

Ross-on-Wye Rapid Townscape Assessment

Draft

March 2010



Conservation Section
Planning and Transportation Services
Regeneration Directorate
Herefordshire Council

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Ross on Wye Rapid Townscape Assessment (RRTA) is one of a number of background studies that will form part of the evidence base for Herefordshire Council's Local Development Framework (LDF). The LDF will eventually replace the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan and will include a Core Strategy that sets out the long-term spatial strategy for Herefordshire. The aim of this characterisation study is to contribute to an assessment of the potential of the Ross on Wye settlement area to accommodate growth allocated through the LDF and, eventually, to contribute to the preparation of a design framework for areas of development potential.
- 1.2 The rapid townscape assessment is based on a model developed by English Heritage for the structured and systematic appraisal of townscape and the historic environment. The results of this assessment include the identification of areas of significant or local interest, sites of development and/or enhancement potential, and issues relating to townscape quality and loss of character.

2. Context

- 2.1 A number of other studies are being, or have been, undertaken by members of Herefordshire Council's Conservation Section that contribute to the visual and historic evidence base of the LDF. These studies are:
 - 2.1.1 *Urban Fringe Sensitivity Analysis*: informing the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) for Hereford, the market towns and villages. The study will also be relevant to future proposals for an outer distributor road for Hereford.
 - 2.1.2 *Green Infrastructure Study*: aiming to ensure that the natural and cultural landscape features are placed at the heart of planning for sustainable development within Herefordshire by identifying the components forming 'green infrastructure', assessing their quality and quantity, identifying any shortfall in provision and identifying the opportunities available to provide and manage such infrastructure within the context of growth of the county.
 - 2.1.3 *Historic Environment Development Impact and Design Studies*: offering a systematic historic environment input to the LDF process, specifically providing an evidence base and strategic advice relating to both the Core Strategy and the SHLAA.
 - 2.1.4 *Hereford Rapid Townscape Assessment*: contributing to a housing land availability assessment for the City of Hereford settlement area and informing the preparation of a broad design framework for areas with development potential.
 - 2.1.5 *Central Hereford Townscape Characterisation*: forming part of the evidence base to support the LDF.

3. Scope

- 3.1 This assessment covers the Ross on Wye settlement area as defined by the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan adopted March 2007.

4. Aims and Objectives

- 4.1 The principle aims of the Ross on Wye Rapid Townscape Assessment are to contribute to a housing land availability assessment for the Ross on Wye settlement area and to provide a consistent overview of the area's historic and townscape character. The assessment will form part of the evidence base for Herefordshire Council's Core Strategy.

- 4.2 The key objectives are:

- To define broad character areas within the Ross on Wye settlement area
- To describe their visible historic and townscape characteristics in sufficient detail to inform strategic options for spatial planning policy and to contribute to an urban capacity study
- To identify issues that may need to be addressed in the spatial management of the respective areas.

5. Character and Identity

- 5.1 The method of townscape assessment used in this project is based on a model brief proposed by English Heritage and CABI for the systematic and structured approach to townscape and heritage appraisals. The brief describes two levels of assessment:

5.1.1 An extensive assessment is intended to provide a broad-brush overview across a wide area to inform strategic decisions.

5.1.2 A second phase of intensive assessment will provide more detailed information on selected areas.

- 5.2 The model brief outlines four key aspects of information for the study area:

- Historic development
- The mapping of character areas
- An assessment of significance
- Recommendations on integrating significant heritage assets with development or renewal.

- 5.3 The approach taken in this project is to undertake an extensive (rapid) assessment of the study area (Ross on Wye settlement area):

- To identify character areas
- To outline briefly their historical development
- To describe briefly their townscape character

- To identify areas of significant or local interest, sites of development and/or enhancement potential, and issues relating to townscape quality and loss of character.

6. Method

6.1 An initial assessment of the settlement area was undertaken based on a desk-stop survey using Herefordshire Council's GIS (Exponare) system and a visual survey by motor vehicle and on foot. As a result, the following categories were identified:

- Landscape types (Appendix I)
- Townscape types (Appendix II)
- Character areas (Appendix III).

6.2 A rapid survey of each character area was undertaken, primarily on foot, to record townscape observations, to identify sites of development/enhancement potential and other issues, and to confirm or amend the initial assessment.

6.3 Further research was undertaken on the historical development and architecture of each character area based on map regression analysis using Ordnance Survey, tithe, and other historic maps; Herefordshire Sites and Monuments Record; Department of Culture, media and Sport Revised List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest; Royal Commission on Historical Monuments England; and other limited documentary sources (see Appendix VI, Sources).

6.4 An appraisal of each character area (Appendix V) was prepared to include the following information:

- Character statement
- Location and physical setting
- Historical development
- Townscape
- Heritage assets and sense of place
- Development and/or enhancement potential
- Issues, including loss of character.

6.5 Plans of the Ross on Wye settlement area (Appendix IV) and individual character areas were prepared.

7. Rapid Townscape Assessment

7.1 The results of the Rapid Townscape Assessment are presented in the individual character area appraisals (Appendix V). Here, brief details are given of significant findings.

7.2 Areas of Significant or Local Interest

Areas of significant interest (within conservation areas) and local interest (not within conservation areas) are defined by their historical or architectural interest and their area or group integrity.

7.2.1 *Central* (Character Areas RCA1 and 2)

- Ross Historic Centre (RCA1) lies within the Ross on Wye conservation area. The area has a strong sense of place informed by its history, architecture, medieval plan-form, and natural setting overlooking the Wye Valley. The use of local red sandstone in the construction of buildings and boundary walls well into the 19th Century, and of cast iron street furniture, including cellar covers and water channels, manufactured at local foundries, contributes to the significant local interest of the area
- East Central Ross-Gloucester Road (RCA2) lies within the Ross on Wye conservation area. The area has a strong sense of identity, due particularly to its Victorian (later 19th Century) development. The following areas are of significant interest:
 - Crofts Lane (east end): terraces of 19th Century redbrick houses with small front gardens, hedges, shrubs and small trees, and brick or rendered boundary walls
 - Alton Street: groups of 18th and 19th Century two- and three-storey houses and cottages of sandstone rubble, some roughcast, set at the rear of a narrow footway, linked by rubble walls with overhanging trees and shrubs
 - School Lane/Green Pits area: a small group of 18th/19th Century houses of brick and sandstone rubble, of irregular alignment, set on irregular plots enclosed by rubble walls extending along School Lane.

7.2.2 *South* (Character Areas RCA3 and 4)

- Ashfield (RCA3) lies, for the most part, within the Ross on Wye character area. The area has a strong sense of place generated by its Victorian suburban villas on generous plots with mature gardens and trees
- Several localities in South Ross (RCA4) retain a sense of identity and local interest:
 - Fernbank Road: a semi-rural “country lane” with grass verges and hedges, well-spaced houses and bungalows on large plots, leading the eye upwards to the skyline of Chase Wood
 - Tudor Street and Chapel Lane: a 19th Century townscape of terraced cottages and narrow streets (compromised to some extent by later infill)
 - Archenfield Road (north): a sunken road lined by grassy banks with rubble walls and hedges that screen from view comfortable homes with mature gardens.

7.2.3 *East* (Character Areas RCA5, 7 and 9)

- In the Ryefield Road/Gloucester Road (south)/Camp Road area of East Ross (RCA5) late 19th/early 20th Century houses in a range of architectural forms, an Edwardian grammar school, and mature

gardens with brick and stone walls, hedges and trees create a sense of place and an area of local interest

- In Hildersley (RCA7) Spring Farm and the Model Farm buildings represent aspects of Ross on Wye's agricultural and architectural history. In their rural setting these buildings generate a sense of place and an area of local interest.

7.2.4 *North* (Character Areas RCA6 and 8)

- In North Ross (RCA6) the south-eastern part lies within the Ross on Wye conservation area. The south end of Overross Street, an area of mixed 19th Century architectural design and use, including residential, industrial, and a former place of worship, displays a sense of place and of local interest.

7.3 Areas of Development and/or Enhancement Potential (Plan 5)

A number of sites were identified of development and/or enhancement potential. Suggestions for development are based on the townscape character and design of the locality.

7.3.1 *Central* (RCA1 and 2)

- Edde Cross Street at the junction with New Street, a hard-surfaced open space used as a private car park: a limited residential development to restore the frontage of New Street including the corner with Edde Cross Street and to compliment the streetscape on the opposite side of New Street. This could consist of a short row of small two-storey houses, rendered or roughcast in white or cream under pitched roofs, set at the rear of the footway with small gardens and parking places at the rear
- Kyrle Street (north side), a larger hard-surfaced space used as a private car park: residential development on Kyrle Street to restore the street frontage. This could consist of a short row of small two-storey houses, rendered or roughcast in white or cream under pitched roofs, set at the rear of the footway with small gardens at the rear; on a larger site at the rear, several short rows of two- or three-storey houses under pitched roofs with gardens at the rear, a small landscaped area and parking areas
- Church Street (east side behind Rudhall Almshouses), an open space used as a private car park: a residential development. This could consist of short rows of three-storey houses or flats with landscaping and parking areas
- Old Maid's Walk, a site presently occupied by the health centre and the police station with landscaped areas and parking screened by a high sandstone rubble wall: a residential development. This could consist of short rows of three-storey houses and/or flats of brick under hipped roofs with landscaping and parking areas. This suggestion assumes that the health centre can be transferred to the hospital site, and the police station

transferred to an alternative site (as has been done in Leominster and is proposed in Hereford)

- Millpond Street, a row of 19th Century brick industrial buildings (adjoining a 19th Century residential terrace), an open yard and a late 20th Century light industrial building: a small-scale residential development of two-storey terraced houses retaining the present scale and enhancing the street frontage
- Old Gloucester Road at the rear of 30 and 31a and b Gloucester Road, a yard with several light industrial or storage buildings: a small-scale development of two-storey terraced houses that enhances the street frontage and complements the townscape further west on this street
- A green space (paddock) in private ownership accessed from Old Gloucester Road: a residential development of medium density, with landscaping, that complements the adjacent residential area, e.g., two-storey semi-detached houses on adequate plots, with access from Alton Street
- Market Place/Broad Street: a rapid street survey of occupancy or use indicated that upper floors (mainly 2nd floor level) of up to twenty premises may be unoccupied or unused (based on the absence of curtains or blinds and other visible furnishings): the letting of upper floors as residential apartments would increase the availability of residential accommodation in this area.

7.3.2 *South* (RCA3 and 4)

- Ashfield Park at the junction with Ashfield Park Avenue (north side), two fields: may be suitable for one two-storey detached house and a pair of semi-detached houses on adequate plots with front gardens; access via Ashfield Park
- Fernbank Road: one undeveloped plot on the east side and one (larger) plot on the west side: may be suitable for three detached two-storey houses or bungalows on large plots with front gardens
- Merrivale Lane, an undeveloped plot adjacent to no. 29: may be suitable for three pairs of two-storey semi-detached houses, or four detached houses, on adequate plots with front gardens.

7.3.3 *East* (RCA5, 7 and 9)

- Council Yard, Station Street: may be developed as public sector/affordable housing on a similar scale and density as the Grammar School Close area
- An enclosed open green space south of Smallbrook Gardens: may be developed as additional sheltered housing of similar scale and density

- A paddock on the south side of Marsh Farm: may be developed as private housing on a similar scale and density as The Glebe (adjacent) with possible access via Hildersley Rise (or via the potential development described below)
- A field to the east of the Hildersley residential area extending east to the Spring Farm and Highfield Farm access road: may be developed as private housing on a similar scale and density as The Glebe and Parsons Croft with undeveloped buffer zones (green spaces) between the new residential development and both The Glebe/Parsons Grove residential area and the Model Farm site. The field is currently protected in its entirety as a green space in the Herefordshire UPD (2007), Policy HBA9
- The Model Farm site in the eastern part of the character area is allocated as employment land in the Herefordshire UPD (2007), Policy E3: Spring Farm farmhouse and the Model Farm buildings should be retained for their historical interest and incorporated into future developments
- Some additional land for commercial or industrial buildings may be available within the Ashburton-Alton Industrial/Commercial Area if some land presently used for parking or storage is given up; flood risk can be alleviated in the eastern part of the area; the recycling centre is moved to an alternative site.

7.3.4 *North* (RCA6 and 8)

- Greytree Road (south side) on both sides of Trenchard Street: occupied by an industrial-scale commercial building with yard, a surface car park and storage area. May support a residential development (public sector/affordable housing) of a similar scale and density as that on the north side of Greytree Road, i.e. short terraces of two-storey houses on small plots and/or several two-storey blocks of flats with soft landscaping. Development may be constrained by flood risk
- Field remnants between Greytree/Blackfields and the A40(T): small fields with boundary hedges. May support residential development (private sector housing) of a similar scale and density as that in the immediate area, i.e., detached two-storey houses or bungalows on adequate plots, with a landscaped buffer zone between the residential area and the A40(T)
- A field east of Brampton Road and north of the A40(T): a field with boundary hedges. May support residential developments (mixed public sector/affordable and private housing) of a similar scale and density as those in the Oaklands/Vaga Crescent/River View area, i.e., short terraces of two-storey houses on small plots; two- or three-storey blocks of flats with soft landscaping; two-storey detached or semi-detached houses on adequate plots
- Two small undeveloped sites on the northern edge of the Greytree/Blackfields area: undeveloped plots. May support

residential development (private sector housing) of a similar scale and density as that in the immediate area, i.e., two detached houses on adequate plots on each site

- Tanyard Lane (north side): an industrial site with a vacant modular frame building, several outbuildings and a yard. May support residential development (public sector/affordable housing) of a similar scale and density as at Rudhill Close (adjacent), i.e., several two-storey blocks of flats with soft landscaping
- Fields south and east of Tanyard Lane: allocated for housing provision, with constraints, by the Herefordshire UDP (2007), Policy H2
- Allotment gardens and fields west of Cawdor Arch Road: allocated for housing provision, with constraints, by the Herefordshire UDP (2007), Policy H2
- A site near the livestock market in the centre of the Overross Industrial/Commercial Area, presently used for parking or storing heavy goods vehicles: may be appropriate for a smaller commercial building of a similar scale to a group of adjacent buildings
- A small site near a large retail building in the eastern part of the Overross Industrial/Commercial Area, apparently unused at present and adjacent to an undeveloped site that has been allocated as employment land in the Herefordshire UDP (2007), Policy E3: may supplement the allocated employment land.

7.4 Townscape Quality and Loss of Character

A number of issues have been identified, both general and specific, that relate to townscape quality and loss of character.

7.4.1 *Central* (RCA1 and 2)

- The eastern end of High Street is of a very different character to the western end in terms of architecture, business activity, and townscape appearance. At the eastern end buildings are of two or three storeys and generally quite plain; business comprises mainly of take-away restaurants and gift shops; at any one time several premises are vacant, and the area has, generally, a run-down and transitory appearance. There is evidence, however, of a higher-status history. Several former hotels or inns are located here (one named, imposingly, King Georges's Rest) and shopfronts retain 19th Century design features. To date, a successful enhancement scheme has been undertaken on one former inn at the junction with Old Gloucester Road. It is suggested that a more general area enhancement scheme be undertaken, to include residential occupation in upper floors, with the intention of improving the townscape, promoting business, and revitalizing the area

- The following areas are of poor townscape quality. Planning permission has been granted but the proposed developments are not informed by the townscape character of the area and may not enhance the character:
 - Kyrle Street (south side), site of a commercial garage (former gas works site): proposed residential development (DCSE2008/2817/C, DCSE2008/2815/F)
 - Brookend Street (west side) site of car sales showroom with workshops and car park at rear: proposed commercial (supermarket) development (DCSE2007/2555/C, DCSE2008/2730/F)
 - Old Gloucester Road, proposed residential development on land at the rear of the former Rosswyn Hotel where street frontage includes a wide-span carriageway entrance (DCSE2007/0382/O).

- The following changes to listed buildings have resulted in loss of character:
 - Nos. 21-22 Brookend Street (Grade II): replacement aluminium windows and swan-necked lamps to illuminate fascia boards
 - No. 25 Brookend Street (Grade II): prominent graffiti-style murals of modern music themes
 - Tower House (formerly flat no. 5, Rothsay Court, Grade II): Edde Cross Street: removal of stucco to expose sandstone rubble
 - No. 8 Edde Cross Street (Grade II): replacement aluminium windows.

7.4.2 *South* (RCA3 and 4)

- In the Ashfield area the following changes have taken place resulting in loss of character:
 - The sub-division of large residential plots for additional residential developments
 - Change of use of large houses from private (low density) residential to high density residential (for example, a nursing home), generally accompanied by the construction of extensions or additional buildings.

- In South Ross (east side) the construction of residential cul-de-sacs extending up-slope towards the woodland edge, an intrusive urban element in a rural landscape likely to detract from the character of Ross on Wye as a settlement in a wider rural context.

7.4.3 *East* (RCA5 and 7)

- In the Gloucester Road (north side) area the construction of modern (post 1950s) houses and blocks of flats on infill sites, which do not respect the townscape character of the area, results in an erosion of local identity.

7.4.4 *North* (RCA6 and 8)

- In North Ross residential density is high but public green spaces and soft landscaping are limited, particularly in the Three Crosses Road/ Springfield Road area. It is proposed that enhancement schemes, including limited areas of soft landscaping and plantings, would improve the townscape character and quality of life in this area.

7.4.5 Changes, additions or alterations to buildings have been undertaken throughout the settlement area, generally in areas of pre 1960s residential development and particularly during the late 20th/early 21st Century, that have resulted in an erosion of local character. Factors that contribute to loss of character include:

- Intensification of use: including change of use of large houses and villas, for example, conversion to flats, residential homes, small hotels and guesthouses
- Incremental change: including small extensions (for example conservatories and service facilities); external lifts and fire escapes; external painting, rendering or cladding; replacement of doors and windows; replacement of gardens by parking areas and loss of boundary features (including walls and hedges)
- Insensitive residential development on infill and backland sites that does not respect local townscape character.

