

Agenda Cabinet

**Wednesday, 9 February 2022 at 3.30 pm
at Council Chamber, Sandwell Council House, Freeth Street, Oldbury,
B69 3DB**

This agenda gives notice of items to be considered in private as required by Regulations 5 (4) and (5) of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

1 Apologies for Absence

2 Declarations of Interest

Members to declare any interests in matters to be discussed at the meeting.

3 Minutes (Pages 7 - 28)

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 12 January 2022 as a correct record.

4 Additional Items of Business

To determine whether there are any additional items of business to be considered as a matter of urgency.

**5 West Bromwich Interim Planning Statement (IPS) and West Bromwich Masterplan (Masterplan)
(Pages 29 - 230)**

**Regeneration
& Growth**



To approve the the West Bromwich Interim Planning Statement and West Bromwich Masterplan.

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| 6 | Re-commissioning Sandwell Adult Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services (Pages 231 - 250) | Adults,
Social Care
& Health |
| | To consider re-commissioning the Adult Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services ensuring future delivery of support for Sandwell residents. | |
| 7 | Appointment of an Executive Director to Sandwell Children's Trust Ltd (Pages 251 - 258) | Children &
Education |
| | To consider the appointment of an Executive Director to Sandwell Children's Trust. | |
| 8 | Award a Contract for Highway Surfacing and Associated Works (Pages 259 - 264) | Environment |
| | To consider proposals to procure a contract for the provision of highway surfacing and associated works. | |
| 9 | Revocation of Highway Improvement Lines - A41 Birmingham Road, West Bromwich (Pages 265 - 270) | Environment |
| | To consider proposals to revoke the highway improvement lines at A41 Birmingham Road/Park Lane, West Bromwich. | |
| 10 | Smethwick to Birmingham Area Framework and Grove Lane Masterplan (Pages 271 - 454) | Regeneration
& Growth |
| | To consider the results of the consultation undertaken on the Smethwick to Birmingham Area Framework and Grove Lane Masterplan during October to December 2021. | |
| 11 | Sandwell Valley Urban Bike Park Project (Pages 455 - 506) | Culture &
Tourism |
| | To approve proposals to create a series of cycle trails within Sandwell Valley, West Bromwich. | |
| 12 | Council new build homes on land at Beever Road, | Housing |

Tipton (Pages 507 - 532)

To consider proposals to appropriate the site for housing purposes and develop land at Beever Road, Tipton.

13 Award of Contracts for Horticultural Products and Tools (Pages 533 - 538) **Culture & Tourism**

To award contracts for the provision of Horticultural Products and Tools for the period April 2022 to March 2026.

14 High Needs Block Funding Allocation (Pages 539 - 560) **Children & Education**

To approve the distribution of High Needs Block grant funding to meet the needs of children and young people with additional needs, including special educational needs.

15 Action Taken on a Matter of Urgency - Uplift of Hourly Rate - Domiciliary Care Costing Model (Pages 561 - 568) **Leader**

To consider an urgent action taken by the Leader of the Council in relation to giving approval to an addition to the costing model used to calculate the domiciliary care hourly rate.

16 Exclusion of the Public and Press

That the public and press be excluded from the rest of the meeting. This is to avoid the possible disclosure of exempt information under Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, relating to the financial and business affairs of any person, including the authority holding that information.

17 Sandwell Leisure Trust Business Plan 2021-24 (Pages 569 - 724) **Culture & Tourism**

To consider the Sandwell Leisure Trust Business Plan

2021-24.

18 **Sandwell Community Dementia Support Service**
(Pages 725 - 738)

**Adults,
Social Care
& Health**

To consider proposals for the community dementia support service.

Kim Bromley-Derry CBE DL
Interim Chief Executive
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West Midlands

Distribution

Councillor Carmichael (Chair)
Councillors Ahmed, Bostan, Crompton, Hartwell, Millard, I Padda, Piper and Simms

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Minutes of The Cabinet

**Wednesday 12 January 2022 at 3.30pm
in the Council Chamber, Sandwell Council House, Oldbury**

Present: Councillor Carmichael (Leader of the Council);
Councillors Ahmed, Crompton Hartwell, I Padda, Piper and
Simms.

Officers: Kim Bromley-Derry (Interim Chief Executive), Simone Hines
(Director of Finance), Michael Jarrett (Director of Children
and Education), Tony McGovern (Director of Regeneration
and Growth), Surjit Tour (Director of Law and Governance
and Monitoring Officer) and Suky Suthi-Nagra (Democratic
Services Manager).

1/22 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bostan, L
Giles, Millard, Moore and Shackleton.

2/22 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no interests declared at the meeting.

3/22 **Minutes**

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 15
December 2021 be confirmed as a correct record.



Two additional items of business were considered:-

5/22 (a)

Business Rates Covid Additional Relief Fund

Approval was sought for Sandwell's policy to administer the Business Rates Covid Additional Relief Fund (CARF) arising from new regulations introduced through the Government's Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

Reason for Decision

The policy would ensure businesses received the financial support they were entitled to. The Council intended to make the CARF scheme as simple as possible and make the awards without the need for businesses to apply. Sandwell Council would therefore, based upon the guidance issued by the government, identify the businesses entitled to the CARF and then award relief directly to their business rates accounts. This would ensure the financial support would be paid to businesses a lot quicker than via an application process. Furthermore, in view of the tight deadlines to expend the grant funding, a decision was required urgently.

Alternative Options Considered

As an alternative to the direct award of CARF, an application process would be implemented which would enable those businesses who felt they might qualify for the relief to apply via an online form.

This would delay getting the financial support out to the businesses who required this financial support and the potential for businesses to miss out on the support by not applying.

As any awards given out were reimbursed to the Council in the form of a Section 31 grant, it was in Sandwell Council's own interests and local businesses interest to make these awards as quickly and efficiently as possible.



Agreed:-

- (1) that Sandwell's policy for administering the Business Rates Covid Additional Relief Fund (CARF) arising from new regulations introduced through the Government's Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities be approved;
- (2) that details of the sum of £7,582,533 that Sandwell has received to support businesses that we identify as meeting the eligible criteria be noted;
- (3) that the Director of Finance be authorised to make any changes necessary to the Business Rates Covid Additional Relief Fund policy in order to ensure all the funding is expended within the time frame.

6/22 (b) Additional Restrictions Grant 3

Approval was sought for Sandwell's policy to administer the Additional Restrictions Grant 3 (ARG 3) arising from 21 December 2021 announcement from Government to the introduction of grant support for hospitality and leisure businesses in England.

Reason for Decision

On 21 December 2021, the Government announced that a further £102 million would be made available for local authorities, through a top-up to the Additional Restrictions Grant.

The ARG funding scheme aimed to support businesses severely impacted by coronavirus restrictions and the rise of the Omicron variant, when most needed.

All funding must be spent by the 31 March 2022 and as such, the way in which the council utilised this funding must be aligned to available resources; the council's decision-making processes; and procurement regulations. Flexibility would also be required to enable the council to respond to any changing circumstances over the grant period and therefore this was the reason for the urgent decision.



Alternative Options Considered

As the government had expressed their preferences on this funding, there was minimal scope for alternative options. Whilst there was one alternative to increase both grant sizes by £500; to £2500 and £5500 respectively, this would result in less grants being available overall and fewer local businesses would also benefit as a result.

Agreed:-

- (1) that approval be given to Sandwell's policy for administering the Additional Restrictions Grant 3 (ARG 3) arising from 21 December 2021 announcement from Government to the introduction of grant support for hospitality and leisure businesses in England;
- (2) that the Director for Regeneration and Growth in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth and the Director of Finance, be authorised to allocate and administer £406,000 of Additional Restriction Grants 3;
- (3) that the Director of Regeneration and Growth be authorised to make any changes necessary to the Additional Restriction Grants policy in order to ensure all the funding is expended within the time frame.

7/22

Determination of Admission Arrangements for Sandwell's Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools for 2023/24

Approval was sought for the publication of the Council's Admission Arrangements for 2023/24 academic year for places in all community and voluntary controlled schools.

Questions were asked by Chair of the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board regarding the process and criteria of admissions of children to Sandwell schools.



In response, the Cabinet for Children and Education confirmed that whilst a school may indicate a place available at its school at a particular point in time, when a formal application to the Admissions Team was required, in accordance with the national School Admissions Code, the Authority must then consider all current applications received from parents/carers for that school. Applications were then prioritised against the school's published admission criteria. A child may not secure a place if there was an alternative child who met a higher admission criteria or lived closer to the school.

Reasons for Decision

The Council must abide by the requirements of the School Admissions Code and associated regulations and determine admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools each year. The proposed arrangements were in line with the requirements of the Admissions Code.

The Admissions Code also required the Council to consult governing bodies of community and voluntary controlled schools where it proposed either to increase or keep the same Published Admission Number (PAN).

Alternative Options

There was no alternative option open to the Council in relation to its responsibilities for agreeing and publishing oversubscription criteria for community and voluntary controlled schools.

Agreed that the Director of Children and Education, in accordance with the School Admissions Code 2021, be authorised to publish the Local Authority's Admission Arrangements for 2023/24 academic year for places in all community and voluntary controlled schools as now submitted.

8/22

Request to procure for the Holiday Activity and Food Programme 2022-2023

Approval was sought to undertake a procurement exercise for holiday activity provision via the Holiday Activity and Food programme 2022-2023 to a maximum value of £360,000.



Additionally, approval was sought to authorise the Director of Children and Education to request an exemption to the Council's Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules to contract an existing schools catering provider for the Holiday Activity and Food programme 2022-2023 to the maximum value of £144,000.

Reasons for Decision

The Department for Education had recently informed all local authorities in England that the Holiday Activity and Food programme would now be funded for an additional three years, from 2022 – 2025.

Approval was therefore requested to undertake a procurement process for holiday activity provision for centralised activity providers at a maximum value of £360,000 and to undertake an exemption to procurement procedures to contract an existing centralised meal provider at a cost of £144,000. Both decisions would require Cabinet approval in order to meet the procurement and contracting regulations in order to meet the timescales to enable live delivery for Easter 2022.

Alternative Options

There were no viable alternative options as the Holiday Activity and Food programme 2022 would continue investing through a grant making scheme to support the voluntary and community sector to deliver holiday activity in communities. Local voluntary and community sector capacity was limited and would not meet the sufficiency of places that were required to offer that exceeded 17,500 children currently in receipt of benefit related free school meals.

A procurement process was undertaken for our current schools catering provider. It identified value for money, local jobs for local people and the provider had the skills, knowledge and experience to deliver against the School Food Standards which was a requirement of the grant.



Agreed:-

- (1) that the Director of Children and Education be authorised, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer, to undertake a procurement exercise for holiday activity provision via the Holiday Activity and Food programme 2022-2023 to a maximum value of £360,000;
- (2) that the Director of Children and Education be authorised to request an exemption to the Council's Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules to contract an existing schools catering provider for the Holiday Activity and Food programme 2022-2023 to the maximum value of £144,000.

9/22

Mobysoft Limited- RentSense Software Contract

Approval was sought to award a contract for Mobysoft's RentSense product to deliver an efficient and effective arrears recovery process.

Whilst the Chair of the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board agreed that the software was multi-purpose, he questioned whether the contract had been put out to tender and how many companies had submitted bids.

In response, the Cabinet Member for Housing stated that the contract had not been put out to tender and had been done as an exemption to procurement rules as there were no other suppliers in the market who could offer the Council this product and service. The return on investment for the contract had been proven in the initial two-year contract procured from Mobysoft which was now coming to an end.



Furthermore, officers had benchmarked what was being paid for the software and service with other Mobysoft Customers and were satisfied that Sandwell Council were getting value for money. The efficiency gains included an increased capacity within our existing team resources which had freed them from the manual checking of rent accounts ensuring their time and expertise was focused on interventions to collect rent and providing advice and assistance to tenants in financial hardship, so they could maintain their tenancies.

Reasons for Decision

Mobysoft's RentSense product would enable the service to deliver an efficient and effective arrears recovery process that maximised cash collection, prevented tenants from getting into debt, supported tenancy sustainment and reduced homelessness.

The value and return on investment had clearly been demonstrated during the existing contract term in delivering greater caseload accuracy, a more manageable caseload enabling officers to focus on tenants most in need, reduced arrears, fewer tenants in debt, fewer evictions and in supporting tenant wellbeing and tenancy sustainment.

Alternative Options Considered

Option 1 – Use Capita's Open Housing Management System: there was no guarantee moving forward that any future version upgrade would deliver on the functionality required to reduce arrears, increase cash collection and manage the escalating demands of universal credit.

Option 2 - Procure a new Housing Management System: The current contract with Capita expired March 2023 and approval was being sought to commence a system review. The end to end process to review, procure and implement a new housing management system would not be completed until approximately 2025.



Option 3 - Enter into a new contract with Mobyssoft Limited:
This would not require any additional resources and Mobyssoft had delivered on the projected outcomes which included a reduced arrears caseload, capacity gain enabling officers to focus on complex arrears cases and mitigate the impact of universal credit, increased cash collection and a reduction in arrears.

Agreed:-

- (1) that the Director of Housing be authorised to enter into a direct award contract via Crown Commercial Services G-Cloud Framework Agreement with Mobyssoft Limited for RentSense software for a period of two years with the option to extend for a further two years when the existing contract expires on 23 February 2022 given no further extension provision exists within the current contract, at a total cost of £905,356, should the two year option to extend be exercised;
- (2) that in connection with Resolution (1) above, the Director of Housing be authorised to enter into a new two-year contract with the option to extend for a further two years with Mobyssoft Limited from 24 February 2022 to 23 February 2026;
- (3) that the Director – Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer be authorised to execute any documentation necessary to enable the course of action referred to in Resolution (1) above;
- (4) that any necessary exemptions be made to the Council's Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules to enable the course of action referred to in Resolutions (1) and (2) above to proceed.



Consideration was given to proposals in relation to travel arrangements for children with special educational needs and disabilities to facilitate their attendance at an appropriate education provision.

It was now proposed to:-

- (i) abandon the mini-competition undertaken under the new Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS)
- (ii) extend the existing arrangements to ensure the continued delivery of this essential service, with the appropriate additional safeguards
- (iii) embark on the procurement of a framework agreement with measures and provisions in place to ensure the needs and priorities of the Council and the service users are most appropriately and fully met, with support (if required) by using the new DPS for additional ad-hoc service.

The Chair of Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board, on behalf of the Chair of Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board, asked the relevant Cabinet Member several questions regarding procurement rules.

In response, the Cabinet Member for Children and Education stated that the original bidders for the DPS contract would be informed following the decision made by Cabinet. Furthermore, the new procurement exercise would begin almost immediately to ensure operators would be invited to tender for the new framework early February with the aim of it being agreed by late April. The successful operators would then be invited to bid for the new contracts, with a view to seeking Cabinet approval to award new contracts in early June ensuring sufficient lead in time for new arrangements for families, schools and operators.

The Cabinet Member for Children and Education also stated the new procurement rules included provision to address the concerns and issues identified, and to deliver the best solution for service users and their families, provide sufficient assurances for the Council around quality of provision and deliver the most economical and sustainable solution.



Reasons for Decision

The Council had a duty and had powers to make particular travel arrangements for children with special educational needs and disabilities to facilitate their attendance at an appropriate education provision.

Alternative Options

Option 1 – Running a new mini-competition under the New DPS: A new mini-competition could not be split into smaller lots, for shorter periods, so would not remedy all the issues arising and raised during the review process, particularly in relation to the mini-competition again producing only two successful bidders.

Option 2 - Continue to use the existing arrangements, under the previous DPS: it was possible for the Council to extend the previous DPS (completed in 2018), however this would not address the concerns and issues raised recently and would not positively contribute to the Council's current priorities.

Option 3 – Procure a new Fixed Term Service Contract This would be the least flexible option and high risk in terms of service delivery due to the rigid nature of a fixed term contract. Once a fixed term contract had been let, no further suppliers could be added to the contract, therefore should any suppliers wish to leave the contract, there would be no mechanism available to replace them with an alternative supplier.

Agreed:-

- (1) that the Director of Children and Education, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and Cabinet Member for Children and Education, be authorised to:
 - (a) abandon the mini-competition undertaken under the Dynamic Purchasing System (the new DPS), pursuant to which the contract award decision was deferred by Cabinet at its meeting on 16 June 2021 and inform all operators who are on the new DPS of the decision to abandon this process;



- (b) extend the existing contracts with providers for the continued provision of SEND transport beyond the current expiry date of 23 February 2022 until 21 July 2022, in accordance with the terms of those contracts, to ensure/enable continuity of service pending the award of new contracts, with any extension to be subject to the additional checks and balances on providers as approved by Cabinet on the 21 July 2021;
 - (c) tender any new SEND Transport work or any SEND Transport work that is not undertaken by operators using the current DPS Framework to cover the period 23 February to 21 July 2022;
 - (d) agree any necessary exemptions pursuant to the Council's Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules to enable the course of action referred to in Resolutions 1(b) and 1(c) above to proceed;
- (2) that in connection with Resolution 1 (a-d) above, the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer be authorised to agree, enter into and/or execute under seal (if necessary) all requisite contracts and ancillary documentation in relation to the extension of the contracts for the continued provision of Sandwell's SEND transport;
- (3) that the Director of Children and Education, in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer, be authorised to (i) undertake a new procurement exercise to establish a new Framework Agreement to award new contracts for SEND Transport from 1 September 2022 to July 2024 (inclusive), and (ii) undertake, if necessary, the procurement of any new additional ad-hoc SEND Transport work arising during this period, not covered by the new contracts awarded under (i) using a new Dynamic Purchasing System;



- (4) that the Director of Children and Education and the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer be authorised to agree, enter into and execute all requisite contracts and documentation (including under seal) in relation to the provision of SEND Transport work pursuant to the procurement exercises referred to at Resolution (3) above, and award contracts to all successful bidders as appropriate/required.

11/22 **Schools Funding 2022/2023**

Approval was sought for the Schools Funding 2022/23 proposals.

On behalf of the Chair of Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board, the Chair of Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board asked whether extra monies had been made available to school budgets to help bridge the gap/for levelling up etc to reduce the long-term effects on children's development and education and whether extra money was likely to come from the government.

In response, the Cabinet Member for Children and Education stated that additional funding had been received and had been passed onto maintained schools such as Covid -19 Catch up premium, Covid-19 Summer school programme, school led tutoring programme, Senior mental Health Leads training (this funding would be paid in January 2022 to specific schools). The government had stated they would be increasing schools funding in 2023/24; however, no announcements had yet been made as to the actual funding to be received.

Reason for Decision

The Schools Revenue Funding 2022/2023 – Operational Guide required the Council to engage in open and transparent consultation with maintained schools and academies in their area, as well as with their respective schools' forum about any changes to the local funding formula, including the principles adopted and any movement of funds between blocks.



The Council was responsible for making the final decisions on the formula and for ensuring there was sufficient time to gain political approval before the schools funding model (Authority Proforma Tool – APT) deadline in January 2022.

Alternative Options

Local Authority Funding Formula

Option 1 - Stepped increase to the 2022/23 Local authority model - Increase of the Primary: Secondary Ratio to 1:1.29 (3rd Year)

Option 2 - Secondary Schools receive 1% more above the overall increase in funding

Option 3: National Funding Formula Factor Values

Pupil Number Growth Fund

Agreed:-

- (1) that in respect of the 2022/2023 schools funding formula for Sandwell schools, the outcome of the consultation proposals following review by the Schools Forum, as shown in Appendix 1 be considered and approved as follows:
 - (a) the funding formula option 1; a primary: secondary ratio of 1:1.29 be adopted;
 - (b) a minimum funding guarantee of at least 0.5% and up to 2.0% be set;
 - (c) the pupil number growth fund be set at £1.3m as recommended by Schools Forum;



- (2) that In respect of the proposal to top slice the dedicated schools grant (DSG) to create a growth fund for 2022/23 of £1.300m, this be ring fenced for the purposes of supporting growth in pre-16 pupil numbers to meet basic need, additional classes need to meet infant class size regulation and to meet the costs necessary for new schools, including the lead-in costs, post start-up costs and any diseconomy of scale costs;
- (3) that in respect of the de-delegated budgets for Sandwell maintained schools, the outcome of the consultation proposals as agreed by the Schools Forum for 2022/23 be noted;
- (4) that in respect of the education functions budgets for Sandwell maintained schools, the outcome of the consultation proposals as agreed by the Schools Forum for 2022/23 be noted;
- (5) that in respect of the central schools' services block and the line by line expenditure as agreed by the Schools Forum for 2022/23 as now submitted be approved.
- (6) that the provisional 2022/2023 schools funding formula values as outlined below are approved:

Item	Primary	Secondary
Primary: Secondary Ratio	1	1.29
Basic Entitlement	£3,512	£4,977
Free School Meals	To be checked by the DfE and confirmed with DCS and S151 Officer	
Free School Meals – Ever 6		
IDACI Band E	£77	£350



IDACI Band D	£485	£676
IDACI Band C	£551	£771
IDACI Band B	£602	£855
IDACI Band A	£630	£900
Prior Attainment	£1,225	£1,776
English as an Additional Language (EAL) (2 years)	£846	£1,227
Lump Sum	£129,057	£129,057
Split Site	£129,057	£129,057
Rates	Actual	Actual
Private Finance Initiative (PFI)	Actual	Actual
Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG)	To be checked by the DfE and confirmed with DCS and S151 Officer	

- (5) that the Director of Children and Education, in conjunction with the Section 151 Officer, be authorised to approve the 2022/2023 schools funding formula following confirmation of the funding allocation from the Department for Education.

12/22 **Recommendations of the Scrutiny Review of Elective Home Education**

The Cabinet considered the recommendations from the Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board in respect of the Elective Home Education Working Group.



The Cabinet Member for Children and Education, on behalf of the Cabinet, submitted her thanks to the Children and Education Scrutiny Board for considering this matter.

Reasons for Decision

The findings reflected wider national concerns that the Association Directors of Children's Services (ADCS) and Association of Elective Home Education Professionals (AEHEP) had made to the Government relating to the need to strengthen the legislation, to provide further safeguards for children who were Elective Home Educated (EHE) and the need to provide funding to local authorities work with EHE children through Designated School Grant (DSG).

The Cabinet was requested to consider the recommendations and determine what action it wished to take. In accordance with the Localism Act 2011, the Cabinet was requested to respond to the recommendations of the scrutiny board within two months, setting out any approved recommendations and how they would be implemented. Progress against these recommendations would be monitored by the Children and Education Scrutiny Board.

Alternative Options

The purpose of the review was to consider current support for Elective Home Education and if it met the needs of young people and parents, findings would inform if the Council should consider alternative options.

Agreed:-

- (1) that, the Cabinet consider the following recommendations from the Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board in respect of the Elective Home Education Working Group:
 - (a) The Elective Home Education (EHE) resource pack be reviewed and edited to make it more accessible to parents;
 - (b) The EHE website be refreshed to provide information, guides and links to other information and links to EHE forums for advice and support;



- (c) To identify resource and support within the Council to facilitate the refresh;
 - (d) That additional spaces and facilities be identified for EHE groups to meet and carry out activities, and that competitive rates for use of those facilities be negotiated for EHE group use;
 - (e) That the Council develop a mechanism for resources to be shared for EHE, such as a hub for books or other educational material to be kept;
 - (f) That youth social networks, such as 'Just Youth', be promoted on the EHE website for users to find out what's on in Sandwell for young people and to encourage engagement;
 - (g) To raise awareness of the Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Education and Health Care Plans (EHCP) support available and access for children;
 - (h) That the Cabinet Member for Children and Education and the Director of Children's Services, on behalf of the Council, be requested to write to the Secretary of State for Education, Nadhim Zahawi and to the Parliamentary Select Committee Inquiry of Home Education, to register this Council's findings from the EHE review which highlights the need for regulation and resources for Elective Home Education; and to endorse a letter from the Association of EHE Professionals which asks whether consideration is being given to strengthening the legislation to provide further safeguards for children who are EHE.
- (2) that, in connection with Resolution (1) above, a further report be submitted to the Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board, on the decision of Cabinet.



Exclusion of the Public and Press

Resolved that the public and press be excluded from the rest of the meeting to avoid the possible disclosure of exempt information under paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, relating to the financial and business affairs of any person, including the authority holding that information.

Procurement of a new Asset Management Database

Consideration was given to proposals for a new IT system (asset database) to enable all of the Council's property and finance information to be managed effectively.

The Council owned and managed circa 4000 property assets. In a typical year, it collected and processed in excess of a thousand rental receipts and made thousands of payments to contractors and suppliers. It undertook approximately 100 rent reviews each year, granted 25 to 30 new leases and would see around 60 leases expire in a typical year. In order to manage all of this effectively and efficiently, it was crucial that accurate and up-to-date information was held on the entire estate which provided links to other Council software, including Building Services payment systems and building records, terrier / land ownership records, etc.

When assets were being valued, the valuers needed access to all the above information and the auditors needed to be satisfied that the information was accurate, up-to-date and easily available in order to be satisfied that the valuations were robust.

Reasons for Decision

Grant Thornton's March 2021 Audit Findings Report highlighted an urgent need to improve the Council's systems and practices particularly with regard to the maintenance of property information.



The Council's current system (Atrium) would cease to be operational from December 2022 and a replacement was therefore sought.

It was agreed to approve the acquisition of a new IT system (asset database) to enable all the Council's property and finance information to be managed effectively.

Alternative Options

An options appraisal was considered in order to determine the best course of action for the Council.

- Staying with the current provider was considered, as data migration would be easier. However, given the fundamental change to their offer and their charges, a direct award would not comply with procurement rules.
- Manage without a system. The council could not effectively manage the property estate without a system to replace.
- Full OJEU procurement had been considered, but the timescales were prohibitive.

Agreed:-

- (1) that approval be given to the acquisition of a new IT system (asset database) to enable all the Council's property and finance information to be managed effectively;
- (2) that in connection with Resolution (1) above, the Director of Regeneration and Growth and the Director of Finance be authorised to commence a procurement process using the Crown Commercial Services G-Cloud 12 Framework or such other process as the Director of Regeneration and Growth and the Director of Finance Section 151 Officer considers appropriate;



- (3) that the Director of Regeneration and Growth and the Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer be authorised to oversee the procurement process for the acquisition of a new IT system (asset database) to enable all the Council's property and finance information and to approve the selection of a system provider, to approve the terms of the contract and to award and enter into contract with the selected provider;
- (4) that an exemption, in accordance with the Council's Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules (Rule 15), be made in the absence of a minimum of 3 tenders being obtained;
- (5) that the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer be authorised to execute any documentation necessary to enable the course of action referred to in Resolution (3) above to proceed.

15/22

Agreement with JKA

Consideration was given to proposals in relation to the option agreement with the developer for the Lion Farm site, Oldbury.

Reasons for Decision

The Council entered into an Agreement with JKA (Developer) in 2013 to explore the establishment of a Retail Outlet Village on the Lion Farm site in Oldbury. Consideration was now given to resolve the long-term impasse with the developer in relation to the Option Agreement for the Lion Farm site and as part of the Action Plan to implement the recommendations of the recently published Grant Thornton report which identified this issue for resolution.

Having considered the options agreement, the Cabinet was of the view that the Council should trigger the Arbitration Clause of the existing Agreement to refer the matter for Expert Determination in order to resolve the current impasse.



Alternative Options

An options appraisal was considered in order to determine the best course of action for the Council. It was agreed to trigger the Arbitration Clause of the existing Agreement to refer the matter for Expert Determination.

Agreed:-

- (1) that in order to resolve the long-term impasse with the developer in relation to the Option Agreement for the Lion Farm site, approval be given to Option 2: Trigger the Arbitration Clause of the existing Agreement;
- (2) that in connection with Resolution (1), the Director of Regeneration and Growth and the Director – Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer be authorised to take the necessary actions in relation to legal processes and documentation to implement the preferred option;
- (3) that the Director of Regeneration and Growth a be authorised to submit a further detailed report on the implementation of the preferred option including the approval of any specific financial implications.

Meeting ended at 4.12pm.

Contact: democratic_services@sandwell.gov.uk



Report to Cabinet

9 February 2022

Subject:	West Bromwich Interim Planning Statement (IPS) and West Bromwich Masterplan (Masterplan)
Cabinet Member:	Cabinet Member Regeneration and Growth: Councillor Padda
Director:	Director of Regeneration & Growth Tony McGovern
Key Decision:	Yes
Contact Officers:	Peter Simpson – Planning Officer (Policy) peter_simpson@sandwell.gov.uk Richard Reeve - Senior Planner - Urban Designer richard_reeve@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations

That Cabinet;






- 1.1 Notes the outcome of the public consultation and the response to the representations received.
- 1.2 Approves the West Bromwich Interim Planning Statement and West Bromwich Masterplan.



2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 Following public consultation, approval of the West Bromwich Interim Planning Statement (IPS) and associated West Bromwich Masterplan (the Masterplan) will provide the Council with an updated framework to guide the further regeneration of West Bromwich which is the borough's Strategic Centre. The documents will bridge the gap between the current statutory Local Plan document, the 2012 West Bromwich Area Action Plan, and its replacement expected to be adopted in 2024.
- 2.2 The documents are non-statutory and non-binding. They do not formally replace the existing development plan allocations in the WBAAP/SAD DPD which remain extant.
- 2.3 This report responds to minute 36/20 of the Cabinet meeting held on 5th Feb 2020 which required a report to Cabinet on the outcome of Public Consultation on the IPS and Masterplan.

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<i>Best start in life for children and young people-Education Issues.</i> An expansion of existing high-quality education facilities will be promoted through the Masterplan.
	<i>People live well and age well.</i> The proposals and initiatives contained in the masterplan will encourage additional health facilities, together with other facilities that promote healthy activity and lifestyles.
	<i>Strong resilient communities.</i> The documents will promote a successful, distinctive centre, and aid community life.
	<i>Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods.</i> Residential redevelopment is a key component to bolster a smaller more viable centre. Quality, sustainable homes serviced by excellent facilities are to be an objective of the documents.
	<i>A strong and inclusive economy.</i> The documents seek to repurpose vacant land & sites. This will help local companies expand, attract inward investment and protect jobs.





A connected and accessible Sandwell.

The proposals build on West Bromwich's highly accessible and excellent public transport links, promoting further sustainable active travel projects.

4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 The IPS will provide a 'Land Use Planning' update for the town. The current adopted Local Plan, the West Bromwich area Action Plan (WBAAP) (2012) contains policies and proposals for retail, office, and residential development in West Bromwich which are increasingly out of date, affected by numerous factors including the reduction of retail, and COVID-19.
- 4.2 The development plan for West Bromwich cannot be updated in advance of the Black Country Plan, programmed to be adopted 2024. The IPS is intended to fill the 'planning policy gap', so the council can be guided in its decision making. The IPS and Masterplan are running in tandem, The two documents in combination embrace possible future land use changes and support development/regeneration interventions which would be contrary to the adopted Local Plan but which align with emerging policy as expressed in the Draft Black Country Plan, and which will ultimately be included in the review of the West Bromwich Area Action Plan (WBAAP).
- 4.3 Savills were appointed in Nov 2020 to develop a Masterplan, in conjunction with Council Officers. The Masterplan will drive forward the next stage of regeneration investment for the town and provide a future vision, so the town can prosper. The Masterplan underpins the projects identified under the Town Investment Plan and will help to identify and unlock future investment to enable sustainable growth.
- 4.4 The Masterplan has development options which are supported with financial viability appraisals and phasing plans. This will inform the next stage of works which will involve the Council working through and identifying a realistic but manageable development strategy. This will probably involve looking even deeper into the site areas/parcels and phasing plans being considered and identifying a manageable delivery method within each site zone. It is therefore acknowledged and expected that given the size of the larger zones identified for change this will require a step change in its delivery.



- 4.5 Significant outcomes proposed by the Masterplan include for example:
- 1359 new dwellings
 - £6.6 Million extra expenditure by new residents in the West Bromwich
 - 1740 local jobs
 - 12000m2 new retail floorspace (to replace 30000 m2 of time expired vacant retail floorspace)
 - Significant Health, Education & Community uses
 - Improved public transport accessibility.
- 4.6 Public consultation feedback and findings as part of the Towns Investment Plan Bid/Deal have been utilised by the consultants in shaping the masterplan, together with reflecting the Council's Inclusive Economy Deal and 2030 Vision and Big Plan for A Great Place.
- 4.7 To further support the data analysis for the masterplan and to capture our 'youngest views' of the town a school writing and Illustration competition was held with the Lyng Primary School (yrs 4-6) during spring 2021. A workshop was also held on online with Sandwell College to understand the key issues and challenges facing the younger generations within West Bromwich. Several important themes were explored by the students including health, education, sustainability and wellbeing and it was clear from their work that they were passionate about their town and community. Key messages from both consultations focussed around an improved town offering a safer, more attractive place, more green spaces, residential and better shopping and education provision. A better leisure/exercise provision offer and more independent shops/markets was raised together with a general poor image/perception of the town and then linking onto crime/antisocial behaviour. These are some of the key challenges that the masterplan aims to support and address through the proposals put forward.
- 4.8 A Cabinet Workshop was held on 30th June 2021, where various development options were presented. Members were keen to see a step-change in West Bromwich and endorsed the development of the comprehensive ambitious option for the Masterplan, whilst recognising the delivery challenges linked to land ownership, funding requirements, and the timescale involved in the delivery of such wholesale change.



4.9 A robust engagement plan was conducted for 4 weeks from 21st July to 20th August 2021. This was publicised in the local press, Sandwell Herald, through online platforms (facebook/twitter) and through West Bromwich Town Groups Mailing records. It included the Councils website and face to face sessions in the Town Centre to engage with residents, shoppers, local businesses and other stakeholders.

4.10 The completed IPS and Masterplan are appended to this report (at A and B respectively). The outcome of the public consultation is contained in the Consultation Report Summary as Appendix C.

4.11 Key Consultation Results:

89 formal responses to the online questionnaire were received, these were overwhelmingly supportive of the need for change in West Bromwich

- 83% agreed a Masterplan/Vision would be good for the Town
- 82% supported future regeneration for the Town to grow,
- 85 % thought the Town could be visually improved,
- 12 % thought the Town had a good image.

After these questions, respondents were asked for further comments on West Bromwich & the IPS/Masterplan proposals. Crime/Anti-Social Behaviour were the most frequent issues raised, with 47 of the 89 responses (52%) directly referencing Crime/ASB.

Other issues included, support for greening of the centre (11%), maintenance/litter issues (11%) and other Sandwell Towns missing out (9%) Community Spaces needed (4%), Youth Facilities required (3%).

Issues that were also raised, but less frequently included:

need to repurpose space, Affordable Housing, evening economy, Libraries, Vermin, more disabled facilities and toilets required, need to maximise housing provision & lack of demand for office accommodation.

4.12 With regard to crime/ASB, the Masterplan and IPS will assist by increasing levels of natural surveillance, reducing vacancy rates, raising levels of night time activity with more town centre dwellings and an enhanced night time economy, and through the use of 'secured by design' for new development.



- 4.13 Face to face meetings in the Centre of West Bromwich were well attended & successful events, with shoppers, market traders, shop keepers and Shopping Centre operators among the attendees who supported the proposals. The most negative feedback was received from online consultation methods, showing the value of the face to face meetings.

Twitter for example, had only negative comments:

'Don't bother, wasted far too much money on The Public',

'Decries millions spent on WB over last decade. Hates the town, money can't change it, Sad.'

'Query loss of food court, closed down, a waste of money.'

'Outdoor market horrible to walk past.'

- 4.14 Amendments in response to consultation have included clarifying Queens Square site density issues, and the need for further work with stakeholders on the access from New Street to Astle Park, while the consultation responses summary on crime/ASB have been shared with West Midlands Police. Other issues are addressed in the IPS/Masterplan such as Greening of the Centre, providing more homes, repurposing vacant space, community facilities etc.

- 4.15 Further information on the Consultation responses are in Appendix C.

5 Alternative Options

- 5.1 The alternative to endorsing this Interim Planning Statement and Masterplan is that the existing development planning framework as set out in the West Bromwich Area Action plan becomes increasingly out of date. This will diminish the prospects of securing investment and development for the continued regeneration of West Bromwich.
- 5.2 It is considered that not providing an IPS and Masterplan would mean this gap between the existing Local Plan and WBAAP, and the revised version, -after 2024 at the earliest -would be too great. Following endorsement, the IPS and Masterplan will form a material planning consideration that can fill in this gap.
- 5.4 The Masterplan aims to provide business confidence in a number of intervention areas/zones (development sites) whilst also providing a clear, deliverable vision for West Bromwich Centre.



It will be achieved by creating :

- a metro gateway, a new Town Square for events and a high quality public realm
- green links, parks and enhancements to the sustainable transport network.
- A major mixed-use community including residential and employment.

This will involve:

- reduction of 30000m2 of vacant & time expired retail space, to be replaced with up to 12000 m2 new retail space,
- about 1300 new dwellings.
- New residents will help contribute £6.6 million to the Town Centre, and support about 200 jobs in retail & leisure uses,
- 15000m2 of Community/Leisure uses.

This will create a vibrant, attractive and sustainable Town Centre.

The Masterplan will be underpinned by priorities of the Councils 2030 Vision (the Corporate Plan) and Inclusive Economic Growth deal and will be in the Sandwell Plan.

6 Implications

Resources:	<p>The adoption of the Masterplan and IPS has no implications on resources. If adopted the documents will be uploaded on to the Councils website.</p> <p>The delivery of the long-term vision set out in the Masterplan will require significant public-sector funding over a number of years in order to deliver the scale of change set out in the document. Separate reports to Cabinet will be brought forward at appropriate times on specific projects.</p>
Legal and Governance:	<p>There are no direct Legal and Governance considerations. The IPS and Masterplan are informal non-statutory documents.</p>



Risk:	There are no direct risk implications arising from this report. Non-approval would carry the risk of increasing numbers of non-conforming development being proposed with no up-to-date framework against which planning decisions could be taken.
Equality:	An EIA has not been carried out. The IPS/Masterplan does not create policy, it sets out the expected direction of travel of emerging policy and can be a material planning consideration when determining applications. Individual projects proposed in the Masterplan will be subject of their own EIAs at part of the development process.
Health and Wellbeing:	<p>The built and natural environment is a key environmental determinant of health and wellbeing. The linkages between health and the built and natural environment have long been established and the role of the environment in shaping the social, economic and environmental circumstances that determine wellbeing is increasingly recognised and understood.</p> <p>The approach to be taken to the development of places and housing in West Bromwich would enable healthy, safe and secure sustainable places and homes that are built in active and social streets that are accessible to all. Being at the centre of Sandwell's public transport network, the town centre facilities of West Bromwich would be accessible to a wide range of people from surrounding areas, and existing and future residents of the town would be able to access areas and facilities outside it, such as Dartmouth Park and Sandwell Valley.</p> <p>Along with walkable streets to safely connect neighbourhoods, soft landscaping, street trees and natural meeting places would enable people to be connected to jobs, other social infrastructure and spaces to relax, play and socialise.</p>
Social Value	The IPS and Masterplan will engage and create social value opportunities for residents to ensure jobs, skills and apprenticeships. They will work alongside schools and voluntary organisations in the promotion of community engagement.



	<p>Developing a masterplan for places and housing would respond to the needs of residents, employees and visitors across the life course and help to provide young people and families with the best start in life. The masterplan would help to encourage physically, economically and socially active populations, and ensure that older generations can retain their independence in safe, secure, inclusive, social and healthy environments.</p>
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7. Appendices

- A - West Bromwich Interim Planning Statement
- B - West Bromwich Masterplan
- C - Consultation Report Summary.

8. Background Papers

West Bromwich Area Action Plan (2012)
Report to Cabinet – 5th February 2020



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INTERIM PLANNING STATEMENT FOR WEST BROMWICH TOWN CENTRE

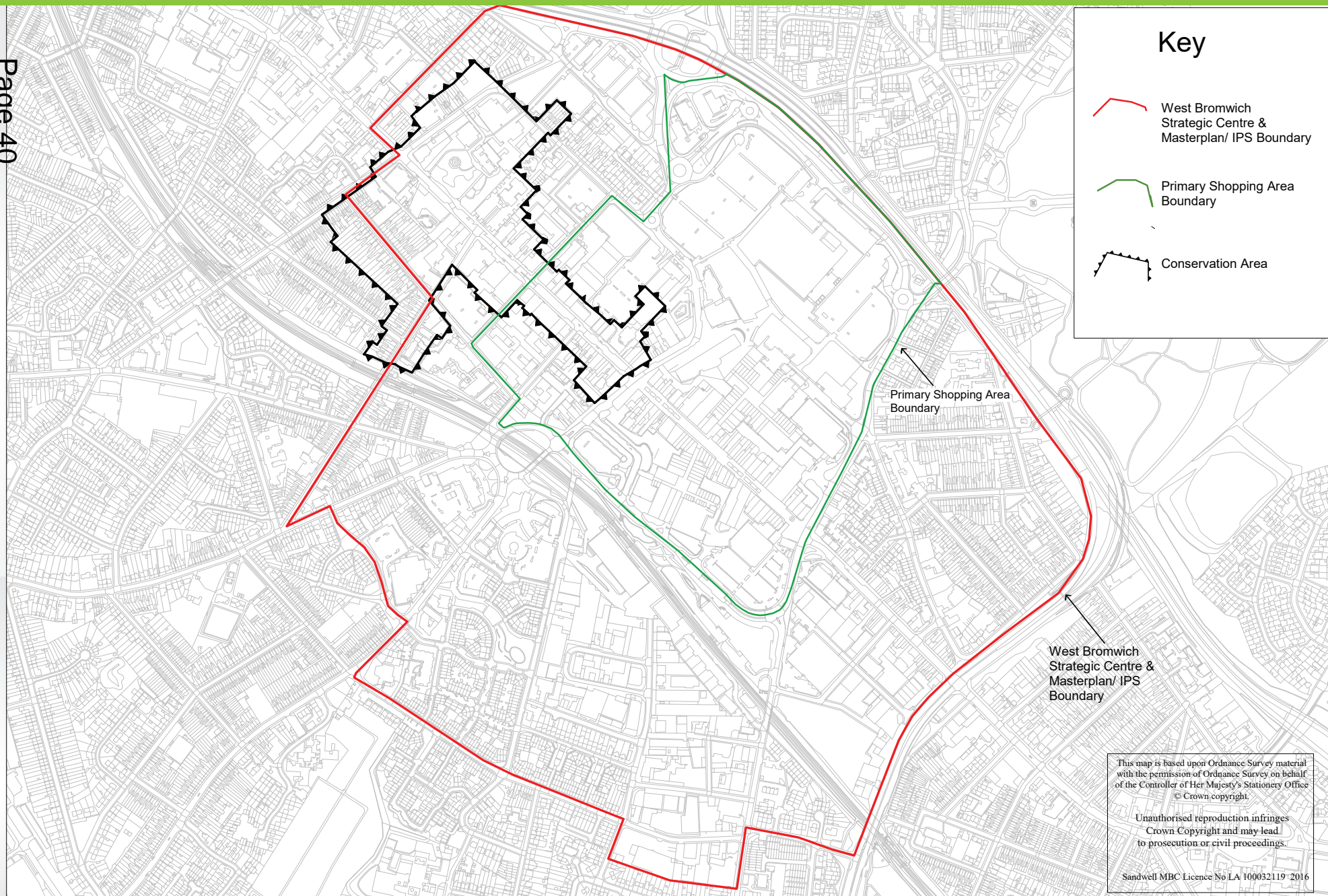
To be read in conjunction with the West Bromwich Masterplan

January 2022



WEST BROMWICH STRATEGIC CENTRE, MASTERPLAN/INTERIM PLANNING STATEMENT BOUNDARY

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WHAT IS THE INTERIM PLANNING STATEMENT FOR WEST BROMWICH?

Page 41
Sandwell MBC has prepared an Interim Planning Statement (IPS) for West Bromwich, which will help to guide development in the West Bromwich Town Centre area until the revised West Bromwich Area Action Plan (WBAAP) is adopted.

This statement sets out the anticipated 'direction of travel' of planning policy for West Bromwich, and the general locations and scale of development anticipated.

This statement provides confidence to developers and land owners on what can be accommodated in the town centre and on what the Council expects to see delivered as part of the ongoing regeneration of West Bromwich.

The wider West Bromwich area contained within the WBAAP 2012 (outside the red line boundary on plan to the left) is not included in the IPS. This will be covered by the Black Country Plan and Sandwell Development Plan



DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONTEXT

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The Black Country Core Strategy (2011) outlines the strategic spatial vision for future development in the Black Country. This is currently being reviewed (renamed the Black Country Plan) and the Draft Black Country Plan has been to public consultation during the summer of 2021, with adoption anticipated in 2024.

Development plan proposals for West Bromwich Centre are set out in a hierarchy of planning policy documents, with site-specific policies and proposals currently contained within the WBAAP, which was adopted in December 2012.

Local plans need to be consistent with the strategic planning framework to determine development proposals and the WBAAP cannot be updated in advance of the Black Country Plan and Sandwell Development Plan.

However, the current WBAAP is becoming out of date; it contains policies and proposals for retailing, employment, office development and residential development in West Bromwich that have now been overtaken by recent events and economic shifts.

The Interim Planning Statement will provide up to date guidance until the WBAAP can be formally updated.

Sandwell Council is looking to deliver transformational change to West Bromwich Town Centre, to create a place that people can be proud to call their home, where people live, work and play and a place that is capable of capitalising on the significant opportunities that will be available in the West Midlands.

To achieve this ambition, Sandwell MBC commissioned a Masterplan for West Bromwich in October 2020.



The Objective Of The Masterplan Is

'to provide a vision to enable sustainable economic growth for the town and how intervention sites identified can be transformed and regenerated for the future'

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The role of the Interim Planning Statement (IPS) is to facilitate land use proposals in the town centre of the Masterplan where they are at variance with the adopted West Bromwich Area Action Plan (WBAAP) until the Sandwell local development plan can be updated.

The IPS and Masterplan will inform related planning decisions in the Town Centre and will also act as a precursor to the full review and adoption of the WBAAP, anticipated post-2024. In this interim period, the IPS and Masterplan will provide confidence to developers and land owners when they are making decisions on the use, development and disposal of land, buildings and sites within the town centre.

The IPS and Masterplan will be material considerations when determining planning applications.

The IPS and Masterplan are to be used as a catalyst for future bidding to external organisations such as the Local Enterprise Partnership, West Midlands Combined Authority, Government Towns Fund / Future High Streets Fund and others, as opportunities arise for grant funding support.



CURRENT SITUATION

In the years since adoption, many of the growth and development aspirations of the WBAAP

have become reality. For example, the following have been brought forward over recent years:

Other major developments include realignment of West Bromwich Ringway, Lyng Medical Centre, New Leisure Centre, and more.



New Square



Lyng Residential Redevelopment



Sandwell College Central Campus



Lyng Residential Redevelopment



Lyng Residential Redevelopment



Lyng Residential Redevelopment

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These developments have led to a significant transformation of the town over recent years that has seen it reinforce its position in the Black Country as one of the four strategic centres. It has a renewed capacity to serve the needs of local people, the wider population and the business community.

Although still relevant, the pace and extent of changes since 2012 has meant that in some areas the WBAAP no longer reflects the current direction of new development or how the town can capitalise on emerging opportunities.

Key issues include: -

- The loss of comparison retail shopping (i.e. clothes, shoes, electrical goods etc) to the internet.
- Increased levels of convenience (food) shopping also being undertaken online.
- The rise of limited-range food discounters.
- A greater than forecast demand for employment land, which has had an impact on the provision of vacant / brownfield land for housing in the borough. This is compounded by viability issues. In Sandwell there is now a substantial shortfall in the supply of new dwellings.

- In relation to the above, rather than the forecast surplus of employment land freeing up brownfield land for housing, there is now a deficit of employment land available for economic development and growth purposes.
- Permitted Development rights changes: this has seen considerable numbers of new dwellings created from the conversion of existing offices in the centre. This is mirrored across the nation and is unlikely to be reversed.
- Technological changes driven by people working from home has led to reduced demand for offices in centres, with levels of future demand now uncertain.
- 'Knock-on' effects of reduced office occupancy on aspects of the service economy dependent on high footfall in centres like West Bromwich,

These trends have been greatly accelerated by Covid pandemic-related opening restrictions on non-essential retail and services. Predicted levels of retail expenditure growth forecast in the 2012 WBAAP will not now come forward. There is a clear excess of retail floorspace in the centre that requires repurposing.



TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

The Area Action Plan had as one of its key objectives the need to improve accessibility and movement within the area by;

- Giving greater priority to pedestrian movements in certain parts of the town centre.
- Developing routes and crossings that are safe and attractive and balance the needs of the pedestrian and the car.
- Promoting the use of public transport, through improvements to infrastructure and accessibility to services.
- Promotion of greater priority measures for public transport to improve service provision both in and around the centre.

- Developing a hierarchy of roads across the town that meet the needs of an expanded town centre.
- Providing appropriate levels of short and long stay car parking that meet the future long term needs of the town.
- Providing a co-ordinated approach to signage, furniture, lighting and paving materials to create a stronger sense of place and identity.

These elements continue to underpin the transport strategy for the town. Many of the proposals identified in the AAP in 2012 have been delivered; the underpass on the A41, alterations to the Ringway, Metro Plaza and much of the pedestrian and public realm improvements. Much of the cycling

infrastructure proposed in the AAP is now either being delivered or will be in the next few years, funded through such initiatives as the Government's Towns Fund and Active Travel Fund.



During 2021 the West Midlands Cycle Hire scheme was rolled out across the metropolitan area, including in West Bromwich. Cycle Hire docks are located in nine locations around the Town and at Sandwell & Dudley Railway Station around a kilometre to the south. The scheme is expected to be expanded further over the next two to three years to cover more of the borough including West Bromwich's hinterland.

A major transport driver affecting the local economy and housing provision is the development and extension of the West Midlands Metro network. West Bromwich is a key point on the network that links Birmingham city centre with Wolverhampton and, when the extension is complete, to Dudley and Brierley Hill. The development of a 'turn-back' facility and third platform at West Bromwich Central stop would enable services to start and stop in West Bromwich facilitating a potential doubling of frequency of services into Birmingham. Significantly increased connectivity would influence the viability of retail, office and residential markets particularly in competition with and in support of West Bromwich's largest and most influential market - Birmingham. The extension of the metro to New Street Station was completed in 2016 and will eventually reach Birmingham Airport. These extensions further enhance and influence national and international connectivity. The stop will also

play an important role in making best use of the extension to Brierley Hill, by allowing more flexible service patterns.

The proposals contained in the Masterplan will result in significant changes to the patterns of movement across the town for all modes. The location and quantum of car parking will also be reviewed to meet the changed and emerging needs. The impact of car parking on the vitality and viability of the town centre needs to be considered within the context of the need to address air quality issues and the Council's commitments in relation to climate change.

A complementary transport strategy will be developed in recognition of these issues and will be an integral component of the reviewed AAP.



PROPOSED WAY FORWARD:

Intensification

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To support and grow an evening economy and provide economic drivers for other services and uses, the centre of West Bromwich needs to intensify. This will involve buildings with greater height and capacity. Residential use in particular will be sought on upper floors. Developing a vibrant, mixed use town centre is a top priority.

Additional dwellings

- There is a strategic need for more dwellings in Sandwell and the wider Black Country Plan area, as shown by the draft Black Country Plan, Sandwell Strategic Housing Land Availability assessments (SHLAA) and Black Country Urban Capacity Review Update.
- Additional dwellings will be a significant factor in West Bromwich. They will capitalise on the centre's excellent and sustainable public transport links. They will bolster a consolidated retail offer, support service uses, add to the centre's vitality and viability, and boost the night time economy.

Retail capacity / repurposing

- Retail capacity in West Bromwich exceeds the level that can be sustained, as evidenced by the current number of vacant units.
- Emerging retail capacity forecasts show no increase in retail floorspace requirements up to 2028. Consolidation, renewal and repurposing is required.
- New Square has changed the 'centre of gravity' of the Town Centre and there are areas of the town that are in clear decline. A Retail Diversification Program is required to fund the acquisition, remediation and redevelopment of sites for new homes and a sustainable level of retail and service uses on repurposed and regenerated brownfield sites.
- Community, education and health uses will assume a greater importance in the centre, taking advantage of the centre's excellent sustainable transport links.
- A program of Urban Greening will provide a central linear park and pocket parks forming a route through the centre to Dartmouth Park.

- This will incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDS) principles. These parks will promote non-transactional interactions, with places for informal association, increasing community contact in the centre, and adding footfall, vitality and viability.



PROPOSAL SITES

The 2012 West Bromwich Area Action Plan sets out the adopted development plan allocations. IPS/Masterplan-proposed changes are on the maps that follow. These show:

Page 49

- the existing WBAAP location and allocated use,
- the new land use proposals in the IPS/Masterplan,
- the intended scale of the IPS/Masterplan proposals.

This should be read in conjunction with the Masterplan, which shows in greater detail the proposals, scale, massing and interactions.

Note: proposal site numbers are carried forward from the WBAAP 2012 for ease of reference. However, boundaries do not always coincide. In particular, WBPR4 & WBPR5 should be viewed together, while WBPR3 allocation boundary does not match the Masterplan 'Pocket Park' boundary.

WEST BROMWICH AREA ACTION PLAN

ADOPTED DECEMBER 2012



SITE WBPR2: QUEENS SQUARE

Page 50



Queens Square WBPR2

Current WBAAP Allocation:
Retail plus small amount of
complementary uses.

Proposed Use :
Now to include:
Retail/ Residential
Leisure/ Community

Scale 1:1500



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SITE WBPR3: TOWN SQUARE WEST

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Site Area: 1.36 hectares

Current allocation: A1 Retail / B1 Business / C3 Residential

Indicative proposed uses: F & B 260m², Community / Leisure 1350m² 'Pocket Park', Car parking 77m²

See West Bromwich Masterplan Zone 4 'Pocket Park' p102.



WBPr3 Town Square West

Current WBAAP Allocation:
A1 Retail/ B1 Business/
C3 Residential

Proposed Use :
Now to include
Pocket Park.

Scale 1:2000



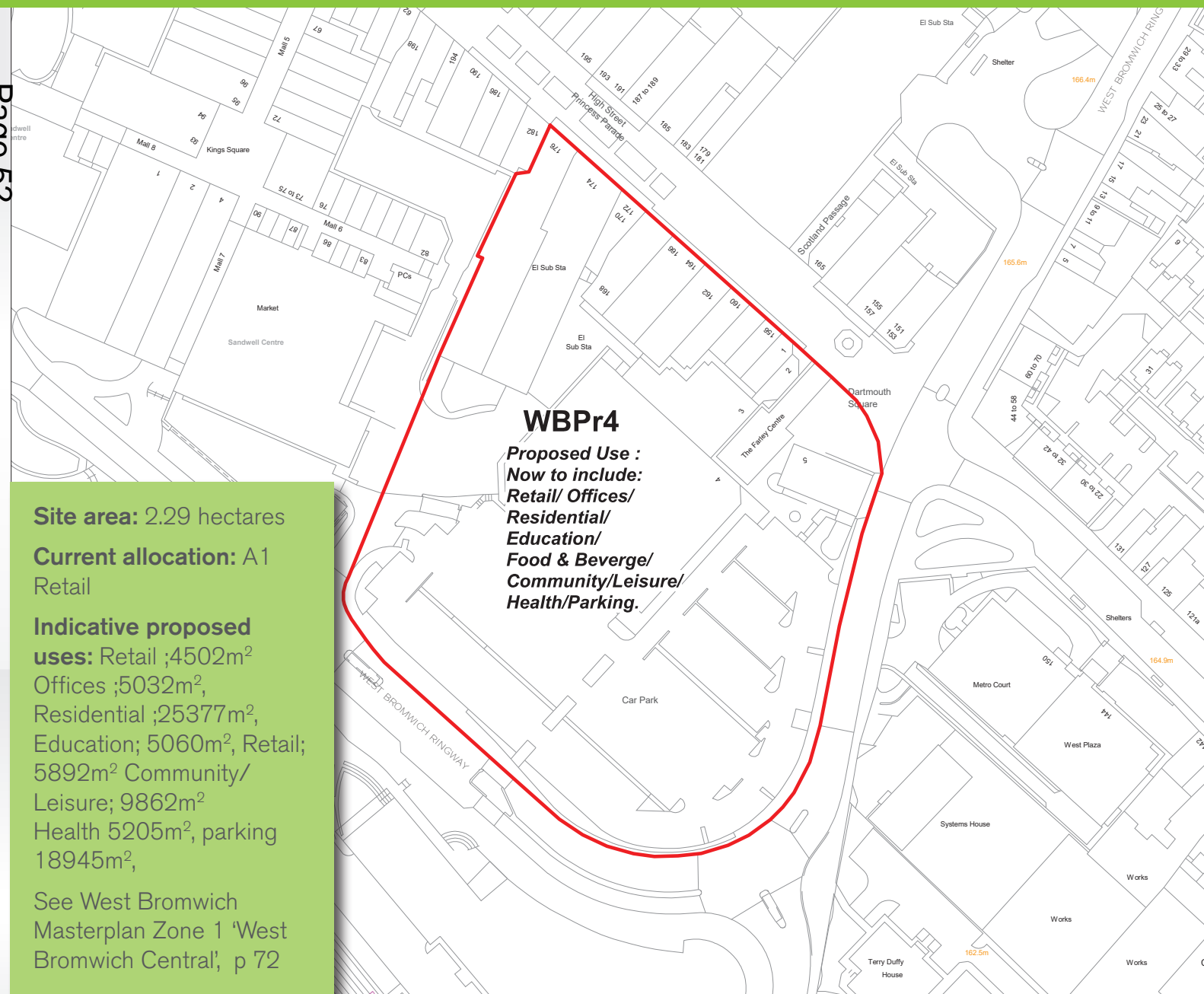
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SITE WBPR4: THE FARLEY CENTRE (see in conjunction with WBPR5)

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Site area: 2.29 hectares

Current allocation: A1
Retail

Indicative proposed uses: Retail ;4502m²
Offices ;5032m²,
Residential ;25377m²,
Education; 5060m², Retail;
5892m² Community/
Leisure; 9862m²
Health 5205m², parking
18945m²,

See West Bromwich
Masterplan Zone 1 'West
Bromwich Central', p 72

WBPR4

**Proposed Use :
Now to include:
Retail/ Offices/
Residential/
Education/
Food & Beverage/
Community/Leisure/
Health/Parking.**



WBPR4 Farley Centre

Current WBAAP Allocation:
A1 Retail

**Proposed Use :
Now to include:
Retail/ Offices/
Residential/
Education/
Food & Beverage/
Community/Leisure/
Health/Parking.**

Scale 1:1500



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SITE WBPR5: KING'S SQUARE (see in conjunction with WBPR4)

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King's Square WBPR5

Current WBAAP Allocation:
A1 Retail

Proposed Use :
Now to include:
Retail/ Offices
Residential/Education
F & B
Community/Leisure
Health/Parking

Scale 11500



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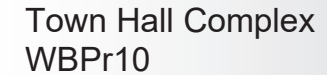
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Site area: 1.5 hectares

Current allocation: A1 Retail

Indicative proposed uses: See WBPR4 on previous page.

See West Bromwich Masterplan Zone 1 'West Bromwich Central', p 72



Proposed Use :
Now to include:
Residential ,
Food & Beverage,
Community/Leisure
Parking

Site area: 1.1 hectares

Current allocation: Mixed Use: Cultural / Leisure/ Office; Retail / Cafes and Bars

Indicative proposed uses: Residential 5450m², Food and Beverage; 1054m², Community / Leisure; 2000m², Car parking spaces 123m²

See West Bromwich Masterplan Zone 3 'Cultural Quarter' p96

Scale 1:1500

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SITE WBPR11: IZONS ROAD

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Izons Road WBPr11

Current WBAAP Allocation:
Car Park

Proposed Use :
No change*

***(Boundary amended
to exclude dwellings)**

Scale 1:1500



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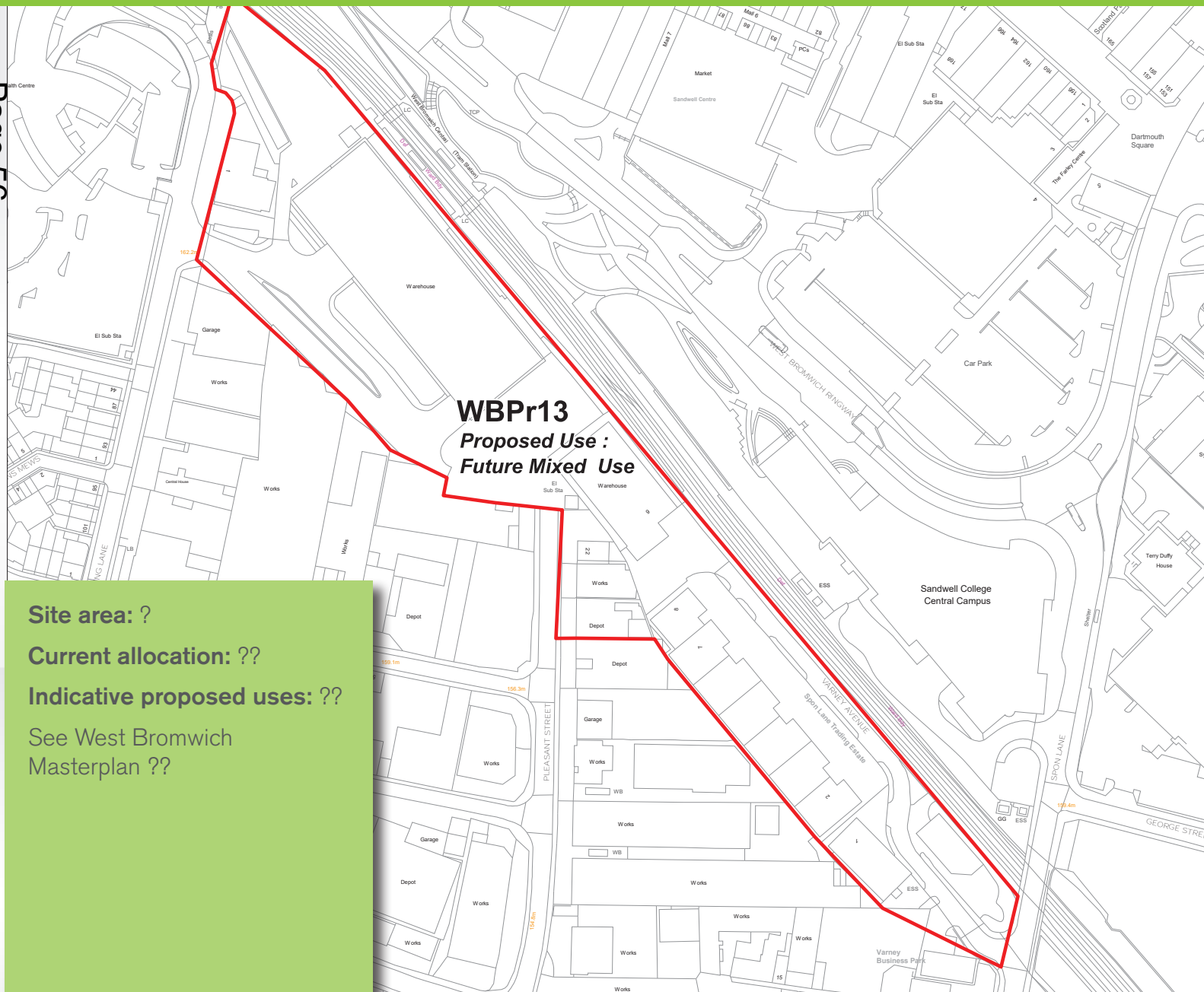
Site area: 0.31 hectares

Current allocation: Car park

Indicative proposed use: No change to the use, however the boundary has been amended to exclude residential area

SITE WBPR13: NORTH LYNNG

Page 56



North Lyng WBPr13

Current WBAAP Allocation:
B1 Office.

Proposed Use :
Future Mixed Use

Scale 1:2000



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Site area: ?

Current allocation: ??

Indicative proposed uses: ??

See West Bromwich
Masterplan ??

SITE WBPR22: NORTH LYNG INDUSTRIAL ESTATE

Page 57



Site area: ??

Current allocation: ??

Indicative proposed use: ??



Lyng Industrial Estate WBPr22

Current WBAAP Allocation:
Residential

Proposed Use:
Future Mixed Use

Scale 1:3000



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SITE WBPR16: EASTERN GATEWAY SOUTH

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Eastern Gateway South WBPR16

Current WBAAP Allocation:
Mixed use: Retail/ Office/
Leisure/ Residential/
Car Parking

Proposed Use :
to include:
Residential
Community/Leisure
Parking

Site area: 2.35 hectares

Current allocation: Mixed Use: Retail
/ Office / Leisure / Residential / Car
parking

Indicative proposed uses: Residential:
50232m²; Community/Leisure 1150m²,
Car parking spaces 1611m²

See West Bromwich Masterplan Zone 5
'George Street Living' p106

Scale 1:1500



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CONCLUSION

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This interim guidance is intended to provide confidence to developers and land owners on what type and scale of new development can be accommodated in the town centre and will be the policy basis for future bidding from numerous external organisations until the update of the WBAAP.

Where new development proposals are received the IPS and Masterplan will be material considerations.

Should the proposal be contrary to existing adopted policy such as the WBAAP 2012, the Planning Authority retains its ability to refuse the proposal.

This document does not replace the 2012 WBAAP allocations, which remain extant.





West Bromwich Town Centre Masterplan

“The Future of West Bromwich: A transformational Town Centre Masterplan”



**“A proud,
vibrant market
town with
facilities and
amenities for
everyone”**



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Section 4 - Character Areas	69
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Section 6 - Delivery Strategy	117
Appendix	120



THE BEST START IN
LIFE FOR CHILDREN
AND YOUNG PEOPLE



PEOPLE
LIVE WELL
AND AGE
WELL



STRONG
RESILIENT
COMMUNITIES



QUALITY HOMES
IN THRIVING
NEIGHBOURHOODS



A CONNECTED
AND ACCESSIBLE
SANDWELL



A STRONG AND
INCLUSIVE
ECONOMY



Councillor Maria Crompton - Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council Deputy Leader:

“West Bromwich Town Centre Masterplan provides a vision for growth and prosperity for the town for the next 20 years. The vision seeks to create a vibrant, rich and busy town centre with a mix of new uses with supporting residential communities in the town. We want a town where people can live, stay and enjoy their environment and a place they can be proud to call home. This is the start of an ambitious plan for the future regeneration and transformational change for the town. The Masterplan will be at the centre of the town’s growth for the future and signals a positive statement to attract ongoing and future investment funds from a range of stakeholders and partners.”



A black ink signature of Councillor Maria Crompton.

Jude Thompson - Chair of Sandwell Towns Fund Superboard and President of the Black Country Chamber of Commerce:

“The Masterplan will present a significant opportunity to deliver transformational change to West Bromwich given the unprecedented environment we are now in. The long term vision will provide business confidence which together with the Council’s partners present significant investment opportunities for the town and which will enable it to grow and be sustainable for the future. The Masterplan provides the right environment for business and commerce to come together to help drive forward the ambitious plan for West Bromwich and in doing so reinforcing its position as the strategic premier town centre for the borough of Sandwell. This is the start of an exciting journey.”



A blue ink signature of Jude Thompson.

Chris Hinson - Chair of West Bromwich Town Deal Local Board (Sandwell Business Ambassador):

“The Masterplan will present a significant opportunity to breathe life back into the Town Centre and create a safe welcoming environment with a modern mix of housing, retail and employment opportunities. The Plan will encourage, support and improve the existing business offering for the town and will capitalise on the existing Town Deal Funding. The proposals will promote more quality and diverse uses in the town together with a residential element which will help to support new environments and communities, and enhance the existing green spaces and infrastructure. The town is blessed with great transport modes which makes it an ideal hub to live, work and socialise in.”



A black ink signature of Chris Hinson.

Introduction

1

*“An exciting
place to live”*



Introduction

Introduction & Brief

P Sandwell Council is looking to deliver transformational change to West Bromwich Town Centre and create a place that people can be proud to call their home. Where people come to live, work and play and a place that is capable of capitalising on the significant opportunities that will be available in the West Midlands.

West Bromwich has undergone a significant transformation over the last 10 years to see that it maintains its position in the Black Country as one of the four strategic centres and a renewed ability to serve the needs of local people, the wider population and the business community.

The role of our town centres are changing across the country. The retail sector, which has long dominated town centres, has undergone decline with changing consumer patterns, increased online shopping, and high rents resulting in closures. This has only been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. At the same time towns across the country are responding to community needs for more homes in well connected locations, more jobs close to homes, a diversity of jobs in new and emerging sectors, more liveable, high quality places, a greater focus on health and wellbeing and improved connections to nature. Our towns must respond to these changes or face being left behind.

The key development proposals are set out in a hierarchy of planning policy documents, with site specific policies and proposals within the West Bromwich Area Action Plan (WBAAP, adopted December 2012). Although still broadly relevant, the pace and extent of change in the town since 2012 has meant that in some instances the WBAAP no longer reflects the current market conditions, direction of new development or how the town can capitalise on new opportunities and investment.

The WBAAP expires in 2026 and is now dated. The Black Country Core Strategy (BCCS) is also under review and will become the Black Country Plan (BCP), which is proposed for adoption during 2024. To ‘bridge’ this policy gap the Council requires an updated policy position to provide guidance and context to decisions affecting West Bromwich town centre; therefore an ‘Interim Planning Statement’ (IPS) is being produced to help capitalise on new opportunities and the potential additional investment now available to meet the Councils key objectives.

West Bromwich is also facing unique opportunities. The Town has recently been allocated significant Town Deal funding from the Government to support its transformation. In order to ensure this money has a lasting impact, rather than piecemeal projects, a coherent single vision and strategy is required for the town. This ambitious masterplan aims to deliver that vision and present a plan for the future of West Bromwich that will transform how people live, work and visit the town.

A Masterplan is required to demonstrate where key development schemes can be delivered to provide leverage to secure investment and realise opportunities for the town now and for the future. This work, together with the IPS will give the Council an up-to-date policy framework within which strategic decisions on land use, investment and other forms of development can be taken and subsequently delivered.

The Masterplan will provide inspiration to enable the delivery of new homes and jobs in the context of a high quality mixed use environment which will provide the basis for a thriving and resilient town whilst being able to respond to the effects of Covid-19. Sandwell Council’s (SMBC) vision is for all of its towns to be thriving and optimistic places, with resilient communities.

These towns are where we call home and are proud to belong to - where we choose to bring up our families, feeling safe and cared for, enjoying good health, rewarding work, feeling connected and valued in our neighbourhoods and communities, confident in the future, and benefiting fully from a revitalised West Midlands.

The masterplan is expected to embrace the Councils 2030 vision, and objectives and support the drive of Sandwell's Inclusive Economy Deal.

Introduction

Policy and Strategy

Strategic Alignment

West Bromwich is one of the main strategic centres in the Black Country. The issues facing the town are common across many Town Centres in the UK. Overcoming the challenges and unlocking the major opportunities facing West Bromwich are key principles of Government strategy at the national, regional and local level. Supporting places like West Bromwich to transition is currently at the heart of the Governments policies nationally. Planning for growth in West Bromwich aligns strategically with the following national, regional and local policies:

- Levelling Up – The Governments ambition is to reduce inequality across the Union and invest in ‘left-behind’ areas that perform poorly in terms of employment, skills, health and pay. The Government has pledged £4 bn of funding for these locations
- Transforming Cities – The Government recognizes that towns and cities hold the key to economic growth. The current GVA gap between our towns and cities is significant, bridging this gap, and creating places that can support diverse and sustainable economies is a key strategy for the national economy. Sandwell has been successful in securing £25 million of Town Deal funding to support the redevelopment of West Bromwich, including key projects such as urban greening, green links and retail diversification. The Masterplan aims to build on these initiatives and the wider aims of the towns fund to create suitable communities in town centres
- Green Industrial Revolution and Net Zero Carbon economy – The Government has a significant, legally binding, commitment to reduce carbon emissions. To deliver on this commitment there is a need for our economic centres to be more sustainable and alter the way people travel. The masterplan will create opportunities to deliver highly sustainable buildings, with modern low carbon technology and increase public transport use, therefore reducing vehicle use
- ‘Midlands Engine’ economic alliance – A public and private partnership initiative which aims to bridge the gap between the performance of

the Midlands and the rest of the country. The ambition is to increase GVA and improve transport, skills, unlock housing and support economic growth

- West Midlands Combined Authority Strategic Economic Plan – The SEP aiming to increase jobs, business start-ups, increasing GDV. The strategy will focus on delivering the right housing in the right location and improving Urban centres and the role they play in the economy
- Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership – focusing on creative and digital industries, the impact of HS2 and connectivity benefits; skills for growth; housing delivery; and improvements to health and wellbeing outcomes

Planning Policy

The following National and Local Design guidelines have been considered in the formulation of the masterplan concept:

- National Design Guide
- Building for Life
- Black Country Garden City Principles
- SMBC’s Residential Design Guide SPD
- Big Plans for a Great Place
- Vision 2030
- West Bromwich AAP, 2012
- WMCA and Sandwell MBC Draft DIP
- West Bromwich Town Investment Plan

Further details are available in Appendix A

Introduction

Where is West Bromwich?

Location & Profile Overview

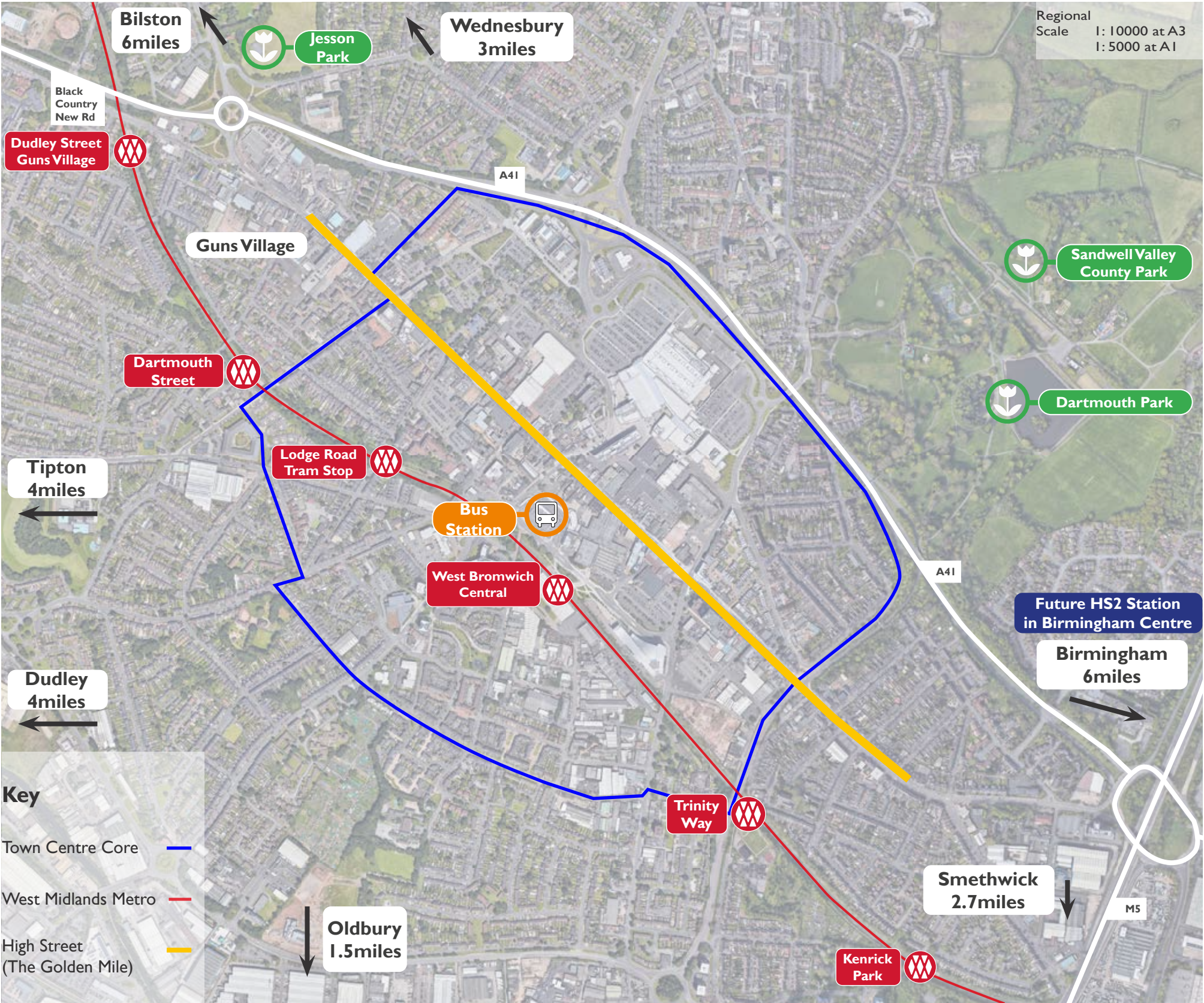
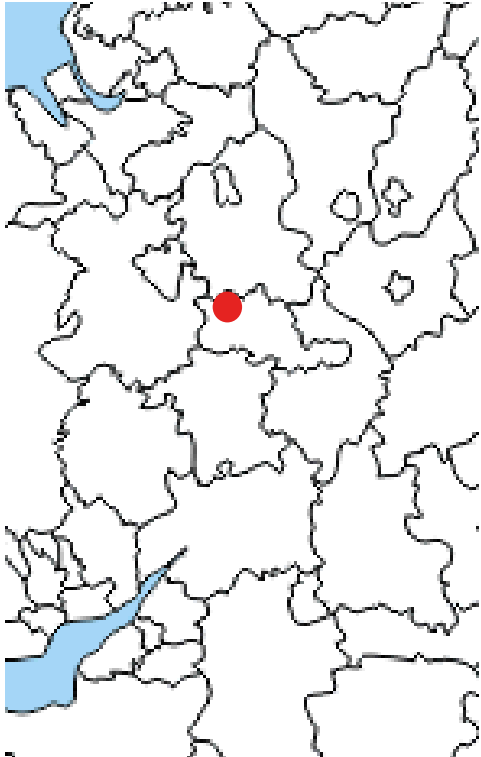
Sandwell is a metropolitan borough in the Black Country made up of six towns: Oldbury, Rowley Regis, Smethwick, Tipton, Wednesbury and West Bromwich.

