

ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
WATCHING BRIEF  
AT  
93, LOWESMOOR TERRACE,  
LOWESMOOR,  
WORCESTER

Graham Arnold

Illustrated by Carolyn Hunt

31 August 2012

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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Project P3806  
Report 1920  
WCM 101942



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## Archaeological watching brief at 93, Lowesmoor Terrace, Lowesmoor, Worcester

**Graham Arnold**

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### Background information

<i>Client</i>	J B Leadbitter & Co.
<i>Site address</i>	93, Lowesmoor Terrace Lowesmoor Worcester
<i>National Grid reference</i>	SO 85390 55300 (Figure 1)
<i>Historic Environment Record reference</i>	WCM 101942
<i>Planning authority</i>	Worcester City Council
<i>reference</i>	P09D0492
<i>Brief</i>	WCC 2011
<i>Project design</i>	Worcestershire Archaeology 2012b
<i>Project parameters</i>	IfA 2008

### *Previous archaeological work on the site*

The archaeological background to the site is given in the Brief (WCC 2011, 4) and a report on initial evaluation works (phase 1) undertaken in 2006 (Mercian Archaeology 2006). The evaluation revealed no archaeological deposits or features dating to before the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century within the evaluated area. Undisturbed natural substrate was found a 2.40m below ground level. There were two distinct layers of dumped and levelled layers. This was thought to relate to the construction of the Worcester to Birmingham Canal in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and further domestic developments from the 1830s and mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century (*ibid*).

### *Previous archaeological work on associated sites*

A desk-based assessment for the Lowesmoor area was also completed for the recent Flood Alleviation Scheme (Wessex Archaeology 2010). In summary, the results of the surrounding area focussed on the 19<sup>th</sup> century construction of the canal basin (WCM 98263) to the west of the site and later building of the hotel (WCM 99040) and medical centre (WCM 99130) that stood on the site. A watching brief during borehole work (WCM 100590) to the north of the current study area had found post-medieval deposits. It has been conjectured that the line of the Roman road (WCM 96405) from Worcester to Droitwich runs past the site.

The DBA concluded that 'Archaeological investigations within and around the Study Area have recorded archaeological sites, deposits and find spots dating from the prehistoric to modern period. However, much of the known and potential archaeological resource with the Study Area reflects the expansion and contraction of the urban suburb of Lowesmoor into its hinterland through the Post-medieval to modern periods. Consequently it is considered there is an increased potential for the presence of archaeological remains dating to these periods. There is also a potential for recovering remains relating to background level of Romano-British to Medieval date activity within the Site' (Wessex Archaeology 2010, 12-3).

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### Aims

The aim of the watching brief was to observe and record archaeological deposits, and to determine their extent, state of preservation, date and type, as far as reasonably possible.

In particular the project provided the opportunity to address a number of research questions identified within *An archaeological resource assessment and research framework for the city of Worcester* (Worcester City Council, September 2007, version 2.51, <http://www.worcester.gov.uk/?id=2570>), as follows:

- character and development of the Frog Brook valley (RP 1.2);
- documenting the extents of Roman Worcester (RP 3.30);

- Roman road network (RP 3.7);
- Roman activity in the Frog Brook valley (RP 3.11);
- Major medieval common rubbish disposal zones (RP 5.11);
- Industry and land-use patterns in the suburbs (RP 5.14);
- post-medieval waste disposal areas (RP 6.6).

### Methods

General specification for fieldwork Worcestershire Archaeology 2012b  
WCC 2011

Sources consulted Worcester HER

Date(s) of fieldwork 17 May to 16 July 2012

Area of site c 735m<sup>2</sup>

Sampling area sampled Indicated on Figure 2

Dimensions of excavated areas observed:

Area 1	Reduced site strip across whole of site	depth 0.50m max
Trench 2	Drainage	length 15.00m width 0.80m depth 3.30m max
Trench 3	Lift shaft	length 3.50m width 3.50m depth 1.10m

### *Access to or visibility of structure/deposits*

Observation of the excavated areas was undertaken during machine and after excavation. The exposed surfaces were sufficiently clean to observe well-differentiated archaeological deposits, though any less clear may have not been identified. Selected areas were cleaned by hand. Access to deep trenches was not made for safety reasons.

### *Statement of confidence*

Access to, and visibility of, deposits allowed a high degree of confidence that the aims of the project have been achieved.