APPENDIX I

List of Ross on Wye Landscape Types

RL1 Urban

RL2 Suburban

RL3 Park

RL4 Semi-rural

RL5 Rural

RL6 Industrial

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APPENDIX II

List of Ross on Wye Townscape Types

- RT1 Historic Building/Structure (pre C18)
- RT2 Georgian Building (C18-early C19)
- RT3 Victorian/Edwardian Building/Development (mid C19-early C20)
- RT4 Victorian/Edwardian Suburban Villas and Gardens Development (mid C19-early C20)
- RT5 Public Sector Residential Development, Pre-World War II (pre 1940)
- RT6 Private Sector Residential Development, Between the Wars (1920s-30s)
- RT7 Public Sector Residential Development, Post World War II (1940s-50s)
- RT8 Private Sector Residential Development, Post World War II (1940s-50s)
- RT9 Public Sector/Affordable Residential Development (post 1950s)
- RT10 Private Sector Residential Development (post 1950s)
- RT11 Civic: government, local authority, education, place of worship, arts/culture, recreation/leisure, health/social/other public services
- RT12 Commercial: retail, hospitality, financial, other services, light industry, construction, engineering
- RT 13 Agricultural: farm (farmhouse, agricultural buildings)
- RT14 Industrial/Commercial Estate

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APPENDIX III

List of Ross on Wye Character Areas

RCA1 Ross Historic Centre

RCA2 East Central Ross-Gloucester Road

RCA3 Ashfield

RCA4 South Ross

RCA5 East Ross

RCA6 North Ross









RCA7 Hildersley

RCA8 Overross Industrial/Commercial Area

RCA9 Ashburton-Alton Industrial/Commercial Area

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**RCA1 Ross Historic Centre
Character Area**

-  Character Area
-  Tree Preservation Order
-  Listed Building
-  Scheduled Monument
-  Conservation Area
-  Area of Local Interest
-  Green Space/Allotment Gardens
-  Development/Enhancement Potential

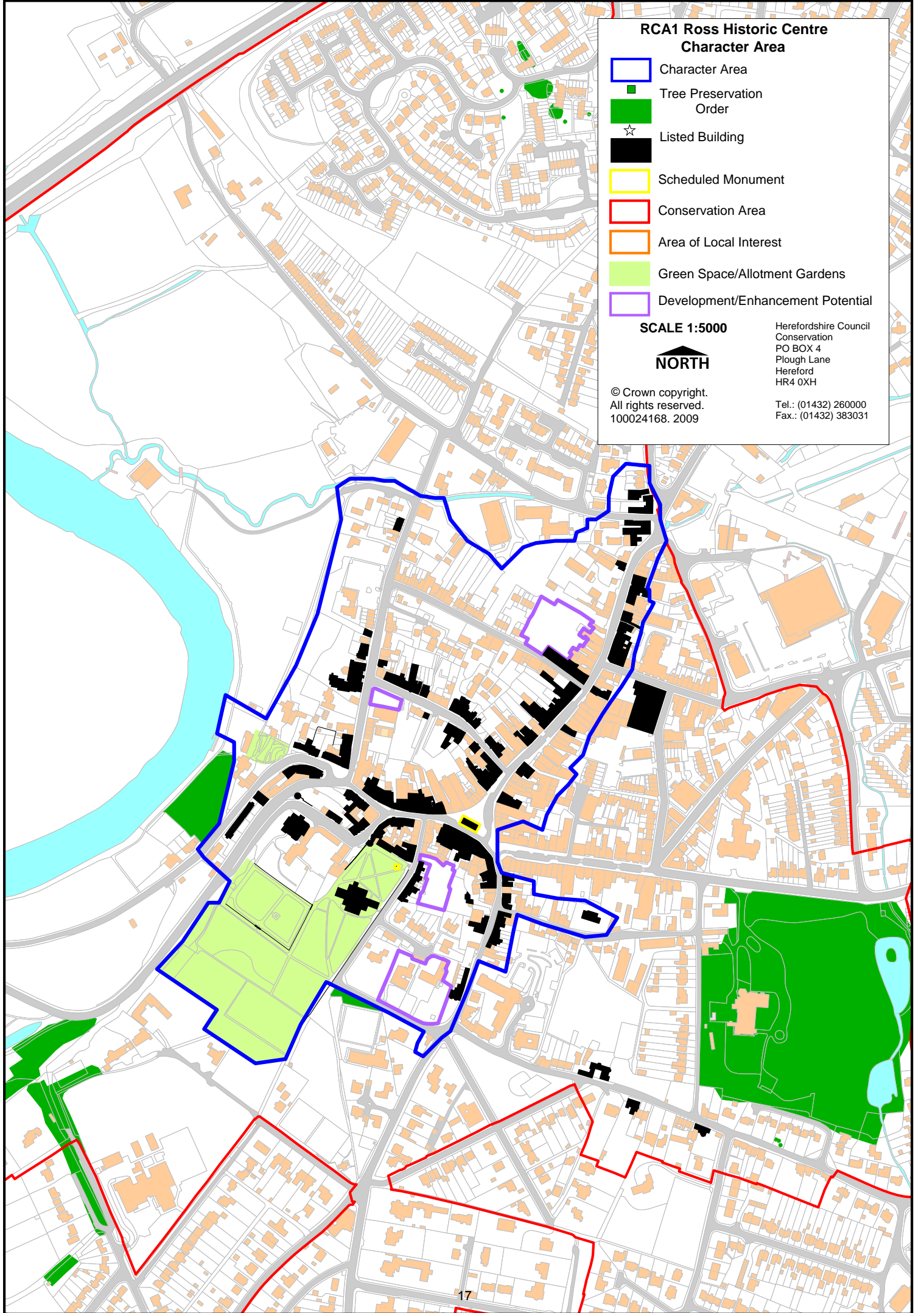
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






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**RCA2 East Central Ross -
Gloucester Road Character Area**

-  Character Area
-  Tree Preservation Order
-  Conservation Area
-  Listed Building
-  Scheduled Monument
-  Area of Significant Interest
-  Green Space/Allotment Gardens
-  Development/Enhancement Potential

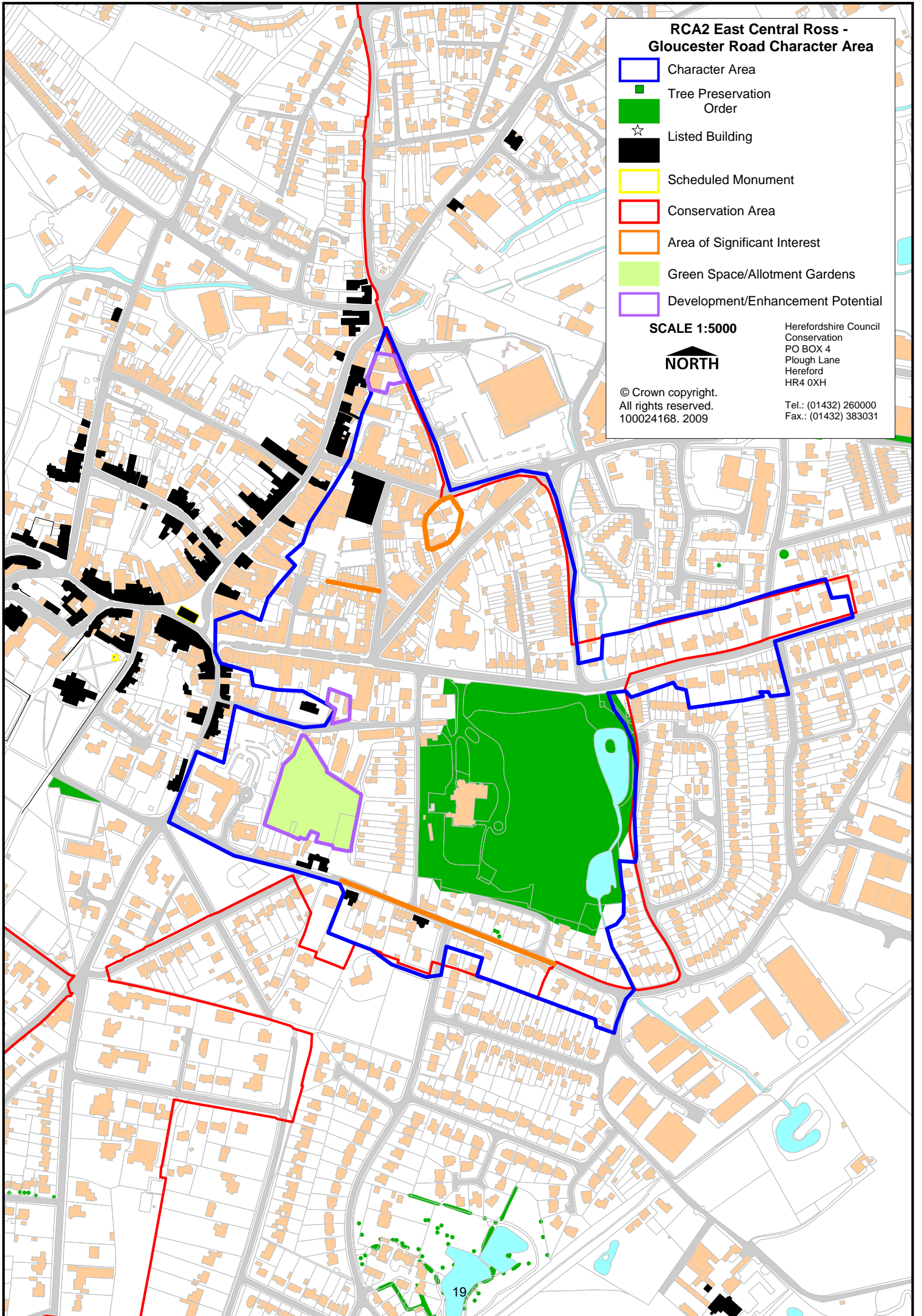
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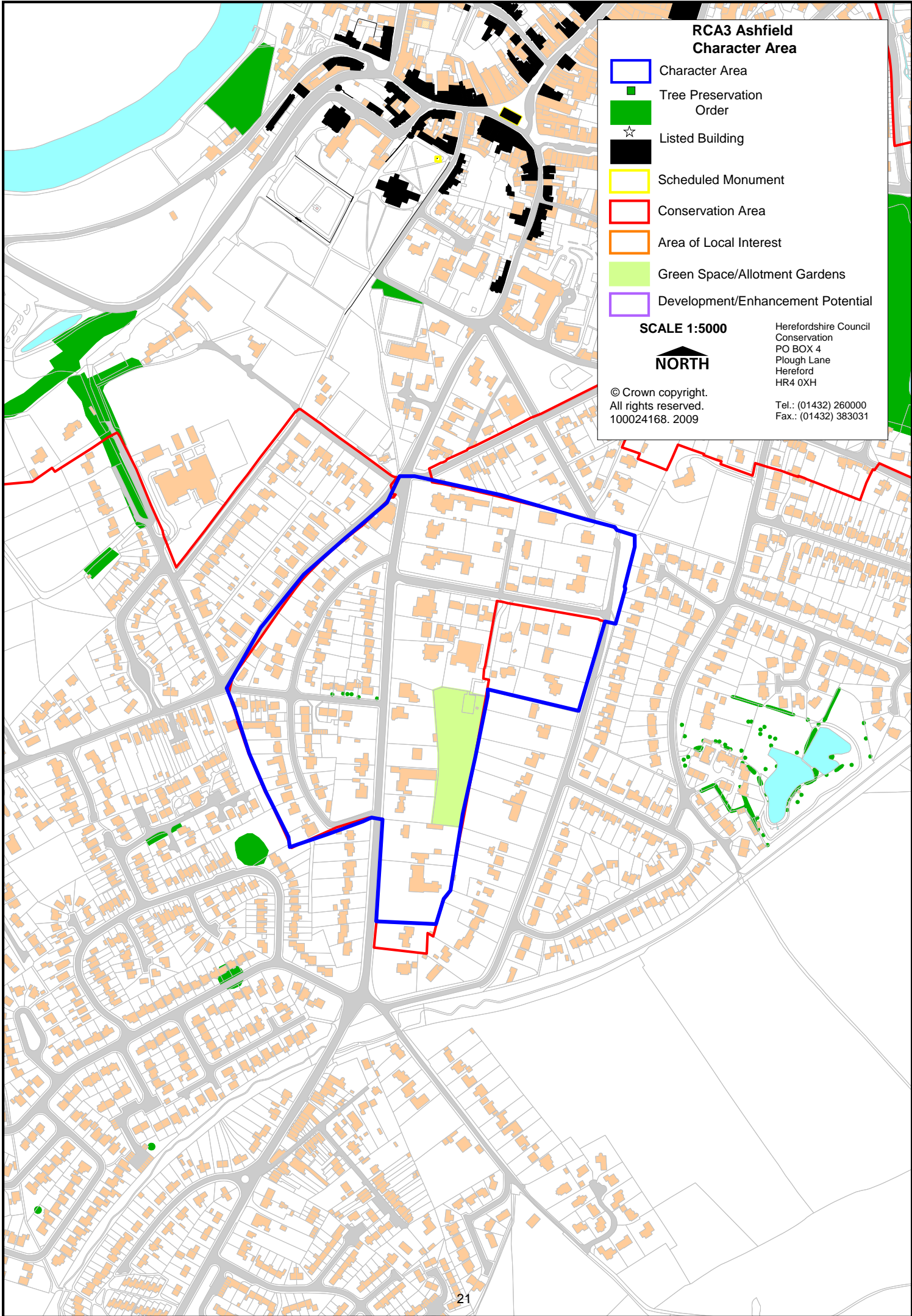
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**RCA3 Ashfield
Character Area**

- Character Area
- Tree Preservation Order
- Listed Building
- Scheduled Monument
- Conservation Area
- Area of Local Interest
- Green Space/Allotment Gardens
- Development/Enhancement Potential

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**RCA4 South Ross
Character Area**

- Character Area
- Tree Preservation Order
- Listed Building
- Scheduled Monument
- Conservation Area
- Area of Local Interest
- Green Space/Allotment Gardens
- Development/Enhancement Potential

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







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RCA5 East Ross Character Area

-  Character Area
-  Tree Preservation Order
-  Conservation Area
-  Listed Building
-  Scheduled Monument
-  Conservation Area
-  Area of Local Interest
-  Green Space/Allotment Gardens
-  Development/Enhancement Potential

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**RCA6 North Ross
Character Area**

-  Character Area
-  Tree Preservation Order
-  Conservation Area
-  Listed Building
-  Scheduled Monument
-  Conservation Area
-  Area of Local Interest
-  Green Space/Allotment Gardens
-  Development/Enhancement Potential

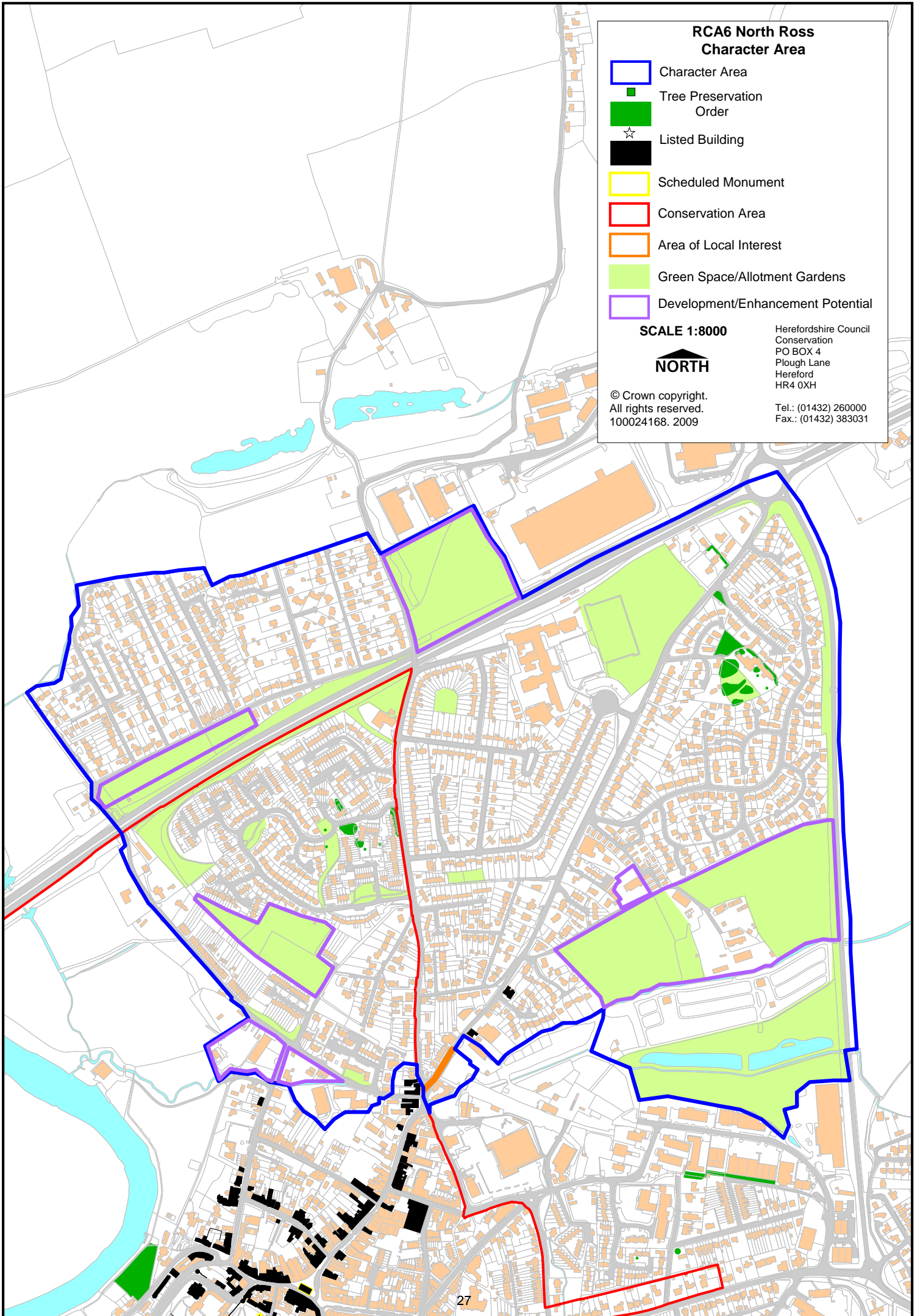
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RCA7 Hildersley Character Area

-  Character Area
-  Tree Preservation Order
-  Conservation Area
-  Listed Building
-  Scheduled Monument
-  Area of Local Interest
-  Green Space/Allotment Gardens
-  Development/Enhancement Potential

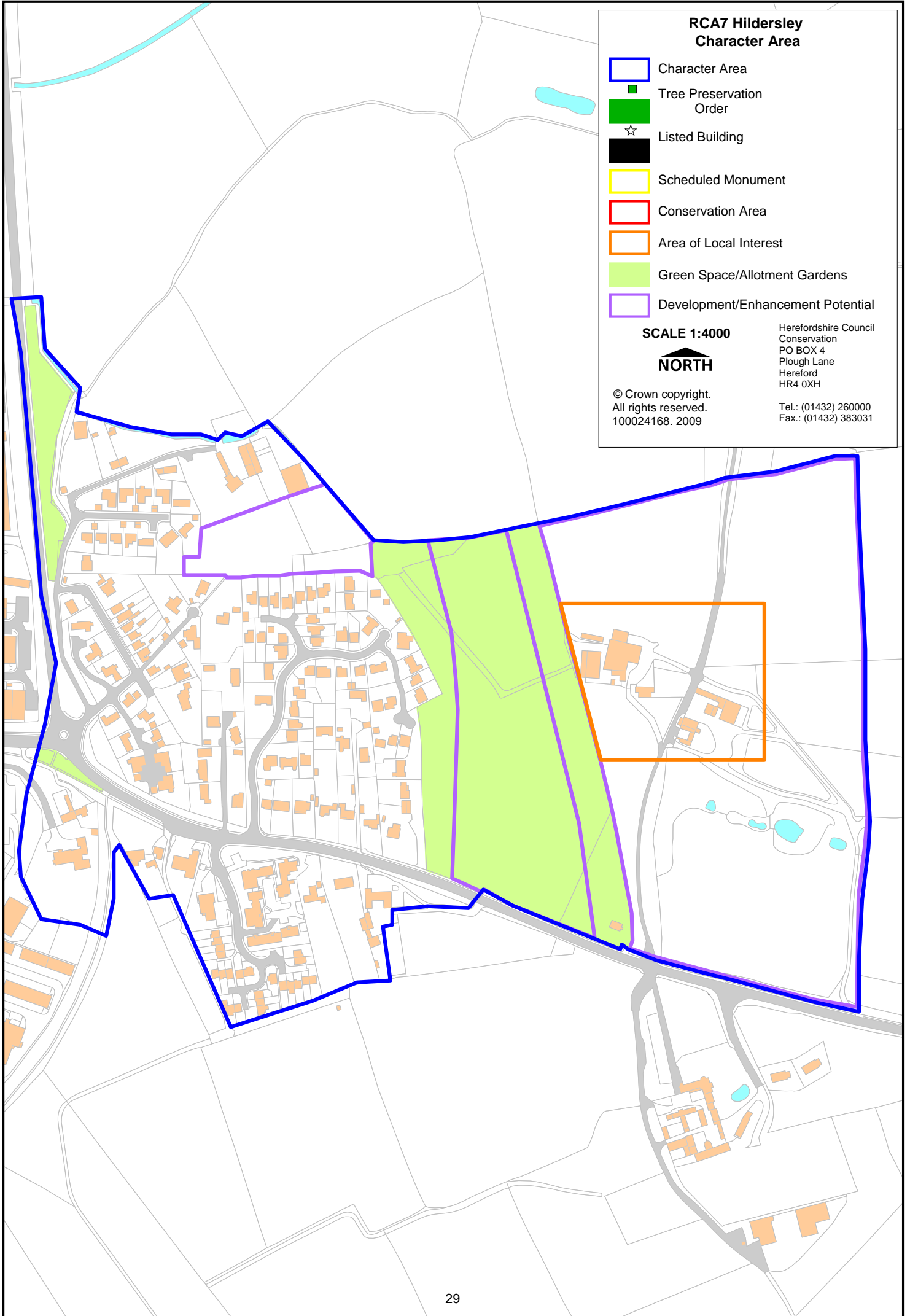
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

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**RCA8 OverRoss
Industrial/Commercial Area**

