

10 Bargate Environs and Hanover Buildings

Context

Above Bar (CA9) and Central Parks (Houndwell) (CA7) form the northern edge of this character area. CA26: Evans Street and Threefield Lane is to the east, CA14: East Street to the south, CA12: High Street north on the south-western edge and a short length of CA11: the West Gate Town Walls and Castle on the western edge.

The area slopes to the south and east and there is a dramatic level drop adjacent to the walls which is reflected in a more gentle slope down into the parks on Hanover Buildings.

This area takes in the northern edge of the medieval walled town but extends northwards beyond the line of the wall reflecting the development of properties along the outer face of the wall in the area to the east of Bargate.

Grain

Surrounding and to the south of the Bargate, the street widens and the building line curves to create a space around the scheduled ancient monument. There is a fine to medium grain to the development around the Bargate. On travelling east along Hanover Buildings development of a similar grain and composition to that of the Bargate environs is seen. Building lines are continuous and regular with a strong consistency in conformity to the lines on all the street frontages.

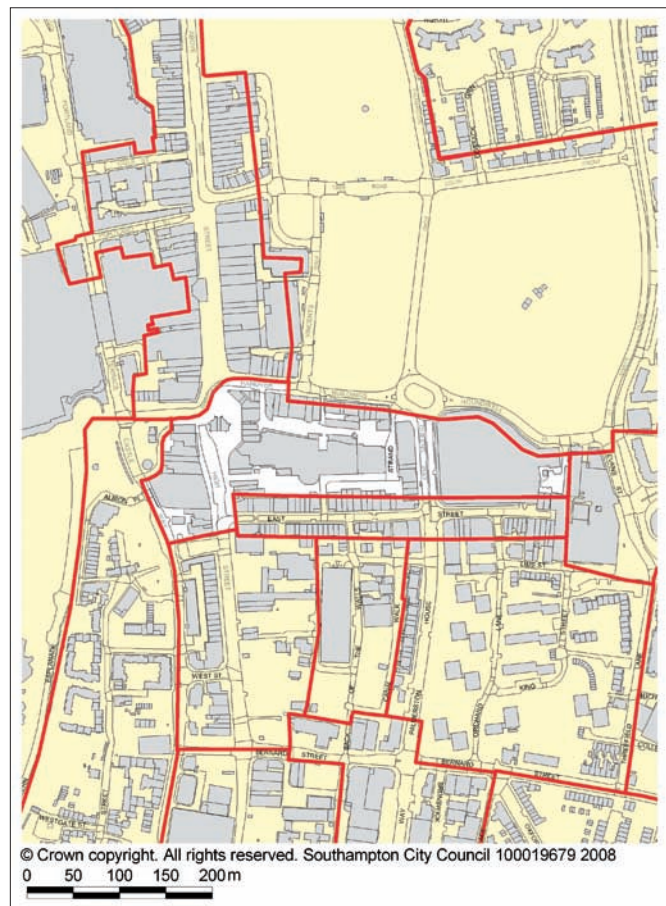
Scale

This area displays a continuous rationale of built form distinct from that of Above Bar which is generally of a higher quality (particularly in material terms) but more varied in its scale.

Due to its rebuilding in the immediate post-war era, there is a marked emphasis on conformity of parapet heights – generally three commercial storeys (or equivalent) in height. Some of the remnant pre-war buildings are taller. Parapets are dominant as most of the area consists of flat roof buildings. There is an additional storey added along Hanover Buildings but the variation in levels accommodates this height difference so the strong horizontal parapet line remains the same across the group running down Hanover Buildings.

Uses

The predominant land use is retail. Upper floors have secondary retail and commercial uses and there is limited evidence of under-use of upper floors. Residential uses are negligible however there is a small number of residential buildings, the principal example being the four storey block Hanover House forming the centre of Hanover Buildings. The Bargate has recently been re-opened to the public as the Bargate Monument Gallery.