### Deposit description

#### Area 1 General site ground reduction

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
100	Layer	Modern reinforced concrete and tarmac of car park	0.00-0.20m
101	Layer	Type 1 grey gravel chipping, levelling for carpark surface	0.20-0.30m
102	Layer	Mixed amorphous dark reddish brown silty sand y clay with frequent brick rubble, mortar, metalwork and drainage channels from extant medical centre and hotel on site	0.30 – 0.50m

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## Trench 2 Drainage

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Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
200	Topsoil	Loose dark brown sandy silt with frequent rooting and tree roots	0.00-0.25m
201	Layer	Type 1 grey gravel chipping, levelling overlying manhole and BT service trench.	0.25-0.50m
202	Layer	Mixed amorphous friable dark brownish grey silty sandy clay with frequent brick rubble, mortar, metalwork and glass. Modern made ground.	0.50 – 1.40m
203	Layer	Moderately compact reddish brown silty clay with occasional sub-angular stones and brick and occasional porcelain. Post medieval levelling deposit. made ground.	1.40 – 2.20m
204	Natural	Compact reddish brown clay. Natural substrate	1.50 -2.40m

## Trench 3 Lift Shaft

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
300	Structures	Modern cellars and footings of extant hotel on site.	0.00-1.20m +
301	Layer	Series of modern soil horizons, including garden soil and make up layers including redeposited natural mottled reddish brown clays.	0.20-1.10m
302	Layer	Mixed amorphous dark reddish brown silty sandy clay with frequent brick rubble, mortar, metalwork and drainage channels from extant medical centre and hotel on site	1.10 - 1.20m +

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## Discussion

The site works comprised a general ground reduction across site, removing the old carpark and other hard-standing for piling of the buildings foundations (Area 1; Plates 1 -4) with associated drainage (Trench 2; Plates 5 – 10) and a lift shaft (Trench 3; Plates 11-14). In the areas of Trench 2 and 3 the site had been heavily truncated by previous building activity on site. This mirrored the findings in the initial evaluation in 2006. A series of modern layers overlaid a post-medieval made ground (contexts 203 and 302) overlying the natural clay substrate. The natural clay substrate lay at between 1.50 and 2.20m below ground level. No significant archaeological artefacts, features, structures or layers were observed. Therefore it is considered that the likelihood for preservation of archaeological remains elsewhere across the site is considered to be low.

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## Conclusions

The archaeological watching brief has demonstrated that there is no significant archaeology in the area and that the cellars of the previous hotel, medical centre and associated drainage have truncated the site down to the level of the natural matrix.

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## Publication summary

The Service has a professional obligation to publish the results of archaeological projects within a reasonable period of time. To this end, the Service intends to use this summary as the basis for publication through local or regional journals. The client is requested to consider the content of this section as being acceptable for such publication.

*An archaeological watching brief was undertaken on behalf of J B Leadbitter & Co at 93, Lowesmoor Terrace, Lowesmoor, Worcester (NGR ref SO 85390 55300; HER ref WCM 101942).*

*The groundworks revealed a series of layers of post-medieval and modern made ground and cellars of the previous building on site. No significant archaeological artefacts, features, structures or layers were observed, nor relict stratified soils*

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### **Acknowledgements**

The Service would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, Peter Dixon and Dave Fisher (J B Leadbitter & Co) and James Dinn, (Archaeological Officer, Worcester City Council).

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### **Bibliography**

HEAS 2008 *Standards and guidelines for archaeological projects in Worcestershire*, Historic Environment and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished document dated November 2008

IfA 2008 *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief*, Institute for Archaeologists

Mercian Archaeology 2006 *An Archaeological Evaluation and Building Assessment at the Former Medical Centre, Lowesmoor Terrace, Worcester*, unpublished report dated February 2006, **PJ 155**, WCM 101417

WCC 2011 *Brief for archaeological mitigation, 93 Lowesmoor Terrace, Worcester*, Worcestershire City Council, unpublished document dated 9<sup>th</sup> December 2011

Wessex Archaeology 2010 *Lowesmoor Flood Alleviation Scheme, Worcester, Desk-based assessment*, unpublished report dated November 2010 report ref **75980.02**

Worcestershire Archaeology 2012a *Manual of Service Practice: recording manual*, Worcestershire Archaeology, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished report, **1842**

