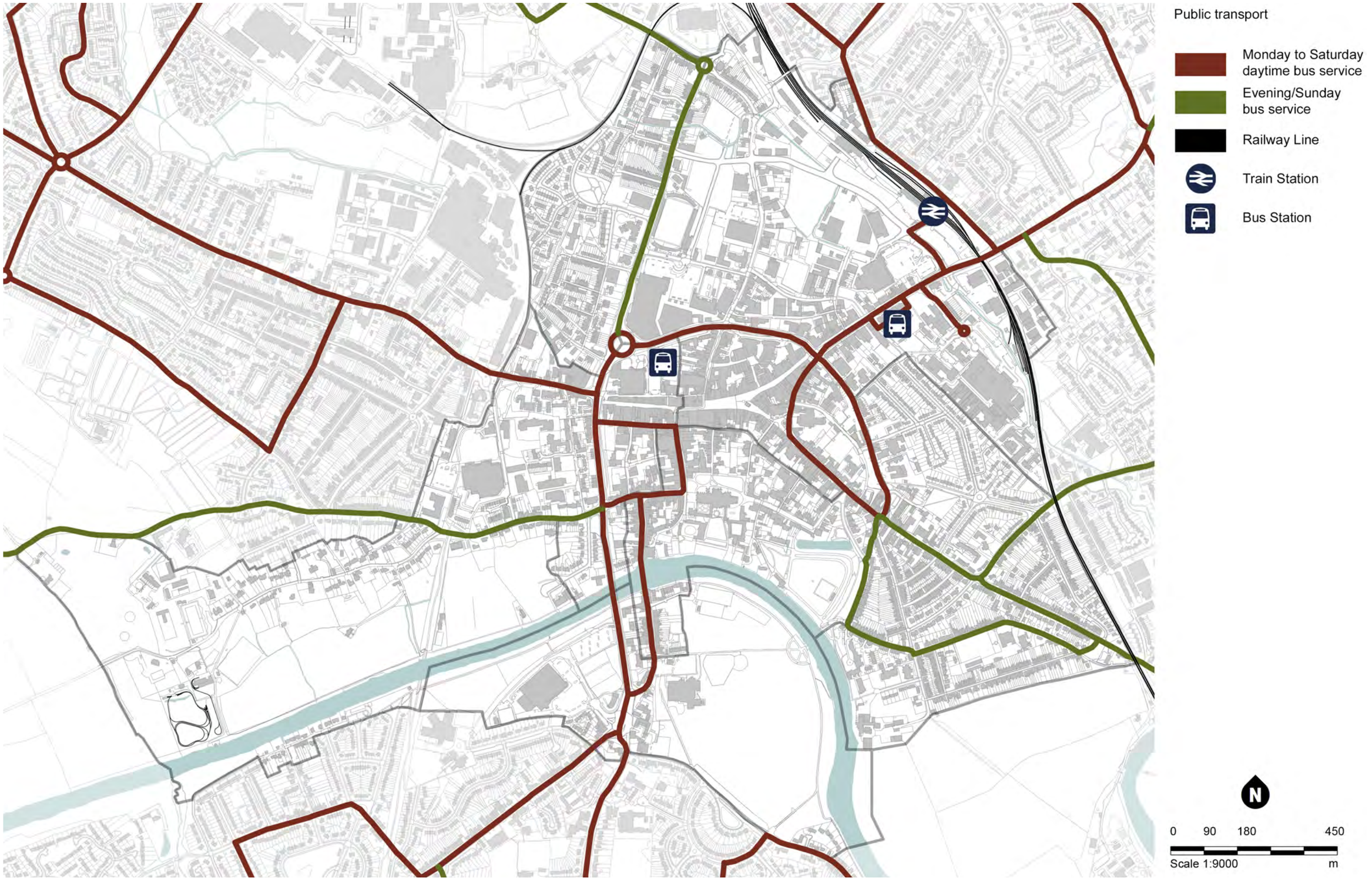
Hereford currently has no 'park and ride' system and studies to examine the feasibility of such a system are recommended. The city is served by a number of major routes entering from the north, east, south and west and the establishment of large parking areas on the edges of the city alongside these routes, along with the inauguration of a shuttle bus system could well alleviate many of the congestion and parking issues which detract from the experience of Hereford.