West Bromwich is the largest town by population size and by area, giving it the lowest population density. It includes the main commercial and retail centre of Sandwell.

Its housing markets include older terraced housing in the town centre, extensive council-built neighbourhoods to the north and the more affluent suburban Great Barr area. The town also has one of the most successful new residential developments in the Midlands at the Lyng Phase 1.

It has the second oldest age profile in Sandwell with 16.6% of its population aged over 65.

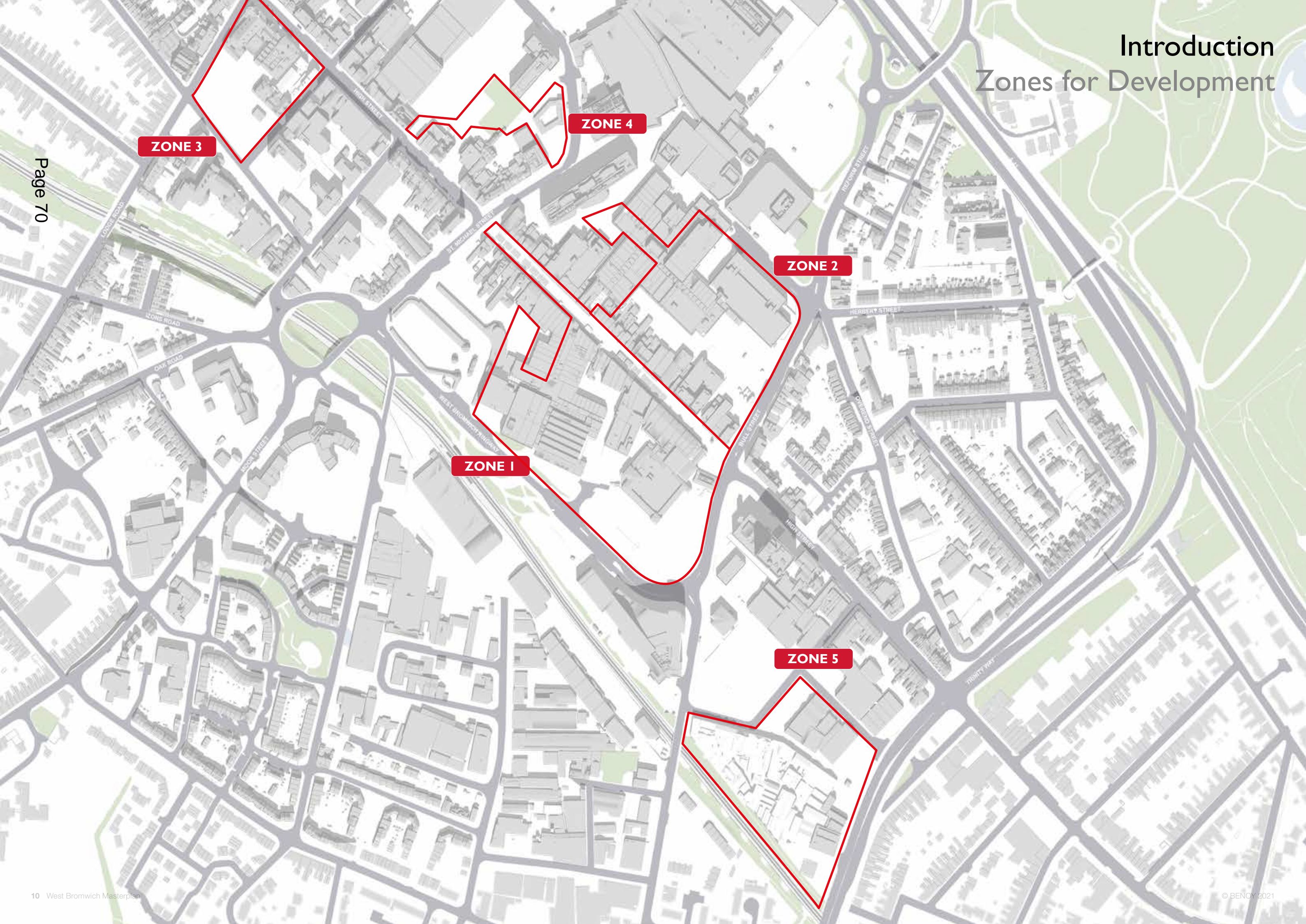
It has the second highest number of jobs at 36,400 and has experienced 6% employment growth since 2012. Its 2,430 businesses have experienced similar growth.⁽¹⁾



⁽¹⁾ Reference (The Sandwell Plan).

Introduction

Zones for Development



**“Re-discover
our history”**

Page 71



Kenrick & Jefferson Grade II listed printing works

2

“A warm welcome”



Our vision is for West Bromwich to be a thriving, optimistic and resilient town. West Bromwich is the strategic heart of Sandwell, a destination town, a place where the people of Sandwell and the wider West Midlands come to shop and relax, with things to do for all. It is a gateway into higher education, where students choose to come to study; a landmark of sport through our public spaces and sports clubs; and a safe place where people want to live, with high quality housing available for people of all ages.

The vision will be achieved by:

1. Creation of metro gateway, new town square and a step change in the quality of place / public realm
2. Creation of green links, squares, parks and sustainable travel networks
3. Development of a major mixed use community including residential and employment to create a vibrant, active and sustainable town centre

Introduction

Need for Change



There are many drivers for change in West Bromwich and reasons why investment here can deliver wider benefits. They include:

Population growth and residential demand – The local population is growing, but housing delivery has not occurred at the same rate. In 2018-19 only 794 net additional dwellings were delivered in Sandwell, well below the Governments assessment of housing need of 1,432 homes. This has resulted in significant housing demand and people are seeking homes in good quality locations with access to amenities and good transport links. West Bromwich in the future could deliver on these needs and grow a sustainable residential community.



Deprivation and Skills – The local population and surrounding area is characterized by some of the most deprived communities in the country (top 10% most deprived) according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation. Qualifications and wages are low. Delivering a step change in the quality of environment, economic, skills and training opportunities to this community aligns with the Governments Levelling Up agenda.



Quality of the environment – The Town Centre is blighted by a number of high profile vacant and derelict spaces. It suffers from a number of structural issues which hinder access and create opportunities for crime. Over 12-months around 1,000 incidents of crime were recorded in the town. There are negative perceptions of the town as a place to live, work and visit. To create a centre capable of supporting a residential community and attract visitors requires transformation in the quality of the centre.



Retail oversupply and changing demand – There is a lack of economic diversity and an oversupply of retail floorspace, much of which is long term vacant and obsolete. Vacancy rates were close to 20% pre-pandemic and have worsened. To tackle the oversupply of retail uses there is a need to repurpose redundant retail space to new uses, increase the shopper population of the area via residential development, and improve the vibrancy and quality of the shopper experience in the town.



Economy and Job growth – We are a 15 minute commute to Birmingham, and at the centre of the Black Country. We are well placed to capture economic growth opportunities. Job growth is strong (15% increase since 2015) and there are opportunities in emerging sectors including leisure, arts, creative, digital, tech, and professional service sectors.

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic the conditions for office working have changed significantly. There is greater flexibility over where people work and more home working. There is also more demand for workspace on our high streets, in co-working spaces, and in areas that are close to home. There is also increased demand for incubator space for new business start ups in a variety of sectors which can help to diversify the economy. These trends are creating

significant opportunities for towns like West Bromwich to support future job growth and deliver jobs close to peoples homes

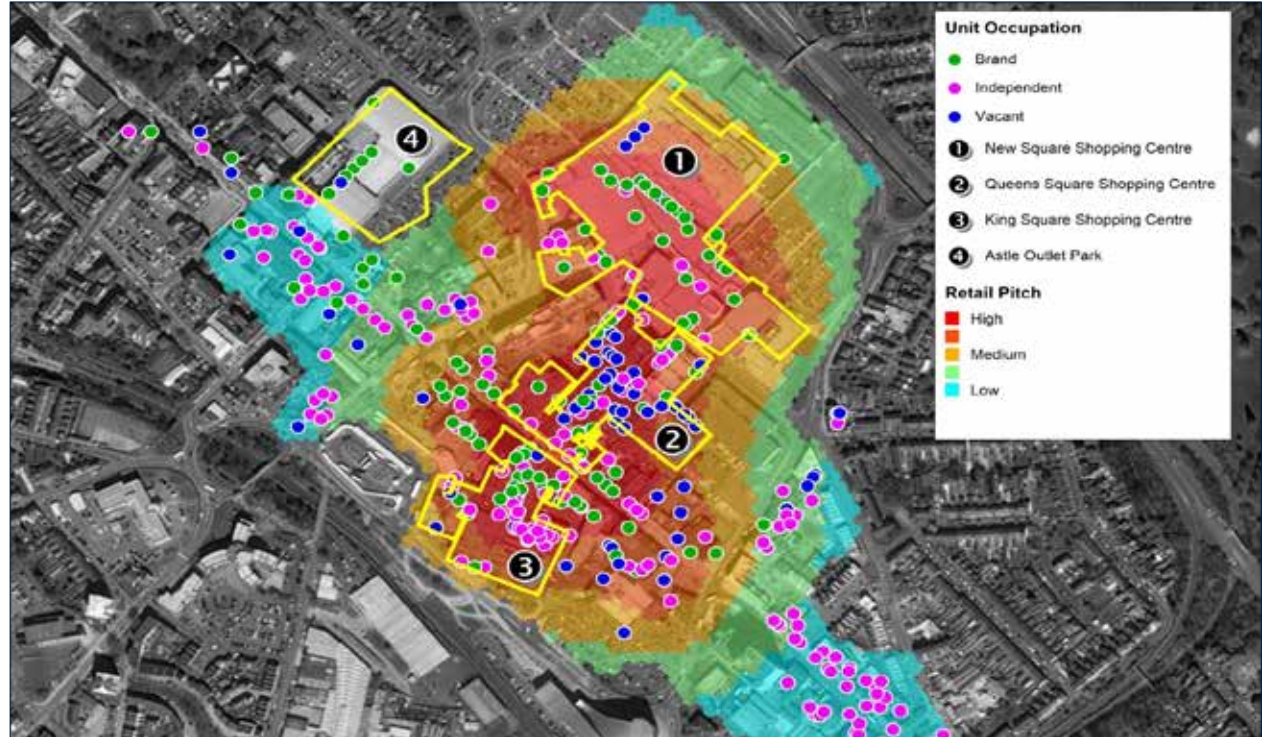


Sustainability – Our metro and bus station mean we can provide communities with sustainable, low carbon travel options. The proximity to Dartmouth Park will provide our communities with active space. Improvements to our cycling and walking network will create a sustainable place to support population growth.

All Town Centres across the country are facing similar challenges to West Bromwich. Changing retail demand, greater demand for housing, changing employment markets, issues with quality of environment. At the same time it is important that town centres work well as economic drivers for our national economy, alleviate pressure on housing growth in green belt areas, help tackle the housing affordability crisis, link people with jobs and avoid long commuting, promote sustainable transport, and help meet the challenge of global warming by transitioning to low carbon and sustainable practices.

West Bromwich has a unique opportunity to deliver transformation due the successful allocation of Town Deal funding, which will be used to help deliver this change in the town and respond to future opportunities.

This Masterplan recognises that in order to achieve these complex challenges requires an ambitious and transformational approach to regeneration. Creating a new balance of uses and delivering growth in the right places.



Retail and Leisure Use Analysis
Source: GOAD, Geolytix, Savills, 2019

Introduction

Collaborative Approach and Engagement

Page 79
Process

In order to create the vision, we needed to understand the challenges facing the town today and the aspirations of those who live, work and play in West Bromwich. The views of the local community were embedded in the design and formulation of the final masterplan.

In Spring 2021 West Bromwich was granted funding from the Towns Fund as part of the Town Investment Plan strategy. As part of this, significant Public Engagement was undertaken with the local community to hear the views of the public and stakeholders.

The masterplan has further engaged with the community through online workshops and meetings and a public consultation was undertaken in July 2021 to present the ideas. The resulting feedback fed in to the final masterplan which continually developed throughout this process.

Regular meetings and workshops have been undertaken between the local authority, organisations and individuals to inform the design and test the viability and concepts throughout the process.

The masterplan is the result of a shared vision to unlock investment and deliver new schemes that can drive economic growth and improve the quality of life for local people.

Public Consultation Events

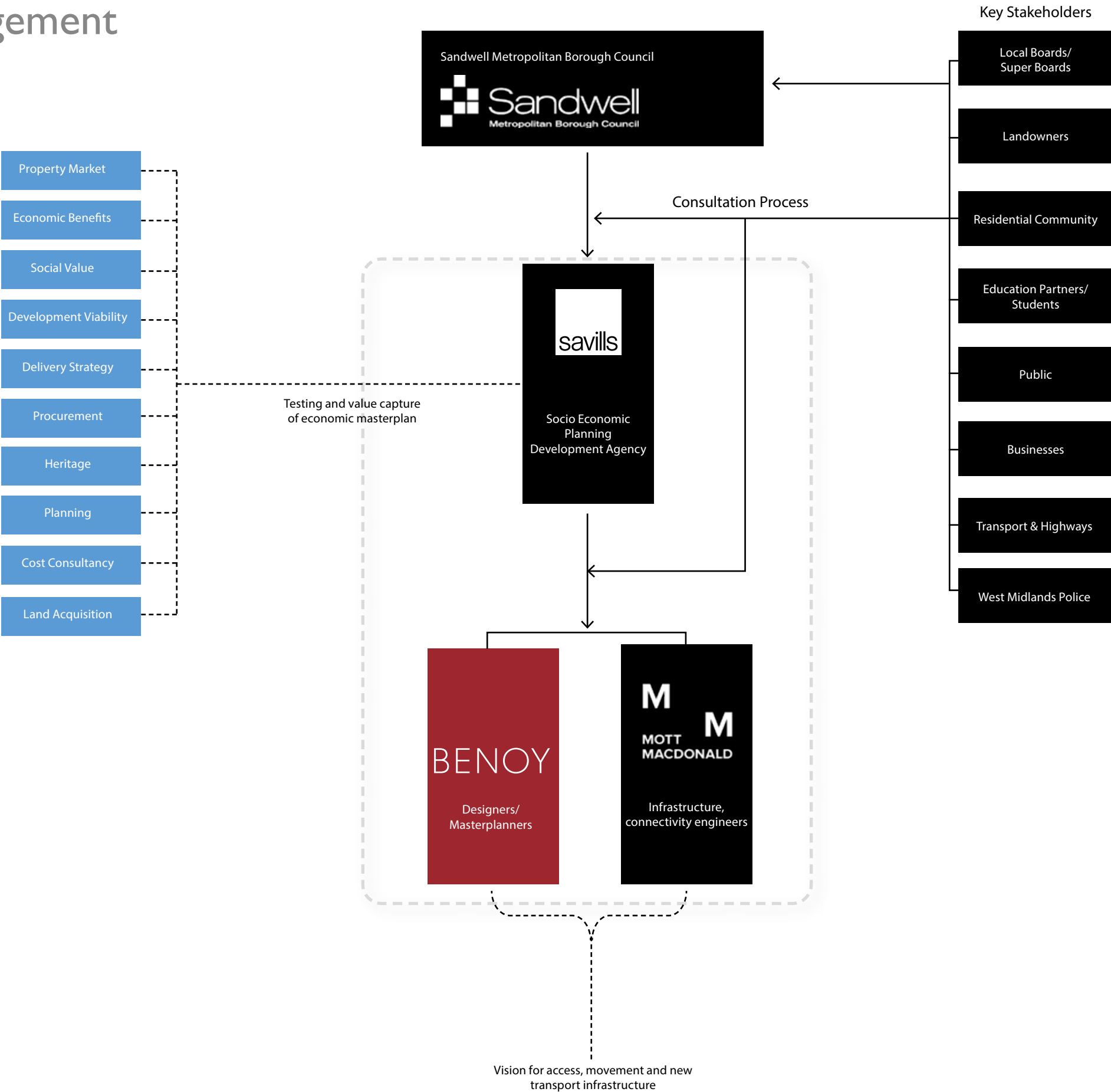


Diagram identifying the process

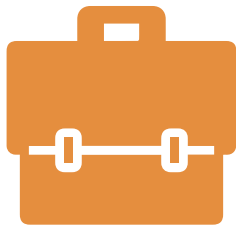
“Consultation Responses- Common Themes”



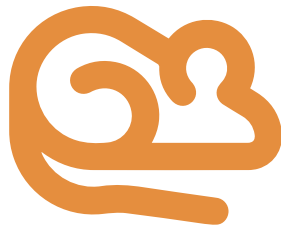
NEED FOR EVENING
ECONOMY



REVITALISED ECONOMY



EMPTY OFFICE SPACE
RE-PURPOSING



VERMIN



COMMUNITY SPACE
NEEDED



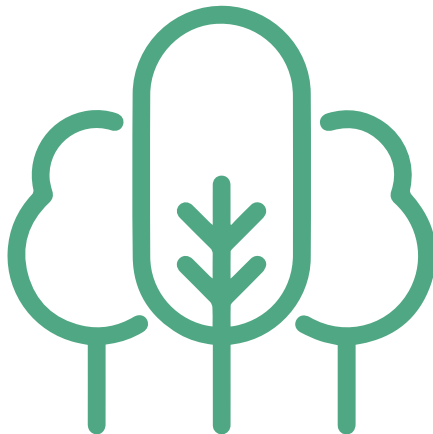
INCREASE RECYCLING



LACK OF HOUSING



CRIME & ANTI-SOCIAL
BEHAVIOUR



GREENERY NEEDED



MORE PUBLIC TOILETS



MORE DISABLED FACILITIES



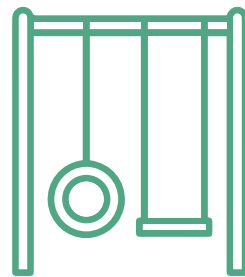
RE-UP TAKE OF LIBRARIES



GREEN TRANSPORT
SOLUTIONS



SECURE CYCLE PARKING



SPACE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE



Introduction

Engagement Feedback

Youth Engagement

A workshop was held on an online platform with Sandwell College and a writing and illustration competition was undertaken with the Lyng Primary School to understand key issues and challenges facing the younger generations within West Bromwich and their aspirations and ideas for the future.

Key Challenges Identified and aspirations

- Anti social behaviour/litter and graffiti. Fear for safety. Problems around the bus station where people hang out.
- Nothing to do & nowhere to go day and night. No social space for young generation after school/college.
- Poor connections from metro to centre.
- Need for leisure/active facilities, pop up events, music festivals, cinemas, crazy golf, bowling, ice skating and trampoline parks.
- No green central space/no central park. Nowhere to exercise. Indoor/outdoor playing space limited. Sports pitches needed.
- Homelessness.
- Too much surface car parking and limited cycle provisions.
- Not enough suitable eating provisions/no foodhall/no outdoor seating.
- Traffic and congestion. Road network confusing.
- Urban allotments for growing food needed.
- Better quality markets/farmers markets/Independent food shops.
- Need additional better quality homes and retirement homes.
- More healthcare and pet care.
- University/education campus would improve town.
- A more attractive centre- Murals, art and sculpture.

Public Consultation Feedback on Key Challenges

- Anti Social Behaviour
- Crime
- Image and perception of West Bromwich

“We Listened- And Responded”



Introduction

Previous Town Investment Plan (TIP) Engagement - Common Themes

Page 88
The **Town Investment Plan** has already engaged with businesses, community organisations and residents across West Bromwich, as well as from previous engagement developed during Vision 2030, the Inclusive Economy Deal, and through local community surveys and interviews. Common themes are listed below. The masterplan will also consider this feedback.

“West Bromwich needs an **identity**”

“Provide theatre and **community events** and activities for all ages” “Provide **support for all residents**, i.e. career advice, mental health services”

“Amenities are too spread out across the town centre, with a **need to improve connectivity** and create a **stronger core**”
“**Pedestrianised zones** may help to increase space and better connect the town centre”
“Include information and **sustainable travel** options to encourage their use and make the developed spaces multi-use and accessible to all”
“Better **walking and cycling** routes-travelling to work”
“Green transport is more important than ever”

“More **social spaces**, access to **free WiFi**”
“Gaming centre, youth lounges, social spaces to eat and drink. **Better youth facilities.** Things for young people”
“More entertainment and **activities for families and old people**”

“Capitalise on this opportunity and better **connect the town with the green space/Sandwell Valley.** Better signage to green spaces”
“Use **derelict sites as green spaces**, easily accessible and **within walking distance** from residents’ houses. Create areas of urban natural play”
“Consider **places for young people to play sports**, both indoor and outdoor spaces.”
“Consider **street furniture**”
“Creative design of the built **environment for children to play**”



Introduction

Previous Town Investment Plan (TIP) Engagement - Common Themes

Page 81

"Create night time offer **Live entertainment venues**"

"Outdoor farmer/local market. **Upgraded markets and shopping areas**"
"Market area and old square to be refurbished. New food and drinks market"

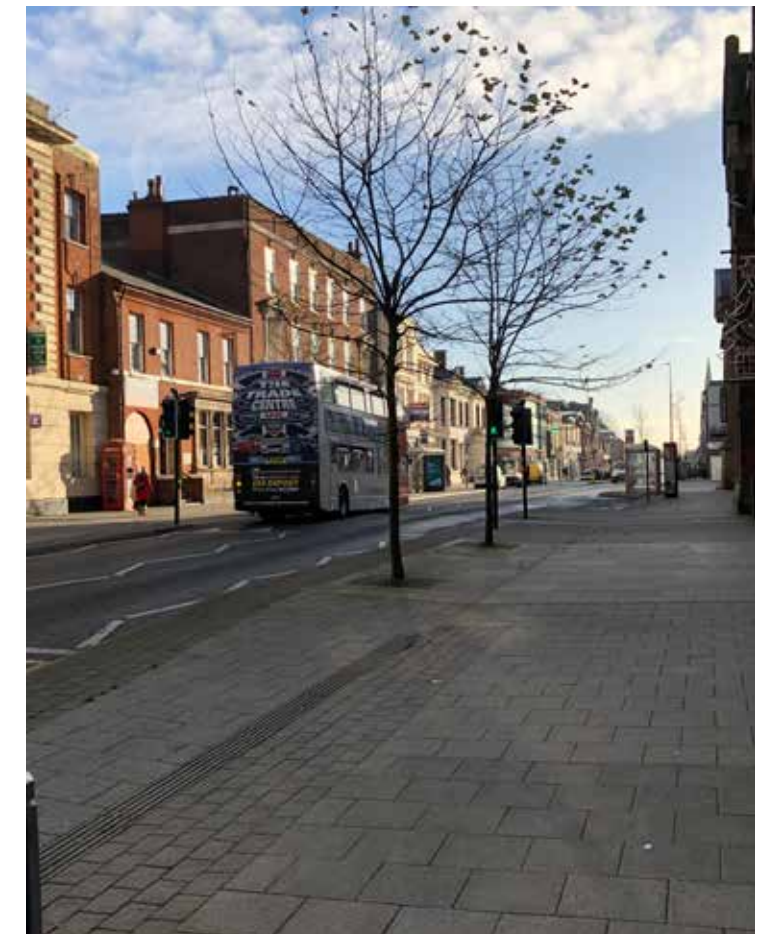
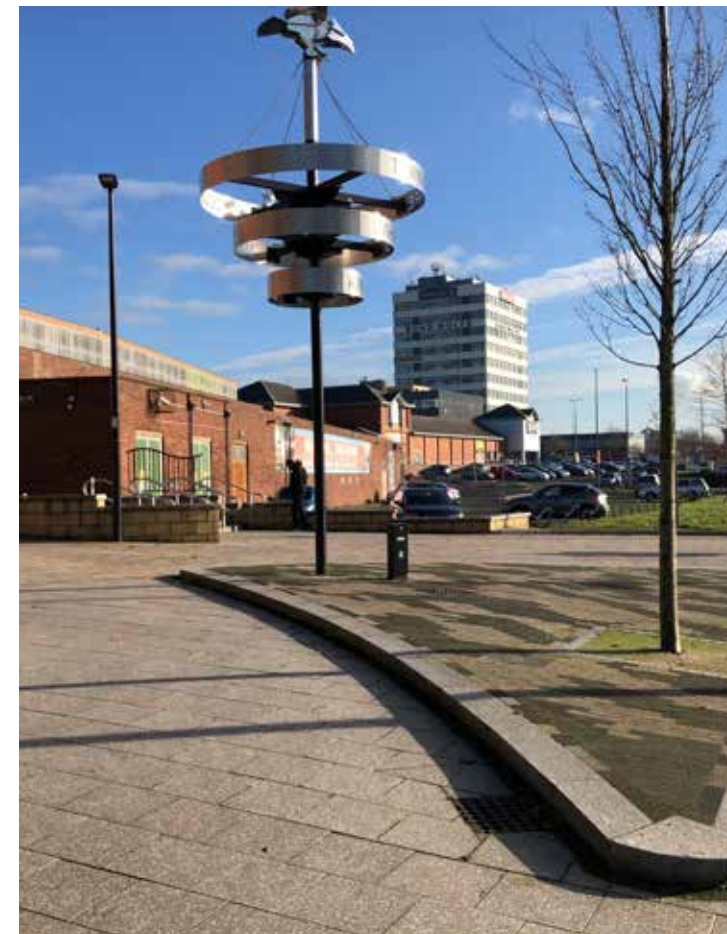
"Full fibre internet **access to digital technology**. Improve digital capacity"

"Complement (or enhance) existing schemes or assets. **Better lighting & Improved CCTV**"

"Small and medium-sized **local businesses to access commercial spaces** with reasonable rents and business rates is important to keeping them in West Bromwich"
"Opportunities for businesses to innovate within the area and make West Bromwich a centre for the **future of industry and manufacturing**"

"**Existing retail** offer which shouldn't be added to, but **improved**"
"More **social spaces and popular brands** to the town centre"
"**Re-purpose** empty shops/market stalls"
"Create synergy between the new shopping areas and the old shopping areas by **linking them with sustainable travel routes and a green corridor**"

"**Aspire for a University campus**, Student village, student accommodation, recreation and leisure opportunities"
"Improved **training and education for local people** of all ages, particularly for traditional trades, digital skills and arts"
"A **hub for young people** to further develop their skills"
"**Collaboration between businesses and education** institutions are vital"



Analysis

What is West Bromwich?

Page 82

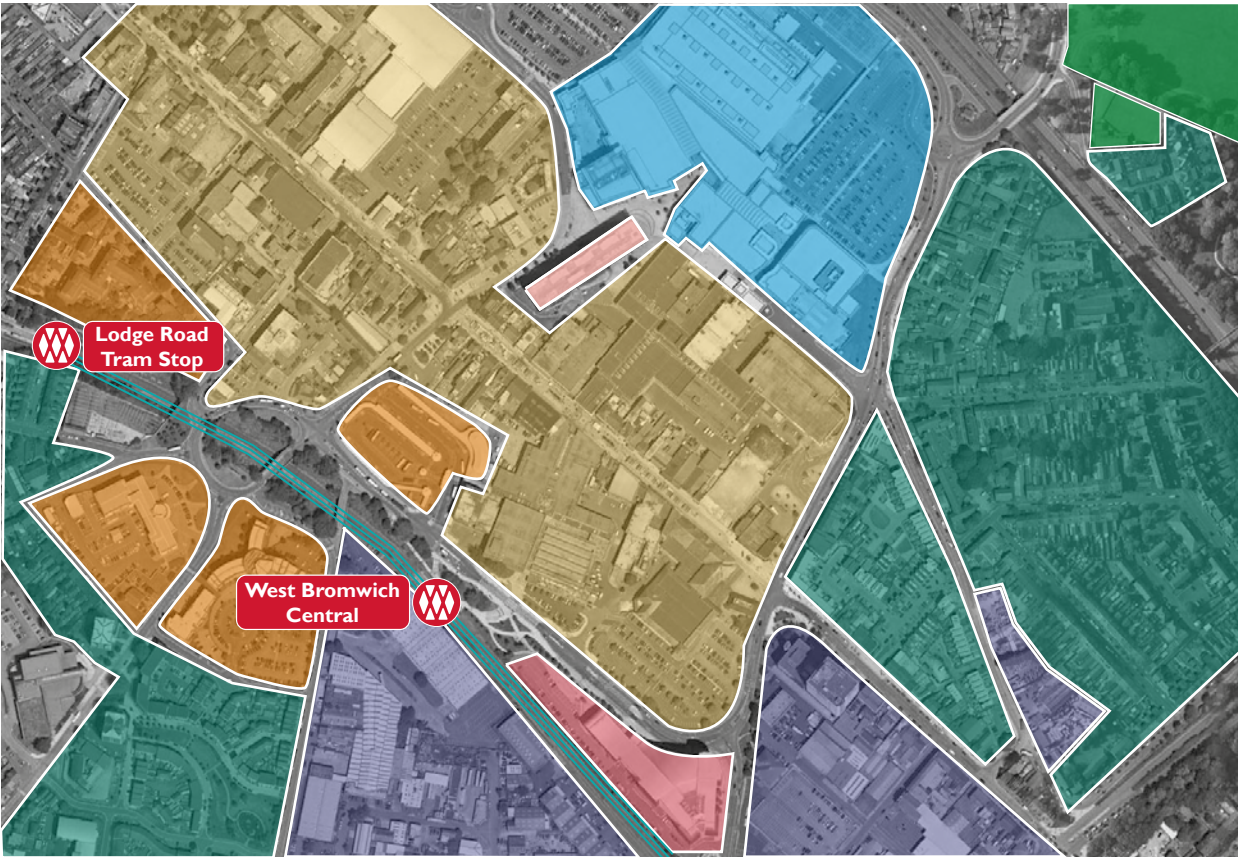
Image: Top left

High Street- Mixed Use

- Retail
- Health & Services
- Education
- Leisure/Sport/Recreation
- Industrial
- Residential

Image: Top right

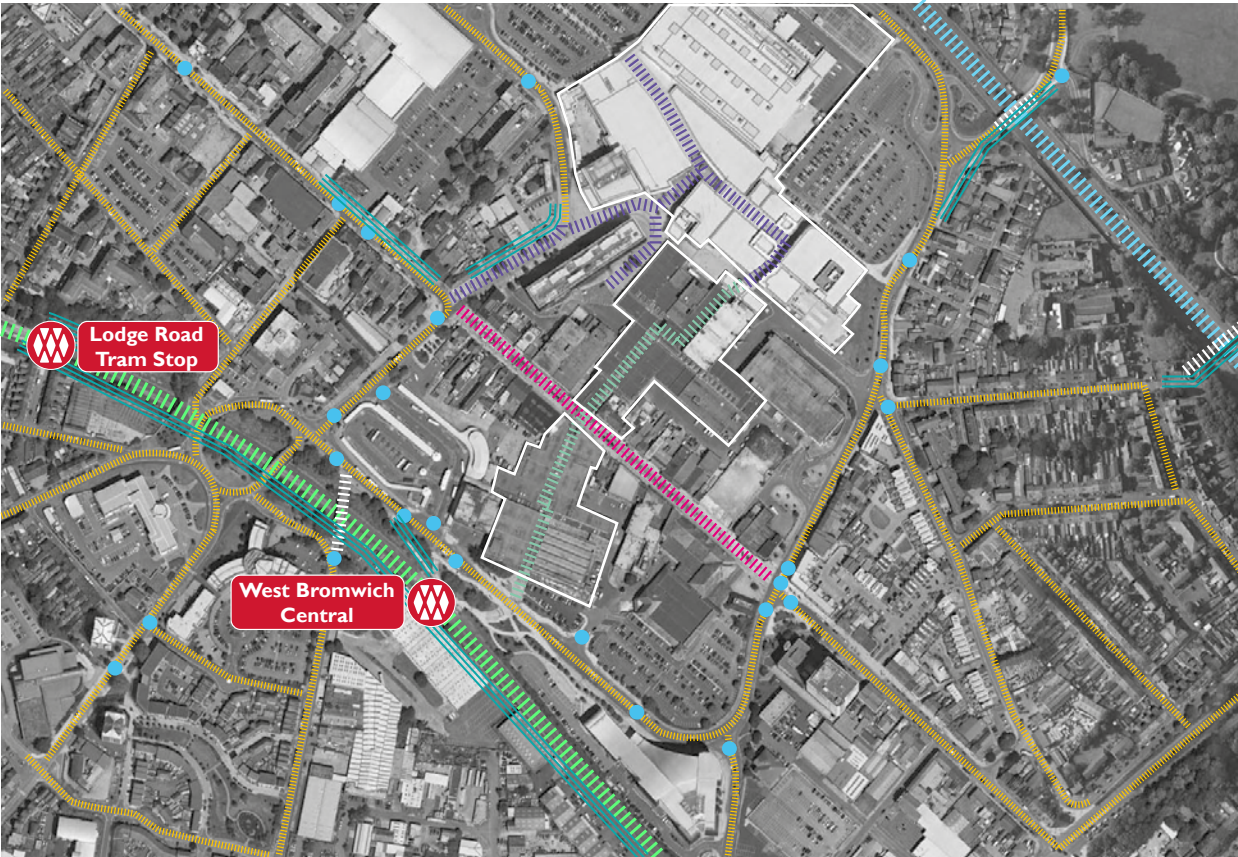
- A41
- Metro line
- Primary vehicle routes
- Restricted zone- Buses only
- Pedestrianised zone
- Internal pedestrian route
- Cycling routes
- Key crossings



Uses - Predominant Zoning

Town Centre uses are predominantly grouped with the main retail core circled by housing to the east and south. The centre and chain retailers have shifted north over the last decade with the development of St Michael’s Square and New Square Shopping Centre. The High Street has suffered as a result and has less footfall. There is a limited draw to the west of the High Street although Astle Retail park is well used and attracts visitors. Light industry sits to the south and borders the Lyng community.

Rather than grouping uses the masterplan vision will focus on truly mixed use environments with uses to complement one another and create sustainable, well connected mixed use neighbourhoods and communities with multiple functions that will be used both during the day and in the evening.



Access & Flows

The Masterplan will align with the TIP project to deliver ‘green links’ through the town making sustainable transport via walking and cycling easier and improving links to Dartmouth Park.

The current street network is relatively impermeable to pedestrian movement and hinders active north-south and east-west connectivity. In addition to the weak permeability, the key ‘gateway’ points into the heart of the town centre lack identity with no clear sense of ‘arrival’ with inactive exposed service areas and backs of buildings dominating an inward looking town centre.

The masterplan will increase active frontages, create direct, permeable and more purposeful street networks prioritised for pedestrians with legible routes and a new central market heart/square whilst appreciating the historical urban grain and authenticity of the Town Centre. Ultimately to find a balance between movement & place functions.

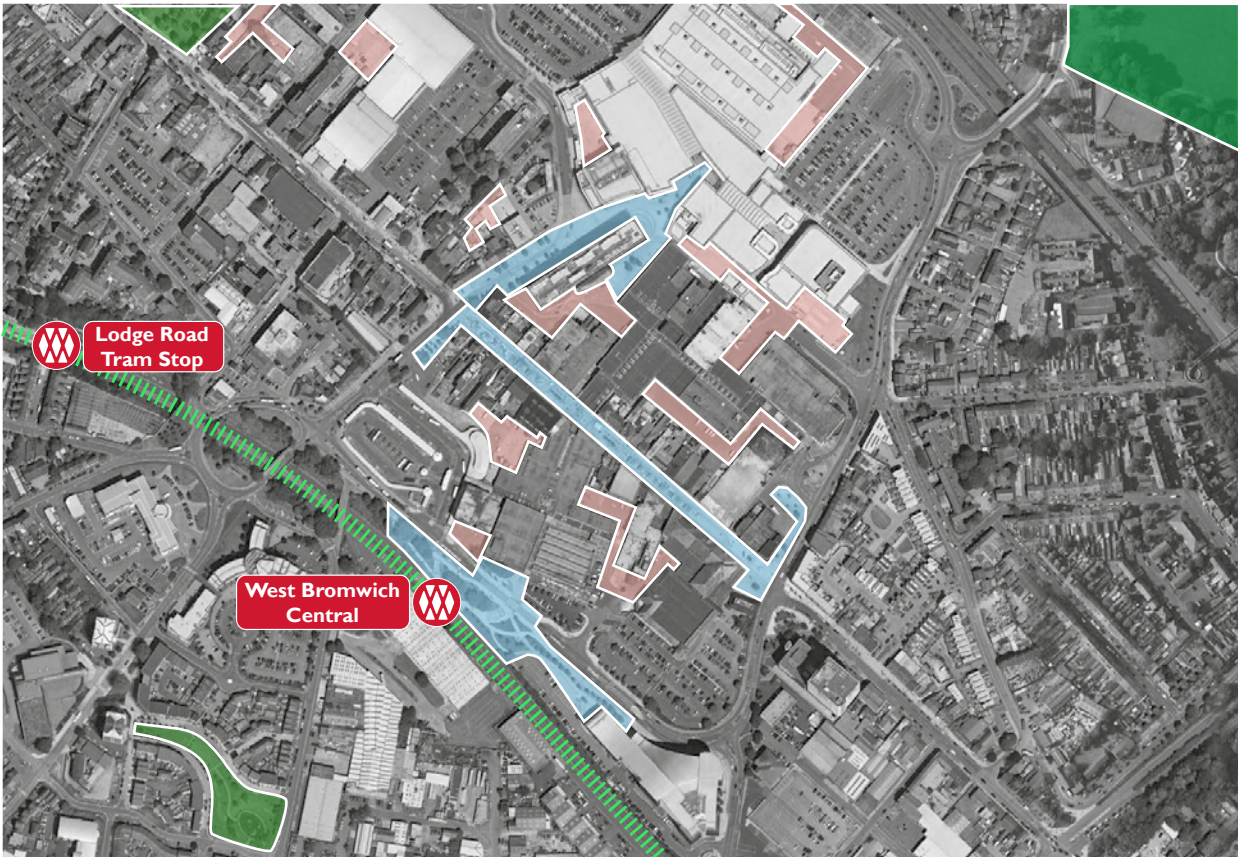
Analysis

What is West Bromwich?

- Page 83
- Image: Top left
- Public Realm / Public Space

Parks /Public Access

Back of House/Servicing Areas



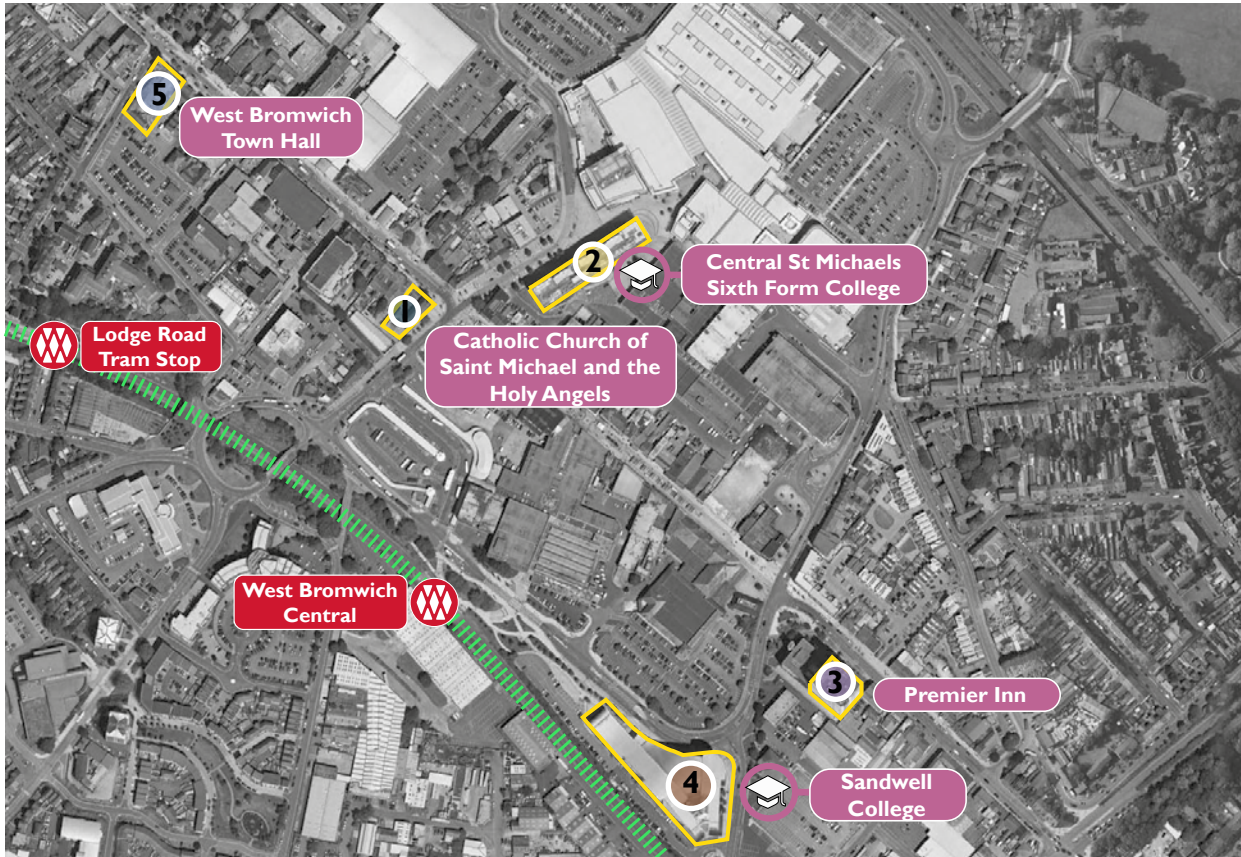
- Image: Top right
- 1 The Catholic Church of Saint Michael and the Holy Angels

2 Central St Michaels Sixth Form College

3 Premier Inn

4 Sandwell College

5 Town Hall & Library



Public & Private Spaces

The Town Centre has minimal high quality public realm accessible to all. Relatively recent improvements to St Michael’s Square, the Ringway and the high street have been successful in their own right but an overriding strategy is required to connect, enhance and provide additional quality public space.

The masterplan will create a number of streets, squares green parks and spaces for meeting and enjoying in the Town Centre. These public spaces will be accessible, multi functional, and consider the environmental, social and economic benefits of quality, well designed public realm.

The masterplan will better connect the town centre with Dartmouth Valley and it’s expanse of greenery and will encourage tourism and day trips to experience the town and plentiful amenities.

Scale, Massing & Legibility

The Town Centre is predominantly low rise with 2-3 story buildings. The areas highlighted on this map are buildings/structures with height above 3 storeys and are key way finding elements which aid legibility and visible connections within the centre.

The masterplan will preserve these elements and key vistas and position the taller landmark buildings to aid legibility and create variety in the roofscapes.

The arrangement, volume and shape of the buildings will be considered in relation to surrounding buildings and the relationship with street and pedestrian size.

Analysis

What is West Bromwich?

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Image: Top left

A41

Metro line

Primary vehicle routes

Restricted zone- Buses only

Pedestrianised zone

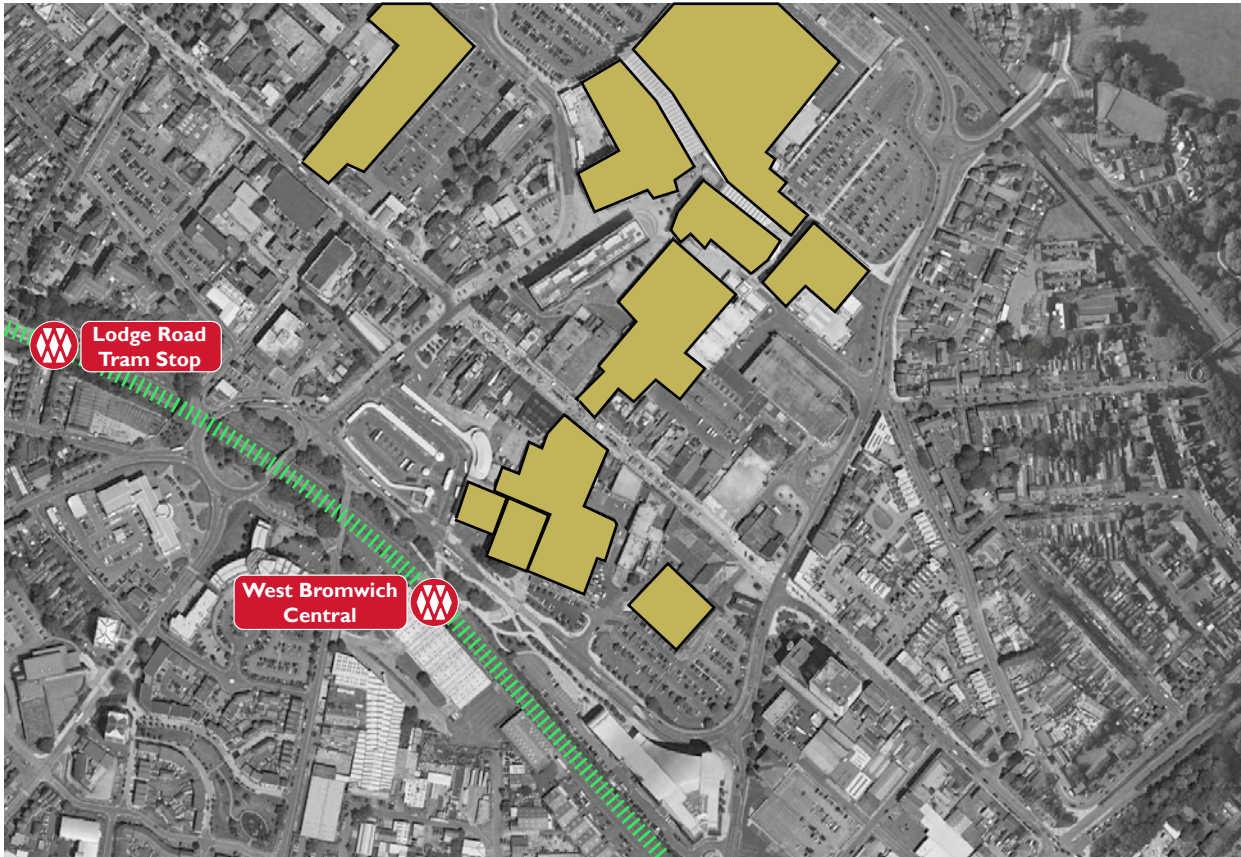
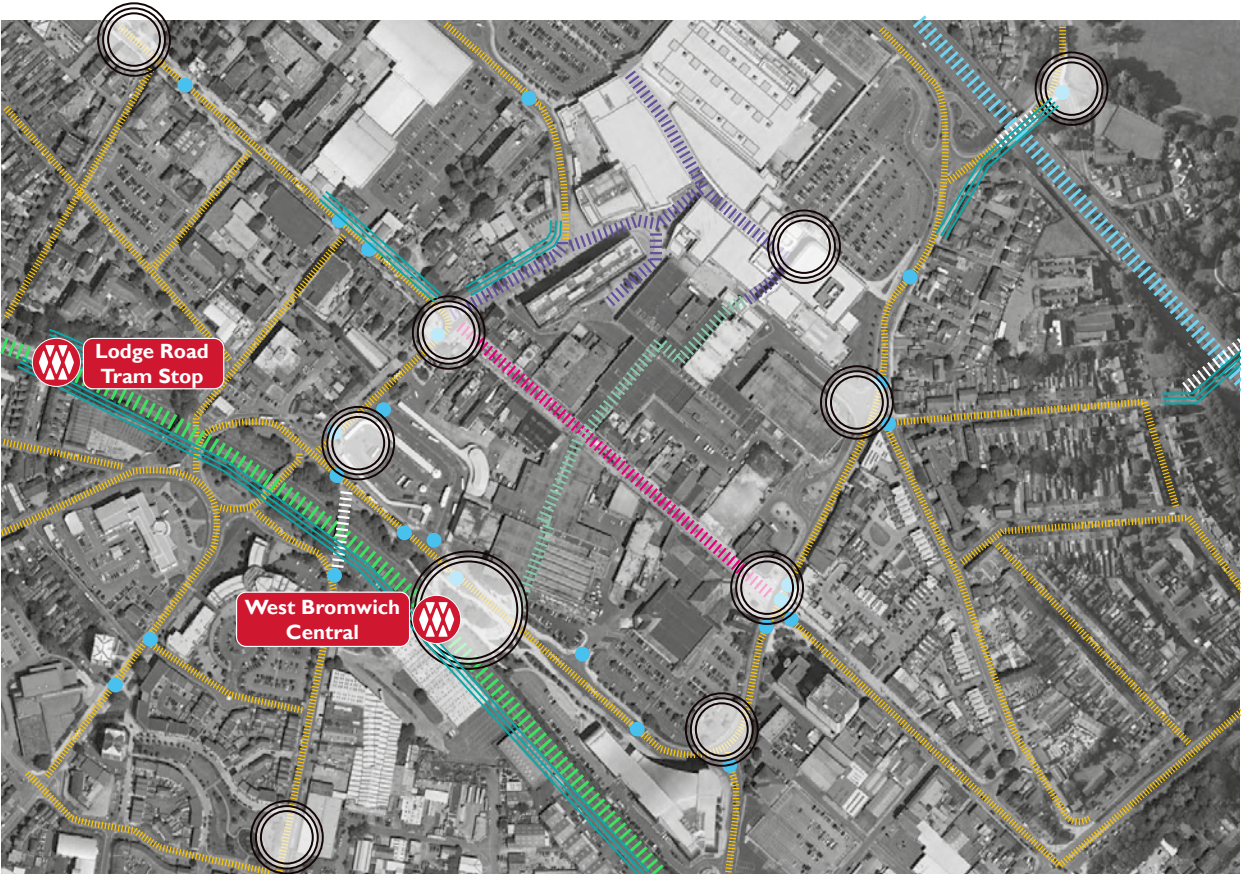
Internal pedestrian route

Cycling routes

Key crossings

Image: Top right

Large Town Centre Building Footprints



Key Gateway Nodes

Opportunity to create positive and active pedestrian entrances to the Town Centre especially around West Bromwich Central Metro and Bus Station.

Pedestrian approaches will consider:

- Pedestrian scale landmarks
- Active edges focused on primary pedestrian linkages
- Views into enclosed spaces / routes to aide legibility

Public & Private transport to consider

- Access and egress
- Vehicle & cycle parking
- Servicing
- Vehicle charging
- Clear designation of space

Building Blocks & Urban Grain

Town Centre blocks within the retail quarter are dominated by covered shopping centres. The masterplan will propose a variety of blocks and scales to break down the oversized and inflexible footprints. The internal covered shopping arcades will be replaced with externalised streets and the footprints broken down to acknowledge the town's urban grain and scale.

This will create the opportunity not only for high quality public realm space, but also flexible space for new uses and functions that will make the town more resilient to future economic changes.

Analysis

What is West Bromwich?

Page 85

Image: Top left

Vacant units
(Pre Covid estimate)



- Image: Top right
- Retail / Leisure / F&B
 - Commercial / Offices
 - Public / Civic / Community
 - Educational
 - Light Industry
 - Car Parking

Vacant Ground Floor Uses

Nearly a fifth of shops in West Bromwich town centre are empty.

Shopping habits have changed dramatically since the current plan for West Bromwich was approved. The number of vacancies, particular in the older units, is clear proof of this.

We need to investigate other uses for town centre land and buildings such as housing and leisure facilities that will bring more vibrancy to the town, particularly in the evenings.

Current Ground Floor Uses

In the post covid world with increased internet shopping, we must re-invent our high streets and this part of town, so reliant on retail.

The masterplan will explore alternative uses, adaption and re-use of existing buildings and a more fundamental approach which offers flexibility in delivering proposals in phases and flexibility in use for a more sustainable and prosperous Town Centre.

Analysis


Existing Constraints & Challenges

Page 86



Inward facing centre with inactive externalised façades to the periphery.

Poor linkages and connections.

No central heart of town. 

Limited relationship between buildings and boundary treatment/ frontage condition at street level.


Poor architectural expression of entrances, corners, roofscape and projections.

No rhythm & pattern of openings and blocks.



 Key Anchors

 Metro line


 A41


 Bus Station

 Listed Buildings/Heritage Assets

 Active Frontages/Direction of activity


 Inactive Frontage

 Oppressive & unattractive edge condition to town centre

 Convoluted and indirect internal north-south links.

 Noise

First Impression

Inactive Facades & Surface Car Parking

Page 87



Streets cluttered with furniture



Poor legibility & Inactive routes through to the centre



Inactive blank facades as the arrival experience



Surface car parking & inactive public realm treatments



Tired, hoarded sites require stimulating graphics. Opportunity for branding



Unsecured, poorly maintained sites awaiting development

West Bromwich

Image & Branding

Identity

The masterplan will build on the identity, branding and cultural offer for the Town and celebrate the history, arts and passions of the local community. The community are proud and resilient and are passionate about changing the perception of West Bromwich for the better.

The centre will be more permeable and accessible, and outward looking creating a more welcoming and attractive appearance.

With nature on its doorstep (Sandwell Valley/Dartmouth Park), West Bromwich must tap in to this and promote the image of health, well-being and nature and integrate within the urban centre.

West Bromwich will embrace the history of indoor and outdoor markets, so distinctive and enjoyed by the community.

West Bromwich Albion is a significant local brand which draws over 26,000 people to the area regularly. This is an opportunity to strengthen the brand further, link to sport and active, healthy living but also develop complementing offers around this to support and attract further Town Centre investment and regeneration.

There is an opportunity for the Town to roll out a considered and cohesive branding strategy which encompasses all of the above to link and knit together the architecture and spaces. SMBC are undertaking a branding exercise which will help mould the development phases being brought forward over the short to long term.

The design and appearance of West Bromwich should reflect the hopes and aspirations of the local community and be bright, bold and colourful. Providing welcoming, vibrant spaces with street art, murals and sculpture to enhance the brand.



www.rspb.org.uk

Concept Development
The Future of West Bromwich

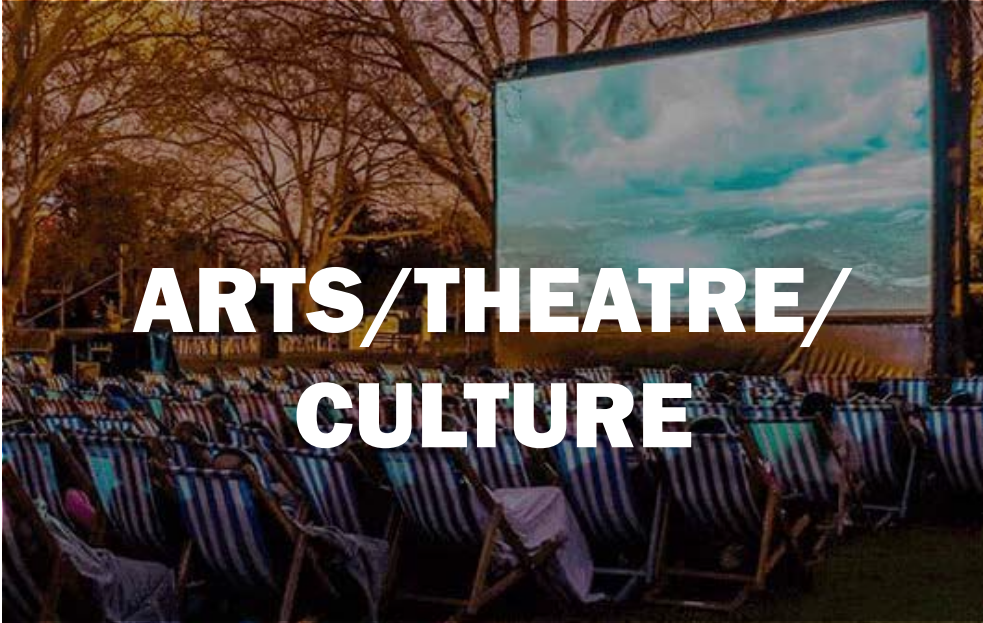
Page 89



Concept Development

The Future of West Bromwich

Page 90



*“Vibrant spaces
and activities”*



Opportunities



Connectivity

- Maximise the impact of metro and bus station and links to Wolverhampton and Birmingham with new arrival experience, new links to the bus station, high density and first phase development here.
- Improve the connectivity by delivering legible direct routes for pedestrians within the Town Centre with a new boulevard and entrance point and improved links to the park, the Lyng, Town Hall and through to St Michaels Square.



Green and Sustainable

- Maximise opportunities for sustainable transport around station development; cycle and walking routes; making a pedestrian friendly, liveable town centre.
- Move away from private car as the dominant means of accessing the town through improved walking and cycling routes, connections to public transport and embracing new opportunities for transport such as car clubs, e-bike hire, e-scooters and remote working.
- Improve greening and environmental improvements in the town with new public squares; links to green space and high quality public realm.



Growth Drivers

- Respond to changes on High Street and re-imagining/reducing of retail space, delivering experiential leisure, improve quality and public realm.
- Respond to local opportunities and strengths with new market; new College Campus; new Town Hall Cultural Quarter.
- Respond to wider economic drivers (inc. Covid and Brexit) with space for co-working; residential growth in Town Centre; and health, education, public sector, digital and creative industries.



Community

- Respond to the unique character of the existing community by improving much loved assets such as the Market; delivering new public space (Central square) and community facilities/open space for public use and interaction, and delivering a new retail and leisure offer.
- Grow a new Town Centre community in a sustainable way by creating new communities around the Town Hall, Queens Centre and George Street and creating a new town centre population with high quality housing.



Ambition

- Change perceptions of West Bromwich as a place to live, work and invest through ‘transformational’ change and an ambitious strategy.



Deliverability

- Acquire key sites, but also test phasing and funding opportunities through identifying the gap, then identifying solutions to reduce or manage this.
- Bring together key stakeholders, including land owners and delivery partners, to invest in the future of West Bromwich by presenting an ambitious and transformational plan.

*“A Town full of
Potential”*



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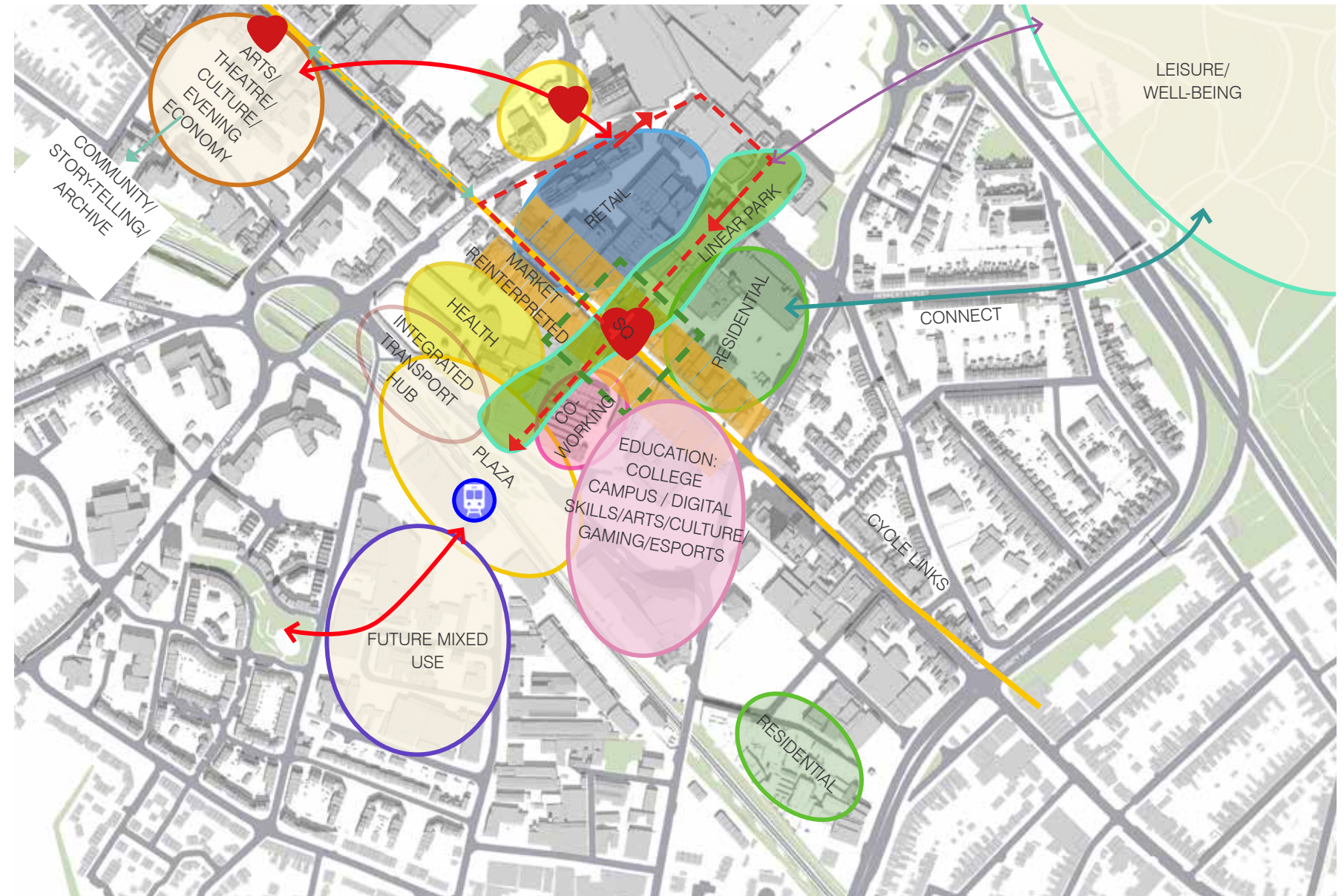
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Concept Development

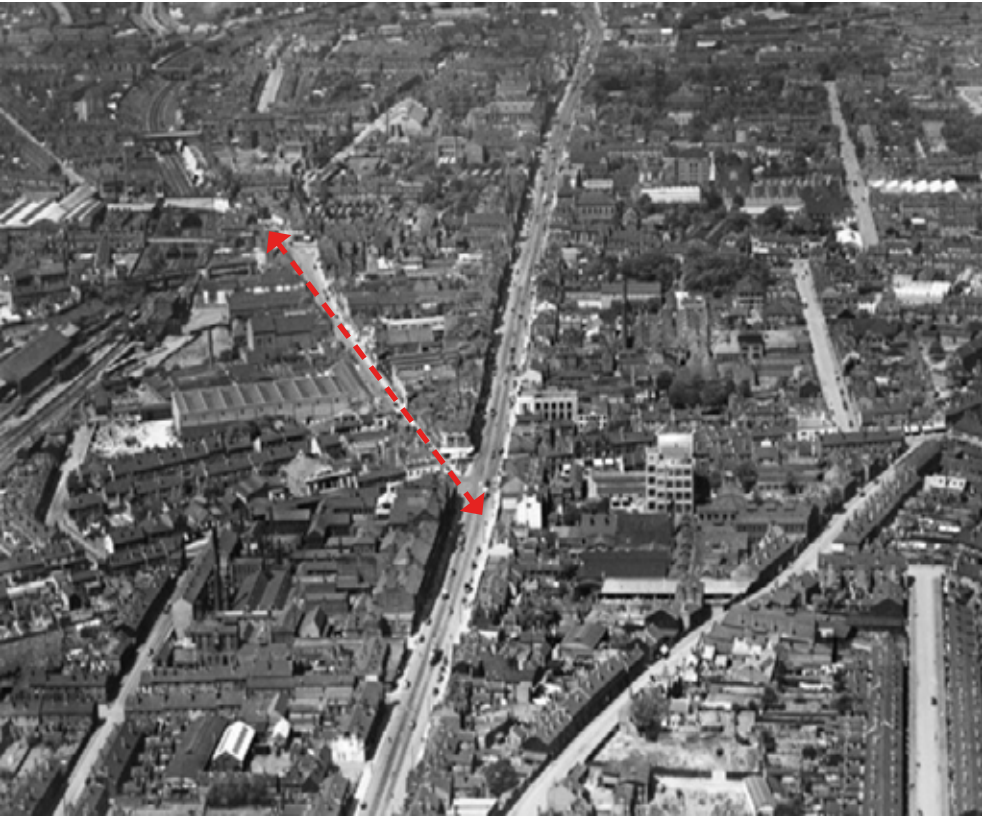
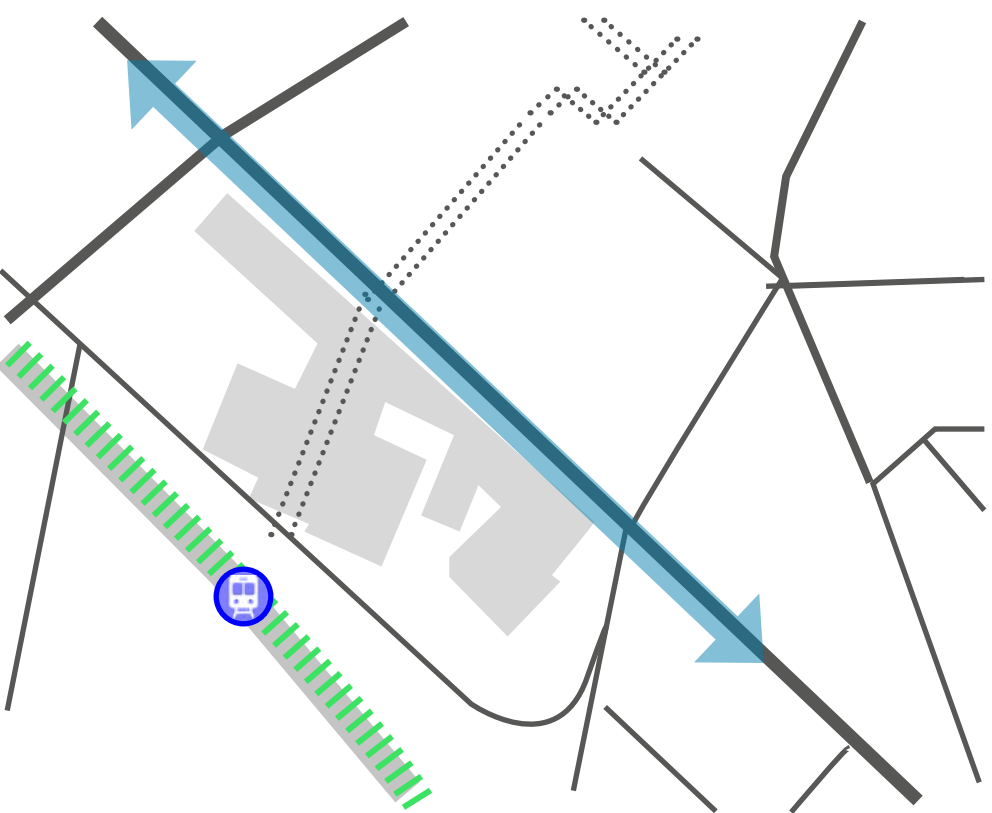
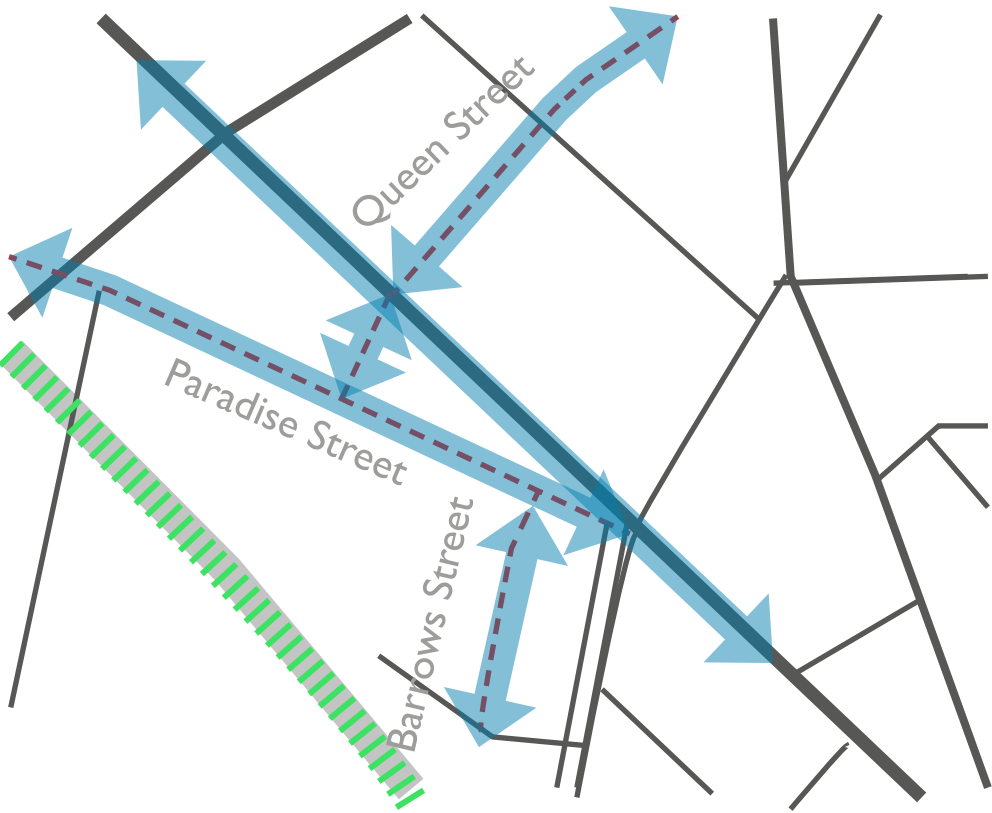
Key Design Drivers - Historic Connections

Street Networks

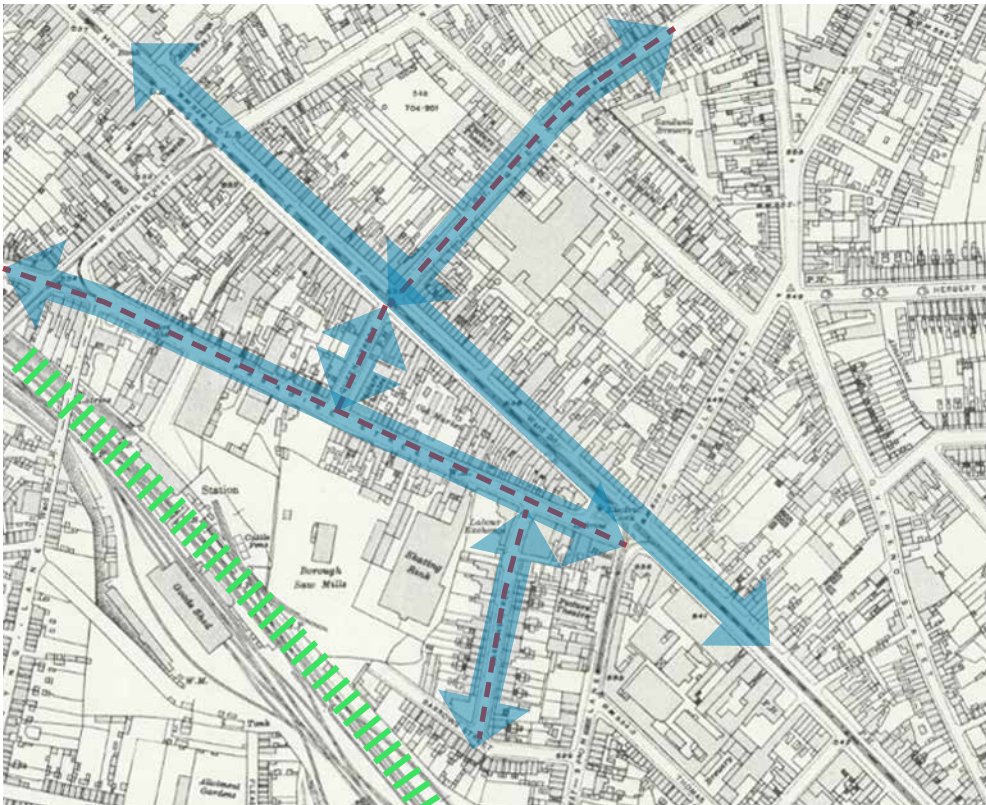
The masterplan draws inspiration from local architectural character and traditional street patterns. The masterplan appreciates the historic urban grain and the network of streets and squares and re-interprets this in an authentic and exciting town centre development with permeable routes and public space.

The historic urban grain emphasises the importance of Paradise Street, Queen Street and Barrows Street as significant routes and flows through to the High Street. These lost streets were once home to a vibrant community of performers and trades people with theatres, the old market and skating parks adjoining light industrial operations.

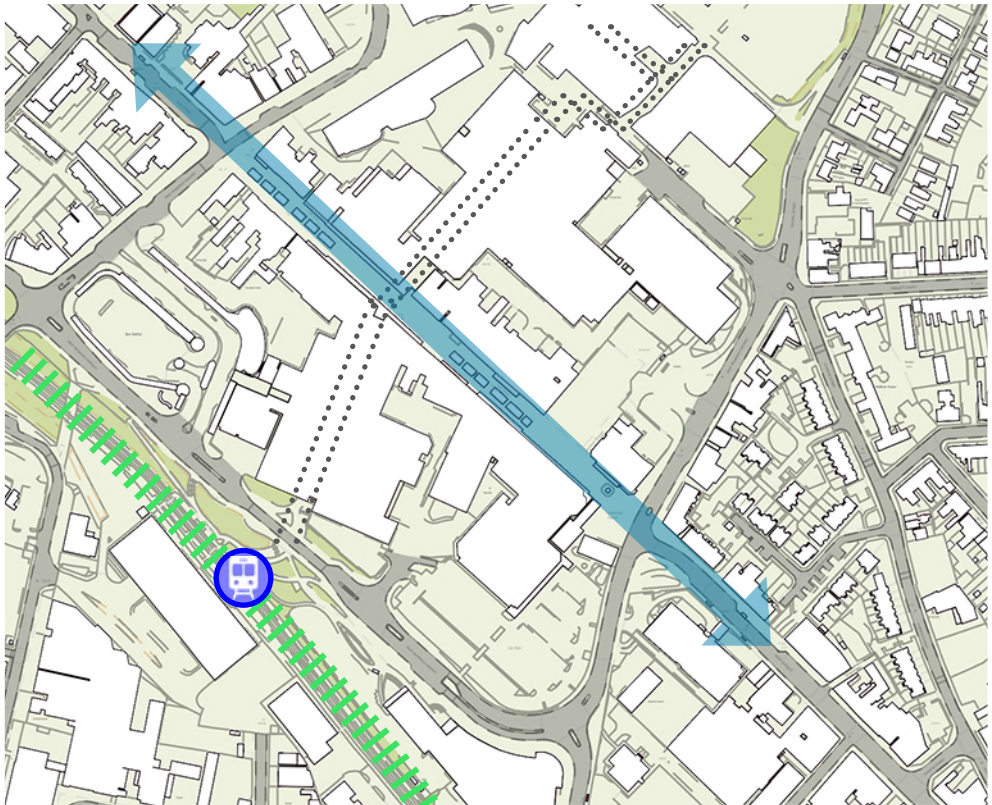
Re-establishing the connections and incorporating new prominent routes to the High Street from the north and south will create a more legible and accessible town centre.