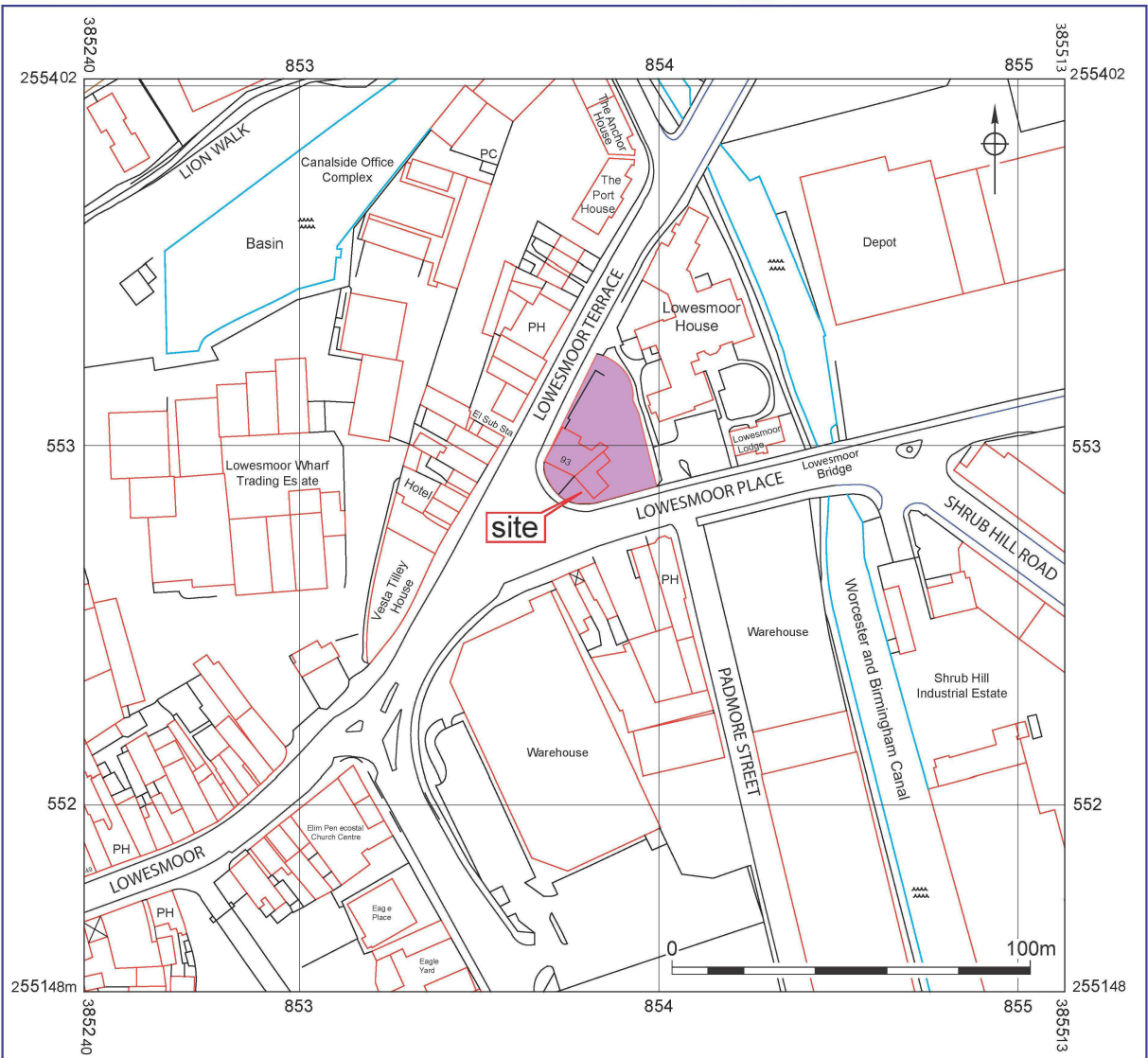
Worcestershire Archaeology 2012b *Proposal for an archaeological watching brief at 93 Lowesmoor Terrace, Lowesmoor, Worcester*, Worcestershire Archaeology, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished document dated 10 May 2012, **P3806**