Map 14 - Pedestrian and cycle routes



Map 15 - Traffic Routes



Map 16 - Public Transport (bus and rail)

6.0 The city in view

6.1 Approaching the City

The city lies in a hollow basin surrounded on most sides by higher ground. Historically, main trading routes followed higher land, avoiding low-lying river valleys, marshes and land liable to flooding. Hence, in the case of the city of Hereford, many of the approaches to the city run along high ground with a drop down as the city is approached.

Approaching from the north, the A4110 and the A49 cross a ridge and then drop down as they reach the city outskirts. From the east, the A465from Worcester and the A438 from Ledbury cross the Lugg flood plain then rises up over the ridge dropping down into the city via Aylestone Hill. The minor road from Fownhope follows the same sequence but with a less marked drop down into the city.

There are two main routes from the south – the A49 from Ross descends Callow Hill some miles from the city, then crosses lower ground reaching Hereford over Redhill where it descends to the river valley. The approach of the A465 from Abergavenny from the south west is much more level.

From the west the A438 Brecon Road reaches the city via Whitecross and has no dramatic entrance, but the minor road just to its south runs along the ridge from Breinton before descending via Broomy Hill.

The outcome of this is that there are 6 potential viewpoints associated with main approaches to the city. (see map 17)

6.2 Brief analysis of views

Whilst in theory, Hereford's setting within a natural basin suggests that there should be many views down into the city, the brief exercise carried out as part of this analysis suggests that in many cases potential panoramic views are obscured, in most cases by trees, as shown in the photographs.

The presence of trees is to be welcomed, but they are by nature transitory features and therefore some assessment of the views without their presence is deemed appropriate.

Of the views captured, the most significant would seem to be those from the main approach roads, so viewpoints 2,3 and 4 are from the main A49 nearing the city from the north, view 5 is from the A465 from the east and 6 is from the A49 approaching from the south. These viewpoints present three 'viewing cones' looking into the city which are represented diagrammatically on the map.

Within the city centre there is a cluster of landmark buildings (identified on the Building Heights map) consisting of:

- Cathedral
- All Saints church
- St Peter's church
- Town Hall
- Shire Hall
- Buttermarket

These buildings have towers, spires or lanterns which project clear of the surrounding buildings and together form the essence of Hereford's distinctive skyline. It is the views of these landmarks which should be protected.

For these landmark buildings to be viewed clearly it is important that there is an uncluttered area, a protected circle within the view either side of the tower or spire. The extent of this protected circle needs careful assessment and may be different for each feature, but for the purpose of this assessment a distance of approximately 100m has been assumed.

The viewing cone extends therefore from the viewpoint itself to encompass a range extending 100m either side the outermost landmark buildings seen in the view.

Within this cone, building heights in front, and to a lesser extent behind the landmark buildings will need to be controlled in height in order to preserve the view.

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Map 17 - Key viewpoints on city approaches

7.0 The Historic Environment

7.1 Archaeology (see map 18)

The Hereford Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI) encompasses the whole zone within the medieval walls of the city, together with some of the early suburbs and former monastic precincts. It was designated an AAI in 1983 (under the 1979 Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act) due to the national significance of the historic core of Hereford. Hereford is only one of five national AAIs (the others being Canterbury, Exeter, Chester and York).

Designation helps to prevent important archaeological sites from being damaged or destroyed without at least allowing for some investigation and recording first. It is an offence under the Act to undertake any operations within a designated Area of Archaeological Importance which may disturb the ground, or flood any site, or tip upon any site, without giving the administering authority six weeks' notice of the commencement of those operations. The unauthorized use of metal detectors in an AAI is an offence.