Paradise Street

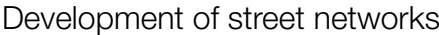


1913



2021

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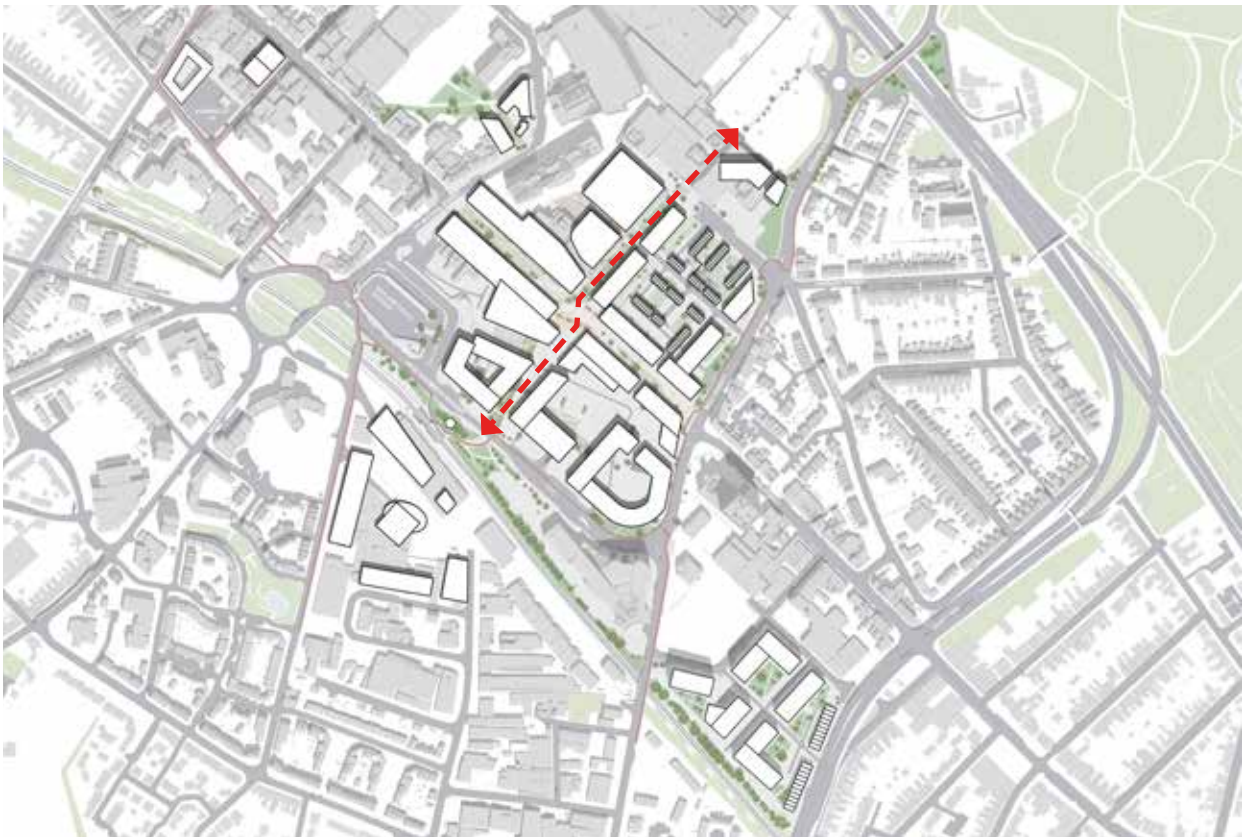


Concept Development

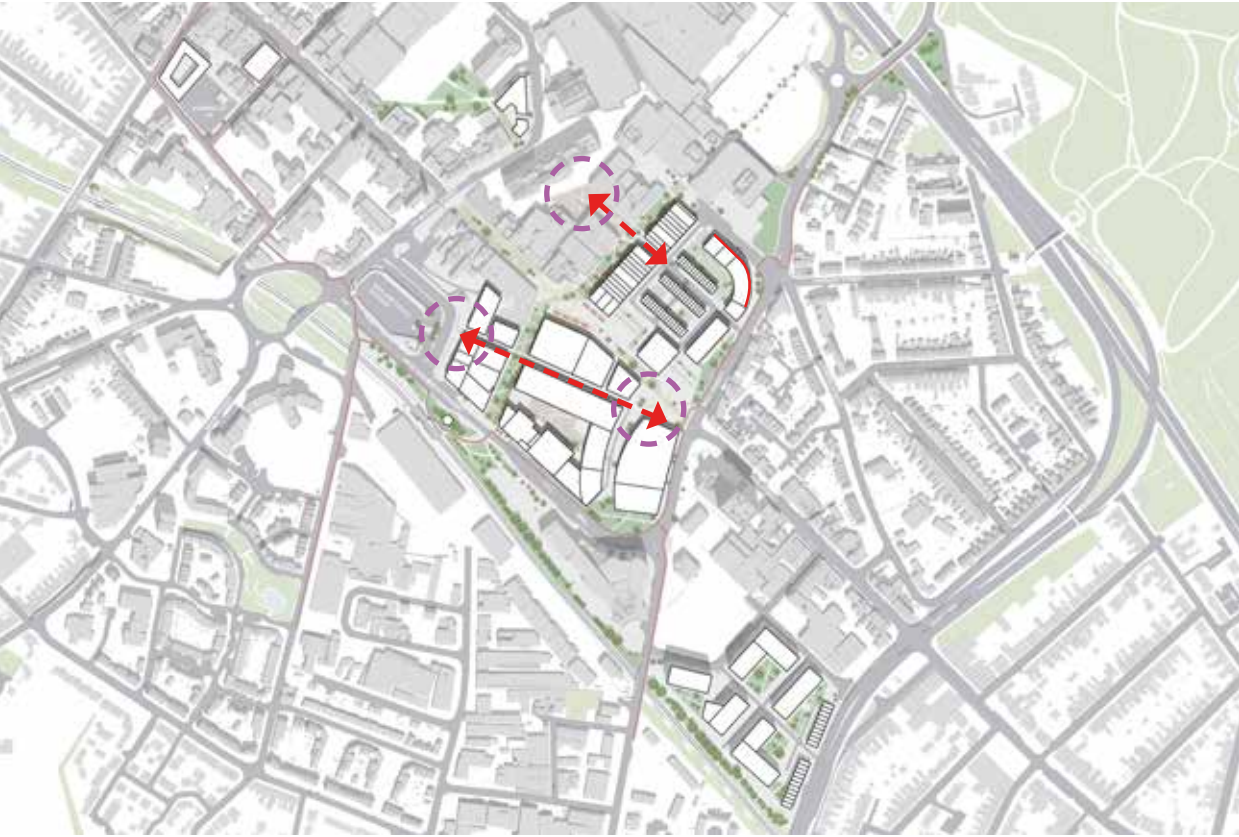
Creating a Framework Plan



Existing Context



Developed aspirational concept emphasised with widely opened direct North and South axis - Urban Green Spine. Queens Sq Shopping centre replaced with new blocks.



- Historic routes reinstated.
- Town Centre defined with education and Multi-storey car park blocks connecting back to bus interchange.
- Existing Queens Square Centre reduced and opened up connecting St Michael College plaza.
- Introduction of curved block to North East end of Queens Sq Resi zone to create a well defined edge to Bull street.



- Enhanced development density with centre apartment blocks in Queens Square Residential zone.
- Improved permeability in the heart of Town Centre by creating open paths between blocks.

Concept Development

A framework plan of West Bromwich was developed by exploring different approaches to redeveloping the town centre site based on data, research and stakeholder feedback.

The options ranged from providing limited interventions through to a highly aspirational wider approach.

Following engagement with the stakeholders, the framework plan principles were established.

Concept Development

Key Design Drivers

Key Design Drivers

1. Creation of metro gateway, new town square and a step change in the quality of place / public realm

A new framework of streets and squares glued together by quality linkages and public realm. The masterplan will enhance first impressions on arrival at the West Bromwich Central Metro stop and bus station with attractive public space and a new distinct gateway to the Town Centre. A vibrantly varied facade of new high quality, high density and mixed use buildings along West Bromwich Ringway will replace the inactive brick walls with bright active uses and provide a welcoming Town Centre experience.

This new substantial mixed use Town Centre destination will provide space for working, living, playing and resting for all ages and be the catalyst for regeneration within West Bromwich Town Centre and harness the potential from the metro connection. Whilst the Town Centre has a strong linear High street, and areas of public realm surrounding St Michael's Square, and the Sixth form college, the centre lacks a vibrant, accessible heart of the town. The masterplan will provide a new town square with quality public realm and a new indoor flexible market/foodhall experience in a contemporary and exciting environment.

The proposals will offer opportunities for existing retailers to grow and prosper in this new, exciting environment. Increasing Town Centre densities and uses will provide more visits and encourage greater spend.

2. Creation of green links, squares, parks and sustainable travel networks

The masterplan will significantly improve the quality of the public realm and environmental credentials through urban greening. Strategically linked community parks and open space will regenerate the Town Centre, emphasising health and well-being and attracting a wider demographic and experience. The network of streets and squares will be pedestrian friendly public spaces in a wider sustainable travel network.

3. Development of a major mixed use community including residential and employment to create a vibrant, active and sustainable town centre

The masterplan will strengthen the links between the Town Centre and adjoining areas such as the Cultural Quarter and Dartmouth Park/Sandwell Valley by creating strategically connected functional and active zones with playful street furniture, public art and art trails connecting spaces along the routes. Cycle routes are extended east to west and north to south to further strengthen connectivity and access across the Town Centre and beyond.



Concept Development

Key Design Drivers

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KEY

- Links
- Key pedestrian routes
- Key cycle routes
- Block massing
- Site area

Diagram showing the extent of the subdivision of the area into smaller development parcels with pattern and scale of streets, blocks and plots.

A photograph of two young boys playing on a modern playground structure. The structure features yellow curved bars and black vertical posts. The boy on the left is wearing a blue t-shirt and dark shorts, looking up with a smile. The boy on the right is wearing a light blue t-shirt and blue shorts, with his mouth open in a shout or laugh. The background is filled with lush green trees and foliage, suggesting a park setting. The overall mood is joyful and active.

***“A focus on people to create vibrant,
happy and healthy communities”***

3

“Meet me at the Hub!”



Framework Plan

The Town Centre transformation will have a distinctive image, identity, legibility and urban structure, which is key for successful place making. In practice this means ensuring that buildings are of an appropriate design and scale, that the plan addresses the key streets, spaces, uses and local landmarks and that the street structure is used to emphasise and create key views and vistas to reinforce routes or spaces. This creates arrival points that are well designed, attractive and make it easy for people to orientate.

Regeneration across the Town Centre provides opportunities for significant transformation. The changes on the High Street will re-imagine the Centre as a truly mixed-use environment tying together individual sites through improved connectivity and high quality public realm. Improved cycle and pedestrian routes will strengthen the connections between the Town Hall, High Street, St Michael’s Square and the retail centre, through to Dartmouth Park.

New green routes between the “live and play” area in the South and Dartmouth park in the North are shown in the framework plan vision on the following page. This shows the relationship of the new development with nature and enhances the concept of ‘connecting to nature’. Interconnected public realm with green routes will further enhance the natural penetration of green into the heart of Town Centre. A new central green linear park flows north to south providing much needed public space for relaxing, entertaining and playing surrounded by a mix of uses with education, health and learning at the heart of the Town Centre.

The vibrant mix of uses in the framework plan will create an inclusive community for all age groups and include shops, restaurants, cafés, leisure, entertainment, markets, performance, event spaces, community facilities, education campus, health and residential living. Additionally, there will be an emphasis on green public spaces for the community to enjoy. The reinstatement of historic connections and re-interpretation of the streets and squares are an authentic and contemporary approach of the plan. A strong focus on provision of spaces for community and social interactions will promote well-being and health in a truly green environment.

There are five distinctive character areas of the masterplan: West Bromwich Central, Queens Square Living, St Michael’s Pocket Park, The Cultural Quarter and George Street community. These have been identified in the framework plan to ensure that development is taken forward in a coordinated and cohesive manner in line with the masterplan objectives, and to ensure that each phase represents a piece of urban development in its own right, that is well connected to the other key areas around the town centre. The framework plan also identifies the proposed main streets and spaces that will form the basic skeleton of the masterplan area, and the landmarks, activity hubs and arrival points.

The character areas have also been designed to balance infrastructure requirements throughout the development, ensuring in particular that the early infrastructure requirements are not overly onerous. Furthermore, each character area is a response to its surrounding landscape and existing built character and to its proposed uses.

Concept Development Framework Plan

CULTURAL QUARTER

URBAN POCKET PARK

QUEEN SQUARE LIVING

WEST BROMWICH CENTRAL
MIXED USE CENTRE

GEORGE ST LIVING

The Framework Plan

Zoning

Functional Zoning

The framework plan consists of the following functional zones:

1. West Bromwich Central Mixed Use Centre

A mixed use centre with central market square at it's heart and comprising F&B and leisure blocks to the North/West, office blocks and residential to the South and education and multi-storey car park to the East of central courtyard.

2. Queens Square Living

A new centrally located high density residential community is set within a blanket of green park with external parking spaces, office and gym/amenities space at ground level of the northern residential block. Retail blocks with town houses above to the North and East of the square also form a well-defined edge with active market streets to the High Street and Queens Street.

3. Cultural Quarter

The site comprises two blocks. Main block along High Street adjacent to Town hall provides the ideal setting for cultural/ community space with restaurant/F&B activating the street. The building to the rear facing Edward Street and Lodge Road is proposed as aged living accommodation, set beside a cultural offer this is a perfect setting for relaxation for later stage of life.

4 Urban Pocket Park

A new park/route that connects St. Michael Street, the Astle Retail centre and the High Street. We will work with key stakeholders and landowners to bring forward these desirable future connections and management of spaces.

5. George Street Living

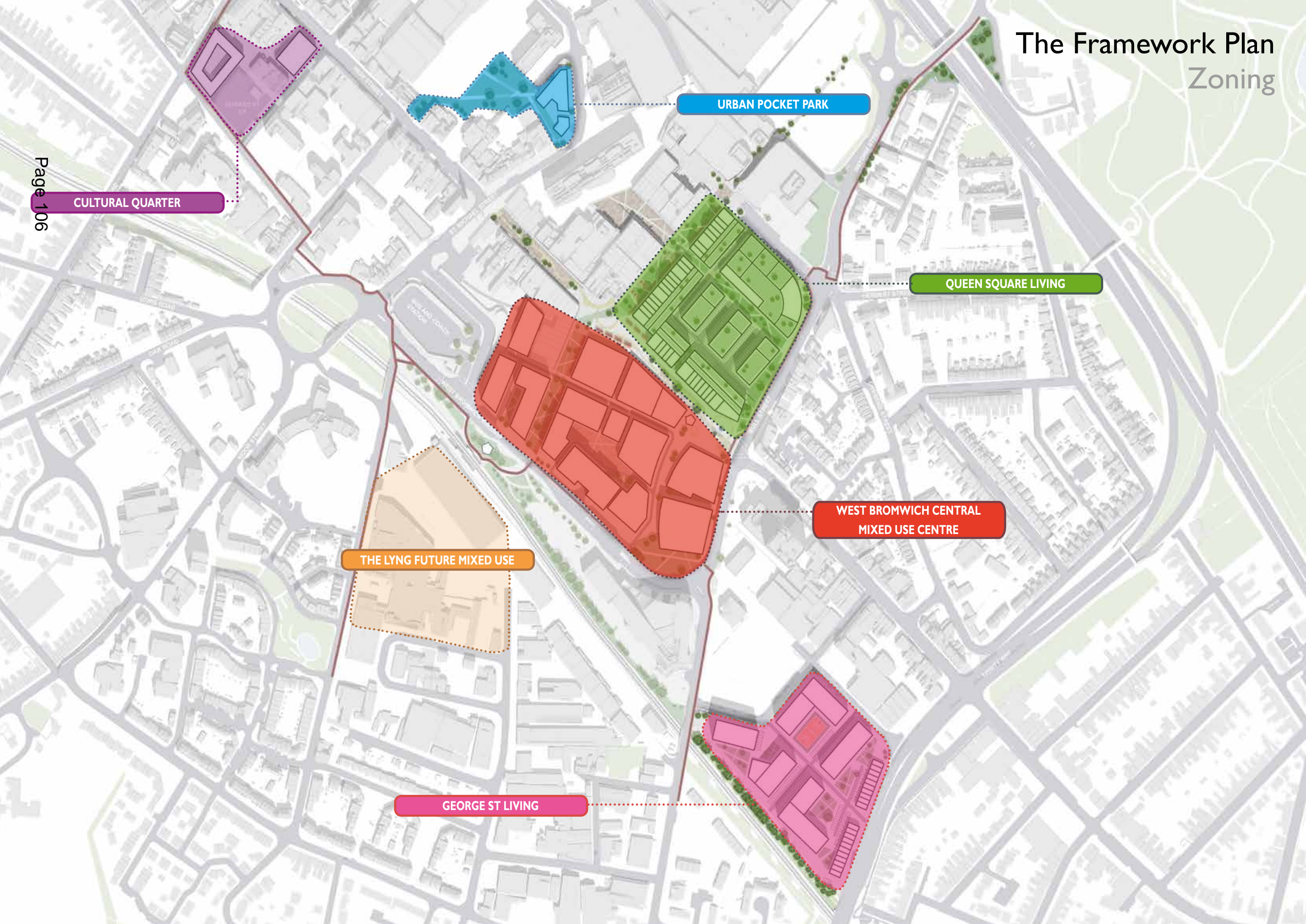
A new high density residential community comprising a series of 3-8 storey blocks with landscaped courtyards and amenities. The site is ideally positioned close to Trinity Way Metro and accommodates on-site parking and amenities.

The Lyng Future Mixed Use Development Zone

This area has been highlighted as a long term mixed use future development zone. The complexity inherent with the future delivery of this site and the surrounding area means we have not considered the same level of detail as provided for the masterplan.

The Framework Plan

Zoning



CULTURAL QUARTER

URBAN POCKET PARK

QUEEN SQUARE LIVING

WEST BROMWICH CENTRAL
MIXED USE CENTRE

THE LYNG FUTURE MIXED USE

GEORGE ST LIVING

Concept Development

Aerial Sketch

View towards Dartmouth Park

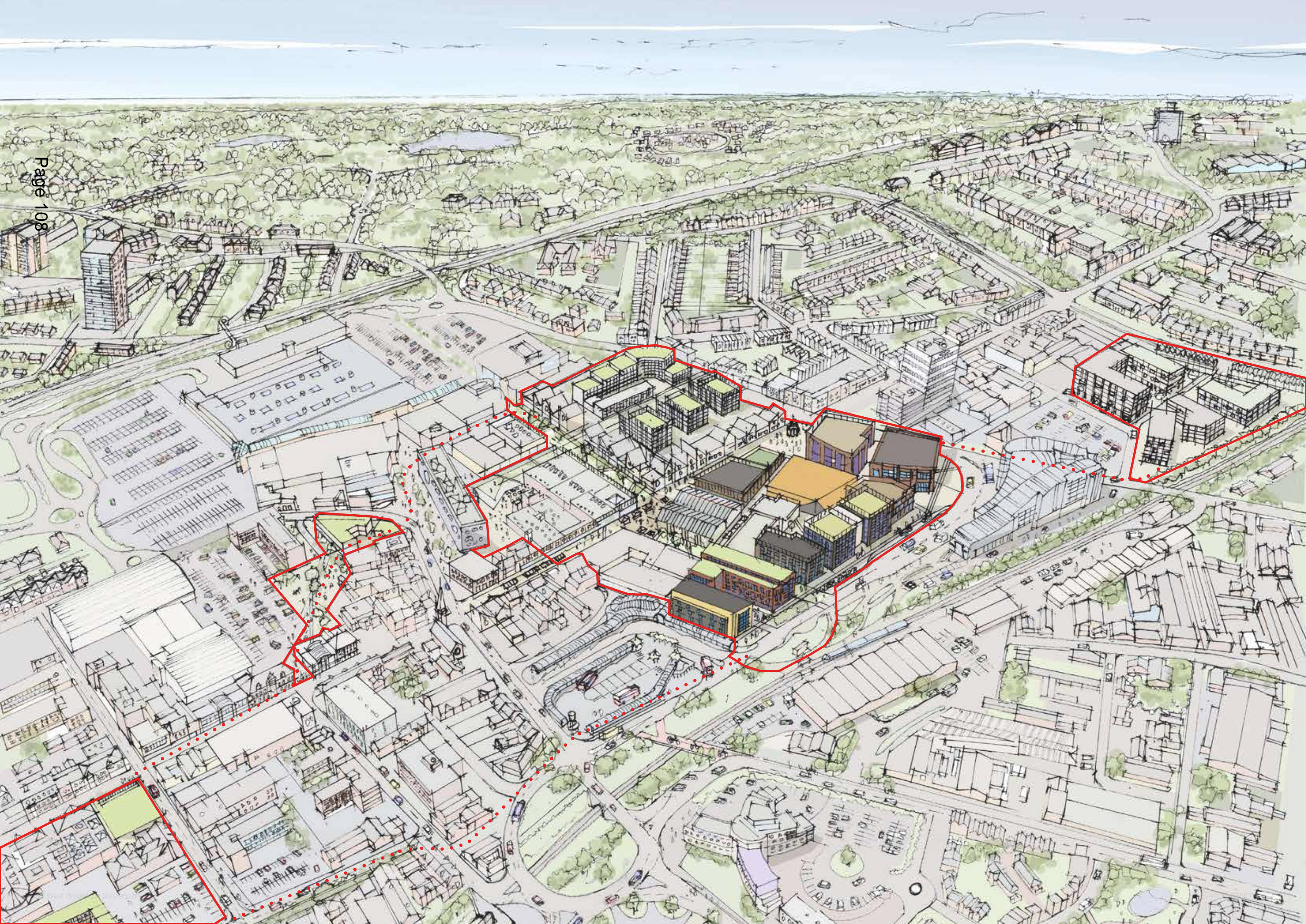
The masterplan vision is ambitious and builds on the strengths of the current Town Centre. The plan embraces much loved assets such as the market but also responds to wider economic drivers (inc. Covid and Brexit). The plan also shows space for co-working, residential growth in the Town Centre, as well as buildings for health and well-being, education, public sector, digital industries and creative industries. The creation of a new Town Centre population is also vital to the support of the retail, High Street shops and venues.

The image on the following page shows the proposed development plots and massing from the Town Hall to George Street, showing varied green roofscapes and public realm linkages. The old gas showrooms site next to the Library and Town Hall will be revitalised and brought back to life with a variety of uses to reinforce activity at street level whilst animating the public realm and providing an evening destination to enhance the cultural offer. Community space above will provide flexible space for activities and groups creating a real Creative Cultural Quarter in the Town Centre. This area is also attractive for high quality housing with the pull of the arts and theatre attracting new residents.

This Cultural Quarter is linked back to the main Town Centre through new cycle and pedestrian routes, with an arts trail along the High Street and a new green public pocket park linking the High Street and St Michael's Sq. The dated Kings Square shopping centre has been re-imagined with open streets, squares and green space and a new central market square sits beside the re-configured/downsized Queens Square shopping centre. There is a real opportunity to create activity, not just at ground level but at roof levels too with potential for green roofs, rooftop restaurants, gardens, urban farming, open air theatres and sports pitches.

The improvements to the public realm and layout of the town will create the opportunity to build a large new residential community with high quality units. This will add to the vibrancy and activity in the town.

Flexible new economic uses, including co-working and business incubation space can be delivered to create a more diverse and resilient town centre economy and capture job opportunities which will enhance the economy of the town further.



The Framework Plan

Floor Use

Typical Floor Use

Typical floor use reflects the functional zoning of the framework plan.

Increased leisure, F&B, foodhall/market, flexible office, public services, shops and community amenities are typically facing the public realm with residential apartments above. Health and education blocks book end the West Bromwich Central development providing a strong live edge and with an active dialogue between the proposals and the existing college/context. The key public facing elements are arranged spatially within the mixed use centre in the heart of the framework plan with the proximity to central bus station and West Bromwich Central metro.

New residential led communities are located adjacent to Trinity Way and Edward Street, surrounded by local amenities and are suitable in the context and the framework plan.

Ground Floor Use

There is a mixture of active uses on the ground floor which provide the streets with a distinct character and feel including flexible space that accommodates educational, skills and training uses linked with existing and future growth sectors in the economy and supports innovation and entrepreneurship; a stronger mix of leisure uses that serve the needs of existing and future residents, and visitors to the town.

These new land uses will help support the transition away from retail, bringing new life into existing buildings and supporting the development of vacant sites in and around the town centre. Blank facades are replaced with glazed shopfronts promoting activity with food and beverage units placed in strategic locations, particularly around the gateway entrances and new squares. Residential lobbies are located off the public realm to take residents to the floors above with bright, well overlooked entrances. The green parks and public realm connect all of the blocks together including the new education campus, digital industries and leisure offer with the existing High Street shops and businesses.

A strategically placed market hall at the Central Square connects with leisure and food & beverage along the former Paradise Street route creating active frontages and a vibrant environment for both daytime and evening entertainment.

The college and multi storey car park occupy the South -East corner of the mixed use Town Centre and are easily accessible from the surrounding road network and adjoining multi storey car park.

Existing transport gateways and connectivity is enhanced to the bus station and metro stations and new multi storey car part, taxi ranks, drop off points, electric charging points, cycle stations and E-scooter docs will all aid mobility and accessibility.

The Framework Plan

General Floor Use



The Framework Plan

Ground Floor Use



KEY

- Residential
- Mixed Use
- Retail
- F&B/Market
- Leisure/Entertainment
- Educational
- Community/Health
- Multi Story CP
- Office

“Building a Green Future”

Page 112



The Framework Plan

Public Squares and Greening

Public Squares and Greening

These proposals build on the Town Investment Plan projects including the Urban Greening and Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Improvements.

West Bromwich has an opportunity to significantly improve it's quality of public realm and environmental credentials through urban greening and green infrastructure.

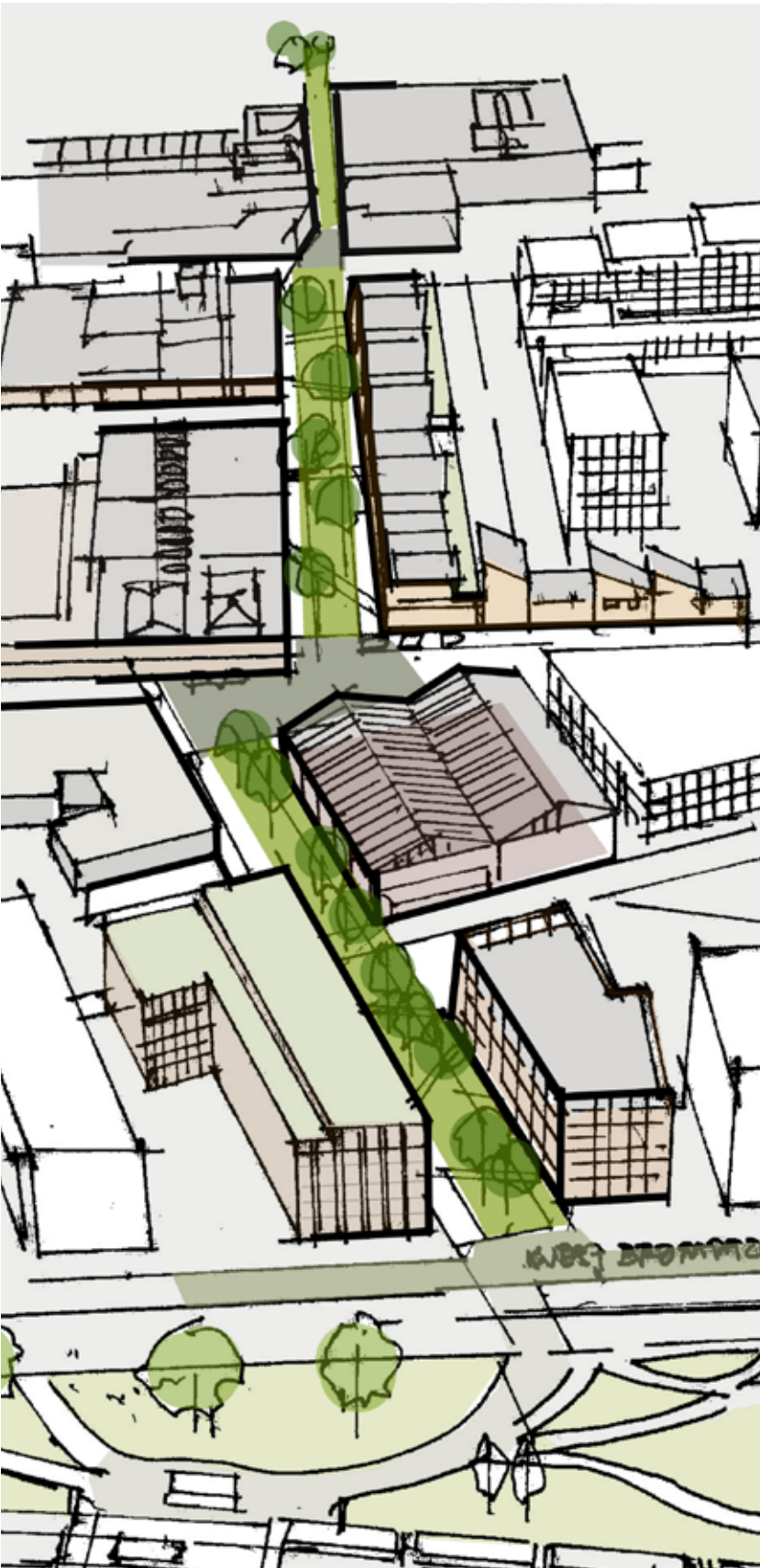
The introduction of well designed public squares, green boulevards and centrally located play areas for children and families are critical to creating a memorable and successful space. By introducing carefully located natural elements, the hard public realm can be softened and provide distinct zones for movement, recreation and sports. These boulevards enhance both the visual and physical link of green spaces in the framework plan.

High quality paving, planting and street furniture will provide an interesting and varied street scenes with the integration of public art, lighting, signing and way finding carefully curated. These spaces will be carefully detailed, uncluttered, suited to the needs of everyone, including disabled and elderly people, be attractive and robust and provide a feeling of safety and security.

Encourage living healthy lifestyles

Strategically linked community parks and open space will regenerate the town centre, emphasising health and well-being and attracting a wider demographic and experience.

Integration of street furniture and public leisure opportunities/sports within the landscape will encourage the engagement of the public. These spaces such as the recreation areas for play will be well overlooked by residences for safety.



Connectivity & Wayfinding

Public Arts Trail - Connecting Routes

Page 14

Murals

Like many Towns and Cities, West Bromwich suffers from inactive facades at street level and above. Many councils have employed artists and run competitions to design and implement urban murals throughout the street-scape. The murals can be bright, vibrant and radiate energy and play an important role in wayfinding and creating connections through the spaces.

These proposals also tie into the potential enhancements to the Town Hall, including an archive and ‘story telling’ elements to the library, where a process of capturing local stories, and discovering local history can inspire the street art.

The murals could strengthen the identity and show off the images of the proud inventors and trail blazers in the area. This will form part of a wider arts trail with periodically changing images and sculptures designed by the local community. The locations below better connect the cultural quarter with the Town Centre and promote energy and colour on the mainly red brick High Street facades.

The masterplan has defined zones and raised stages for buskers and a speakers corner to express the creativity within the community. Refer to the following page for map locations.



View 1

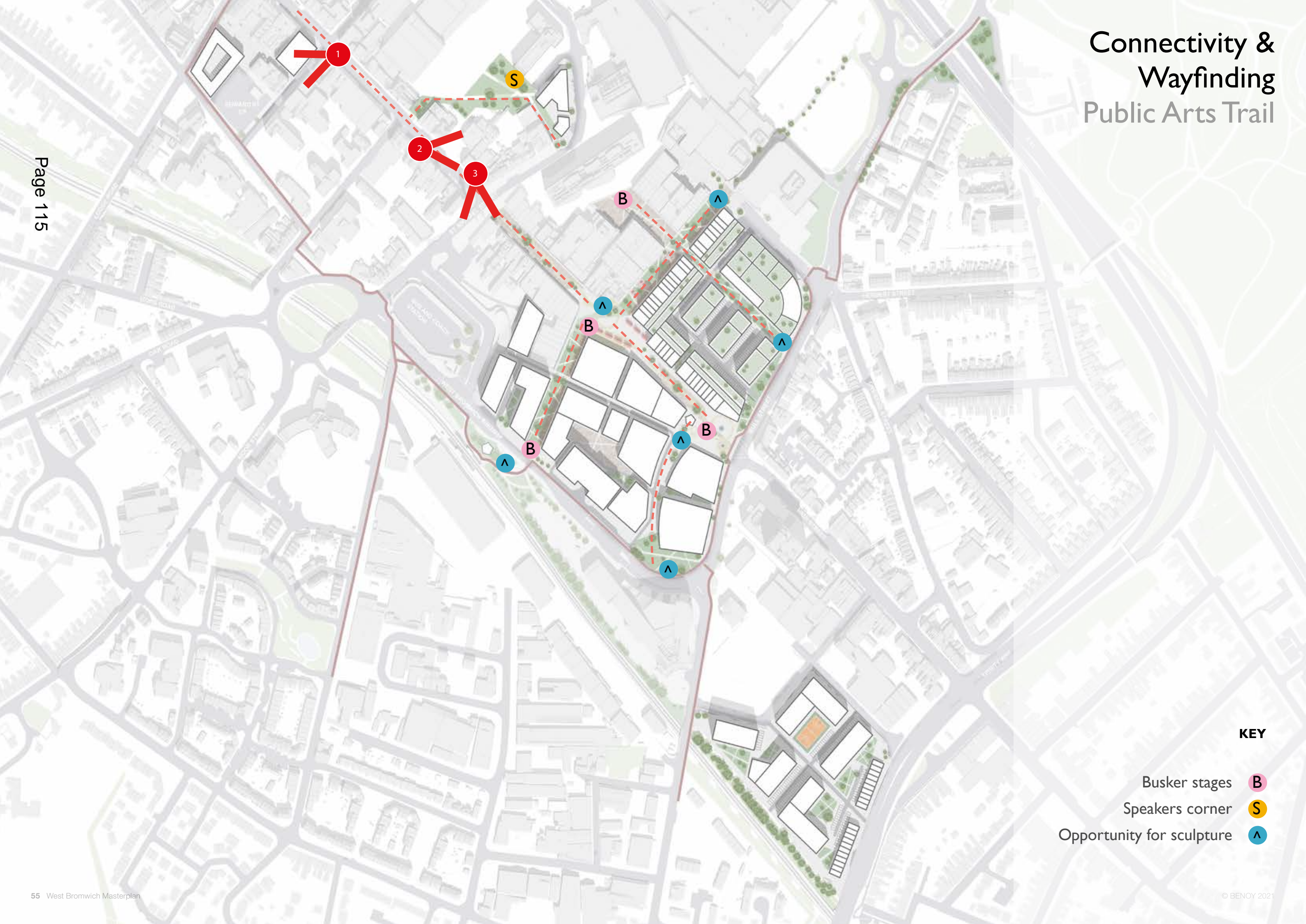


View 2



View 3

Connectivity &
Wayfinding
Public Arts Trail



KEY

- Busker stages **B**
- Speakers corner **S**
- Opportunity for sculpture **A**

Concept

Street Furniture, Lighting & Security

Page 16
Furniture

The clutter will be removed from the public realm and street furniture rationalised. Bins, benches, bollards, railings, lighting, signposts, CCTV, substations and cycle stands will establish a visual and functional logic. Creation of spaces with clear functions will minimise the need for signs with coordinated design, installation, management and maintenance, forming part of a well designed public space strategy.

High quality public realm will be essential to help enable residential development by creating a place people feel safe in an proud of. It will also help to change the perceptions of West Bromwich to visitors.



Concept

Street Furniture, Lighting & Security

Page 17

Lighting and Security

Safety and security were raised as major concerns by the public during the consultation process. Improvements to active and passive surveillance will be required. These improvements will help people feel safer and more willing to use the town centre at all times of the evening and night.

Street lighting and illumination will be selected carefully for each particular space. Artificial lighting will complement the natural daylighting forming well lit public realm and creating attractive and safe spaces.

Lighting will be integrated within furniture and the landscape to provide integrated and tamper free solutions.

Paradise street will have a number of evening entertainment and uses and the lighting should be exciting yet functional.

CCTV cameras will cover public areas, ensuring safety for the community/town centre. Creating well designed public realm which is overlooked by residential communities will help to deter anti social behaviour and crime.



Concept

Sustainability

Page 18



Principles

The masterplan considers the design of routes and spaces, their micro-climate, ecology and biodiversity. Future development plans should consider the following sustainability principles:

- Re-purpose + reuse of existing buildings where possible (e.g. Queens Square Shopping Centre reduced in size and re-purposed).
- Fewer finishes: strip back (Propose a carefully selected material palette e.g. The Market could be delivered in stripped back new building).
- Renewable energy: rooftop + facade photovoltaic. Energy generating glass. (Integrated in terraces and on roof pitches from the outset).
- Improve comfort + increase natural ventilation - shading, louvres, night purging.
- Community offers (e.g. markets, incubator hubs, pop-ups).
- Reduce Parking.
- Increase site permeable surfaces focusing on Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDS).
- Green Axis + parkland creation (central linear park).
- Encourage sustainable transport (e.g. Metro or walking and cycling).
- Job creation - flexible work space that can be tailored to support multiple economic uses and growth across multiple sectors.
- Circular Food Economy - Urban Farming.
- Low Energy Lights -> LED.
- Flexible for future adaption with minor build rework. Plug and play.
- Heating: Potential to connect to a new heat network (distribution system of insulated pipes that takes heat from a central source and delivers it to the town centre reducing carbon and cutting heating bills for customers).



Concept

Materiality

Page 199

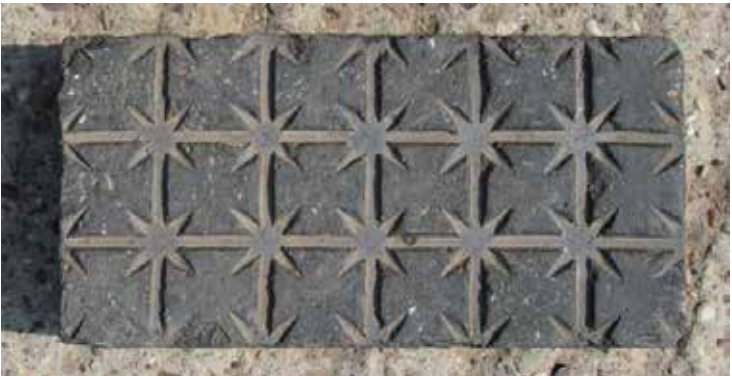
Sense of place and history

The masterplan takes inspiration from West Bromwich's proportions and material palettes and celebrates the industrial heritage to create distinctive landscapes and buildings in a contemporary and authentic approach.

West Bromwich has historically be renowned for its metal work industries and trades. The masterplan should embrace this skill and encourage exposed structure and metal details to complement the architectural style. The new Central Hub market will reflect this and use a metal frame to increase flexibility/function and be able to adapt over time.

The architecture will also utilise brick as a predominant building material to provide robustness, textured facades, colour, pattern and fine detailing with a mix of brickwork from buff to black textured brick. The latter is a reference to the heavy industry in the Industrial Revolution that mined the coal and used it in foundries and steel mills turned the air and buildings black. This added to the notion of the Black Country.

West Bromwich may have lost the brick making industries of the past (Joseph Hamblet Albion Road), but the new developments should reflect the historical material quality and variety. The contemporary architectural language must complement the heritage, incorporating flexibility, environmental sustainability and technology in the designs.



*“New Travel Routes,
No Emissions”*



Looking to the future

West Bromwich is well served by public transport in the form of buses and Metro. The bus station and West Bromwich Central Metro stop are conveniently located for the southern side of the town centre. The centre of the town is largely pedestrianised, and restrictions were made to through traffic in central areas as a result of the changes to the town’s network in the early 2000s and 2010s to accommodate regeneration and development schemes such as the New Square retail and leisure venue. Nevertheless, it is still relatively easy to drive around the edges of the town centre and based upon data from the 2016 PRISM regional transport model there are no notable congestion issues identified on the existing highway network in the peak periods in the town centre.

The vision is to develop a town centre which moves away from the private car as the dominant form of transport to public transport and active modes. The town centre will be environment which is attractive and where people can easily walk. The Metro is an important asset and the masterplan aims to re-orientate the town to provide greater access to the metro and encourage greater use.

The context to the transport vision is within existing and emerging policy. In June 2019, the UK became the first major country to legislate for a net-zero target for carbon emissions by 2050. Transport contributions to carbon emissions therefore need to be addressed through a combination of new technology, more sustainable transport and reducing non-essential journeys. Regionally the West Midlands Combined Authority’s WM2041 Five-Year Plan contains a target to avoid travel, shift to more sustainable modes and improve transport through electric cars and taxis. Sub-regionally the Black Country Transport Strategy (2020) identifies a suite of schemes across all forms of transport, which improve connectivity, journey time reliability and public health, and reduce harmful emissions and CO2.

Locally, Sandwell’s Climate Change Strategy 2020 – 2041 (2020) identifies three means of reducing transport’s impact on emissions, promotion of sustainable travel, developing a low carbon transport system and establishing planning policies that encourage developers to promote sustainable transport choices.

Key principles and interventions for the town’s transport strategy are:

- **Provide improvements to the public realm including more legible, direct pedestrian routes**
- **Use the Metro as a key driver for access to and from the town**
- **Develop a north to south and east to west grid of high-quality cycling infrastructure**
- **Embrace new ways of working and town centre living which reduce non-essential journeys**
- **Maintain and enhance the high mode share of bus journeys in the area**
- **Focus private car journeys on the primary road network around the edge of the centre**
- **Ensure access is maintained for deliveries and servicing at appropriate locations and times of the day**
- **Review parking provision to ensure it is in suitable locations and the supply is correct for how the town centre will work in the future**

The Framework Plan

Pedestrian and Cycle Network

Better Connectivity

Site wide new pedestrian routes are created across the entire masterplan. The new pedestrian network makes more active and convenient connectivity within the new town centre as well as between all other development zones. All new routes are formed as an integral part of the new landscape design strategy with distinctive paving patterns and soft landscape.

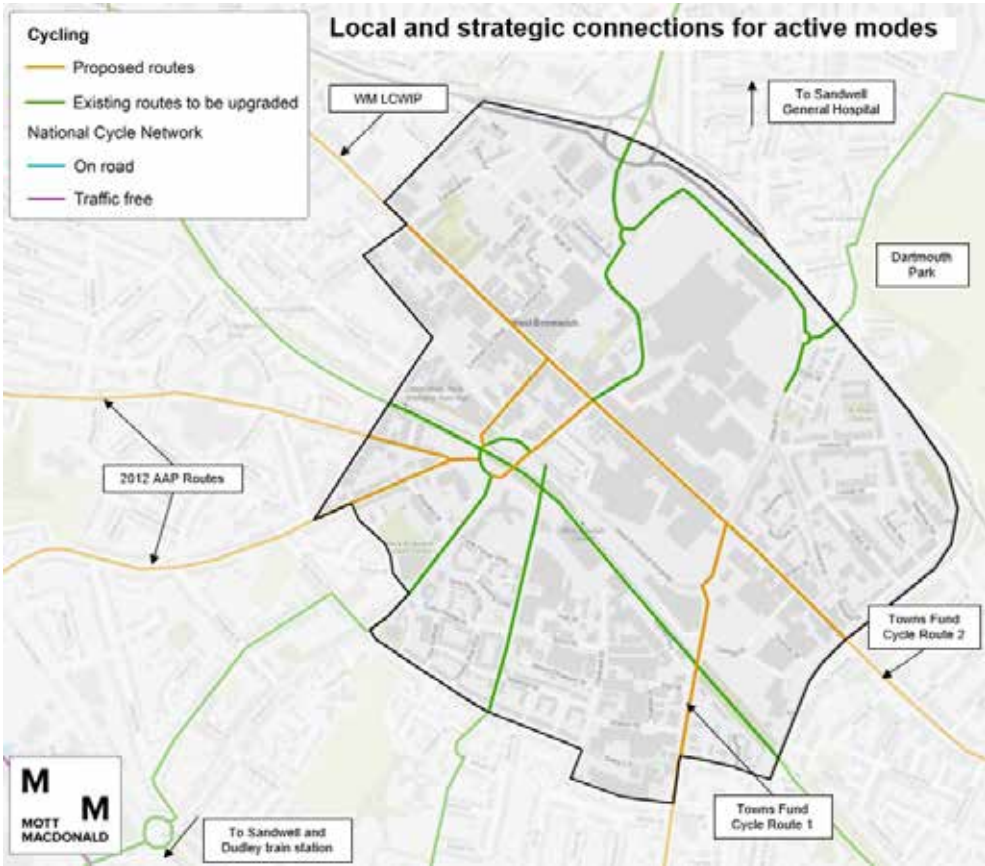
The existing cycle network is extended through the site creating an integrated, permeable cycling network. Cycle stores are provided within the individual building blocks, with additional street level cycle kiosks.

Enhancing pedestrian permeability and legibility is a key driver of the proposals for the town centre. Currently it is difficult to navigate through parts of the town as a result of the built environment. The masterplan will provide wide, direct routes north to south and east to west within the town.

Similar to the pedestrian network, the plans propose new cycling infrastructure which is direct, comfortable, safe and provides a ladder network which runs both north to south and east to west. In line with current design guidance these routes should be segregated from motorised traffic and wide enough to accommodate the current levels and any future increased needs for cycling. The masterplan proposals tie in with SMBC’s and TfWM’s plans for other cycle routes close to the town centre.

It is planned to provide a transport hub at a strategic gateway into the town centre. A ‘transport hub’ is a recognisable place with an offer of different and connected transport modes supplemented with enhanced facilities and information features to both attract and benefit the traveller. This could include:

- Access to secure cycle parking
- Access to cycle hire
- Cycle maintenance facilities
- Access to a car club
- E-scooter or other forms of transport if these were available for hire in the future
- Public transport information, timetables and off-bus ticketing
- Information on EV charging



Routes SCWIP CR1, CR2, NCN5 & WM LCWIP from Roebuck Lane to Bull Street (all to the east side of the town) have been awarded Towns Funding and will be delivered over the next 4 financial years.

New routes in the west side of the town identified within the West Midlands LCWIP are for delivery in tranche 4 (most long term) and therefore it may be beneficial to accelerate these proposals where they unlock Masterplan proposals sooner.

2012 AAP schemes to the SW of the town are yet to be delivered and considered lower priority for the Masterplan emerging options.

The Framework Plan

Pedestrian and Cycle Network



KEY

- Pedestrian Route
- Cycle Route
- Transport Hub

The Framework Plan

Public Transport

Public Transport

The West Midlands Metro serves West Bromwich and has a strategic importance for the Town Centre. There are frequent services (every 6 minutes¹) towards Birmingham City Centre and Wolverhampton St George's. West Bromwich Central has the largest footfall of all Metro stations in Sandwell².

The masterplan will see enhanced connectivity to and from West Bromwich Central Metro stop, providing a focal gateway point into the town.

West Bromwich bus station is well served with frequent services to Wednesbury, Dudley, Wolverhampton and Halesowen. There are also regular buses to Bilston and Birmingham City Centre. Bus use in West Bromwich is higher than the averages for the West Midlands as a whole. The masterplan sees buses as a continued important form of movement to, from and within the Town Centre.

Ideally these excellent, and enhanced public transport connections will reduce the need for private car ownership for the incoming residential community that will be created here. These incoming residents will be able to utilise the public transport and walking and cycling routes for their primary transport needs.

¹ <https://westmidlandsmetro.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/WMM-Full-Timetable-October-2020.pdf>

² West Bromwich Town Investment Plan, October 2020 (Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council)



KEY

Metro Line

Bus Stop

Bus Station

Bus Travel Corridor

Highway Network

The Masterplan proposes an increase in land being developed / redeveloped within the town centre in comparison to the current built form. However, this does not necessarily mean an increase in private car trips in the centre for a number of reasons. The Masterplan proposals include significant areas for new town centre living. This will result in the internalisation and linking of a number of trips, for example people who live in the town centre will walk to nearby shops and services rather than drive as those currently travelling into West Bromwich from surrounding areas often do. Secondly, the demographics of future residents may be very different to users of the current centre and as is more typical with city centre living all residents may not wish to own a private car and instead use public transport and mobility hubs / car clubs to travel away from the centre. Trends relating to home working and internet deliveries are also likely to reduce the influence of car movements in the town centre over the lifetime of the Masterplan.

The highway strategy is to provide appropriate access for essential movements into the town centre for deliveries, loading and unloading. High Street, Bull Street and the West Bromwich Ringway will continue to provide East to West and North to South connectivity for motorised traffic. To maximise the opportunities for pedestrians and cyclists within the central core, motorised traffic will be encouraged to stay on this primary network. Further improvements will be made to the public realm adjacent to and across these routes, however to ensure suitable infrastructure is provided for cycling and pedestrians, particularly to enable them to cross highways in a safe and direct manner.

Secondary streets will be provided to access to the development sites at Queens Square and George Street. These will have lower design speeds and discourage travel by car other than by those who need to access these locations.

In West Bromwich Central, access will be provided for loading and unloading in a way which balances the needs of pedestrians in this area.

A new multi-storey car park is proposed on Bull Street.

The National and Regional policy context identifies a need to move away from private car trips to meet the region's Net Zero carbon ambitions. As a result, the future car parking provision will need to be reduced in comparison to current maximum standards. Parking requirements for the town centre will need to include:

- Blue badge parking
- Provision of and future proofing for electric vehicles
- Cycle parking
- Car clubs with priority spaces at strategic locations on and off street to be considered
- Provision of areas / routes for loading / unloading for premises
- Zoning parking, so that where it is essential for people to drive, car parks are in locations close to strategic routes, not central areas where more people will be walking and cycling
- Review the locations of on and off street parking to ensure sufficient short-stay parking to maximise parking turnover and as a result footfall in the town centre

The Framework Plan Highway Network

KEY

- Primary Vehicle Movements
- Secondary Vehicle Movement
- Servicing Connections
- Restricted Movement

Car Park

Page 127

67 West Bromwich Masterplan

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The Framework Plan
Highway Network

KEY

- Primary Vehicle Movements
- Secondary Vehicle Movement
- Servicing Connections
- Restricted Movement

Car Park

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**The Framework Plan
Highway Network**

KEY

- Primary Vehicle Movements
- Secondary Vehicle Movement
- Servicing Connections
- Restricted Movement

Car Park

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**The Framework Plan
Highway Network**

KEY

- Primary Vehicle Movements
- Secondary Vehicle Movement
- Servicing Connections
- Restricted Movement

Car Park

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**The Framework Plan
Highway Network**

KEY

- Primary Vehicle Movements
- Secondary Vehicle Movement
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- Restricted Movement

Car Park

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The Framework Plan Highway Network

KEY

- Primary Vehicle Movements
- Secondary Vehicle Movement
- Servicing Connections
- Restricted Movement

Car Park

Page 127

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*“Building sustainable
Infrastructure”*

4

Zone I - West Bromwich Central Sketch

“A growing town centre”

Page 130



Zone I - West Bromwich Central Location









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Zone I - West Bromwich Central

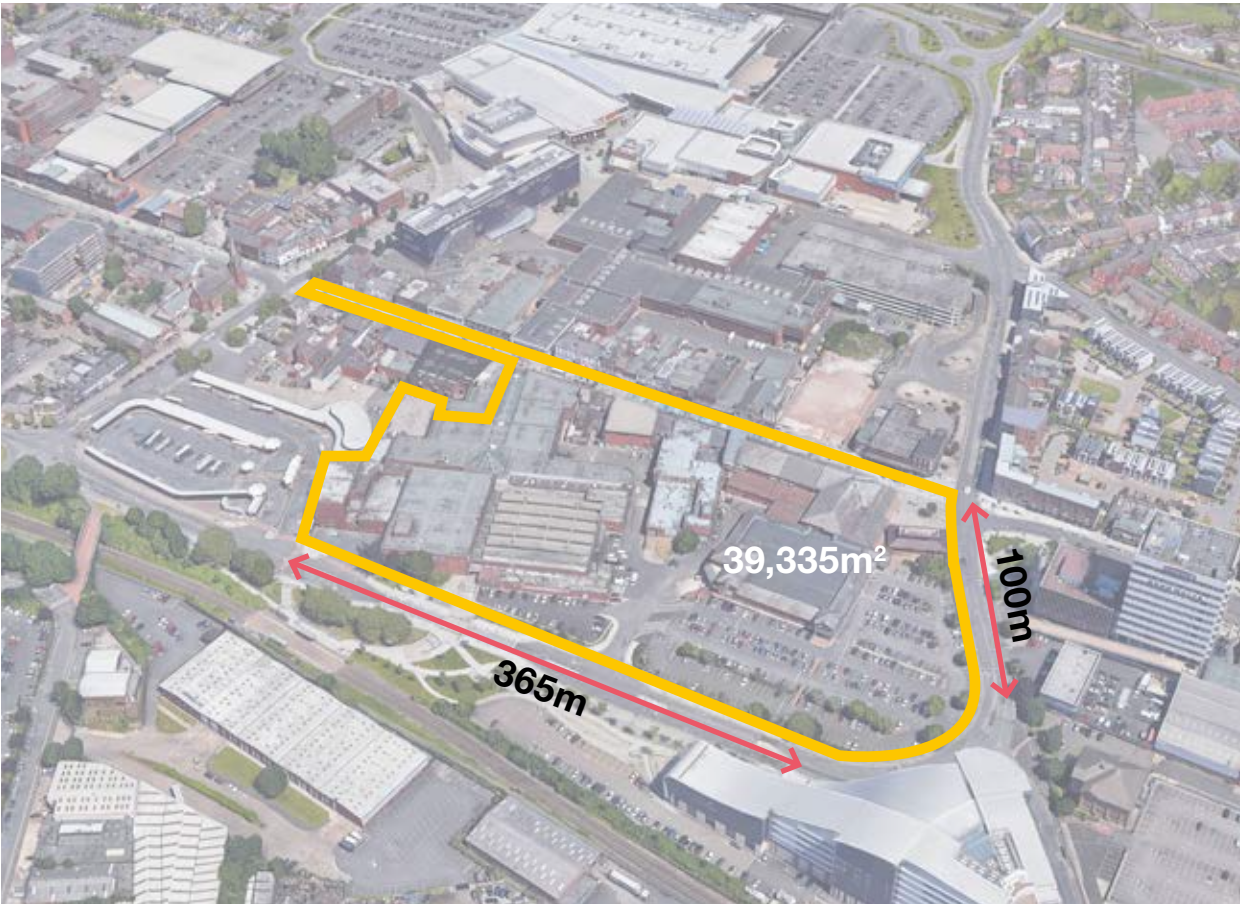
Key Information

Page 132

							
Retail 4,502 sqm	Offices 5,032 sqm	Residential 25,377 sqm	Education 5,060 sqm	F&B 11,840 sqm	Community/ Leisure 9,862 sqm	Health 5,205 sqm	Parking 18,945 sqm

KEY

	Primary Pedestrian Routes		Multi-storey Car Park
	Secondary Pedestrian Routes		Square
	Vehicle Routes		Key Gateways
	Servicing		Drop off



Town Centre - West Bromwich Central

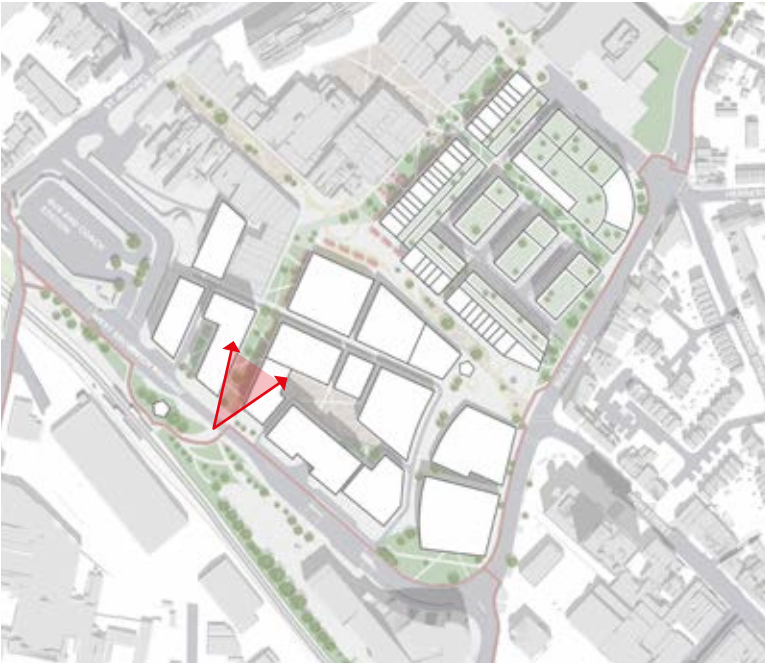
A new multi-purpose Town Centre and a square at the centre of enhanced linkages and green public realm. The emphasis is on high quality public space and surrounding amenities to embrace West Bromwich’s rich character of markets and trade and encouraging interaction and entertainment in a vibrant environment. This is a place with a strong identity where people will meet, interact and enjoy.

The Hub is part of the new generation of food halls providing flexible spaces which are also able to adapt to all kinds of events from concerts to toddler groups and a strong emphasis on community. A year round programme of season events with farmers markets, music, crazy golf and ice skating would all be suitable within this flexible heart of the Town.



Zone I - West Bromwich Central
Visual - Green Boulevard

Page 133



Zone I - West Bromwich Central

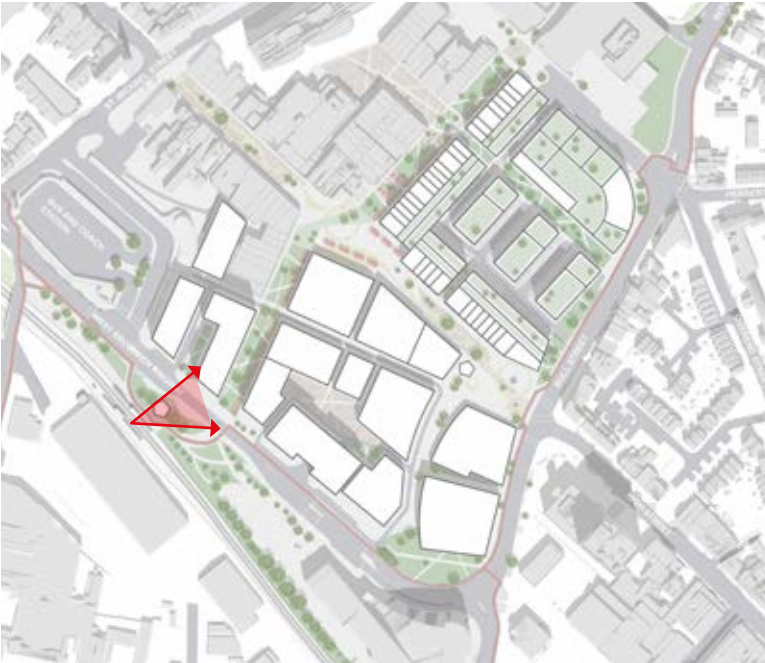
Precedents - Green Boulevard

Page 134
Green Boulevard

West Bromwich needs more quality green public realm within the Town Centre. The masterplan re-imagines the street for community and experiences integrating public art, signage and way-finding and defining space for sports and activities. This linear park is overlooked by residential apartments with active shop fronts such as food and beverage and community uses at street level. Yes it's a street, but it's also a community park. A place to have a picnic, enjoy a book or catch up with friends.



Zone I - West Bromwich Central
Visual - Metro Gateway



Zone I - West Bromwich Central

Precedents - Metro Gateway

Page 136

First Impression

People's first impression of West Bromwich is really important. The Town Centre suffers from inactive red brick facades facing many of the circulation routes in to and around the Town Centre. The vision will externalise the activity providing interesting and varied facades and promote an exciting and ambitious arrival experience. Clearly defined pedestrian and cycle routes with cycle hire hubs will improve connectivity throughout the town and strengthen wider connections to Dartmouth Park and key assets. West Bromwich is very well connected with the Metro and Bus Station and has the opportunity to be a destination of choice for living, visiting, learning, shopping and playing.



Zone I - West Bromwich Central
Visual- Market Square

Page 137



Zone I - West Bromwich Central

Precedents - The Hub

Page 198

A flexible new generation of food hall

The ambition is to provide West Bromwich Town Centre with a new centrally located heart. A new multi-purpose town square at the centre of enhanced linkages and green public realm. The emphasis is on high quality public space and surrounding amenities to embrace West Bromwich's rich history of markets and trade and encouraging interaction and entertainment in a vibrant environment. This is a place with a strong identity where people will meet, interact and enjoy.



Zone I - West Bromwich Central

Precedents - Market Square

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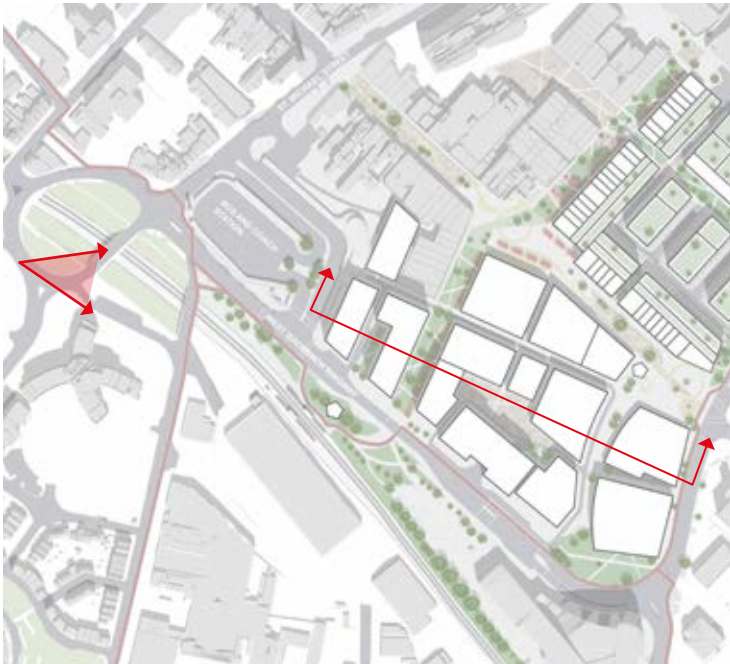
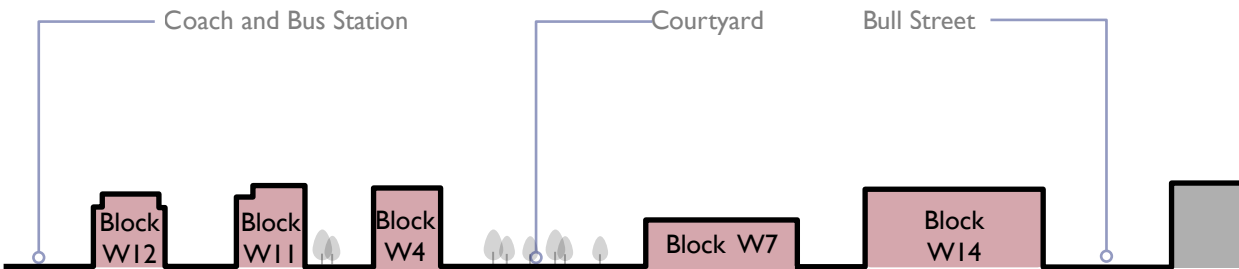
Zone I - West Bromwich Central

View from Price Street

Page 140
Scale, massing & legibility

The scale and massing of the proposals consider the existing buildings and retain the visibility of key wayfinding nodes. Refer to the image below and the gateway view from Price Street which retains the view of the Premier Inn Hotel (outlined in red).

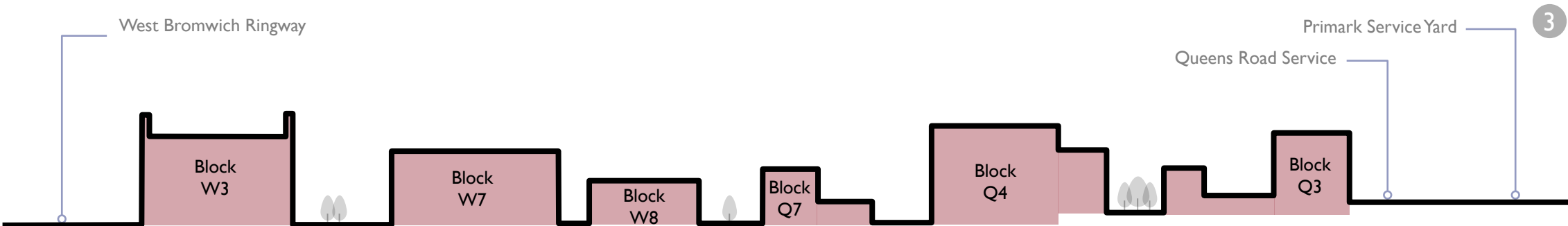
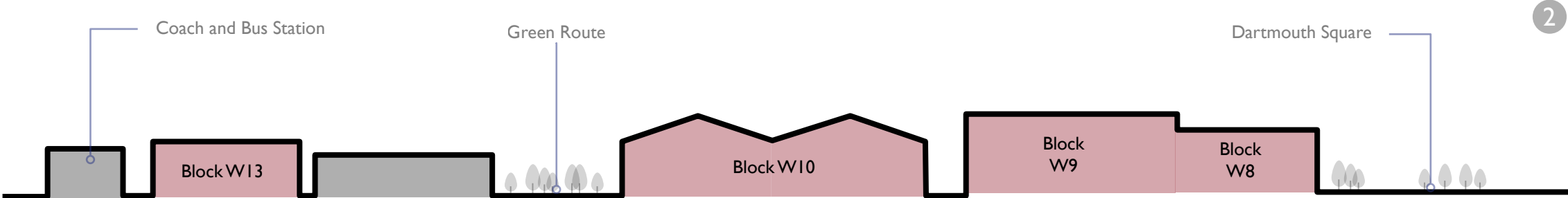
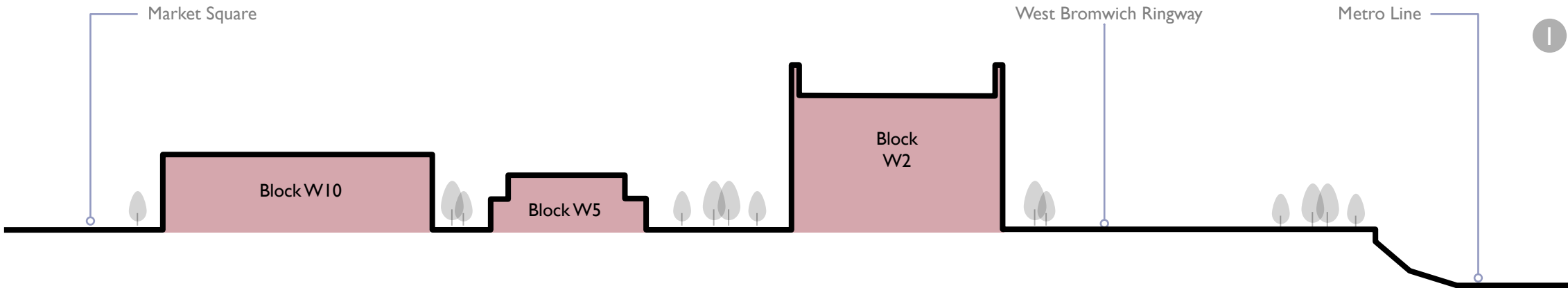
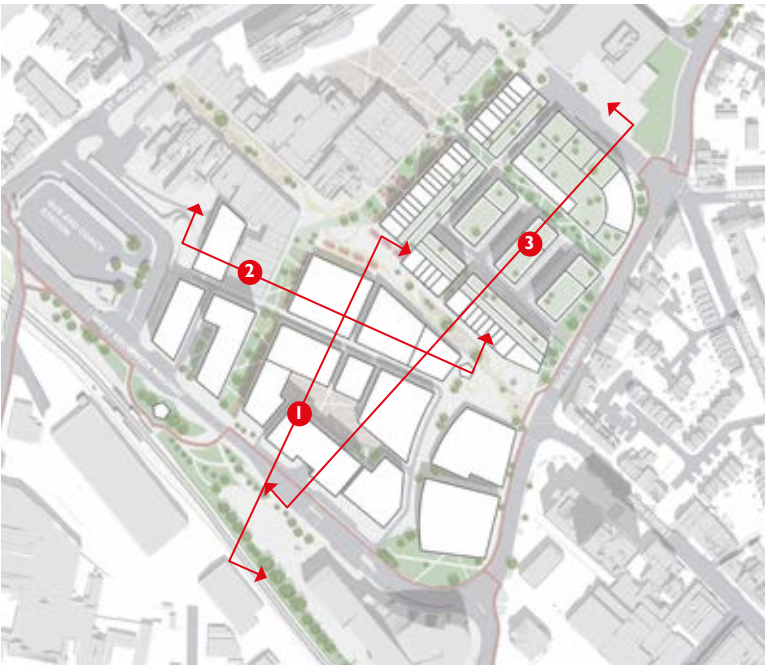
The framework plan increases densities in the Town Centre and provides the amenities for these new communities and visitors and limits building heights in the process.



Zone I - West Bromwich Central

West Bromwich Central Sections

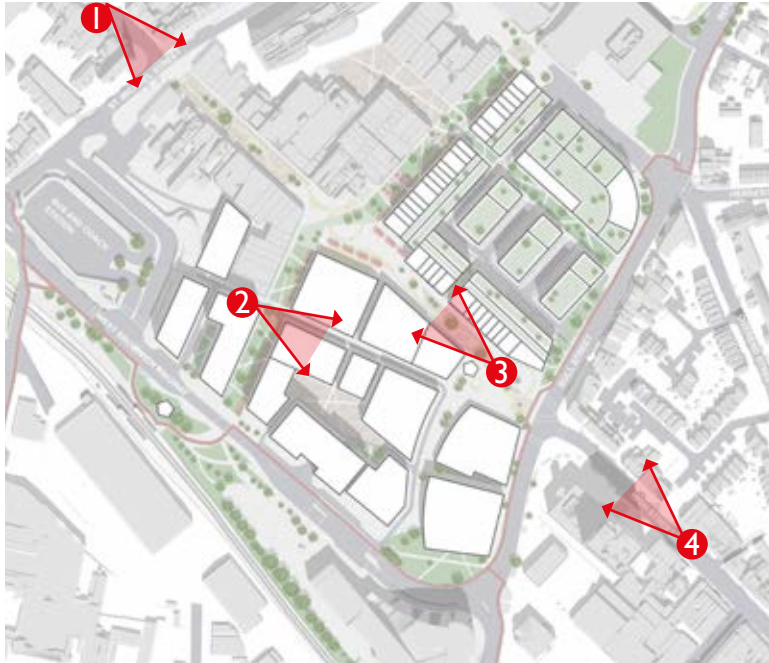
Page 141



Zone I - West Bromwich Central

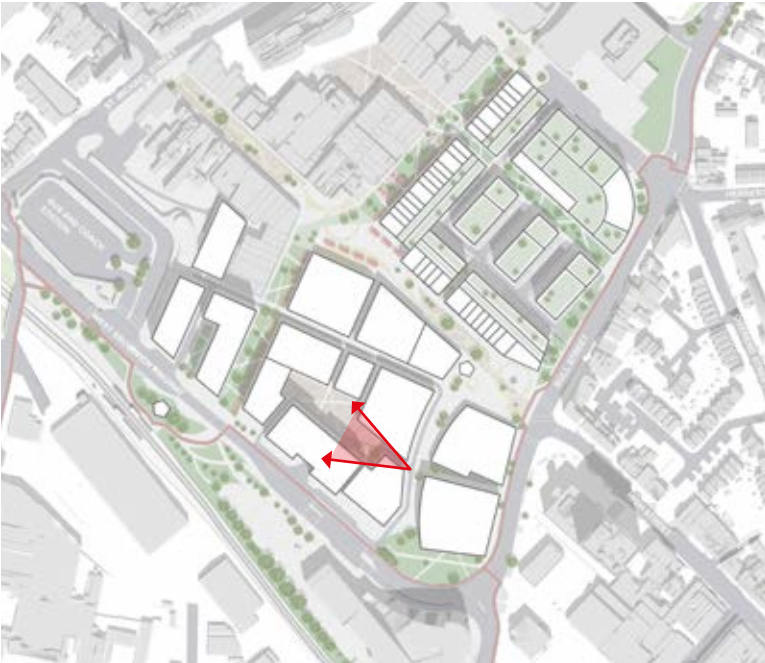
Illustrative Massing Views

Page 142



Zone I - West Bromwich Central Visual - The Courtyard

Page 143



Zone I - West Bromwich Central

Precedents - The Courtyard

Page 144

Creating a Vibrant Mix of uses

The masterplan creates a number of distinct squares as a place for meeting, dining and playing. This view within the West Bromwich Central Square Courtyard is enclosed by a vibrant mix of uses from office, co-working, restaurants, digital industries, residential apartments and community facilities. Independent retailers, food operators as well as incubator space for small businesses and start-ups sit side by side with much needed venues for digital gaming and indoor active sports. It's a place for daytime and evening entertainment for all ages in a safe, accessible, well-lit and overlooked environment.



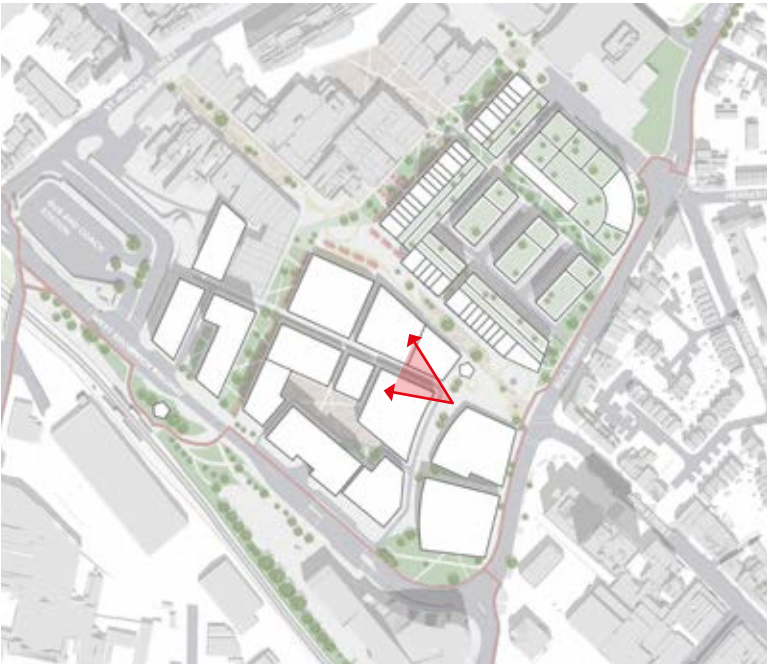
Zone I - West Bromwich Central

Precedents - Paradise Street

Page 115
Leisure

Active and experiential leisure uses, such as gaming bars and venues, which respond to the growth in ‘competitive socialising’ will help to attract a young and diverse profile of visitors to the town.

A new destination for daytime and evening entertainment with an active ground floor plain with pavement seating to F&B and cafes interspersed with leisure venues and community facilities. The strong axis connects the bus station in the west and Dartmouth Square in the east and provides an opportunity to site sculpture within the public realm as a focal point within Dartmouth Square.



Zone I - West Bromwich Central

Sketch - Education Campus & Digital Industries

Page 146 Technology /Future

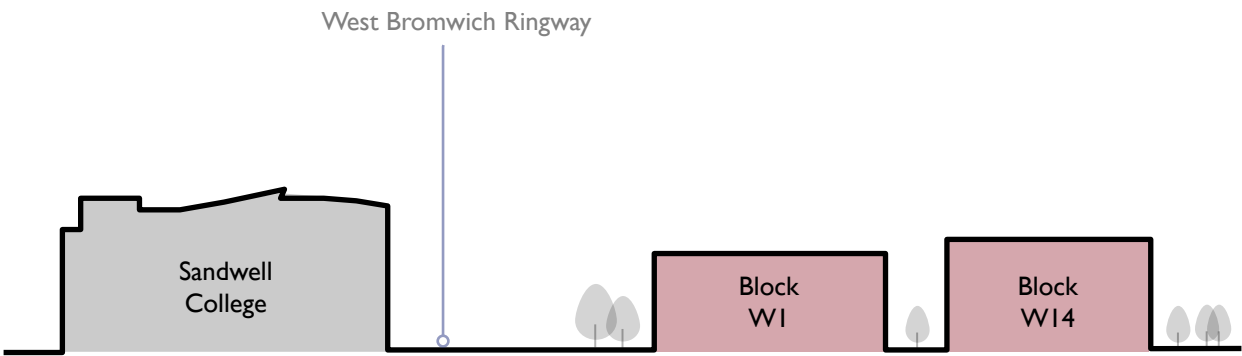
Our Towns, High Streets and communities must embrace technological change and re-imagining the role and function of town centres in the digital age.

West Bromwich is the education and retail hub for Sandwell. It provides employment, educational, and other services to thousands of residents daily. The Town Centre benefits from good quality public transport links making it a strong, sustainable, accessible location with 10,000 staff and students travelling to West Bromwich for Sandwell College and Central Saint Michael's Sixth Form.

Education provision is expanding, with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra choosing West Bromwich to open a new specialist music school. Education will continue to grow due to our young population; 0-29- year olds comprise of almost 40% of our population.

Through engagement with stakeholders we know there is a desire to extend education provision in West Bromwich and create a college/university campus in the heart of the town. This has the opportunity to create stronger ties with Birmingham & Wolverhampton and increase training and skills provision. The masterplan locates a new teaching/learning and living facility opposite Sandwell College with a cluster of flexible work space/co-working offices aimed at creative digital industries and incubator space for start ups and accelerators.

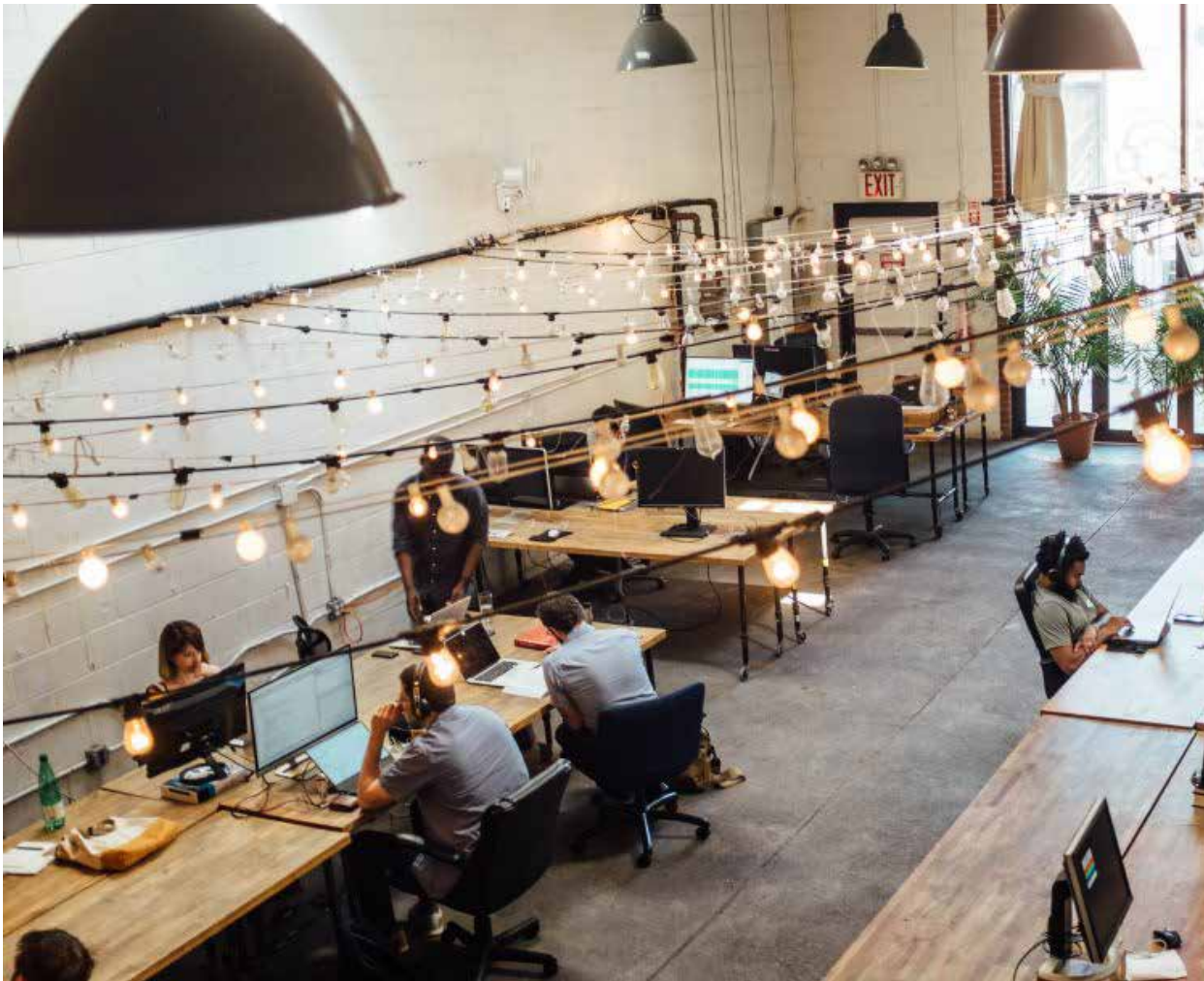
The existing Farley centre footprint is removed and the historic Barrows Street route re-instated with high quality public realm connecting the college back to the High Street. By directing pedestrian flows back towards the High Street, the surrounding uses with benefit from increased footfall and activity within the town centre.