Public Realm

Generally concrete slabs with resin bond gravel in the Bargate area. The line of the missing city wall is marked out in traditional paving materials, as is the area in the immediate vicinity of the Gate. The public realm along Bargate Street is generally of indifferent and poor quality and not commensurate with the setting of a scheduled monument and Grade I listed building.

Connectivity

This character area is very well connected to most parts of the city centre, with a clearly legible Main Street/Side Street structure with good visual links to other areas.

Views

The main focus of the area is the Bargate: it dominates southerly views from the lower end of Above Bar and northerly views from the south of the area. Extensive and developing views of the parks are gained from along the Hanover Buildings frontage.

The Neo-Jacobean stone frontage of No.171 High Street (Barclays Bank) comprises columns and string courses with projecting bays and obelisk finials to the parapet and forms a striking and notable termination of the view looking west along East Street.

The city walls can be most clearly seen along Bargate Street and in the service areas to the rear of the buildings facing Hanover Buildings, which create a particularly poor setting (both in front of and behind this major landmark).

Building types

Predominantly medium to large floorplate shops, on two or three floors, with further retail space, storage space and some residential above.

Architectural qualities

The overwhelming architectural style and period is post-war modernism c.1950-1960. The characteristics are of clean lines, grouped windows, expressed structural frame in places. Window/wall relationships are consistent and alluding to the classical in places with a hierarchy to each floor. A small pocket of inter-war architecture exists on the eastern side of the Bargate (neo-Georgian), with a fine art deco facade just south of this. Despite the strong horizontal emphasis throughout this character area mainly derived from the consistent parapet line and continuous projecting canopies at ground floor level, there is a good sense of vertical emphasis and rhythm throughout derived from the classical hierarchy of the facades.

Heritage Assets

The Bargate environs comprises the buildings which enclose and form the setting for the Bargate monument. The character area also includes a section of High Street to the south of Bargate down to the boundary with CA13.



- 01** The Bargate, a Scheduled Ancient Monument, is an important symbol of the city but stands as an isolated monument, detached from the town walls
- 02** Sections of the medieval wall – their setting compromised by twentieth century development
- 03** The area surrounding the Bargate is regularly used for markets

All of this character area as well as a section of High Street further south falls within the designated conservation area; Old Town North Conservation Area.

The area is considered to possess a high degree of evidential and historic value due to archaeological evidence for late Saxon and Norman settlement that has been found. In relation to the shift of settlement from Hamwic and the development of the medieval town this area is regarded as being nationally important. The area lies within a Local Area of Archaeological Importance to reflect this potential to yield significant evidence for past activity in the area.

The principal built heritage assets are the Bargate and the town walls marking the northern extent of the medieval walled town with Bargate being the principal gateway to the old Town. The walled town of Southampton is a highly significant historic survival of the medieval period and defined, in part, later development of the town. The Bargate is illustrative of the scale, craftsmanship and social significance of the town's status in this period. The Bargate is well maintained and interpreted if seen somewhat isolated being totally detached from the town walls. The walls, especially to the east of the Bargate have a poor setting, but are in reasonable condition as a managed ruin. Their cultural value has been diminished by their poor setting and loss of context. The south side of the remnant wall facing Bargate Street is not well managed. The outstanding historical, evidential and aesthetic value of the walls and Bargate are reflected in their national designations as Scheduled Monuments and Grade I listings. The Bargate

is the significant symbol of the city's medieval old town.

Materials

The stone of the City Walls and Bargate are perhaps the most locally distinctive. Otherwise the palette covers a wide spectrum. Historic materials comprise the rubble stone and ashlar work of the surviving sections of wall, Portland stone and some stucco. Post-war materials comprise: pale red brick, some buff brick, Portland stone, exposed pre-cast concrete, and reconstructed stone.

Condition

Generally very good condition of buildings and public realm.

Ownership

Generally larger scale corporate ownership. Some smaller scale ownerships in side streets in other buildings.