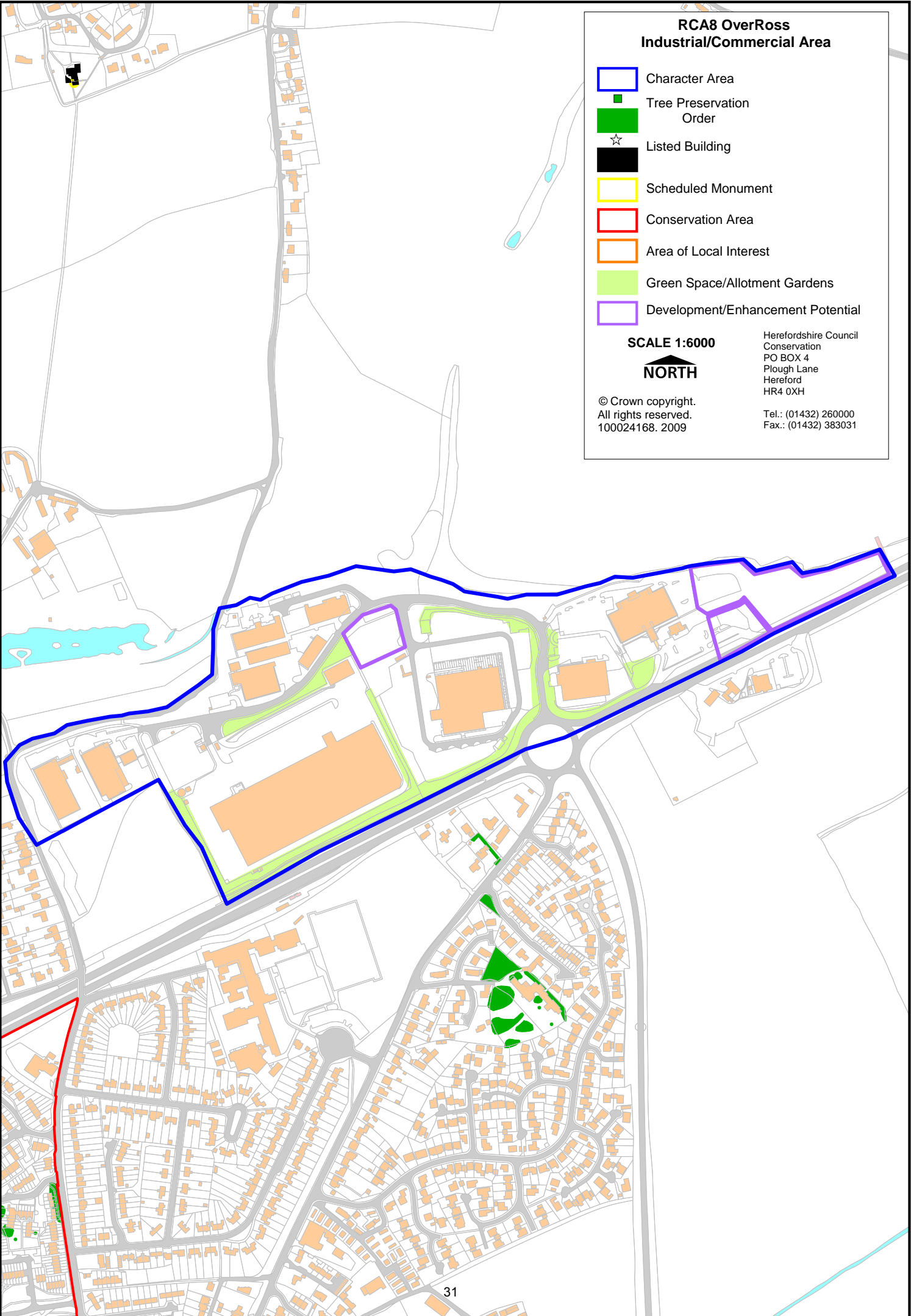
-  Character Area
-  Tree Preservation Order
-  Conservation Area
-  Listed Building
-  Scheduled Monument
-  Conservation Area
-  Area of Local Interest
-  Green Space/Allotment Gardens
-  Development/Enhancement Potential
- 

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





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RCA9 Ashburton - Alton Industrial/Commercial Area

-  Character Area
-  Tree Preservation Order
-  Listed Building
-  Scheduled Monument
-  Scheduled Monument
-  Conservation Area
-  Area of Local Interest
-  Green Space/Allotment Gardens
-  Development/Enhancement Potential

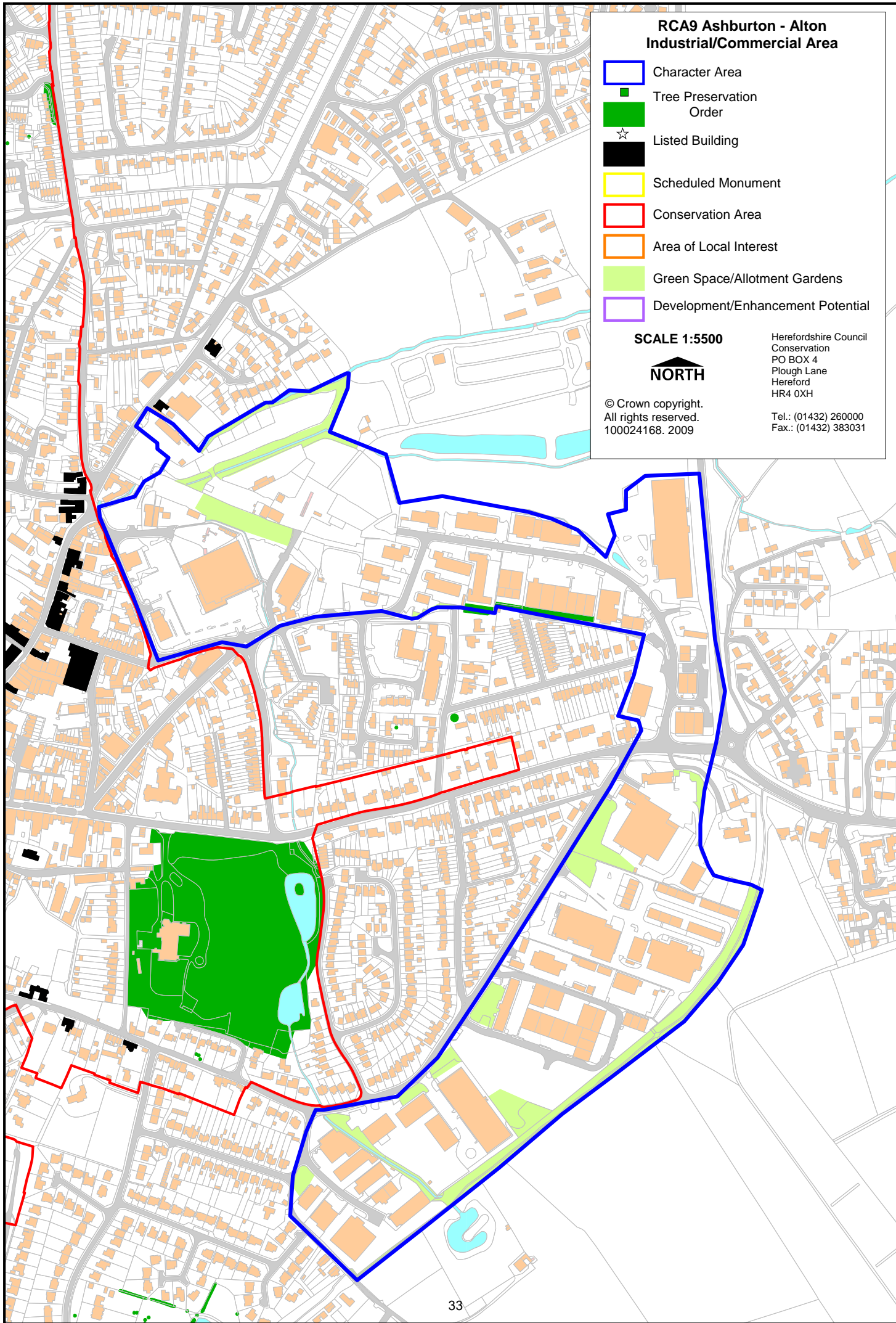
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APPENDIX IV

List of Ross on Wye Settlement Plans

Plan 1 Settlement Area

Plan 2 Historic Assets

Plan 3 Archaeological Sites

Plan 4 Character Areas

Plan 5 Development/Enhancement Potential


Plan 6 Borough of Ross Boundary Map 1823

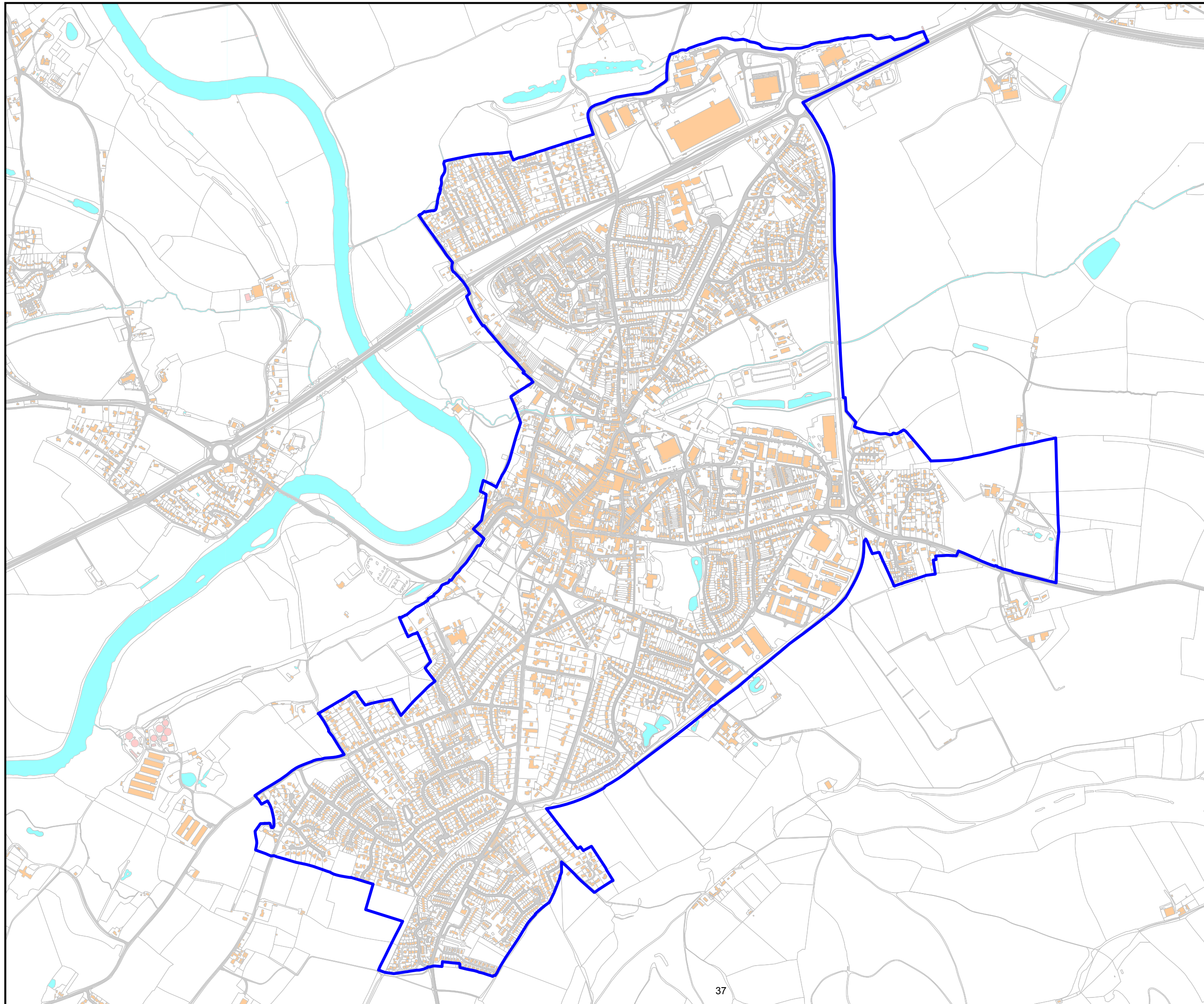
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Ross on Wye Rapid Townscape Assessment

Plan 1 : Settlement Area

Legend

 Settlement Boundary



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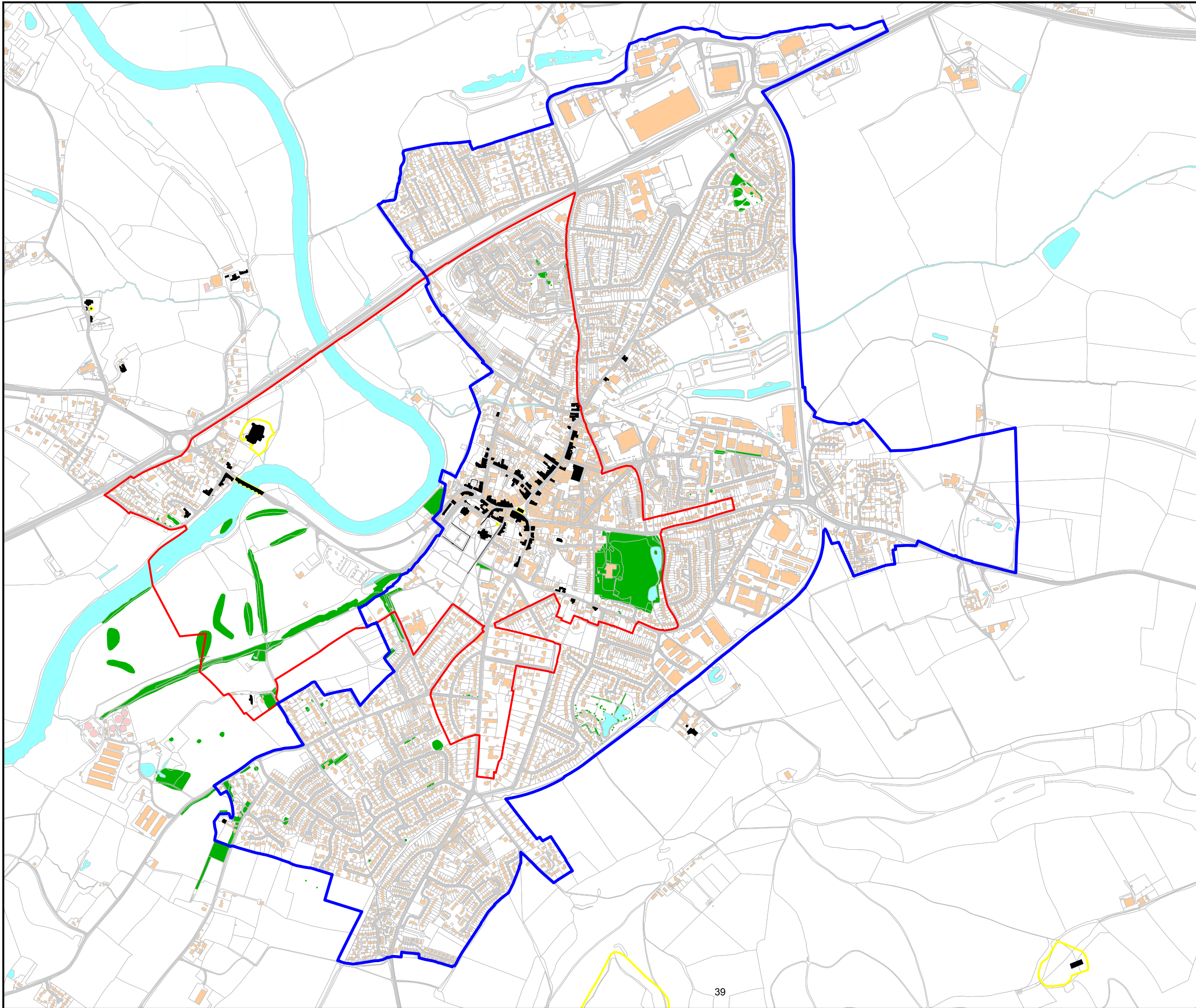
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Ross On Wye Rapid Townscape Assessment

Plan 2: Historic Assets

Legend

-  Settlement Boundary
-  Tree Preservation Order
-  Listed Building
-  Scheduled Monument
-  Conservation Area



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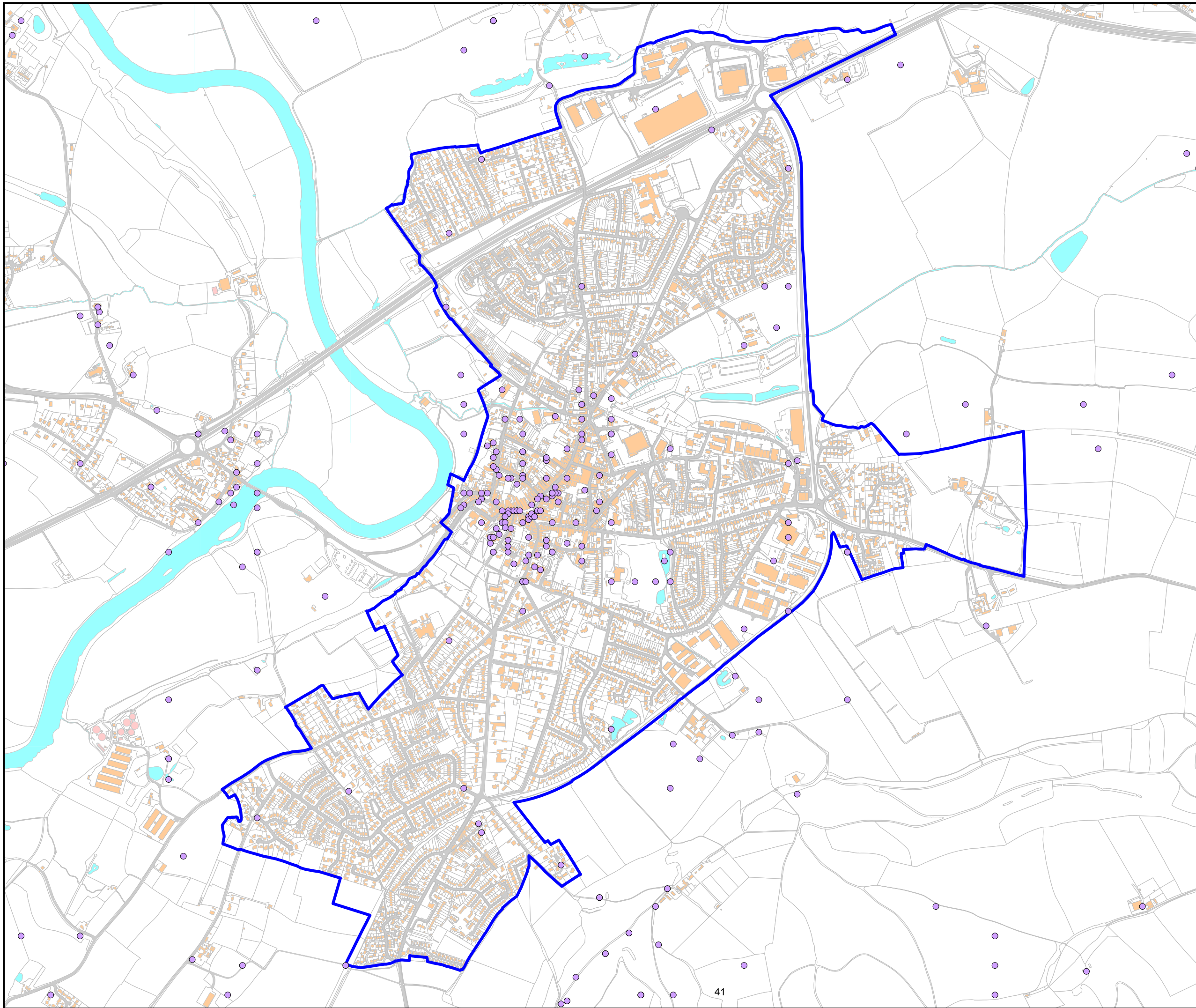
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Ross on Wye Rapid Townscape Assessment

Plan 3 : Archaeological Sites

Legend

-  Settlement Boundary
-  Archaeological Site (SMR)