Zone I - West Bromwich Central

Precedents - Co-working & Live/Work Residential

Page 147



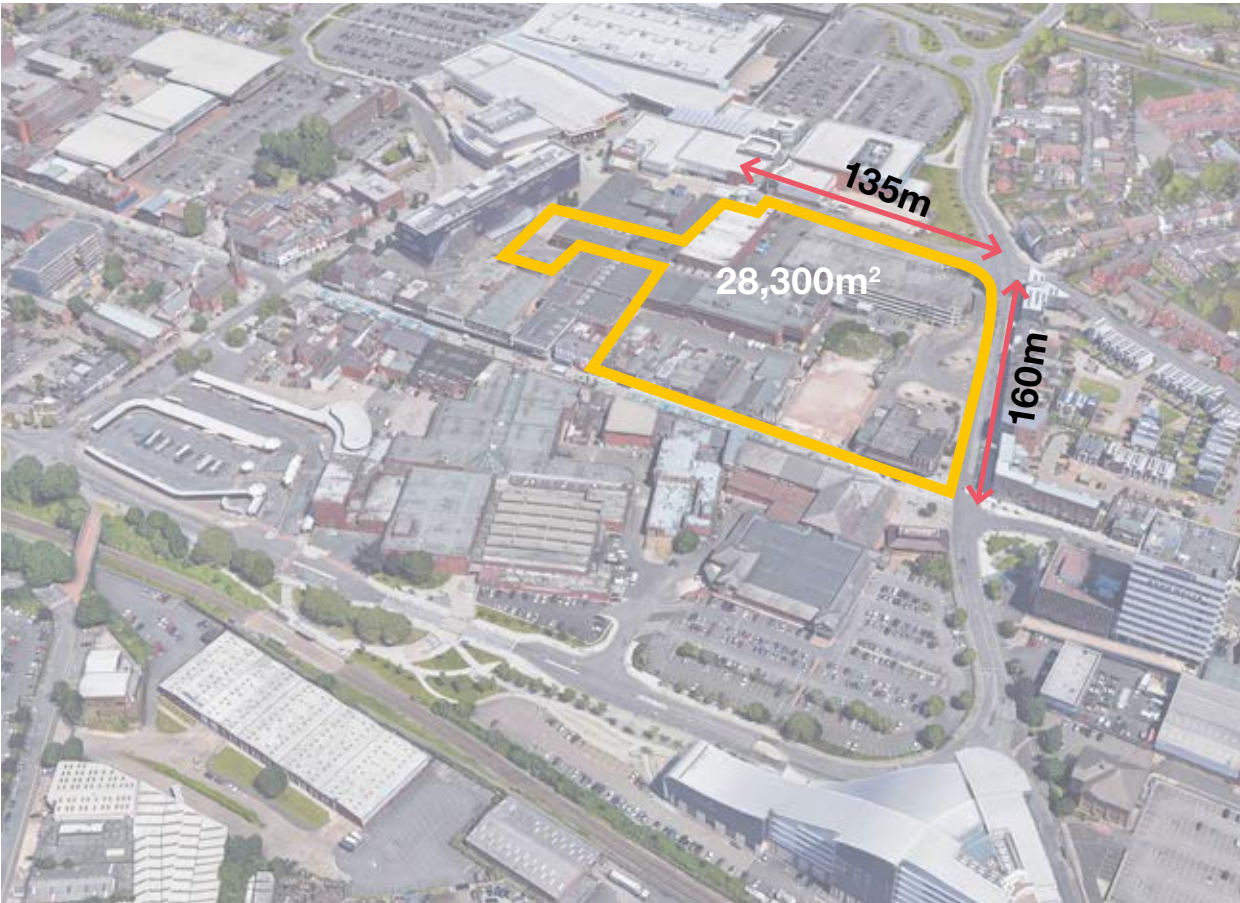
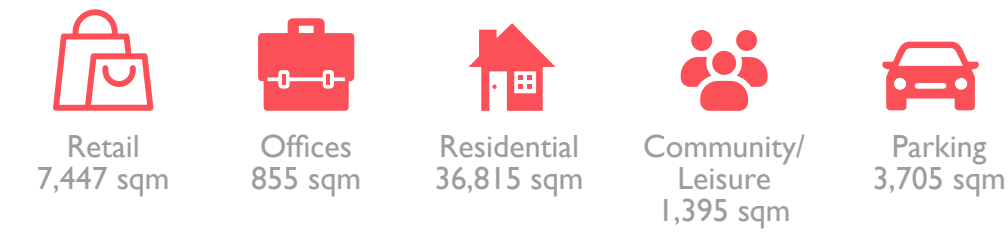
Zone 2 - Queens Square Living Location

Page 148



Zone 2 - Queens Square Living

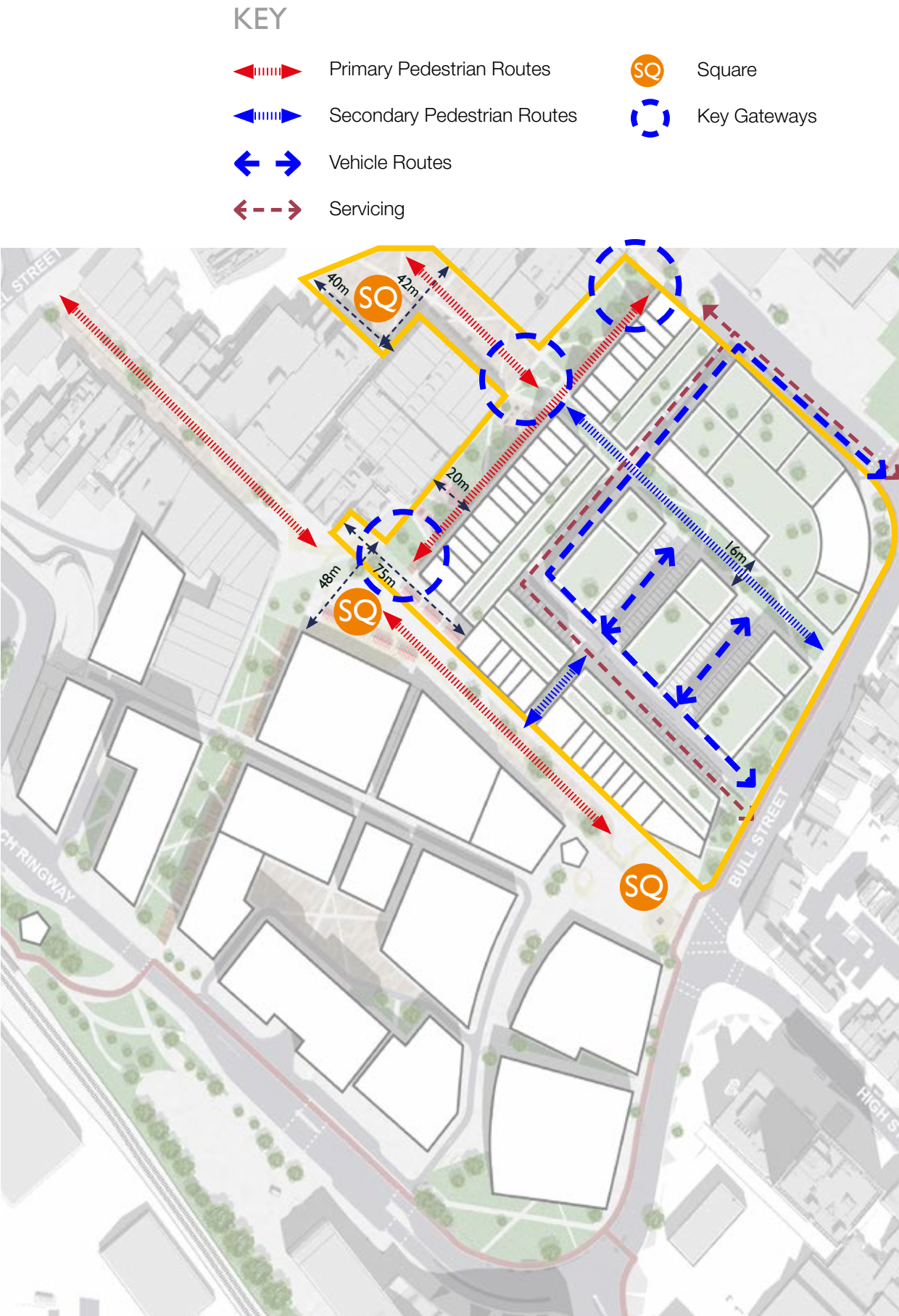
Key Information



Queens Square Living

The north/south green spine connects the central market square with the New Square shopping centre and strengthens the retail circuit with a mix of leisure, recreation and office uses. A new external route and plaza creates links back to the Central St Michaels Sixth Form College.

Town houses above retail units create a well-defined edge with active market streets to the High Street and Queens Street with a new centrally located high density residential community set within a blanket of green park with external parking spaces, office and gym/amenities.



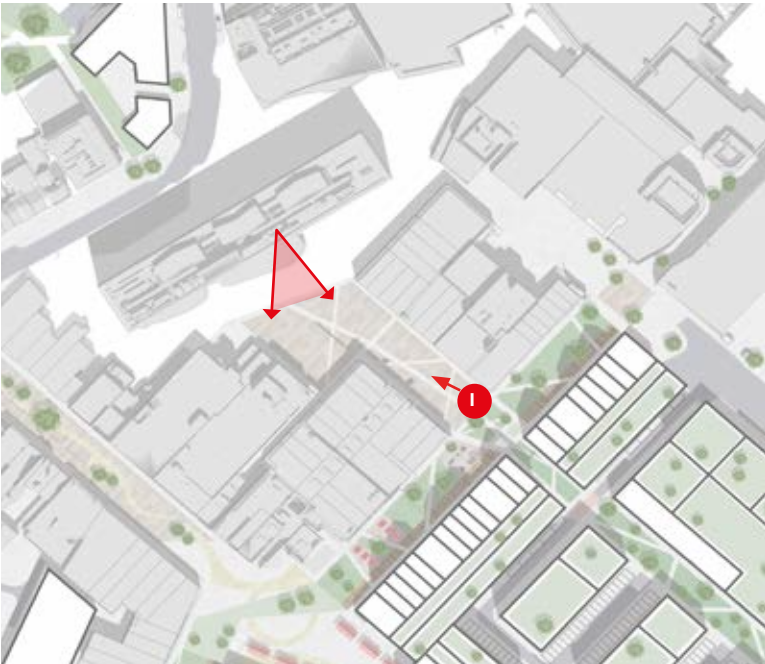
Zone 2 - Queens Square Living

Sketch - Cinema Square/Park

Page 150

Outdoor Events & Activity Space

The new square carved out of the Queens Shopping Centre extends the existing food and beverage offer from New Square. The blank red brick walls facing the service yards are replaced with a family orientated mix of uses and restaurant/cafes which overlook the plaza for seasonal events and pop up entertainment with water fountains and children's activity park.



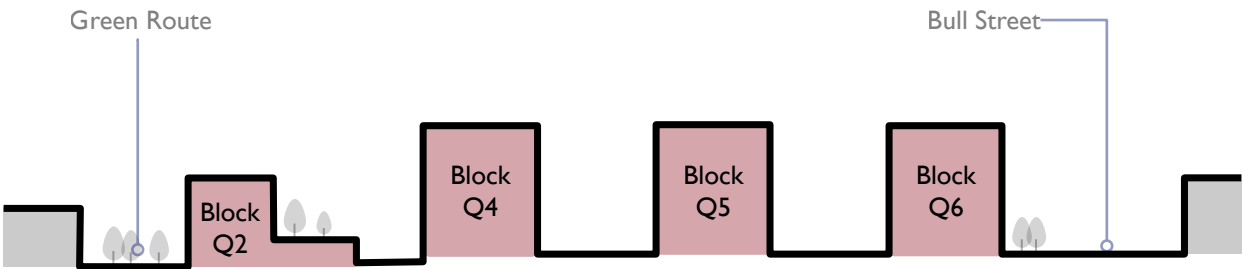
Zone 2 - Queens Square Living

Queens Square Residential

Page 101

Queens Square Community

This is a high-density residential community combined with ground level retail area with a tight urban form and excellent links to the town centre and wider green spaces. It will be set within a strong geometry of streets and spaces, reflecting the linear pattern and landscape. Housing form will principally be high density apartment up to 7 storeys plus town houses above retail, ensuring efficient use of land, and helping to define the public streets and spaces through overlooking and uniform building setbacks. Roof gardens and green public gardens at ground floor provide ample controlled external space for residents.



Zone 2 - Queens Square Living Precedents

Page 152



Zone 2 - Queens Square Living Sketch

Page 103

Bull Street

The form of the Bull Street corner block follows the curved ownership boundary and has been designed to be implemented as one of the first development phases. 6 storeys of residential sit above the office, gym, car park and flexible commercial space at ground floor level creating a visible gateway in to the town centre.



Zone 3 - Cultural Quarter

Sketch

Page 154

“A community that connects”



Zone 3 - Cultural Quarter Location

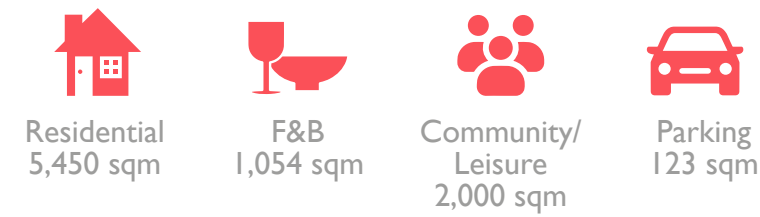
Page 155



Zone 3 - Cultural Quarter

Key Information

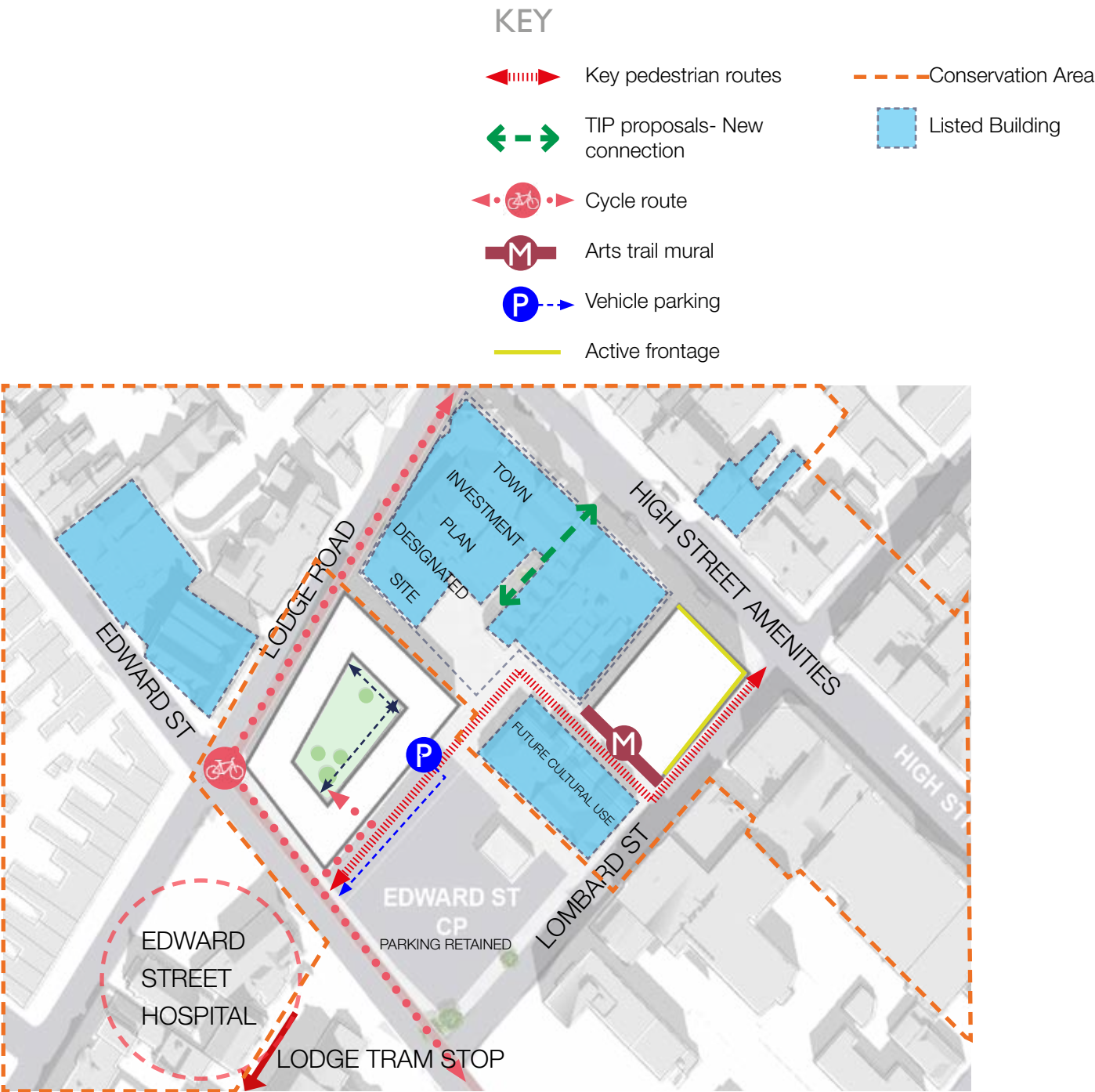
Page 156



Cultural Quarter

The masterplan aims to reinvigorate and reconnect the Town Hall area as West Bromwich main cultural offer. The plan seeks to breathe new life into the area to complement the rich heritage assets and historic connections, enhancing the distinctive character and special qualities of the quarter.

The High Street gas showrooms site will provide a new 3 storey building comprising restaurant and bar at ground floor level to provide much needed activity along the street and create a destination for evening entertaining and dining to complement the adjoining theatre/production offer at the Town Hall. The upper storeys are identified as community space with an open terrace at roof level and a community garden to the rear. This site sits within the conservation area and is surrounded by listed buildings.

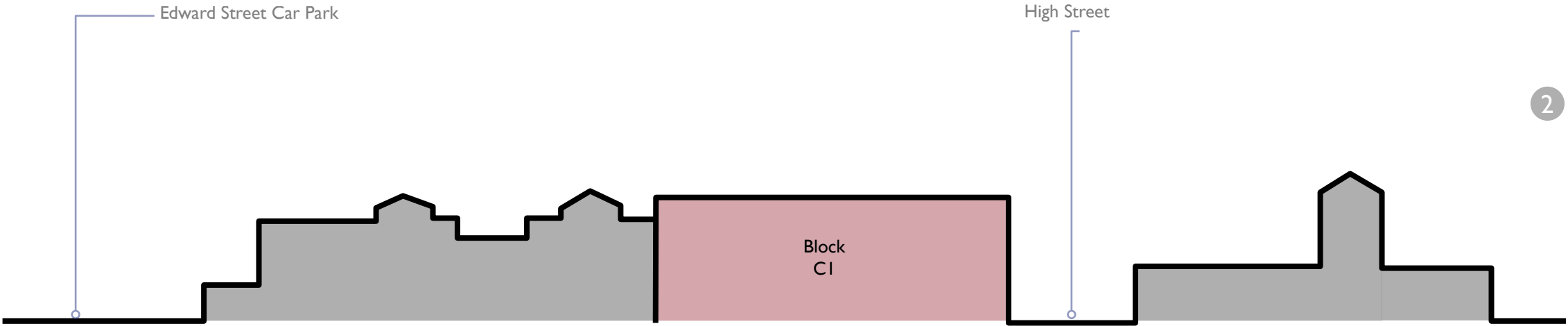
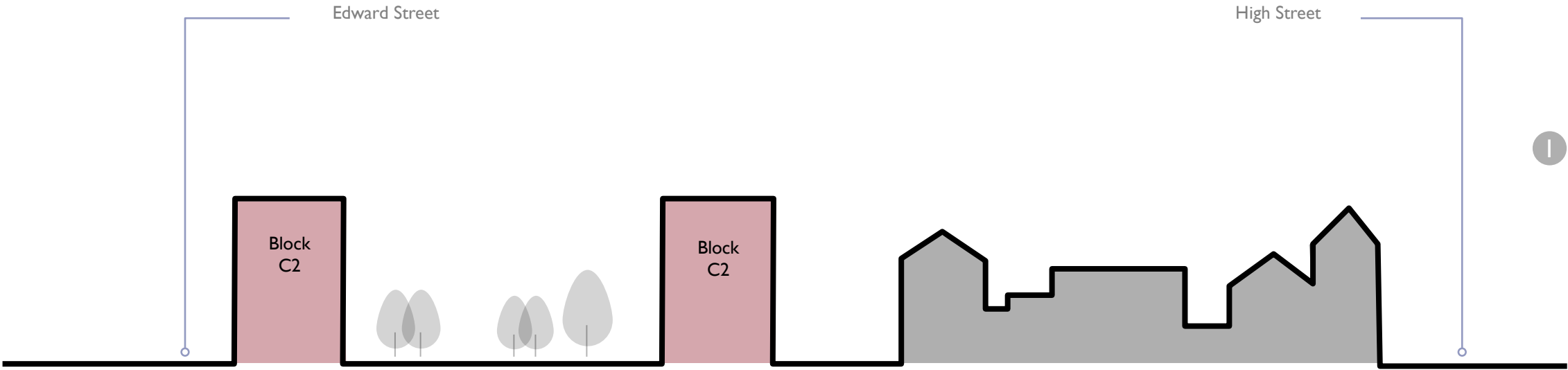


With an increased cultural offer the area will be desirable for a new residential development to the rear of the Town Hall site specifically for older age living more humbly responding to the surrounding character and urban fabric of the setting. Located adjacent to the conservation area It will comprise 3-4 storey low dense apartment blocks with a green courtyard at the centre. Through considered treatment of building boundaries, a well-defined, meaningful street edge will be created and off-street parking provision provided.

Zone 3 - Cultural Quarter

Sections

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Zone 3 - Cultural Quarter

Precedents

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Zone 3 - Cultural Quarter

Precedents

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Zone 4 - Pocket Park

Sketch

“Lunch in the Park?”

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Zone 4 - Pocket Park Location

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Zone 4 - Pocket Park

Key Information

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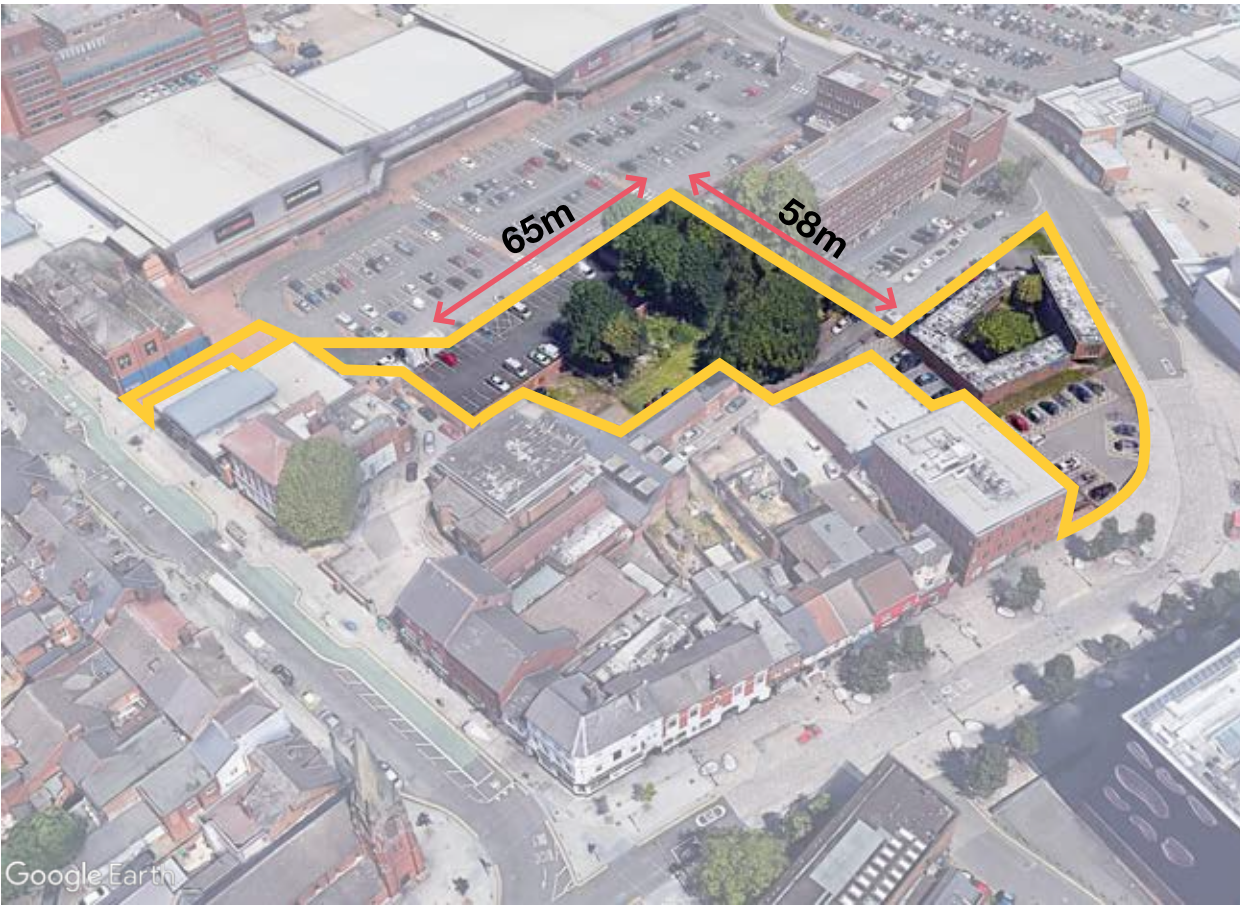
F&B
260 sqm



Community/
Leisure
1,350 sqm



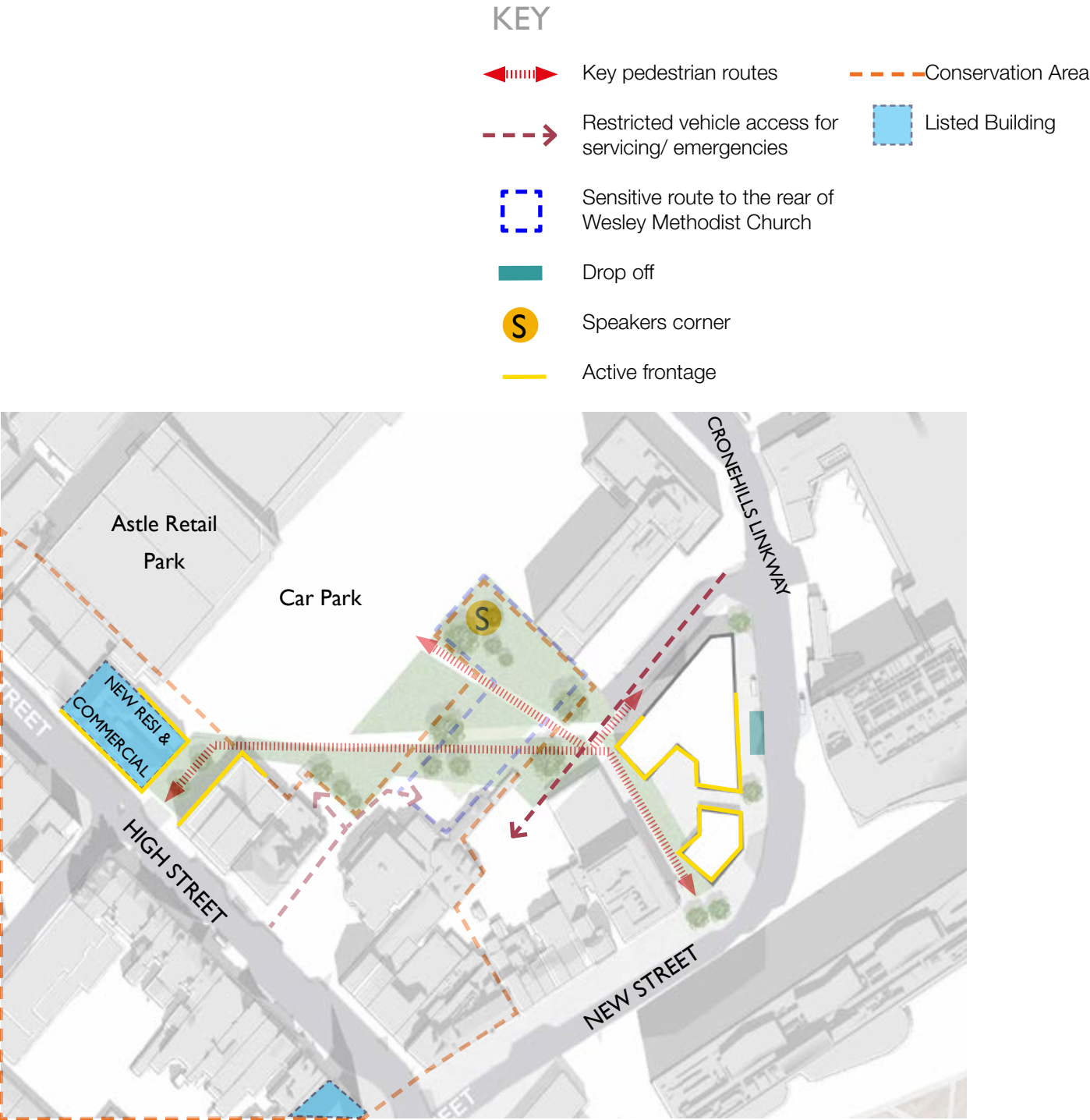
Parking
77 sqm



Pocket Park

This urban pocket park strengthens the routes from New Square/St Michaels Square to the High Street and provides a tranquil green space in the heart of the town. The park treats the rear of Wesley Methodist Church sensitively and access for servicing is maintained from Cronehills Linkway.

It's a place for relaxation, picnics and eating lunch.

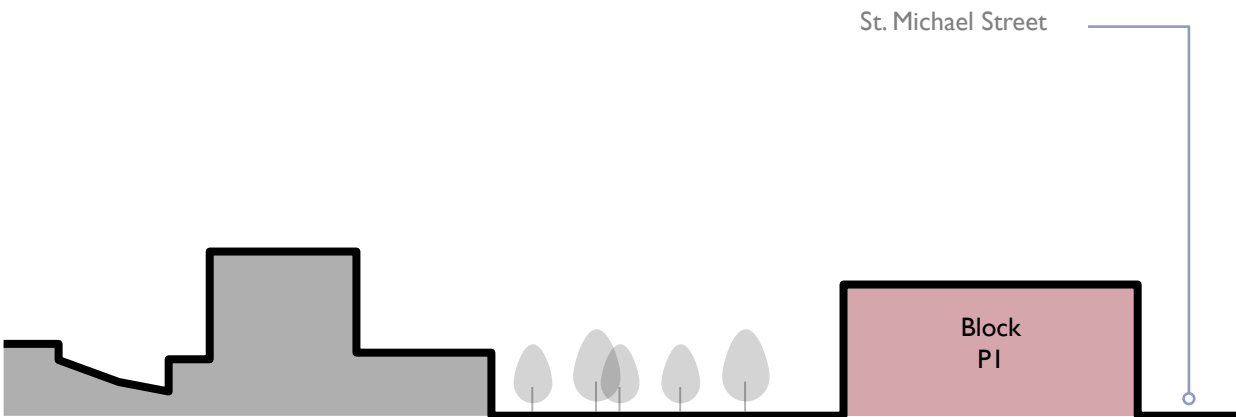


We will work with key stakeholders and landowners to bring forward these desirable future connections and management of spaces.

Zone 4 - Pocket Park

Precedents

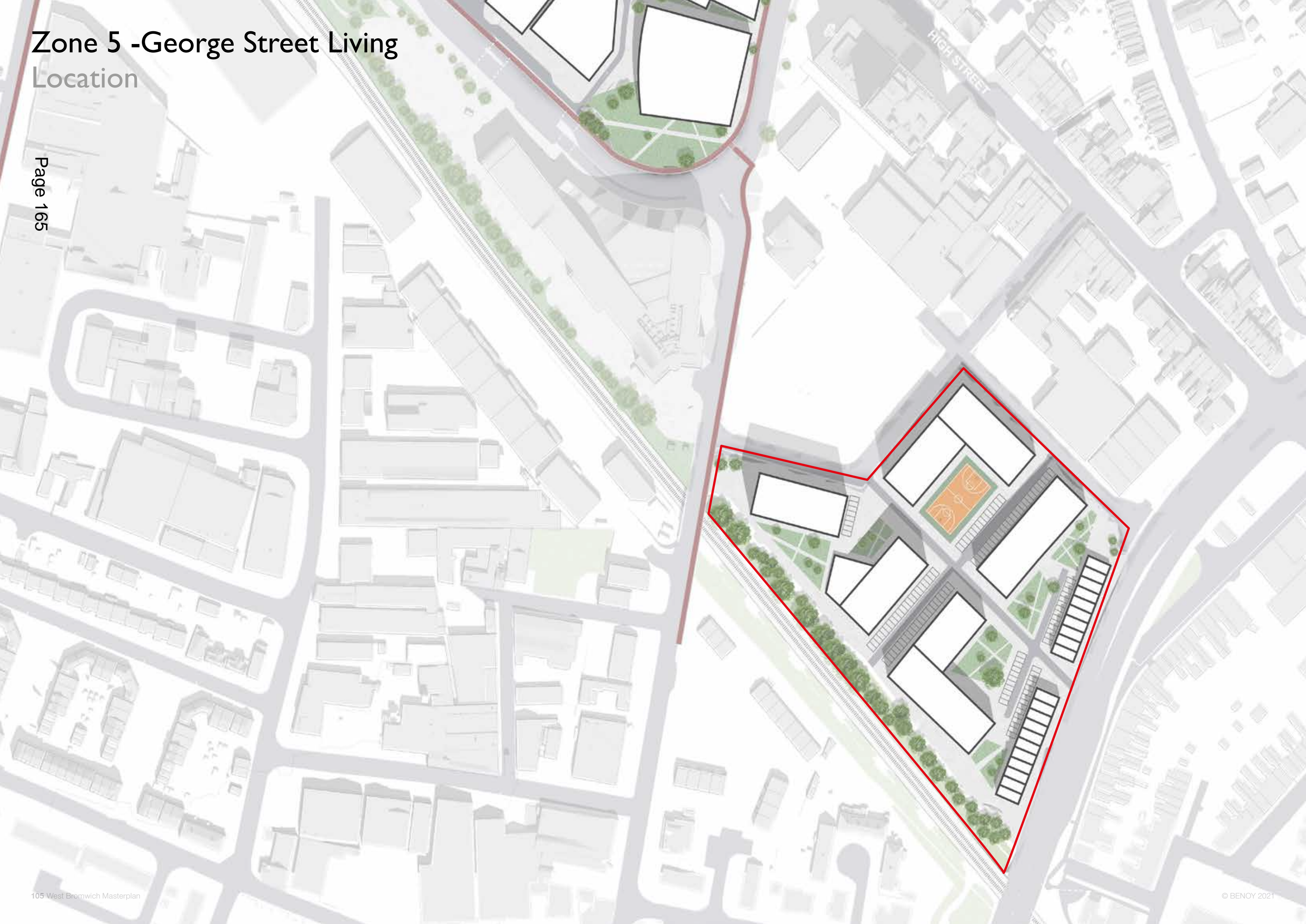
Page 163



Zone 5 -George Street Living
Sketch



Zone 5 -George Street Living Location



Zone 5 -George Street Living

Key Information

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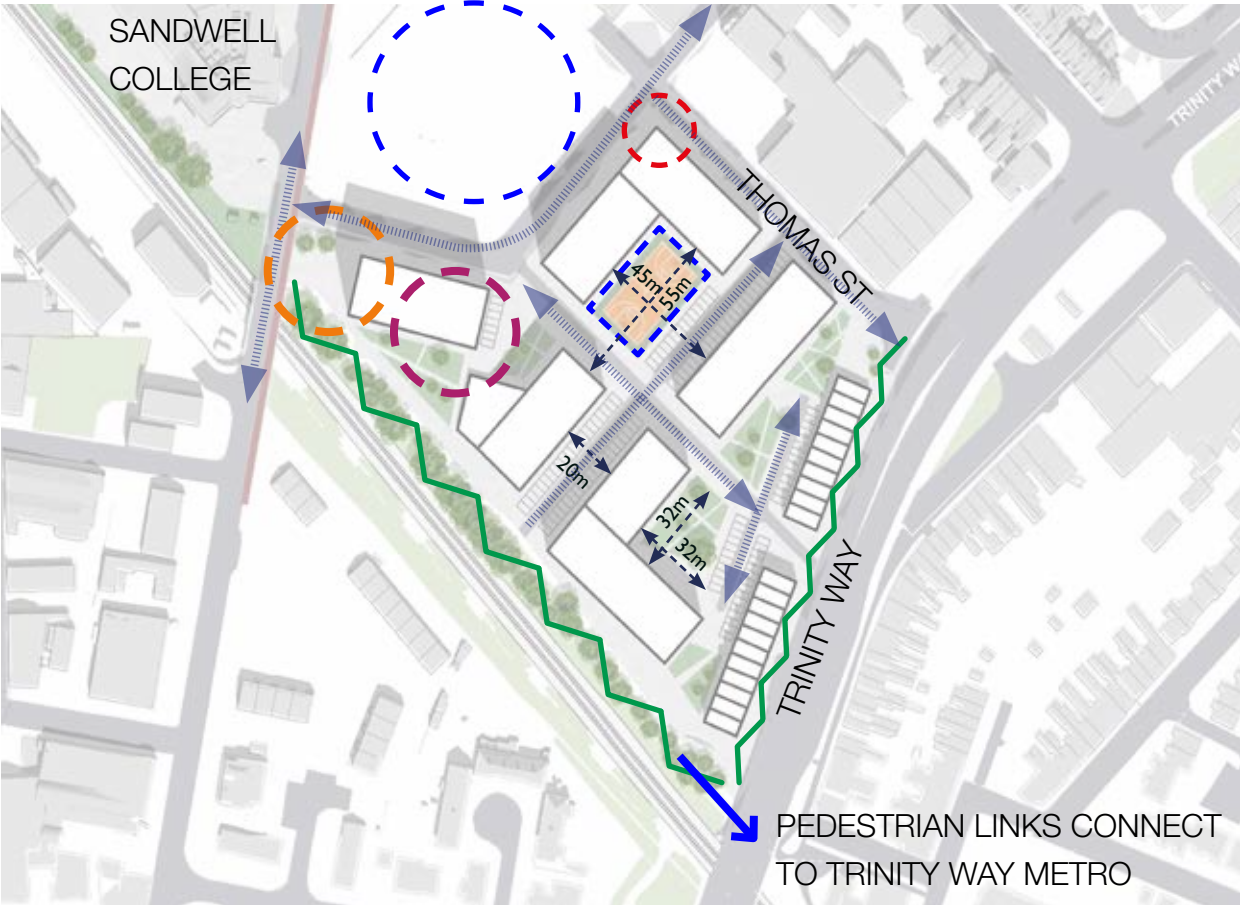
Residential
50,232 sqm



Community/
Leisure
1,150 sqm



Parking
1,611 sqm



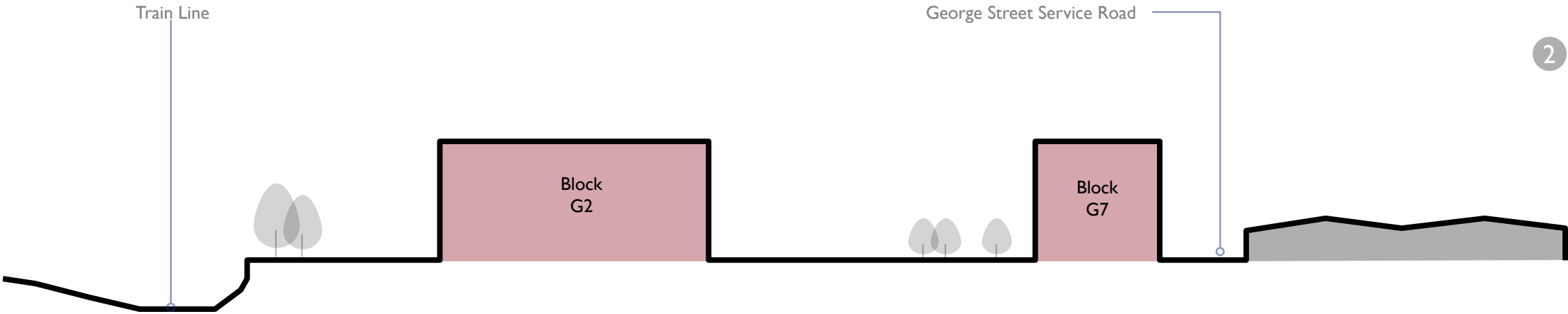
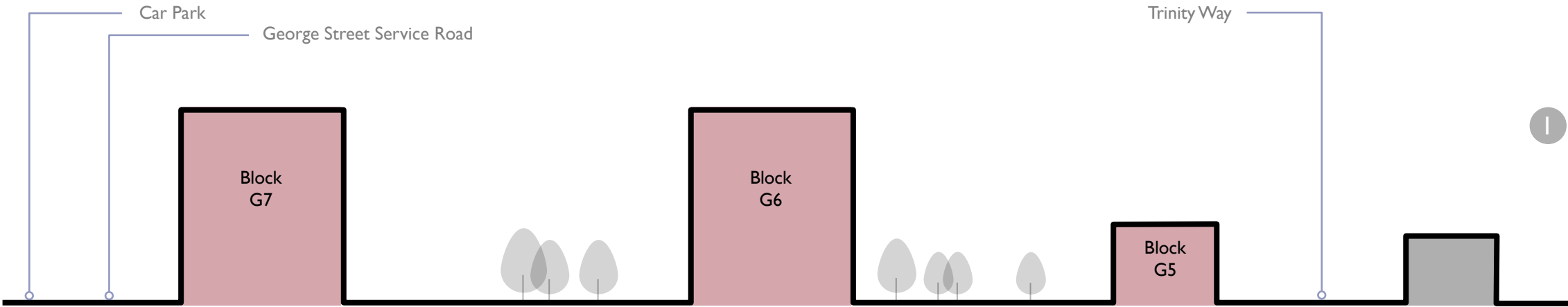
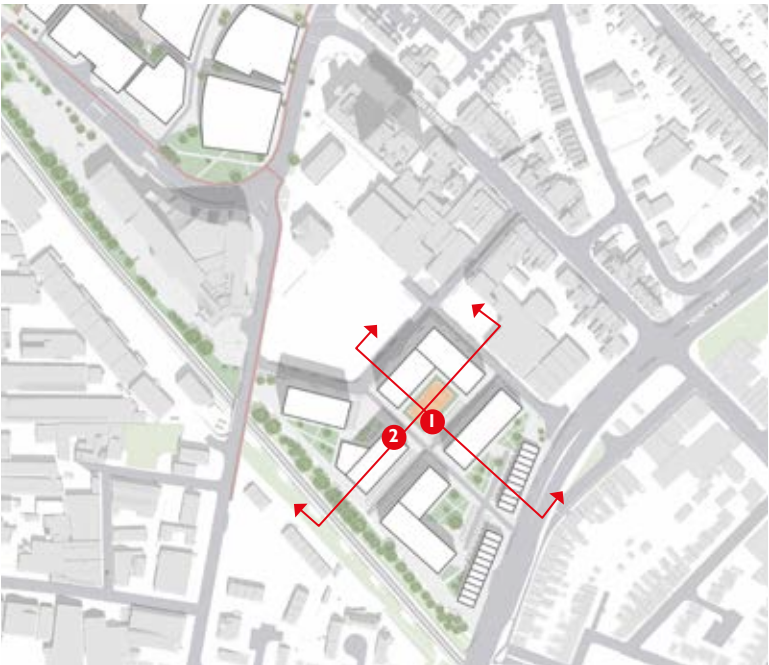
George Street Living

A new high density residential community to the south-east of the town centre is proposed, with a tight urban inner development and low scale residential frontage to Trinity way dual carriageway.

Building forms will principally be 3-7 storey apartment blocks with densities reducing eastwards towards Trinity way. Terraced houses bordering the highway ensure efficient use of land, helping to define the public streets and spaces. Street tree planting will help to reinforce the linear form and provide links to the wider landscape. This area will form the main arrival image into the town centre from the south east border of the site.

Zone 5 -George Street Living Sections

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Zone 5 -George Street Living Precedents

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5

In order to create a diverse and vibrant town centre, the Masterplan proposals include a range of uses which aim to build on the current strengths of West Bromwich, while also delivering new economic uses and functions to the town to capture future opportunities.

The proposed mix of uses have been informed by detailed property market analysis, including supply and demand analysis for residential, office, employment, retail and leisure uses. This considered the local, regional and national context and latest market trends. The analysis is summarised in the accompanying Baseline Report.



The Market – West Bromwich is known for its High Street and indoor market. They are much loved community assets and will be important features of the revitalized town centre. A new and improved indoor market will be provided and act as a catalyst and central hub to the town. It will provide sufficient space for current and new traders, and a diversity of new stalls including food and drink offering to support and evening economy.



Education – The role of education will be crucial in upskilling and reskilling the workforce and capturing jobs in emerging economies, including digital and tech sectors. Sandwell College has expansion plans and there is an opportunity to deliver an education campus in the centre of the town. This education space can provide a link between Higher and Further education and industry. It can also provide facilities for business startup and innovation space creating a supportive business ecosystem and attracting people to stay in West Bromwich.



Health – West Bromwich has high employment in the health sector with a number of key institutions. The town centre redevelopment presents the opportunity to respond to the needs of the local community, and COVID-19 pandemic recovery, by providing new town centre, community focused health service provision that could consolidate wider services into a single, well accessed centre.



Entertainment and leisure – The town hall and its theatre is a jewel in the crown of West Bromwich, and the masterplan envisages an entertainment and cultural quarter to be developed in this area. Elsewhere there will be a focus on leisure uses including evening and night time economy uses to create a destination for residents and improve safety, vibrancy, footfall in the town of an evening. This may include restaurants and bars, but also potentially competitive socializing and experiential leisure uses. There will also be open space for activity and community events (e.g. Outdoor cinema).



Office space / workspace – West Bromwich is not a major office location, and we don't anticipate it will be in the future. However, the delivery of right sized office / workspace to support the economic function of the town is imperative. Covid-19 has changed the way we work, with many people working from home. However research shows most people are hoping to get back to the office. The future of office work is likely to be flexible, with home and office working, mixed with work from 'third spaces' including co-working in town centres like West Bromwich. The office space envisaged in this masterplan is not 'traditional' offices filled with banks of desks, but rather flexible and diverse workspace to support start ups, grow ups, innovation space, sole traders, remote workers. There will be larger floorspace for growing or established businesses in higher value digital or creative sectors.



Retail – The town is oversupplied by retail floorspace. In the short term, some of this retail space will be repurposed for other uses as described here. This will increase footfall, vibrancy and activity in the town and make the remaining retail space more sustainable.



Residential – Underpinning this strategy is the delivery of a new, sustainably located, residential community in West Bromwich. Delivery good quality homes in the town centre with access to jobs, amenities, open space, and sustainable transport. This will create the vibrancy, footfall, spending, and economic growth that will support the viability of other uses in the town. It will include space for current 'missing groups' including young people and professionals, as well as older professionals and early retirees who want to enjoy retirement in a high quality space.



Public space – To accommodate a new residential community requires a transformation of the quality of the town centre public realm. The plans include a new boulevard and revitalized open spaces and green links that will transform perceptions of, and how people use, the town.



Car Parking – West Bromwich is one of the most sustainably well connected places in the Midlands with excellent metro and bus links. It also has ample existing car parking facilities in the town. Many of the development opportunities that exist are on underutilized surface car parks. A new multi-storey car park is planned, however the provision reflects the future trends of more sustainable travel via bus, metro, bike and walking, and less travel by car.

Area & Phasing

Area Schedule

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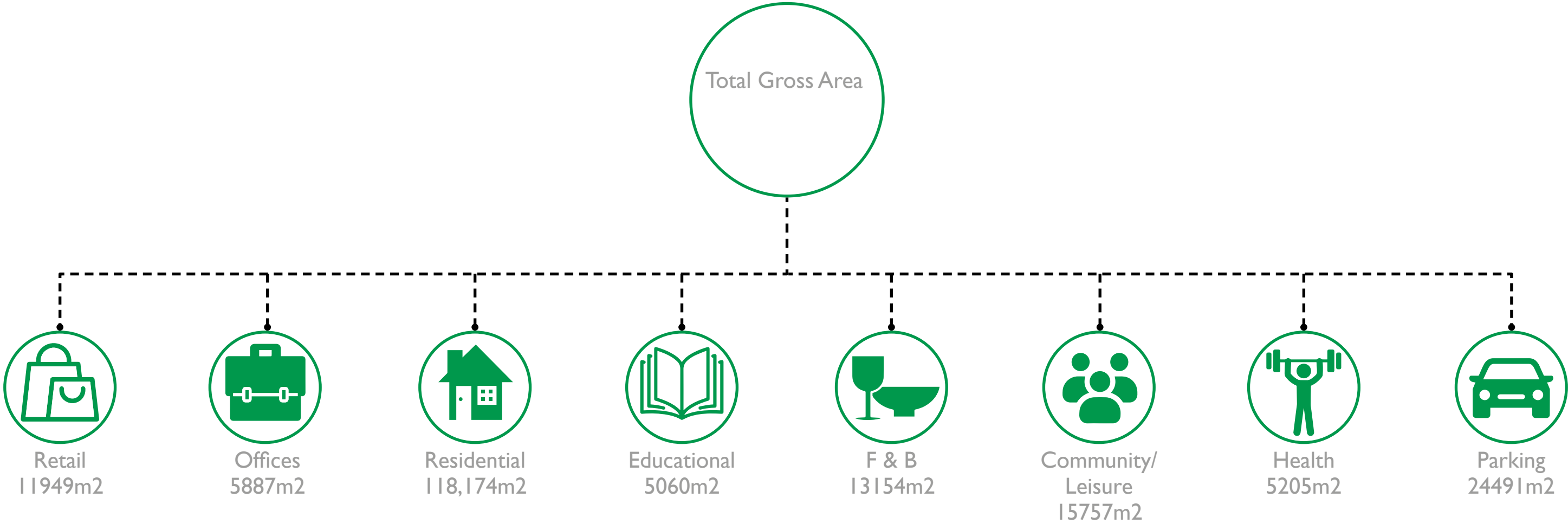
Masterplan For West Bromwich Town Centre - Schedule of Areas and Residential Unit Numbers														
Block	GF Block Coverage	Retail	Offices	Residential	Educational	F&B	Com./Leisure	Health	Parking/ Approx spaces	Floor Area for Parking	Residential Unit Nos			Storeys including ground
											1B	2B	3B	
Queens Square														
Q1	1650m2	1650m2	n/a	2300m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	(5 no. Open GL parking+ Loading Bay)	155m2	0	4	6	4
Q2	2430m2	2430m2	n/a	3530m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	(5 no. Open GL parking+ Loading Bay)	163m2	0	8	6	4
Q3	4342m2	n/a	855m2	12000m2	n/a	n/a	1395m2	n/a	(70 no. Open GL parking)	1350m2	120	40	6	7
Q4	944m2	n/a	n/a	4627m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	(32 no. Open GL parking)	635m2	40	19	0	6
Q5	944m2	n/a	n/a	5064m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	(38 no. Open GL parking)	510m2	44	20	0	6
Q6	944m2	n/a	n/a	5064m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	(19 no. Open GL parking)	255m2	44	20	0	6
Q7	2285m2	2285m2	n/a	2970m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	(23 no. Open GL parking)	435m2	0	7	6	4
Q8	1082m2	1082m2	n/a	1560m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	(14 no. Open GL parking)	202m	0	4	2	4
										Total	248	122	26	
West Bromich Central														
W1	2530m2	n/a	n/a	3800m2	5060m2	n/a	n/a	n/a			56	40	0	4
W2	1288m2	n/a	1288m2	2576m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a			12	2	6	3
W3	1872m2	n/a	3744m2	7115m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a			50	34	10	7
W4	882m2	n/a	n/a	2646m2	n/a	1764m2	n/a	n/a			15	10	0	5
W5	1318m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2636m2	n/a	n/a			n/a	n/a	n/a	2
W6	550m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1650m2	n/a			n/a	n/a	n/a	3
W7	1964m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	5892m2	n/a			n/a	n/a	n/a	3
W8	806m2	1612m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a			n/a	n/a	n/a	2
W9	1560m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3120m2	780m2	n/a			n/a	n/a	n/a	3
W10	2160m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	4320m2	n/a	n/a			n/a	n/a	n/a	2
W11	1540m2	n/a	n/a	9240m2	n/a	n/a	1540m2	n/a			66	42	0	7
W12	1041m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	5205m2			n/a	n/a	n/a	5
W13	1100m2	2200m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a			n/a	n/a	n/a	2
W14	2138m2	690m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	(625 no. in 6fls+roof+base-ment)	18945m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	B+6
										Total	199	128	16	
Pocket Park														
P1	892m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	260m2	1135m2	n/a	(5 no. Open GL parking)	77m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	2
P2	247m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	215m2	n/a			n/a	n/a	n/a	1
Cultural Quarter														
C1	1018m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1054m2	2000m2	n/a			n/a	n/a	n/a	3
C2	1384m2	n/a	n/a	5450m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	(10 no. Open GL parking)	123m2	0	32	20	4
										Total	0	32	20	
George Street														
G1	925m2	n/a	n/a	5550m2	n/a	n/a	925m2	n/a	(8 no. Open GL parking)	92m2	36	36	0	7
G2	1120m2	n/a	n/a	7615m2	n/a	n/a	225m2	n/a	(22no. Open GL parking)	306m2	45	45	0	7
G3	1790m2	n/a	n/a	12530m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	(34no. Open GL parking)	417m2	84	70	0	7
G4	675m2	n/a	n/a	2025m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	(15no. Open GL parking)	195m2	0	0	11	3
G5	490m2	n/a	n/a	1470m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	(11no. Open GL parking)	182m2	0	0	10	3
G6	1206m2	n/a	n/a	8442m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	(25no. Open GL parking)	288m2	42	42	0	7
G7	1800m2	n/a	n/a	12600m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	(15no. Open GL parking)	161m2	77	70	0	7
										Total	284	263	21	
									Overall Total		731	545	83	
									Total residential		1,359 Units			

All areas subject to change as the design develops

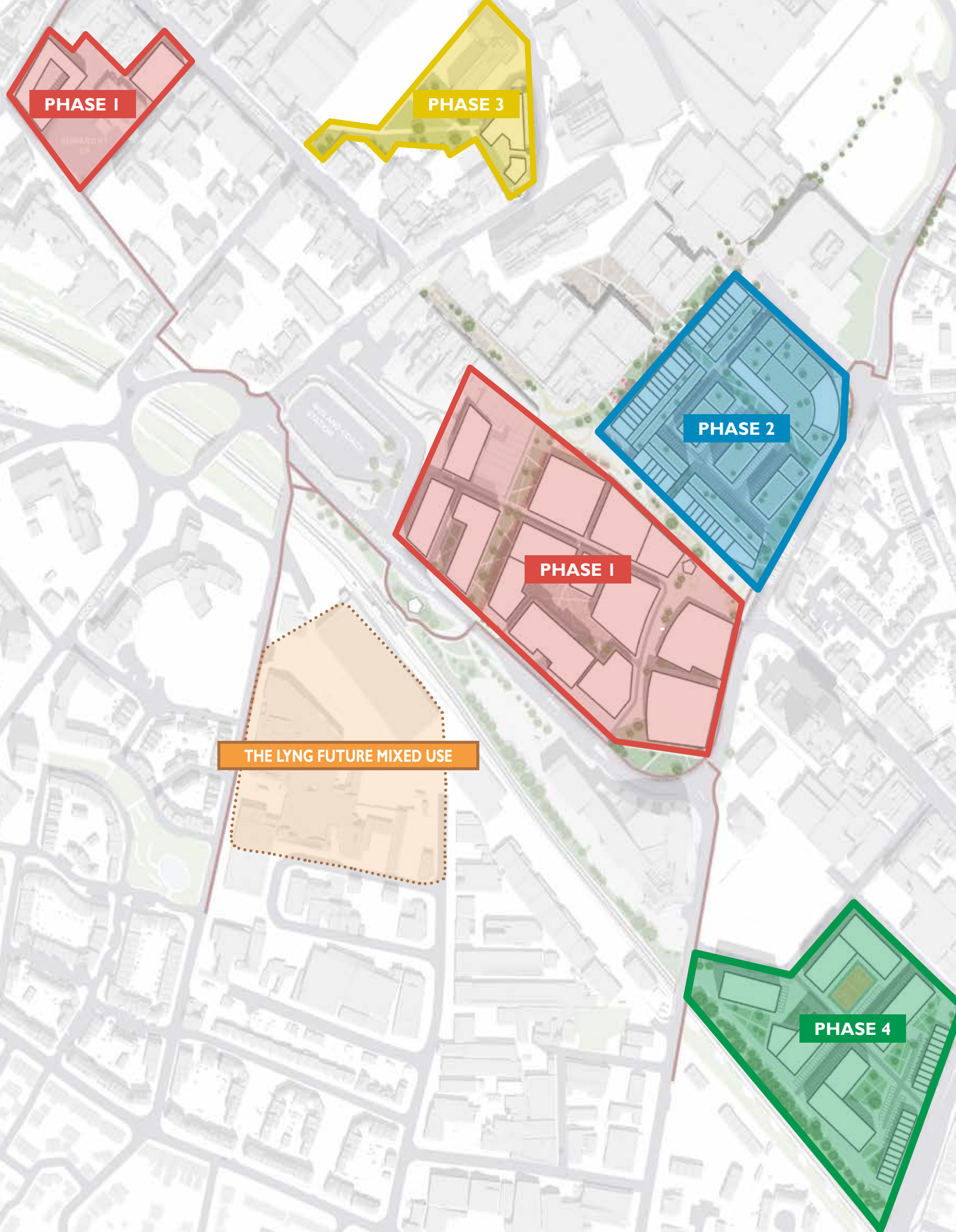
Area & Phasing

Areas

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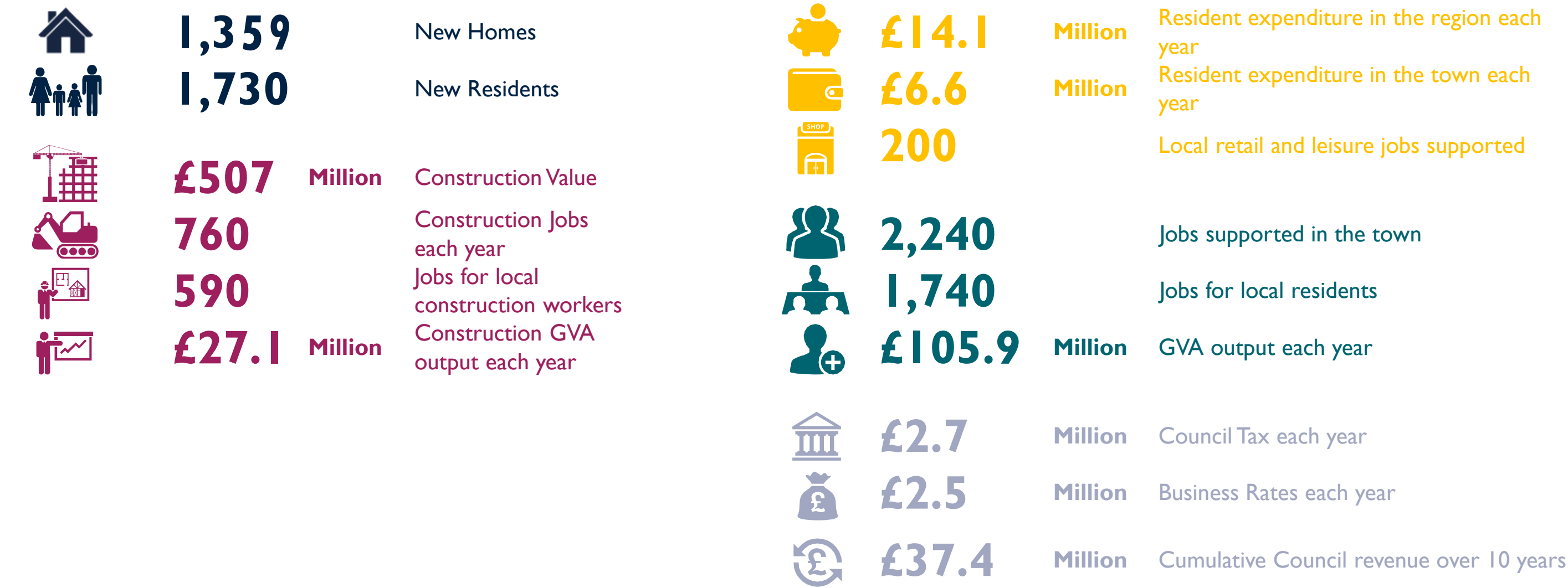
Area & Zones Phasing



Introduction

Economic Benefits

The proposed transformation of West Bromwich Town Centre, as outlined in this Masterplan document, could have significant economic benefits for the town and wider region, including:



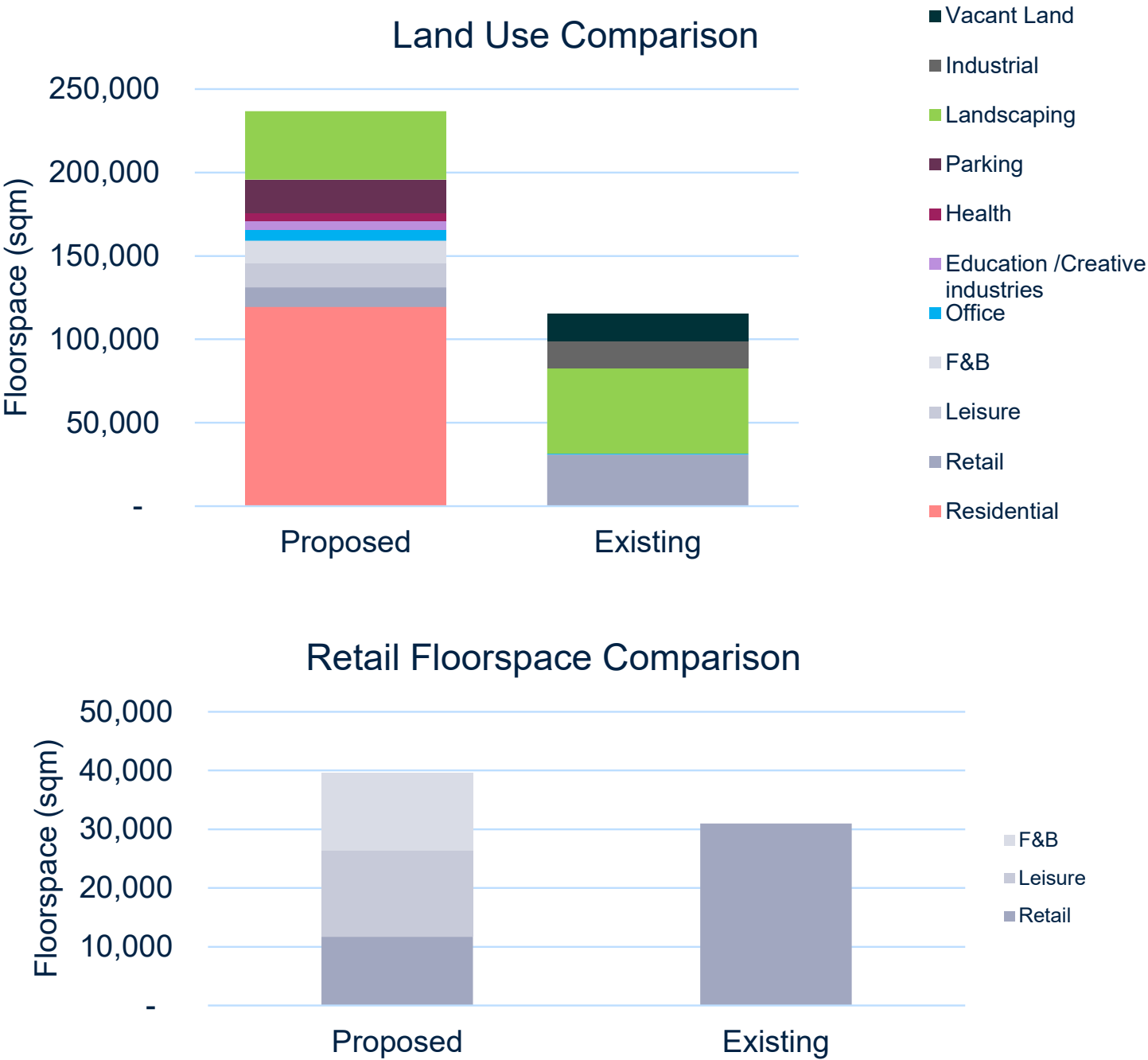
Estimates of operational jobs, GVA and public sector revenues are gross rather than net additional

Introduction

Transformational Impact

The proposed transformation of West Bromwich Town Centre, as outlined in this Masterplan document, will have a significant impact on the diversity of uses and economic growth potential in the town including:

- Reducing existing over dependence on retail uses
- Capturing future job markets and economic growth in digital, tech, arts, culture and public sector work
- Delivering new, consolidated education campus offering
- Reducing vacant, redundant, and derelict land
- Increasing the diversity of the evening and night time economy
- Transforming the leisure and socializing opportunities
- Delivering new community open space
- Transforming the markets
- Creating a new, high density and sustainable residential community in the town centre



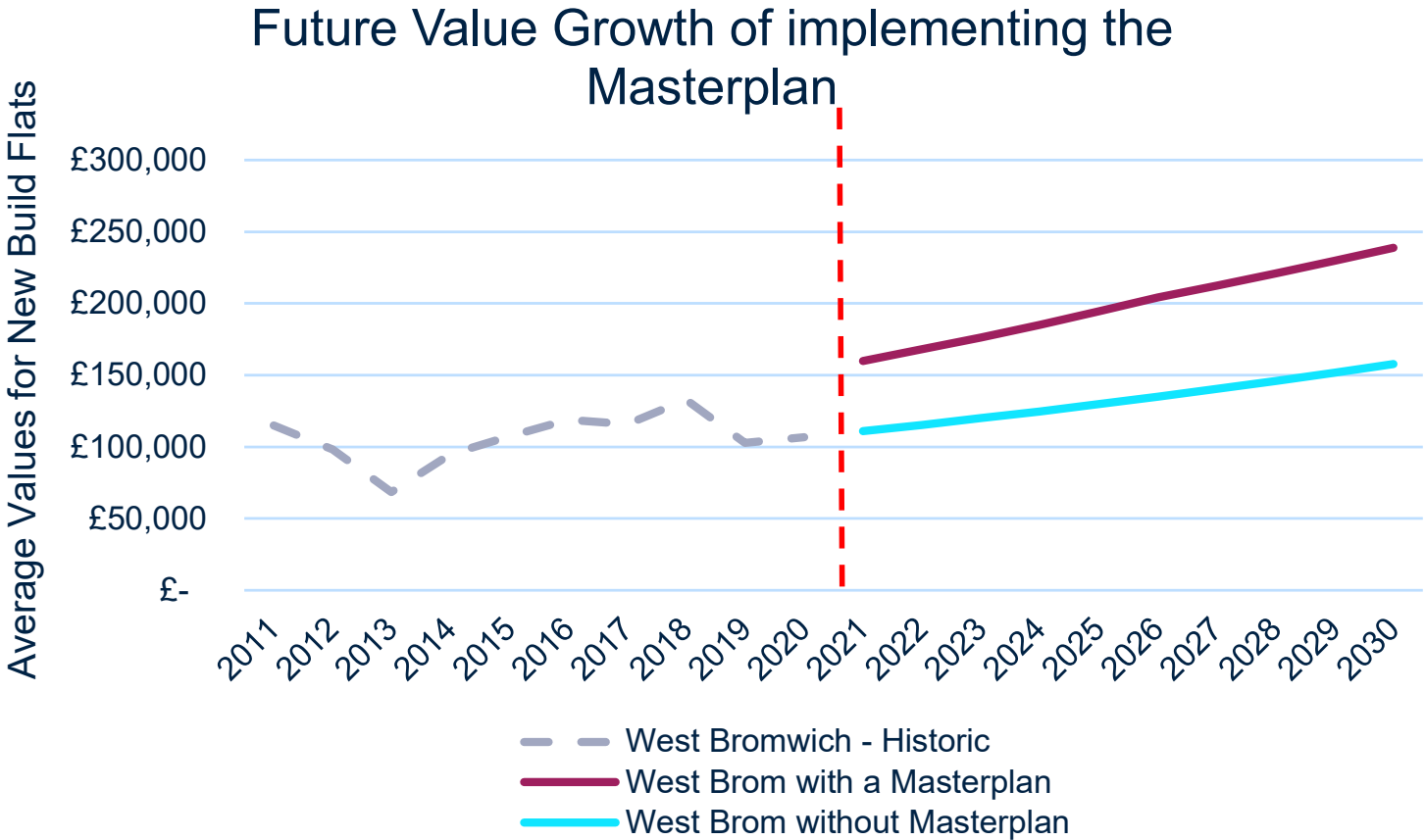
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This transformation and investment will have a significant impact on land values in the town and put West Bromwich on a high future value growth trajectory. This will help to attract further investment from the private sector.

Value Growth Impacts of the Masterplan

5% per annum for **new Flats**, compared to 4% currently

3% per annum for new **Office Space**, compared to 0.9% currently

0.8% per annum for **Retail and Leisure space**, compared to -0.6% currently.





Delivery Strategy & Next Steps

Challenges

This is a transformational masterplan which depicts the wholesale redevelopment of West Bromwich town centre, to reposition the town to capture current and future opportunities and tackle the challenges the town currently faces.

There are major deliverability challenges to such an ambitious and transformational plan. There are no simple solutions to delivering such growth and a number of different options in terms of how it can be achieved.

The purpose of this masterplan was to set a strategic vision for how the town could change, to energise the market, attract discussion and debate and to enable stakeholders and the community to come together to identify how best to deliver these changes.

Here we set out a number of challenges in terms of delivering the ambitious plans detailed in the masterplan.

Planning

Planning policy for the Masterplan area currently consists of the adopted West Bromwich Area Action Plan (WBAAP, December 2012). The WBAAP expires in 2026 and is now dated. The Black Country Core Strategy (BCCS) is also under review and a new Plan is proposed for adoption in 2024. To bridge this gap it is intended that this Masterplan will form part of an Interim Planning Statement (IPS) which will be used to help guide development and planning decisions until the full review and adoption of a revised WBAAP in 2024. The IPS will be treated as a material consideration for any future proposals put forward in the area. The IPS sets out the anticipated ‘direction of travel’ of planning policy for the town and the general locations and scale of development anticipated. This aims to provide confidence to developers and land owners on what can be accommodated in the town and what Council and the community expects to see delivered as part of the ongoing regeneration of the town.

Viability

Development viability is a major challenge to achieving the masterplan vision.

Even for non-complex sites and schemes, development viability and feasibility in the town and wider region is challenging. To deliver the ambitious scale of change outlined in the masterplan will need significant upfront costs including land acquisition, demolition, site preparation, engineering, public realm works, and delivery of high quality buildings, with sustainable design principles, which are fitting for a new town centre and are capable of changing perceptions of the area and delivering a high quality environment to attract a new residential market.

In order to achieve this will be extremely costly. In addition to this, the development market is currently faced with unprecedented cost inflation for materials and labour.

The current and demonstrated values for new homes and commercial property in the town, would not support delivery of such large scale changes. The values would not outweigh the costs.

As such other strategies in terms of funding and deliverability must be considered.

Funding

Without question, this scale of change and development will not be achievable without significant public and private sector funding support. Sandwell MBC has been successful in securing £25 million of Town Deal funding as part of the Governments £3.6 bn commitment to transform town centres across the country. Of this approximately £15.62 million can be allocated to schemes which will help to progress the delivery of the masterplan vision, including:

- £13 million for retail diversification including land acquisition, demolition, and remediation
- £1.4 million for walking and cycling improvements
- £1.22 million for urban greening works

In addition to this, £1.3 million has been secured from WMCA to support the retail diversification strategy.

Delivery Strategy & Next Steps

Challenges

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However, even this level of secured public sector investment is unlikely to be sufficient to deliver the masterplan and further public intervention will be required. This could be sourced from Sandwell Council (via prudential borrowing), via WMCA, or via other government agencies (eg. Homes England, MHCLG, BEIS etc). It is likely that a range of public funding streams would need to be secured to unlock the growth ambitions in West Bromwich.

It is anticipated that the scale of the impact that this ambitious regeneration could have on the economy, social outcomes for the community, and in tackling environmental challenges, would present a compelling value for money case to support public sector investment.

At the same time, the scale of growth can only be delivered with major private sector investment also. This will require developers, investors and landowners to recognize the unique opportunity and growth potential for West Bromwich and develop and plan for schemes which will support this transformational growth strategy.

There is potential that major development could be brought forward in partnership between the public and private sector, with an understanding that early stages of the regeneration may not be viable but are required to deliver longer term, and potentially more viable future stages of development.

Phasing

This masterplan presents a long term 20 year growth strategy for the town. Phasing growth in an appropriate way will be important to support viability and deliverability, also to reduce disturbance and support the transition of the town. Below presents an indicative phasing strategy for how development could come forward:

- Phase 1 – 2024-2029: Kings Square, the Farley Centre, Bull Street and the Town Hall Quarter
- Phase 2 – 2029-2034: Queens Square
- Phase 3 – 2030-2032: Urban Pocket Park
- Phase 4 – 2034-2038: George Street Living and wider growth opportunities (e.g. The Lyng mixed use development).

This phasing strategy aims to deliver the most transformational projects first. The redevelopment of the Kings Square and Farley Centre will transform the central area of the town, creating new connections and new uses that will set the precedent in terms of quality of space to support delivery of the remaining areas.

Phasing would also consider the relocation and retention of important community assets such as the market. The level of vacant space within the town at present means that it may be possible to identify opportunities for the temporary relocation of space while redevelopment takes place and until new facilities are ready for occupation.

Community and Stakeholders

This Masterplan will not be successful without the support from the community and a range of stakeholders. Sustainable masterplanning is hinged on the success of local partnerships and buy in from stakeholders into the vision and strategy outlined.

This will need support from public sector at local, regional and national levels. It will need support from the private sector, including land owners, developers, and businesses. It will also need support from the community to direct growth and realize the benefits of such transformational change.

As a long term strategy, there would need to be a long term approach to stakeholder engagement and support in a similar way to the Town Deal has leveraged support via the Town Boards.

Appendix A- Policy Review

Appendix

Key National and Local Design Guidelines

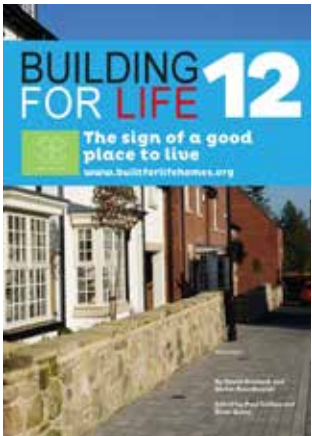
The following National and Local design guidelines have been considered in the formulation of the masterplan concept and concept development. The overarching objectives throughout are based around the creation of high-quality sustainable environments, well integrated and connected placemaking and the inherent importance of community, people and facilities.

National Design Guide:

- The most relevant characteristics will be determined by: Local priorities and concerns; the strategic priorities of the local authority; the priorities of a particular user group; the scale of proposal; its site and location; and/or; the design process, including whether it is at a strategic or detailed stage.
- Good design involves careful attention to other important components of placemaking; context for places and buildings; hard and soft landscape; technical infrastructure – transport, utilities, services such as drainage; and social infrastructure – social, commercial, leisure uses and activities.
- A well-designed place is unlikely to be achieved by focusing only on the appearance, materials and detailing of buildings. It comes about through making the right choices at all levels, including: the layout (or masterplan); the form and scale of buildings; their appearance; landscape; materials; and their detailing.
- Characteristics: Context, Identity, Built form, Movement, Nature, Public Spaces, Uses, Homes & Buildings, Resources, Lifespan.