The administering and investigating authority for the AAI is Herefordshire Archaeology, the archaeological section of the council. On receipt of operations notices, Herefordshire Archaeology will determine what archaeological response is appropriate under the 1979 Act, depending on the circumstances of the case. Responses can vary from simply noting the operations involved, to occupying the site for formal archaeological excavations. It should be emphasised that AAI procedures are in addition to any requirements that may be applied under the Planning Acts, having regard to current historic environment policy in the Herefordshire Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

The Location of the AAI is shown on Map 18 overleaf. Also shown (by red dots) are the principal locations within the historic area for which there exists a specific record of interest. These records are held in the county Historic Environment Record ('HER'). The nature and significance of such records varies considerably, as does the weight that may be given to them in any planning or other decisions. Some of the records relate to known sites or excavations thereupon, and it will be observed that there is a preponderance of them in the historic city centre – as might be expected. In simple visual terms, this emphasises the exceptional value and sensitivity of the archaeological resource here.

7.2 Conservation Area (see map 19)

This map shows that all the historic core is covered by one or more Conservation Areas and that CAs extend outside the core in a number of areas. The areas outside the city centre include much of the flood plain of the river which is now recreational ground, much of it landscaped, and also the Victorian suburban development.

Conservation Areas, first promulgated under the Civic Amenities Act of 1967 are areas designated for their special architectural or historical interest, the character of which it is desirable to conserve or enhance. The area will include the buildings, hard landscape and spaces around them and natural features, such as trees and open spaces. Together these form distinctly recognisable areas of quality and interest. Once an area is designated, Herefordshire Council is under a duty to prepare proposals to ensure the preservation and enhancement of the area.

Proposals for development in a conservation area will receive additional scrutiny and approval may be needed for types of work not needing consent elsewhere. In particular, consent will be required for the demolition of most buildings and works to trees.

In these areas, Article 4 direction orders may exist which bring under the council's control certain works permitted outside CAs. In Hereford's case the following types of work have been restricted in this way -

- Various types of wall cladding
- The insertion of dormer windows
- The installation of satellite dishes on walls and roofs facing a highway
- The installation of radio masts, antennae or radio equipment housing with a volume over two cubic metres
- A reduction in the size of residential and industrial extensions, which may be carried out without the need for planning permission
- The installation of solar panels

(Information based on an extract from Herefordshire Council's website.)

7.3 Scheduled monuments and Listed Buildings (see map 19)

Monuments are scheduled under the 1979 Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act in relation to their national importance and other criteria. Within the historic area, the Scheduled Monuments include remains of the city defences (i.e. city walls and associated features), the defensive banks in The Bishop's Meadow, the inner precinct of Blackfriars and Coningsby Hospital, the Old Wye Bridge, And the civil war Row Ditch in Bartonsham. There is a general presumption against development on or very near these sites, and any works that are required will require Scheduled Monument Consent from The Secretary of State.

The city contains a large number of listed buildings from the Grade 1 cathedral, to the many Grade 2 listed dwellings. The greatest density of listed buildings is, not surprisingly within the historic core of the city, with relatively few in the outer parts.

Works which affect the character of Listed Buildings require LB consent which is administered through the council. For buildings of higher grade (2* or 1) Historic England is consulted before any decision is reached. Most ecclesiastical buildings are controlled by parallel schemes within their relevant denominations.

It is worthy of note that few of Hereford's good later Victorian or modern buildings are listed and a review of the list may well remedy this position. In the meantime a 'Local list' has been promulgated (see Conclusion section).

Map 18 - Archaeological data and sensitivity

Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings and Conservation Area

Conservation Area

Scheduled Monument

Listed Building

N

0 90 180 450

Scale 1:9000 m

Map 19 - Scheduled Monuments, Listed buildings and conservation area