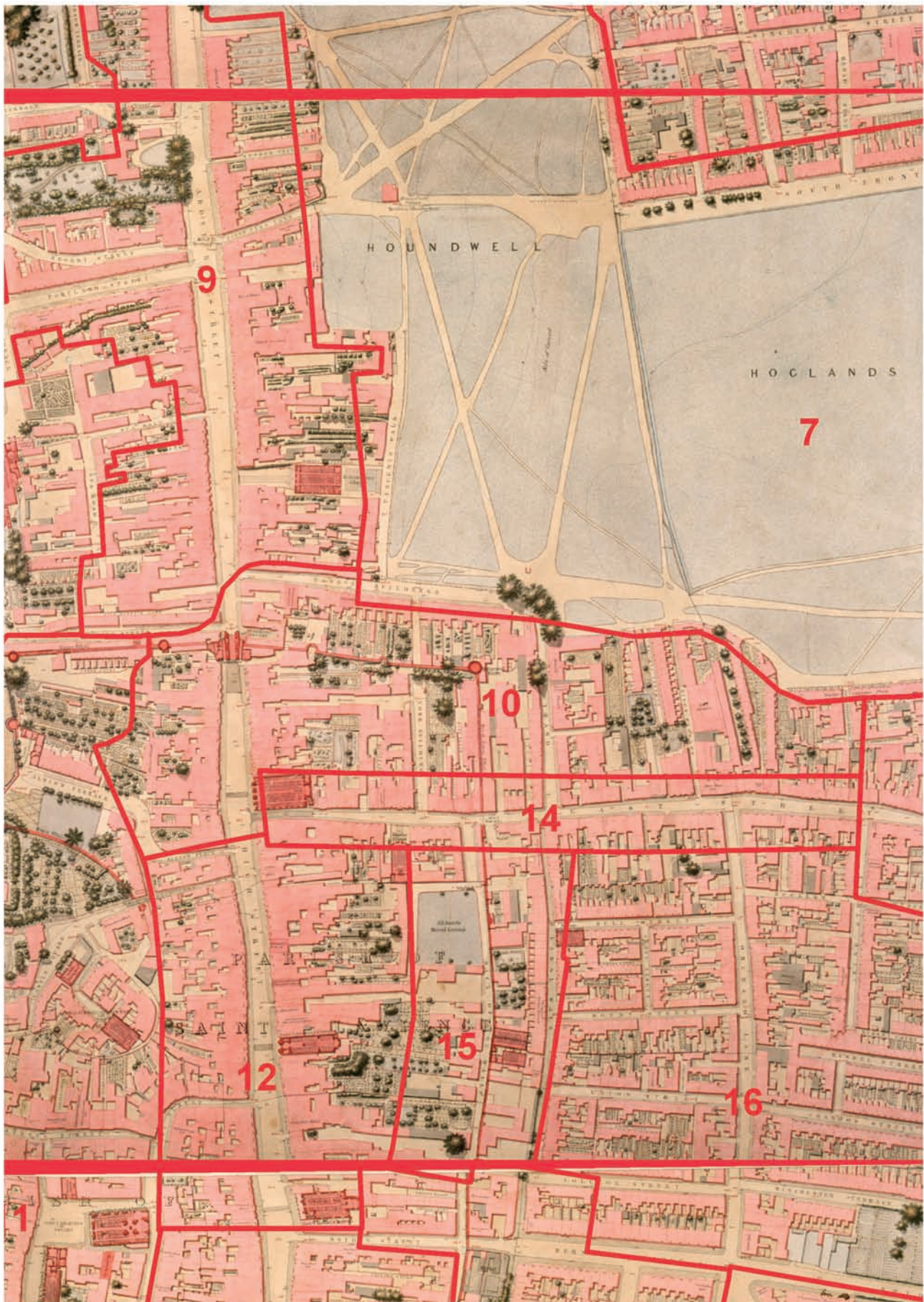
Intervention

Suggested areas for Improvement.

- Area in front of and behind the Town Walls, behind the Hanover Building.