Building for Life 12/ Building for a Healthy Life

- Initiative by the housing industry- setting standards through a traffic light system which developers must meet to achieve planning approval.
- Links back to national Planning Policy Frameworks and National Design Guides. Reviewed by Local Design Network partner with possible Design for Homes commendation.
- Creating quality places that are better for people and nature through better design and placemaking from the outset of a project based on 16 points:
 - 1.Integrated neighbourhoods;
 - 2.Natural connections and permeability;
 3. Walking, cycling and public transport;
 4. Facilities and services to respond to community needs/Public squares;
 - 5.Homes for everyone/mix of types and tenures/flexibility;
 - 6.Distinctive places;
 - 7.Making the most of what’s there/Opportunities;
 - 8.Constraints and assets with LA;
 - 9.A memorable character;
 - 10.Well defined streets and spaces with active frontages;
 - 11.Easy to find your way around/ legibility to inform mental mapping;
 - 12.Streets for all;
 - 13.Healthy streets/Balance between movement & place functions;
 - 14.Cycle and car parking;
 - 15.Green and blue infrastructure/A network of different spaces;
 16. Back of pavement front of home.



Black Country Garden City Principles - BCLEP

- The Black Country LEP, Local Authorities and the Homes & Communities Agency Partnership to create a new 21st Century Garden City in the centre of England, which will connect into existing communities and infrastructure based on 10 Principles:
 1. Land Use - Brownfield sites, 45,000 homes make the most of context, mixed density, use and tenure, £6 billion investment over the next 10 years
 2. Black Country - Maintain existing assets and heritage
 3. Garden - Green streets and spaces
 4. Connectivity - car, walk, public transport
 5. Accessibility - Convenient access to local facilities: schools, health and shops.
 6. Distinctive - Clear sense of identity
 7. Enterprising - Support and encourage growth in enterprise and creative industry
 8. Engaging - Local people involved in managing communities
 9. Smart - Technology innovation
 10. Health - Encourage living healthy lifestyles - well designed environment
- Vision - Transform perceptions, walkable neighbourhoods, green spaces, beautiful efficient homes, mixed use, accessibility to public transport and facilities. eg: low carbon timber framed homes, Beechdale, Walsall. Black Country, heart of construction technologies in the UK: 4000 companies, £1.6 billion to UK economy, 44,000 jobs.

SMBC’s Residential Design Guide SPD

(Link to Building for Life12, Black Country Core Strategy & Sandwell Site Allocations)
Encourages a comprehensive design approach to the delivery of new residential environments with a commitment to high quality sustainable housing and based upon key objectives:

- To use land more efficiently for new homes
- Build good quality housing set in attractive environments.
- Connect and integrate designs physically and visually to the local context and facilities

Appendix

Key National and Local Design Guidelines

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Respect the local character and landscape when designing development
Ensure that housing designs are flexible to meet changing demands during their lifetime

- The delivery of good quality sustainable external spaces
- Integration into the neighbourhood through well connected & Integrated new and existing development. Connected to local facilities and demands of different ages; connected to transport links (Rule of thumb: walking distances, 320-400m in high density and 560-700m in low density). Improve & maintain existing spaces. Variety of open spaces - route through. New developments (10 plus) - mix of housing and sizes to encourage mix of occupants, avoid continuous runs of housing, rear bin stores and parking is easily accessed, design set back from existing. Affordable housing scattered through development. Meet changing needs of people through their lifetime & occupier - Require Sustainable Homes, Level 3, Re-use not rebuild. Renewable energy to off-set 10% of residual energy. Personal extensions will be limited, considerations are given to scale and appearance etc
- Creating a Place
- Street and Home

Big Plans for a Great Place - for the people of Sandwell - Vision 2030 Sandwell

- Sets out an ambitious plan to deliver Vision 2030 with 6 outcomes:
 - The best start in life for children and young people
 - People live well and age well
 - Strong, resilient communities
 - Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods
 - A strong and Inclusive Economy
 - A connected and accessible Sandwell
- Put Sandwell on the Map - better opportunities – next 5 years:
 - Sandwell Aquatics Centre - 2022 Commonwealth Games
 - New housing developments
 - New infrastructure - Midlands Metro line extension & HS2
 - New Midland Metropolitan University Hospital as catalysts for wider regeneration
 - New Inclusive Economy Deal

- 5G collaborative ways of working with residents, businesses
- Building community wealth
- Stronger Towns Fund

Vision 2030

- Opportunity and aspirations
 - Healthy lives
 - Skilled workforce
 - High quality education
 - Community with mutual respect
 - Public transport - connected and affordable
 - New connected homes
 - Successful neighbourhoods - bring up families
 - Choice for industries
 - National reputation for getting things done - people's lives and communities.
- The Sixth Outcomes:
 1. The best start in life for children and young people
 - 1st 1000 days, foundation of child's development
 - Support to be school ready
 - Vulnerable children
 2. People live well and age well
 - Being with people
 - Access to food
 - Choice and Independence

3. Strong, resilient communities
 - Vibrant town centres - SHAPE, places for young people
 - Clean & Green, carbon neutral by 2041
 - Minimum energy performance standards for homes
 - Enhance existing green spaces and create new - plant tree for every child starting school
 - Safe environment
 4. Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods
 - 1/5 of homes managed by council
 5. A strong and Inclusive Economy
 - Economy Deal will be a complementary document
 - Put on map - transformational opportunities
 - Strong business sector & routes into jobs
 6. A connected and accessible Sandwell
 - Wednesbury- Brierley Hill West Midlands Metro Corridor (£450million investment) which is the largest light rail project in Europe - link to Dudley and through West Bromwich to Birmingham
 - Cycling and walking strategy
- Regional Level: Sandwell council is working with the West Midlands Combined Authority, WMCA & Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership, BCLEP
- Local Level:
- Sandwell Health and Wellbeing Board
 - Sandwell Safeguarding Children's Partnership
 - Sandwell Safeguarding Adults Board
 - Safer Sandwell Partnership
 - Volunteering and Community sector



Appendix

Defining Sites Strategy

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Decemal Development & Visionary Strategy

Over the last decade West Bromwich has seen the opening of a new Central College Campus, the Providence Place office development, a revamped High Street and metro station, the New Square retail and leisure complex, a revitalised Dartmouth Park, and a leisure pool and fitness centre to name a few.

Wider regeneration is also currently taking place across the borough such as the Midlands Metro line and the Midland Metropolitan University Hospital development. These are catalysts for future development.

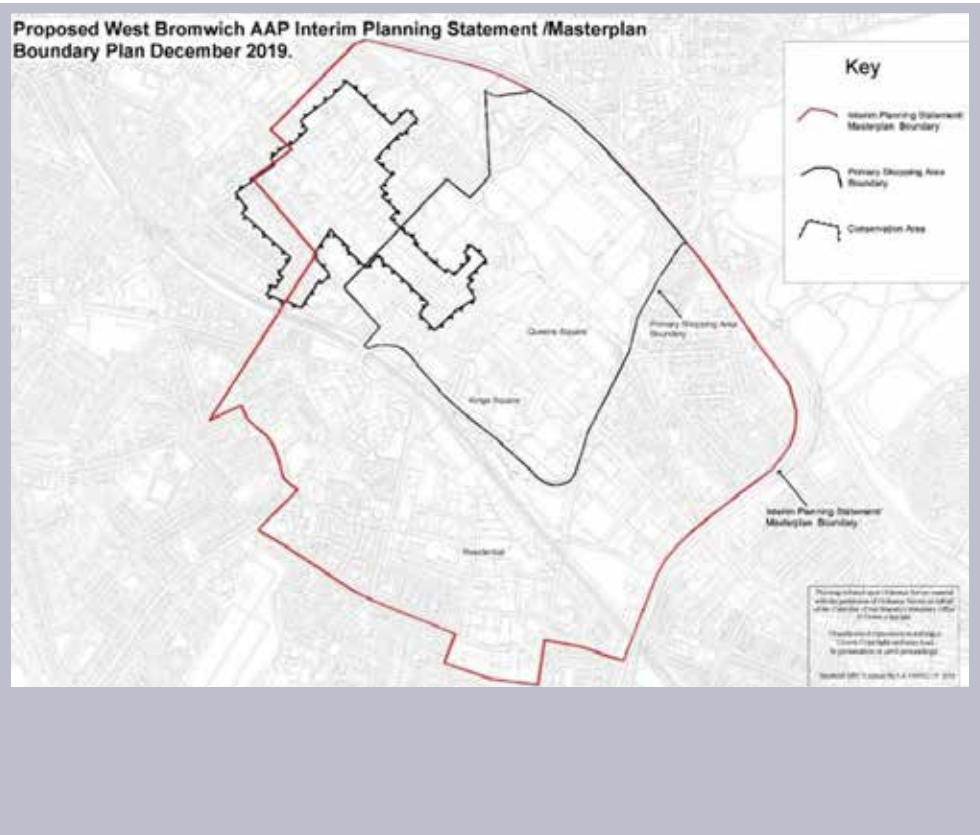
Area Action Plan (AAP 2012)

The initial stages of the masterplan looked at the existing building stock and potential for adoption to regenerate individual areas. Although West Bromwich has previously developed individual sites around the Centre and identified a number of key sites within the Area Action Plan (AAP), it became evident early on that this strategy would not lead to transformational and aspirational change and many buildings were not flexible to accommodate additional uses.

Through workshops, analysis and dialogues, it was agreed that a more fundamental, and coherent approach to Town Centre regeneration was required to drive significant change, growth and prosperity across the Town Centre. There is a need to prioritise schemes which can have a transformational impact.

The design team worked closely to understand West Bromwich’s growth industries and future projections based on data analysis to determine viable uses and locations for these sites. Continued analysis was undertaken throughout the masterplan process to test the mix of uses with viability, market testing and engagement.

The resulting masterplan would need to create a balanced offer for a variety of new shops/spaces and differing uses but would also need to facilitate local needs and support local business and retailers.



AAP Masterplan Boundary Plan December 2019

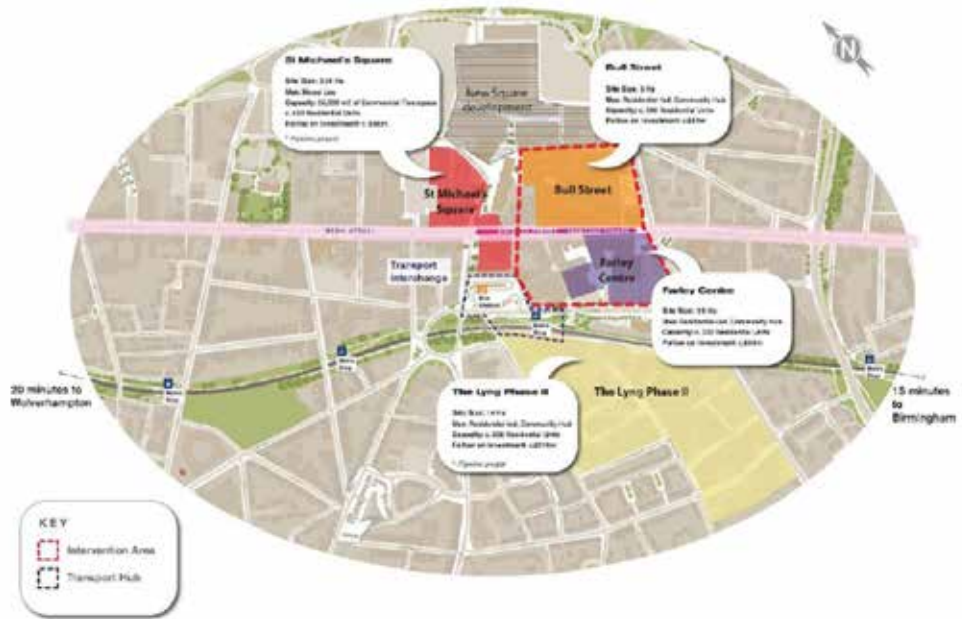


Identified sites and opportunity locations

WMCA and Sandwell MBC Draft DIP

In 2019 Sandwell MBC prepared a Draft Delivery and Investment Plan (DIP) for West Bromwich Town Centre as part of the WMCA Town Centre Programme. This identified 4 development opportunity sites in close proximity to the existing metro and bus interchange station.

This has been considered within the masterplan proposals and further strengthens the potential to shift perceptions of the town and attract inward investment for a range of uses.



West Bromwich DIP

Appendix B- Need for Change

Appendix

Need for Change

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Overview

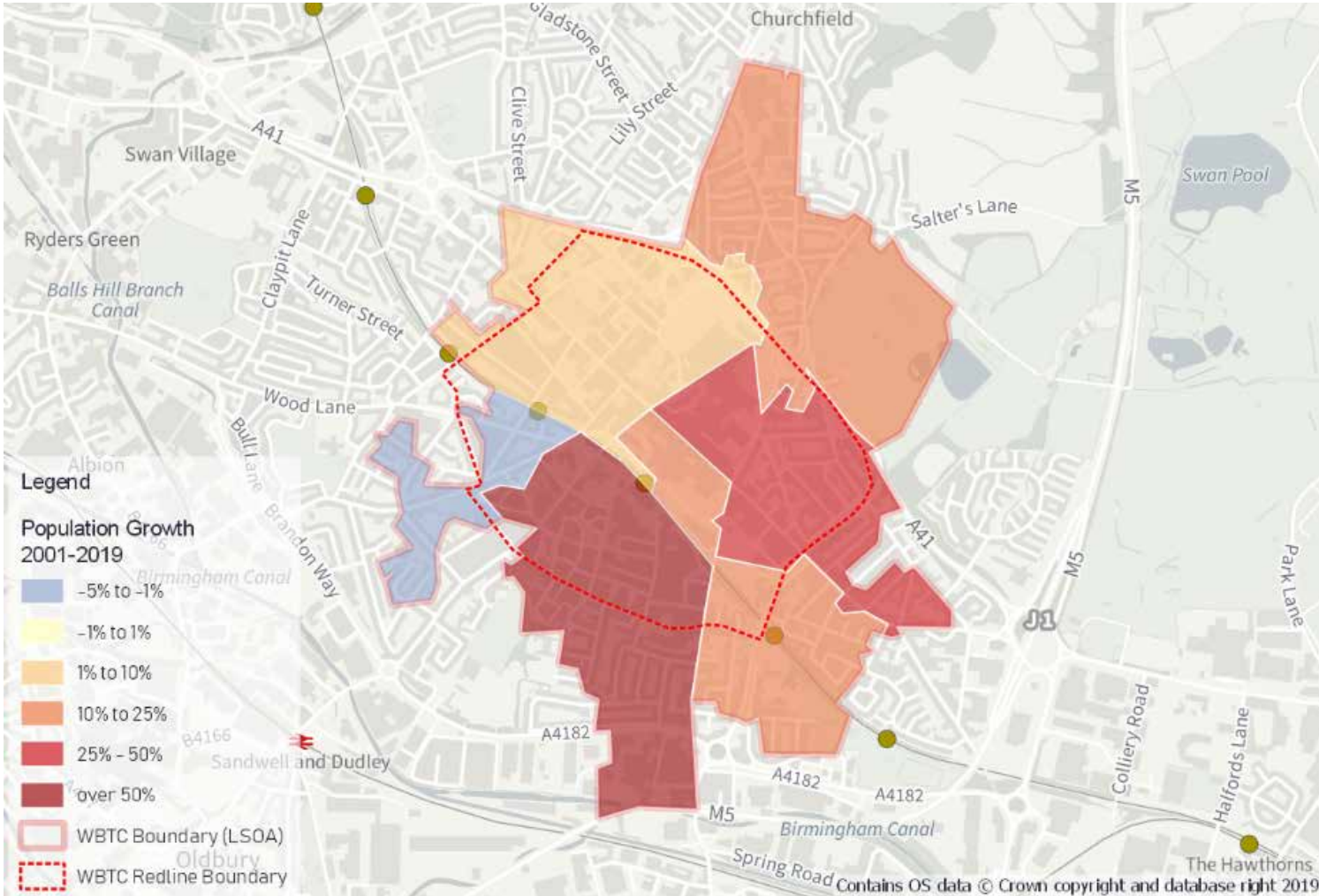
There are many drivers for change in West Bromwich and the wider Black Country and West Midlands region. Theses include complex challenges as well as exciting opportunities for growth of the town. The following section provides an overview of some of these challenges, opportunities and drivers for change. Further detail on this is provided in the Baseline Report which accompanies this Masterplan.

Population growth and residential demand

West Bromwich and Sandwell both have growing populations, however housing delivery has not occurred at the same rate. This has resulted in increased housing demand in the area. There are currently unprecedented levels of housing demand and people are seeking homes in good quality locations with access to amenities and good transport links – West Bromwich in the future could deliver on these needs and grow a sustainable residential community.

Demand is strong across multiple housing types, including homes for young couples and singles looking to get onto the property ladder, families, as well as older professionals or retirees looking to downsize and move somewhere that has an active and vibrant community and social scene.

- The town centre population is growing. Major residential development schemes such as the Lyng Phase I and Eastern Gateway, have been extremely successful in meeting residential demand and increasing the local population. The Lyng Phase I completed in 2013 was one of the most successful housing developments in the region in terms of sales rates
- This demonstrates the demand potential for such a well connected and sustainable location as West Bromwich. However there remains significant unmet demand in the town for residential development



LSOA population change 2001-2019
Source: ONS Population Estimates, Savills 2020

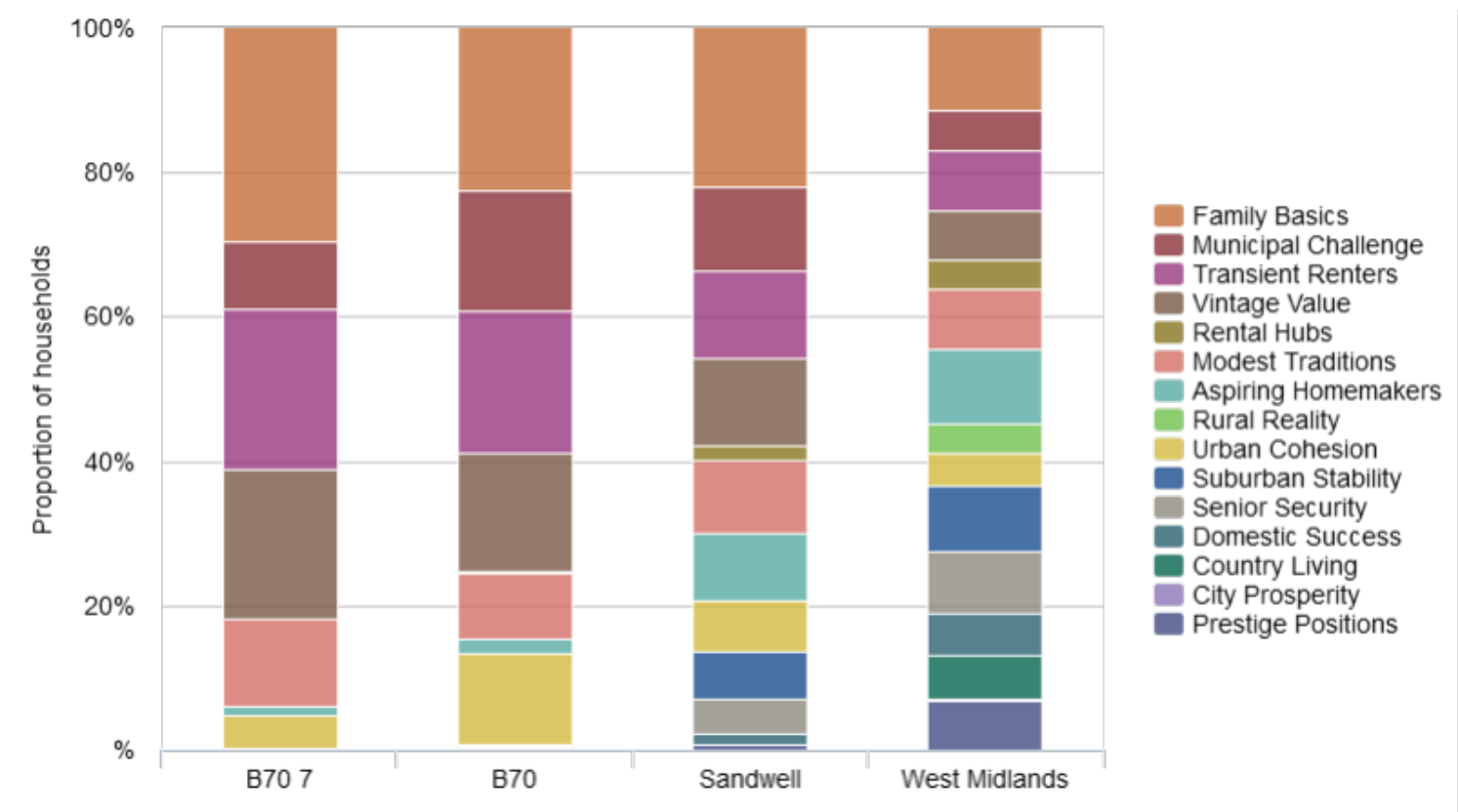
Appendix

Need for Change

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There were 794 net additional dwellings in Sandwell between 2018-2019, a 4% increase on the 5 year average. While this presents a growth in homes built it is well below the Governments assessment of housing need of 1,432 homes per annum – this suggests a significant undersupply of homes, and need to increase homes built

- There are also a number of ‘missing markets’ for residential development. Experian data provides a classification of residential populations based on multiple characteristics, including family status, employment, occupation and wages. For West Bromwich this indicates that there are a number of potentially ‘missing’ residential markets not catered for compared to the wider region. For example there are none of the more affluent categories of ‘City Prosperity’, ‘Domestic success’, ‘senior security’ or ‘aspiring home makers’ in the town, but a high proportion of ‘Transient renters’
- Town Centre residential development will provide a range of benefits, including increased footfall, vibrancy, increase retail and leisure spending, support for an evening economy and entertainment, use of the metro, and use of sustainable low carbon transport
- To deliver high quality residential development in the town centre would require a transformation of the urban design and layout of the town, as well as a step change in the quality of place and public realm



Experian MOSAIC Consumer Classifications for West Bromwich Town Centre Residents and wider area
 Source: Experian MOSAIC, 2019

Appendix

Need for Change

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Deprivation and Skills

The local population and surrounding area is characterized by some of the most deprived communities in the country. Delivering a step change in the quality of environment, economic and skills and training opportunities to this community aligns with the Governments Levelling Up agenda.

- Parts of the town and surrounding area are some of the most deprived (top 10% most deprived) locations in the country according the Index of Multiple Deprivation
- Development and regeneration projects such as the Lyng Phase I have had a significant impact on the deprivation levels in the area, by reducing the opportunities for crime and establishing a new community in good quality housing. This demonstrates the value of good quality residential development in delivering positive outcomes for our communities
- The qualification profile for the town shows a prevalence of resident with no qualifications, and low shares of people with qualifications at degree level or above
- Also annual earnings for residents are and have historically been below Sandwell's and the West Midlands levels', and that gap is widening as the town centre is registering slower growth
- This is despite the prevalence of education facilities in the town. West Bromwich town centre is now home to three further education facilities
- New economic opportunities, including jobs in new, high value, growth industries, can have Social Value benefits to residents via training and apprenticeship opportunities and also raising aspirations of young people in the towns education institutions



Appendix

Need for Change

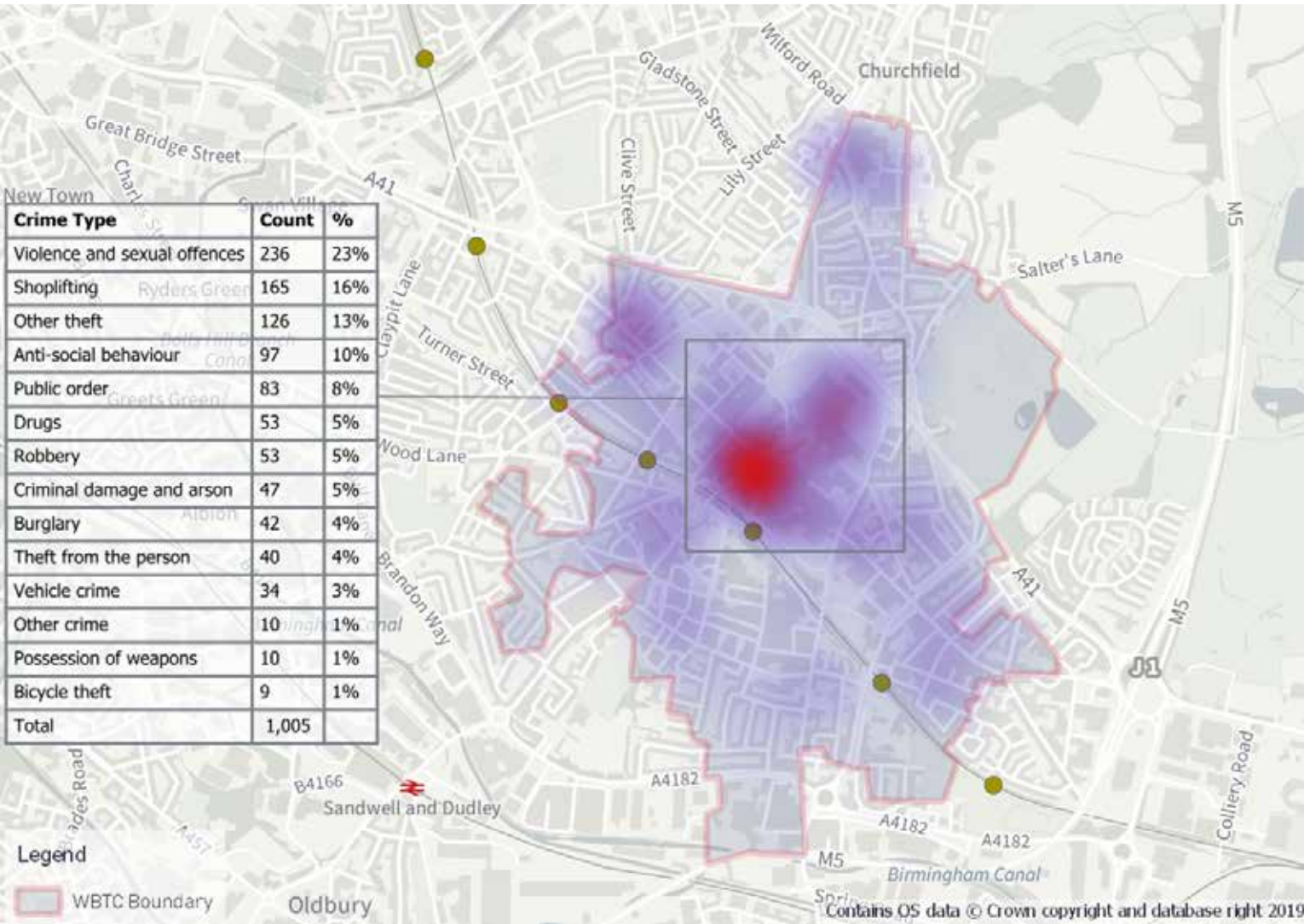
Page 128

Quality of the environment

West Bromwich Town Centre is blighted by a number of high profile vacant and derelict spaces. It also suffers from a number of urban design issues which hinder access, or create opportunities for crime, and impact on the perceptions of the town as a place to live, work and visit. This Masterplan aims to transform the urban design of the town, completely transforming the face of West Bromwich.

- The town centre is a crime hotspot. Over 12-months around 1,000 incidents were recorded in WBTC
- The current layout and design of the centre exacerbates crime issues, with a number of areas with poor passive surveillance
- The quality of the environment in the town is lacking, with a number of bare brick walls, limited public realm improvements, and only isolated new build developments of high quality
- To create a centre capable of supporting a residential community and attract visitors requires transformation and a step change in the quality and offer of the centre

Development will need to consider the Secured by design principles to create safe and secure communities where the risk of crime and anti-social behaviour can be reduced at the earliest stage.



Crime Incidence Hotspots
Source: West Midlands Police, Savills 2020

Secured by Design Principles



COMMITMENT



UNDERSTAND



RESPOND



MANAGEMENT



IMPLEMENT



EVALUATE

Appendix

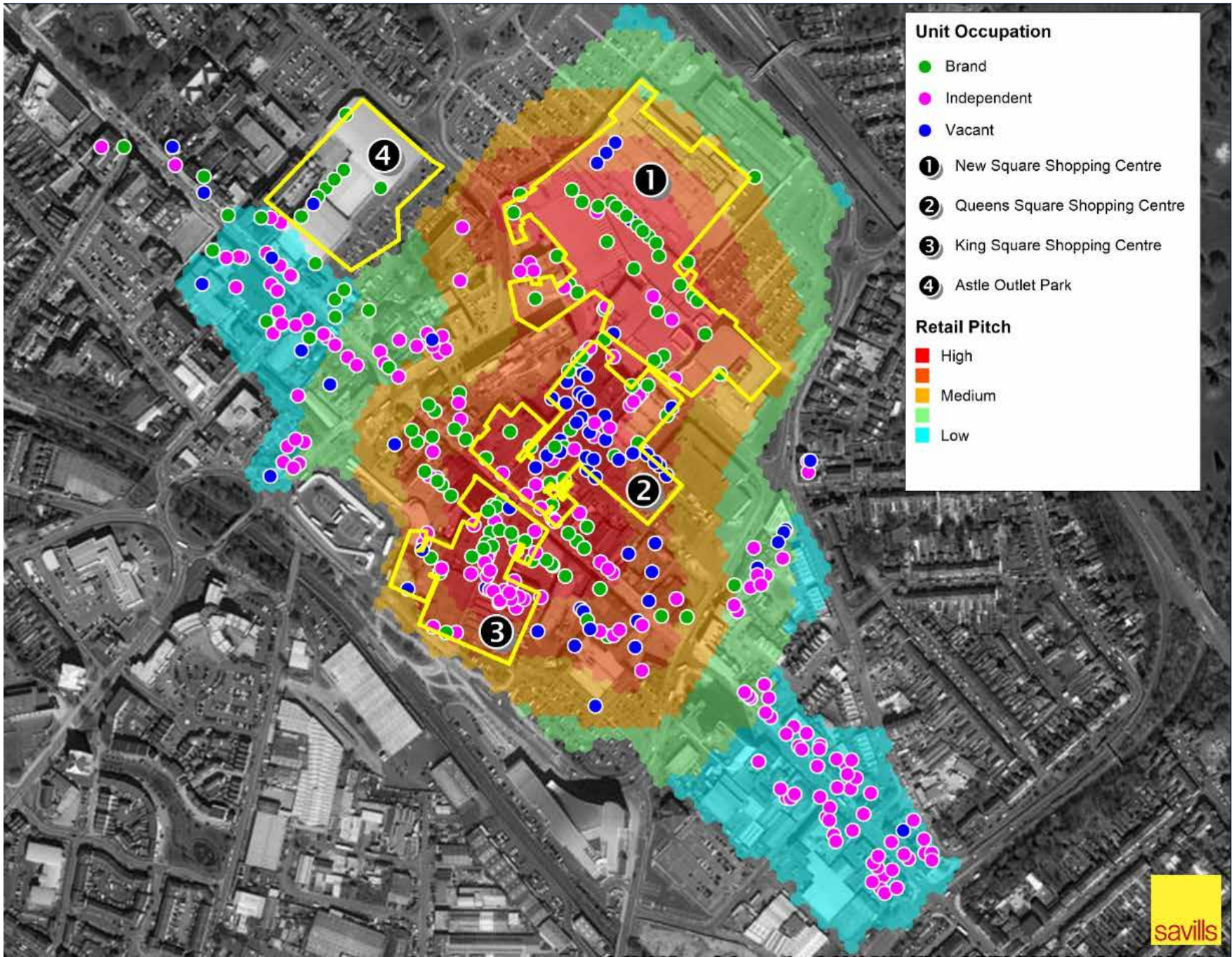
Need for Change

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Retail oversupply and changing demand

The town currently has a lack of economic diversity and an oversupply of retail floorspace, much of which is long term vacant and obsolete. This means the town and the local economy are susceptible to the challenges facing the retail sector currently. The masterplan creates the opportunity to plan for and deliver more flexible space targeted at economic growth sectors, and transform the patterns of land use in the town.

- Even before the pandemic, brick-and-mortar retail outlets in town centres were struggling due to increasing rents and business rates, competition from out-of-town retail and increasing online shopping. Covid-19 accelerated some of these trends, particularly the increase in online shopping
- In 2019 Town Centre vacancy rates were at 19%. Well above the UK average of 11%. Covid-19 is likely to have increased vacancy rates
- 88% of vacant units in the prime pitch have been vacant for more than three years
- There was 8.7sqft of retail space per Shopper Population (number of people in the catchment). By comparison the national figure is 5.2sqft/ Shopper Population. This suggests that the centre is oversupplied with retail space compared to its catchment
- To tackle the oversupply of retail uses there is a need to re-purpose redundant retail space to new uses, increase the captive shopper market of the area via residential development, and improve the vibrancy and quality of the shopper experience in the town



Retail and Leisure Use Analysis
Source: GOAD, Geolytix, Savills, 2019

Appendix

Need for Change

Economy and Job growth

West Bromwich town centre is within 15 minutes commute of Birmingham, and sits in the centre of the Black Country. It is strategically located to capture the major economic growth drivers for these areas, and in doing so can have an impact on the regional economy. Job growth is strong in traditional sectors such as education and health, but is less so in emerging sectors including leisure, arts, creative, digital, tech, and professional service sectors. The Masterplan will deliver space to capture future growth in these emerging and established sectors.

- The economy in West Bromwich town centre is buoyant, but limited to a number of sectors which are undergoing change, and so potentially susceptible to future changes (eg. retail and industrial manufacturing). At the same time the town has the potential to capture the growth of exciting new sectors and markets which could transform the employment base of the town, including in leisure, arts, creative, digital, tech, and professional service sectors
- Between 2015 to 2019 jobs in the town centre have gone up by 15%, a contrast to the trend across Sandwell where jobs have decreased by 6%. This demonstrates the importance of the town as an employment location
- The employment base and economy of West Bromwich is supported by a number of key sectors, including health which is the strongest sector, and public administration
- Despite the wealth of education facilities in the town, education is not growing as fast as other sectors and there are opportunities to support a greater cluster and scale of education services in the town that could have flow on impacts on the knowledge economy and digital, creative sector specialisms in the town
- There are more jobs (15,300) than people (11,500) living in the town centre. While this is a common feature of town centres, it is significant also in relative terms, whereby West Bromwich has about 3% of Sandwell's population and 12% of total jobs

- West Bromwich town centre benefits from established industrial land assets, to the south of the town but also in the wider region which are well placed to support future industrial land needs
- Well connected centres such as West Bromwich should instead focus on higher density employment uses in high growth and value sectors such as finance, insurance, public admin, real estate, digital, technology, science and knowledge sectors
- This requires high quality, flexible workspace in high quality settings with good transport links

Sector	Sandwell	West Midlands
Arts, entertainment and rec	21%	16%
Human health and social work	20%	18%
Professional, scientific and tech	15%	12%
Real estate activities	9%	3%
Administrative and support	9%	15%
Construction	4%	4%
Transportation and storage	4%	-3%
Other service activities	3%	2%
Information and communication	2%	4%
Education	0%	-1%
Wholesale and retail trade	-3%	-5%
Accommodation and food service	-3%	-5%
Public administration and defence	-9%	-8%
Financial and insurance	-10%	-10%
Electricity, gas, steam and air	-12%	-12%
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	-18%	-18%
Water supply	-21%	-21%
Manufacturing - Total	-36%	-36%
Mining & Quarrying		-56%

Forecast employment growth by sector until 2040
Source: Oxford Economics (2020), Savills Analysis (2020)

Appendix

Need for Change

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Resilience and sustainability

All Town Centres across the country are facing similar challenges to West Bromwich. Changing retail demand, greater demand for housing, changing employment markets, issues with quality of environment. At the same time it is important that town centres work well as economic drivers for our national economy, alleviate pressure on housing growth in green belt areas, help tackle the housing affordability crisis, link people with jobs and avoid long commuting, promote sustainable transport, and help meet the challenge of global warming by transitioning to low carbon and sustainable practices.

This Masterplan recognizes that in order to achieve these complex challenges requires an ambitious and transformational approach to regeneration. Creating a new balance of uses and delivering growth in the right places.

- The use of metro and public transport is relatively low
- The layout and design of the centre limits access from key transport nodes including the bus station and metro
- Severance of the highway network makes the pedestrian and cycling experience less desirable in places
- Cycling infrastructure around the centre is piecemeal
- Increasing the town centre population, and access to sustainable transport (walking cycling, bus and metro) could help create a sustainable community and support transition to a Low Carbon economy

Appendix

Key economic sectors for size and growth in West Bromwich

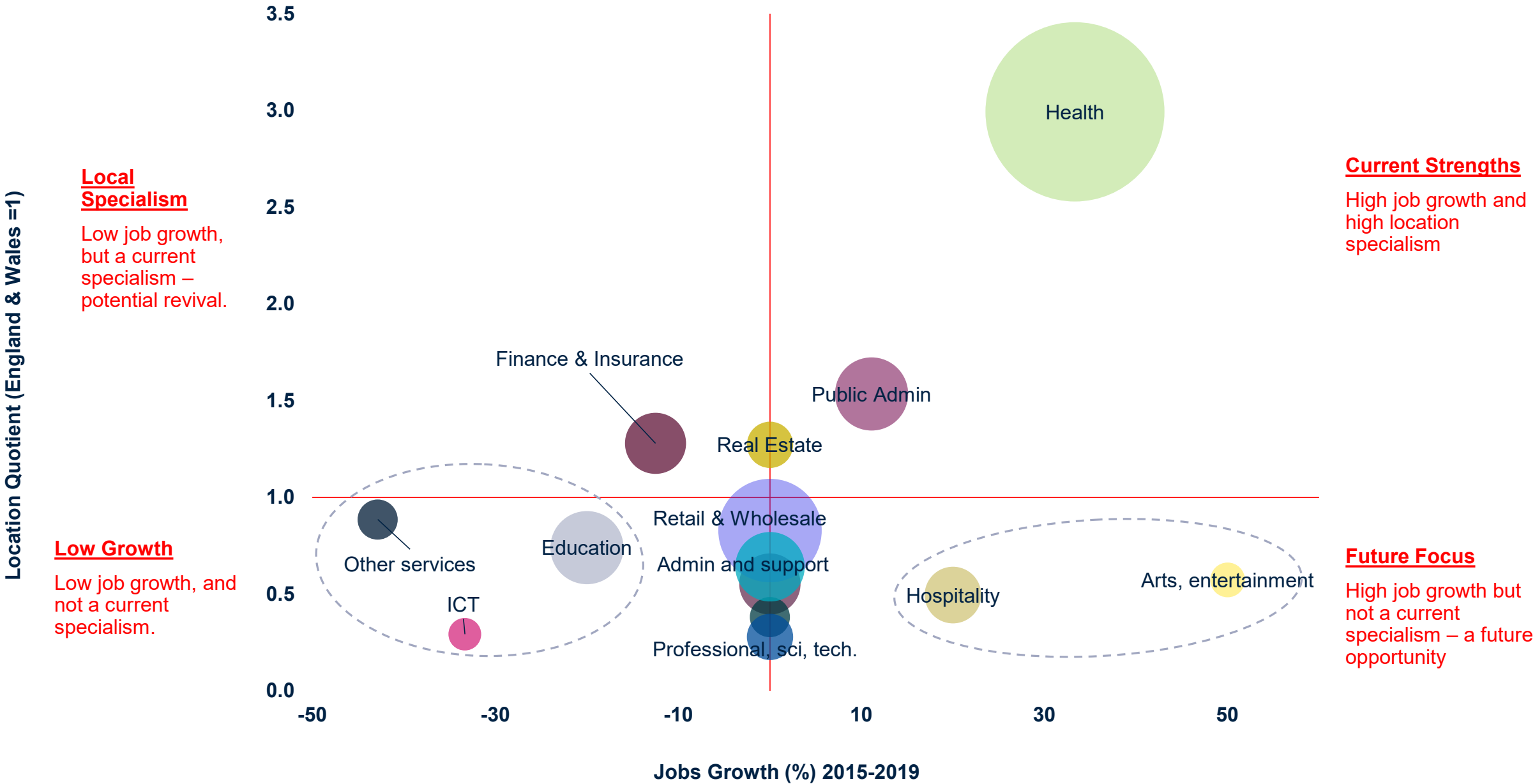
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Health – Strongest employment sector in the town centre. Consider links with light manufacturing for bio-tech space and nursing homes.

Retail – second largest employment sector. The worst affected by the pandemic. Importance of re-thinking the use of existing retail space (experience driven, more active uses, repurposing, etc.)

Arts & Entertainment – great sector to build on to improve vitality and diverse use of the town centre. One of the fastest growing – driven by sports.

Hospitality – important sector for town centres, also badly affected by the pandemic. Opportunity to consolidate uses with retail.



Appendix C- Historical and Heritage Context

Analysis

History

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West Bromwich is first mentioned as Bromwic in the Domesday Book of 1086. The etymology of the settlements name Bromwic, to mean 'broom village', is a reference to the plants that presumably grew in the area.

By the 12th century a Benedictine Priory had been established, around which the settlement of Broom-rich Heath grew. However, it was not until the early-18th century that the settlement began rapid expansion, coinciding with the Industrial Revolution. The natural richness of ironstone and coal in the area led to a number of industries developing, including brick making and coal mining. The enclosure of the Heath in 1804 resulted in a shift of the settlement south-west from Lyndon to what became the High Street stretch of the Birmingham-Wolverhampton road.

The arrival of the railway and opening of the West Bromwich train station in 1854 resulted in further growth of the settlement. The affluence of West Bromwich throughout the mid to late-19th century can be seen in the high quality municipal buildings constructed in this time. A new town hall and library were constructed in 1874-75. In the 1900's West Bromwich grew rapidly, radiating from the long High Street, with its large public buildings at the western end and industrial activities to the south and east in closer with abundance of retail shops lining the High Street.

The growth and affluence of West Bromwich continued into the early-20th century, which can also be inferred by the construction of a spire added to the Church of St Michael and the Holy Angels by 1911.

Modest buildings were replaced with larger structures, some with greater architectural detailing, such as the Central Library and the original old post office along the High Street which was replaced with a three-storey red brick building to the design of Henry Collins opposite the town hall.

The mid to late-20th century saw pockets of redevelopment along the High Street, including the construction of large shopping centres, replacing a number of smaller retail and residential properties within their footprint. These later developments have had a varying degree of success in design terms and their impact on the local economy, subsequently having been altered or demolished.



West Bromwich Aerial 1938
Images from <https://www.westbromwichhistory.com/>



Salters Springs

Analysis

Heritage

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West Bromwich boasts many fascinating places and buildings both within the Town Centre and further afield. The walk ‘West Bromwich heritage trail’ takes you around the key sites and attractions including the centrally located:

Grade II listed, Gothic style Town Hall and Central Library.

Sandwell Valley & Dartmouth Park.

The Public (Formally the largest community arts development in Europe) now Central St Michaels Sixth Form College.

Additionally:
Kenrick & Jefferson grade II listed printing building is located on the High Street.

Grade II listed drinking fountain and canopy & Dartmouth Sq Clock located at Dartmouth Square.

Football - As one of 12 founder members of the football league WBA attracts thousands of people to the area on a regular basis.

The coat of arms represents the iron and brass foundries and motto- ‘Work overcomes all things’ This emphasised the working nature of the town.



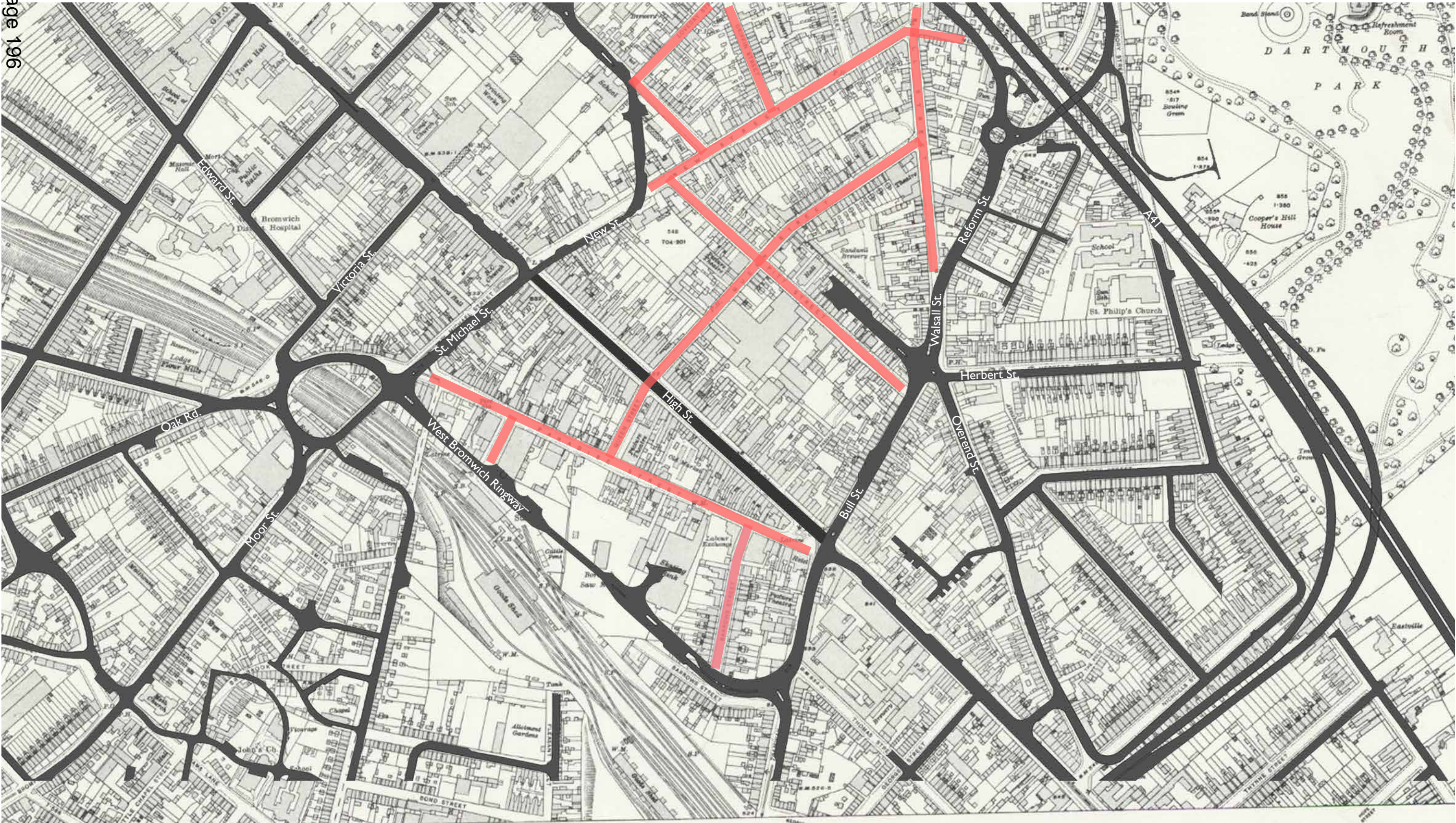
Analysis

Historic Connections - Evolution of the town.

West Bromwich Map 1913

Current Road Network 2021

Lost Streets & Connections

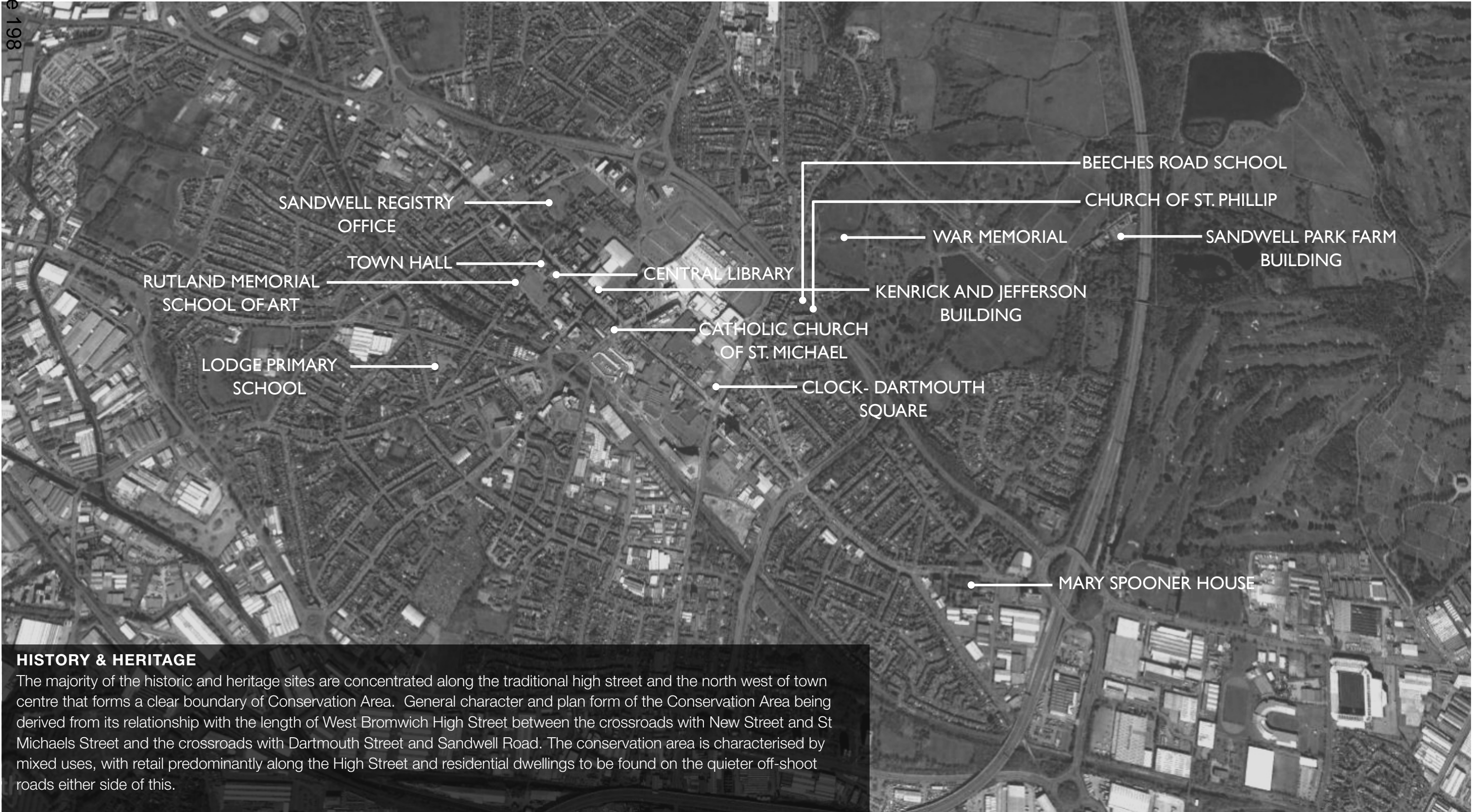


Appendix D- Wider Context

Appendix

Existing Ingredients Wider Context

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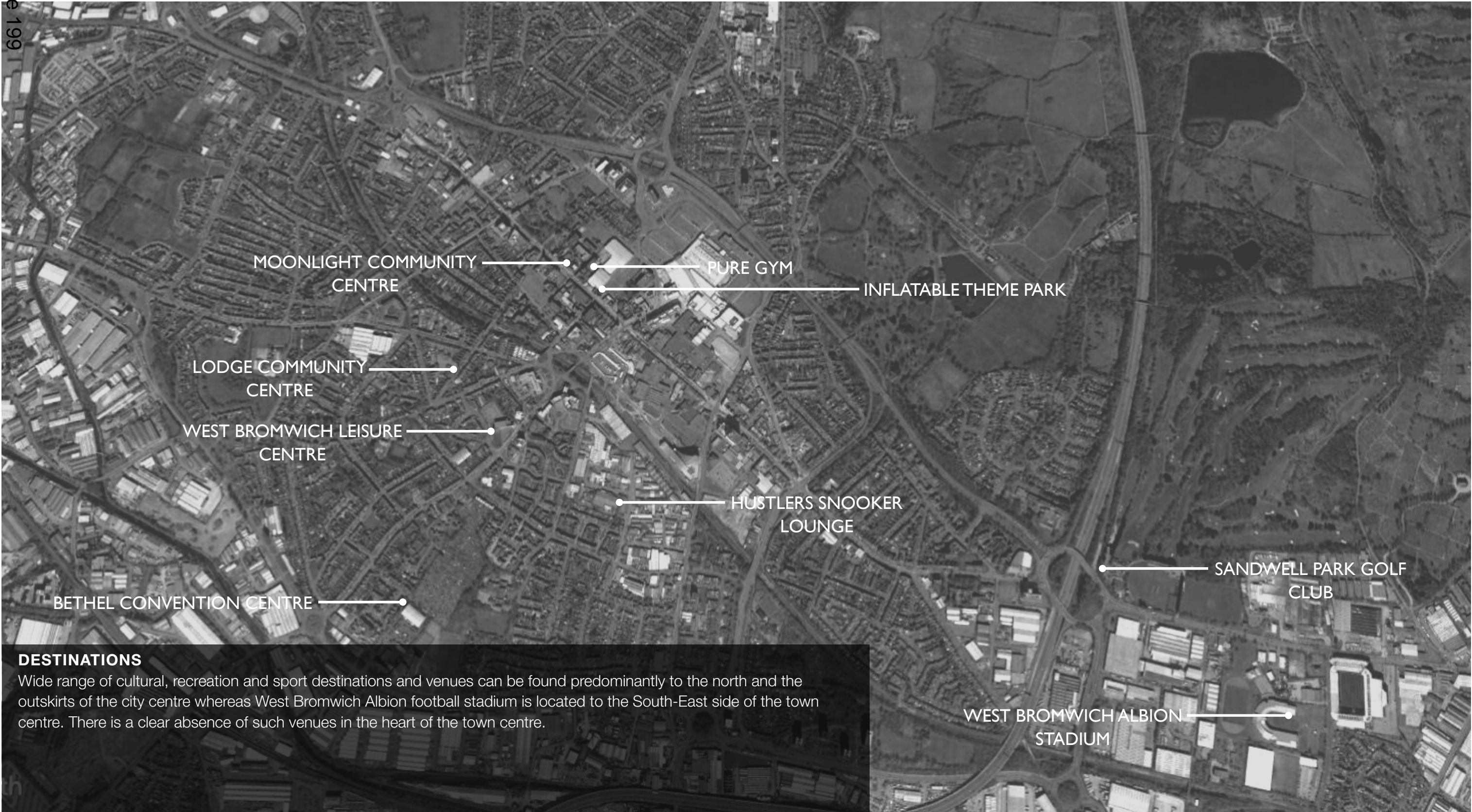
HISTORY & HERITAGE

The majority of the historic and heritage sites are concentrated along the traditional high street and the north west of town centre that forms a clear boundary of Conservation Area. General character and plan form of the Conservation Area being derived from its relationship with the length of West Bromwich High Street between the crossroads with New Street and St Michaels Street and the crossroads with Dartmouth Street and Sandwell Road. The conservation area is characterised by mixed uses, with retail predominantly along the High Street and residential dwellings to be found on the quieter off-shoot roads either side of this.

Appendix

Existing Ingredients Wider Context

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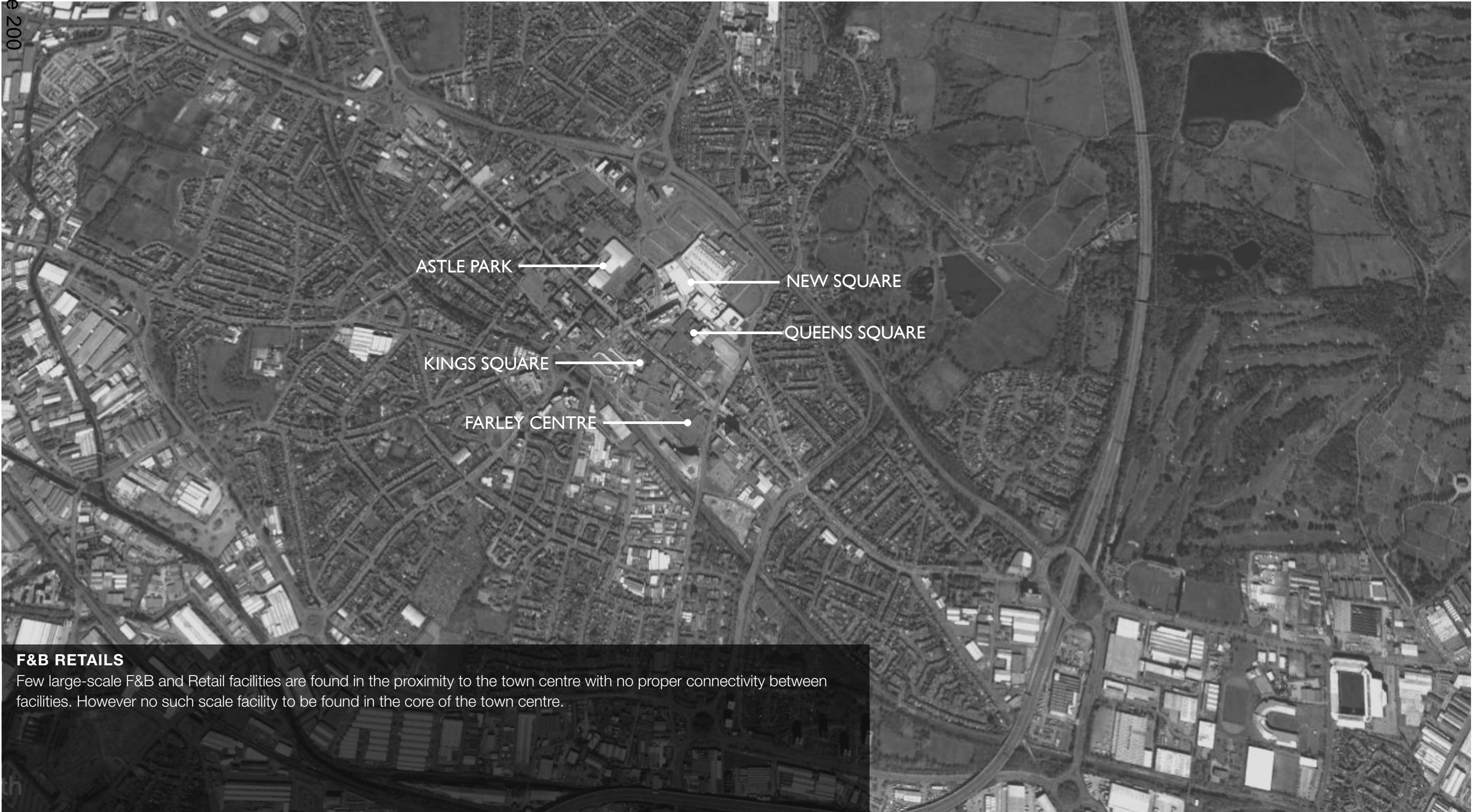
DESTINATIONS

Wide range of cultural, recreation and sport destinations and venues can be found predominantly to the north and the outskirts of the city centre whereas West Bromwich Albion football stadium is located to the South-East side of the town centre. There is a clear absence of such venues in the heart of the town centre.

Appendix

Existing Ingredients Wider Context

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F&B RETAILS

Few large-scale F&B and Retail facilities are found in the proximity to the town centre with no proper connectivity between facilities. However no such scale facility to be found in the core of the town centre.

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Existing Ingredients Wider Context

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Appendix

Existing Ingredients Wider Context

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PARKS & GREEN SPACE

Two main parkland space in the proximity to the West Bromwich town centre are Dartmouth and Sandwell parks, North-East to the town centre. There are also a few smaller park areas scattered West of the town centre.

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West Bromwich Masterplan/Interim Planning Statement (IPS) Consultation Statement

Key Background/timeline dates;

Initial authorisation of IPS Cabinet Report (Cllr Bob Lloyd/Director Amy Harhoff) 24th Sep, 2019.

Cabinet Authorises IPS/budget of £200k Masterplan, 5th Feb, 2020, Cllr Bob Lloyd, Director Amy Harhoff.

Masterplan commissioned October 2020 (Savills, with Benoy & Mott MacDonald supporting).

Lyng Primary School Writing/Illustration Competition spring 2021- 140 + entries, completed.

Sandwell College Workshop **Date to be confirmed with Savills**

Cabinet Workshop with Members (30th June 2021)

4x total Presentations made to West Bromwich Town Deal Local Board and West Bromwich Town Members Board Groups.

Public Consultation on Draft IPS & Masterplan undertaken over four weeks- 22nd July-20th August 2021. Online Consultation closed at 5:30pm on 20th August.

Cabinet Process starts 22nd October 2021.

*Outcome of Public Consultation to be reported to Cabinet and for final approval and endorsement of Masterplan and IPS to be sought **24th November 2021**

Public Consultation- Consultation methods

Face to Face:

This consisted of face to face meetings with display boards in West Bromwich Centre on 7 occasions, to explain IPS/Masterplan proposals to members of public, traders, shoppers, Councillors etc.

Schedule of meetings:

27th July (2hrs) 10-12 noon

29th July (2hrs) 10-12 noon

3rd Aug (2hrs) 12-2pm

5th Aug (2hrs) 12-2pm

10th Aug (2hrs) 10-12 noon

12th Aug (2hrs) 10-12 noon

17th Aug (2hrs) 12-2pm

No formal responses were recorded at the face to face events, rather attendees were invited to use the on line forms, or post in paper copies of the surveys.

Generally, attendees were supportive of the Masterplan proposals once they were explained, along with the reasons why a Masterplan is needed.

Other Methods:

Press Release - Article featured Express & Star Tuesday 27th 2021

-Article featured in Sandwell Chronicle Thursday 29 July 2021

Facebook, Webpage Survey on Sandwell MBC Website, SMBC online 'Weekly News', Twitter, paper copies of forms and Sandwell Herald, SMBC's Think Sandwell's Online Site (tweeted). Message of consultation pushed through email via West Bromwich Town Members Board mail contacts (Community & Youth) and through Members.

*The SMBC online masterplan page recorded 1,696 unique page views.

Responses:

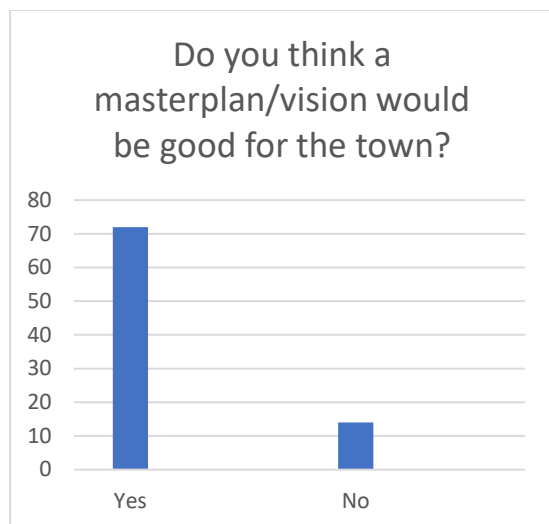
For the Online Survey 89 formal survey responses were received. These addressed 5 key questions for West Bromwich Town Centre, with space for "other comments".

If responders did not agree with the questions, they were invited to say why/what were the reasons.

A range of respondents contributed. These ranged from individual residents & shoppers, to Market Traders, Shop Owner/operators and Shopping Centre Operators.

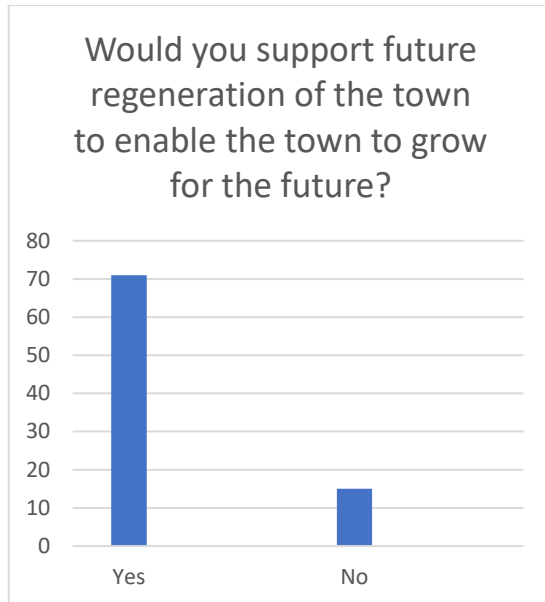
Results below:

Question 1



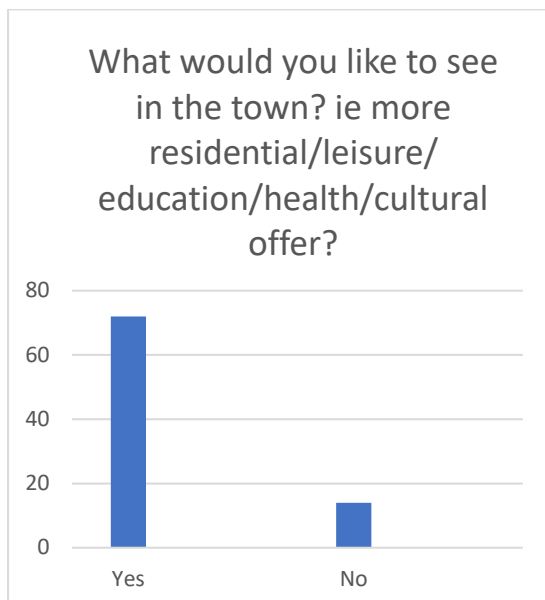
Base 86 – Yes 72 83.70% NO 14 16.30%

Question 2



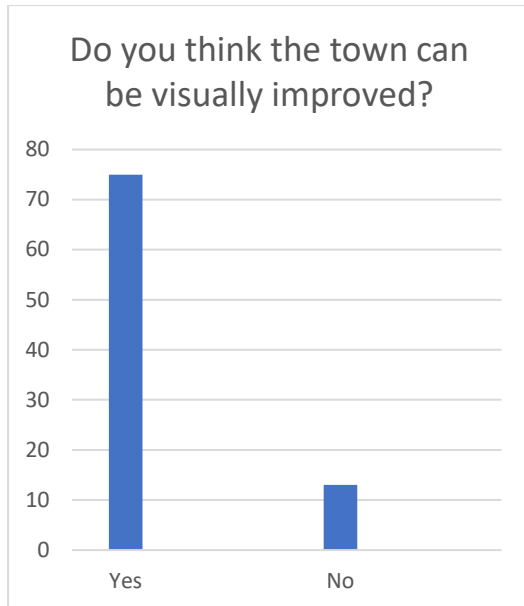
Base 86 – Yes 71 82.60% NO 15 17.40%

Question 3



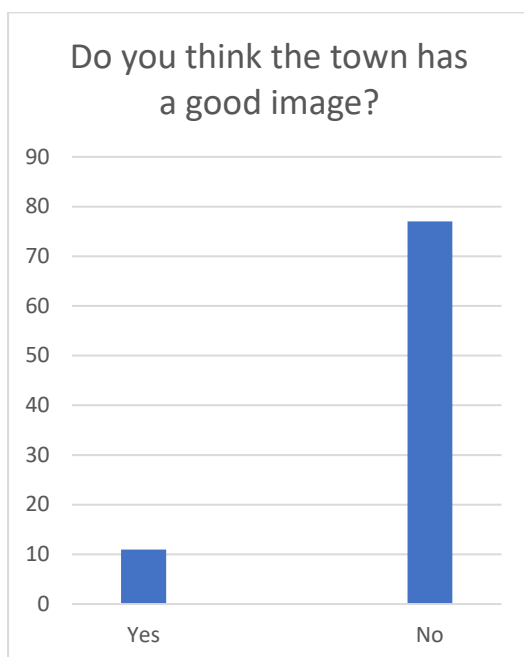
Base 86 Yes 72 83.70% NO 14 16.30%

Question 4



Base 88 Yes 75 85.20% NO 13 14.8%

Question 5.



Base 88 Yes 11 12.5% **NO 87.50 %**

Responses to Q1-4 show a good level of support for the proposals, with the response to Q5 showing why intervention is required.

After these 5 questions, respondents were asked for further information on West Bromwich & the IPS/ Masterplan proposals.

Responses/Trends

Again, Crime/ASB were the most frequent issues raised, with 47 of the 89 responses directly referencing Crime/ASB or safety issues.

Other issues included:


- A strong element of other Towns missing out ,
 - Youth facilities required,
 - Need to repurpose space,
 - Community Spaces & Greenery and Affordable Housing needed,
 - Evening economy required,
 - Libraries role espoused,
 - Vermin issues,
 - More disabled facilities,
 - More toilets required,
 - The need to maximise housing provision & lack of demand for office accommodation was raised,
- concern of effects of proposals

(See Appendix 1 (below) for full list.)

The LDF planning email facility was used by several respondents. Of the issues raised, there was a common theme, again, of crime/anti-social behaviour, which is largely not a direct planning issue.*

Other issues included maintenance, transport, value for money, play areas.

The results are summarised in the table below.

 denotes inappropriate comments

Ref	Supporting	Objecting	Main Issues	Summary
St Michael's Court	1	1	Support, better communications, unrelated finance issue	Broad Support
Ms B	0	1	Crime ASB	Crime ASB
Ms B	0	1	Crime ASB	Crime ASB
Ms H	1	1	Better Transport, more shops, play space, social space, Crime ASB.	Better Transport, more shops, play space, social space, Crime ASB.
Ms R	1	1	supports greening, maintenance issues++	supports urban greening, maintenance issues
N R	1	1	Lists 26 improvements suggested-see appendix.	Maintenance, security, more leisure, entertainment,D2, supports Greening, cafes with canopy, water features, new bus stops, see through roofing.
Ms T	1	0	Outdoor Gym good, aids obesity fight.	pro outdoor gym on health grounds.
Unstated	1	0	pro greening, pro play area kids	pro greening, pro play area kids
Peter P	0	0	Clarification request	Clarification request
Severn Trent	1	0	water efficiency, water quality, capacity, run off, sewage issues raised-no problems foresaw.	No problems envisaged.
Severn Trent2	0	1	Possibly underground water assets mooted.	Possibly underground water assets mooted.
Craig C	0	1	Suggests priority is maintenance, proposals a waste of money & will be utilised by [REDACTED] community. Crime ASB	Maintenance, Crime ASB, proposals used [REDACTED] waste of money, wants consultation on further spend.
Ms K	1	0	Pro greening, also recycling machines to support homeless, reduce litter etc.,	Pro greening, recycling machines.
Ms H	1	0	pro greening, play area & community, maintenance key	pro greening, play area & community, maintenance key
Mrs S	0	1	Crime ASB, litter, vacancies, policing issues	Crime ASB, litter, vacancies, policing issues
NG W	1	1	Supports greening, SUDS, transport etc proposals, but Crime /ASB needs tackling first	Supports greening, SUDS, transport etc proposals, but Crime ASB needs tackling first
LibDems	1	1	welcomes community and emphasis on creating more green space, charging points for electric cars or electric (zero-carbon) buses supports SUDS principles, more cultural facilities req. ie The Public	Supports community/greenspace ,less abled help req, more emph on e charging cars/buses req, supports SUDS principles, more cultural facilities req.
J B	1		Fantastic scheme, new indoor market is fantastic news, and good for passing footfall & thus added trade... All Trees must be mature, English grown & an English variety. ALL With a 5 years warranty.. And maintained over those years.. Plus replaced if trees die or are stunted We do non want small narrow whips. Secure cycle parking area with those silver Sandwell type cycle stands , like a penny farthing in shape.... Cameras must cover that secure cycle paring area as well.	Broad support for plan, specific req trees, maintenance & cycle parking, cctv.
12		11		

++ see Appendix 3 for full list

See (LDF Responses Masterplan).xls

Broad support was evident in most of the representations for the Masterplan & Urban Greening.

*Although planning does not *directly* impact the main concerns of Crime/ASB, it will play a valuable indirect role through, for example, encouraging/protecting active frontages, more residential in the centre & hence more visual surveillance, and promoting ‘secured by design’ principles for buildings & layouts.

See (Masterplan Responses Bar Charts Keywords Analysis).xls

Other Representations

WM police liaised directly with consultants to emphasise the importance of crime reduction via ‘Secured by Design’ approach. Developers need to show how they will address community safety & crime prevention in application documents. Early engagement encouraged. Pre application discussions welcomed, ‘protecting crowded places’ document referenced. **For full representation see Appendix 2 (below).**

Councillor D SMBC

Cllr D suggested the Indoor Market should be refurbished to a high standard rather than moved to the High Street, and that a high quality scheme would ensure its future success.

Twitter:

Several ‘Twitter’ responses were received:

Ref	Support	Object	Issue
Sidney		1	██████████ Inappropriate comments
Darren		1	Don’t bother, wasted far too much money on The Public
Dan		1	Decries millions spent on WB over last decade. Hates the town, money can’t change it, Sad.
Amie		1	Query loss of food court, closed down, a waste of money.
Bhav		1	Outdoor market horrible to walk past.
Tom		1	██████████

Facebook We received in excess of 150+ comments on the Councils Facebook page over a series of pushed messages during the consultation period. The main discussions centred around the poor visual quality of the town , crime and anti social behaviour although there were a few positive comments received in support of developing a masterplan. **See Appendix 4 data-**

General Summary:

The consultation process has generated a range of comments/suggestions that can be incorporated into the body of the IPS Masterplan. Generally, there is broad support for many of the changes the Masterplan espouses, with wide agreement on the scale of the issue.

However, Crime/ASB is not a direct planning issue, which was by far the major concern of respondents.

The aim of the Masterplan is to provide a vision for the future of the Town Centre. By Repurposing spaces and reimagining new places and spaces through flexible new uses it is hoped a level of vibrancy and improved sustainability will boost the economic standing of the town but also become a more attractive place to live, work and place to enjoy in the future. The proposals identified in the masterplan will seek to improve the quality of places and spaces in the town moving forward to the future and help in tackling the concerns and issues raised by the public. Much of the concerns and issues raised through the consultation will be reported to the respective internal/external agencies to inform and improve ongoing collaborative working.

Appendix 1 -Further Comments on IPS/Masterplan Survey.