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
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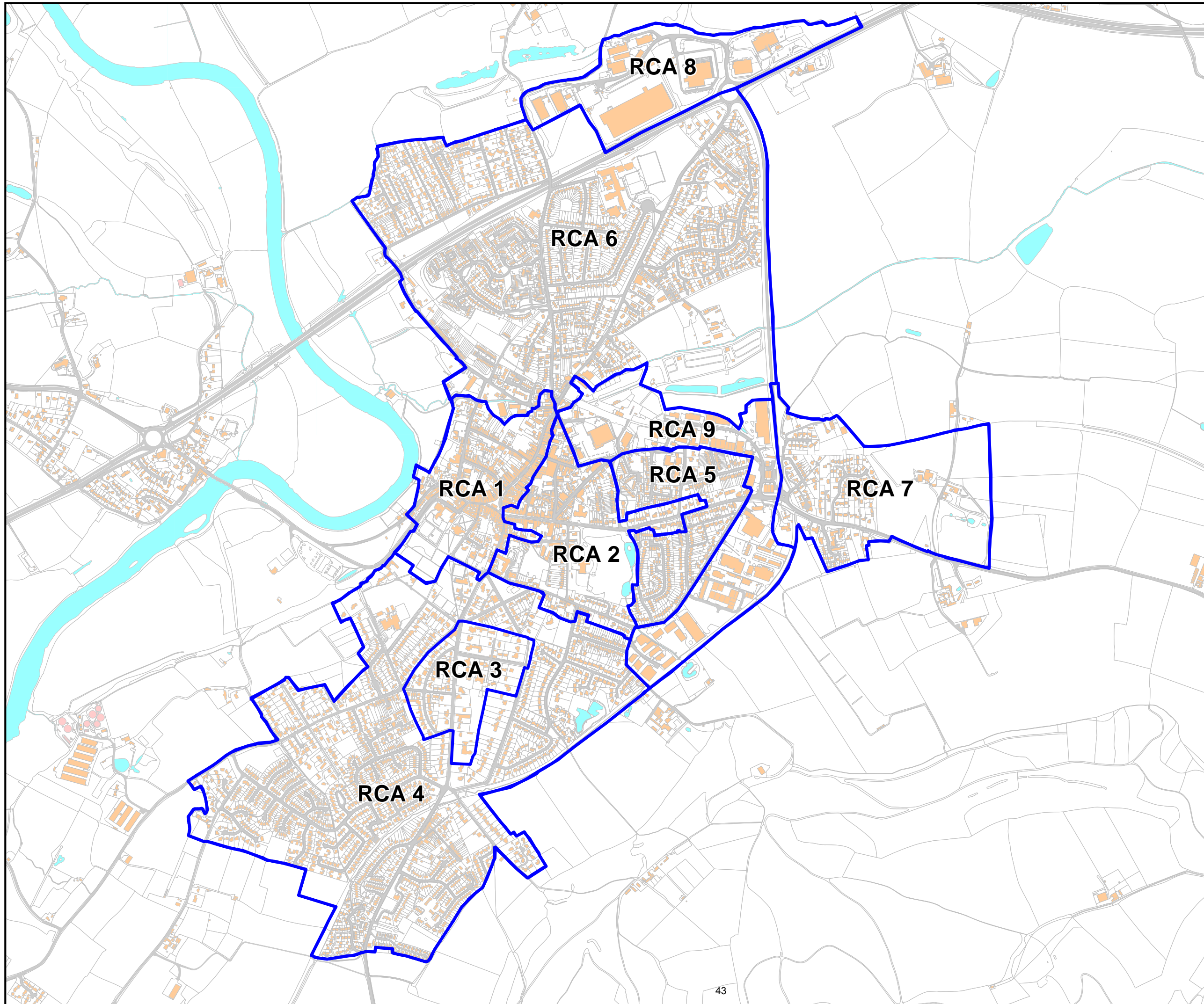
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Ross on Wye Rapid Townscape Assessment

Plan 4 : Character Areas

Legend

 Character Area



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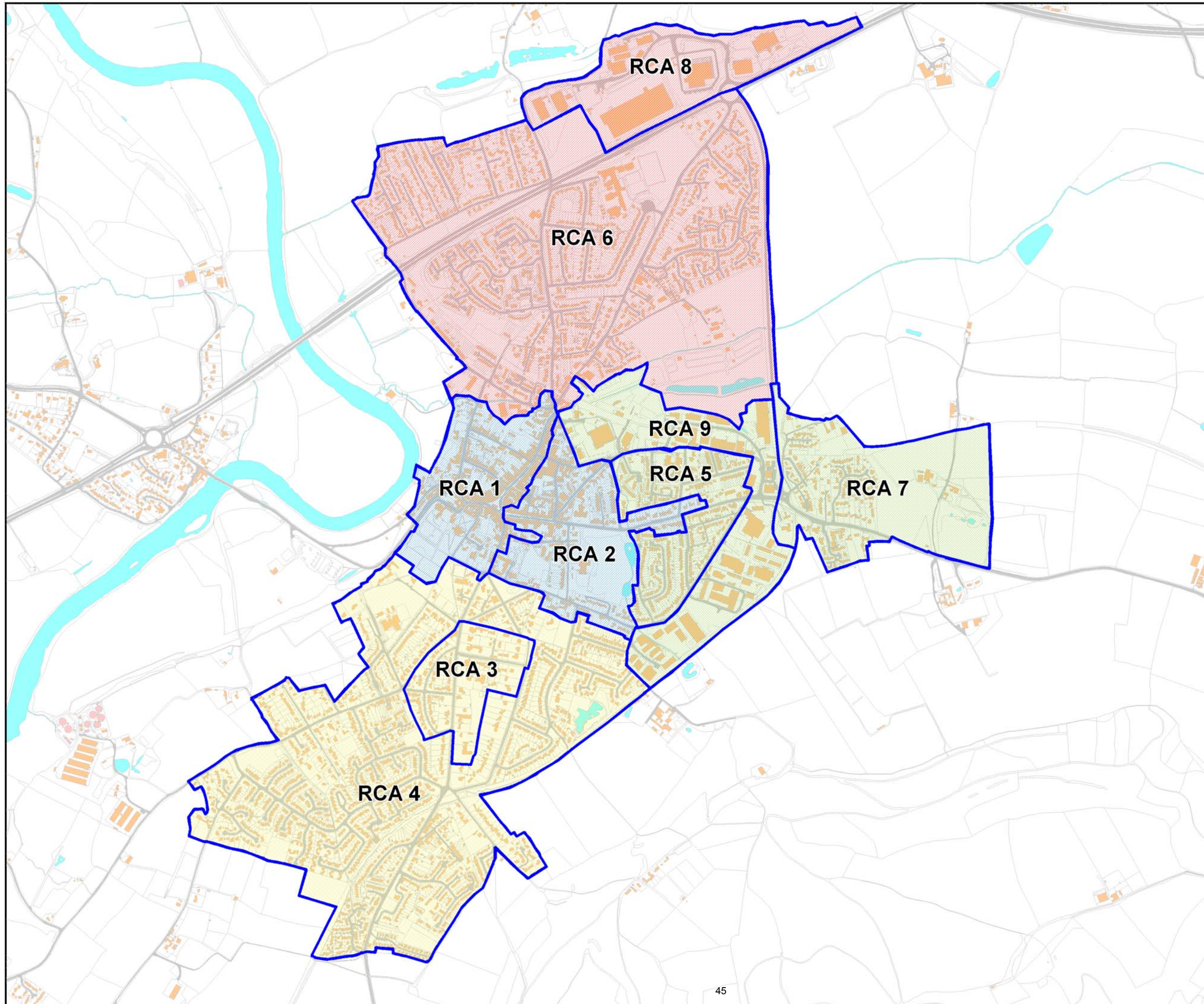
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Ross on Wye Rapid Townscape Assessment

Plan 4a: Character Area Groupings

Legend

-  Character Area
-  Central: RCA 1 & 2
-  South: RCA 3 & 4
-  East: RCA 5, 7 & 9
-  North: RCA 6 & 8



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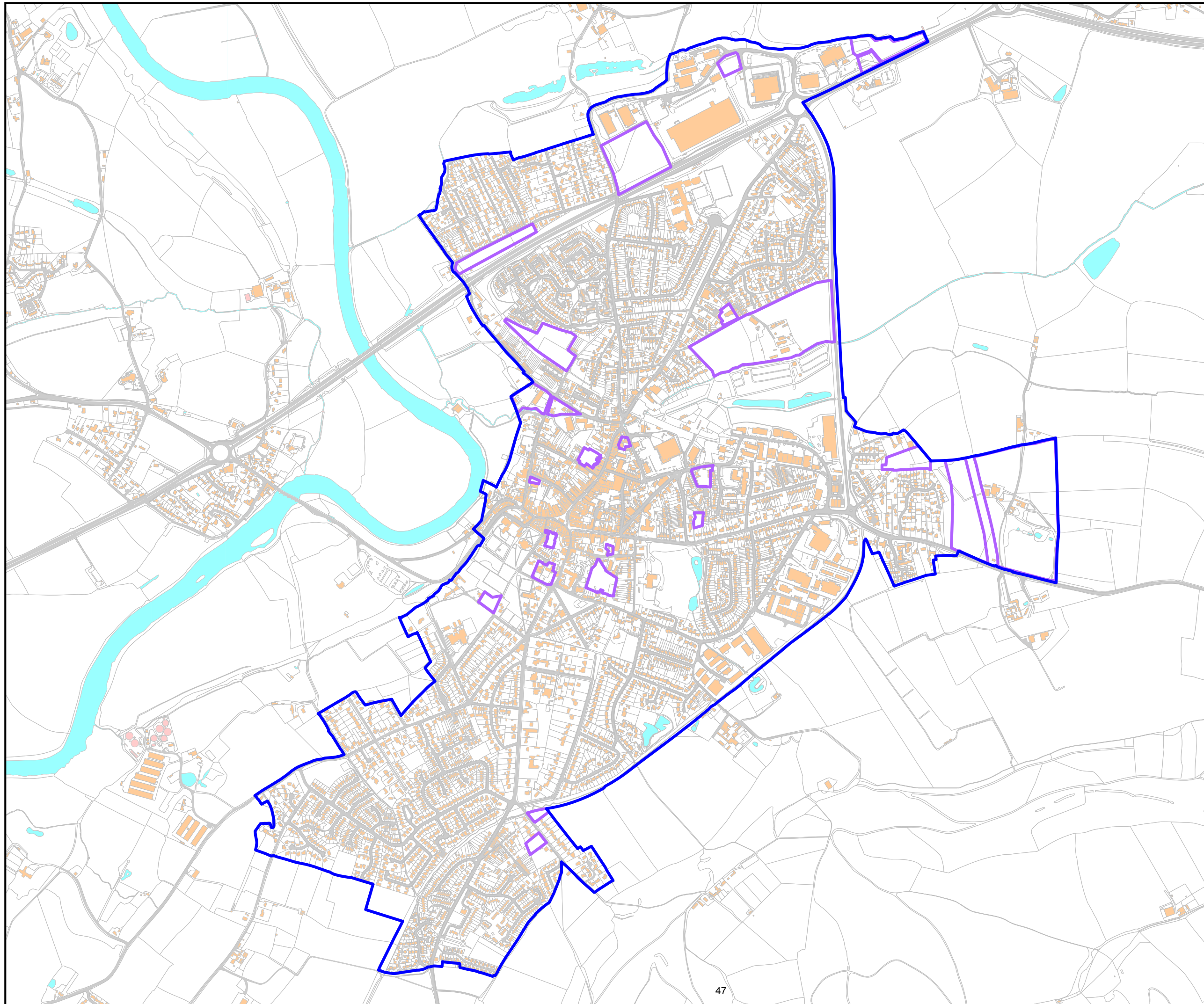
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Ross on Wye Rapid Townscape Assessment

Plan 5 : Development/ Enhancement Potential

Legend

-  Settlement Boundary
-  Development/ Enhancement Potential



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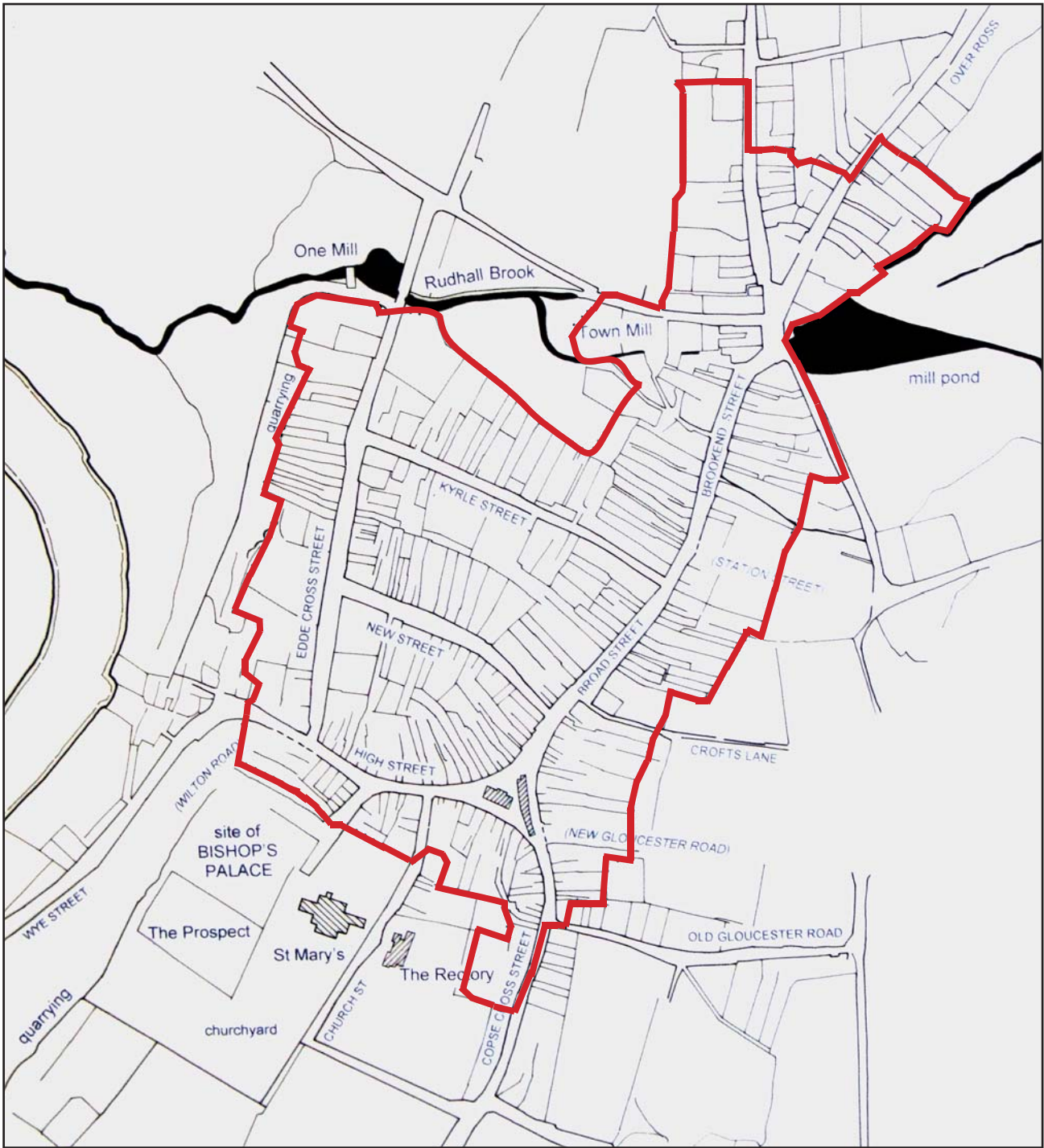
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Ross on Wye Rapid Townscape Assessment

Plan 6: Borough of Ross, 1823

Legend

 **Borough of Ross Boundary. 1823**



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APPENDIX V

Ross on Wye Character Area Appraisals

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RCA1 Ross Historic Centre Character Area

1. Character Statement

- 1.1 The area is characterised by the medieval plan-form of the central core consisting of Market Place, High Street and Broad Street/Brookend Street with its urban grain of long burgage or tenement plots with narrow frontages; the post-medieval grid of streets on the west side including New Street, Kyrle Street and Edde Cross Street with (generally) smaller residential plots; and the ecclesiastical precincts and green spaces on the southern promontory. The townscape of the historic centre is more heterogeneous than surrounding areas in terms of building dates (ranging from the 13th Century to the 21st Century), architectural style, materials, scale of development, and land-use.
Townscape type: RT 1, 2, 3, 10, 11 and 12

2. Location and Physical Setting

- 2.1 The character area coincides approximately with the boundaries of the early 19th Century Borough of Ross, extending west to the settlement boundary but north only as far as the Five Ways junction. It also includes the former episcopal and ecclesiastical precincts to the south. The borough occupied a north-facing slope, falling quite rapidly from a high point near the church to the floodplain of the Rudhall Brook. Several streams converge on the floodplain but their channels have been modified significantly. The area encompasses much of the commercial centre of the town based on Market Place, High Street, and Broad Street/Brookend Street. The southern promontory includes St Mary's parish church, the churchyard and burial ground; The Prospect gardens; and the Royal Hotel. This area is bounded on the east side by Copse Cross Street (but includes part of Old Gloucester Road), on the south side by Old Maid's Walk, and on the west side by the settlement boundary.
Landscape type: RL1 (elements of RL3)

3. Historical Development

- 3.1 The earliest archaeological evidence of human settlement within the character area comes from The Prospect where a recently excavated structure is dated to the Roman period (c. 60-420AD). The structure is interpreted as a stone tower, perhaps associated with a shrine or temple, and enclosed by a precinct wall. The tower was preceded by horse burials (also of the Roman period) and possible Iron Age rock-cut features.
- 3.2 At the time of the Norman Conquest the manor of Ross (*Rosse*) was held by the Bishop of Hereford. The Domesday Book (1086) records that the manor consisted of seven hides of arable land and 16 acres of meadowland (woodland was held by the king). The population was made up of a priest, 18 villagers, six smallholders and three slaves (a total of approximately 120 people, including families). Twenty-four ploughs were also recorded, one of which belonged to the Bishop. In addition, the manor included a mill. At this time the Ross economy was primarily agricultural with a related industrial element (indicated by the mill). It is likely that the Bishop maintained a manor house, or Bishop's Palace, at Ross at this time but the earliest documentary evidence for this dates to 1167. Archaeological evidence of the Bishop's Palace (substantial wall foundations) is dated c. 1200-1350AD. The palace

appears to have occupied the site of The Prospect gardens and the adjacent gardens of the Royal Hotel (formerly part of The Prospect).

- 3.3 The parish church of St Mary is located to the south east of the Bishop's Palace site. The building is dated to the 13th Century but may contain reused material from an earlier church. The presence of a priest, recorded in the Domesday Book, is indicative of an 11th Century church. The church precinct previously extended to the south east as far as Copse Cross Street (formerly Corpse Cross Street); much of this area has since been developed.
- 3.4 In 1138 the Bishop was granted the right to hold a market in his manor of Ross, and in 1241 the right to hold an annual fair. These activities indicate the increasing importance of a market economy at Ross and probably the development of an urban settlement. A rent roll for 1277-85 confirms this and records approximately 105 tenancies of burgage plots in Market Place, High Street, and Broad Street/Brookend Street including the mill (by this time consisting of two corn mills and a fulling mill). Tenants in Market Place included stallholders; within 100 years market stalls had been replaced by more permanent structures. The population of the borough of Ross in the late 13th Century is estimated at about 470. In 1305 the town sent two burgesses to Parliament at Westminster. It is likely, however, that the visitation of the Black Death in 1349 together with the absence of the Bishop and his retinue after 1356 had a detrimental effect on the economy of Ross in the mid 14th Century and for some time after. However, an additional mill (known, from the 18th Century, as One Mill) was established in the early 15th Century at the north end of Edde Cross Street (now Trenchard Street).
- 3.5 The 17th Century was a time of economic growth for Ross which may be related to the development of a local iron working industry and improved communications due to the construction of Wilton Bridge (c.1597) over the River Wye. The present sandstone Market Hall was built in Market Place c. 1660-70; at this time several earlier houses and the Boothall were demolished. Infill development at Underhill on the east side of Market Place, consisting of substantial timber-framed buildings, was probably undertaken in the late 16th/early 17th Century (demolished in the 19th Century). Intermittent development took place on Copse Cross Street and Old Gloucester Road between the 16th and 18th Century.
- 3.6 New Street and Kyrle Street were built up during the 17th and 18th Century (and later) forming a grid with Edde Cross Street (possibly in existence since 1339). New Street was previously a back lane servicing burgages at Market Place. The area west of Broad Street is thought to have been the site of late medieval metal working. John Kyrle, a local philanthropist eulogised as the 'Man of Ross', created The Prospect c. 1700 as a formal walled garden with three gateways for the recreation of the inhabitants of Ross and its visitors.
- 3.7 Further development took place during the 19th Century including the construction of "new" Gloucester Road (1825) and of Wilton Road (1833) creating an easier ascent from the floodplain of the Wye than the pre-existing Wye Street (formerly Dock Pitch or Dock Street). Royal Parade and the Royal Hotel were constructed in 1837 on the site of an earlier inn (and of the Bishop's Palace). The gardens at the rear of the hotel encroached upon The Prospect gardens. The Picturesque 'Gothick' sandstone rubble tower on Royal Parade and the high rubble wall on Wilton Street were also built at this time.