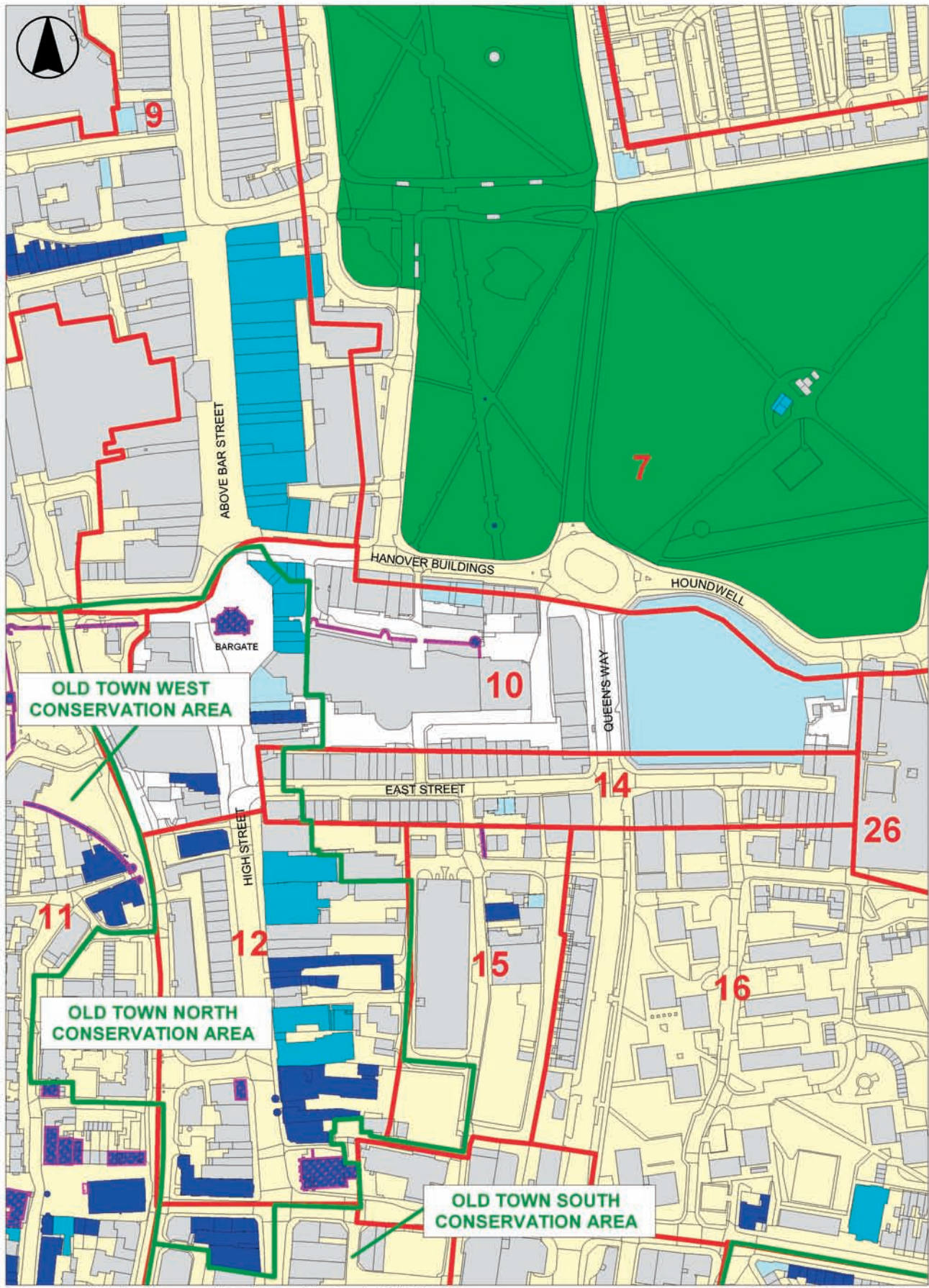
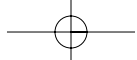
Key design principles

- Creation of active frontages through negotiation with building owners and incremental development control decisions.
- Improvement of setting of the northern town walls requires a detailed action plan covering paved surfaces, removal of car parking and inappropriate structures from the immediate vicinity of the walls.