If an answer is NO to any of the previous questions please let us know why...		
	Do you have any other comments	Keywords
West Bromwich is very scary now and I would not go alone. A lot of crime, closed shops, gangs and rubbish on the floor		Crime
I do not think the town has a good image at the moment due to crime happening in the town and surrounding areas.	I do not use the town centre as much as I would have due to feeling unsafe with recent incidents that have happened there.	Crime
High crime, low police presence	Crime needs more severe punishment. Gun or knife crime needs to be looked at by government as a priority so there is a deterrent not to carry them. Our town will not be safe until this happens.	Crime
People seem to think of West Brom as run down, tatty and a hive of anti-social behaviour	Please, please focus on the doable, not grand plans which end up as white elephants. Look at the Public as an example of what not to do.	ASB, Achievable,
Reputation for violence and crime		Crime
		ASB
There is too much anti-social behaviour which deters people from using West Bromwich. Street drinkers, beggars and homeless people. Disruption from college students with frequent fighting. Our beautiful town feels very neglected. I think it definitely needs regeneration, but I think the above problems need to be addressed first.		ASB
West Bromwich town centre is not a safe place to walk around. Government funding cuts has caused huge unemployment and police cuts. We basically need to bring hope back to the town and the only way to do that is by bringing large companies in to employ locals and much desperately needed places for younger people to go. A huge youth club, a decent skatepark, music venues etc. I still can't believe you closed the public to be honest, the one place that brought culture and entertainment to the town that we hadn't seen in yrs. We need these things in the town centre, close to public transport so that	Please actually listen to people and do something productive. Don't just take back handers and build things that benefit no one but the person getting paid.	Crime, youth facilities req

younger people can reach them easily. Building apartments that no one can afford to buy is not the answer to anything.		
Vile place to live and walk through I feel intimidated going there hassled by beggars shop lifting is rife ...the stench of weed as you walk in the High street. Crime going on all around drugs deals openly on corners, thieving in shops the list goes on	I'd love to move I'm on the housing list the sooner the better	Crime
I hate west Bromwich i don't go up there anymore full of druggy's, thief's, Romanians i don't feel safe and i would not allow my children there on their own	Hate west Bromwich I feel like I've stepped into a diff country when i go their spot the white it is i don't feel comfortable my anxiety goes through the roof hate west Bromwich	Crime
West Bromwich as it is now is dirty and run down, I don't really feel safe there. It's not a place I would choose to shop anymore.	There needs to be a mix of green space, free parking, undercover shopping, places to eat, nightlife, exhibition spaces, more upmarket shops, not just pound shops and cheap places to make it a place that people want to visit, not just for locals but for people visiting the area.	Run Down
Anti-social behaviour, other than New Square, town is outdated and scruffy. Sadly, many of the local's behaviour is contributing to the bad image. Too little provision for young adults and not enough police presence to deter bad behaviour. Too many empty shops that will never be filled is ruining the appeal of the town.	It is time councils accept that we no longer need the amount of retail space in our towns. Rather than leave empty units unoccupied, reduce the number of units and convert remaining spaces to good quality apartments for rent or buy. Also encourage town centre living and re-consider having an ice skating rink built. The nearest ones are too far away and we have a train station, metro and motorway network that could serve people well to access the facility. This should encourage visitors from outside and increase footfall in the town. Security and behaviour is vital, along with keeping the town spotlessly clean. Visitors must feel safe and any bad behaviour must be dealt with immediately and effectively. We have an opportunity to grow the leisure side on offer and remove all those horrible empty shops, creating a new town, otherwise I fear it will all be a waste of time.	Acime/ASB, need to repurpose space.
The town just got a bad reputation due to crime		Crime
West Bromwich is very run down despite having lots of money already spent on it. Crime is huge up their pavements are filthy. Maybe it's time to try and spend money elsewhere in hope it will be kept well and looked after. Please spend money wisely and help another area which will help them to thrive.		Crime
Over the past 10-years the town has gone seriously downhill with an increase in anti-social behaviour and crime, lots of unemployed people hanging around drinking and smoking drugs outside betting shops and children hanging around in gangs after school or at night causing problems.	Before you improve the town centre visually I think it would be best to clean it up from all crime and anti-social behaviour, beggars and have an increased police presence.	Crime
	Need more study spaces no study zones available or private/quiet places to work	Study Spaces req

Please try spending some money on the rest of the Borough instead, rather than wasting it all in West Bromwich, anyone would think you were West Brom Council, not Sandwell. Let's see Tipton, Wednesbury, Oldbury and Blackheath have some massive improvement projects, rather than massive vanity projects like a new swimming pool or a big pink art gallery that failed miserably.		Other Towns a priority
The old part of the town is filthy and looks like it has never been cleaned. Millions was spent on paving to improve the town and it is not maintained. Need more police on patrol as it no longer feels safe as there are loads of people just hanging around. Not the town I grew up with. The Tesco side is ok but the old part really needs looking after.		maintenance, Crime
With Tesco selling everything no shops would be profitable in West Brom. Won't think Sandwell did was allow it to be built	It's pointless trying to regenerate a town over run with violent crime (I refer to the three stabbed police officers only last week) drug addiction and alcoholism is rife in the town. No one would want to set up a business while it's in this state	Crime
It's rundown and has a bad rep but I think there's places in Sandwell that need time and money more than West Brom... Tipton, Blackheath and Bearwood. For example		Other Towns a priority
It deemed as a high crime location and the streets are dirty with rubbish, where we have canals which would be beautiful nature spots, there is litter and obvious signs of neglect.		Crime
not safe to visit		not safe
to much crime, to many gangs, too much European residents		Crime
More Policing in the town due to violent robberies and street fighting. More security at Sandwell College in and around the college to avoid fighting.	More encouragement for big name shops to come into the town. The indoor market needs regenerating as that part of the town is almost dead.	Crime, big shops req
Image of the town is appalling. Unkempt buildings both privately owned and council. Litter throughout. Disused buildings and office spaces. Illogical road, cycle and footpath organisation. Generally, the entire town looks and feels run down and dirty	A predominance of single person dwellings along with many HMO's mean fewer families settling and living in the town. The only real leisure activity available is drinking. Far to many premises selling alcohol throughout the town .	Appaling Image, run down
Too much drug use within town centre no longer feels safe drivers driving on clearly marked footpath threatening to run people if they don't move of the footpath (by probation centre) no CCTV is covering that area there should be no parts of West Bromwich which doesn't have CCTV especially with the amount of crime that is currently taking place in the town centre		Crime
Before a masterplan is created to improve the area, create jobs etc the local issues within the area need to be targeted I.e. crime, cleanliness, safety. As a child I always went to West Brom but I no longer do and I wouldn't take my children and certainly not my disabled child		Crime, jobs req
Towns image is too much crime and drunkenness. Safety is paramount and less selling of alcohol would benefit the image.	More family homes and less individual flats would benefit a more safe shopping and coffee shop area.	Crime
The town is currently brightened with crime - assaults, theft, muggings, beggars, drinking alcohol - it seems to be acceptable for gangs to congregate drinking, swearing and making people feel very uneasy and not want to go to the town. Local social media sites are full of daily stories if the aforementioned and many local residents are now too frightened to venture up our town. It's very sad and desperately needs sorting. There needs to be a bigger police presence.	Most people living in West Bromwich are decent law-abiding citizens, we desperately want our town back.	Crime
West Bromwich carries a lot of stigma of being run down and dangerous from days of old and this affects what people think of it today. I think it's much better than it was but would benefit from more greenery, trees, plants, places to sit outdoors (was difficult finding somewhere in New square to eat outside during covid for example)	Please think about planting more trees so it's visually attractive and helps wildlife to flourish	Run down. Greenery, community spaces req

SMBC is about wanting to gentrify the town centre. This project will not even have 25% of the housing available for low income people.	As the local authority is known for corruption. I would like everything to be transparent accounts, bids, material pricing.	Affordable housing req
The town is a dump, abandoned by the police and the council, no wardens, although a fat lot of good they were, only good for ticketing grannies for dropping crumbs from cakes and ash from ciggies. Open dealing and drinking in the town, you report it, no one does anything at all. now it's lads getting mugged, by gangs with knives, No one does anything about that either. I was thrown off the Sandwell Council Facebook page for saying the "Improvements" to carter's green has made it worse than before. it was better in the 80's for god's sake. so I get banned from the Sandwell page. Without police there is no town, without a way to get from the high street to the indoor market, there is no indoor market (they sold the market gate entrance and built a charity shop) people are lazy, if you don't let them park, and move quickly from one place to another they will go elsewhere, if not then the town is as dead as Smethwick.	[REDACTED] and seeing pound signs which enables council houses and entire estates to be demolished and sold off to private development, Then building on every patch of land anywhere... including the joke for the old star and garter pub... 8 story block of flats, no parking. [REDACTED]	Crime, No police, no wardens.
Too much litter....especially at weekends, although New Square is kept clean and free of litter at all times Anti-social behaviour, begging etc not tackled effectively Behaviour of students from the colleges leaves a lot to be desired Crime	High profile retail needs to be encouragedM&S Food, TK Maxx, Body Shop....to move in. Yes, they are located out of area but not everyone has transport to get to the Gallagher Retail Park or similar. I regularly go to Solihull.....what a difference!!!!	litter, ASB
The shops are all run down Nothing has been looked after Looks dirty and unappealing	Unsafe place to visit Pickpockets, immigrants and gangs. Not a nice place to shop around. Do not feel safe in my own district Very sad and depressing it has come to be like this	Run down
I do not feel safe when I go to the town. I have a vulnerable mom and 9-year-old daughter and don't like to take them as I feel there is too much crime going on. Before the town looks at improving the look of West Bromwich I think that the crime needs sorting first. Plus, there are lots of people just hanging around making lots of noise by the market, this makes me feel intimidated and uncomfortable.	I feel that West Bromwich has had a lot of money put into it and this is unfair on other parts of Sandwell. I think Wednesbury and friar park should have money pumped into it as its a nice quiet little town that could do with a much needed make over	Crime
Firstly, I love West Bromwich and the kind-hearted people in the shops and on the market. But the market rates are too high; and this isn't the market that it was 10 years ago. There's too many empty stalls and, I know from being a journalist that used to cover the area, the traders are crying out for help. Outside, the higher part of the high street looks bear with empty shops (former Bargain Buys and Wilko) and the derelict site of the former Burtons building. I know that West Brom has a great BID team and lots of potential - but a greater police/ BID presence would ease anxiety around safety and give more support for homelessness. If the old part of West Brom could become more like New Square then I feel certain more people would like to come there (and feel safer to do so). But please - invest in the indoor market - don't let this traditional part of West Brom disappear! There seems to be a good presence of security in this area (King's Square) but we need this outside too! Perhaps better surveillance such as this would encourage a safer atmosphere in the high street and bring in more shoppers.		Indoor market issues, security.
The town is a hive for criminal activity and it isn't welcoming. If you want to do something then stop the drug dealers who operate under the market stall areas around McDonalds, clear up the youths running riot around. I used to venture into new square but I don't feel safe anymore.	Instead of putting more money into West Bromwich, try spending it on cleaning up other towns, replacing broken play equipment in Sandwell parks, put money into more of the green spaces so kids can play.	Crime, other towns a priority.

Currently, West Bromwich is a rundown area filled with students, homeless and people who destroy the area. It is not a safe place to be, especially on the evenings. The main square is a lot safer due to cameras and security but as soon as you are near the old parts or West Bromwich it is very clear it's not a safe place to be.	I believe that regenerating West Bromwich will have a positive impact upon the local community, especially the younger generation and the 60+. I also think adding more greenery to the new site as well as the existing site will create a happier, friendlier place making the community feel safer. By incorporating freestanding flower beds (like Walsall city centre) would not only help the environment, bee populations and local pollution levels but also moral, spirit and faith for the local community to become better again.	run down unsafe
West Bromwich has had far too much investment already. It's dangerous, unsafe and threatening, overrun by gangs, muggers, and beggars. No locals want to go there. Sandwell council seem to only see areas where their councillors have investment...	Try investing in the rest of Sandwell - Wednesday needs more than just a bus station. Oldbury should be better catered for. Blackheath, Great Bridge, Tipton - so many areas that have suffered from a lack of local investment and abandonment from the council. West Bromwich has already had so much with the Public, New Square and market redevelopment, and it's even worse. To quote hotel magnate Alex Polizzi, "it's like putting a cherry on a t - at the end of the day, it's still a t". If the locals hate it and don't feel safe, get the hint.	Too WB centric, unsafe.
	this all looks great, but we need to ensure everyone feels safe in the town. we need regular patrols from keys partners i.e. BID Ambassadors, EPO's and Regular police patrols. maintenance on the works as well and who will pay if anything gets damaged and whose responsibility it is	safety, security issues
Because you need to address the crime first.		Crime
At present doesn't have good image due to empty shops and neglect of centre.	Excited about plans especially increase in green spaces, leisure and idea of cultural quarter	empty shops, positive about proposals.
Rubbish issue, pigeons, street begging, drugs, enforcement.		Rubbish, ASB
Not enough quality shops, High St looks appalling, weeds on shop roofs, abandoned buildings.	Please help the Historic Leisure places. Bromwich Hall is in urgent need of funds.	Poor shops, poor image.
I don't feel safe when visiting West Brom at any time of the day or night. Too many people hanging around, mainly young men, up to no good, and leering at women.	Spend money on Wednesbury as this could be a fantastic little town again	Unsafe, spend on Wed instead.
	More housing. There is a housing crisis. Also priority should be given to Sandwell council staff that have applied for housing as they work for the council and working from home they need it more than ever.	More housing req.
The town as you call it has been systematically destroyed by years of neglect by Sandwell Council. West Bromwich used to be a Hub for shoppers, now it is just a place for Drunks to hang about and Students to congregate. How many millions did Sandwell waste on the New Square aka Dartmouth Bronx. People want to feel safe.		Centre neglected by Council.
Currently the town has very bad reputation for gangs and crimes. Neither of my children wish to go to West Bromwich. I will not allow my elderly father into the Town Centre.	When the New Square was built the town felt different and I would allow my then young teenager into the square alone or with a few friends if they wanted to go shopping. However, the feel of the Square has since changed, and it feels intimidating. To improve the town, you need to increase policing and security to reduce the threatening gangs hanging around.	Crime, policing issues.

Its run down ,	I feel you need ro cater for a prayer room for all faiths as you know Muslims pray 5 times a day and usually we go Birmingham as there is a multi-faith room. I think if West Brom had this many more Muslims would love to shop there.	All faiths prayer room req.
The High St has a run down look because the market is right down the middle, if you want up market shops you must have a up market look in the High St. If you want to serve the bottom end of the retail market then keep the street market and the town will die. The market may give the High St a higher foot fall but the real money is being spent in New Square.	Question 3 can not be answered yes or no, the person who complied this consultation is not very good at there job. The public consultation in the High St is being held on Tuesday & Thursdays only, Clearly this is a token, if you wanted people to be involved in this consultation you hold it on every day to get a full cross section of the people using the town. I know that I am wasting my time with is consultation because Sandwell Council do not really want to listen to the public.	Outdoor market detracts from High Street.
Need to get rid of king and queen square. Improve Carter's green also		King/Queens Squire needs to go.
The old High Street is a mess. I don't go there. I don't feel safe. New square is good but the old areas of the town such as Bull Street, High Street a above Dartmouth Square, Carter's green and most of the high street needs to be demolished.	I see no focus on jobs, new businesses or creation of wealth for the population. It's all about shops and housing. A cultural centre is a wonderful idea but people need to be earning money to support this. Around the town hall all needs cafes and restaurants to support the new focus on cultural activities. If Dartmouth Park is in the plan then why is it being used as a car park for the planned festivals. This is not a good plan for people's health. No one is going to want to live in close proximity to a Rave Festival site. This is not the culture we want to become renowned for	High St a mess, need focus on jobs, wealth creation.

The Town does not have a good image, over crowded, poor parking, badly managed, ASB, crime and disorder, pound land shops no big retailers, West Bromwich needs to have a bigger town plan and needs to widen the area out for bigger regeneration project and new build which needs to include Lyng estate from Mount Pleasant Street, Pleasant Street onwards. Its an ignored part of West Bromwich which if used properly could be developed to a world leading development which could bring in diverse funding, jobs, family homes, hi tech work units, a university, a school for Autism etc etc the Lyng estate borders the town centre and it needs to be developed as a border with green spaces, carbon capture, reducing pollution. At the moment the Lyng estate (residential) is next to an industrial estate which is out of date, in poor condition, change of businesses have resulted in large scale ASB, nuisance, crime and drug paraphernalia. For example were there was only one car repairer there are now 9 in a small area who have canabilised small warehouse which are unfit for purposes, and the whole area then suffers with unwanted visitors, nuisance parking, car storage on public highway. Historic family managed caring businesses are no longer in operation and no Impact assessment has been carried out, and is a major sorce of noise and air pollution. Whilst residents have pro actively complained for years including petitions no progress or any action has been taken which can demonstrate any success. This failure has already affected the original phase one regeneration of new builds were peoplecare selling and moving out and is being turned into a sink estate. This us all in the heart of West Bromwich next to the Town centre. Therefore any regeneration plans need to fundamentally include the missing jigsaw pieces to carry out a total package of change and make West bromwich the modern entity it needs to be. The whole area including the Lyng estate Or Newhall Street estate needs to be a safe family area with a diverse family orientated zones from new family detached homes to child safe areas, recreational and learning/educational for all ages to space age hi tech clean areas of businesses. If this areas is not regenerated it will continue to create a sink estate and the increases in ASB will not be managed no matter how many task forces SMBC enlists because the level of ASB will be like Japanese knotweed and its already set root. SMBC has a window of opportunity it makes valuable sense to regenerate the whole area including the missed estates with a fresh new canvas attracting world class leaders in urban design and regeneration. We as residents have spent over a decade monitoring and complaining so this email is from a point of truth and within data protection.

Even Merry Hill is now considered small, a shopping centre of the future needs not only to be appealing, it needs to be safe, crime free, total new design with large scale parking from its good travel connections will attract a lot of attention and business West bromwich town centre cannot be designed in isolation by not taking the old industrial brown field Lyng area.

Crime, Lyng Ind Estate Issues, safety issues.

Anti-Social behaviour is a problem within the town centre which in turn is having an impact on visitors. Also, with the design of the New Square shopping area, it has split the town into two parts. The older part of the town is run down and is in dire need of regeneration

I am a long-established market trader within the indoor market. The indoor market premises are old and very tired which makes it unappealing to customers. Years of underinvestment by the council has led us to this dire situation we find ourselves in. We desperately need a relocation closer to the centre. The old Argus building, along with the neighbouring shops which are all owned by the council could quite easily be converted into a brand new, modern indoor market. The market should be the jewel in the crown for Sandwell because of the diversity of the traders, customers and the personal customer service we provide that the big corporations do not. To lose this would be a travesty.

ASB, indoor market needs relocating.

The High Street side of the Town needs considerable improvement. It looks very dated and could do with an injection of modern living spaces/areas. More breakout areas for shoppers to socialise. More vegetation

Dated High Street, Greening req

I think the town has a poor image, it lacks evening activity. It has improved with new square but other parts look unloved and the shopping centre near to the bus station is dated and tun down.	It would be great to see the vision and proposals delivered. It would enhance the town. It needs more evening activity, I appreciate that's down to market forces, but it would be good if it was a nice place to go for a meal and a drink.	poor image, need evening economy.
It's full of crime as long as it remains this way you can pump as much money in as you like but people will stay away. You have many more areas that could benefit from the money, but you keep pumping money into West Brom??? We need greener safer areas for our children to play but you are building on every bit of land possible, you're cramming us in like ants and it's making the crime rate sky high... we are not a city, we're small towns. Stop over populating us		Crime,
I think the new square is very nice but the old town is not nice. It's an eye sore and seems to attract the wrong kind of people.		Old Town eyesore
Because the new Outdoor Market is not fit for purpose and Market Traders who used to work on the Outdoor Market in West Bromwich Town Centre have been ousted without good reason. My Fiance BJP used to do the Outdoor Market in West Bromwich Town Centre until him and AS were both pushed out by the Market Management for no reason at all. The Market Management have basically shafted Traders who were pushed off the market for no reason at all.	The Market Management needs to be held to account because people who were Customers of BJP and AS are asking for those two Market Traders to return to the Outdoor Market in West Bromwich Town Centre. B JP is my Fiancé and he wants to come back to the Outdoor Market in West Bromwich Town Centre.	Outdoor market not fit for purpose
Too afraid to walk around the town. It's gone downhill!! There are too many people taking drugs, drinking and begging.	Please consider spending some money bringing other towns in Sandwell up to date and save some historic buildings. Needs to be more green spaces with equipment that is actually maintained and not left to fester before just being removed and never replaced.	Crime, other towns a priority.
There are a lot of anti social behavioural problems in and around the town, this needs to be rectified prior to any further redevelopment as to ensure public safety and restore the faith in the town.	Try saving other small towns in the borough such as wednesbury, which is crying out to be renovated. Maybe build a cinema on the j9 shopping complex and ensure the parks are safe and used correctly and that equipment is maintained.	ASB, other towns a priority.
Unclean not much events on No help with the market	Market needs relocating	Maintenance, Market needs relocating
	It is a good plan, and long overdue. Hope it can be implemented as soon as can be.	a good plan long overdue
The town is in desperate need of regeneration. It has long been forgotten about. The newly built New Square is aesthetically pleasing and therefore attracts a certain demographic of visitors. The rest of the Town Centre also does the same but it's a completely different demographic and one that gives West Bromwich a bad name. Investment in the Town should be increased and regeneration should include the whole Town Centre, including the High Street, particularly the lower part (Carters Green). Anti-social behaviour in the Town is rife and this needs to drastically change to improve both the image and reputation of the Town.	Our High Streets are in fast decline, so it would be great if the ones in West Bromwich could stop this from happening and become the once, popular thriving Town Centre it once was.	Regen Req, ASB needs action.

BEGGERS AND DRUG DEALERS THESE ARE NOT UNDER CONTROL IN THE TOWN CENTRE CUT THE TOWN IN HALF BY THE NEW SQUARE OPENING OF TESCO SUPERMARKET PEOPLE NOW AVOID KINGS SQUARE AS THEY CAN BUY EVERY THING UNDER ONE ROOF		Crime/ASB, New Sq means less demand in old Town.
I'd like to see more green space in town, tree lined avenues, green walls. Also, access to free community spaces like refurbished empty shops, that can be accessed by community groups to support young people, families, vulnerable people e.g. a permanent safe youth space to drop in for homework help. A healthy families hub for breastfeeding and infant feeding support, a creche for families that may need guidance, CV help, funding support etc (Children's centres once offered similar services before their funding was cut by the Council). If the council are considering MORE housing, then access to local services like new schools and healthcare need to be provided too.		Greening, greenspaces req, community uses in empty shops
The environment of the town centre / high street is very tatty. The council does not listen to and appears to neglect the Indoor Marketeers. Increasing rents at such a time as this beggars belief. Splitting the Town centre off to the High Street - Queen's & King's Squares from New Square and also Astle Park instead of mergeing it into one retail visitor attraction is very short sighted wedded to the mixed prices for parking makes it an unwelcome place to visit - This comment is what I hear when I tell folk of West Bromwich's attractions. There are missing retailers such as Halfords, Screwfix, Bookshops and others. There is a paucity of community events - BID does an excellent job with just a few staff - perhaps they should be expanded? Parking is an issue. Its like having a shopping tax. Added to all that pithering with paying parking charges at New Square - particularly during inclement weather.		Maintenance, indoor market issues, parking.
I don't think the town has a good image or safe reputation. A vision to make West Bromwich a place people are proud of, and a place they feel safe to visit and call home. Over the many years I lived in Sandwell I have observed the decline of the area and the levels of anti social behaviour concerns me as a resident. I'd like to see investment in the library service which has felt overlooked and undervalued. I feel libraries have a huge role to play in this vision and local recovery. Libraries are free and trusted places that welcome local residents. They are much more than books - supporting lifelong learning and development for all. They bring people together and foster community spirit. Libraries sit at the heart of the communities they serve.		Poor image, ASB, libraries role to be expanded
Lots of empty stores, plus some of the open stores don't look inviting. Lots of pigeons still around the town, so amounts of guano. Some intimidation by gangs and also college students, which the college doesn't seem to take seriously. Not directly town centre, but also aware of prostitutes working.	New Square feels better than the town centre. Needs some real investment in cleaning up the town centre, to bring retailers et al back in.	Vacancies, vermin, gangs.
west Bromwich town centre, now looks dated, with the empty shops, trouble with youths hanging around. people begging, the new square is great, but the old part of town needs a complete re - think	The Town needs more community areas, for the ages of 11-18... lots of stuff for toddlers, not enough for youth of our town. to many take away food shops, also need more small businesses, make the rents more attractive and not too expensive. we have recently lost a few small businesses because of the lock down.	Dated centre, revamp req, ASB.
The New Square has highlighted how deprived the rest of West Bromwich Town Centre is. The town needs a drastic visual improvement and improvement in security also.	Other than the New Square I do not utilise the facilities on West Bromwich High Street and avoid where possible.	Deprived old centre, image & security req

	<p>Few suggestions - Developing a clear youth space that allows young people to co-own/design/develop that may develop enterprise and a start up culture (Youth Cafes)</p> <p>- Allow people to reimagine or innovate (Think Tank Space) - Allowing an indoor space for pop up retail - Cultural Exhibition Space - Pop up band stand or performance space to support night time economy. - Adult experiences through games/bowling eg https://lane7.co.uk/leicester/ - Food zone that offers restaurants as well as street food</p> <p>Building a clear identity that knows its residents and consumers that will come into West Bromwich is very important to support the growth economy of the region. With the region I sit on the following boards that I could play a strategic role in support this planning - West Midlands Combined Authority - Cultural Leadership Board - Sandwell Council - Cultural Leaders Group - Midlands Metropolitan University Hospital - Arts and Culture Board - Sandwell Cultural Education Partnership - Chair of the Management Board - Sips Education - Music Service Advisory Board</p>	Youth Facilities, cultural space, evening economy.
The town has sufficient number of different outlets. The Town has a poor image as far as the disabled are concerned since the Multi Storey car Park was closed and no longstay disabled places replaced.	<p>More disabled parking spaces closer to the amenities. more disabled toilets as as it stands it is a route march to any of them. I no longer use West Bromwich as three hours free is not long enough to enjoy your time there and due to health reasons it is impossible for me to use the Farley centre car park</p>	Poor image, disabled facilities req.
Improvements are needed for the image of the town centre. New shop signage, roofing, pavements, seating areas, also a lot more greenery, play areas and entertainment facilities ie; Treetop Golf, Bowling, Go Karting, Fun station. Rough sleepers need to be moved into accommodation. More needs to be done to make it a family friendly environment and regularly cleaning of the town centre. More security guards monitoring town centre. Removal of rubbish by market stall traders, removal of bubble gum, removal of cheap shop signage and existing fountain and clock by little desert shop replaced or refinished.	<p>Princess parade needs to connect to New Square and have similar image. Better quality affordable shops and less cheap tacky looking shops. New barriers and sculptures re-painted because they are looking old and rusty.</p> <p>Entrance to kings square via bus station needs cleaning and refurbishment and inside kings square needs new signage, looks dated.</p> <p>Deterrent needed for pigeons and also fines issued to people who feed them outside kings square via bus station and by the clock by little dessert shop. Small Bistros/cafes with outdoor seating areas, existing cafe in princess parade needs refurbishing. A toby carvery in princess parade with park/play area for children would be nice.</p>	Better image, greenery & security req.
I think with the current levels of crime in the town, the majority of the town is a no go area. Especially for anyone with children. Personally, as a white woman with a child, I will only use New Square, as I don't feel safe outside of this in the town.	<p>If you go back 20-25 years the town centre was a vibrant, buzzing hub of a town. On a weekend, parking was hugely difficult as it was so busy. With coffee shops, retail outlets, independent and chain... You could literally get everything you needed. Now, unless you're in the town for illegal activity, there is no other reason to go there. And I absolutely miss it.</p>	Crime, not town it was 25 years ago.
The market and high street has been very run down; closed shops left empty rather than used for social enterprise and lots of drug dealing. I wouldn't want to see another New Square - shared outdoor space and community events are preferable		run down, drugs. Community space req.

<p>Apologies for this but I may have pressed the wrong button by accident, and might end up submitting more or less the same info twice. The High Street wish it was more diverse in types of shops. That I can see it is looking more and more like an extension of either Soho Road or Stratford Road in Birmingham! Where have all the traditionally British companies gone, like Morrison's or Wilkinson's? I am not against SOME ethnic food shops and businesses selling lots of goods imported from China or India, etc., but then if some British or European company up and coming wanted to open a store here would there be any vacant commercial spaces available to them?</p>	<p>Visual 2 - Dislike the view of too many Hi-Rise residential buildings being right by the tram stop when people get off. Would this be the reality visitors, etc. would see? Makes it just look like many other places, unfortunately.</p> <p>Visual 3 - Hub - great idea. Visual 4 - Community green street - good idea. 3D Sketch - evening destination - love it! We could use a few more of those for young AND OLD. As long as somehow high levels of music, etc. could be catered for or planned for to minimise disturbances to neighbours.</p> <p>WBpr22 - Lyng + Farley - if it is ex-industrial land, will soil be checked for dangerous chemicals, if turned over to residential?</p>	<p>Supports proposals, but doubts hi rise is good.</p>
<p>High street looks run down and grubby.</p>		<p>Run down high Street.</p>
	<p>1. I want more marketing by the officers to attract more businesses to West Bromwich Town centre rather than leaving more empty shops. 2. I want a Community Centre in the Town Centre one of the empty shop could be converted to the Community Centre. 3. King Cinema should be converted into more shops. 4. Residential development should build on top of the shops in the Town Centre. 5. All shops should be refurbished (empty shops) to a good standard. 6. There shouldn't be duplication with the money allocated by the Central Government.</p>	<p>More business needed, community centre,</p>
	<p>Hi, I would like to put forward suggestion for improving the High St - from the Farley Centre to the former Star & Garter corner. As you will have witnessed, several of the main retailers have re-located to the New Square, leaving huge gaps on the High St, others have simply closed. I alongside many many retailers have long felt some kind of covering for the High Street would go a long way to reigniting its appeal. All retailers I have spoken to, and there are many, who would happy contribute a fair proportion towards the cost. Rather, than spending money on minor improvements which may not have a long return, a covering would yield results for years to come and make West Bromwich a much more appealing place to work, shop and for leisure. Not to mention improving the safety. I would welcome a discussion on the matter. Thank you. Regards G Dillon</p>	
	<p>As you are aware my client holds a significant interest in the town and has already engaged in pre-application discussions regarding redevelopment of part of the town highlighted in the Council's Master Plan. My client is pleased to see that the principles of the use and nature of the proposals he is promoting are included in the masterplan, i.e. new residential, whilst reducing and replacing some of the older outdated retail offer appear to be supported. My client also notes that an element of office accommodation has been introduced in the area, and whilst this is an acceptable town centre use is concerned whether a market exists for it and should not be rigorously maintained at the sacrifice of potential additional residential.</p>	<p>Broadly supports plan, doubts market for offices.</p>

I answered 'No' to the first two questions because I don't think enough information has been shared about the impact of the regeneration plan for West Bromwich. I tried to locate the Cabinet report for this but can see that it has been marked Private. In the information made available to the public there are broad statements made such as, prosperous growth for the next 20 years, supports growth and combats decline, attracting investment to the town, change economically for the town, enable it to grow and become more sustainable for the future, add to the centres vitality and viability... can you provide the information on how this regeneration will achieve those things by giving specific detail? Without that information I think its difficult to answer the first two questions in this consultation. I notice that a large part of this regeneration is additional dwellings. How many dwellings will there be? Is it houses, marionettes, flats? Who will own them; the council, will people be able to buy them? And if private landlords buy them how will they be held accountable (e.g. there is a problem with landlords who do not live nearby, buying property in cheap areas and not taking the responsibility they should in the property or the tenants of that property)? Will these new dwellings increase the amount of people already living here? The point made about boosting the nighttime economy, how will you ensure this is done responsibly, e.g can you stop people drinking too much and causing problems? How will a safe environment be ensured? There is already a problem with crime and disorder in the town centre. Which type of independent retailers and food operators are you hoping to attract? I would hope it wouldn't not be more of the same. It would be nice to have variety and choice (there is enough bargain type retailers and fast 'junk' food outlets, healthier choices would be welcomed!). How will this regeneration impact already stretched services like GP's, health and social care services, community services and school places? How will it make progress all towards/achieve all of the Councils Vision 2030 ambitions (I think number 7 is achieved, but an explanation for the rest of them would be helpful) I really hope this regeneration has a positive impact on the area. I want to understand what opportunities will be created for the people who live and work here and what positive impact there will be.

Further to your third question, I marked yes because the suggestions made in the question would be good. (I think it was supposed to be an open question rather than a yes/no closed question). To have opportunities in an area is good. Currently I travel outside of the area to access things for myself and my family. E.g. recreation, leisure, etc.

More info req, housing types & tenure query

Future High Street Living Ltd (FHSL) are generally supportive of the proposed masterplan and the opportunity it offers to see redevelopment delivered in the town centre, especially in light of continuing decline as a result of numerous factors effecting high streets across the country. FHSL have an interest the policy allocation WBPr2 which seeks to deliver residential, office, retail and leisure offers. It is a very positive step to see residential development is being supported in such locations which have the potential to re-introduce footfall to the immediate surrounding area and the High Street. As set out at Paragraph 86 of the NPPF (2021) residential development plays an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres. Notwithstanding the positive approach, including residential development, FHSL consider that the site offers the potential for inclusion of some houses, as well as flats, in order to provide accommodation to meet a greater range of needs. Housing of two-three storeys could be comfortably assimilated centrally within the land parcel, bound by taller flatted developments to the periphery of the land parcel. It is acknowledged that the draft proposals seek to deliver a mix of uses. However, there is apprehension regarding the viability and deliverability of office accommodation in the identified location on the periphery of the town centre, fronting onto Bull Street. This concern is raised as a result of the relationship the offices would have with the wider town centre and adjoining residential development as well as the demand for offices in this location; with recent trends, and likely increasing trends in the foreseeable future, for change of use from offices to alternate accommodation. The requirement to deliver office accommodation in location and the manner shown, would create difficulties in delivering a compressive redevelopment of the parcel, should it not be possible to deliver the offices as a result of lack of demand, as anticipated. Market research undertaken by FHSL to-date raises concerns in relation to this. FHSL would be of the view that this area could be used more effectively to provide a greater level of residential accommodation in close proximity to the High Street and retail offers. In addition to the above, the illustrative sketches provided as part of the consultation do not marry with the areas provided for delivery of the proposed uses. WBPr2 includes the buildings to the north-west of the illustrative sketches leading to New Street and the College, as well as the existing Queens Square shopping centre. With regards to the buildings to the north west, consideration should be given to the inclusion of these buildings in the redevelopment proposals which could enhance the connectivity of the town centre and public realm as well as providing a greater area in delivering a mix of uses. With regards to Queens Square shopping centre, the effects of the new retail provision would be significant and adverse on the retained units. The north eastern section of Queens

Broadly supportive, queries office component at expense of residential mix.

Square shopping centre has high vacancy rates and the demolition and redevelopment, as shown, would generally be supported. Whilst the creation of an enhanced public realm between the High Street and New Square is supported in-principle, it would be at the expense of existing and retained retail provision and it is therefore questioned whether this could be better provided through the retained, and potentially remodelled sections, of Queens Square shopping centre, supporting and enhancing the existing retail provision. Without consideration of a route through the retained areas of Queens Square shopping centre, the proposed retail provision would likely lead to a significant deterioration of the immediate area surrounding, comprising the retained elements of Queens Square shopping centre, causing further issues for the town centre. A comprehensive redevelopment of the parcel including consideration of the retained, and potentially remodelled parts of, Queens Square shopping centre must be considered.

<p>West Bromwich does not have a good image, and I know several people who try to avoid shopping there. The market stalls on the High Street in particular are an eyesore, and both Kings Square and Queens Square are very rundown. We have the areas around New Square and Sandwell College which are quite nice and then a terrible area between the two.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We welcome the ambition to create an inclusive community and emphasis on creating more green space. • There is a strong emphasis on cycle and pedestrian routes through the town, but the plan also needs to consider improved access for the less able-bodied. (For example, additional bus or tram stops near the new squares.) New Square has a mobility centre where people can borrow a mobility scooter to get around, so that could be expanded. • No mention of charging points for electric cars or electric (zero-carbon) buses. • Need to actively encourage independent retailers, and businesses, not just rely on big chains with no connection to the area. • What does the master plan mean by "indoor active sports"? Do the leisure facilities include plans for a swimming pool? • Is the intent to include a theatre and performance event spaces, and a Culture Quarter, not an acknowledgement that The Public was to some extent a success. It attracted people to the town who would otherwise not have visited West Bromwich and it encouraged the investment in New Square, which is now the nicest part of the town centre. Whether The Public was cost effective is another matter, but it did lead to improvement in the area around it. • Also need to consider surface materials, such as porous surfaces that will reduce risk of surface water causing flooding. The green space should also consider trees and hedges contribution to preventing flooding and to reducing carbon emissions. 	<p>Poor image, broadly welcomes proposals.</p>
<p>As a church we witness a lot of anti-social behaviour in and around our building, and within the local area to the church. There have been numerous occasions where we have had to report to the town ambassadors and the police. Previously we had problems with drugs/needles in the graveyard area to the rear of our building and as we have youth groups meeting in the rear of the church, they have had to walk past and witness these situations. Sandwell Council assisted by erecting a fence across the graveyard to deter these activities.</p>	<p>If there are any future plans to include our graveyard, to open up this area to the public, it will inevitably create an opportunity for anti-social behaviour and likely damage to our property. This fenced off area is at present a secure area where our youth groups can use for outside activities. As the Church Council we are trustees of the property but do not own the premises. It is owned by the Methodist Church of England whose legal department is in Manchester. We would require full consultation of any future plans and these would all have to go through to our Legal team.</p>	<p>ASB concerns re graveyard</p>
	<p>Improvements bring better communities to the area, clean, tidy & modern facilities are key to a good area we could do with more public toilets</p>	<p>Broadly welcomes proposals, more toilets req</p>

Appendix 2

WM Police Representation

Dear Chris,

Thank you for agreeing to gather the WMP feedback on the West Bromwich Town Centre Masterplan Consultation.

Formal Representations on behalf of Chief Constable of West Midlands Police (WMP). The WMP Design Out Crime Team make representations to ensure safety and security is included in future designs. This means recognising the community need for securing safe environments with crime reduction made a priority. There are principles created by Secured by Design, that guides those involved in designing and shaping the built environment in our communities.

Developers need to demonstrate how proposals address community safety and crime prevention in Design & Access Statements, or other relevant planning application documents. These proposals should promote safety and security across our communities and business sectors.

We seek timely and effective engagement of WMP through WMP's Design Out Crime Officers (DOCO) to ensure effective delivery of projects in our communities. This engagement needs to be sought at the earliest opportunity, especially when the projects are of considerable scale. This allows the views of the DOCO to be captured at the key stages of a project, so to influence crime reduction principles in to designs very early on.

In relation to matters likely to affect crime and the fear of crime. Secured by Design provide guides to designers and developers. By using those guides to influence design, it is proven by research that crime can be significantly reduced. In one piece of recent research, there was 87% reduction in crime across 3000 homes built to Secured by Design standards.

There is also a need to involve the Police in relation to Counter Terrorism matters within designs. Counter Terrorism Security Advisors can give appropriate advice, such as concerning protection from Vehicle-Borne attacks and mitigation and protection in Crowded Places. This can be done through liaison with the DOCO officer involved in any project.

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 states, 'Without prejudice to any other obligation imposed on it, it shall be the duty of each authority to which this section applies to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can, to prevent crime and disorder in its area'.

The Chief Constable clearly has a statutory duty to secure the maintenance of an efficient and effective police force for its area and, of course, the Council is also statutorily required to consider crime and disorder and community safety in the exercise of its duties with the aim of achieving a reduction in crime.

West Midlands Police, through the DOCO team, would welcome the opportunity to become actively involved in the more detailed development of residential, commercial, retail and leisure developments proposed for the communities of the West Midlands. The purpose of such engagement is to encourage developers to build to 'Secured by Design' standards and to ensure that

issues of crime prevention and designing out crime are taken into account at the earliest opportunity.

To further support this, on the 12th July 2017, a letter from the Chief Planning Officer was published by the Department of Communities and Local Government. This sought to remind local planning authorities of the important role the planning system plays in ensuring appropriate measures are in place in relation to counter-terrorist and crime prevention security. It encourages, where appropriate, pre-application discussions between planning officers and Suitably Qualified Security Specialists, such as Counter Terrorism Security Advisors and Design Out Crime Officers. This is to ensure that authorities and applicants share an understanding right at the beginning of the design process, of the level of risk and the sort of measures available to mitigate the risk in a proportionate and well-designed manner. In addition to the need for reference to be made to the requirements in the NPPF and the PPG, the letter also states that reference should be made to the guidance 'protecting crowded places: design and technical issues'.

I must raise the case for Designing Out Crime to feature in the Sandwell West Bromwich Masterplan. The inclusion of Designing Out Crime measures is vital for safe and secure communities, both now and in the future. So that the lasting legacy of this beneficial development is safe and secure, and the risk of crime and anti-social behaviour is reduced at the earliest stage.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment as part of the consultation, and if there are any questions please get in touch.

Appendix 3 N R Representation

1. Refurbishment of existing buildings- Buildings in Princess Parade- Birmingham Rd.
2. Princess Parade to coincide with New square.
3. Regular cleaning of streets, Market stalls and buildings.
4. Security.
5. More greenery- Shrubs and wild flowers
6. Better quality shop signage.
7. Water features.
8. Litter picking and bubble gum removal.
9. Pigeon deterrent near Dessert shop-CCTV, Signs to fine and bird of prey sounds.
11. Painting of sculptures and Buildings.
12. Entertainment venues- Aquarium, Bowling, Go- Karting, Treetop Golf, Kids Arcade, Parklets, Ice-skating, Zoo and play areas- Princess Parade
13. Homeless people/Beggars moved out of Princess Parade.
14. Clock and Water feature removed or refurbished and colour changed- Near Dessert shop.
15. Small Bistros/cafes with outside seating and canopy.
16. Refurbishment of existing cafe near McDonalds.
17. Comfortable seating.
18. NEW bins for chewing gum, cigarettes etc.
19. NEW bus stops Birmingham Rd and West Bromwich High Street.
20. NEW See-through roofing similar to New Square to let sunshine through above shops-Princess Parade
21. Murals.
22. WIFI access.

23. Overend Street- Entertainment Facility instead of industrial buildings. Eg Aquarium or Bowling alley
24. Car park and road signs maintenance.
25. Carvery with play area.
26. Interactive spaces for children

Thank you

N. R

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Report to Cabinet

9 February 2022

Subject:	Re-commissioning Sandwell Adult Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Hartwell, Cabinet Member for Adults, Social Care and Health
Director:	Dr Lisa McNally Director of Public Health
Key Decision:	Yes An executive decision which is likely to incur significant expenditure or have a significant effect on the community
Contact Officer:	Mary Bailey Addictive Behaviours Programme Manager mary_bailey@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That approval be given to re-commission Adult Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services ensuring future delivery of support for Sandwell residents.







- 1.2 That the Director of Public Health be authorised to commence a procurement process for the provision of Adult Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services to commence 1 February 2023 for a period of 3 years with the option to extend for up to a further 2 years.
- 1.3 Further to recommendation 1.2, that the Director of Public Health be authorised to include any future Drug Strategy monies awarded from National Government into the contract value to enable delivery of the 2021 Drug Strategy ambitions towards a delivering a world class treatment system.
- 1.4 That the Director of Public Health be authorised to award a contract and enter into a contract with the successful bidder, on terms to be agreed by the Director of Public Health, for the provision of Adult Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services to commence on 1 February 2023 for a period of 3 years to 31 January 2026 with the option to extend up to a further 2 years (until 31st January 2028).
- 1.5 Than an exemption to rule 8.7 of the Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules 2018/19 be made to allow a contract to be awarded to a successful tenderer in the event that the required minimum number of tenders are not received.
- 1.6 That the Director of Public Health, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adults, Social Care and Health, be authorised to make variations to the Contract up to a maximum of 10% of the Contract value, should they be necessitated.
- 1.7 That the Director of Law and Governance be authorised to execute any documentation necessary to give effect to the proposals set out in 1.1 – 1.6 above for the provision of Adult Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services




2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 The report seeks approval to the procurement of Adult Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services. This will ensure that support for Sandwell residents continues to be available beyond the currently commissioned service which is due to end 31st January 2023.

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p>Best start in life for children and young people:</p> <p>Maximising access and engagement with substance misuse support enables people (including those affected by someone else's use such as children, family members and the wider community) to benefit</p> <p>Parental substance misuse is known to have a negative impact on children and young people. Half of adults starting drug treatment are parents, though many don't currently live with their children.</p> <p>Of those who are living with their children evidence suggests that in Sandwell there are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 982 adults with an alcohol dependency who live with children and the number of children living with an alcohol dependent parent is estimated to be 1,915• 522 adults with an opiate dependency live with children and the number of children living with an adult with an opiate dependency is estimated to be 1,014.• In 2016/17, 21% of parents with an alcohol dependency and 48% of parents with an opiate dependency accessed local treatment services.ⁱ
 	<p>People live well and age well:</p> <p>Problematic substance misuse can cause ill health and impact on mortality rates. Ensuring engagement and support with treatment services, will help individuals live longer and enjoy a better quality of life – adding years to life and life to years.</p> 

	<p>Sandwell has a higher than national prevalence of opiate and crack usersⁱⁱ, as well as displaying statistically significantly worse alcohol related specific mortality than the national average (Sandwell is currently ranked as the 2nd worst Local Authority in the country for alcohol specific deaths)ⁱⁱⁱ</p> <p>The proposals aim to ensure effective treatment and support provision given access to treatment can help reduce morbidity and mortality</p>
	<p>Strong resilient communities</p> <p>It is estimated that around 45% of acquisitive crime is committed by opiate/crack users in order to fund their dependency. Evidence suggests that in 2016/17 substance misuse treatment helped to prevent 4.4 million crimes nationally and helped to prevent an estimated 30,665 crimes locally^{iv}.</p> <p>It is estimated that alcohol is a factor in approximately 40% of all violent crimes as well as contributing to public disorder and anti-social behaviour in communities^v</p> <p>Crime can have a significant impact on communities; people may feel less safe, home insurance can increase, property prices can be affected, and businesses may avoid the area.</p> <p>The proposals aim to ensure effective treatment and support provision given access to treatment can help reduce crime associated with substance misuse.</p>

4 Context and Key Issues

4. Background

- 4.1 Substance misuse is uniquely harmful, causing damage not only to individuals themselves but also to the people around them. Furthermore, substance misuse often impacts both physical/mental health as well as criminal justice outcomes -the combination of these factors have a considerable adverse impact on the health and wellbeing of the people of Sandwell as a whole.



4.2 The landscape for drug and alcohol needs continues to provide challenges for service provision:

- Sandwell's high and ubiquitous levels of deprivation pose a contextual challenge whereby evidence shows problematic substance use and premature deaths occur disproportionately more in deprived areas
- an ageing cohort of substance misusers who now suffer from age related health comorbidities alongside the impact of their substance misuse
- 85% of alcohol dependent individuals and 58% of opiate/crack users are not known to treatment services
- increasingly available and accessible alcohol and drug supplies
- the impact of Covid on substance misuse behaviours has shown an exacerbation of alcohol harms with a statistically significant increase of 20% in total alcohol specific deaths compared to pre-pandemic (and continuing to increase further again throughout 2021). There has also been an increase in illicit drug use during the pandemic whereby levels of use increased during 2020 compared to 2019 (PWID UAM Survey 2020).
- The Dame Carol Black review of drug treatment services 2021 has evidenced year on year funding cuts to local drug treatment services, combined with increases in adverse health and social impacts for this client cohort.

4.3 Whilst work to address the harms from substance misuse has resulted in some real successes for the local population including one of the lowest drug related deaths in the country, the provision of well delivered evidence-based community treatment provision remains integral to continuing such efforts. Furthermore, conditions attached to use of the Public Health Grant require that local areas must: "have regard to the need to improve the take up of, and outcomes from, its drug and alcohol misuse treatment services"^{vi}



4.4 Learning from the current service delivery model has shown that resources must be carefully balanced against delivery expectations. The current service model was ambitious in its scope - aiming to not only meet established health needs but to prevent use in order to reduce future service demand. Despite efforts and following variations to the contract to enhance resource levels, high levels of unmet need remain whilst national spend comparator data shows Sandwell to have lower than national average spend for drug and alcohol related support (£10 per head locally versus £20 nationally).

4.5 The combined impacts of changes in substance misuse behaviours due to Covid, an ageing cohort of substance misusers presenting with increasingly complex co-morbidities, high levels of unmet need together with increasingly accessible drug and alcohol supplies necessitate the need for a more focussed service delivery model.

4.6 Current Position

4.7 Current Adult Drug & Alcohol Support is delivered by Cranstoun, a registered UK Charity. The service is now delivering into its permissible two-year extension period which ends 31st January 2023. The service operates from its base in the Alberta Building located in Smethwick, a Council owned property.

4.8 The current contract finance arrangements were subject to an annual 10% reduction each contract year (towards efficiency savings) starting at £3.1million per annum reducing to the final lowest annual amount of £2.5million per annum. The total current contract amount (3 years main contract inclusive of the 2-year extension period) totals £13.4million. The current contract payment mechanism is block payment.



- 4.9 The current service delivery model was the first model to integrate both drug and alcohol support provision into one service aiming towards efficiencies of scale (having previously been delivered under two separate contracts). Prior to integration, the local successful completion rate was 27.9%, reducing to 12.8% in 2018/19 which was the first full year of current provision. Despite a slight increase the latest rate stands at 16.3% (lower than the national average of 21%).
- 4.10 The current service model ambitions for an all-encompassing prevention, treatment and recovery system were not fully realised. Service specification requirements beyond a safe clinical treatment service (particularly in relation to adult prevention work and access to specialist support such as residential rehabilitation) were largely unmet owing to the volume of established needs requiring support set against resource levels. The Service was further affected by unprecedented medication cost increases impacting resources further as well as the pandemic impacting delivery modes. Variations were made throughout the life of the contract to ensure relevant psychosocial and pharmacological approaches remained available including, most recently, a variation for additional resources afforded from Central Government's Universal Drug Treatment grant following the 2021 Dame Carol Black review of treatment services.
- 4.11 In summary, learning from the current contract has shown:
- caseloads have grown too high reducing the quantity /frequency of support available
 - a lack of access to higher cost specialist services including residential rehabilitation
 - recovery support has been under resourced, including employment support and recovery communities



- medication cost increases could not be absorbed within existing service resources and necessitated a review of staffing posts within the service
- clinical treatment provision was safeguarded as an essential delivery requirement at the expense of adult prevention and early intervention efforts
- workforce recruitment issues including a loss of skills, expertise and capacity from the sector

4.12 Having consulted with residents and stakeholders about future service delivery, (a total of 42 responses were received), respondents felt that the current service model works well but could be improved by increasing investment in services. Reducing the caseloads of workers, a stronger community presence and longer opening hours were all deemed important in the responses. All of the providers who responded (a total of 5 responses received) mentioned unrealistic delivery expectations against the available budget would put them off from bidding for substance misuse services in Sandwell. The majority of providers stated that they would prioritise the prevention of drug and alcohol related deaths and focus on those most at risk. Harm reduction and substitute prescribing were highlighted as playing a role in this approach.

4.13 In mirroring recommendations from the national Dame Carol Black review^{vii} of drug treatment services, the focus of the proposed future service model is to ensure a high-quality treatment service. The future model will therefore focus on the delivery of a core clinical service model offering structured pharmacological and psychosocial treatment ensuring those who require structured drug and alcohol support receive high quality effective care.

4.13.1 The service will continue to be delivered from the Council owned building, Alberta Building in Smethwick given consultation feedback and accessibility considerations.



- 4.13.2 The core clinical service model will consist of providing:
- effective talking therapies / psychosocial interventions
 - a range of medicines licensed for use for the treatment of substance misuse disorders
 - overdose antidote naloxone provision,
 - needle and syringe programme,
 - blood born virus testing and treatment
- 4.13.3 The service must be underpinned by a competent and fully staffed workforce -this will not only work to reduce caseload levels but improve the quality of treatment support delivered.
- 4.13.4 Areas that will not be covered within the core clinical service consist of:
- residential rehabilitation placements
 - inpatient detox bed placements
 - hospital in-reach
 - custody referral services
 - targeted outreach
 - recovery support
 - adult prevention and early intervention

4.14 The budget to be funded from the Public Health Grant for the proposed core clinical service model will commence at £2.75million in the first year of the contract increasing by 10% each year until January 2026 as detailed below:

Year 1 (Feb 2023 - Jan 2024): £2,750,000

Year 2 (Feb 2024 - Jan 2025): £3,025,000

Year 3 (Feb 2025 - Jan 2026): £3,327,500

Year 4 (Feb 2026 - Jan 2027): £3,327,500 (optional extension year)

Year 5 (Feb 2027 - Jan 2028): £3,327,500 (optional extension year)



The total maximum amount inclusive of the optional 2-year extension period to be funded from the Public Health Grant would therefore be £15,757,500

- 4.15 The recently released National Drug Strategy ‘From harm to hope: A ten year drugs plan to cut crime and save lives’^{viii} outlines national ambition to deliver a world class treatment system to rebuild drug treatment and recovery services.

The Strategy comes with a funding announcement intended to support Local Authorities to drive quality and capacity of their local treatment services. The funds announced are to be additional to current Public Health Grant spend on treatment services and so cannot be used to replace existing Public Health grant spend for treatment services. When such funds are made available, the intention is to use these to deliver elements required by the Drug Strategy 2021 as per recommendation 1.3.

- 4.15.1 Timescales of the announced additional national funds overlap into the period of the proposed new service model contract (see Table 1). The focus of the funds are to resource local systems towards delivery of the Government’s drug strategy elements including residential rehabilitation and detoxification placements; peer-based recovery support, and additional staff capacity.
- 4.15.2 When such funds are confirmed at a local level we will utilise part or all of these in the Drug and Alcohol Treatment contract (where appropriate to prevent duplication and enhance provision) and therefore the value quoted in 4.14 may increase but only within the parameters of the Drug Strategy Grant conditions.
- 4.15.3 The overall funding situation including the Public Health Grant (covering core clinical service requirements listed under 4.13.2) and the recently announced central government funds aligned to delivery of the National Drug Strategy (local amount unconfirmed as yet) are laid out in Table 1.



Table 1: Funding Streams and Timescales

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27 (possible extension period)	2027/28 (possible extension period)
Public Health Grant (years run Feb-Jan)		£2.75m	£3.02m	£3.3m	£3.3m	£3.3m
Drug Strategy Universal funding - national*	£80 million	£80 million	£80 million	TBC***	TBC***	TBC***
Drug Strategy Place-based additional funding**	£20 million	£81 million	£192 million	TBC***	TBC***	TBC***

* Sandwell amount as yet to be confirmed

** An additional place-based amount of funding to be made available to the 50 most in need areas in the 2022/23, the next 50 most in need in 2023/24 and with all areas receiving this in 2024/25. Methodology to determine which areas feature in which year is currently out to consultation.

*** National Drug Strategy funds are aligned to the Comprehensive Spending Review 3-year period. Beyond that period it is unclear if any further monies are to be made available to local areas.

4.16 The annual increase in Public Health Grant funding for each year of the 3 year contract period is to support improvement across the following key service performance measures:

- achieving annual reductions in caseload levels
- increasing frequency of client appointments



- achieving annual increases in treatment penetration levels for both drug and alcohol clients

This will help address /reverse the current challenges listed in Section 4.11

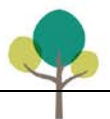
4.17 Bids from providers will be assessed according to structured criteria weighted on the basis of a 60:40 quality to price ratio

5 Alternative Options

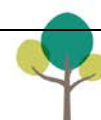
5.1 Do not approve the procurement of Adult Drug and Alcohol Service provision beyond 31st January 2023. This will impact health outcomes (not just of substance misusers themselves but the health of others through secondary harms) and further exacerbate health inequalities for our most disadvantaged groups within the borough. This would be inadvisable given the impact across the wider health and criminal justice system due to substance misuse.

6 Implications

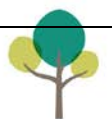
Resources:	<p>Financial, staffing, land/building implications:</p> <p>The proposed contract will be funded from the Public Health Grant. The proposed annual values exceed the current allocated budget and the increases will be incorporated into the Public Health financial planning for the appropriate periods.</p> <p>The budget for the proposed model will commence at £2.75million in the first year of the contract increasing by 10% each year until January 2026 as detailed below:</p>
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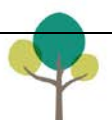
	<p>Year 1 (Feb 2023 - Jan 2024): £2,750,000 Year 2 (Feb 2024 - Jan 2025): £3,025,000 Year 3 (Feb 2025 - Jan 2026): £3,327,500 Year 4 (Feb 2026 - Jan 2027): £3,327,500 (optional extension year) Year 5 (Feb 2027 - Jan 2028): £3,327,500 (optional extension year)</p> <p>The total maximum amount inclusive of the 2-year extension period would therefore be £15,757,500</p> <p>Additional national Government Drug Strategy funding is likely to be available during the term of the contract. When such funds are made available, the intention is to use these to address elements required by the Drug Strategy 2021</p>
Legal and Governance	<p>Legal implications including regulations/law under which proposals are required/permitted and constitutional provisions:</p> <p>Under the Health & Social Care Act 2012, Sandwell Council (Public Health team) has undertaken responsibility for commissioning of Drug and Alcohol support services since 2013. Furthermore conditions attached to use of the Public Health Grant require that local areas must “have regard to the need to improve the take up of, and outcomes from, its drug and alcohol misuse treatment services”^{ix}</p> <p>Under various enabling legislation, including Section 1 of the Local Government (Contracts) Act 1997, the Local Authority has power to enter into contracts for the purposes of or in connection with the discharge of its functions.</p> <p>Due to the value of the contract, it constitutes an above threshold procurement under the Light Touch regime. As a result, the procurement process is governed by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.</p>



	<p>The contract will be awarded in accordance with the Council's Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.</p> <p>In view of the value of the contract, Rule 8.7 of the Council's Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules states that a minimum of three tender submissions would be required. In the event that the required minimum number of tenders are not received, an exemption to Rule 8.7 of the Council's Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules would need to be secured to waive the requirement to obtain a minimum of three tender submissions and to proceed with the award of the contract to a successful tenderer (as per recommendation 1.5).</p> <p>Should variations to the contract up to a maximum of 10% of the contract value be necessitated, an appropriate assessment would need to be undertaken to ensure compliance with relevant procurement rules, including Regulation 72 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015</p> <p>Bids from providers will be assessed according to structured criteria weighted on the basis of a 60:40 quality to price ratio</p>
Risk:	<p>Risk implications, including any mitigating measures planned/taken, health and safety, insurance implications:</p> <p>The corporate risk management strategy has been complied with to identify and assess the risks associated with the decisions being sought.</p> <p>Risk in respect of continuity of service provision from 1st February 2023 has been identified should there be no approval to re-procure.</p> <p>Risk in respect of a potential lack of tender responses has been identified given the budget associated with the service model. Mitigating measures include the removal of certain service delivery elements (listed in section 4.13.4)</p>



	There will be further consideration given to risk management as part of the contractual management with the future service provider.
Equality:	<p>Implications for equality (all aspects and characteristics) including how meeting Equality Duty, equality impact assessments:</p> <p>An Equality Impact Assessment has been conducted and the proposal would have no negative impact on protected groups. In fact, the proposal ensures that the boroughs more vulnerable individuals are supported thereby working to reduce health inequalities</p> <p>Please see Appendix A for a copy of the Equality Impact Assessment</p>
Health and Wellbeing:	<p>Implications of the proposals on health and wellbeing of our communities:</p> <p>This proposal would result in positive implications for health and well-being. Should the proposal not be accepted, and support is no longer available, there is very likely to be an escalation in substance misuse related harms where individuals are unable to access support resulting in hospital admissions, emergency admissions and long-term health morbidities. Not only impacting the health and wellbeing of individuals themselves, but others through secondary harms</p>
Social Value	<p>Implications for social value and how the proposals are meeting this (for e.g. employment of local traders, young people):</p> <p>Tendering organisations will be required to identify how their organisation creates social value as part of the procurement process, (for example local volunteering and employment opportunities) and this will be one of the criteria for assessing the bids. We would particularly be looking at potential providers' commitment to employing local people to deliver services.</p>



7. Appendices

Appendix A -Equality Impact Assessment



EIA_Template - Adult
Substance Misuse Ser

8. Background Papers

National Drug Strategy 2021: 'From harm to hope':

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/from-harm-to-hope-a-10-year-drugs-plan-to-cut-crime-and-save-lives>

Independent review of drugs by Dame Carol Black:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/independent-review-of-drugs-by-professor-dame-carol-black>

NICE guidelines:

- Alcohol-use disorders:
<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg115>
- Needle & Syringe Programmes:
<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph52>
- Drug misuse and dependence: UK guidelines on clinical management:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/drug-misuse-and-dependence-uk-guidelines-on-clinical-management>

ⁱ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/parents-with-alcohol-and-drug-problems-support-resources>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/opiate-and-crack-cocaine-use-prevalence-estimates-for-local-populations>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/local-alcohol-profiles>

^{iv} <https://www.nice.org.uk/advice/es19/chapter/Key-messages>

^v <https://alcoholchange.org.uk/alcohol-facts/fact-sheets/alcohol-crime-and-disorder>

^{vi} <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-health-grants-to-local-authorities-2021-to-2022/public-health-ring-fenced-grant-2021-to-2022-local-authority-circular#annexa>

^{vii} <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-of-drugs-phase-two-report>

^{viii} <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/from-harm-to-hope-a-10-year-drugs-plan-to-cut-crime-and-save-lives>

^{ix} <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-health-grants-to-local-authorities-2021-to-2022/public-health-ring-fenced-grant-2021-to-2022-local-authority-circular#annexa>



By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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Report to Cabinet

9 February 2022

Subject:	Appointment of an Executive Director to Sandwell Children's Trust Ltd
Cabinet Member:	Cabinet Member for Children and Education, Councillor Karen Simms
Director:	Director of Children and Education, Michael Jarrett
Key Decision:	Yes
Contact Officer:	Michael Jarrett, Director of Children and Education Michael_Jarrett@sandwell.gov.uk Mandip S. Chahal, Senior Commissioning Manager for Statutory Services Mandip1_chahal@sandwell.gov.uk

1. Recommendations


- 1.1 That the Cabinet, as the decision maker for the Council in its capacity as sole owner of Sandwell Children's Trust (SCT):
- (a) notes the completed sequence of events that are contractually required to appoint an executive director of Sandwell Children's Trust Ltd;
 - (b) notes and takes into account in its decision-making, the response from the Secretary of State;
 - (c) agrees the appointment of Teodora Bot, Director of Practice, Quality and Partnerships, as an executive director of Sandwell Children's Trust Ltd.







2. Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1. The appointment of the Executive Directors to Sandwell Children's Trust Ltd is a reserved matter for the Council. The board of Sandwell Children's Trust wishes to appoint Teodora Bot as an executive director of Sandwell Children's Trust Ltd following her appointment as Director of Practice, Quality and Partnerships for the Trust. Approval is being sought to complete the appointment and register Teodora Bot as an executive director.
- 2.2 There are currently only two executive directors in place, one of which is the Chief Executive of the Trust. The appointment of Teodora Bot as the third executive director will bring the composition of Sandwell Children's Trust board into alignment with the Governance Side Agreement between the Council and DfE.
- 2.3 The Council has written to the Secretary of State to consult with them prior to confirming its decision. At the time of writing this Cabinet report, Department for Education (DfE) officials have confirmed by email that the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families has approved the recommendation.
- 2.4 Following the completion of the required process to consult the Secretary of State, and to take into account the response, the Cabinet is now recommended to agree the recommendations set out in this report.

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p>Best start in life for children and young people</p> <p>SCT works with families, foster carers, schools, statutory and voluntary providers to support the achievements of vulnerable children and those in the care of the council</p> <p>SCT works to ensure that children in the care of the Council receive the support and opportunities that any parent would give their child</p>
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	<p>People live well and age well</p> <p>SCT ensures coordination between social care and the NHS to better protect vulnerable children</p>
	<p>Strong resilient communities</p> <p>SCT supports families to improve children's life chances</p> <p>SCT works closely with the police to ensure that children are protected from the impact of crime, domestic violence, and all forms of exploitation</p>
	<p>Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods</p> <p>SCT supports care leavers to live independently in the community, working closely with Housing to ensure care leavers are able to good quality accommodation in Sandwell.</p>
	<p>A strong and inclusive economy</p> <p>SCT works with families to access services and support so that they are able to improve their economic well-being and the life chances for their children</p>

4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 At its meeting on 19 October 2016, Cabinet was advised of the Government's Statutory Direction (under Section 479A of the Education Act 1996) to set up a new arrangement in the form of a children's trust to deliver children's social care services. As a result, Sandwell Children's Trust started operating on 1 April 2018.
- 4.2 On 22 March 2017, the Cabinet considered the types of decisions that would be of such strategic importance that they could not be decided at the board of the Trust but would be "reserved to" the owner of the Trust (the Council) for decision:



- As the decision maker for the Council in its capacity as the body that is responsible and accountable for the discharge of the relevant children's social care services functions; and
- As the decision maker for the Council in its capacity as owner of the Trust in relation primarily to the Reserved Matters, as set out in the Memorandum of Understanding, and other legally required decisions.

4.3 The Cabinet agreed (1.5) that: "In order to fulfil the role as sole owner of the Trust, it is recommended that the full Cabinet itself operates as the decision-making body for matters in relation to the Trust." It also agreed that, in order to clearly differentiate between decisions which Cabinet is considering in its two roles (i.e. as owner of the Trust and as children's services authority), separate reports be prepared to set out clearly which role the Cabinet is undertaking at any time. In relation to decisions taken in its role as owner of the Trust, the Cabinet agreed that any recommendations should include authority for officers then to formalise the decision in relation to any company law paperwork.

4.4 The Governance Side Agreement which the Council has entered into with the Department for Education sets out the composition of the board of directors of the Trust as follows:

- A Chair (non-executive director) as appointed by the Secretary of State in consultation with the Council;
- Three executive directors comprising the Trust's Chief Executive and two other members of the executive management team;
- Three non-executive directors with collective knowledge and expertise across children's services, public services;
- Two additional non-executive directors appointed by the Council (e.g. members and /or officers).



- 4.5 Apart from the appointment of the Chair, all other appointments are required to be made in consultation with the Secretary of State for Education. The appointment of the two non-executive directors appointed by the Council is a 'Reserved Matter' and therefore a decision to be taken by the Cabinet.
- 4.6 Appointed individuals will, as executive and as non-executive directors of the Trust, have a fiduciary duty to the Trust board, meaning that they will act in good faith, and in the best interests of the Company.
- 4.7 The Council, as sole owner of the Company (Sandwell Children's Trust) is required to consult with the Secretary of State on certain 'Consultation Reserved Matters' prior to notifying the Company of its decisions in respect of that Consultation Reserved Matter. The Secretary of State is invited to: *"make written representations to the Council within 10 working days of being notified of the matter.... In making its decision the Council must take into account the representations made by the Secretary of State."*
- 4.8 The Consultation Reserved Matters relevant to the recommendations in this report are:
- Approval of the registering of any new member of the Company;
 - Approval of any Additional Executive Director removals or appointments (including the approval of appointment terms for Additional Executive Directors and any amendments to such terms);
 - Approval of any Independent Non-Executive Director removals or appointments (including the approval of the appointment terms for Independent Non-Executive Directors and any amendments to such terms).



5 Alternative Options

- 5.1 The alternative option would be for the Director of Practice, Quality and Partnerships to not be appointed as a company director. However, this would mean the composition of the board of directors was other than that as set out in the Governance Side Agreement and Articles of Association.

6 Implications

Resources:	<p>Sandwell Children's Trust receives a significant financial resource to deliver the Council's statutory responsibilities for children's social care, this includes the cost of the Executive Directors.</p> <p>The Contract Sum amount that SCT receives is agreed annually in line with mechanisms set out in the Service Delivery Contract.</p>
Legal and Governance:	<p>The Governance Side Agreement between the Council and Department for Education sets out the composition of the board of directors of the Trust.</p> <p>The Council is required, as sole owner of Sandwell Children's Trust, to consult with the Secretary of State on certain 'Consultation Reserved Matters' prior to notifying the Company of its decisions in respect of that Consultation Reserved Matter. The approval of any Independent Non-Executive Director removals or appointments is such a matter.</p>
Risk:	<p>The corporate risk management strategy has been complied with and risks have been identified arising from the recommendations being sought. This has concluded that there are no significant risks that require reporting and that suitable measures are in place to mitigate the risks identified to acceptable levels.</p>



Equality:	An Equality Impact Assessment screening is not required for this report.
Health and Wellbeing:	SCT continues to support children and families in Sandwell and as the quality of service that they deliver improves so does the impact they have on improving the health and wellbeing of children and families.
Social Value	SCT supports children to achieve, feel safe, be supported and access opportunities. SCT supports care leavers to access education, employment and training. Having strong governance and oversight supports SCT to achieve service improvement and better support children and families in Sandwell.

7. Appendices

None

8. Background Papers

Cabinet Paper dated:

19 October 2016

[04 - Formation of a Children's Trust](#)

[04 - Formation of a Children's Trust - Appendix](#)

7 December 2016,

[04 - Formation of Children' Trust - MoU](#)

[04a - Appendix 1 Strategic Project Risk Register](#)

[04b - Appendix 2 Formal Commissioner Response](#)

22 March 2017

[22 - Role of Sandwell MBC in relation to Sandwell Children's Social Care Trust](#)



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Report to Cabinet

9 February 2022

Subject:	Award a Contract for Highway Surfacing and Associated Works
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Ahmad Bostan – Cabinet Member for Environment
Director:	Alice Davey – Director of Borough Economy
Key Decision:	Yes
Contact Officer:	Robin Weare – Service Manager, Highways Mathew Burling – Senior Engineer – Maintenance

1 Recommendations



- 1.1 That Cabinet approves Sandwell MBC working in collaboration with Dudley MBC and Wolverhampton City Council with Dudley acting as the lead Authority to procure a contract for the provision of highway surfacing and associated works.
- 1.2 That the Director of Borough Economy be authorised to accept tenders and award the recommended collaborative contract for the provision of highway surfacing and associated works in support of Sandwell's annual planned highway maintenance programme, following a compliant competitive tender process.
- 1.3 That the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer be authorised to execute any documentation necessary to enable the recommended course of action.
- 1.4 That any necessary exemptions be made to the Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules to enable the recommended course of action referred to proceed.






2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 Road users and the wider community place a high value on keeping all road users moving safely around Sandwell on well-maintained roads and footpaths. Failure to do so can result in adverse economic and social impacts, public dissatisfaction and significant reputational damage.
- 2.2 The Council has a statutory duty under section 41 of The Highways Act 1980 to maintain highways that are maintainable at the public expense.
- 2.3 To meet this duty, routine highway maintenance works are programmed such as patching for minor defects or wider resurfacing and reconstruction works where required.
- 2.4 To enable the effective completion of highway maintenance works a suite of contracts are in place covering different specialist methods of work. The current contract for highway surfacing and associated works is due to expire on 30th April 2022.
- 2.5 The existing agreement was also a collaborative exercise with Dudley MBC acting as lead authority and has ensured Sandwell can fulfil its statutory obligations as Local Highway Authority for maintenance of the public highway network, while benefitting from economies of scale and reduced tendering costs.
- 2.6 Subject to the required approvals, the new contract will be in place to allow seamless transition from the current framework.

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	Best start in life for children and young people Good, well maintained highway infrastructure will encourage more walking and cycling among our younger people increasing their health and wellbeing, improving road safety promoting cleaner air quality and supporting the response to the climate change emergency.
	People live well and age well The Highway environment plays an important role in the life of the community, particularly the positive opportunities that they can bring from social inclusion and interaction.



	Good quality Highways infrastructure will reduce the potential for road traffic accidents to make our communities feel safer, more protected and confident in their homes and neighbourhoods.
	Well maintained highways will help maintain economic and physical activity, minimise delays to journey time and contribute to reduced accidents and accident damage.
	Highways are the arteries of our communities. They connect our residents to employment, education, local services and indeed the wider world. They enable economic growth, social mobility and are vital in ensuring good health outcomes.

4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 Cabinet approval is sought for delegated authority to approve the recommendations to establish a collaborative contract for a period of up to 4 years for highway surfacing and associated works to support the Council's highway maintenance programme.
- 4.2 It is anticipated that the value of work commissioned by Sandwell over the 4-year period will be approximately £15M. This will primarily be for planned carriageway and footway maintenance and associated works.
- 4.3 The tender will be evaluated by 60% price and 40% quality with tender evaluation completed by Dudley MBC.

5 Alternative Options

- 5.1 There are no recommended affordable alternatives to enable effective and efficient highway surfacing and associated works.

6 Implications

Resources:	Planned maintenance work to the highways is funded from Highways Maintenance budgets with a combined allocation from revenue and external capital grants of £3.75M based on an 'average' year.
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Legal and Governance:	<p>The principal statutory duty imposed on highway authorities to maintain the highway maintainable at public expense is set out in Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980.</p> <p>The Traffic Management Act 2004 imposes a network management duty on a council as Local Traffic Authority to manage the authority's road network to facilitate as far as reasonably practicable the expeditious movement of traffic.</p>
Risk:	<p>A key service risk relates to third party liability claims arising from accident and injury due to condition of the highway or non-compliance with statutory obligations. The duty is not absolute, but decisions must be taken on reasonable grounds with due care and regard to relevant considerations as set out in best practice guidance 'Well-managed Highway Infrastructure'.</p>
Equality:	<p>An equality impact assessment has not been carried out as maintaining the highway infrastructure maintainable at public expense is not believed to impact significantly against the protected characteristics.</p>
Health and Wellbeing:	<p>The framework will support the delivery of planned highway maintenance work; which supports 2030 Ambitions 5 and 6 in keeping the roads operating safely and efficiently.</p>
Social Value	<p>Highways are the arteries of our communities. They connect our residents to employment, education, local services and indeed the wider world. They enable economic growth, social mobility</p>



7. Appendices

None

8. Background Papers

- 8.1 Well-managed Highway Infrastructure – Code of Practice Last updated October 2016
- 8.2 Sandwell Council Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan



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Report to Cabinet

9 February 2022

Subject:	Revocation of Highway Improvement Lines – A41 Birmingham Road, West Bromwich
Cabinet Member:	Cabinet Member for Environment Councillor Ahmad Bostan
Director:	Director – Regeneration & Growth Tony McGovern
Key Decision:	No
Contact Officer:	Strategic Planning & Transportation Manager Andy Miller andy_miller@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations


- 1.1 That the highway improvement lines at A41 Birmingham Road/Park Lane, West Bromwich which are more particularly identified on Drawing No. SP0290SE/J (attached) be revoked.

2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 Following a review by both Sandwell and Birmingham Councils, the road widening scheme on the A41 between Park Lane and Island Road is no longer intended to be delivered. Therefore, the improvement lines which protect the land required for the scheme are no longer required.



3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	Highway improvements are only justified where they facilitate development or support active travel (walking and cycling) and bus priority as a means of reducing congestion and increasing connectivity. The proposals in this location are no longer considered to support these objectives.
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4 Context and Key Issues

Highway Improvement Lines

- 4.1 Under the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (and its predecessor acts) local authorities have the power to protect from development land that it requires for future highway improvements. This is achieved by a resolution of the authority. The effect is to prevent the granting of planning permission for any development on, or which would affect, the land in question.
- 4.2 Colloquially, the lines that define these areas of land are known as Highway Improvement Lines. The presence of an improvement line on a parcel of land can result in the owner serving a blight notice on the authority which is in effect a compulsory purchase in reverse; where the presence of the improvement line means that the land owner can demonstrate that they cannot sell the site, or only at a reduced value, it can require the local authority to acquire it.
- 4.3 Sandwell is currently protecting land in this way for nine highway schemes across the borough ranging from major projects such as at Birchley Island to minor widening schemes affecting small areas of land.

The Scheme at Birmingham Road

- 4.4 The improvement lines on the A41 are all that remains of a scheme to widen the Birmingham Road/Holyhead Road between M5 Junction 1 and Island Road which lies within the boundary of the City of Birmingham. This scheme was originally proposed by the former West Midlands County Council in the early 1970s with the aim of creating a dual-carriageway with service roads to cater for industrial premises on either side of the road.



- 4.5 Funding was never made available for this project. The WMCC was abolished in 1986 and responsibility for the project passed to Sandwell and Birmingham. The dual carriageway scheme was abandoned by both councils in the early 1990s following a review of the principal road network in this part of the conurbation and a desire by Birmingham City council to downgrade the A41 corridor as far as M5 Junction 1 in favour of the A457 corridor through Smethwick. The improvement lines in Sandwell were revoked as a result. However, Birmingham retained the line in its area pending a revised scheme to address local traffic management and road safety issues at the junctions with Park Lane and with Middlemore Road.
- 4.6 Shortly after the wider proposal was dropped, the boundary between Birmingham and Sandwell was altered such that part of the retained Birmingham improvement line was now located in Sandwell. Birmingham City Council had actually acquired some of the affected land prior to the boundary change. The City Council requested that Sandwell retain the improvement line until such time as it reached a decision on its safety scheme.
- 4.7 The City Council has completed its review of the proposals in this location and has concluded that the improvement lines are no longer required. Therefore, it resolved to revoke the improvement line on its side of the boundary on 26th February 2021. Sandwell's Highway Services has carried out a similar review in this area and concluded that any improvements that may come forward in the future to address road safety would not require road widening into the land covered by the improvement line.
- 4.8 The City Council would like to market the land they acquired. However, the now superfluous improvement line on the Sandwell side will be a deterrent to potential purchasers. It is therefore proposed to formally remove the protection it provides and any resultant planning blight.

5 Alternative Options

- 5.1 The alternative course of action is to retain the improvement line. However, as the City Council no longer wishes to pursue road widening in this location, and Sandwell has no proposals of its own for the land affected, there is no justification to do so.



6 Implications

Resources:	There are no financial or resource implications arising from the course of action set out in this report.
Legal and Governance:	Pursuant to Para. 15, Schedule 13 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, land can be designated as “comprised within the sites of highways which it is proposed should be constructed, improved or altered”. These ‘improvement lines’ can cause affected land to become blighted in certain circumstances.
Risk:	The course of action set out in this report removes the risk of blight associated with land affected by the improvement line.
Equality:	There are no equality implications arising from the course of action set out in this report.
Health and Wellbeing:	There are no health and wellbeing implications arising from the course of action set out in this report.
Social Value	There are no social value implications arising from the course of action set out in this report.

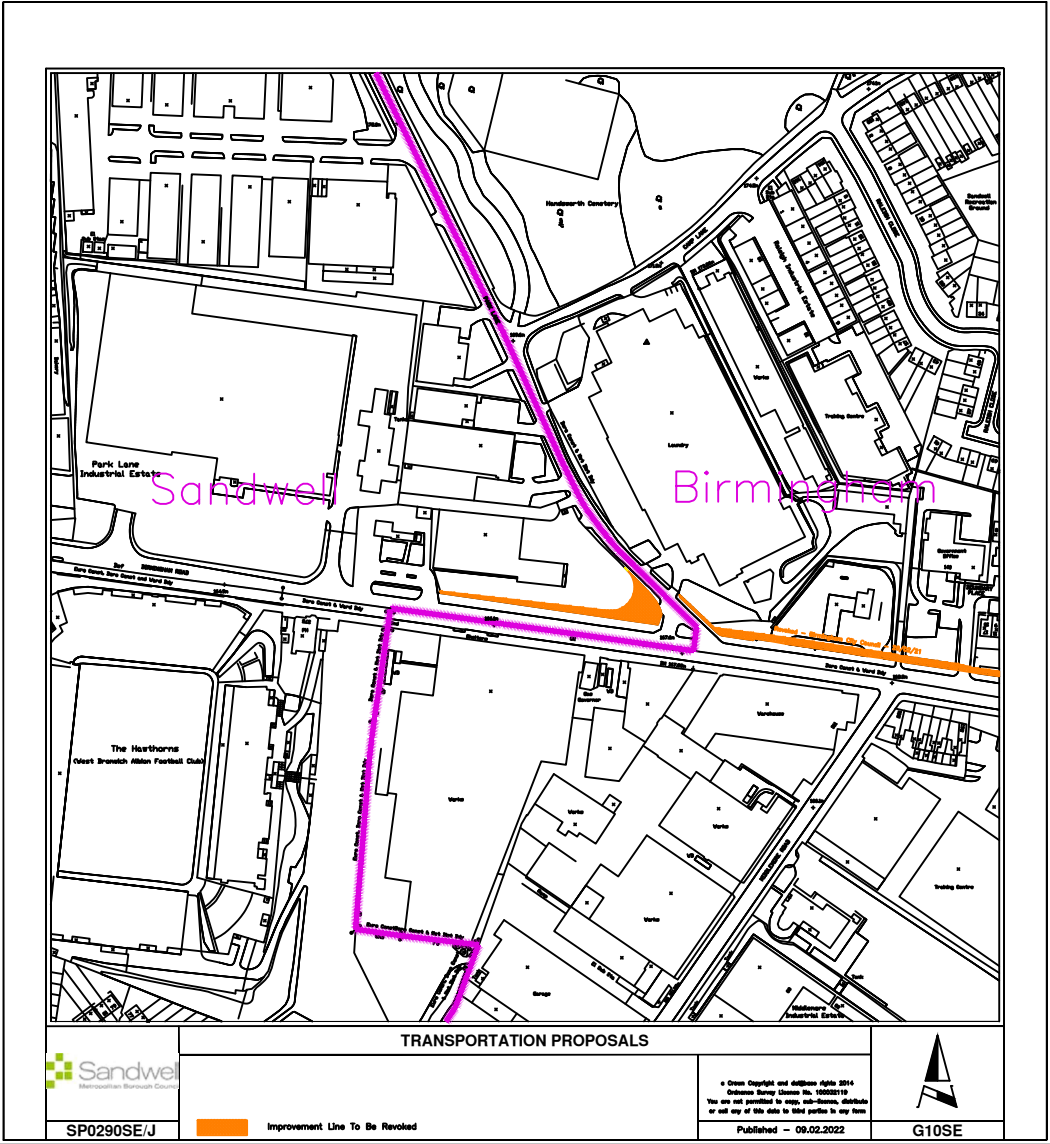
7. Appendices

A - Drawing No. SP0290SE/J

8. Background Papers

Birmingham City Council: Report of Assistant Director Transport & Connectivity under Delegated Authority 26th February 2021





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Report to Cabinet

9 February 2022

Subject:	Smethwick to Birmingham Area Framework and Grove Lane Masterplan
Cabinet Member:	Regeneration and Growth Cllr Iqbal Padda
Director:	Director Regeneration and Growth Tony McGovern
Key Decision:	Yes significant effect on two or more Wards
Contact Officer:	Planning Regeneration Team Leader, Hayley Insley Hayley_Insley@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That Cabinet consider the results of the consultation undertaken on the Smethwick to Birmingham Area Framework and Grove Lane Masterplan during October to December 2021 as set out in the Consultation Report.
- 1.2 That Cabinet is recommended to approve the Area Framework and Grove Lane Masterplan as amended, and for both documents to be treated as a material consideration in the determination of future planning applications.