4. Townscape

- 4.1 The area is characterised by the medieval plan-form of the central core consisting of Market Place, High Street and Broad Street/Brookend Street with its urban grain of long burgage or tenement plots with narrow street frontages; the post-medieval grid of streets on the west side including New Street, Kyrle Street and Edde Cross Street with (generally) smaller residential plots; and the ecclesiastical precincts and green spaces to the south. The north-facing slope has been terraced with retaining walls of brick and sandstone. This has contributed to the preservation of medieval plot boundaries, particularly on Market Place, Broad Street and the north side of High Street. The townscape of the historic centre is more heterogeneous than surrounding areas in terms of building dates (ranging from the 13th Century to the 21st Century), architectural style, materials, scale of development, and land-use.
- 4.2 On the west side of the character area the floodplain forms a natural barrier to further residential development. To the south the churchyard, burial ground and The Prospect comprise a green buffer zone between the historic centre and later residential development further south. The northern and eastern boundaries of the character area are more permeable as a result of some historic linear development (Old Gloucester Road, Overcross Street, Brampton Street), later 19th Century development (including road-cutting) following the arrival of the railways, and some 20th Century development including building replacement.
- 4.3 *Central Core:* In High Street, Market Place and Broad Street many of the buildings are of 19th or 20th Century date (although an unknown number may have an earlier core) with front elevations of brick, painted brick, stucco or render (generally white or cream) under slate roofs; of three or four storeys (some with attics and dormer windows); with wood-framed sash windows, and most with shopfronts on the ground floor (a significant number of which date to the 19th Century). Buildings are set at the rear of a narrow footway and frontages are continuous. Market Hall (a Grade II* listed building and Scheduled Ancient Monument) occupies a prominent position in the centre of Market Place overlooking Broad Street. This landmark building is a two-storey structure of local red sandstone and ashlar with an open arcaded ground floor; it is linked to the east side of Market Place by a pedestrian precinct. Several pre-18th Century buildings with exposed timber-framed frontages are located on High Street, including John Kyrle's house (nos. 36-37, Grade II*) and The Saracen's Head (nos. 12-13, Grade II*). They are three-storey buildings with attics, close-set studding and rendered or roughcast panels, projecting upper floors, inserted sash windows and inserted shop windows at ground floor.
- 4.4 On Brookend Street buildings are also set at the rear of narrow footways. On the east side the frontage is continuous; on the west side it is discontinuous. This is, in part, the result of demolition to provide access to car parks on backland sites. The percentage of 18th Century and pre-18th Century buildings is higher in this area although many have been refronted in brick or painted brick (including nos. 25-32). Most buildings are of two or three storeys under slate roofs with inserted shopfronts at ground floor; many are painted or rendered in colours that include white (predominantly), pink and yellow. Brick buildings are less numerous and include several commercial

buildings of 20th Century construction. On the west side there is a single storey car sales showroom (1920s) with a wide frontage and large plate glass windows. A number of buildings have exposed frontages of local red sandstone. They include the following: Town Mill (18th Century, Grade II), a large three-storey former industrial building; no. 12 Brookend Street (18th Century, Grade II), a two-storey building with attics and dormer windows, a two-storey bay window and inserted modern shopfront; and no. 36 Brookend Street (18th Century, unlisted) a three-storey building of regular coursed sandstone cut to building brick size with sash windows and inserted modern shopfront. Number 28 Brookend (Grade II) is a pre-18th Century building with exposed timber-frame of close-set studding and plaster panels under a slate roof. It is of two storeys with attic and dormer window, casement windows and projecting upper floor.

- 4.5 *Post-medieval Grid:* In the western part of the character area (New Street, Kyrle Street and Edde Cross Street) a significant number of buildings date to the 18th or early 19th Century with only a small number of pre-18th Century date. At the west end (south side) of New Street and Kyrle Street there are concentrations of small houses of early 19th (or late 18th) Century date. Built individually, or in groups of up to four, they form a continuous row set at the rear of a narrow footway. The houses are of two or three storeys under slate (predominantly) or tiled pitched roofs with an irregular roofscape punctuated by brick chimneys. Most are rendered, including roughcast and stucco, and painted in white or pastel shades (cream, pink, lavender, blue and green). Several houses on New Street have cellars with cast iron covers set into the footway. A number of houses (dating from the 17th to the 19th Century) are constructed of local red sandstone. They include, on Edde Cross Street: Pye's Almshouses (17th Century, Grade II), a terrace of four small two-storey houses; and Tower House, formerly no. 5 Rothsay Court (early 18th Century, Grade II), a two-storey house; on New Street: nos. 3-4 (early 19th Century, Grade II), two adjoining ashlar houses of two storeys; no. 47, the old gaol (early 19th Century, Grade II*), a small two-storey building of rubble with tall pointed windows. Large buildings include, on Edde Cross Street: the former Swan Hotel, now Herefordshire Council offices (18th/early 19th Century, unlisted), a stuccoed building of three storeys; Merton House (early 19th Century, Grade II), a three-storey hotel with single-storey wings; on New Street: Telford House (early 19th Century, Grade II), now commercial premises but during the 19th Century used as the dispensary and cottage hospital, a stuccoed three-storey house of five bays set on a raised forecourt. At the east end of New Street and Kyrle Street former burgage plots and buildings extend back from frontages on Broad Street. In some cases plots have been sub-divided and buildings at the rear face onto New Street or Kyrle Street.
- 4.6 There are a number of gaps in the streetscape in the western part of the character area, most of which are the sites of surface car parks (or access to car parks on backland sites). Such gaps occur on the north (site of the former gas works) and south sides of Kyrle Street; the north side of New Street; and the west side of Edde Cross Street opposite Kyrle Street.
- 4.7 *Ecclesiastical Precincts:* The southern promontory is dominated by the medieval parish church of St Mary (13th Century, Grade I). The building, constructed of local sandstone and ashlar with a graceful spire, is a landmark building that can be seen from the floodplain to the west. The church is set in an extensive landscaped green space consisting of the churchyard and burial

ground surrounded by sandstone rubble walls (Grade II), and The Prospect walled garden (walls, Grade II; south gate, Grade II*; north west gate, Grade II). To the west of the church is The Royal Hotel (1837, Grade II) a large stuccoed building of three storeys with prominent gables. Outbuildings are of sandstone rubble with stuccoed front elevations. The Gazebo Tower, a crenellated sandstone tower, and adjoining high sandstone wall (19th Century, Grade II) stand opposite the Royal Hotel and extend along Wilton Street to the junction with High Street giving the illusion of a medieval town wall.

- 4.8 St Mary's Street and Church Street (north end) give access to the ecclesiastical area from High Street. Both are lined by town houses of 18th or early 19th Century date and architectural style, of two or, more commonly, three storeys, of stucco or brick. They are set at the rear of narrow footways. Rudhall Almshouses, Church Street (rebuilt 1575, Grade II*), are a row of two-storey red sandstone cottages with gablets and casement windows. Church Row is within the churchyard walls. It is lined on the north side by St Mary's Hall (18th Century, Grade II), a large two-storey redbrick former grammar school, a two-storey roughcast cottage (early 19th Century, Grade II), and a two-storey stuccoed house (early 19th Century, Grade II).
- 4.9 The eastern part of the ecclesiastical precinct, formerly the site of the Rectory and its extensive gardens, has been redeveloped in the 20th Century. It is now the site of the new rectory, a large two-storey redbrick house with a garden enclosed by a high sandstone wall; Church Close, a cul-de-sac with post 1950s two-storey brick semi-detached houses with small front gardens enclosed by hedges, and a row of small brick-built 'sheltered' houses; the police station, a plain brick two-storey building with hipped roof and prominent central entrance, and the health centre, a one- and two-storey painted building. Both are set in landscaped grounds with parking areas. The original sandstone rubble rectory garden wall has been retained on Church Street and Old Maid's Row.
- 4.10 On the east side of the former rectory garden (with the rear elevation on Copse Cross Street) are Webbe's Almshouses (early 17th Century, Grade II), a row of small two-storey cottages built of local red sandstone. Adjoining the almshouses on the south side is Clairville House, a large two-storey house with a large garden on the south side enclosed by a brick wall. Further north are several large two- or three-storey houses (18th/19th Century, 17th Century in part) of sandstone rubble and/or roughcast and a former warehouse building (18th Century, unlisted) of sandstone rubble, currently under conversion to residential use. In contrast, on the east side of Copse Cross Street, is a row of coloured stucco cottages (17th/18th Century, Grade II), and two larger three storey-storey houses: one is a stuccoed building (18th Century, Grade II) with symmetrical front elevation; the other house (18th Century, Grade II) is currently undergoing renovation.
- 4.11 *Peripheral Areas:* Access to the historic centre from the west is by way of Wye Street and Wilton Road. Wye Street falls steeply towards the floodplain from the junction with Wilton Street. On the north side, The Man of Ross Inn (Grade II) is a three-storey building of stucco over sandstone and brick with a 17th Century core; a single-storey extension has a stuccoed Dutch gable. Extending west down slope is a continuous sequence of large three-storey 18th or early 19th houses (all Grade II), of white, cream or yellow stucco, at least one of which has a 17th Century core, and a 19th Century two-storey building (Grade II) of red sandstone with crenellations. On the south side, the

former Castle Vaults public house (early 19th Century, Grade II), now flats, is a three-storey building of stucco over sandstone with multiple steep gables that echo the gables of the Royal Hotel. The theme of steep gables is continued along Wilton Road by Leobhan, a distinctive 21st Century residence of one and two storeys with an extensive street frontage. Extending west down slope on Wye Street is a row of two- and three-storey houses (nos. 2-7, early 19th Century, all Grade II) of brick or stucco. The former British and Foreign School (mid 19th Century, Grade II) is a landmark four-storey building of red sandstone. Extending further down slope is row of three-storey houses (nos. 11-14, 19th Century, all Grade II) of sandstone with small, fenced forecourts.

- 4.12 Old Gloucester Road has a narrow access from High Street and a very narrow footway on the north side only. On the north side are a number of small two- and three-storey rendered houses, including Perrocks Almshouses (founded 1510, altered and restored in the 19th Century and mid 20th Century, unlisted), a one-and-a-half storey rendered building (in green) with gablets and symmetrical front elevation. Further east is the former Walter Scott Charity School (early 18th Century, Grade II*), a large two-storey brick building of symmetrical proportions, set back behind a low brick wall. It is currently under redevelopment for commercial use.
- 14.13 *Density and Massing:* Throughout much of the character area townscape density is high and street frontages are generally continuous. Density is lower on the south side of Kyrle Street, the edge of the floodplain; on the west side of Edde Cross Street where there are several large gardens, steep slopes and an area of earlier quarrying activity; and in the southern part of the area where there are large open spaces (the churchyard, burial ground, and The Prospect gardens). Most buildings are of two or three storeys, with a concentration of four-storey buildings on High Street and Market Place. Street frontages are generally narrow in the historic core; intermittent wide frontages on Market Place and High Street (south side) are the result of 19th/20th Century redevelopment. Continuous wide frontages are located on Wye Street, Wilton Road and St Mary's Street.
- 14.14 *Green Spaces:* Open green spaces with public access are located in the southern part of the character area; they include St Mary's churchyard and burial ground, and The Prospect gardens. Here, sandstone rubble walls with impressive gateways, and a large number of mature trees create a sense of enclosure and intimacy. The tranquillity of this area contrasts with the bustling activities of the adjacent commercial centre. Memorial Gardens is a smaller open space that occupies the steep west-facing slope off Wye Street. These open spaces are important public amenities in an otherwise densely occupied area.
- 14.15 *Views:* The most celebrated view of the character area is that looking east from the A40 trunk road and the floodplain towards the promontory. The steeple of St Mary's parish church, the gables of the Royal Hotel and the crenellated Gazebo Tower punctuate the skyline while houses of sandstone and pastel render climb up the slope from the floodplain. From The Prospect and Royal Parade there are extensive views across the Wye floodplain to distant Welsh hills.

5. Heritage Assets and Sense of Place

5.1 Heritage assets include:

- *Scheduled Monuments* (2): Market Hall (17th Century), Market Place; Cross (14th Century) in the churchyard of St Mary
- *Grade I Listed Buildings* (1): Parish Church of St Mary (13th Century)
- *Grade II* Listed Buildings* (8): Cross in the churchyard of St Mary; nos. 12-13 High Street, formerly The Saracen's Head; nos. 34-36 High Street, Man of Ross House; Market Hall, Market Place; no. 47 New Street, The Old Gaol; Walter Scott Charity School, Old Gloucester Road; Gate Piers in the east wall of The Prospect; Gate in the south wall of The Prospect
- *Grade II Listed Buildings* (129): the majority are houses of 18th or 19th Century date, many of which have been converted to commercial use, particularly with shops on the ground floor; also hotels and inns, places of worship, almshouses, former schools, a former mill, a sandstone tower (19th Century), sandstone rubble walls (18th and 19th Century), a significant number of timber-framed buildings of pre-18th Century date, and a churchyard cross (14th Century)
- *Conservation Area*: the character area is within the boundaries of the Ross-on-Wye conservation area.

5.2 The area has a strong sense of place informed by its history, architecture, medieval plan-form, and natural setting overlooking the Wye Valley, and is of significant interest. The use of local red sandstone in the construction of buildings and boundary walls well into the 19th Century is a significant part of the character of the area. Cast iron street furniture, including cellar covers and water channels, manufactured at local foundries such as Perkins and Bellamy, is located throughout the character area.

6. Development and/or Enhancement Potential

6.1 The following areas are of development and/or enhancement potential:

- Edde Cross Street at the junction with New Street, a hard-surfaced open space used as a private car park: a limited residential development to restore the frontage of New Street including the corner with Edde Cross Street and to compliment the streetscape on the opposite side of New Street. This could consist of a short row of small two-storey houses, rendered or roughcast in white or cream under pitched roofs, set at the rear of the footway with small gardens and parking places at the rear
- Kyrle Street (north side), a larger hard-surfaced space used as a private car park: residential development on Kyrle Street to restore the street frontage. This could consist of a short row of small two-storey houses, rendered or roughcast in white or cream under pitched roofs, set at the rear of the footway with small gardens at the rear; on a larger site at the rear, several short rows of two- or three-storey houses under pitched roofs with gardens at the rear, a small landscaped area and parking areas
- Church Street (east side behind Rudhall Almshouses), an open space used as a private car park: a residential development. This could consist of short rows of three-storey houses or flats with landscaping and parking areas
- Old Maid's Walk, a site presently occupied by the health centre and the police station with landscaped areas and parking screened by a high sandstone rubble wall: a residential development. This could consist of short rows of three-storey houses and/or flats of brick under hipped roofs

with landscaping and parking areas. This suggestion assumes that the health centre can be transferred to the hospital site, and the police station transferred to an alternative site (as has been done in Leominster and is proposed in Hereford).

- 6.2 A rapid street survey of the occupancy or use of upper floors of premises in the Market Place/Broad Street area indicated that upper floors (mainly 2nd floor level) of up to twenty premises may be unoccupied or unused (based on the absence of curtains or blinds and other visible furnishings). It is proposed that the letting of upper floors as residential apartments would increase the availability of residential accommodation in this area.

7. Issues

- 7.1 The eastern end of High Street is of a very different character to the western end. At the western end buildings are of three or four storeys, many with prominent doorcases, architectural dressings and 19th Century shopfronts. Businesses, including retail shops and services (financial and hospitality) appear to be well patronised. At the eastern end buildings are of two or three storeys with plainer frontages; business is well represented by take-away restaurants and gift shops; one or more premises appear to be vacant at any one time. The area has, generally, a run-down and transitory appearance. There is evidence, however, of a higher-status history. Several former hotels or inns are located here (one named, imposingly, King Georges's Rest) and shopfronts retain 19th Century design features. To date, an enhancement scheme has been undertaken on one former inn on the corner with Old Gloucester Road. It is suggested that a more general enhancement scheme be undertaken here, to include residential occupation in upper floors, with the intention of improving the townscape, promoting business, and revitalizing the area.
- 7.2 The following areas are of poor townscape quality. Planning permission has been granted but the proposed developments are not informed by the townscape character of the area and may not enhance the character:
- Kyrle Street (south side), site of a commercial garage (former gas works site): proposed residential development (DCSE2008/2817/C, DCSE2008/2815/F)
 - Brookend Street (west side) site of car sales showroom with workshops and car park at rear: proposed commercial (supermarket) development (DCSE2007/2555/C, DCSE2008/2730/F).
- 7.3 The following changes to listed buildings are examples of loss of character:
- Nos. 21-22 Brookend Street (Grade II): replacement aluminium windows and swan-necked lamps to illuminate fascia boards
 - No. 25 Brookend Street (Grade II): prominent graffiti-style murals of modern music themes
 - Tower House (formerly flat no. 5, Rothsay Court, Grade II): Edde Cross Street: removal of stucco to expose sandstone rubble
 - No. 8 Edde Cross Street (Grade II): replacement aluminium windows.

RCA2 East Central Ross-Gloucester Road Character Area

1. Character Statement

- 1.1 The area is characterised by 19th Century residential development in the form of terraced housing and detached villas, and later 20th Century development including residential schemes (two- and three-storey flats, detached houses), commercial (particularly retail) development and civic (particularly medical) services.

Townscape type: RT3, 4 and 12 (elements of RT2, 6, 10 and 11)

2. Location and Physical Setting

- 2.1 The character area lies on the east side of the historic town centre. The land generally falls to the east and north from a high point near the north end of Alton Street. The Small Brook flows north along the east side of the character area to the floodplain of the Rudhall Brook. Two historic routes, Alton Street and Old Gloucester Road, are aligned east-west through the character area. Gloucester Road, which replaced an earlier main route in the 19th Century, is now the area's main shopping street. The eastern part of the character area is mainly residential, with retail, commercial and civic services, and some residential, in the western part.

Landscape type: RL1 and 2

3. Historical Development

- 3.1 Residential development in the character area, consisting of intermittent linear settlement on Alton Street and Old Gloucester Road, was established by the 18th Century and continued into the 19th Century. During the early 19th Century The Chase, a large house with outbuildings, was built on the east side of Chase Road with extensive grounds extending east to the Small Brook and the site of Chase Mill, in operation between the late 17th Century and the mid 19th Century. By the early 19th Century there was also a small group of houses and gardens at Green Pits near the junction of the present Station Street and School Lane. At this time much of the character area was rural or semi-rural in character consisting of small fields and closes, at least some of which were given over to arable and grazing, and plant nurseries and gardens.
- 3.2 Old Gloucester Road was a main route extending through the character area up until the early 19th Century. At its western end it was suburban in character, lined by houses and gardens. The present Millbrook Street and Smallbrook Road were rural roads, while School Lane and Crofts Lane were country lanes. A major sequence of road building began in 1825 with the construction of the "new" Gloucester Road (the western section of the former road survives as Old Gloucester Road). In 1855 Station Street was constructed to link the new railway station, since demolished (the site is located in RCA7.2 Ashburton Industrial/Commercial Area), with the town's commercial centre, and by 1887 Henry Street and Cantilupe Street had been laid out.
- 3.3 Road building coincided with major industrial and residential developments in the character area at this time. The Alton Court Brewery was established on Station Street with its brewery on the north side and malting house on the south side; the brewery tap ("off licence") was located on Millpond Street. The Perkins and Bellamy Iron Foundry operated on Crofts Lane, a smithy on Gloucester Road and other small industrial sites on Millpond Road.

Residential development was undertaken on Station Street, Millpond Street, Smallbrook Road, Gloucester Road, Crofts Lane and Henry Street. Other 19th Century developments included a cottage hospital (1878, since demolished) and dispensary on Gloucester Road, a workhouse (1837, the boardroom only survives) on Alton Street, the Congregational Chapel (1868) on Gloucester Road, and the Board School (1874, since demolished) on Cantilupe Road linked by lanes to other areas of the town. During the early 20th Century Gloucester Road developed as an important commercial and service centre with shops, banks, a post office and a hotel. Further residential development took place on Gloucester Road, Chase Road and Alton Street.

- 3.4 A number of changes have occurred in the character area during the 20th Century. Industrial activity, represented by the brewery and the foundry, no longer takes place. The brewery on Station Street has been demolished and replaced by a residential development. The adjacent malting house now contains a supermarket and is adjoined by a retail development. Nearby properties and gardens on the south side have been replaced by a surface car park. The foundry at Crofts Lane has been demolished and replaced by commercial development. The school has been demolished and replaced by a public library and a small housing development; the cottage hospital has been demolished and replaced by a retirement home; the workhouse has been replaced by a new hospital and adjacent medical surgery (part of it survives on Alton Street). Other later 20th Century developments include shops and commercial premises on the south side of Gloucester Road, light industrial development on Old Gloucester Road, and some additional residential development on Alton Street.