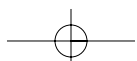


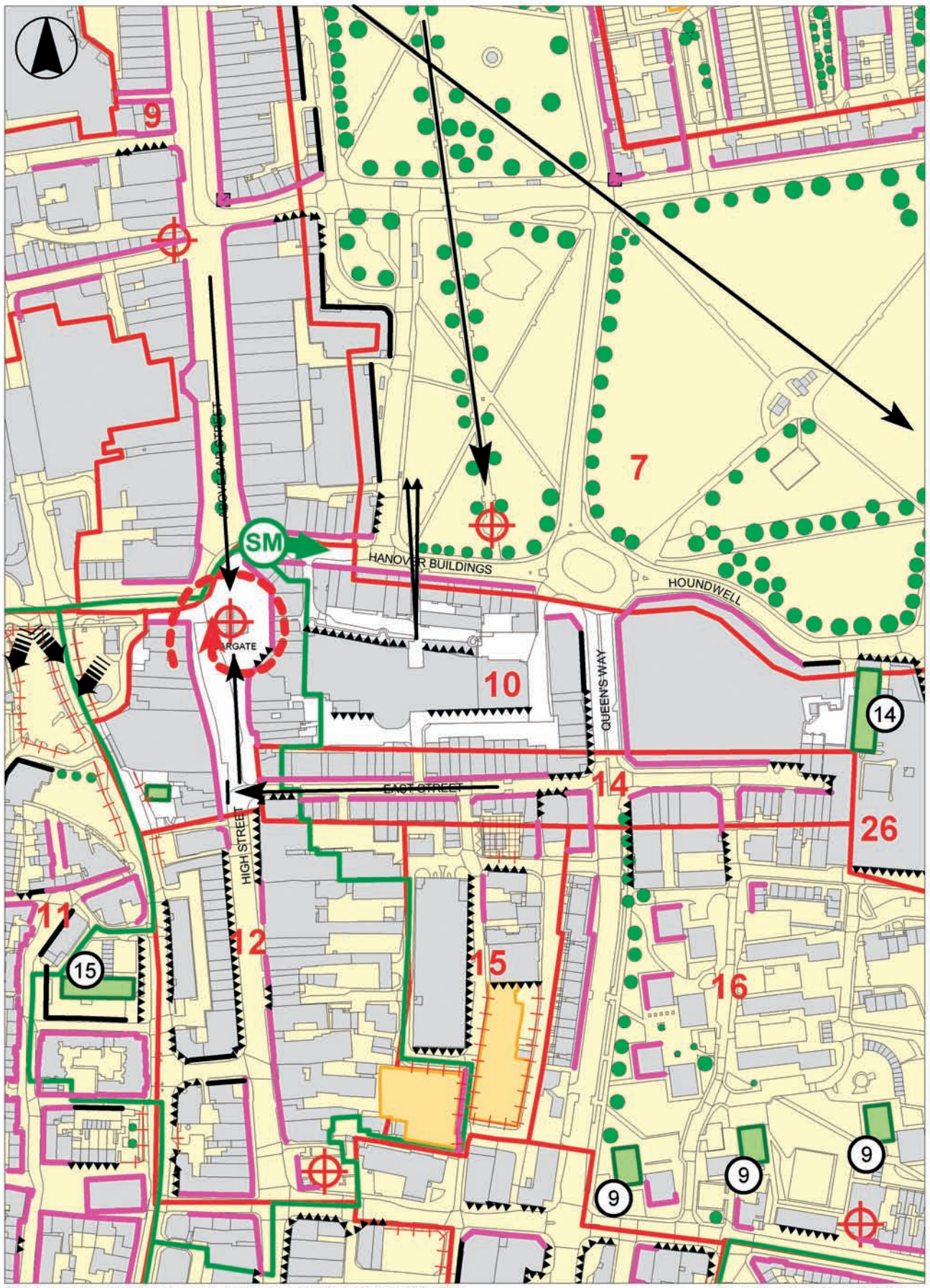
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Heritage Assets





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Townscape