2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 The Draft Smethwick to Birmingham Area Framework and Grove Lane Masterplan were presented to Cabinet in June 2021 for consultation. However, prior to consultation being undertaken, amendments were requested from Birmingham City Council in the capacity of our joint partner for this project. Following this revision, both documents were presented to Cabinet again on 29 September 2021 for authority to consult. It was also

recommended that a further report be presented to Cabinet with the results of the consultation in due course. Consultation is now complete and both documents have been amended to take into account relevant amendments. This report requests that both documents are approved to assist with guiding decisions on future development proposals in the area.

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	Best start in life for children and young people Proposals within the Area Framework and Masterplan consider the need for new education facilities
	People live well and age well New housing proposed within the area will seek to address the needs of all members of the community and include improved public realm and green spaces, improved transport links and access to facilities and increase employment opportunities.
	Strong resilient communities New housing proposed within the area will seek to address the needs of all members of the community and include improved public realm and green spaces, improved transport links and access to facilities and increase employment opportunities.
	Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods The Masterplan seeks to attract a range of house types and tenures that are sustainable and will meet the needs and demands of the future residents.
	A strong and inclusive economy Sites that could assist in delivering new jobs and learning opportunities are identified within the Area Framework. Improvements to transport connections will improve residents' ability to access key transport hubs and hence their access to employment and education prospects and will contribute to attracting and retaining businesses in Sandwell.
	A connected and accessible Sandwell The Area Framework identifies a transport strategy that aims to consider current and future transport needs and promoting alternative safe and convenient modes of transport other than the private motor car, including new cycling and walking routes.

4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 The regeneration corridor between Smethwick and Birmingham contains significant sites for future regeneration. Smethwick will see transformation through the opening of the Midland Metropolitan University Hospital next year, as well as several projects being promoted for education, training, new housing and improvements to walking and cycling connectivity via the Towns Fund programme. Birmingham also has sites coming forward that will deliver significant housing growth, including Port Loop and City Hospital once this site becomes available.
- 4.2 The Rolfe Street and Grove Lane areas will be key to introducing new much needed housing in Smethwick, with new or improved cycle and walking routes assisting in promoting an alternative mode of transport for those working, living and visiting the area.
- 4.3 The Smethwick to Birmingham Corridor Area Framework sets the guiding principles for bringing these opportunities sites forward that promote this area as a place that people want to live in now and in the future, which is well connected with sustainable transport choices and where access to the heritage and green space is maximised and where new communities can be created.
- 4.4 There are six main guiding principles within the Area Framework to guide the delivery of the vision and the corridor's contribution to achieve net zero and inclusive growth; Healthy centres, A new hospital as an anchor institution, a green corridor, an active transport exemplar, green new neighbourhoods and healthy sense of place.
- 4.5 In addition, a Masterplan for the area surrounding the new hospital at Grove Lane has been prepared that provides additional guidance on the amount and type of new housing that could be accommodated, linkages and green spaces and the additional infrastructure such as a new primary school.
- 4.6 These documents have been commissioned jointly by Sandwell Council and Birmingham City Council, with partners West Midlands Combined Authority/Transport for West Midlands and Homes England. Engagement with Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Hospitals Trust and Canal & River Trust has also shaped both the Area Framework and Masterplan.

- 4.7 Following approval to consult last September, consultation commenced on 18 October, initially for a period of six weeks. The documents were put on the respective local authority webpages as well as having its own dedicated webpage managed by the consultants. Information about the consultation was cascaded via a range of means including the use of social media (Twitter and Facebook), presentation and updates to Ward Members Board and reference at Smethwick Town Deal Local Board meetings. Documents were placed within Council offices at Woodcock Street and in Spring Hill Library and Smethwick Library and at Sandwell Council House. Flyers advertising the consultation were also provided to the libraries to be distributed to persons expressing interest. A3 Posters advertising the consultation were put up in the foyer of the Tesco superstore on Dudley Road, the foyer of the Summerfield Community Centre and at Sandwell Council House.
- 4.8 In addition, officers staffed public consultation events at Lidl on Dudley Road in Birmingham on Wednesday 3 November 2021, and outside Smethwick Council House on Saturday 20 November 2021 to raise awareness of the consultation. The documents were also presented to Birmingham City Council's Edgbaston Ward Forum on 15 November 2021. To enable further engagement, an additional 750 flyers were posted to properties in Winson Green and the consultation period extended for an additional week to 3 December 2021.

Results of consultation

- 4.9 At the end of the consultation period, we had received responses from 39 people and organisations comprising 14 emails/letters and 25 who responded to the online questionnaire. A further 30 residents registered to receive additional information during the consultation period although they did not complete an online questionnaire.
- 4.10 The main points raised during the consultation are summarised below:
- There was support from several respondents to improving biodiversity within the corridor and more detail was sought on this.

- There was a high level of support from respondents for active travel improvements, including reallocation of space away from motorised vehicles/parking.
- A number of respondents sought clarification on future plans for bus routes linked to the new hospital.
- There were divergent views on densities. Some responses considered densities to be too high whereas others considered them too low.
- There was support from several respondents for retaining historic buildings in the area and the contribution these could make to regeneration. Some respondents sought a stronger commitment to the retention of such buildings.
- Some respondents sought greater clarity as to the intended planning status of the Corridor Framework and Grove Lane Masterplan. Some respondents raised the issue of consistency with the new Black Country Plan (in Sandwell Borough).

A number of respondents expressed support for a new railway station in the corridor. A number of respondents highlighted issues with levels of traffic and parking. There was considerable support for active travel provision

Changes resulting from consultation responses

4.11 In response to the representations the following principal changes have been made (additional changes are detailed in the responses to individual comments below):

- New text added to both the Framework and the Masterplan to make clear their planning status.
- Additional references to biodiversity have been incorporate into the Framework City Hospital section and expansion of the 'Green Corridor' text on Framework page 33.
- A number of the maps in the Framework were amended to clarify the identification of non-designated heritage assets.

- The cycle network map in the Framework has been updated to fully reflect the Dudley Road Improvement Scheme.

Further details of the representations and how they have shaped the final Corridor Framework and Grove Lane Masterplan are provided in the Consultation Statement.

Next steps

- 4.12 The Area Framework and Grove Lane Masterplan sets the vision for future development within this regeneration corridor. As such, some of the future aspirations for land use are not in line with the adopted local plan comprising the Black Country Core Strategy and Sandwell Site Allocations and Delivery DPD. Therefore, they are unable to be adopted as Supplementary Planning Documents until such time as the Black Country Core Strategy has been reviewed and adopted. However, the proposed land uses within these documents are aligned with those set out in the Black Country Plan review currently in process.
- 4.13 It is therefore proposed for Sandwell to endorse both documents which will enable them to be used as a material consideration to guide future proposed developments that may come forward within the corridor area in Sandwell. As there are no policy changes with regards the Birmingham City Council Local Plan, it is intended that the Corridor Area Framework will be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document by the City Council.

5 Alternative Options

- 5.1 The Masterplan for the Grove Lane area sets in more detail, the vision for future development in this area. It provides more insight to developers and landowners in what type of development could positively contribute to the wider area regeneration. Not progressing with the masterplan may lead to unconnected, piecemeal development that would lack cohesiveness and not provide for connectivity to the wider area and the creation of new, related communities.
- 5.2 Similarly, the progression of the Corridor Area Framework ensures consistency between the two local authorities within this important regeneration corridor in achieving the provision of good quality housing that is well connected to sustainable transport links, open space and the canal network. The guiding principles also assists in contributing to the vision for this area in creating a healthy place to live, work and visit and contributing to net zero and inclusive growth. Without the Area Framework to direct appropriate development for the opportunity sites and the related transport strategy to focus on sustainable transport, development within the corridor may not achieve the vision set out by the respective local authorities and partner agencies for the regeneration transformation this area could achieve.



6 Implications

Resources:	The Area Framework and Masterplan preparation has been developed by consultants funded by Birmingham City Council, Sandwell Council, West Midlands Combined Authority and Homes England and supported by officers within these authorities and agency. The proposals contained within these documents will assist in bringing forward some landholdings within public sector ownership
Legal and Governance:	There are no direct legal implications in relation to this report. The Area Framework and Masterplan will be informal non-statutory documents.
Risk:	There are no direct implications with regard to risk in relation to this report. All consultation was undertaken in line with any Covid restrictions currently in place at the time to ensure safety was maintained. No indoor meetings were proposed due to the potential of infection from Covid.
Equality:	An EIA has not been carried out. The Masterplan does not create policy, it sets out the expected direction of travel of emerging policy, and can be a material planning consideration when determining applications
Health and Wellbeing:	The Area Framework and Masterplan will offer a range of health and wellbeing benefits through improving and developing new sustainable homes and public spaces, providing associated infrastructure to support new communities being created and assets and places for people to go and improvements to infrastructure including cycling and walking routes.
Social Value	The opportunities identified within the Area Framework and Masterplan will acknowledge how inclusive economic growth may be achieved.

7. Appendices

Smethwick to Birmingham Corridor Area Framework
Grove Lane Masterplan
Consultation Statement



8. Background Papers

None



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SMETHWICK TO BIRMINGHAM CORRIDOR

FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT
FEBRUARY 2022

SMETHWICK TO BIRMINGHAM CORRIDOR

THE DELIVERY PARTNERS



Sandwell Council is leading on the preparation of the development framework and the Grove Lane masterplan in collaboration with the other partners. The council is the largest Black Country authority and is pursuing an ambitious and proactive inclusive growth agenda.



Birmingham City Council is leading of the preparation of the development framework in collaboration with the other partners. Birmingham is the largest local authority in Europe and has an extensive track record of delivering large-scale urban renewal.



West Midlands Combined Authority is the combined authority for the West Midlands. The authority works collaboratively to deliver on its priorities including housing and regeneration, productivity and skills, economy and environment. WMCA is working with partners on the redevelopment of the area around the new Midland Metropolitan University Hospital. **Transport for West Midlands** co-ordinates investment to improve the region’s transport infrastructure and create a fully integrated, safe and secure network.



Homes England is the government’s housing accelerator. It is focussed on making possible the new homes England needs, helping to improve neighbourhoods and grow communities. Homes England is working with Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust to bring forward the redevelopment of the City Hospital.



Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust operates City Hospital and its new hospital, the Midland Metropolitan University Hospital, is under construction. The Trust is also leading on the development of the Midland Met Learning Campus which will provide education and skills opportunities for the local population focused on accessing careers in the health and related sectors. The project has been allocated funding from the Towns Fund and is a collaboration between Sandwell College, Aston University, University of Wolverhampton and Sandwell Council. The Trust is the largest employer in the corridor and is committed to improving the lives of local people, maintaining an outstanding reputation for teaching and education, and to embedding innovation and research.



Canal & River Trust is the charity that looks after and brings life to 2,000 miles of waterways in England and Wales, including the Birmingham Main Line Canal within the corridor. The Trust is working to transform canals into spaces where local people want to spend time and feel better.

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2	Smethwick Galton Bridge to Rolfe Street	page 20
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5	Transport strategy	page 60
6	Delivery	page 74
A	Appendix	page 78
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OUR VISION FOR THE CORRIDOR



1

OUR VISION FOR THE CORRIDOR

OUR VISION FOR THE CORRIDOR

Introduction

The Smethwick to Birmingham corridor is Birmingham and Sandwell's historic canal district, stretching from The Roundhouse just west of Brindleyplace to Galton Bridge in Smethwick. It is the historic link between Birmingham and the Black Country and a cradle of the industrial revolution.

Today the corridor is one of the most significant areas of brownfield urban renewal in Europe, with potential to deliver 4,000 new homes. We want to realise the opportunities of that transformational scale of change.

Change is underway with new neighbourhoods under construction at Port Loop and Soho Loop and the Midland Metropolitan University Hospital nearing completion. We want to continue those changes and ensure they enhance the area for existing and future residents.

This framework sets out our plan for doing that. It:

- Creates a vision for the area and guiding principles which will be used by all the delivery partners in the detailed design and development of the main redevelopment sites in the corridor and by private sector partners in delivering development.
- Provides a joined-up transport strategy for the corridor, which will be used by the councils and Transport for West Midlands to create and seek funding for a corridor-wide package of transport improvements focused on walking and cycling.
- Adds additional detail to the planning policies of the councils (summarised in the Appendix) by providing design principles for the main allocated development sites to be applied by developers in designing their schemes and by the councils in determining planning applications.
- Showcases all the changes happening in the corridor and demonstrates the commitment of the delivery partners to making them happen, creating the platform for continuing private and public sector investment.

This framework is prepared jointly by Sandwell Council and Birmingham City Council in close collaboration with Homes England, The West Midlands Combined Authority, Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust and the Canal & River Trust.

Relationship to the Grove Lane masterplan

The Grove Lane masterplan builds on this framework to set out in more detail how the Grove Lane area surrounding the Midland Metropolitan University Hospital can be redeveloped. A more detailed masterplan for the Grove Lane area is needed to show how the site can be developed and set the basis for its delivery.

The development framework and the Grove Lane masterplan are intended to be read together.



“
The corridor..is the historic link between
Birmingham and the Black Country and a
cradle of the industrial revolution
”



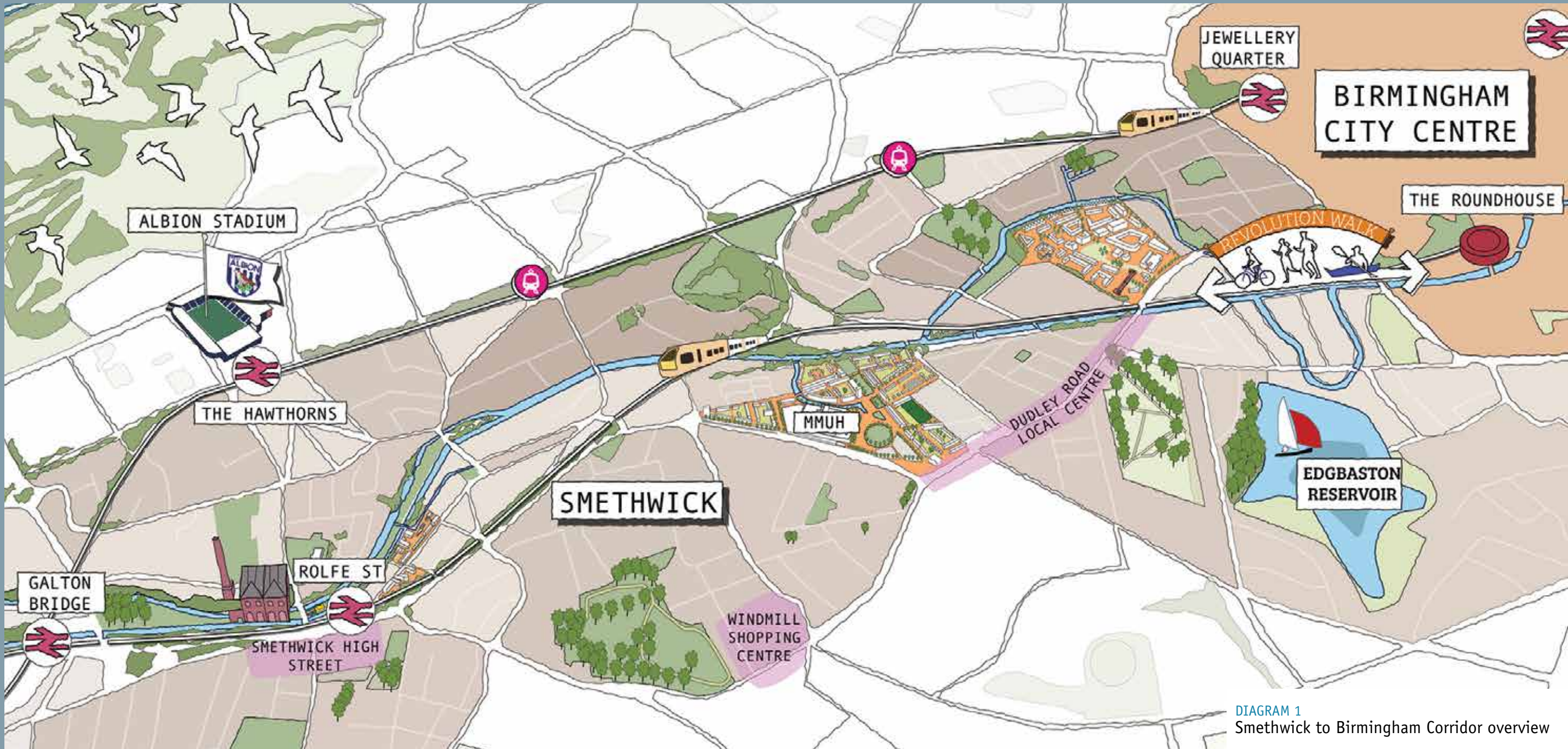
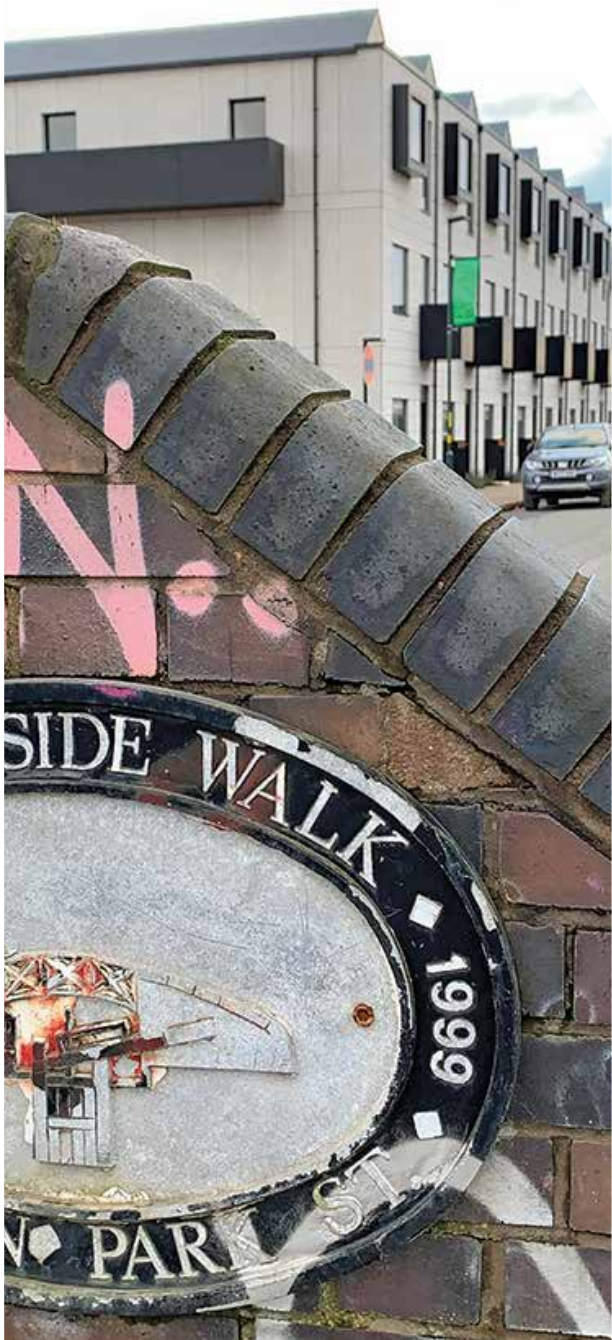


DIAGRAM 1
Smethwick to Birmingham Corridor overview





The corridor area

The Smethwick to Birmingham corridor lies centrally within the West Midlands, the UK's third most populous urban area and one of the largest metropolitan regions in Europe.

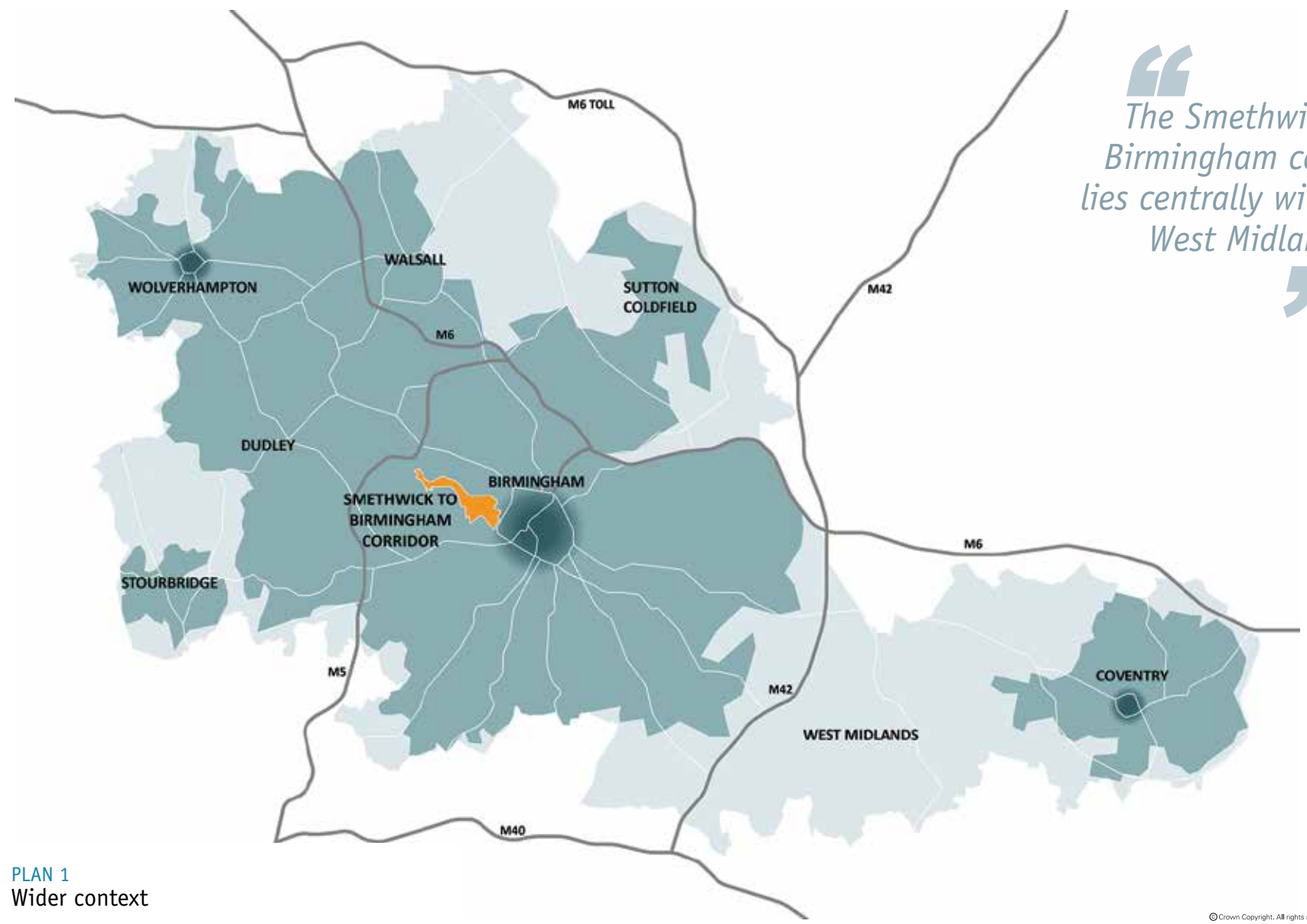
The corridor runs from the edge of central Birmingham at Ladywood, through the Winson Green area of Birmingham, to the town of Smethwick in the Borough of Sandwell and straddles major road, rail and canal routes between Birmingham and the Black Country.

The Birmingham Canal Navigations Main Line canal, which runs through the corridor to the west of Brindleyplace and Gas Street basin, is at the heart of the British canal network.

The corridor includes two mainline rail stations at Smethwick Galton Bridge and Smethwick Rolfe Street on the West Coast Mainline between Birmingham and Wolverhampton.

The A457 through the corridor is one of the principal arterial routes between Sandwell and Birmingham.

The corridor crosses administrative boundaries, with the western part of the corridor lying within Sandwell Council's area and the eastern part within Birmingham City Council's area.

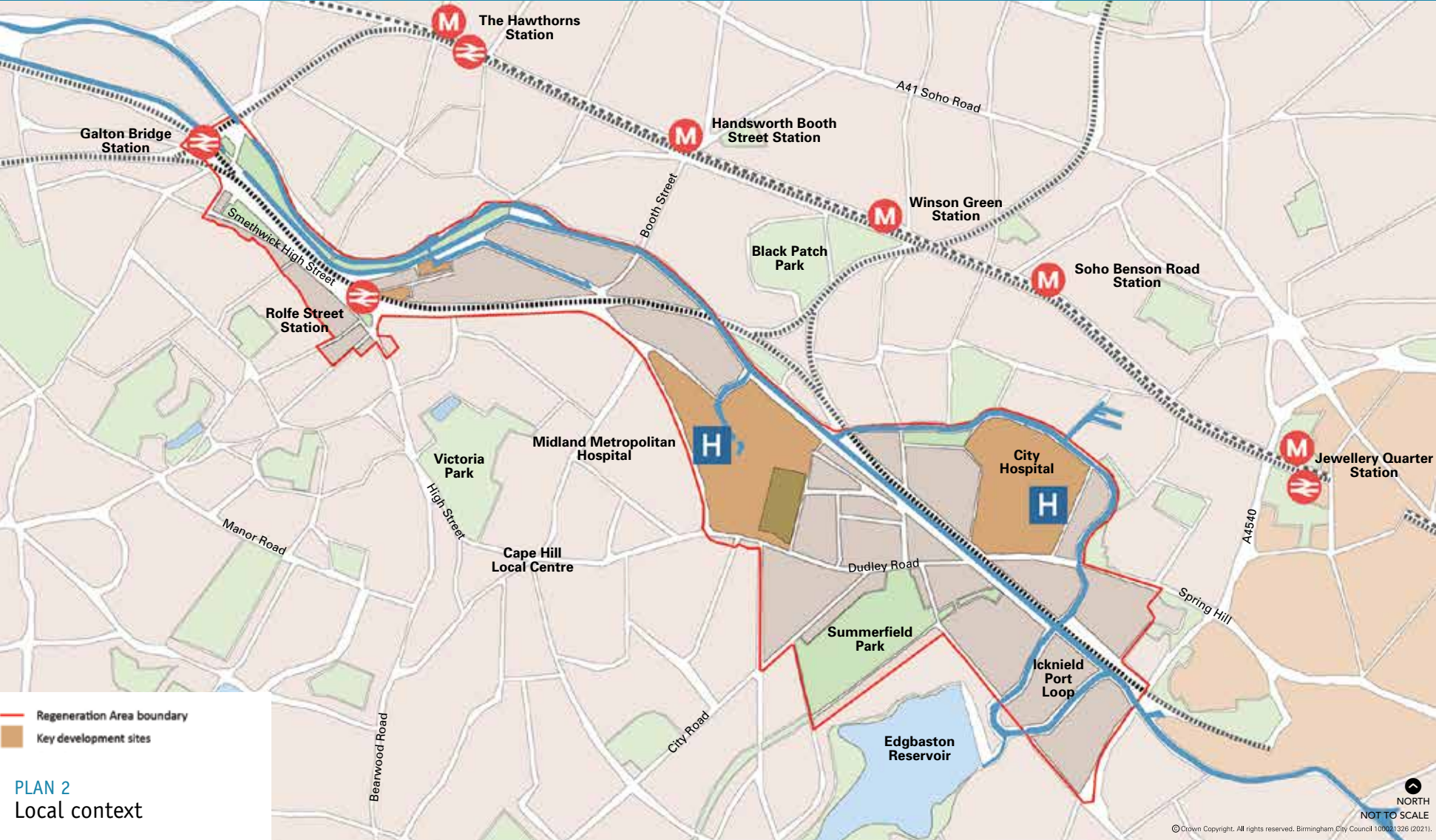


“
The Smethwick to
Birmingham corridor
lies centrally within the
West Midlands
”

PLAN 1
Wider context

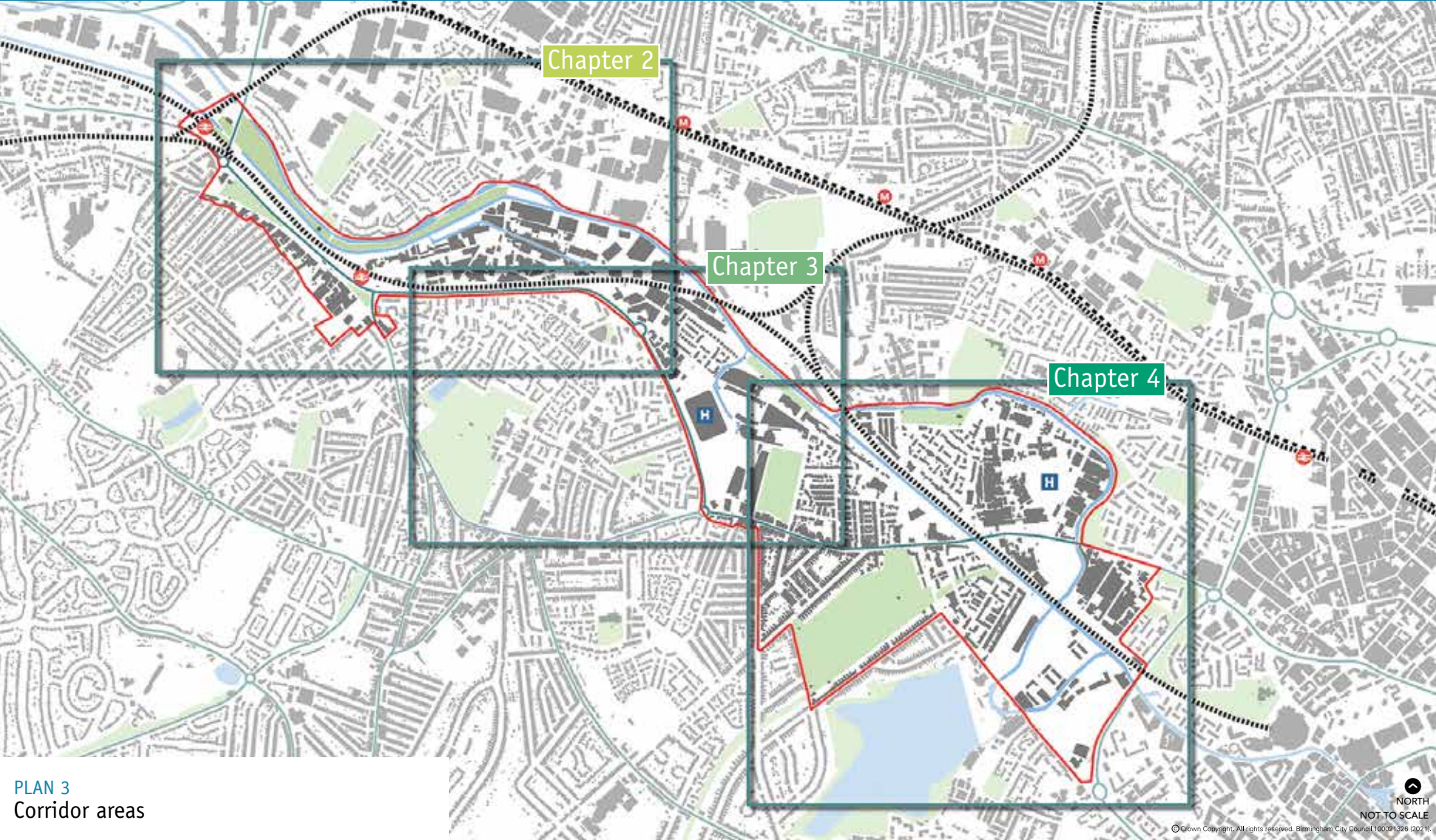
NORTH
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Local context



The corridor

We have divided the corridor area into three separate neighbourhoods which are shown on the map below. In the west Smethwick Galton Bridge to Rolfe Street (see Chapter 2), in the centre of the corridor the Grove Lane area around the new Midland Metropolitan University Hospital (see Chapter 3), and in the east the area between Grove Lane and the City Hospital, including Dudley Road (see Chapter 4).



Vision

Our vision for the corridor is:

Making a healthy community

The corridor will be a place that people want to live in now and into the future, a place that is aspirational, where people feel proud to live, work, visit and be educated, that is well connected and provides sustainable transport choices, where access to the area’s heritage and natural beauty is maximised and a place that forms and bolsters new and existing communities.

“The corridor will be a place that people want to live in now and into the future”





“Our vision is..promoting the future corridor as a healthy place with a healthy environment and a positive outlook built on its history and identity”



Guiding principles

We have established six principles to guide the delivery of the vision and the corridor’s contribution to net zero and inclusive growth.



Healthy centres

We want to protect and enhance Dudley Road and Smethwick High Street local centres as the heart of the communities around them. We want to ensure that commercial or retail development elsewhere does not undermine their function.



An active travel exemplar

With thriving local centres, mixed land uses and public transport links the corridor has many of the ingredients for 15-minute neighbourhoods in which residents can access most of the facilities they need within 15 minutes’ walk. The missing elements currently are walkability and cycling infrastructure. This framework sets the way forward to addressing that.



A new hospital as an anchor institution

We want to integrate the hospital with its surroundings and maximise the improvements it brings to the local area. Benefits include employment, a catalyst for further regeneration, raising the aspirations of the community, and bringing new people into the area. This will take place alongside NHS investment at City Hospital.



Green new neighbourhoods

With some of the largest redevelopment sites in the midlands, most in public ownership, the corridor is an opportunity to demonstrate best practice in design and sustainability. A range of new housing should be provided, while retaining the corridor’s character as a family neighbourhood.



A green corridor

The corridor is defined by its historic arterial transport routes linking Birmingham and the Black Country. The framework sets out how, through new and improved green spaces connected by the canals, the corridor can become a green artery contributing to improving biodiversity and our response to climate change.



Healthy sense of place

We want to make the most of and enhance the things that make the corridor distinctive, including its heritage and diversity. This will give people a sense of pride and belonging in the area they live and build a sense of community.

The corridor’s contribution to net zero

Through these guiding principles the development of the corridor will contribute to achieving net zero by improving green spaces, encouraging sustainable travel choices, reducing congestion and delivering sustainable new homes.

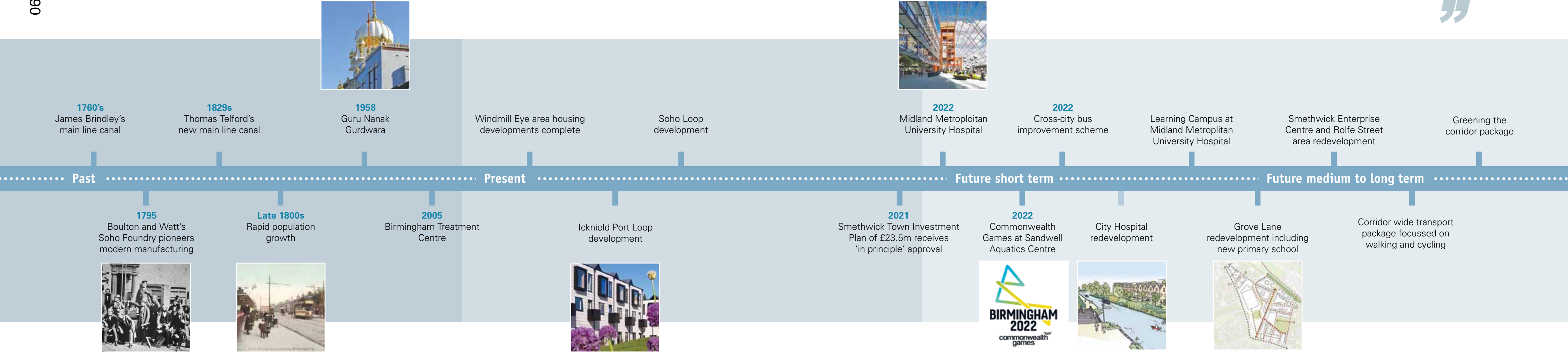
Digital corridor

Digital connectivity will be important to the future success of the corridor. This should include both full fibre broadband to be delivered through new development and improved public access digital infrastructure.

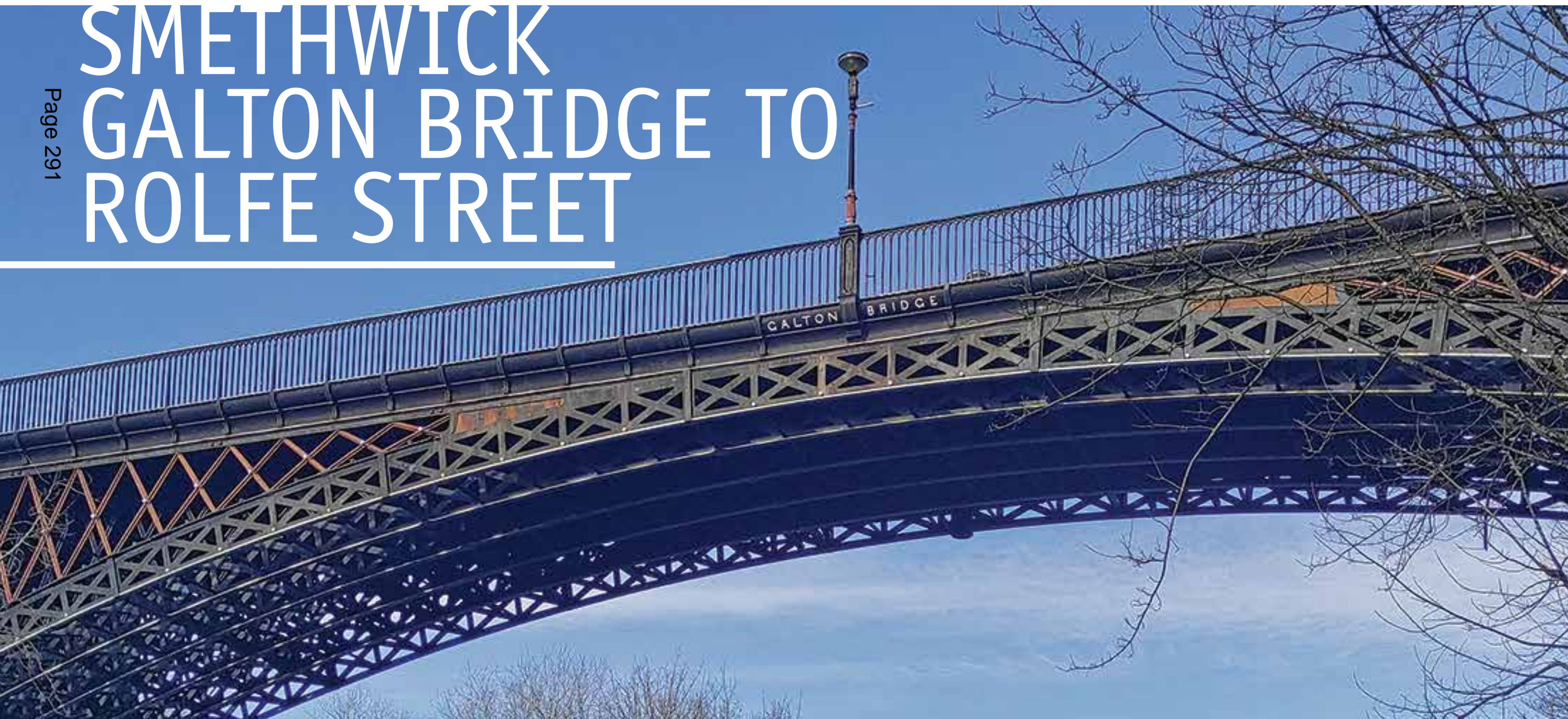
Timeline

The corridor has an important history as a cradle of the industrial revolution and multiculturalism in Britain. This history informs our vision and guiding principles for taking the corridor forward. Proposals to promote and interpret the area’s important history will be supported. The timeline below sets out the changes already underway and the projects that will shape the future of the corridor. The following chapters outline the future changes in more detail for each of the corridor neighbourhoods and set out our corridor-wide transport strategy.

“
This history informs
our vision and guiding
principles for taking
the corridor forward
”



SMETHWICK GALTON BRIDGE TO ROLFE STREET



2

SMETHWICK
GALTON BRIDGE TO
ROLFE STREET

SMETHWICK GALTON BRIDGE TO ROLFE STREET

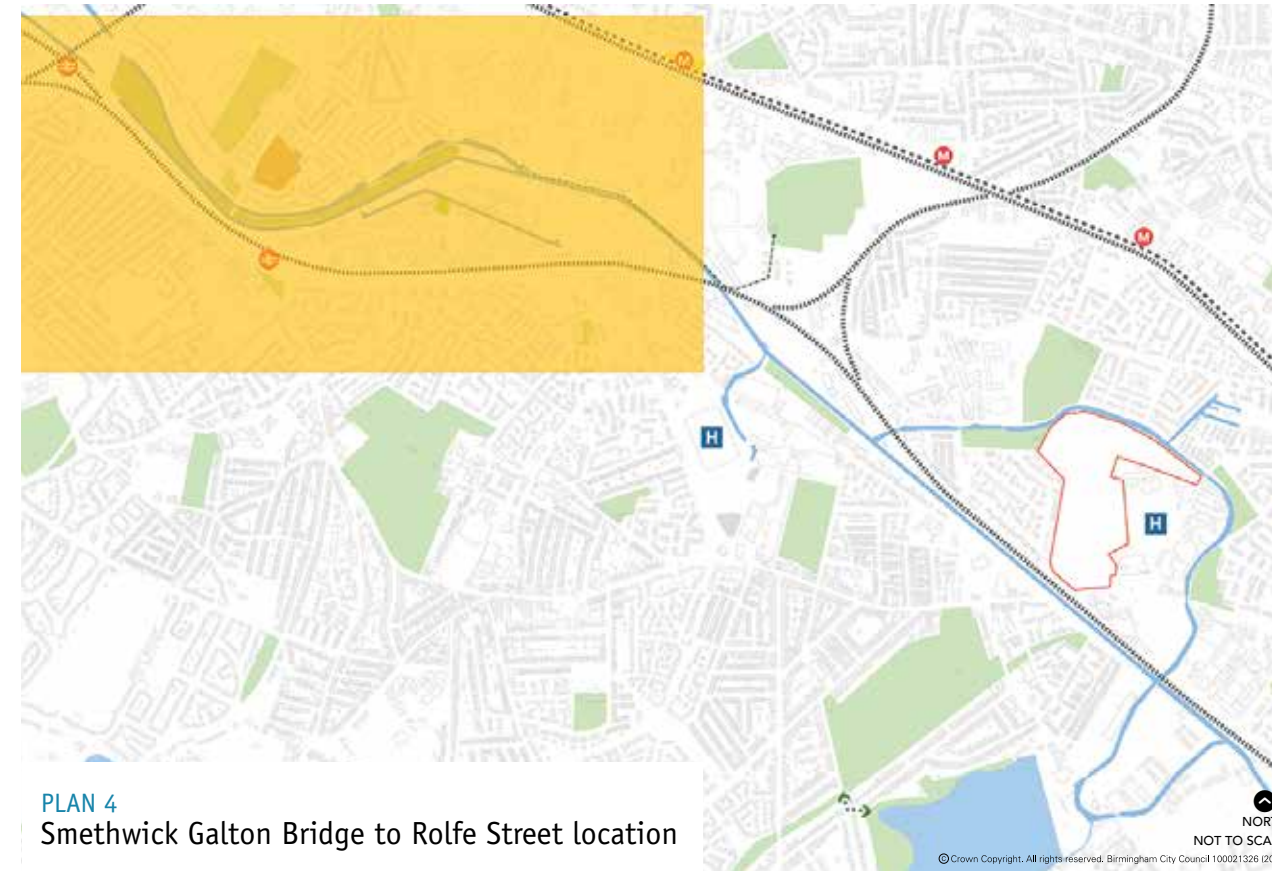
Introduction

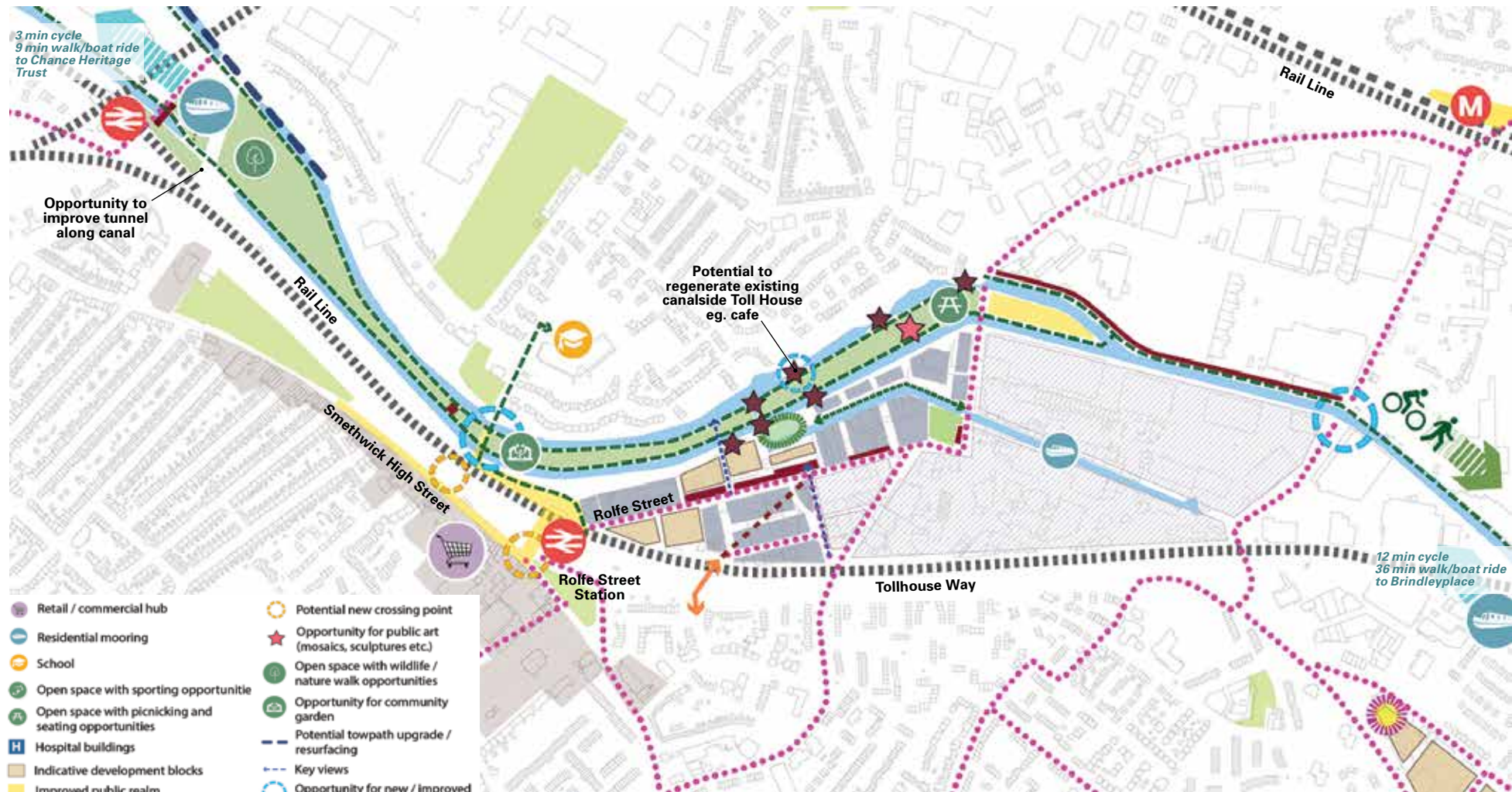
The corridor is at its narrowest here, as the three canals (including the aqueduct branch) converge, along with the railway line and the A457. Rolfe Street station lies close to this convergence of routes and is the main train station to access the new hospital. Improvements to the station are currently planned, including lift access from Rolfe Street.

The canal corridor is wide and green with unique heritage features, not least Grade I listed Galton Bridge, the Grade II* listed Engine Arm Aqueduct and the landmark Grade II listed Galton Valley Pumping Station (now the Galton Valley Canal Heritage Centre). The canal, canal basin and surrounding Victorian industrial buildings create an attractive and characterful area which lies mostly within the Smethwick Galton Valley Conservation Area.

Smethwick High Street is a vibrant and attractive local centre with a range of shops serving the neighbourhoods to the south west but could be made to be a hub for those to the north and east through improved connectivity.

Nonetheless, there are challenges, in particular car dominance, and the difficulties this creates in encouraging walking and cycling even over short distances. This dominance is not limited to the passing traffic using the A457, but also on Smethwick High Street where on street parking and loading is often unauthorised, and in the industrial areas to the east on Rolfe Street where pavement parking and heavy good vehicles make for an intimidating environment. Further, the nature of the land holdings in the industrial areas - both freeholds and leaseholds - may make comprehensive change more difficult.





PLAN 5
Smethwick Galton Bridge to Rolfe Street framework

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NORTH
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Objectives for the area



Rolfe Street station

- Improve public realm and walking routes to key locations around the station, particularly crossings over the A457 to Smethwick High Street, Buttress Way and the route to Brasshouse Lane.



Smethwick High Street

- Address parking and loading issues on Smethwick High Street, initially through enforcement and over the longer term through a clear parking strategy.
- Improve areas of public space between A457 and High Street; seek community input to ideas and implementation.



Heritage and canals

- Establish the location around Galton Bridge and Engine Arm Aqueduct as a focal point for heritage-led regeneration.



Movement networks

- Improve canal pathways and access to them.
- Improve links to Metro stations at The Hawthorns and Winson Green.
- Create clearer and safer routes between development opportunities/Brasshouse Lane and Rolfe Street Station and Smethwick High Street.

Development opportunities

- Enterprise Centre.
- Former Baths site.
- Engine Arm Peninsula. Accessed from Bridge Street North, but with possible links to the Enterprise Centre site, the Engine Arm Peninsula site is in private ownership and represents an opportunity for future residential development. Development would need to be sensitive to its location within the historic canal corridor. All of the site is previously developed, and derelict industrial buildings remain at the eastern end, fronting Bridge Street North.



A closer look: Enterprise Centre

The Enterprise Centre on Rolfe Street is owned by Sandwell Council. It is a self-contained site on the north side of the street, with an important waterfront boundary at the Engine Arm Aqueduct. A mix of single, two and three storey buildings, the site has some interesting historic features and references that could be drawn upon or drawn into a redevelopment scheme. The site has a change of levels, dropping down to the canal, and commands good clear views across and along the canal corridor. Within walking distance of the station and other services, the site could suit a dense form of development that reflects the industrial make up and history of this site and the environment around.

Redevelopment is mooted in the Smethwick Town Investment Plan (TIP) and is expected to be for residential use. The TIP proposes the clearance of the site, though Rolfe House would need to be maintained on the site, and some of the older buildings - such as the former Fire Station - are highlighted within the Conservation Area Appraisal as having local heritage interest and could also be retained. With the wider area in industrial use, integration of residential development will need to be managed carefully, though the site aims to be a catalyst for further change and investment, alongside sites at the former Baths, and the Engine Arm Peninsula site that fronts Bridge Street North.



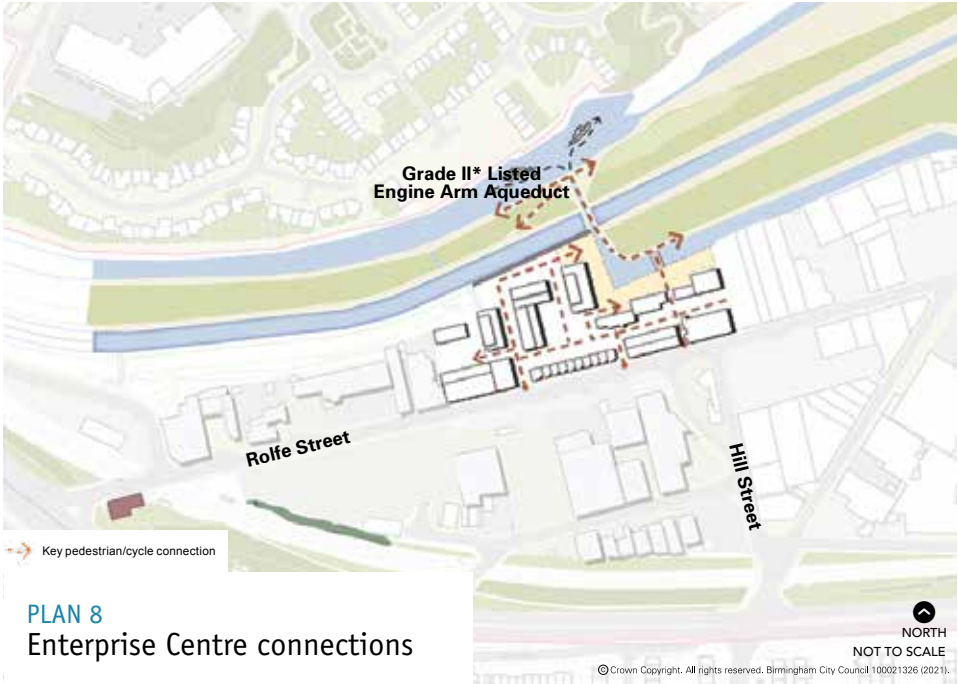
PLAN 6
Enterprise Centre location



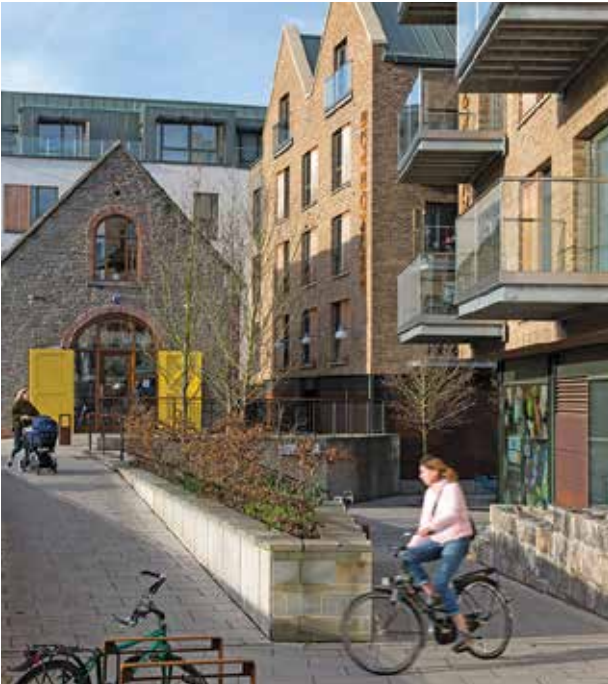
PLAN 7
Enterprise Centre masterplan

Connections

- Building line maintained on Rolfe Street, with connections into the site between buildings for vehicles and for pedestrians/cyclists (potentially segregated).
- Internal circulation space around the site, including to the waterfront.
- Access to key waterfront locations, particularly close to the aqueduct.
- Desirability of connections to the canal towpath for access to the canal corridor and other destinations (e.g. Metro).
- Rolfe Street as a key route to Rolfe Street station and other services (e.g. High Street).



PLAN 8
Enterprise Centre connections

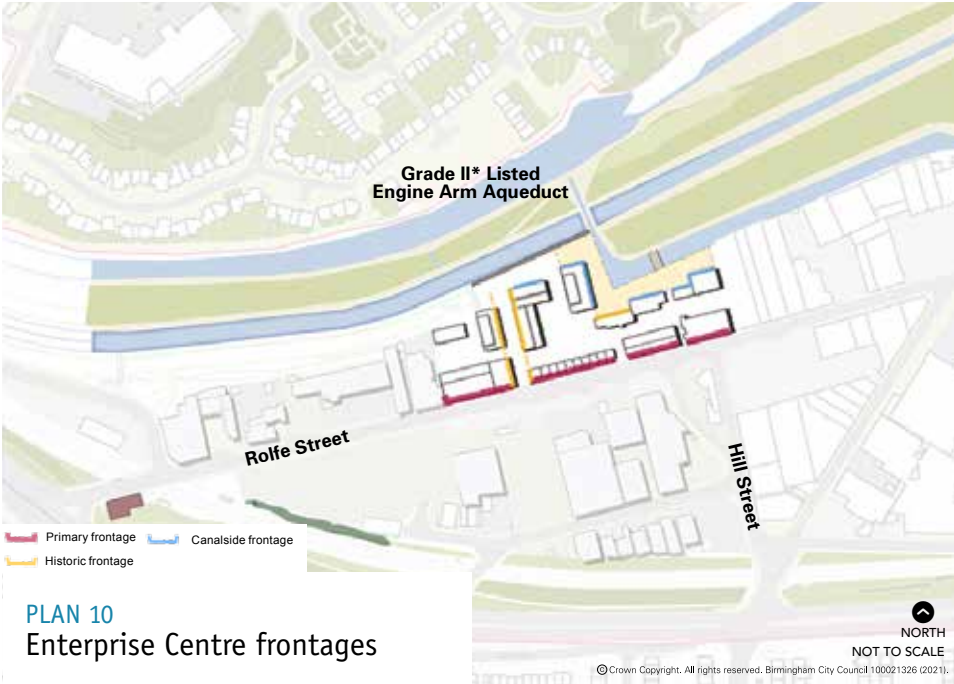
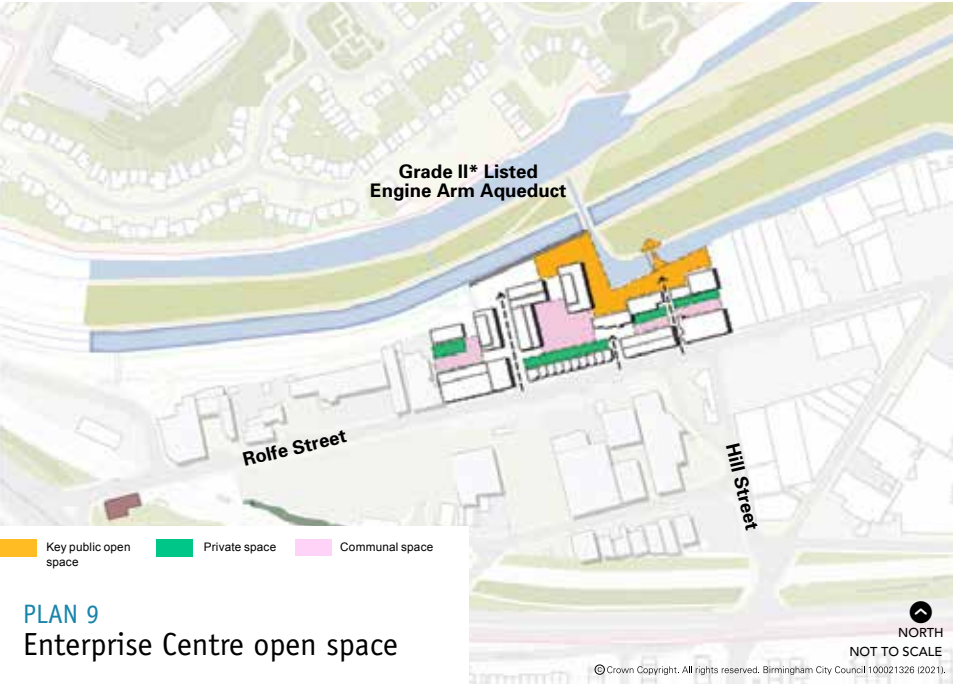


Open space

- Distinct and clear split between private space for residences and public space for access to the canal corridor and waterfront.
- Internal semi-private spaces within the development, reflective of industrial style courtyards and service yards.
- Glimpses of the canal corridor though gaps in the built form tells a story about the place.

Frontages

- Maintenance of clear frontage to Rolfe Street defined by the red brick connected to the street's past.
- Frontages to active connections into and through the site where activity takes place.
- Capitalise on frontages to the canal, benefitting the outlook for residents and providing a sense of overlooking onto the public spaces on the canal.

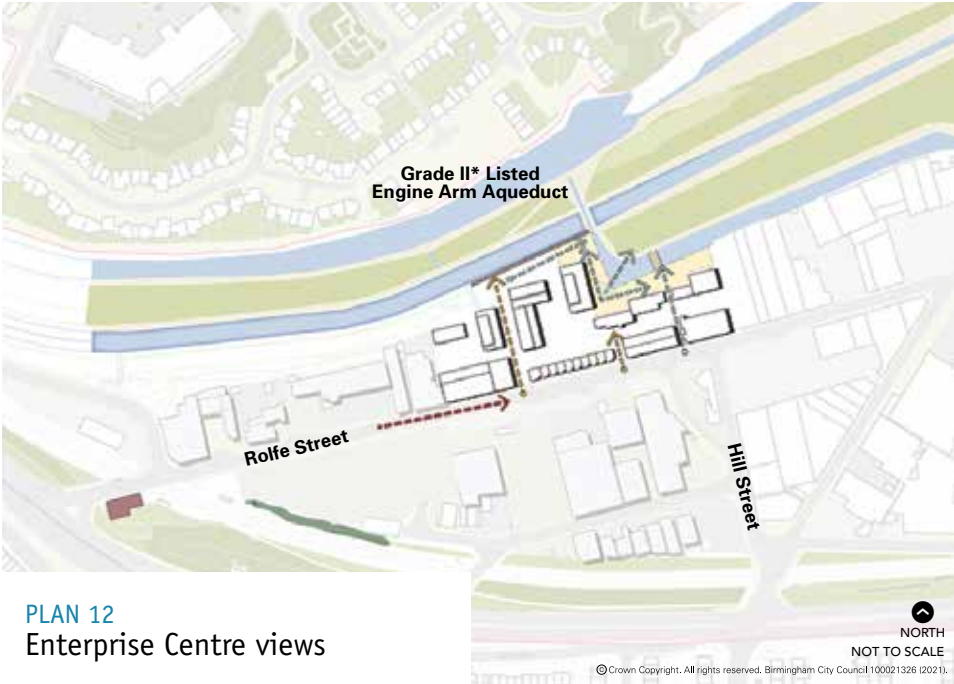


Retained buildings

- Site has potential for retaining buildings on site for conversion.
- Retention of buildings provides a link to the past and helps reflect the character of the area.
- Key building on Rolfe Street is the former Fire Station (1911), which has a distinctive tower, which may assist with placemaking and identity.
- Warehouse style building in centre of the site may be suitable for conversion; lends status to the site; provides a basis for wider design in terms of form, massing.
- Northern wall alongside the aqueduct is listed.

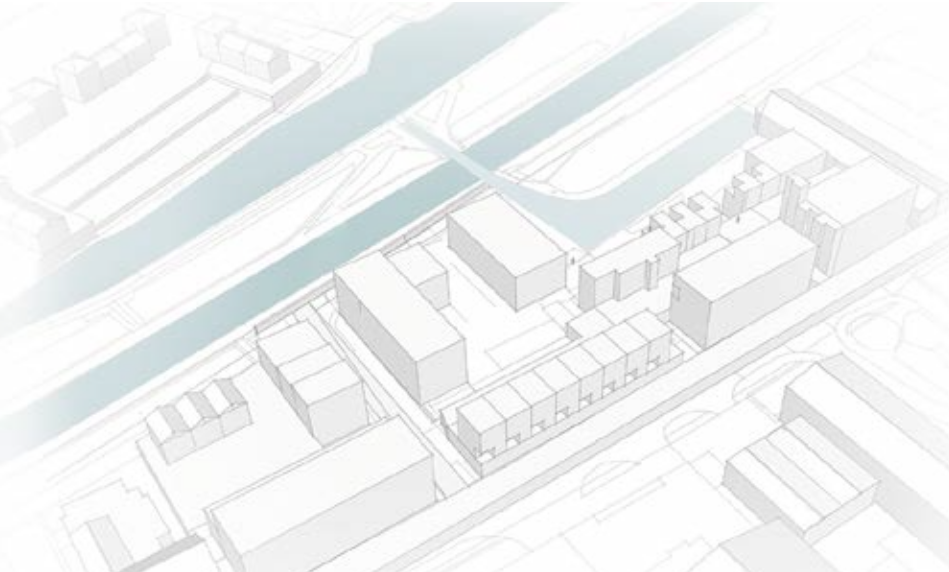
Views

- Short and longer views create a sense of place and location within the wider context, and aid understanding of a place.
- Clear views along Rolfe Street provide easy links to key services and facilities.
- Glimpses from Rolfe Street through the site create connections to the canal and open spaces beyond.
- Views of key buildings help to orientate and direct people to and through the site.
- Views along the canal corridor and aqueduct help with orientation; key views of heritage assets and the canal context create distinctiveness.



Massing

- Town Investment Plan identifies the Enterprise Centre as a residential opportunity close to the station in an area of change.
- Location in a traditional industrial area points to an urban, warehouse style of development echoing the distinctive development of Smethwick as a pioneering and innovative place.
- Red bricks dominate with functional detailing associated with former industrial uses.
- Use of buildings and spaces - courtyards, delivery areas, relationships with streets - provide design cues for future redevelopment.
- Proximity to station and services points to a higher density development which may also reduce reliance on car-ownership.



PLAN 13
Enterprise Centre concept massing



Precedent streetscape

A closer look: Former Baths site

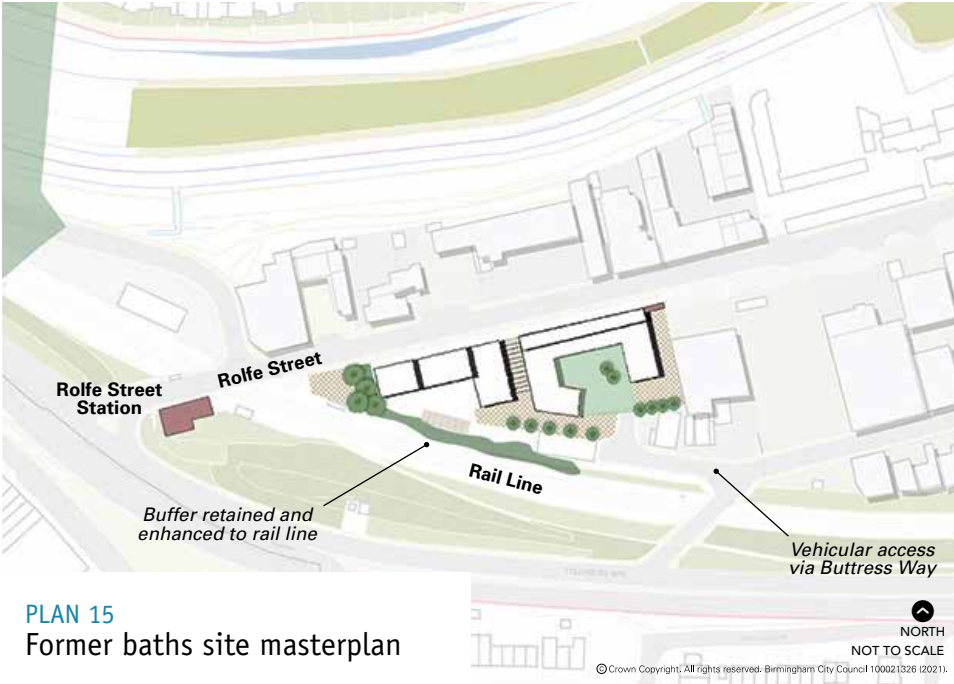
The original Smethwick public baths - a striking piece of nineteenth century civic architecture - were located adjacent to the station on Rolfe Street. The original three storey building has been relocated to the Black Country Living Museum in Dudley, and the site where it once stood has become open and overgrown with trees and scrub.

The site is allocated in the development plan for housing.

The former Baths site has a long frontage to Rolfe Street which terminates at the station building. The south side of the site abuts the railway, but there is an access to this area via Buttress Way. The site is constrained by its location alongside the railway by noise and possible vibration, and differences in levels, limiting its development potential, but the site is owned by Sandwell Council and is well located to provide a catalyst for the development of the wider area alongside the Enterprise Centre opportunity.



PLAN 14
Former baths site location



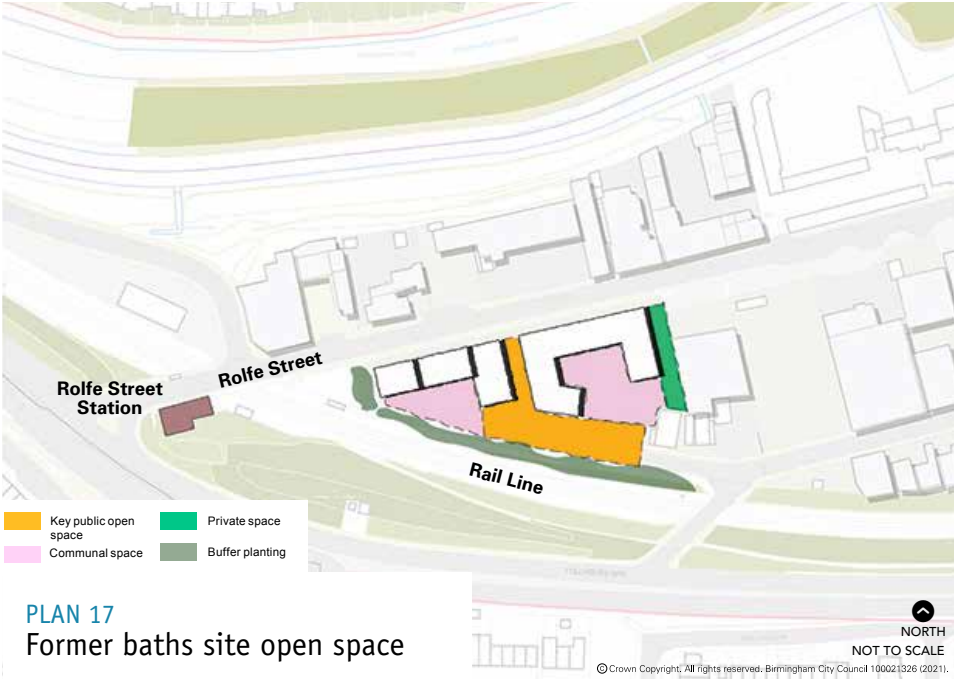
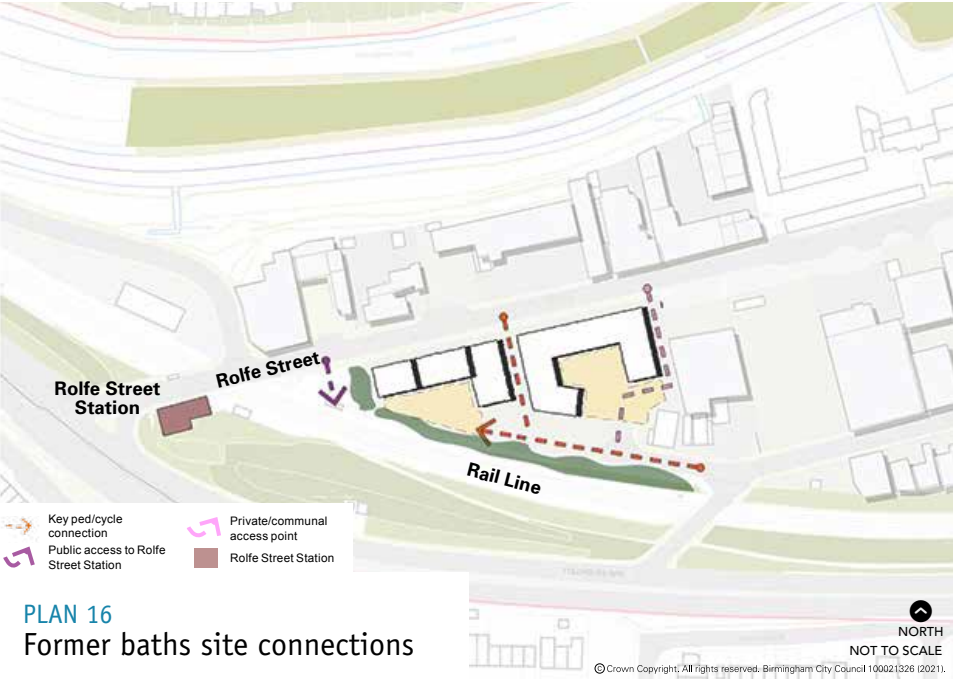
PLAN 15
Former baths site masterplan

Connections

- Principal connection with Rolfe Street, which fronts the site and provides access elsewhere.
- Buttress Way connects to the rear of the site, and might be able to provide another non-vehicular link to the station through the site.
- Private/communal access to terraces along eastern edge to be provided where the former entrance to the Baths site was located.
- Changes in level between Rolfe Street and the south side of the site alongside the railway.

Open Space

- Buffer area would need to be provided between development and the railway to prevent detrimental intrusion (noise, pollution, vibration).
- Communal spaces and landscaped setting to be provided for residents, distinct from public areas of open space (e.g. a public link to the station from Buttress Way).



Frontages

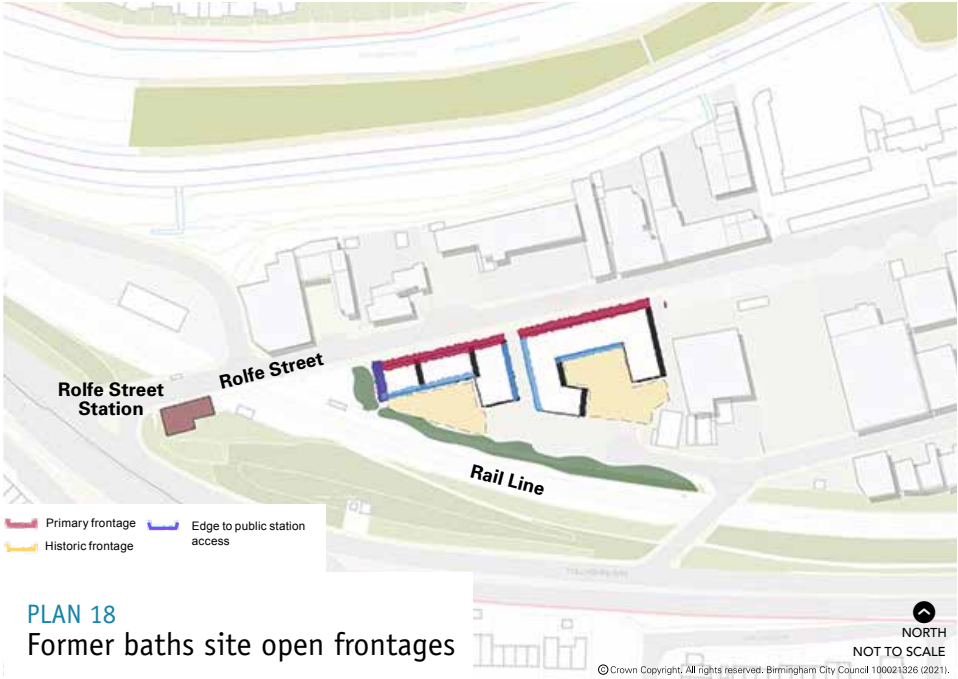
- Maintenance of clear frontage to Rolfe Street defined by the red brick connected to the street's past.
- Frontage to public railway access to west must be carefully treated so that residential privacy is not compromised.

Retained buildings

- The site has no existing buildings of note.

Views

- Clear views along Rolfe Street provide easy links to key services and facilities.
- Glimpses from Rolfe Street through the site may be beneficial if a station link is possible.



Massing/land use

- Location in a traditional industrial area points to an urban, warehouse style of development echoing the distinctive development of Smethwick as a pioneering and innovative place.
- Red bricks dominate with functional detailing associated with former industrial uses.
- Use of buildings and spaces - courtyards, delivery areas, relationships with streets - provide design cues for future redevelopment.
- Proximity to station and services points to a higher density development which may also reduce reliance on car-ownership.
- Former Baths building can be an inspiration for built form.