4. Townscape

- 4.1 The area today is characterised by retail/commercial development on the western section of Gloucester Road and residential development throughout much of the remainder of the area. There are smaller pockets of retail development at Crofts Lane and south of Station Street, light industrial on Millpond Street, and civic services on Cantilupe Street (library), Hill Street (youth services) and the west end of Alton Street (medical services).
- 4.2 *Gloucester Road area:* On the commercial section of Gloucester Road most buildings are of two or three storeys with several of one. The street frontage is continuous with buildings set at the rear of the footway. An extensive modern retail development on the south side of the street is set back from the original (19th Century) building line. On the north side of the street most buildings are of 19th Century date; on the south side 20th Century redevelopment is more extensive. Buildings are of brick, painted brick and render, and several of sandstone rubble, generally under slate roofs. Most buildings have a shopfront, a number of which retain original features, including pilasters, consoles, cornice and fascia. There are a number of prominent 19th Century buildings of redbrick or sandstone rubble (including a former Victorian neo-Gothic church), with ashlar or redbrick dressings, gables and oriel windows at the first floor. Density on this section of Gloucester Road is high.
- 4.3 Further east Gloucester Road is suburban in character. It is lined by late 19th/early 20th Century two-storey redbrick villas (detached, semi-detached and several short rows) with polychrome brick dressings under pitched slate

roofs on large or adequate plots with front gardens enclosed by brick and sandstone walls and hedges. Similar houses are located on Chase Road, together with two-storey sandstone outbuildings associated with The Chase. On Woodview Lane and Smallbrook Road there are terraces of 19th Century two-storey houses of redbrick, some with yellow brick or stone dressings, and slate roofs. They are set on narrow plots with small front gardens or forecourts with brick walls. Several detached houses of early 20th Century brick construction on larger plots are located on Smallbrook Road. On the south side of Gloucester Road is the Chase Hotel, an early 19th Century neo-Classical building set in landscaped grounds. Elsewhere in the Gloucester Road area there are several later 20th Century houses on infill sites. Old Gloucester Road serves as a back lane to commercial buildings fronting onto Gloucester Road. It is also the location of several single-storey industrial buildings with hard forecourts, and a terrace of 19th Century two-storey houses of redbrick with polychrome dressing and slate roofs on very small plots set at rear of a narrow footway. Density is generally lower on the eastern section of Gloucester Road.

- 4.4 *Station Street area:* Station Street (west) is lined by buildings of two or three storeys, with an almost continuous frontage, set at the rear of the footway on small plots. Most buildings are rendered in white; a distinctive group is of redbrick with burnt headers. All display diversity in terms of design features and dressings. The Maltings (Grade II) is a large three-storey 19th Century former brewery building of buff brick with black brick dressings. Directly opposite is a large three-storey 21st Century retirement residence of brick and roughcast. At the east end of Station Street (south side) is a small group of 18th/19th Century houses of brick and sandstone rubble, of irregular alignment set on irregular plots enclosed by rubble walls extending along School Lane. The development of this area predates the cutting of Station Street. On Millpond Road there are three groups of two-storey houses of different designs and materials. They include a terrace of 19th Century redbrick houses with polychrome brick dressings and slate roofs on very small plots set at the rear of a very narrow footway with a low brick protective wall; a terrace of 19th Century stone houses with slate roofs on irregular plots with small forecourts; two pairs of 1920s-30s semi-detached houses, rendered under tile roofs, on irregular plots with very small front gardens and iron railings. There are also several 19th Century brick industrial buildings and a shop, of one and two storeys, set at the rear of the footway. Street frontages on Henry Street and Cantilupe Road are discontinuous and characterised by significant variability in terms of building use (including residential, civic and commercial), architectural design and massing.
- 4.5 On Henry Street residential buildings include short terraces of 19th Century two- and three-storey houses, of redbrick with stone or stucco dressings under slate roofs, on small plots with narrow front gardens and brick boundary, or set directly at the rear of the footway, and also, on infill plots, short terraces of 20th/21st Century two-storey brick houses with small front gardens or forecourts behind brick walls. Large commercial buildings include the extensive three-storey side elevation of The Maltings, and a 19th Century three-storey public house of painted brick with contrasting dressings on a prominent corner side. A 19th Century place of worship, built of local red sandstone, faces the street but is surrounded on three sides by surface car parks created on the tails of former burgage plots. Several mature trees overhang the street and soften the townscape.

- 4.6 Croft Lane, a paved pedestrian route on the west side of Henry Street, is flanked by terraces of 19th Century two-storey houses of redbrick (some painted or rendered) with stone dressings and tile roofs set on narrow or adequate plots with small front gardens behind brick or rendered walls. Hedges, shrubs and small trees soften the townscape, complement the paving, and are of an appropriate scale for the locality.
- 4.7 On Cantilupe Street residential buildings include a large 20th/21st Century three-storey development in brick, render and false timber framing, and several pairs of semi-detached two-storey houses of early and mid 20th Century date, of redbrick or roughcast, on adequate plots with front gardens or small forecourts behind rubble walls. Commercial buildings include several short rows of early and late 20th Century shops and showrooms with rendered or painted frontages and plate glass windows. Other buildings include a 19th century chapel of local red sandstone and an adjacent 20th Century public library of pink blocks under a shallow pitched roof. Both of these buildings back onto Henry Street.
- 4.8 *Alton Street.* The historic character of Alton Street is represented by its 18th and 19th Century houses. On the south side of the street two- and three-storey houses and cottages of sandstone rubble, some of roughcast, under shallow pitched slate roofs are set on plots of variable size. Most are set at the rear of a narrow footway. A large three-storey detached house (no. 36, Grade II) has a symmetrical Georgian frontage with sash windows, a central entrance with pediment, and a small front garden. Groups of houses linked by rubble walls present an almost continuous frontage and are complemented by high rubble walls on the opposite side of the street. Overhanging trees and shrubs soften the townscape.
- 4.9 On the north side of the street the townscape is more variable. At the south end post 1950s detached two-storey houses and bungalows of brick under pitched tile roofs are set on adequate plots behind front gardens. At the north end is the site of the community hospital, a large post 1950s two-storey brick building with extensive surface car parks. Adjacent are a post 1950s single-storey surgery building of brick, and an early 20th Century two-storey workhouse building, with painted ground floor and ashlar, above under a hipped slate roof. The building is of symmetrical proportions with an advanced central bay under a pediment. There are a number of residential buildings in this area of very different design including an 18th Century (and later) group of one- and two-storey buildings (Grade II) of red sandstone with slate roofs, set around a courtyard with a porch and high stone walls; a short terrace of early 20th Century two-storey cottages of brick and roughcast under tiled roofs with sweeping gables on narrow plots with small front gardens and hedges; a late 19th Century two-storey house of redbrick with stone and polychrome brick dressings, tile roof and gables, and several 18th or 19th Century roughcast houses, all set at the back of a narrow footway.
- 4.10 *Density and Massing:* In the western part of the character area, particularly at Station Street (west end), Gloucester Road (west end), Henry Street (north end) density is generally high to very high. In the eastern part, density is generally moderate to low except in parts of Smallbrook Road, Woodview Lane, Cantilupe Street and Alton Street (areas of two- or three-storey terraced houses and flats) where density is higher.

4.11 *Green Spaces*: There are two large green spaces in the character area; both are in private ownership:

- The landscaped grounds of the Chase Hotel located east of Chase Road; trees within the grounds are the subjects of a group Tree Preservation Order
- A paddock south of Old Gloucester Road.

4.12 *Views*: Within the character area views are restricted due to the enclosed character of the area. From Alton Street there are distant views of the wooded uplands of Penyard Park framed by the stone walls and buildings, and garden trees, of the immediate area.

5. Heritage Assets and Sense of Place

5.1 There are four Listed buildings in the character area; all are Grade II. They include a 19th Century brewery building on Station Road (The Maltings), and three residential buildings of 18th and early 19th Century date on Alton Street. Much of the area falls within the Ross-on-Wye conservation area. Mature trees in the landscaped grounds of the Chase Hotel are the subjects of a group Tree Preservation Order.

5.2 The area has a strong sense of identity, due particularly to its Victorian (later 19th Century) development. The following areas, all within the Ross-on-Wye conservation area, are of significant interest:

- Crofts Lane (east end): terraces of 19th Century redbrick houses with small front gardens, hedges, shrubs and small trees, and brick or rendered boundary walls
- Alton Street: groups of 18th and 19th Century two- and three-storey houses and cottages of sandstone rubble and some roughcast, set at the rear of a narrow footway, linked by rubble walls with overhanging trees and shrubs
- School Lane/Green Pits area: a small group of 18th/19th Century houses of brick and sandstone rubble, of irregular alignment, set on irregular plots enclosed by rubble walls extending along School Lane.

6. Development and/or Enhancement Potential

6.1 The following areas may be of development or enhancement potential:

- Millpond Street, a row of 19th Century brick industrial buildings (adjoining a 19th Century residential terrace), an open yard and a late 20th Century light industrial building: a small-scale residential development of two-storey terraced houses retaining the present scale and enhancing the street frontage
- Old Gloucester Road at the rear of 30 and 31a and b Gloucester Road, a yard with several light industrial or storage buildings: a small-scale development of two-storey terraced houses that enhances the street frontage and complements the townscape further west on this street
- A green space (paddock) in private ownership accessed from Old Gloucester Road: a residential development of medium density, with landscaping, that complements the adjacent residential area, e.g., two-storey semi-detached houses on adequate plots, with access from Alton Street.

7. Issues

- 7.1 Insensitive developments on infill sites that do not respect the local townscape character are likely to be detrimental. For example, permission has been granted for residential development (DCSE2007/0382/O) on land at the rear of the former Rosswyn Hotel, High Street with access from Old Gloucester Road where the proposed street frontage includes a wide-span carriageway entrance of inappropriate scale.

RCA3 Ashfield Character Area

1. Character Statement

- 1.1 The area is characterised by 19th Century residential expansion in the form of Victorian suburban villas and gardens development consisting of large detached houses on generous plots with mature gardens, trees and bushes. Many of the houses are built of sandstone in High Victorian style. Stone rubble walls, together with hedges, are typical boundary features in this area. Residential development has continued in the later 20th Century, generally involving the sub-division of large residential plots.
Townscape type: RT4, 8 and 10 (elements of RT11 and 12)

2. Location and Physical Setting

- 2.1 The character area is located to the south of Ross Historic Centre on the promontory plateau that falls gently to the south. Walford Road (B4234), an access route to the town centre from the south, extends through the centre of the area. Residential development began in the area in the 19th Century, and it is surrounded by areas of 20th Century development.
Landscape type: RL2

3. Historical Development

- 3.1 During the early 19th Century the area was rural in character consisting primarily of enclosed fields, including arable, meadowland and some orcharding. Two roads extended through the area, the present Walford Road and Archenfield Road. Cheven Hall (now Chevenhall) was the only residential building in the area at this time. The house and outbuildings, gardens, an orchard and paddocks, were located on Walford Road in the centre of the character area.
- 3.2 By the end of the 19th Century the major streets seen in Ashfield today had been constructed, including Ashfield Road, Ashfield Crescent, Palmerston Road, Eastfield Road and The Avenue, large residential plots had been laid out, and most plots had been built on. During the early 20th Century several more houses were constructed on undeveloped plots in the south western part of the character area. Since World War II a significant number of houses have been built on sub-divided plots throughout much of the character area, extensions have been added to some older houses, and a primary school has been built on land adjacent to St Joseph's Convent (formerly Lebanon, more recently Green Hayes). Several of the larger houses have undergone change of use from private residential to, for example, nursing home, hotel, club, and convent.

4. Townscape

- 4.1 The area is characterised by 19th Century residential expansion in the form of Victorian suburban villas and gardens development consisting of large detached houses on generous plots with mature gardens, trees and bushes. Many of the houses are built of sandstone in High Victorian style. Stone rubble walls, together with hedges, are typical boundary features in this area.
- 4.2 On the east side of Walford Road, the largest houses in the area are set back from the road on large rectangular plots with driveways and mature gardens.

Only Chevenhall, the oldest house in the area, is set closer to the road. Examples of larger 19th Century two-storey houses include The Chasedale Hotel (formerly Chasedale), built of sandstone under hipped slate roof in the Victorian neo-Classical style with symmetrical front elevation and central entrance with portico; and St Joseph's Convent, built of red and grey sandstone under hipped slate roof in Victorian Gothic style with two-storey central porch and hexagonal bays at each corner under conical roofs with finials.

- 4.3 To the west of Walford Road there is a wider variety of architectural styles, building materials and plot sizes including a number of long narrow plots. Most houses are detached and set behind a small front garden with larger gardens at the side or rear. Large 19th Century houses include The Craig, built of sandstone with ashlar dressings under pitched slate roofs in Italianate style with a four-storey tower; Ashfield Lodge and Lyndhurst Lodge, semi-detached villas in eclectic Victorian style, rendered with contrasting dressings under pyramidal slate roof with observation platform and Moorish cupola; Red House, of red brick with polychromatic detailing under a plain tiled roof. Smaller houses, including modern (post 1950s) houses and bungalows are generally of brick under slate or tile roofs.
- 4.4 *Density and Massing:* On the east side of Walton Road residential housing density is fairly low where large detached two-storey 19th Century houses occupy large plots. However, the sub-division of large plots and construction of smaller, modern houses on small plots has resulted in an increase in density. Density is also higher in the area west of Walton Road where houses and plots are generally smaller, and residences include semi-detached houses and several two-storey blocks of flats.
- 4.5 *Green Spaces and Views:* Mature gardens with trees and shrubs are characteristic of the character and create a sense of enclosure that, together with the concentric grid street plan, tends to limit views within and out of the character area. The playing field of St Joseph's RC Primary School is a large private green space surrounded by private residential plots. There are no large public green spaces in the character area.

5. Heritage Assets and Sense of Place

- 5.1 The character area is located within the Ross-on-Wye conservation area. There are no listed buildings within the character area but a number of large 19th Century houses have been proposed as buildings of local interest. Several individual trees on Palmerston Road are the subjects of Tree Preservation Orders.
- 5.2 The area has a strong sense of place generated by its Victorian suburban villas on large plots with mature gardens, and is of significant interest.

6. Development and/or Enhancement Potential

- 6.1 There is little potential for further residential development (see paragraph 7.1 below).

7. Issues

7.1 Since the end of World War II a number of changes have taken place in the character area, including:

- The sub-division of plots for additional residential developments
- Change of use of large houses from private (low density) residential to high density residential (including a nursing home), generally accompanied by the construction of additional buildings and facilities.

These developments erode the character of the area; further residential development should be avoided.

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RCA4 South Ross Character Area

1. Character Statement

- 1.1 The area is characterised by planned residential development, beginning in the late 19th Century and continuing with increasing intensity into the late 20th Century. Large areas of both private and public/affordable sector development are present.

Townscape type: RT5, 7, 9 and 10 (elements of RT3, 6, 11 and 12)

2. Location and Physical Setting

- 2.1 The character area comprises much of the southern part of the Ross-on-Wye settlement area (with the exception of Ashfield character area RCA3). The area extends to the southern settlement boundary; to the north it extends as far as Alton Street (RCA2) and the historical ecclesiastical/episcopal precinct (RCA1). The topography generally falls gently from north to south, but rises gently in the south east on the flanks of Chase Wood and in the south west at Lincoln Hill. An import local route, the B4234 (Wilton Road), is aligned north-south through the area. Local access roads to residential areas include Archenfield Road, Roman Way, and Eastfield Road/Merrivale Lane.

Landscape type: RL2 (elements of RL4)

3. Historical Development

- 3.1 During the early 19th Century the area was rural in character consisting of regular fields and smaller closes given over to a mix of arable and meadowland. Settlement in the area was dispersed and included several farms and large houses, and a number of cottages. Walford Road and Archenfield Road were through routes and several other roads or tracks provided local access. Merryvale (sic) Farm occupied its present site (and may date from the Middle Ages) with access lanes extending north to Alton Street and south to Walton Road. Rectory Farm (now flats) occupied its current site overlooking the north-facing escarpment on the north west edge of the character area. Tudorville House, a farmstead located on Walford Road west of the junction with Fernbank Road has been demolished and the site redeveloped. Large houses included The White House, set in landscaped grounds at Lincoln Hill, and Duxmere House (since demolished) on Archenfield Road.
- 3.2 By the later 19th Century speculative developers had laid out residential plots on both sides of Archenfield Road between Redhill Road and Cleeve Lane. Uptake of plots was slow and many remained undeveloped until the mid 20th Century. Limited suburban development also took place during the late 19th Century in Tudorville on the east side of Walford Road and Tudor Street. By the early 20th Century residential development was beginning in the Ashfield Park area.
- 3.3 In 1873 the Ross and Monmouth Railway opened to passengers. The route extended through the character area on the east side of Merrivale, continuing on the west side of Tudorville. The railway closed in 1965 and the line was dismantled. Several built structures survive including railway workers' cottages and stone bridge abutments at Fernbank Road and Penyard Lane.

- 3.4 Between the two World Wars public sector housing developments were undertaken in the Ashfield Park area (Redhill Road/Middleton Avenue) and in the Walton Road/Purland area. In the post World War II period extensive public sector residential development took place in Tudorville east of Walton Road. Since the 1950s further public sector/affordable housing development has been undertaken in Tudorville and in the Duxmere Drive area. During the 1920s-30s private residential development was undertaken in the Ashfield Park area (including Ashfield Road) and in the Merrivale area (Merrivale Road and The Gresleys). Since the 1950s more extensive private residential development has taken place in Merrivale and in the Roman Way area, and on smaller or infill sites throughout the character area.

4. Townscape

- 4.1 The area is suburban in character with extensive private and public/affordable residential development. Much of this development has taken place during the 20th Century.
- 4.2 *Ashfield/Archenfield Road area:* On Walton Road (north), Ashfield Road and Archenfield Road (north east) there are several groups of late 19th/early 20th Century two-storey detached and semi-detached redbrick houses, some with yellow or polychrome brick dressings, with slate roofs, generally set on large plots with front gardens and brick boundary walls. Also in this area (Archenfield Road north east, Ashfield Park Avenue and Sussex Avenue) are a larger number of 1920s-30s two-storey detached and semi-detached houses of brick or render with tile roofs on large or adequate plots with front gardens enclosed by rubble or brick walls and mature hedges. In the Redhill Road area is a 1920s-30s public housing estate of two-storey semi-detached brick houses with slate roofs on adequate plots with front gardens enclosed by brick walls and hedges. Further west on Ashfield Road there is a group of mid to late 19th Century semi-detached two-storey cottages of brick and painted brick with slate roofs on narrow plots with small front gardens or forecourts, above street level, enclosed by brick and rubble walls; several larger detached 19th Century brick houses on large plots; and post 1950s developments (including cul-de-sacs) consisting of detached two-storey houses and bungalows of brick or render on large plots with front gardens, open or enclosed by rubble walls or hedges.
- 4.3 This area is suburban in character but increasingly rural towards the east where there are adjacent fields and hedgerows. The plan form is rectilinear, based on the existing road system and influenced by field boundaries. Throughout the area townscape density is generally low to moderate. In the north western part there are a number larger buildings including a post 1950s primary school, Ashfield Park, and several two-storey blocks of flats (on the site of a former farm). This area is also more open in character with a school playing field, a recreation ground, tennis courts, bowling green, and several small fields adjoining a burial ground (located in Ross Historic Centre character area, RCA1); all are enclosed (at least in part) by hedges.
- 4.4 *Roman Way area:* This is an extensive area of 1950s private residential development of cul-de-sacs on a single access road, Roman Way. The plan-form shows some correspondence with the earlier system of field boundaries. A rural trackway aligned north-south through the area survives as a public footpath and a green corridor. The townscape consists mainly of two-storey

detached and semi detached houses of brick, brick and tile, and render with tile roofs on adequate (and some large) plots with front gardens enclosed by low walls or hedges, or open with hard-surfaced parking pads. In the Duxmere Drive area is a public/affordable housing development consisting of short terraces of two-storey houses on narrow plots with front gardens, and a sheltered housing/retirement housing development of two-storey blocks of flats in landscaped grounds. Housing density throughout the area is generally moderate to high.

- 4.5 *Tudorville area:* This area is dominated by public sector housing with smaller areas of private residential development on cul-de-sacs. Housing density is high to very high. The route of a disused railway, now a public footpath and cycle way (Betzdorf Walk), is aligned along the western boundary of the Tudorville area. The historical sequence of development is from north to south, extending the built-up area towards the periphery, based on the existing road and rail system. In the Purland and Walford Road (west side) area is a 1920s-30s public sector development of two-storey semi-detached redbrick houses with hipped tile roofs, on large plots with front gardens enclosed by brick walls, and wire and wooden fences. Adjacent is a post 1950s public sector/affordable residential development of high density consisting of short rows of houses of buff-coloured bricks with pitched roofs on small, narrow plots with landscaped areas and lockup garages. In the Tudor Rise area (on the east side of Walford Road) is a large 1940s-50s public sector residential development consisting of short terraces of two-storey brick houses with pitched tile roofs on adequate-sized plots with front gardens enclosed by brick walls and hedges. There is also a small number roughcast bungalows on small plots, and several two-storey blocks of flats in landscaped grounds. Services include several shops and a playground enclosed by iron railings.
- 4.6 On the east side of Walford Road in the Tudor Street area are several 19th Century terraces of two-storey cottages of brick, painted brick or rubble with slate roofs on small, narrow plots with small forecourts; a number of detached or semi-detached house occupy larger, adequate plots. Post 1950s detached and semi-detached two-storey houses and bungalows of brick with tile roofs on adequate plots with front gardens or forecourts have been built on infill sites in this area. The plan form is a linear grid. Residential streets are very narrow, and housing density is very high. Fernbank Road is lined by grass verges and hedges, and retains the character of a country lane. Detached two-storey houses and bungalows of 1920s-30s and post 1950s date, of brick or render with tile or slate roofs, occupy large plots with well-kept gardens. A pair of semi-detached 19th Century former railway cottages of sandstone rubble with yellow brick dressings and slate roofs is set close to the road behind low rubble walls. A large 19th Century detached two-storey house of rubble with hipped slate roofs and several outbuildings occupies a very large plot with mature trees.
- 4.7 There are several post 1950s private residential cul-de-sac developments on the fringes of the Tudorville area. At the south end of Fernbank Road, Woodmeadow Road is a planned estate of two-storey detached houses and bungalows on adequate plots with front gardens and boundary walls; Okell Drive is a planned estate of detached two-storey houses on large plots with open front gardens and hard-surfaced parking pads. Both estates encroach on former open land that formed a buffer zone between the urban area and Chase Wood. At Frome Valley Way (on the site of Vine Tree Farm at the

south end of Walford Road) is a very recent development of detached houses on adequate plots with small front gardens and hard-surfaced parking pads, and short terraces on very narrow plots with parking areas. On the opposite (east) side of Walton Road is a residential mobile home park on a linear access road.