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## **Figures**



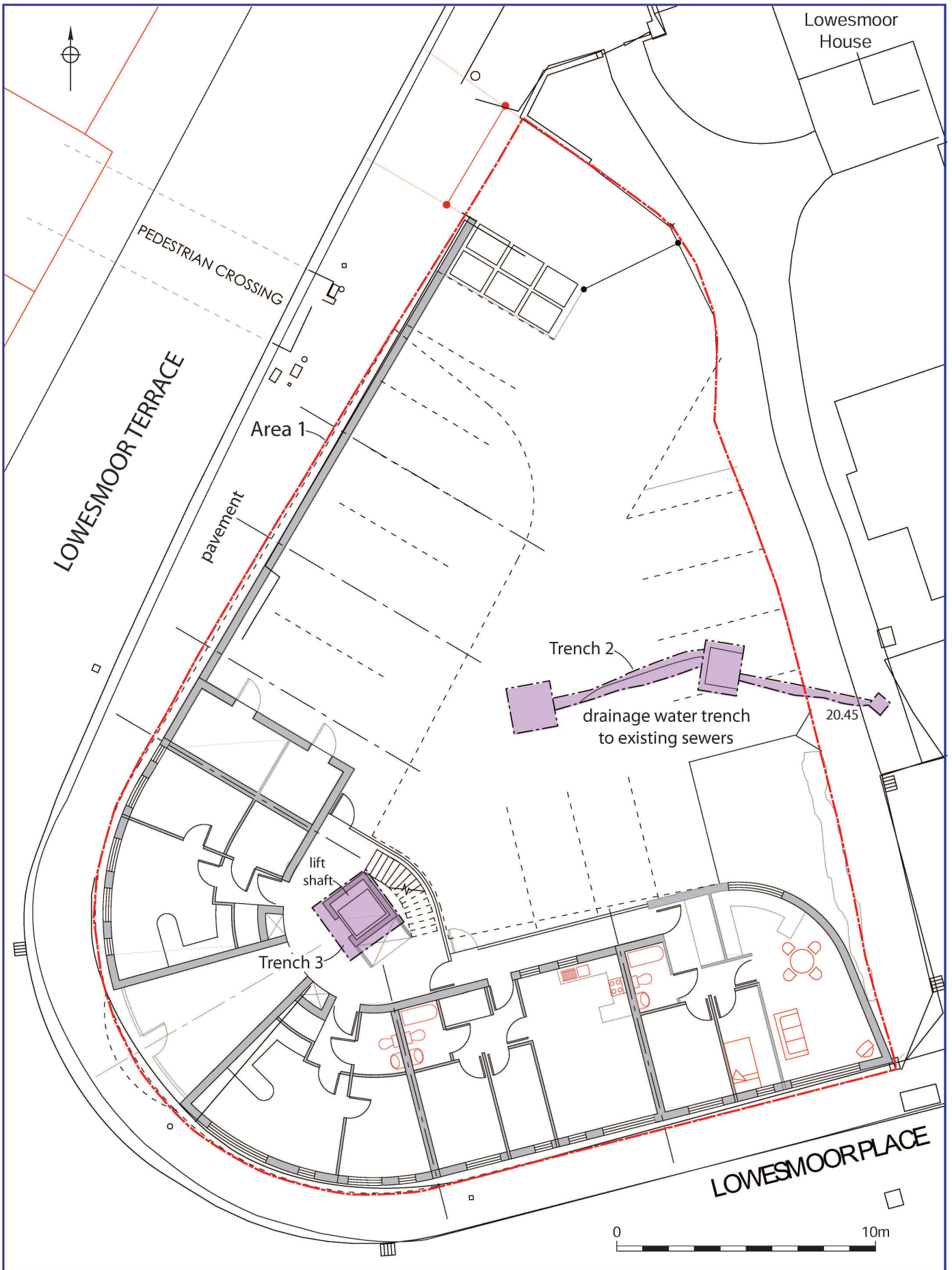




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Location of the site

Figure 1



Trench location plan (based upon JBD Drg No. 5782/02 Ground Floor Plan)

Figure 2

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## Plates



*Plate 1 The site overall during initial ground reduction looking north-west*



*Plate 2 The finished reduced level showing modern drains and refuse, looking north-east*



*Plate 3 The final reduced depth in the north end of the site and a modern existing brick wall, looking northwest*



*Plate 4 The reinforced concrete hard standing broken up across the site during the initial ground reductions, looking south*



*Plate 5 Trench 2 drainage connecting to existing manhole in east corner of site, showing manhole and BT cable at the back of the trench, view north-east.*



*Plate 6 South facing section of Trench 2 showing loose made ground and natural.*



*Plate 7 The drainage trench (Trench 2) after excavation, looking south-east*



*Plate 8 General shot of Trench 2 drainage showing series of modern made ground and levelling material, looking north*



*Plate 9 South facing section of western manhole for drainage in Trench 2*



*Plate 10 South facing section of eastern manhole of Trench 2*



*Plate 11 General shot of lift shaft (Trench 3) looking west*



*Plate 12 The lift shaft (Trench 3) looking north-west*





*Plate 13 Lift shaft (Trench 3) north-west facing section showing cellars of previous building and modern piles for new development.*



*Plate 14 South-east facing section of lift shaft showing a series of soil horizons and modern levelling layers*

## **Appendix 1 Technical information**

### **The archive (site code: WCM 101942)**

The archive consists of:

- 5 Field progress reports AS2
- 1 Photographic records AS3
- 32 Digital photographs
- 1 Drawing number catalogues AS4
- 1 Scale drawings
- 3 Trench record sheets AS41
- 1 Computer disk
- 1 Copy of this report (bound hard copy)

The project archive is intended to be placed at:

Museums Worcestershire  
Worcester City Museum and Art Gallery  
Foregate Street  
Worcester  
WR1 2PW

Tel. Worcester (01905) 25371