- 4.8 *Merrivale area*: This is an area of predominantly private planned residential development on an irregular grid, with cul-de-sacs, superimposed on an earlier system of field boundaries. A former farm access road, Merrivale Lane, now gives access to suburban estates. Density in the area is generally moderate to high. The route of a disused railway, now a public footpath and cycle way (the Town and Country Trail), and a green corridor, is aligned along the eastern boundary of the area and serves as a buffer zone between the rural landscape and the suburbs. Much of the Merrivale area consists of post 1950s two-storey detached and semi-detached houses, and bungalows, of brick with tile roofs on large or adequate-sized plots with front gardens enclosed by walls or hedges. At Lakeside Drive, a short cul-de-sac of public/affordable housing, are several small two-storey blocks of post 1950s flats of brick and tile with tile roofs, on adequate plots with small front gardens enclosed by low walls. Lock-up garages are located at the rear. A similar development is located at Braby Place.
- 4.9 There are several areas of 1920s-30s private residential development. At Merrivale Road and The Gresleys there are two-storey detached and semi-detached houses of brick or render (one of stone) with pitched tile roofs on adequate plots with front gardens enclosed by brick walls and hedges. On Eastfield Road (west side) a number of large individually designed 20th Century houses are set well back from the road on large plots. At the north end of the street four large Victorian villas of c. 1870 are set on large plots with mature plantings. Several smaller 20th Century houses have been constructed on smaller infill plots. This area generally is of low density.
- 4.10 Merrivale House on Merrivale Lane is a former farmhouse of 18th/19th Century date. The two-storey building is of sandstone rubble with slate roof and brick chimneys. It is set on a large landscaped plot, with ponds and mature trees, enclosed by a high rubble wall. The farmyard on the south side has recently been redeveloped as a “gated” residential estate consisting of several two-storey blocks of flats of brick in a paved courtyard. Two pairs of back-to-back former 19th Century railway cottages are located on Penyard Lane. They are built of sandstone rubble with yellow brick dressings and slate roofs on narrow plots behind hedges. Penyard Lane is narrow with grass verges and without footways at this location (south end); it is semi-rural in character.
- 4.11 *Density and Massing*: Much of the character area is of fairly high density. Areas of low density include the north western part of Ashfield (in the area of the primary school), Eastfield Road and Fernbank Road. Scale is that of a residential area consisting mainly of detached, semi-detached and short rows of two-storey houses, flats and bungalows. The largest footprint is that of the school.
- 4.12 *Green Spaces*: The following open green spaces are public amenities protected by the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan (2007):
- Recreation Ground, north of Ashfield Park: includes open green space, tennis courts, a car park, and adjacent bowling green

- Deanhill Park, Alton Street: a landscaped green space with mature trees and a playground
- A green space with a playground at Archenfield Road junction with Roman Way
- A play area at Walford Road and Fernbank Road
- A playground at Walford Avenue
- A green space at Redwood Close
- A green space off Corinium Road
- A green space at Duxmere Road
- A green space off Falaise Road
- Small green spaces off Tudor Rise; at Walford Road junction with Tudor Way; at Juniper Place; at Roman Way near Corinium Road; at Sycamore Close; at Merrivale Crescent; at Merrivale Crescent junction with Merrivale Lane.

4.13 The following are Public Rights of Way:

- Town and Country Trail (continuing as Betzdorf Walk): a green corridor following the line of the Ross and Monmouth railway on the east side of the character area
- A public footpath and green corridor aligned north-south, linking Archenfield Road and fields to the north with Betzdorf Walk.

4.14 The following green spaces are of restricted use or access:

- Cemetery and adjacent allotment gardens, Walford Road
- Ashfield Park Primary School playing field, Redhill Road

4.15 *Views:* There are views from the Town and Country Trail across arable and grazing land towards the upper slopes of Chase Wood.

5. Heritage Assets and Sense of Place

5.1 There is one listed building in the character area: The White House (Grade II), Lincoln Hill, an early 19th Century suburban villa set in a (now truncated) landscape park and screened by shrubberies, on the western edge of the character area. A small area in the northern part of the character area falls within the Ross-on-Wye conservation area. A significant number of trees at various locations throughout the character area are the subjects of Tree Preservation Orders, both individually and in groups. Specific concentrations occur in the grounds of Merrivale House, Merrivale Lane; The White House, Lincoln Hill; and Redhill Road.

5.2 Much of the townscape is characterised by mid/late 20th Century residential development lacking a sense of place or unique identity. Several localities retain a sense of identity:

- Fernbank Road: a semi-rural “country lane” with grass verges and hedges, and well-spaced houses and bungalows set on large plots, leading the eye upwards to the skyline of Chase Wood
- Tudor Street and Chapel Lane: a 19th Century townscape of terraced cottages and narrow streets (although now compromised by later infill)

- Archenfield Road (north): a sunken road lined by grassy banks with rubble walls and hedges that screen from view comfortable homes with mature gardens.

6. Development and/or Enhancement Potential

6.1 The following areas may be of development and/or enhancement potential:

- Ashfield Park at the junction with Ashfield Park Avenue (north side), two fields: may be suitable for one two-storey detached house and a pair of semi-detached houses on adequate plots with front gardens; access via Ashfield Park
- Fernbank Road: one undeveloped plot on the east side and one (larger) plot on the west side: may be suitable for three detached two-storey houses or bungalows on large plots with front gardens
- Merrivale Lane, an undeveloped plot adjacent to no. 29: may be suitable for three pairs of two-storey semi-detached houses, or four detached houses, on adequate plots with front gardens.

7. Issues

7.1 Residential development, particularly on the south east side of the character area, where suburban cul-de-sacs extend up-slope towards the woodland edge, represents an intrusive urban element in a rural landscape. The ensuing loss of that landscape and the erosion of its rural character will ultimately detract from the character of Ross on Wye as a settlement in a wider rural context.

RCA5 East Ross Character Area

1. Character Statement

- 1.1 The area is suburban in character comprised, particularly in the east, of post 1950s residential development including detached and semi-detached houses, bungalows, and some two-storey blocks of flats. In the western part there are Victorian villas and terraces, and 1920s-30s detached and semi-detached houses. Mature gardens and trees are found predominantly in the north-eastern part of the character area; there are no public green spaces
Townscape type: RT3, 6, 9 and 10 (elements of RT4 and 11)

2. Location and Physical Setting

- 2.1 The character area is located on even ground on the east side of the settlement area. Gloucester Road (B4260), a major access route, is aligned east-west through the centre of the area. Alton Road is aligned along the south-eastern boundary; the Small Brook flows north near the western boundary.
Landscape type: RL2

3. Historical Development

- 3.1 During the early part of the 19th Century the area was rural in character comprising fields and closes given over to arable and meadowland. Gloucester Road, an historic route, was aligned (as now) through the centre of the character area. Settlement in the area consisted only of a house and outbuildings at the south end of Alton Road. During the later 19th Century several villas were constructed on Gloucester Road; Camp Road was cut (aligned with irregular field boundaries); residential plots were laid out on the east side (but few had been built on by this time) and a linear grid of back lanes cut.
- 3.2 By the beginning of the 20th Century Ryefield Road (aligned with a sinuous field boundary), North Road and Weston Grove had been laid in the form of a linear grid, and terraced houses had been constructed on North Road. During the early years of the 20th Century, continuing in the 1920s-30s, further house construction took place, on a piecemeal basis, on Ryefield Road, Weston Grove, Gloucester Road, Camp Road and Alton Road. Ross Grammar School was constructed on Ryefield Road in 1911.

4. Townscape

- 4.1 This is a suburban residential area of detached and semi-detached houses and bungalows, a smaller number of terraced houses and two-storey blocks of flats, and a single-storey sheltered housing development. In the eastern part, where residential development began in the 19th Century, the townscape is more varied than in the western part which remained undeveloped until the post 1950s.
- 4.2 *West of Ryefield Road/Camp Road:* The townscape west of Ryefield Road/Camp Road is primarily the result of post 1950s residential development. The Waterside/Park Avenue area is a private development on cul-de-sacs that includes two-storey detached and semi-detached houses, and bungalows, of brick under pitched or hipped tile roofs, set on adequate

plots with open front gardens and hedges, or parking pads. Several terraces of two-storey houses are set on narrow plots. In the Grammar School Close area there is a planned public sector/affordable housing development on cul-de-sacs consisting of short terraces of two-storey houses and two-storey blocks of flats, all of brick with tile roofs, on adequate or narrow plots with open forecourts and parking pads. The Larruperz Centre, a two-storey brick and panel community building with a large surface car park, is also at this location. Smallbrook Gardens is a sheltered housing development consisting of staggered terraces of single-storey brick buildings in landscaped grounds.

- 4.3 *Ryefield Road/Camp Road east:* The townscape of this area is more varied and includes Victorian villas with large gardens, late 19th/early 20th Century terraces, and 1920s-30s detached and semi-detached houses. The plan form is of linear grids on the north and south sides of Gloucester Road. On Ryefield Road there are a number of large late 19th/early 20th Century two-storey villas of brick or rubble on generous plots with mature gardens, hedges and trees, and brick and rubble boundary walls. Also at this location is the early 20th Century former grammar school (now a community centre), a single-storey redbrick building with tile roof, prominent gables, sandstone dressings, tall sash windows and low brick boundary walls with iron railings. (The Larruperz Centre occupies the former school grounds.) North Road is a short street lined by late 19th/early 20th Century terraces of two-storey brick houses with slate roofs on narrow plots with small front gardens or hard forecourts. On Weston Grove there are several short terraces of early 20th Century two-storey houses, brick-built with slate roofs, on narrow plots with front gardens or hard forecourts; several early 20th Century and 1920s-30s two-storey houses, detached and semi-detached, on large or adequate plots with front gardens; and a number of later 20th Century houses on large plots with front gardens.
- 4.4 Gloucester Road is characterised by linear development of detached two-storey houses, mainly of brick, dating from the late 19th Century to the later 20th Century. Houses are set on large or adequate plots with front gardens, brick boundary walls, hedges and mature trees. There are several semi-detached houses and late 20th Century two-storey blocks of flats with hard forecourts.
- 4.5 The townscape on the east side of Camp Road is made up mainly of late 19th Century/early 20th Century detached two-storey houses of brick or painted brick with slate roofs, set on adequate plots with front gardens and brick boundary walls, or parking pads. On the west side is a terrace of late 19th Century two-storey brick houses with slate roofs on narrow plots with front gardens, and groups of 1920s-30s and post 1950s detached two-storey brick houses with tile roofs on adequate plots with front gardens or parking pads. Alton Road (west side) is lined by 1920s-30s and post 1950s semi-detached houses and bungalows of brick with tiled roofs. To the south west, plots are of adequate size and regular shape; to the north west plots occupy irregular infill sites of varying sizes with mature trees. All have front gardens, many with parking pads.
- 4.6 *Density and Massing:* Much of the area is of moderate density and composed of detached and semi-detached houses and bungalows on large or adequate-sized plots. Ryefield Road, with detached houses on large plots, is a small area of low density. The Grammar School Close area (terraced houses on narrow plots and two-storey blocks of flats), Smallbrook Gardens (sheltered

housing), North Road and parts of Weston Grove (terraced houses on narrow plots) are of fairly high density.

- 4.7 *Green Spaces*: There are no publicly accessible green spaces in the character area. Private green spaces include a landscaped area east of Smallbrook Road.

5. Heritage Assets and Sense of Place

- 5.1 There are no listed buildings in the character area. The southern section of Waterside (post 1950s residential development) lies within the Ross on Wye conservation area. Several groups of trees in the northern part of the character area (Ryefield Road and North Street) are the subjects of group Tree Preservation Orders.
- 5.2 Much of the area consists of post 1950s residential development lacking a sense of local identity. In the Ryefield Road, Gloucester Road (south side) and Camp Road area, however, late 19th/early 20th houses in a range of architectural forms, an Edwardian grammar school, and mature gardens with brick and stone walls, hedges and trees create a sense of place.

6. Development and/or Enhancement Potential

- 6.1 The following areas may be of development and/or enhancement potential:
- Council Yard, Station Street: may be developed as public sector/affordable housing on a similar scale and density as the Grammar School Close area
 - An enclosed open green space south of Smallbrook Gardens: may be developed as additional sheltered housing of similar scale and density.

7. Issues

- 7.1 The construction of modern (post 1950s) houses and flats on infill sites in areas of earlier residential development, where recent developments do not respect the character of the area, results in an erosion of local identity. Examples include Gloucester Road (north side).

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RCA6 North Ross Character Area

1. Character Statement

- 1.1 The area is suburban in character with extensive 1920s-30s and post 1950s public sector housing/affordable housing developments, extensive post 1950s private sector housing, and more limited 19th/early 20th Century and 1920s-30s private housing. The character area includes an area of late 19th/early 20th Century speculative development that was not fully realised until the later 20th Century.

Townscape type: RT9 and 10 (elements of RT2, 3, 5, 11 and 12)

2. Location and Physical Setting

- 2.1 The character area is located on a south west facing slope occupying much of the northern part of the settlement area. Two historic routes, the Ledbury road and the Brampton road, are aligned north west-south east and north-south, respectively, through the area. Both roads are, in places, sunken below the land surface. A modern bypass road, the A40(T), is aligned east-west through the northern part of the character area, turning south along the eastern edge. The Rudhall Brook flows westwards through the southern part of the area; the floodplain of the Wye lies to the west.

Landscape type: RL2 (elements of RL1 and 4)

3. Historical Development

- 3.1 During the early 19th Century much of the area was rural in character. The northern part consisted of large fields, most of which were given over to arable with some meadowland. The southern part consisted of smaller fields (arable), closes, orchards and gardens, with meadowland at lower elevations near the Rudhall Brook.

- 3.2 Medieval and early post-medieval suburban settlement extended a short distance along Overross Street and Brampton Street with characteristic long, tenement plots extending back from narrow road frontages. Some linear settlement, in the form of cottages and gardens, extended a little further north along Overross Street. A settlement at Over Ross (sic) east of Ledbury Road, known to have existed since at least the mid 17th Century, consisted of a house built in c. 1830 and several outbuildings, a walled kitchen garden and a landscape park. The house (now Ross Court) and the garden wall still exist but much of the site has been developed for housing. Springfields, an early 19th Century house with outbuildings located west of Brampton Road, was demolished prior to construction of extensive housing in the post 1950s period. A homestead existed at Homs (accessed by Homs Road) in the early 19th Century, part of which survived the construction of the Hereford, Ross and Gloucester Railway c. 1855. The railway line was dismantled during the 1960s but a stone-built bridge arch survives at Cawdor Arch Road, and stone bridge piers at the south end of Brampton Street and Overross Street. During the 19th Century a tannery was located on the north side of the Rudhill Brook (accessed by Tanyard Lane). Currently the site is still used for commercial purposes. Also during the 19th Century, a livestock market was located on Homs Road west of Cawdor Arch Road. During the 20th Century the market was relocated to a new site north of the A40(T) road and the former site was redeveloped for residential purposes.

- 3.3 The Blackfields/Greytree residential area was laid out in linear grid plan-form with regular plots during the late 19th Century on several large arable fields. Homs Road was extended to provide access. A limited amount of house construction took place before World War II. Today, almost the entire area has been infilled by individual house construction or cul-de-sac projects. During the late 19th/early 20th Century terraced houses were constructed on Homs Road, Brampton Road (south end), Brookfield Road, Berryfield Place and Overross Street (south end); small detached villas on Cawdor Road, and other detached and semi-detached houses at Mount Pleasant. Linear residential development continued during the 1920s-30s on Ledbury Road. Extensive residential development, private and public sector/affordable housing, has taken place throughout the character area during the post 1950s period.

4. Townscape

- 4.1 The character area is residential, comprised primarily of detached and semi-detached two-storey houses and terraces with some two- and three storey blocks of flats. Plot sizes range from small and narrow to generous; the majority are of adequate size. Plan-form in areas of post 1950s development is based on sinuous access roads with short cul-de-sacs. Areas of earlier development are based on rectilinear grids or linear development.
- 4.2 *Eastern area:* Between the A40(T) bypass (aligned north-south) and Overross Street/Ledbury Road there is an area of extensive post 1950s private sector residential development. Court Road, a sinuous access road with a number of cul-de-sacs, is a planned estate (occupying much of the former landscape park) consisting of detached two-storey houses and bungalows of brick with tile roofs, set on adequate-sized plots with small front gardens or forecourts, with brick boundary walls and hedges. A sheltered housing development is contained within the high sandstone rubble walls of the former Over Ross walled garden. The 19th Century house survives as Ross Court, a home for the elderly, surrounded by mature trees on a large (but truncated) plot at The Orchard. There are several short cul-de-sacs on the east side of Overross Street/Ledbury Road with post 1950s residential developments in the form of detached two-storey houses of brick or brick and render with tile roofs, set on adequate plots with open front gardens or hard forecourts; bungalows (including chalet bungalows) of brick with tile roofs on large or adequate plots with open front gardens or forecourts; a smaller number of two- and three-storey rendered houses (or flats) on narrow plots with front gardens; several two-storey brick-built blocks of flats with shared grounds; and a mobile home park.
- 4.3 Tanyard Lane is a narrow lane that retains a semi-rural character. It serves as a back lane to premises in the Overross Street/Ledbury Road area, and as an access road to industrial and commercial premises in the site of the former tannery. These premises consist mainly of low modular framed structures surrounded by open yards or parking areas. On the south and east sides of Tannery Lane (extending east to the A49(T) bypass) are fields enclosed by hedges.
- 4.4 The east side of Ledbury Road is characterised by a linear development of 1920s-30s detached (and some semi-detached) two-storey houses of brick and render with tile roofs on large or adequate plots with front gardens enclosed by stone or block boundary walls. There are also several pairs of

late 19th/early 20th Century two-storey semi-detached houses of redbrick with yellow brick dressings, slate roofs and gables at the front elevation. Brookfield House (Grade II) is a large two- and three-storey 18th Century house (now a guest house), roughcast with slate roof, set at the rear of the footway on a large (but truncated) plot with garden and car park on the north side. Ledbury Road is sunken at the north end and gardens are raised above street level. On the west side of Ledbury Road grassy banks and mature hedges screen residential development.

- 4.5 Overross Street is more commercial in character and buildings are generally set at the rear of the footway. On the east side the streetscape is quite open with several large forecourts and a public car park. Prominent buildings include The Plough public house (Grade II), a two-storey house of 17th Century origins, stuccoed (over timber-framing) with slate roof on a large plot extending to the rear, and a group of 19th Century industrial and commercial buildings of local sandstone rubble and render with slate roofs set around an open courtyard. The townscape on the west side of Overross Street is mixed. At the north end is a linear development of early 20th Century two-storey detached and semi-detached houses of brick and render with slate roofs on large or adequate plots with front gardens and hedges. Further south there is a post 1950s single storey commercial garage (vacant), rendered with flat roof and large parking forecourt. At the south end of the street is a group of 19th Century buildings including a former mission hall of sandstone rubble with redbrick dressings and slate roof; a terrace of one-storey rendered cottages with slate roofs, attics and dormer windows, on narrow plots with forecourts raised above street level; a pair of two-storey semi-detached houses of sandstone rubble (one has been rendered) with brick dressings and slate roofs on small plots with very small forecourts; and the rubble piers of a dismantled railway bridge.
- 4.6 *Central area:* The residential area between Overross Street/Ledbury Road and Brampton Street/Brampton Road is of mixed townscape character and development date. Three Crosses Road and the area to the north, including the east side of Brampton Road, is an extensive public sector housing development of 1920s-30s date and design, set out on a rectilinear grid of streets with hard kerbs. Pairs of two-storey semi-detached brick houses with hipped tile roofs are set on fairly large plots with front gardens, many now with parking pads, enclosed by wire fences, brick walls and hedges. There are two enclosed green playgrounds but few trees or other vegetation to soften the streetscape. At Three Crosses Close and Brampton Avenue there are post 1950s public sector/affordable housing developments on cul-de-sacs. They consist of short terraces of two-storey houses of brick with tile roofs on small plots with front gardens or hard forecourts with brick and block boundary walls, and some small two-storey blocks of flats.
- 4.7 Earlier residential development, of a different character, was undertaken further south. Brookfield Road is a narrow street, with a footway on the south side only, and homes of late 19th Century, 1920s-30s and post 1950s periods. The townscape is diverse including two-storey detached and semi-detached houses, a terrace, and bungalows on large, long, narrow, and irregular plots, with front gardens of varied size, or small forecourts. Boundary features include brick and block walls and hedges. Mount Pleasant is a very narrow street without footways. On the west side there are a number of late 19th/early 20th Century two-storey houses, detached and semi-detached, of redbrick with yellow brick dressings on adequate plots with small front

gardens and brick boundary walls, or open forecourts. On the east side of the street, and on previously undeveloped plots, is a variety of detached and semi-detached houses and bungalows, built during the 1920s-30s and post 1950s of brick and render with tile roofs, on large or adequate plots with front gardens and parking pads. Many are screened by hedges and trees.

- 4.8 John Kyrle High School occupies a large site in the north-eastern area. The school comprises a range of post 1950s buildings, generally of brick with flat or shallow-pitched roofs, and an extensive playing field enclosed by hedges. To the east of the school is a small area of post 1950s residential development consisting of large houses on large plots screened by hedges and trees.
- 4.9 *Western area:* The area between Brampton Street/Brampton Road and Greytree Road/Homs Road is primarily of post 1950s residential development. In the Oaklands/Vershoye Gardens/River View localities this consists of public sector/affordable housing in the form of short terraces of two-storey houses, of brick, painted brick and tiles with tile roofs, on small plots with front gardens enclosed by brick walls, wire fences and hedges; and three-storey blocks of flats, of brick and tile or render, in open landscaped grounds. In the Vaga Crescent area post 1950s development comprises larger two-storey detached (and some semi-detached) houses of brick and render with tile roofs on larger plots with front gardens enclosed by hedges and brick walls, or open forecourts. The area plan-form is of cul-de-sacs on sinuous spinal access roads, and a network of footpaths. There are small landscaped green spaces or verges throughout the area, and several groups of trees in the Oakland Court area (the site of Springfield house and grounds). Brampton Abbots Primary School, a post 1950s building with adjacent playground and playing field, occupies a site screened by trees in the north-eastern corner of the area.
- 4.10 Cawdor, a narrow street without footways, is an area of speculative residential development. Late 19th/early 20th Century detached and semi-detached two-storey villas, built of redbrick with slate roofs and set on adequate plots with small front gardens or forecourts with brick boundary walls and hedges, are interspersed with 1920s-30s houses and post 1950s detached two-storey houses and bungalows on larger plots. Greytree Road/Homs Road is an area of residential development and several commercial sites. On the north side there are several post 1950s public sector/affordable housing projects, on the site of earlier 19th Century housing (several remnants of which survive) and the site of the 19th Century livestock market, consisting of terraces of two-storey houses small blocks of flats, all brick-built on small, narrow plots or shared landscaped grounds; terraces of late 19th/early 20th Century two-storey redbrick houses with slate roofs on long narrow plots with small front gardens and brick boundary walls; and a pair of late 18th/early 19th Century semi-detached rendered houses on large plots (the only survivors of a small group of buildings at Hom Orchard). On the south side of Greytree Road is a post 1950s three-storey block of flats, of brick under a tile roof, with a surface car park; a modern swimming pool, brick-built with glazed entrance and a large surface car park; a large single storey brick-clad commercial building with an open yard and car park; a surface storage area (vehicles and equipment); and a surface car park.
- 4.11 *Greytree/Blackfields area:* The townscape comprises a number of widely dispersed late 19th/early 20th Century cottages, short terraces and semi-

detached two-storey houses of redbrick, several of stone, with slate roofs on narrow plots with very small front gardens or forecourts; and a larger number of post 1950s homes on the original rectilinear grid or on short cul-de-sacs including detached and semi-detached two-storey houses and bungalows of brick and render with tile roofs on adequate or large plots (particularly in the Second Avenue area) with front gardens enclosed by brick walls and hedges, or open gardens and parking pads.

4.12 *Density and Massing*: Much of the character consists of post 1950s residential development, both private and public sector/affordable housing. Housing density is generally fairly high and includes detached, semi-detached and terraced two-storey houses, flats of two or three storeys, and bungalows. Plots are generally small or of adequate size with front gardens or hard forecourts. Several areas of 1920s-30s residential development include private sector semi-detached two-storey houses on adequate or large plots, and an extensive area of public housing consisting of semi-detached houses. A smaller number of late 19th/early 20th Century residential terraces on small plots are of high density in comparison with a fairly small number of large post 1950s detached houses on large plots where housing density is much lower.

4.13 *Green Spaces*: There are a number of large green spaces of limited or no public access within the character area, and several smaller public green spaces:

- John Kyrle High School playing field (restricted access)
- Brampton Abbots Primary School playing field (restricted access)
- The grounds of Ross Court (private)
- Fields south and east of Tanyard Lane (private)
- Allotment gardens and fields west of Cawdor Arch Road (private/restricted access)
- Field remnants between Greytrees/Blackfields and the A40(T)(private)
- A field east of Brampton Road and north of the A40(T)(private)
- A playground with access from Mayhill Road (public)
- A playground and gardens south of Three Crosses Road (public/restricted access)
- A green space with play area west of Vaga Crescent (public)
- Several small landscaped areas in the Oaklands/Vaga Crescent/River View area (public).

5. Heritage Assets and Sense of Place

5.1 There are two listed buildings (Grade II) in the character area, both located on Overross Street: the Plough public house (17th Century), and Brookfield House (18th Century). The area west of Brampton Street/Brampton Road and south of the A40(T), discussed above (para. 4.9) as the Western area, falls within the Ross on Wye conservation area. Several groups of trees, at the following locations, are the subjects of Tree Preservation Orders: in the Oaklands Court area; on Brampton Road near the junction with Oaklands; in the vicinity of Ross Court; at Overross Farm and the junction with Ledbury Road; and at Ledbury Road on the north east side of The Limes.

5.2 The residential areas are generally of a uniform character; however, several localities display a sense of place and local identity:

- The south end of Overcross Street: an area of mixed 19th Century architecture and use, including residential and industrial, and a place of worship
- Homs Road: an area of well-preserved late 19th Century/early 20th Century residential terraces within the Ross on Wye conservation area
- Cawdor: an area of speculative late 19th Century/early 20th Century villa development within the Ross on Wye character area.

6. Development and/or Enhancement Potential

6.1 Several areas may be of development/enhancement potential:

- Fields south and east of Tanyard Lane: allocated for housing provision, with constraints, by the Herefordshire UDP (2007), Policy H2
- Allotment gardens and fields west of Cawdor Arch Road: allocated for housing provision, with constraints, by the Herefordshire UDP (2007), Policy H2
- Tanyard Lane (north side): an industrial site with a vacant modular frame building, several outbuildings and a yard. May support residential development of a similar scale and density as at Rudhill Close (adjacent), i.e., several two-storey blocks of flats (public sector/affordable housing) with soft landscaping
- Greytrees Road (south side) on both sides of Trenchard Street: occupied by an industrial-scale commercial building with yard, a surface car park and storage area. May support a residential development of a similar scale and density as those on the north side of Greytrees Road, i.e. short terraces of two-storey houses on small plots and/or several two-storey blocks of flats with soft landscaping (public sector/affordable housing). May be constrained by flood risk.
- Field remnants between Greytrees/Blackfields and the A40(T): small fields with boundary hedges. May support residential development of a similar scale and density as that in the immediate area, i.e., detached two-storey houses or bungalows on adequate plots, with a landscaped buffer zone between the residential area and the A40(T)(private sector housing)
- A field east of Brampton Road and north of the A40(T): a field with boundary hedges. May support residential developments of a similar scale and density as those in the Oaklands/Vaga Crescent/River View area, i.e., short terraces of two-storey houses on small plots; two- or three-storey blocks of flats with soft landscaping; two-storey detached or semi-detached houses on adequate plots (mixed public sector/affordable and private housing)
- Two small undeveloped sites on the northern edge of the Greytrees/Blackfields area: undeveloped plots. May support residential development of a similar scale and density as that in the immediate area, i.e., two detached houses on adequate plots on each site (private sector housing).

7. Issues

7.1 The character area is of high residential density but public green spaces and soft landscaping are limited, particularly in the Three Crosses Road/Springfield Road area. It is proposed that enhancement schemes, including limited areas of soft landscaping and plantings, would improve the townscape character and quality of life in this area.

RCA7 Hildersley Character Area

1. Character Statement

- 1.1 The western part of the area is suburban in character, consisting mainly of post 1950s residential development on cul-de-sacs, with some post 1950s public sector/affordable housing south of Gloucester Road. There is also a limited amount of 1920s-30s residential development and several 19th Century houses. The eastern part of the area is agricultural in character, consisting of several large fields, with a farmstead at its centre.
Townscape type: RT 9 and 10 (elements of RT3, 5 and 13)

2. Location and Physical Setting

- 2.1 The character area is located on level ground on the east side of Ross-on-Wye. A field drain flows north west in the central part of the area; a dismantled railway line with cuttings is aligned east-west in the northern part of the area; and the A40(T) bypass (Gloucester Road) is aligned along the western and southern sides.
Landscape type: RL2 and 5

3. Historical Development

- 3.1 During the 19th Century the area was rural in character and comprised a number of large fields with several paddocks and small orchards. Settlement in the character area was limited to several Victorian villas and cottages on the south side of Gloucester Road; a farmhouse and agricultural buildings at Marsh Farm; and several cottages (Spring Cottages) on the site of Spring Farm. The Model Farm was constructed at Spring Farm in late 19th/early 20th Century.
- 3.2 The Hereford, Ross and Gloucester Railway opened in 1855 and the line passed through the northern part of the character area. The line closed in 1965 and was dismantled.
- 3.3 During the 1920s-30s generous residential plots were laid out on the north side of Gloucester Road and a number of detached houses were built. (Residential development was not completed until the post 1950s.) At about this time half-a-dozen houses were also built, on smaller plots, at Hildersley Avenue.

4. Townscape

- 4.1 The western part of the area is suburban in character. The townscape consists of recent (post 1950s) private residential development on cul-de-sacs, with some linear 1920s-30s development, and several dispersed 19th Century buildings. Post 1950s development in The Glebe/Parsons Croft area consists of two-storey detached houses of brick or render with tiled roofs on adequate plots with open front gardens and parking pads. At The Mead, post 1950s public sector/affordable housing includes short terraces of two-storey houses and bungalows of brick and render on small plots with open forecourts, and two-storey blocks of retirement flats in landscaped grounds (Reynolds Court). On Gloucester Road (north side) there is a group of 1920s-30s detached brick-built houses set back on large plots. At Hildersley Avenue, smaller 1920s-30s detached roughcast houses are set on narrow

plots with small front gardens enclosed by rubble walls. At the north east corner of the character area is Marsh Farm, a 19th Century farmhouse with a range of 19th and 20th Century agricultural buildings. Post 1950s residential development extends to the edge of the farmyard on the east side; on the south side is a paddock. On the south side of Gloucester Road is a large 19th Century house of sandstone with slate roof and bay windows, now a home for the elderly and part of a larger post 1950s development in landscaped grounds. Adjacent are two modern single-storey civic buildings, a fire station and an ambulance station.

- 4.2 The eastern part of the area is rural in character. It consists of several large fields and smaller paddocks enclosed by hedges. In the centre is a group of farm buildings including Spring Farm, a large 19th Century two-storey double pile farmhouse of sandstone rubble with ashlar dressings and pitched tile roofs; Model Farm, a group of late 19th/early 20th Century agricultural buildings of redbrick with cast iron casements under hipped and gabled tile roofs; and a number of 20th Century steel-framed agricultural buildings with corrugated iron or weatherboard cladding.
- 4.3 *Density and Massing:* Density throughout much of the suburban residential area is generally moderate and the scale is that of detached two-storey houses on large or adequate plots. South of Gloucester Road density is higher with two-storey blocks of flats, and short terraces of two-storey houses and bungalows on small plots.
- 4.4 *Green Spaces:* There are no public green spaces in the character area. In the eastern part, however, an area of agricultural land between the Hildersley residential area and Spring Farm/Model Farm is protected as an open area/green space (see 7.1 below).
- 4.5 *Views:* To the west are views of the Ross on Wye skyline dominated by mature trees and the spire of St Mary's parish church. To the north and east there are views across low-lying agricultural landscapes; to the south there are views of the wooded slopes of Penyard Park.

5. Heritage Assets and Sense of Place

- 5.1 There are no listed buildings or other protected heritage assets in the character area.
- 5.2 Much of the western part of the character area is of post 1950s residential development consisting of repeated housing types and layouts lacking a sense of local identity. Spring Farm and the Model Farm buildings represent aspects of Ross on Wye's agricultural and architectural history. In their rural setting these buildings generate a sense of place.

6. Development and/or Enhancement Potential

- 6.1 The following areas may be of development and/or enhancement potential:
- A paddock on the south side of Marsh Farm: may be developed as private housing on a similar scale and density as The Glebe (adjacent) with possible access via Hildersley Rise (or via the potential development described below)

- A field to the east of the Hildersley residential area extending east to the Spring Farm and Highfield Farm access road: may be developed as private housing on a similar scale and density as The Glebe and Parsons Croft with undeveloped buffer zones (green spaces) between the new residential development and both The Glebe/Parsons Grove residential area and the Model Farm site (but see 7.1 and 7.2 below).

7. Issues

- 7.1 The field east of the Hildersley residential area is, at present, protected in its entirety as an open area/green space in the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan (2007), Policy HBA9.
- 7.2 The Model Farm site in the eastern part of the character area is allocated as employment land in the Herefordshire UDP (2007), Policy E3. It is proposed that Spring Farm farmhouse and the Model Farm buildings be retained for their historical interest and incorporated into future developments.

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RCA8 Overross Industrial/Commercial Area

1. Character Statement

- 1.1 This is an industrial/commercial area. It is characterised by modular frame buildings with a low profile and large footprint, and adjacent extensive surface parking and loading areas.

Townscape type: RT14

2. Location and Physical Setting

- 2.1 The area is located at the north-eastern edge of the settlement area. The A40(T) bypass marks the southern boundary; the settlement boundary and a field drain mark the northern boundary. The land slopes down naturally to the north but extensive areas have been levelled to accommodate large buildings and hard-surfaced open areas.

Landscape type: RL6

3. Historical Development

- 3.1 During the 19th Century the area was rural in character and comprised a number of large fields given over to arable and meadowland. Field boundaries were marked by hedges, many with trees. Wallhouse Farm (since demolished) was located at the centre of the area. The farmstead comprised a farmhouse and agricultural buildings, yards, paddocks and an orchard.
- 3.2 The industrial/commercial estate was established in the late 20th Century after the construction of the A40(T) bypass.

4. Description

- 4.1 The site includes at least ten large, or very large, modular frame buildings of low profile and large footprint. Cladding materials include steel, block, brick and wood; roofs are flat or shallow-pitched. Commercial buildings include: a very large warehouse/distribution centre; a livestock market; several large retail stores; office premises.
- 4.2 Most buildings are adjacent to hard-surfaced parking and loading areas. Soft landscaping includes linear green banks (the result of levelling), hedges and trees. Direct access to the area is from the A40(T).

5. Heritage Assets and Sense of Place

- 5.1 There are no listed buildings or other protected heritage assets in the area.

6. Development and/or Enhancement Potential

- 6.1 Several sites may have potential for further development:
- A site near the livestock market in the centre of the area, presently used for parking or storing heavy goods vehicles: may be appropriate for a smaller commercial building of a similar scale to a group of adjacent buildings

- A small site near a large retail building in the eastern part of the area, apparently unused at present and adjacent to an undeveloped site that has been allocated as employment land in the Herefordshire UDP (2007), Policy E3: may supplement the allocated employment land.

7. Issues

7.1 There are no outstanding issues.

RCA9 Ashburton-Alton Industrial/Commercial Area

1. Character Statement

- 1.1 This is an extensive industrial/commercial area. It is characterised by modular frame buildings with a low profile and large footprint, and adjacent extensive surface parking and storage areas.

Townscape type: RT14

2. Location and Physical Setting

- 2.1 The industrial/commercial area occupies low-lying land that wraps around the eastern part of Ross-on-Wye, bisected by Gloucester Road. The area includes two industrial/commercial estates. Ashburton Industrial Estate is in the north east; the A49(T) delineates its eastern boundary. Alton Road Industrial Estate occupies formerly marshy land in the south east between Alton Road and the Town and Country Trail (on a raised embankment). The Rudhall Brook flows west through the north-western part of the area.

Landscape type: RL6

3. Historical Development

- 3.1 During the early 19th Century the area was rural in character. A number of stream channels flowed through the north-western part, including a mill pond; the land was low-lying and prone to flood, and given over to meadowland. Low-lying meadowland extended around to the east side of Alton Lane (now Alton Road), an area known as The Marsh. At this time there were few structures in the area; the damp or water-logged nature of the land inhibited permanent settlement.
- 3.2 The Hereford, Ross and Gloucester Railway opened in 1855. Railway infrastructure, including track, yards, the station and other buildings (or “sheds”) occupied much of the northern part of the area. The Ross and Monmouth Railway opened in 1873 and the mainline, on an embankment, enclosed the low-lying land east of Alton Lane. By the later 19th Century industrial activities were established on the present supermarket site, including an agricultural implement works and a timber yard.
- 3.3 The railways were closed in the 1960s and much of the infrastructure was dismantled or demolished. Several buildings survived, including the goods shed, the engine shed and the weighbridge house. Ashburton Industrial Estate was opened in 1974 on land formerly occupied by the railways. This was later followed by development of the Alton Road Industrial Estate and the supermarket site.

4. Description

- 4.1 The area is the focus of industrial and commercial activities. It is the location of two industrial estates, a large supermarket, a recycling centre and several office buildings. Most structures are large modular frame buildings with a low profile and large or very large footprint, surrounded by surface parking areas, yards and storage areas.
- 4.2 *Ashburton Industrial Estate:* The estate includes about twenty buildings located on both sides of a linear access road. Most are modular frame structures with brick or steel cladding and flat or shallow-pitched roofs.

Generally these buildings have a low profile and a large or very large footprint. Most have adjacent surface car parks. There are limited areas of soft landscaping with shrubs and, on the south side of the estate, a line of trees provides a buffer zone between the industrial estate and a residential area.

4.3 Several 19th Century railway buildings survive and now have alternate uses:

- Engine shed: a long narrow building of local sandstone rubble with steep pitched louvered roof
- Goods shed: a large single-storey building of local sandstone rubble with shallow pitched roof

4.4 *Alton Road Industrial Estate*: The estate includes over thirty buildings. Most are modular frame structures with steel cladding and flat or shallow pitched roofs of low profile and large or very large footprint. There are also several two-storey brick office buildings with flat roofs, and a two-storey brick clubhouse with hipped roof. Most buildings have adjacent surface car parks or yards. The estate is accessed from Alton Road directly or by cul-de-sacs. There is some soft landscaping with trees or bushes on the west (Alton Road) side and along the eastern edge (Town and Country Trail).

4.5 *Floodplain and Supermarket Site*: The eastern part of the industrial/commercial area lies on the floodplain of the Rudhill Brook. Much of the area is open and used for goods vehicle parking and storage, and includes a recycling centre. This is also the site of a large supermarket: a modular frame building of low profile with a hipped roof and a large footprint. It is surrounded by surface car parks. There is one surviving 19th Century building in this area, a small 19th Century weighbridge house: a single storey building of redbrick with yellow brick dressings, steep pitched roof with decorative bargeboards at the gables, a later brick extension with lean-to roof, and an adjacent pit weighbridge. The area is generally hard-surfaced but trees and shrubs line the course of the Rudhill Brook and part of the route of the dismantled railway.

5. Heritage Assets and Sense of Place

5.1 There are no listed buildings or other protected heritage assets in the area.

6. Development and/or Enhancement Potential

6.1 It is likely that some additional land for commercial or industrial buildings can be allocated throughout this area if:

- It is thought appropriate that land presently used for parking or storage is given up
- Flood risk can be alleviated in the eastern part of the area
- The recycling centre is moved to an alternative site.

7. Issues

7.1 There are no outstanding issues.

APPENDIX VI

List of Sources

Planning Documents and Guidance

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