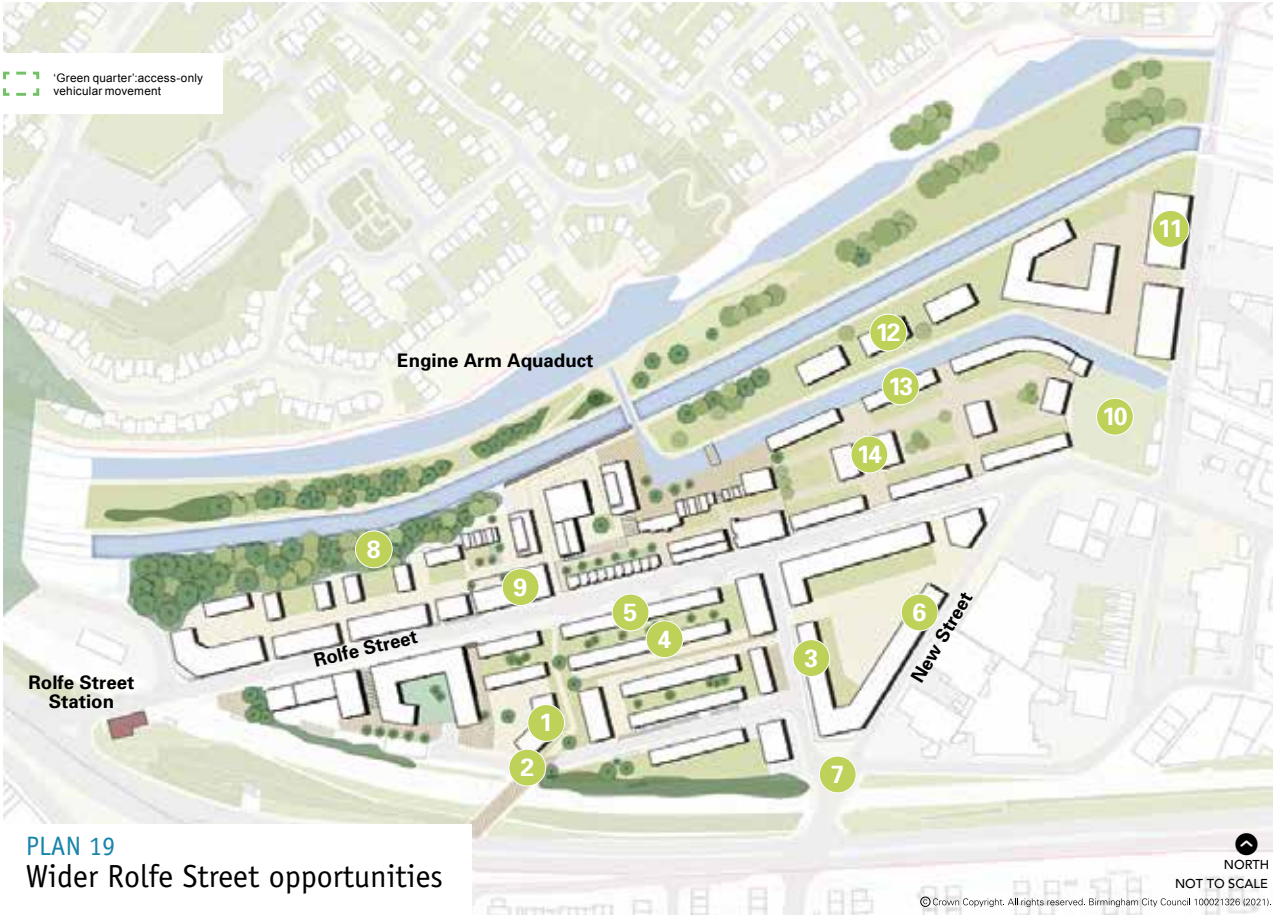
Comprehensive masterplan

In combination with the Enterprise Centre and Rolfe Street baths sites, there is an opportunity to bring change to the wider area between Rolfe Street station and New Street. This would aim to bring other sites together and form a new residential quarter. The masterplan below shows how this could be done.

- 1 Opportunity to respect historic street alignment through built form.
- 2 Opportunity to close off Cross Street for pedestrian access only, with a new crossing proposed across Tollhouse Way to reconnect the fragmented communities.
- 3 Opportunity to create a ‘green quarter’ to the west of Hill Street, with access only for vehicular traffic and the rationalisation of the road infrastructure, including the closure of the western branch of Hill Street joining Rolfe Street, and Cross Street as discussed in part 2.
- 4 To the south of Rolfe Street there are intimate terraced and mews streets.
- 5 Strong frontage overlooking Rolfe Street, with a continuous building line.
- 6 Transition from residential to urban in mixed-use blocks, with residential units fronting Hill Street and mixed-use/flexible workspace fronting New Street.
- 7 Clear legibility between industrial space and residential development when entering via New Street from the south.
- 8 Variety in buildings siding on and fronting onto the canal, respecting the former urban grain along this working watercourse with differing set backs.

- 9 Retention of buildings to the north of Rolfe Street. This location is the first red-brick industrial building when approaching from Rolfe Street Station and is an important gateway.
- 10 Improved publicly accessible area of open space.
- 11 Strong frontage overlooking Bridge Street North.

- 12 Buildings breaking down further west from Bridge Street north, with blocks sitting in open space leading towards Engine Arm Aquaduct.
- 13 Direct waterside living to create variety in enclosure of the canal reminiscent of the industrial era.
- 14 Series of communal courtyards with direct views towards canal arm from Rolfe Street.



Corridor projects: green corridor

The corridor’s open spaces are an oasis for urban wildlife and an important leisure space for residents. Our goal is to knit the corridor’s green spaces together into a green lung between Smethwick and Birmingham which enhances biodiversity, contributes to tackling climate change and helps make the corridor an attractive place to live. We can do this through new and improved green spaces at Rolfe Street, new green spaces linking the canal to Moilliett Street Park at Grove Lane, and new green spaces linking to the canal and All Saints Park at City Hospital. There is also an opportunity for corridor-wide biodiversity enhancements focussed on the canals.

Biodiversity enhancements to the canals could include efforts to establish marginal vegetation and/or the installation of flowering islands.

Within new development the use of perennial wild flowers, flowering native shrubs and small flowering/fruited trees and wetland plants within sustainable urban drainage features would all provide multiple benefits to biodiversity.





GROVE LANE AREA

3

GROVE LANE AREA

GROVE LANE AREA

Introduction

The corridor widens out in this central strip, encompassing the area between Grove Lane and the Main Line Canal. The dominant area of interest for the framework is the Midland Metropolitan University Hospital and the land surrounding it, much of which is either vacant or underused, or occupied by small to medium industrial and commercial businesses occupying fairly low-quality building stock. While the industrial and commercial uses themselves are not unattractive or bad neighbour uses, their impacts often spill into the wider area in the form of parking, blocked pavements and heavy traffic amongst residential streets.

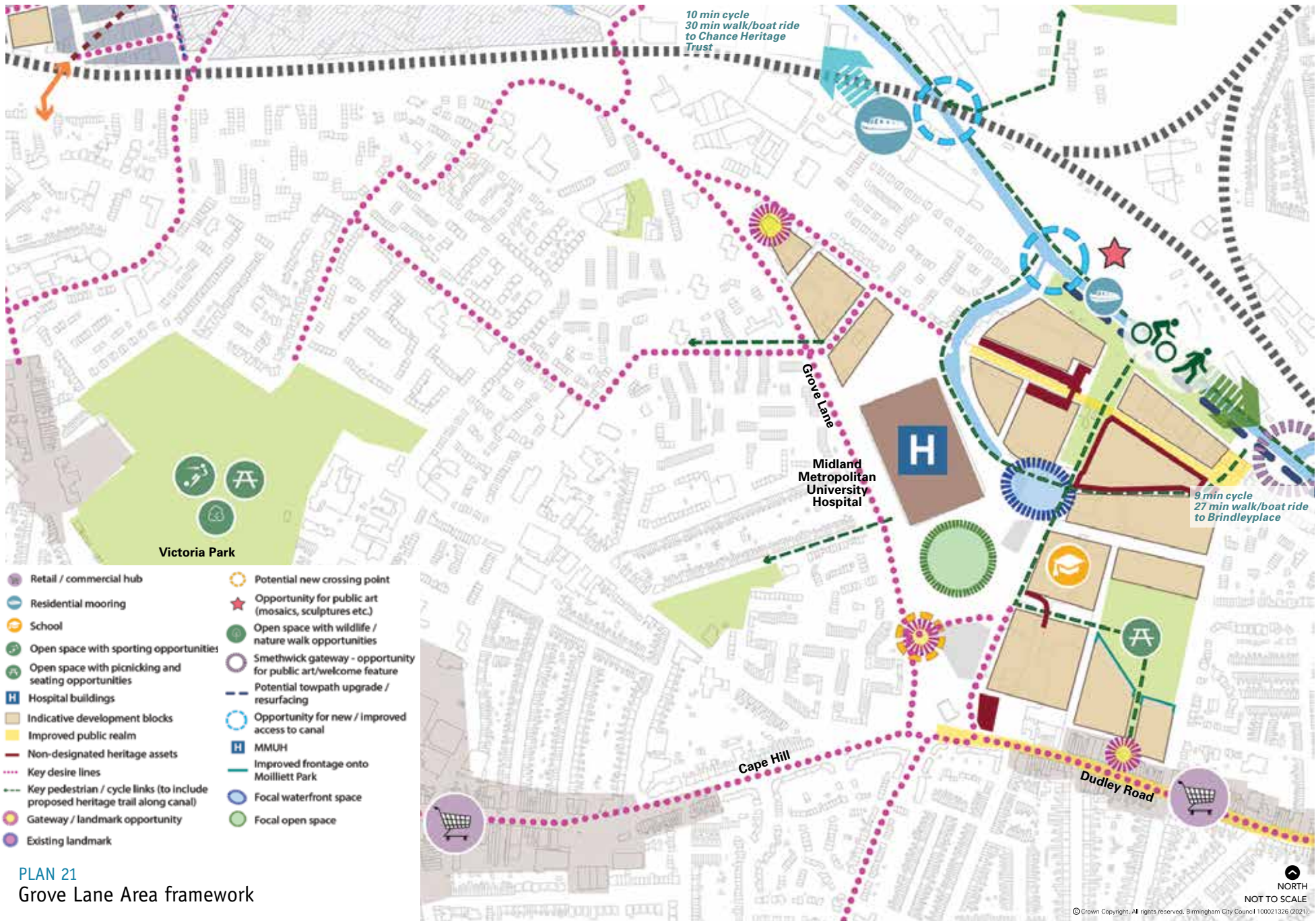
The hospital will bring change. It is a major building, with height and mass. Alongside the hospital, a learning campus, bringing a university presence to Smethwick, is proposed. People from across the region will have reason to visit here

as patients, visitors, professionals, students and employees.

The location has two nearby centres at Dudley Road and Cape Hill and is also well connected to Birmingham by road and public transport. The hospital site has a branch of the canal coming into it, which could form the basis of a high-quality public space based around water. There are older buildings on the Grove Lane masterplan site that are of interest and could be incorporated into development or form cues for the design of new buildings. The neighbouring community of Windmill Eye have produced a detailed neighbourhood plan, which provides a good basis for informing aspirations for the corridor.

The Grove Lane area is the subject of a more detailed masterplan created alongside this framework.





Objectives for the area

Layout principles

- Develop clear edges using retained historic buildings where possible, and complementary new buildings to reflect the historic nature and identity of the area as part of the canal corridor.
- Open up the canal (Cape Arm) creating a public route through and forming a positive relationship with the hospital edge.
- Integrate focal buildings and celebrate Smethwick's heritage.
- Integrate the area with the Dudley Road high street.
- Locate a new primary school within the heart of the Grove Lane masterplan site to be fully integrated within the community.
- Introduce a mix of housing types including an identified need for family housing.

Hospital site

- Integrate the hospital building and grounds into the masterplan to create a neighbourhood that responds to its form and size, and creates an appropriate transition to the existing neighbourhoods.
- Improve public spaces and walking routes to and around the hospital site, particularly crossings over the A457 to and from Windmill Eye, links to and beyond Cranford Street and Heath Street to the canal and links to Dudley Road.
- Create a strong edge on Grove Street to address the hospital in order to help contain the large open space.

Heritage and canals

- Incorporate designs that reflect the industrial context and history. Consider re-use of industrial buildings where possible to enhance the sense of place. Key buildings are located on Cranford Street and Heath Street.
- Aim to bring back into use the Cape Arm branch, and reflect former canal alignments where they cannot be reinstated.

Movement networks

- Overcome land ownership constraints to enable the creation a smooth, unified and seamless network of streets and spaces with an attractive public realm for people to enjoy.
- Establish connections to the canal, both within the development and through the connections from the redevelopment site to canal access points.
- Enhance canal pathways particularly from the Cape Arm to the main canal.
- Enable clearer and safer links between new development and nearby centres and facilities (e.g. Dudley Road local centre, Cape Hill, Moilliett Street Park).

Open Space

- Establish a clear structure of green and blue infrastructure within the area that complements the built form, provides connections within and beyond the area, and provides different forms of outdoor recreation (eg. play areas, neighbourhood parks, spaces for hospital users).
- Use the internal open space structure to provide pointers to green space beyond the area (such as Summerfield Park) to widen the opportunity to find natural space and recreation.
- Improve and remodel Moilliett Street Park.

A closer look: Grove Lane

The Grove Lane area is the centre of the framework corridor and the place where much of the change will happen. The new hospital sits on Grove Lane at the heart of this area.

The remainder of the site is allocated in the development plan for housing.

The development opportunity takes in the land around the hospital between Grove Lane, Cranford Street, Heath Street and the Main Line Canal. It has been awarded Housing Zone status with potential to deliver approximately 800 new homes over almost 18 ha of brownfield land. Some of these have already been provided with approximately 140 constructed north of Cranford Street. Moilliett Street Park - which lies across the authority boundary within Birmingham City

Council's area - abuts the Grove Lane Housing Zone and needs to be considered as part of the masterplan.

The development of the land should be comprehensive, creating a people centred neighbourhood that supports existing local centres, provides a new school, connects with the canal and promotes active travel. It is important that development is not purely based on achievable numbers of homes but delivers a quality place that sets a high standard for the regeneration of the wider area.

The hospital itself is a dominating presence, a prominent building that is significantly taller than most of the surrounding buildings. To the south of the hospital building, a large open space is planned as an entrance point; the space could also be used

as a public open space and is not intended to be exclusively for the hospital. South of this space, the Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust have ambitions for a learning campus and for temporary living accommodation (e.g. nurses' accommodation, a hotel). The eastern side of the hospital fronts Cape Arm, a branch off the main canal, though not currently accessible as a waterway for boats or for pedestrians.

Most of the industrial units to the east of the hospital are low rise and over fifty to sixty years old, and many seem tired. However, elements speak to the area's history and heritage, and some of the brick patterns and openings have a distinctiveness that is worthy of note in redevelopment ideas.



PLAN 22
Grove Lane location



Concept view from the new hospital looking south



PLAN 23
Grove Lane masterplan

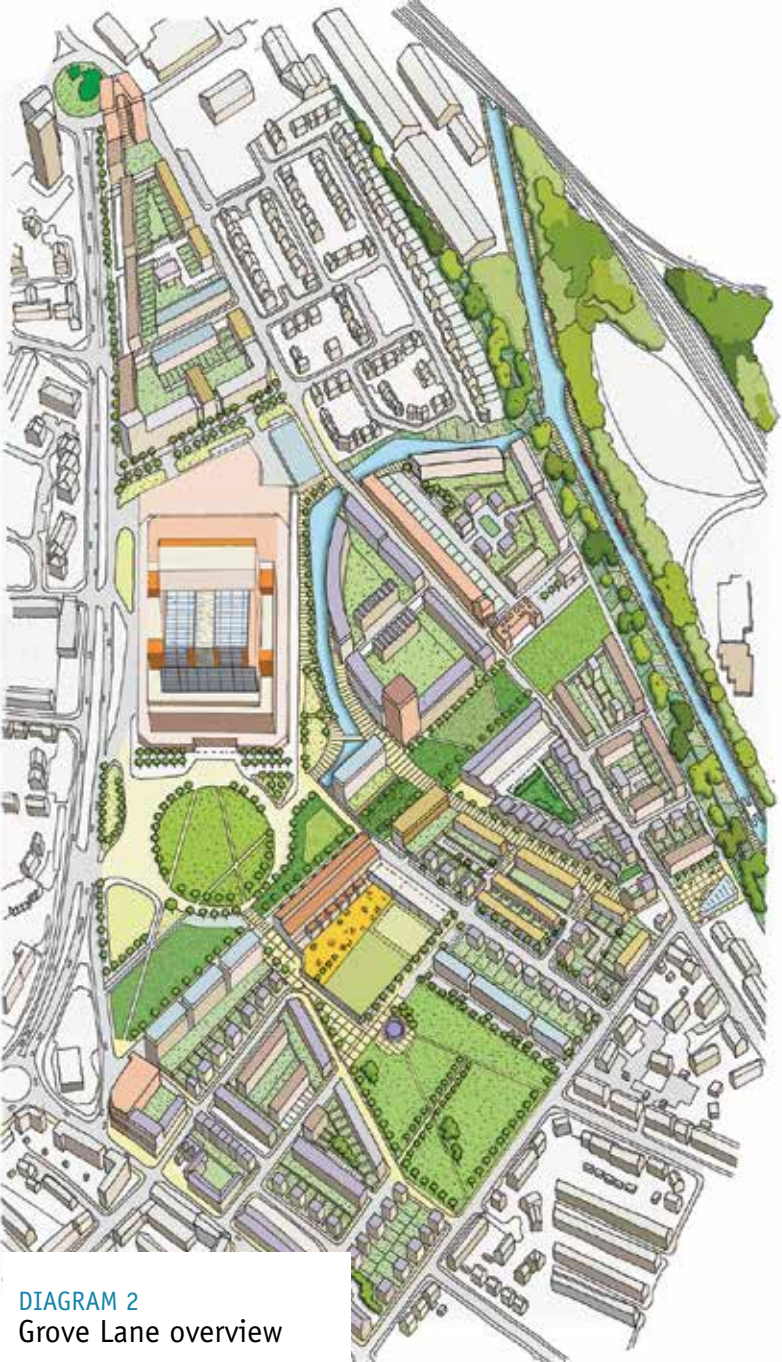
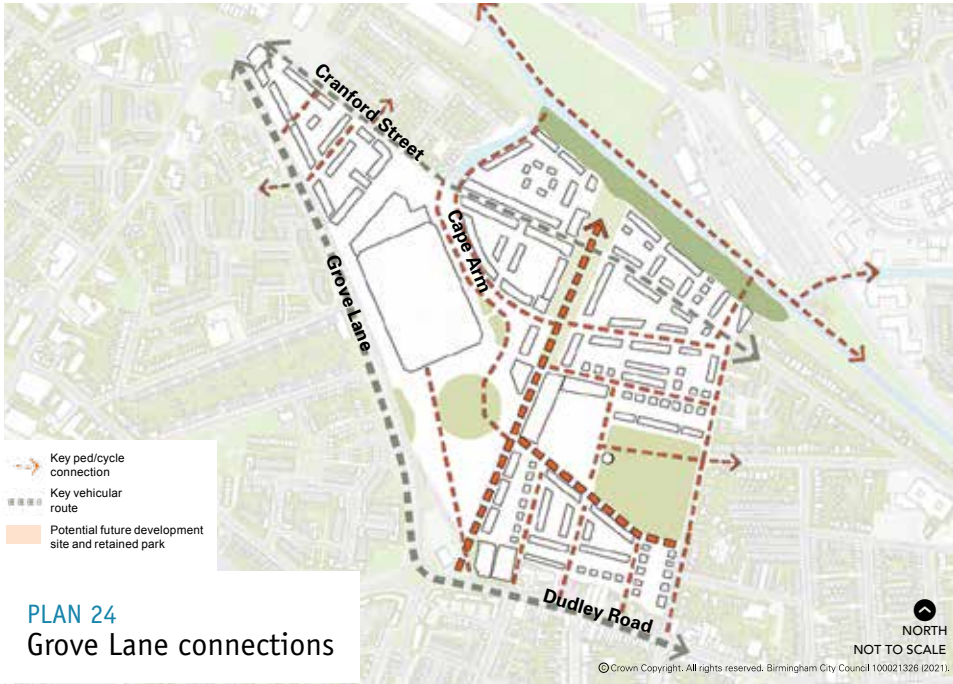


DIAGRAM 2
Grove Lane overview

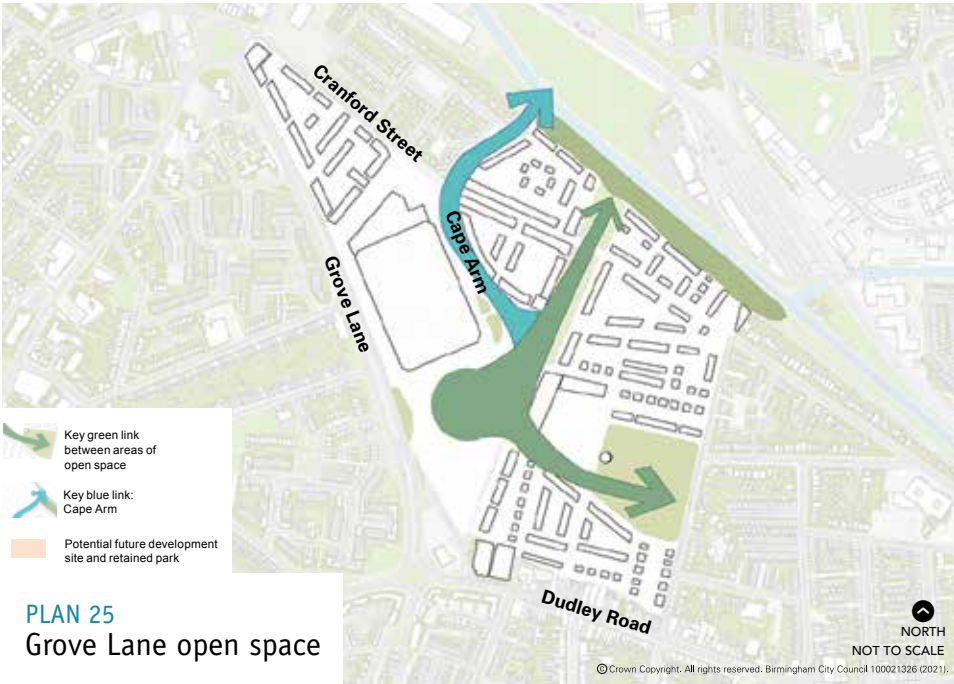
Connections

- Key north-south and east-west pedestrian/cycle axes which connect the primary areas of open space.
- Internal connections improved by the development of the MMUH, particularly around its entrance and Cape Arm.
- Utilises existing street network. Cranford Street/Heath Street improved for pedestrian/cycle movement (see Transport Strategy).
- Pedestrian connection along Cape Arm and across canal connecting into towpath.
- Change in level between northern boundary of site and canal feeder. Crossing opportunity to be explored in the north eastern corner of the site for improved connectivity to the towpath.
- Aim to improve connections beyond the site edges, and across existing transport infrastructure.



Open space

- Defined areas of green and blue corridors connect the site together and form its heart.
- Improved accessibility along Cape Arm will allow people to enjoy the waterfront, with the opportunity for a moored boat with a cafe onboard bringing life to the water.
- Green corridors connecting the hospital open space, Moilliett Street Park and the key north-south green link. The primary school is located adjacent to this open space network.



Corridor project: Moilliett Street Park

Currently the park suffers from fly-tipping and the impacts of surrounding industry. An improved park could form the heart of the new Grove Lane neighbourhood and provide new walking and cycling routes linking Dudley Road to the new hospital and school.

Closing Moilliett Street to traffic at its junction with Dudley Road could allow creation of a new pocket park. Building new homes on the southern and northern edges of the park could improve those edges and help fund the improvements.

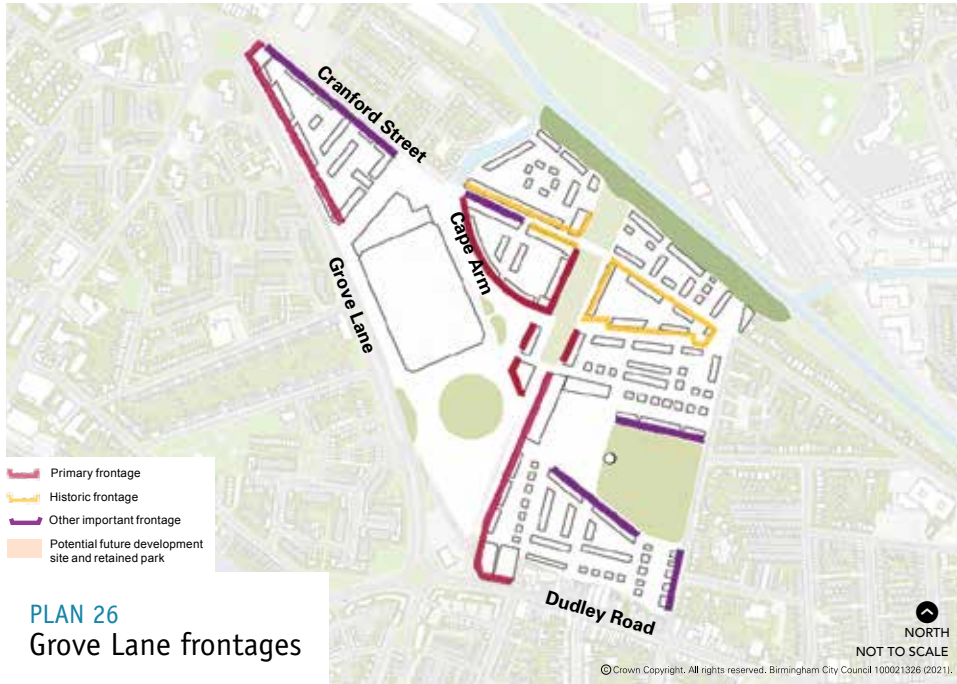
Any development of the park would need to accord with Birmingham Development Plan Policy TP9 or come forward through the new Birmingham Plan.



Example pocket park, Derbyshire Street, Bethnal Green, London

Frontages

- Primary frontages overlooking Grove Lane, Cape Arm and the hospital, and the key north-south movement axis.
- Heritage frontages along Cranford Street, creating a distinctive and positively enclosed streetscape reminiscent of the sites former use.
- Important frontages activating the edges overlooking Moilliett Street Park, and along Cranford Street amongst the heritage frontages retained.



Land use

- MMUH located in the centre of the site, with public realm overlooking Cape Arm to the north.
- Retail and food and beverage outlets retained fronting onto Dudley Road to the south.
- Retained former cinema building potentially to be re-purposed for community use.
- Primary school located adjacent to the key areas of open space.
- Education campus to south west of hospital.
- Establish a mix of houses and flats to offer a range of accommodation to existing and new residents.
- Opportunities for residential moorings on the canal.



Retained buildings

- 1 Retained former cinema building forms a gateway entrance to the site and could be used for community uses.
- 2 The curved red brick wall that defines the eastern edge of Halberton Street should be partially retained. A sensitively designed opening within the wall could provide a distinctive and attractive gateway through to Moilliett Street Park for pedestrians and cyclists.
- 3 The perimeter wall around this parcel is a distinctive feature within the site. The pitched industrial roofs here and red brick wall should be retained as a facade to new build development, with a series of carefully considered access points into the plot.
- 4 The red brick buildings to the north and south of Cranford Street, including the bridge and canopy between buildings, should be retained if possible, creating a unique setting defined by the sense of enclosure and architectural style that is rooted in the site's history.



Corridor project: Smethwick Learning Campus

A collaborative proposal between Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust, Aston University, Sandwell College and the University of Wolverhampton will create a new FE/HE university campus in Smethwick.

It will bring together The Learning Works, a Nursing and Midwifery School, development of an Advanced Clinical Practitioner programme, a satellite School of Pharmacy and a Regional Centre of Excellence for Health Professions.



GROVE LANE TO CITY HOSPITAL



4

GROVE LANE TO
CITY HOSPITAL

GROVE LANE TO CITY HOSPITAL

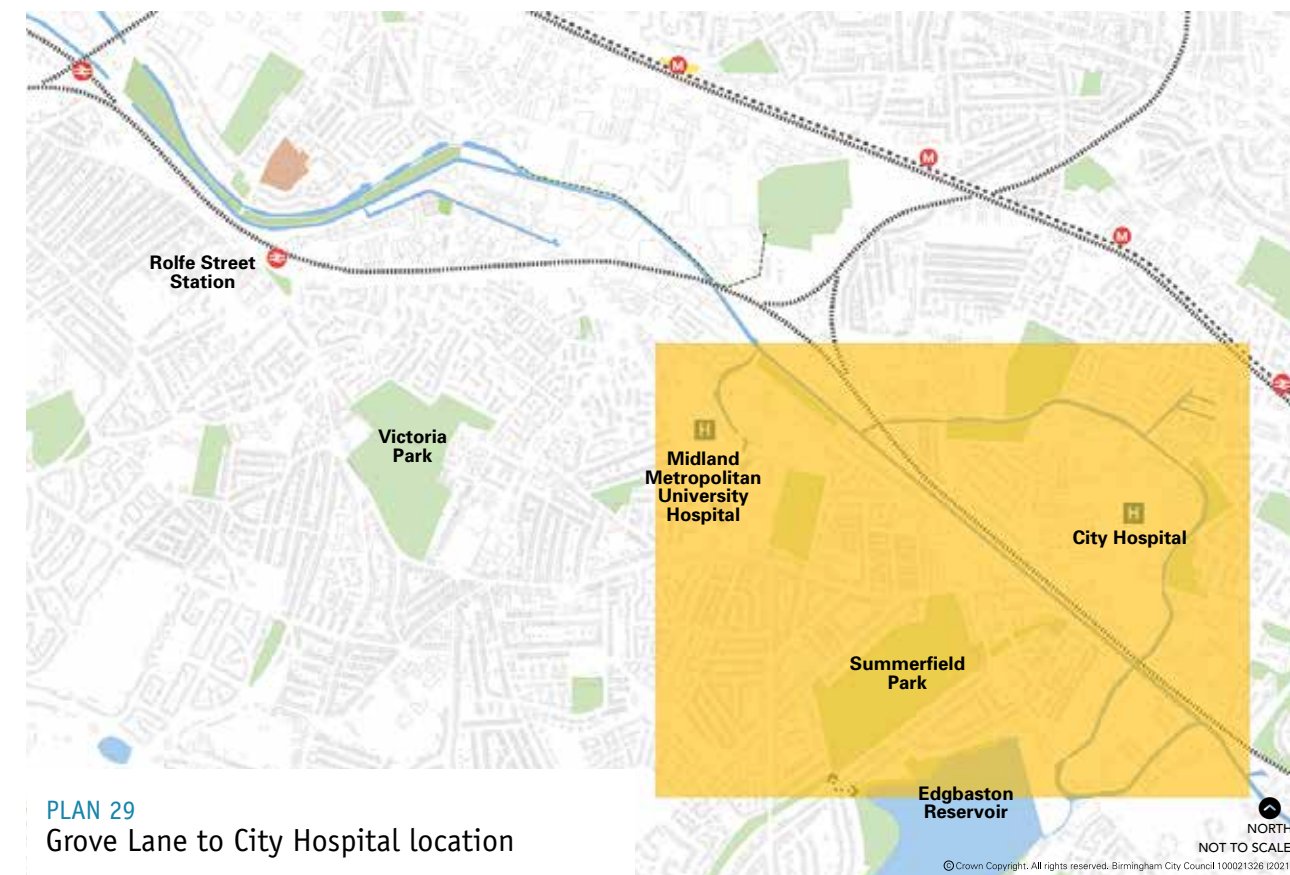
Introduction

The Main Line Canal runs through the middle of this area, and the Old Line forms a loop around the City Hospital site.

Dudley Road is a busy local centre providing a range of shops and services for the surrounding communities. It is locally focused, comprising mainly family-owned Asian and African-Caribbean shops, rather than chains, though it is bookended by Lidl in the east and McDonalds in the west. Summerfield Park and Moilliett Park public parks

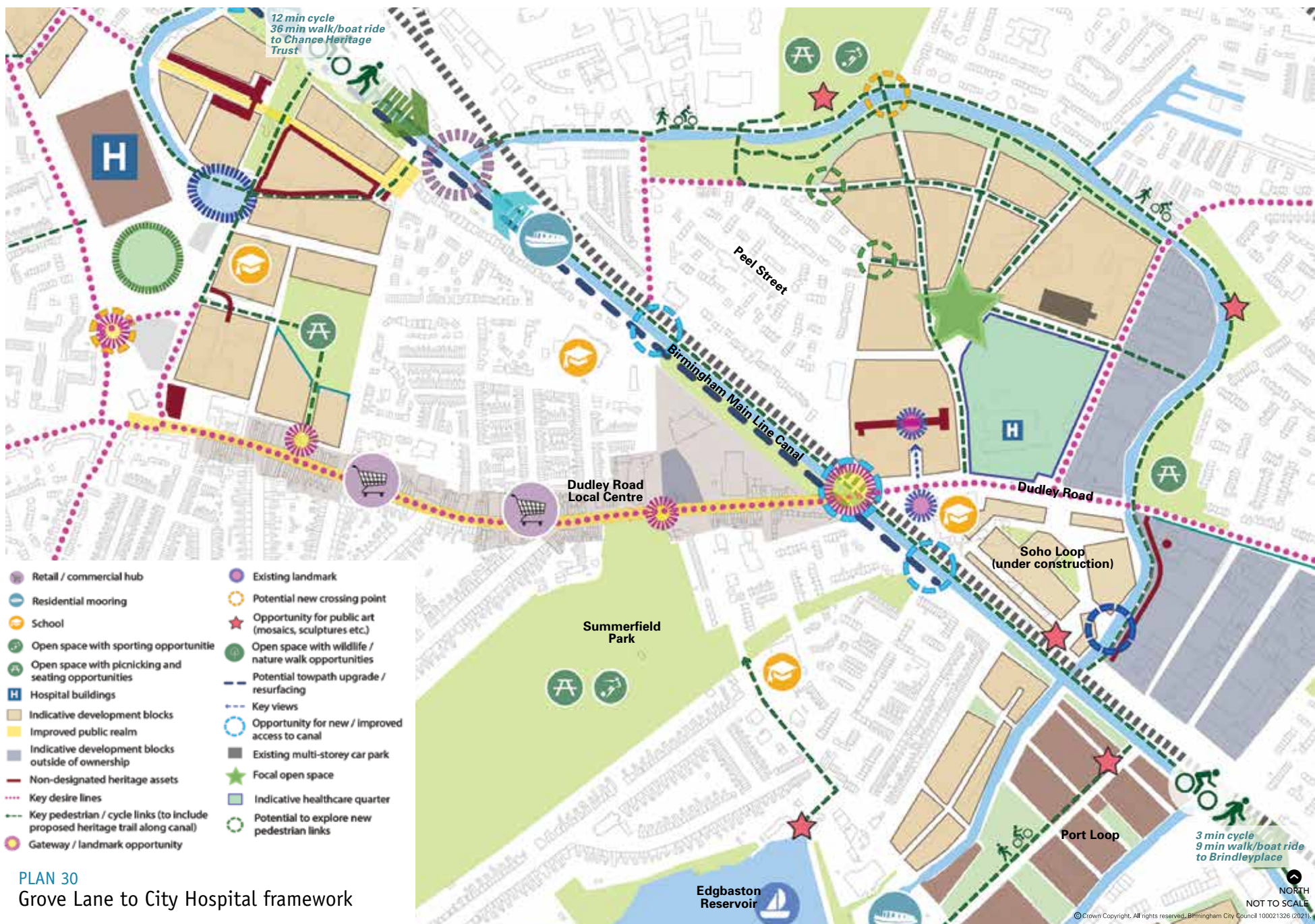
lie within this area, but they would benefit from improvement.

The Port Loop redevelopment has started to deliver innovative, modern urban housing in a canal setting with high quality open spaces. Soho Loop, off Spring Hill, will deliver more urban housing in the form of flats and town houses, and part of the City Hospital site will become available for residential development when the MMUH opens and some services relocate.



PLAN 29
Grove Lane to City Hospital location





Objectives for the area



Dudley Road local centre

- Use City Council land holdings to improve entrances to Moilliet Street Park.
- Address parking and loading issues on Dudley Road, initially through enforcement and, over the longer term, through a clear parking strategy.
- Improve connections to the centre, enabling communities to reach it easily and safely, particularly by walking and cycling.
- Enable improved access by public transport.



Heritage and canals

- Seek to reflect the area's heritage within the redevelopment of the City Hospital.
- Create better links to the canal pathways.

Development opportunities

- City Hospital.
- Icknield Square: Icknield Square/Freeth Road is outside of the red line planning application boundary for Port Loop, though is part of the Port Loop site allocation. In phasing terms, it is likely to be some time before it is built on, and, perhaps will be a continuation phase after the current permission is built out (15 phases at Icknield Port Loop).
- A linear strip of land at the southern end of Heath Street which has gone over to scrub with immature trees. The front strip to Heath Street is narrow, and a wall exists to separate the land from the canal, which is set in a cutting beyond the wall.
- Western Road and Spring Hill. The Western Road site (3.4ha) currently comprises industrial buildings in fragmented ownership. It is located opposite the City Hospital site on the eastern side of Western Road. The Spring Hill site was assessed in the Birmingham SHLAA 2020 as having capacity for up to 360 dwellings. It is also in fragmented ownership and has potential to be contaminated. Both sites are currently identified as locations for employment growth in policy GA2 of the Birmingham Development Plan. Both sites may be difficult to assemble in the short term and would likely need a business relocation strategy to support redevelopment.



Corridor project: lighting the way

Appropriate lighting in high-use areas along the canal can increase security and encourage use particularly in winter. This could be used between Port Loop and Birmingham City Centre, around the new Hospital and on the Soho Loop around City Hospital.



A closer look: City Hospital

City Hospital is located on the western side of Birmingham city centre and is currently one of the principal hospitals in the city. It sits on a significant site, north of the Dudley Road (A457) and is located on an island created by the Birmingham Canal Old Line and Main Line. The surrounding context is one of change; land to the south around the canal loop (Soho Loop 750 homes/Port Loop 1,150 homes), is coming forward for residential and industrial areas around Western Road and Spring Hill are identified as possible development

sites in recent housing land availability assessments.

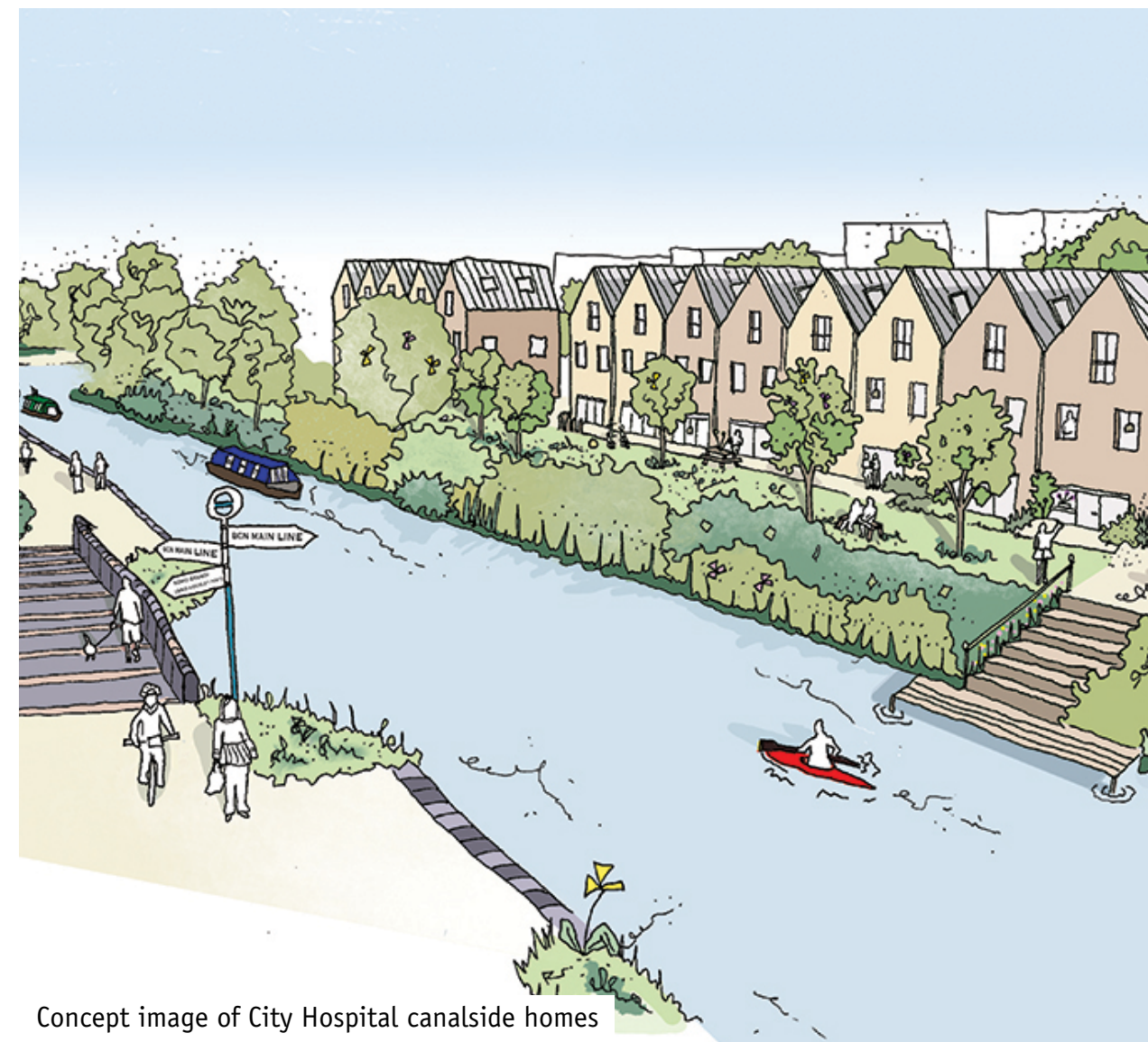
City Hospital is a typical established hospital site that has developed over many decades and comprises a mix of buildings dating from the Victorian period through to recent times. Whilst the original Victorian buildings have some merit, they are not listed, and there are no other designated heritage assets on site. Parts of the hospital will become redundant when the new hospital opens in 2022.

The Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust will retain the Eye Hospital and Treatment Centre on the eastern side of the site. This retained land is closest to Western Road. As the site is within a wider area of redevelopment and regeneration, the City Hospital can contribute to changing perceptions of the area, and it benefits both from the good access to the city centre via the A457.

The Greater Icknield Masterplan (2016) envisages the site coming forward for around 750 dwellings, alongside ancillary retail and commercial uses. More recent estimates may see the whole site achieve up to 1000 new homes but this will be dependent on eventual house types and mix.

Because of the location of the site within easy access of the city centre, there is some potential for higher density and higher rise living. The site is notable for its long frontage (but lack of connection) to the Birmingham Old Line canal, and there is opportunity to front water and to improve movement along the canal corridor and make connections to key sites beyond the canal line, such as All Saints Park.

The site also marks a gateway on Dudley Road, marking a transition from the more suburban areas to the west in Smethwick, and the more urban city centre to the east, particularly as Dudley Road crosses the canal and railway lines just to the west of the site.



Corridor project: activating the canal

- Across the corridor the canal has great potential as a transport link, leisure space and wildlife corridor. To activate the canal:
 - New buildings need to front it, not turn their backs.
 - Opportunities for new and improved accesses to the canal need to be explored in detail.
 - Towpaths need to be improved following the Canal & River Trust Towpath Design Guide. There is an opportunity for a continuous dual-use towpath on the southern side of the Main Line canal.
 - Subject to the Canal & River Trust's agreement, recreational use of the water will be encouraged.
 - Developers are encouraged to engage with the Canal & River Trust as early as possible to develop detailed proposals.



Connections

- Redevelopment may mean the site can be opened to and connected physically with surrounding streets (e.g. Norman Street). New and improved connections should be explored.
- Direct physical links to the canal should be explored, including the creation of a new canal bridge linking the site along its northern edge, creating improved connections to All Saints Park, subject to further technical design and delivery agreements.
- Frontages and crossings at Dudley Road to be enhanced for pedestrians.
- Internal connections and pathways based upon links at the edge of the site, to ensure straight routes and clear legibility.

Open space

- Redevelopment allows consideration of existing open spaces within the hospital site, and adjacent spaces to plan and manage a clear open space structure.
- Creating a focal point and ‘green heart’ to the new residential neighbourhood that is accessible and useable by the whole community.
- Green spaces will play an important role in delivering Sustainable Urban Drainage. This should incorporate swales and basins, particularly on lower lying land in the north of the site, where there is an opportunity to create public green space linked to the canal alongside any new residential development. The green feel of the canal should be maintained.

- Significant trees on the site should be retained and protected to contribute to development character and residential amenity.
- Physical and visual connections can take advantage of off-site open spaces (Norman Street Park, All Saints Park, Clissold Passage)

Frontages

- Key frontages to face main routes to ensure clear definition and overlooking.
- Urban block structure, also emphasising open space network and key views/routes.
- Frontages to work with retained buildings within the NHS estate.
- Frontages overlooking the canal. Opportunities for direct waterfront housing should be provided where the development faces New Spring St N to the north east.
- Development adjacent to existing housing must respect the privacy and amenity of these homes by either siding or backing onto their rear property boundaries.

Retained buildings

- It is understood that the Local Planning Authority wishes to see the Gothic Infirmary frontage building facing Dudley Road, which is a local landmark with strong local historic value, retained, clearing away later additions. Retention and conversion will be subject to technical feasibility and financial viability.



Views

- Emphasis on short and longer views to and through the site, particularly making connections to any determined key buildings and spaces within and outside the site.
- Glimpsed view of hospital building/health provision from Dudley Road for wayfinding.
- Distinctive views towards St. Patrick’s Catholic Church.
- Includes relationships between any retained buildings, views into the site from Spring Hill, views to adjacent spaces and across the canal.

Massing/land use

- The site will comprise a mix of apartment buildings and houses. A graduated approach to density is appropriate.
- Health care uses concentrated in a cluster on the south eastern corner.
- High density residential appropriate surrounding the health care cluster and on the Dudley Road frontage.
- Residential uses to the western and northern edges; higher density around the central core and to the waterfront, facing outward, lower densities moving outwardly to the western edges in light of the scale of neighbouring existing housing.

- Area to the east of Western Road has a longer-term development opportunity for housing but this will need to be managed in such a way not to displace the existing business needs. It is this long-term aspiration that is shown on the principles diagram above.

Icknield Square

Icknield Square is located on the eastern edge of the corridor, adjacent to Ladywood and a relatively easy walk from Birmingham City Centre. This site, of around 3ha, is surrounded by the Port Loop development.

The site is currently occupied by a two small groups of industrial units. Whilst much of the waterfront land is currently vacant, the late Victorian Biddle and Webb buildings fronting Icknield Square have heritage value and significant potential to contribute to place-making, especially when integrated with high quality new architecture.

Given its location and context, a residential-led, mixed use development would be appropriate for this site. The Victorian buildings fronting Icknield Square would also be suitable for commercial

uses. The development should be designed to enhance the links between Port Loop and Ladywood Middleway/Birmingham city centre.

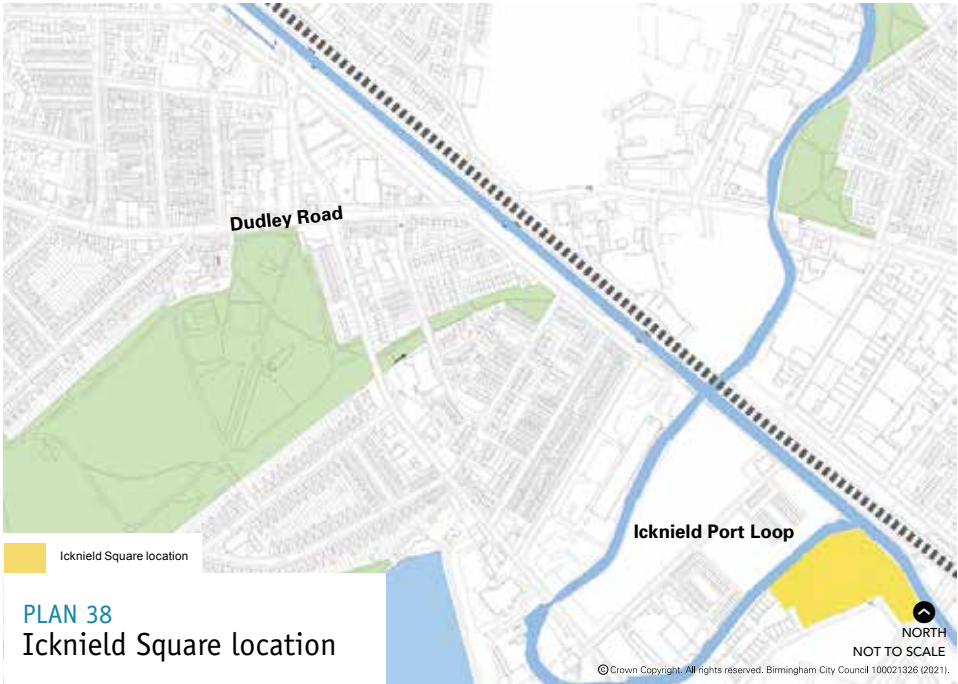
Heath Street (south eastern end)

The strip of land at the south-eastern end of Heath Street between the road and the canal may provide an opportunity for development.

The land has gone over to scrub and has several immature trees along its whole length. The area is prone to some fly-tipping and litter.

Development may be possible to improve the general environment and allow frontage to both the street and the canal. If this was possible, a residential development may be suitable, but the location of the site close to the Dudley Road centre may lend itself to a non-residential use.

There is no public access over the site to the canal, but nearby Northbrook Street may offer some inspiration for short term treatment of the strip to either bring environmental improvement or possible access to the towpath. If this land is developed or formalised this needs to be done in a sensitive manner in order to preserve habitat and biodiversity resource.



TRANSPORT STRATEGY



5

TRANSPORT
STRATEGY

TRANSPORT
STRATEGY**Transport baseline**

The area of interest for transport is wider than the core framework area, as it covers the networks and facilities that enable the movement of people and goods to and from the core area, not just within.

The area has a reasonably dense network of connections, but there are numerous challenges in respect of the current operation of the transport network in the corridor and its ability to accommodate future demands, including new development. These include:

- Significant peak period congestion on the principal highway network.
- Capacity constraints for the rail corridors in the peaks, in terms of the number of paths for local stopping services and of the length of trains (due to the shortness of platforms).
- Passenger accessibility constraints at Rolfe Street and Galton Bridge stations.

- All Metro stops being more than a 15-minute walk from any part of the core area, and most being accessible only from the north of the rail/ Metro corridor.
- Bus journey times and reliability are adversely affected by general traffic congestion and the lack of priority.
- The canal towpaths are in variable states of repair, physically remote from homes and other trip generators (e.g. shops, schools and workplaces), have a limited number of access points - fewer still that are easily accessible, and are not lit.
- Conditions for cycling on-street are generally very poor across the core and wider areas, with little to no separation from motor traffic.
- Walking conditions within the core area, and between it and the Metro stops to the north are similarly poor.

Research undertaken to inform the emerging Key Route Network (KRN) Action Plans revealed that 41% of journeys under 2km in the West Midlands are undertaken by car. It also found that 77% of rush-hour drivers say they would not swap modes, despite increasing congestion.

These findings go to the heart of what the Transport Strategy for the corridor needs to address. Making all alternatives to car travel appreciably more attractive is essential if new trips are to be accommodated, and old trips re-moded in line with the over-arching policy priorities of Sandwell, Birmingham, TfWM, WMCA, other transport agencies and the Government.



“
Making all
alternatives to car
travel appreciably
more attractive is
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trips are to be
accommodated
”





“
*The Transport Strategy
 comprises a large number
 of schemes, most of which
 are designed to make
 walking, cycling and public
 transport significantly
 more attractive*
 ”



Strategy

In the context both of the issues relating to the current transport networks in the corridor and of the challenges set out within national, regional and local policy documents, it is clear that the Transport Strategy must embrace the widest possible range of schemes and initiatives aimed at enabling a substantial shift in the movement of people and goods to walking, cycling and public transport and away from cars and other motor vehicles.

The scale and urgency of the changes needed are daunting but should also help focus thinking and action in bringing forward a co-ordinated package of measures for implementation over the next 10

years. This challenge is not, of course, restricted to this corridor, and all the work undertaken as part of this strategy will require to be integrated with the wider transport strategies and programmes of TfWM, Sandwell and Birmingham.

There will be temporary measures implemented in the corridor as part of the 2022 Commonwealth Games Transport Plan. The Commonwealth Games Transport Plan sets out transport measures for access to the Sandwell Aquatics Centre. These include shuttle buses from The Hawthorns rail station and walk routes from Smethwick Rolfe Street and Galton Bridge stations. There will also be a temporary Games Route Network for travel

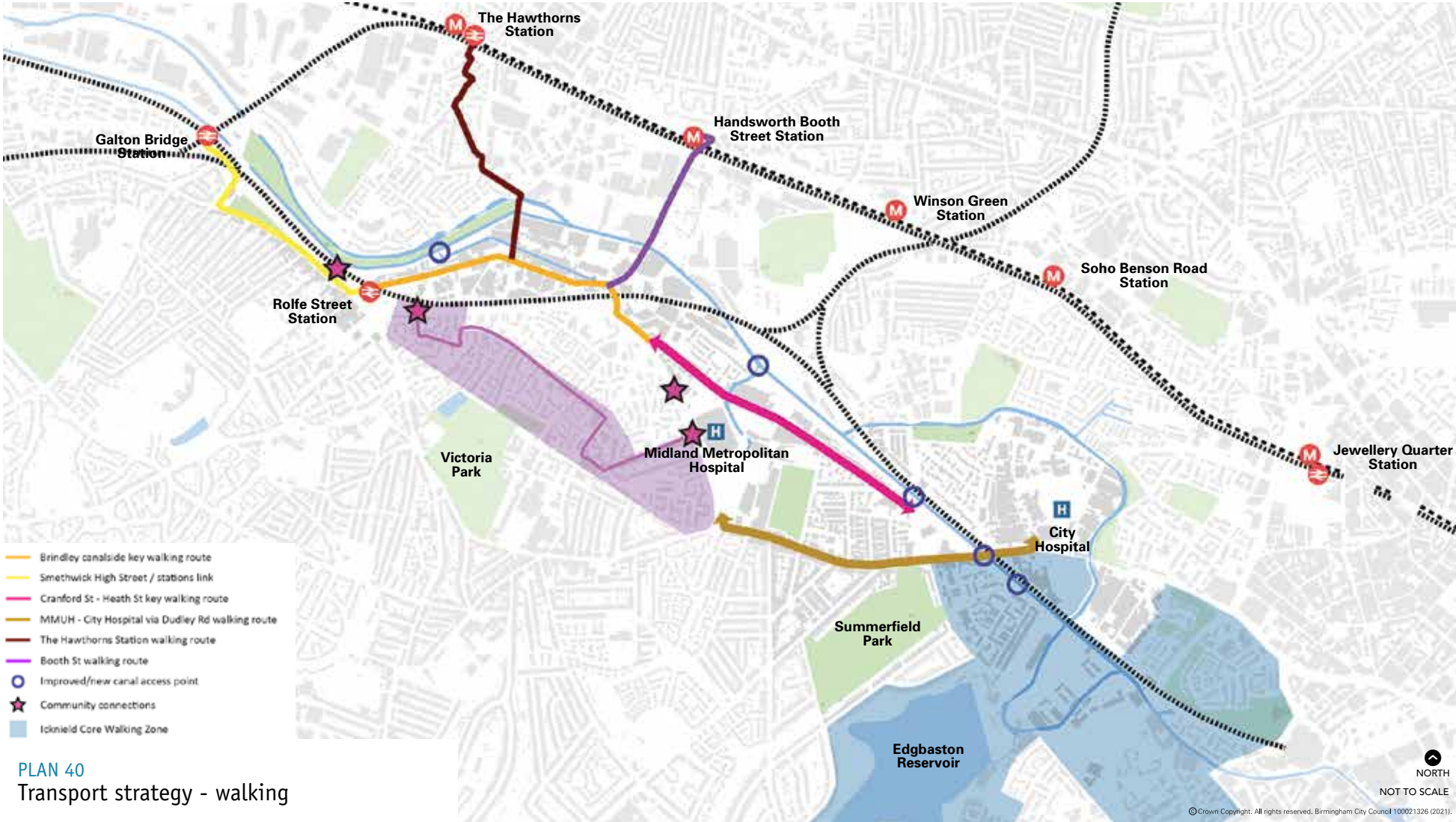
movements of officials and athletes during the Games.

The Transport Strategy comprises a large number of schemes, most of which are designed to make walking, cycling and public transport significantly more attractive than at present, and thereby both to provide a better level of service to people who already uses these modes and, critically, to make credible the substantial mode shift from car travel (and to a lesser extent from the use of motorised goods vehicles). The full range of schemes proposed is listed in Table 1, with the broad categories of measures summarised as follows.

Walking

Packages of measures for identified key routes, as pilots/exemplars/templates for future work throughout the area. Adapted to the local context, these packages will feature most or all of the following.

- Improving footway condition.
- De-cluttering/widening footways.
- Removing footway parking.
- Narrowing bellmouth junctions.
- New 'green man' signal stages.
- New formal/informal crossings.
- Signage/wayfinding measures which should assist in integrating modes (for example by indicating routes to train stations/metro).

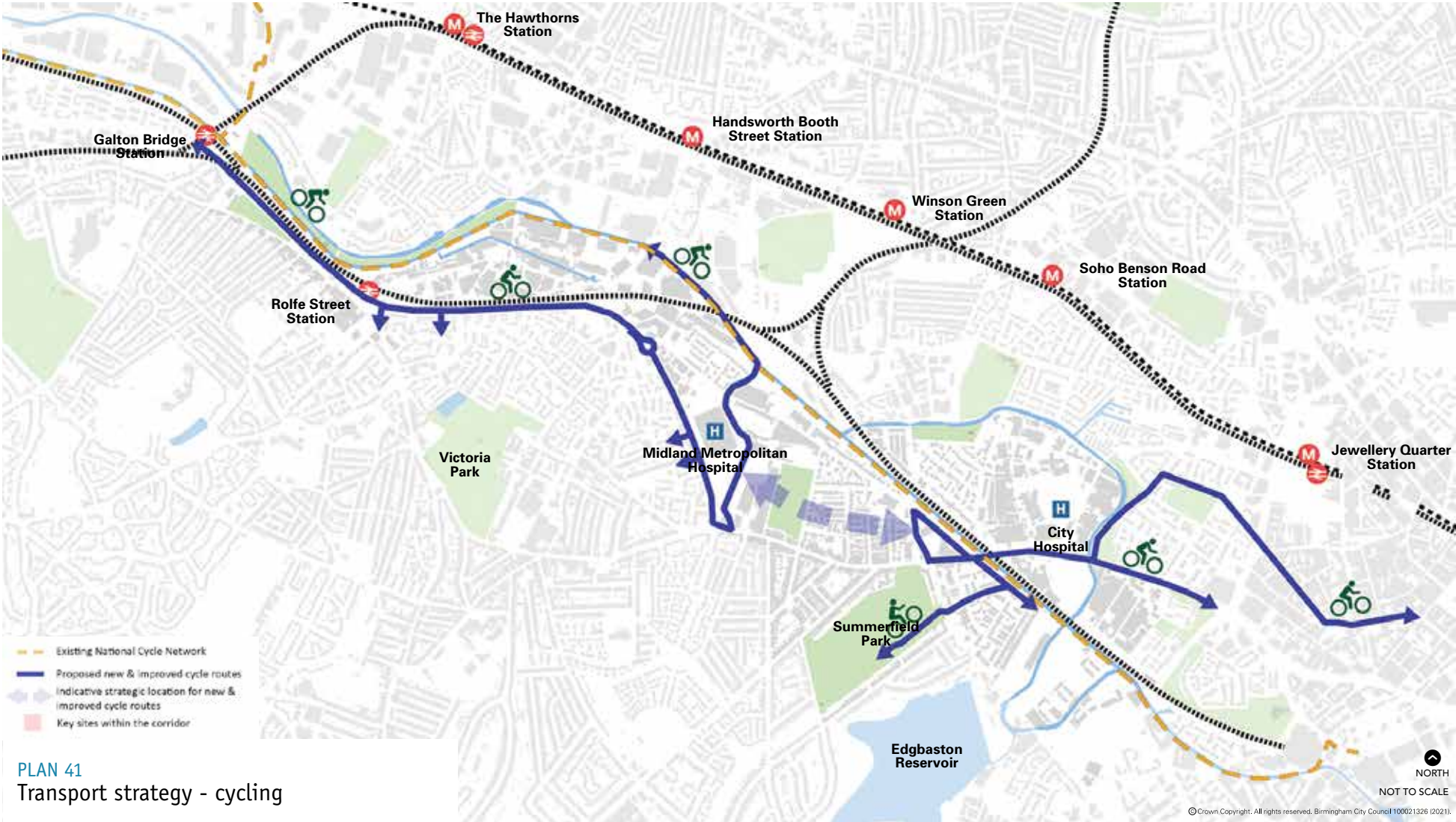


PLAN 40
Transport strategy - walking

Cycling

A focus on new protected cycleways on key routes, with supporting traffic calming and other measures on other roads and local streets. There will also be supporting measures such as secure

cycle parking and cycle hire. Scheme designs will need to be in accord with new Government design guidance - LTN 1/20.



PLAN 41
Transport strategy - cycling

Bus

Enhanced bus priority on the key routes, along with possible new services and improvements to existing services, such as in connection with MMUH or justified by demand associated with other new development. Bus service provision

to MMUH will be based on a set of service enhancements, with options currently being developed by TfWM and operators. Proposed provision will be consulted on in 2022.



PLAN 42

Transport strategy - bus

Metro

Focus on improving walk routes to/from and at-stop-immediate public realm and access improvements.

Rail

Access improvements at Rolfe Street, Galton Bridge and Hawthorns stations, including the station-immediate public realm. Significant changes in local rail capacity in the longer term are subject to review of the current West Midlands Rail Investment Strategy. This review is also considering the potential for new stations across the West Midlands, including the Dudley Road corridor, and will take into account longer-term rail capacity increases.

Highways and parking

The focus of these measures is on management, not the creation of new capacity. Specific congestion management proposals will come through the Key Route Network Action Plan for Route 14, and include the Grove Lane/Soho Way/Cranford Street junction. The management/enforcement of parking in high street locations (Smethwick High Street and Dudley Road) and trials of footway parking exclusion zones are core proposals.

Supporting measures

These include several innovative measures to enable mode shift - for the movement of goods as well as of people - and will often involve working in partnership with third party service providers.



TABLE 1
Smethwick to Birmingham Corridor Transport Schemes

Ref	Mode	Scheme description	Status/Funding/Programme	Link refs
1	W,C	Smethwick Connected Phase 1 (Smethwick High Street)	Delivered.	11
2	W,C	Smethwick Connected Phase 2 (High Street-Rolfe Street link)	Town Investment Plan (TIP)-funding confirmed. Due in 2022/23 FY.	
3	W,C	Smethwick Connected Phase 3 (Rolfe Street to Midland Metropolitan University Hospital (MMUH) via Windmill Eye)	TIP-funding confirmed. Intended Spring 2022.	15
4	W,C	Smethwick Connected Phase 4 (to Cape Hill r/a)	TIP-funding confirmed. Intended 2024/25.	21
5	W,C	Smethwick Connected Phase 5 (Cape Arm link, MMUH-Mainline)	TIP-funding confirmed. Intended 2024/25. May be earlier, if Canal & River Trust can expedite. Canal & River Trust, Sandwell Council (SMBC) and maybe NHS are the only land-holders.	
6	W,C	Birmingham City Council (BCC) Dudley Road Improvement Scheme	Awarded Levelling Up Fund (LUF) funding October 2021. Western Road junction works on site. Main scheme works 2022/23 to 2024/25	
7	W,C	Cranford Street-Heath Street Cycle Route	Sandwell Council preliminary concept. Concept design development in 21/22 with funding bid for City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) in 22/23 or after.	8
8	W	Cranford Street-Heath Street Key Walking Route Package (KWRP)	Proposal. Cycling and Walking funding; possibly CRSTS.	7
9	W,C	Dudley Road Active Travel Measures Scheme - A457/Cape Hill r/a to A4040	Linked to Cross-City Bus Package 3 (West). Space reallocation and improved management/enforcement of on-street parking. Also related to Key Route Network (KRN) Route 14 Action Plan.	10, 27, 42
10	W	MMUH to City Hospital via Dudley Road KWRP	Proposal. Cycling and Walking funding; possibly CRSTS.	9, 27, 42
11	W	Smethwick High Street: Galton Bridge Station to Rolfe Street Station KWRP	Proposal. Cycling and Walking funding; possibly CRSTS.	

Ref	Mode	Scheme description	Status/Funding/Programme	Link refs
12	W	Brindley Canalside: Rolfe Street Station to Grove Lane r/a KWRP	Proposal. Cycling and Walking funding; possibly CRSTS.	15
13	W	Brindley Canalside to Hawthorns Station Walking Route Package (SWRP)	Proposal. Cycling and Walking funding; possibly CRSTS.	
14	W	MMUH to Handsworth Booth Street SWRP	Proposal. Cycling and Walking funding; possibly CRSTS.	
15	W	Sandwell Core Walking Zone 2 (Rolfe Street Station to MMUH direct)	LCWIP/Cycling and Walking funding.	3, 12
16	W	Icknield Core Walking Zone - various local walking route improvements	LCWIP/Cycling and Walking funding; possibly CRSTS.	
17	W	Community Connection: New, accessible Smethwick High Street to Brasshouse Lane footbridge	Proposal. Cycling and Walking funding; possibly CRSTS.	
18	W,C	Community Connection: Surface crossing of A457 Tollhouse Way between Lynton Ave & Cross St	Proposal. Local funding or part of wider ‘Community Connections Programme’ funded through Walking and Cycling pot.	
19	W,C	Community Connection: Surface crossing of A457 Grove Lane between MMUH and e.g. Woodlands St	Proposal. See Ref 19.	
20	C	Icknield Area (62) Local Cycle Routes	Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan/Cycling and Walking funding.	
21	W,C	Canal towpath improvements, including ‘dualling’	Canal & River Trust Proposal. Canal & River Trust/NHS/ Councils funding.	4, 22
22	W,C	‘Heroes Way’	Proposal by partners. Cycling and walking funding.	21
23	W,C	Improved Canal Connection: Winson Green Bridge (Winson Green Rd steps north of Heath St)	Proposal. Walking and Cycling funding in partnership with Canal & River Trust.	
24	W,C	Improved Canal Connection: Northbrook Street steps/ramps	Proposal. Walking and Cycling funding in partnership with Canal & River Trust.	

Ref	Mode	Scheme description	Status/Funding/Programme	Link refs
25	W,C	New Canal Connection: Lee Bridge (Dudley Road near Northbrook Street)	Proposal. Walking and Cycling funding in partnership with Canal & River Trust.	
26	W	New Canal Connection: Engine Arm Aqueduct to Rolfe Street/ Enterprise Centre	Proposal. Walking and Cycling funding in partnership with Canal & River Trust.	
27	B	Cross-City Bus Package 3 (West) - Routes 82 and 87	Better Deal for Bus users funding; on-site 2022.	9, 10, 42
28	B	MMUH Bus Service Modification and Bus Stop Package (Travel Plan)	NHS as developer contributions.	30
29	B	X7 Bus via Cranford Street and Heath Street	Proposal. Reinstatement of previous short-lived service. Financial support needed.	28
30	B	Additional/amended services on existing routes (e.g. 80, 11)	As required.	
31	W,M,R	Hawthorns Station public realm scheme	Proposal. CRSTS/Walking and Cycling funding.	
32	W,M	Handsworth Booth Street Stop public realm scheme	Proposal. CRSTS/Walking and Cycling funding.	
33	W,M	Winson Green Outer Circle Stop public realm scheme	Proposal. CRSTS/Walking and Cycling funding.	
34	W,M	Soho Benson Road Stop public realm scheme	Proposal. CRSTS/Walking and Cycling funding.	
35	R	Rolfe Street Station Access for All scheme	Committed, funded Network Rail Access for All scheme that will be delivered in 2022.	
36	R	Galton Bridge station improvements	WM Stations (WMSA) Alliance Proposal.	
37	R	Train capacity increases: longer trains/platform extensions	2018-47 Rail Investment Strategy (under review).	38
38	R	New Dudley Road railway station	Mayoral proposal.	37
39	MV	A457/B4135/B4136 Grove Lane/Soho Way/ Cranford Street Junction	Options development in progress. HIF funding now lapsed, so CRSTS funding.	4
40	MV	Key Route Network 14 Action Plan	In development. CRSTS.	
41	P	Smethwick High Street parking management scheme	Proposal. SBMC/Walking and Cycling funding.	11

Ref	Mode	Scheme description	Status/Funding/Programme	Link refs
42	P	Dudley Road parking management scheme	Proposal. BCC/SMBC funding.	9, 10, 27
43	P	Footway parking management pilot schemes (see Key Walking Route Packages)	Proposal. BCC/SMBC joint approach with TfWM support.	8, 10-14
44	O	Last-mile logistics pilot (MMUH; Smethwick High Street; Dudley Road)	Proposal. To be developed. TfWM lead.	
45	O	Electronic Vehicle charging programme	Existing proposal. BCC/SMBC.	
46	O	Rolfe Street Station Mobility Hub	Proposal. SMBC, WMSA, TfWM.	
47	O	Local Mobility Hub Network pilot	Proposal. TfWM lead.	
48	O	Wider E-cycle/scooter share pilot	Proposal. TfWM lead.	
49	O	West Midlands Bike Share	Existing proposal. TfWM lead.	
50	O	Corridor MaaS Pilot Scheme	Proposal, TfWM lead. CRSTS.	



DELIVERY

6

DELIVERY

DELIVERY

In the Rolfe Street area a number of the sites are owned by Sandwell Council and redevelopment in this area has gained momentum through the successful Town Investment Fund (TIF) bid. The Council will drive forward proposals for transforming the area over the longer term alongside public sector partners and private sector landowners and interests.

The Grove Lane Masterplan, which has been prepared alongside this framework, provides a more detailed delivery strategy for this part of the corridor. Sandwell Council has attracted funding through the TIF to help instigate its redevelopment. The public sector has some land ownership within the area and these sites will be instrumental in delivering early phases of development and acting as a catalyst for the wider regeneration.

At the south eastern end of the corridor, redevelopment is underway at Port Loop and Soho Loop. Homes England and Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust are developing a detailed masterplan for City Hospital setting out how it can be redeveloped once

parts of the hospital facilities are relocated to the MMUH. The masterplan is supporting a future planning application for the site, following which Homes England will be seeking to bring forward development of the site with a private sector developer(s).

Delivery of the vision will take time and will require the joint working of all of the delivery partners. The framework and masterplan now provide a coherent and consistent basis for doing this which provides greater clarity and a basis for decision making, alongside providing a tool to engage and collaborate with third party landowners, developers and investors.

Delivering the transport strategy

Implementing the Transport Strategy is critical for delivering the wider vision for the Smethwick to Birmingham Corridor; and funding is critical for implementation.

The number and range of proposed schemes, and the importance of a co-ordinated approach in bringing them forward points to the strong desirability of developing, as far as possible, a single package of proposals for funding through as

small a number of large pots as possible. As part of this approach, all individual Key Walking Route Package schemes and possibly Station Walking Route Package schemes will be considered for development as a phased single Key Walking Routes Programme, as part of this wider corridor approach.

In 2022/23 the five-year City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) becomes active. This will deliver £1.05bn of capital funding for transport projects in the West Midlands. This will support a cohesive package of interventions for the corridor to be implemented prior to 2030. This is in line with TfWM's current thinking in terms of focusing much transport investment on six Inclusive Growth Corridors, of which Smethwick-Icknield is one.

In addition, to the CRSTS, additional major funding has also been accessed through the Levelling Up Fund (LUF). The LUF has a focus on regeneration rather than specifically transport and Birmingham City Council was successful in its bid for LUF for the Dudley Road Improvement Scheme with £19.98m awarded in October 2021.

Other identified funding sources for schemes covered by the Transport Strategy include the government's £2bn Walking and Cycling Investment Strategy, with an announcement on the next tranche of delivery funding in 2022.

In addition to the £20m of government funding that the West Midlands has been allocated for cross-city bus route priority measures, future funding for better bus services should be available through the National Bus Strategy for England (March 2021). Any funding from this source will be in accord with the West Midlands Bus Service Improvement Plan produced in October 2021. In connection with this, TfWM, Sandwell and Birmingham will need to have an Enhanced Partnership in place by March 2022. The West Midlands is already close to concluding the details of its Enhanced Partnership, so is ahead of the curve in this regard.

As mentioned above, funding for rail projects will be subject to the review of the West Midlands Rail Investment Strategy.

“Implementing the Transport Strategy is critical for delivering the wider vision for the Smethwick to Birmingham Corridor”

APPENDIX

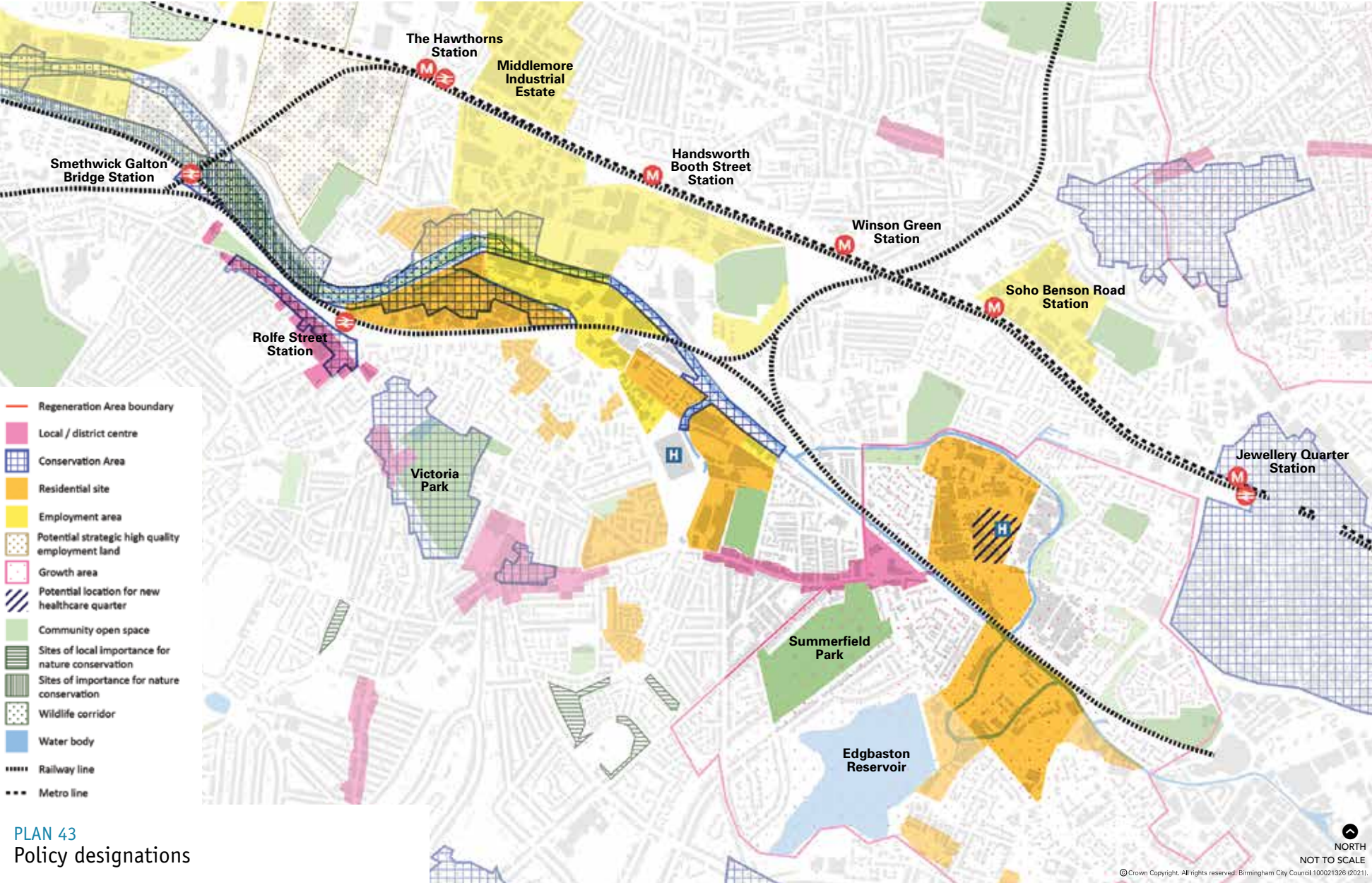
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A

APPENDIX

Planning policy



PLAN 43
Policy designations

Status

The Framework is adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) by Birmingham City Council. Sandwell Council has not at this stage adopted the Framework as an SPD but its cabinet has approved the document as a non-statutory planning document which will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Sandwell Council policy

Black Country Core Strategy (2011)

The Core Strategy sets out the spatial vision, objectives and strategy for future development in the Black Country up to 2026. It identifies regeneration corridors of which Oldbury-West Bromwich-Smethwick is one.

Sandwell Site Allocations and Delivery DPD (2012)

The Site Allocations and Delivery DPD (SADDPD) adds further detail to the Core Strategy's regeneration corridors. The plan states that the focus for new housing within the next few years will be within the Smethwick area of the Oldbury-West Bromwich-Smethwick corridor (corridor 12). The plan identifies the following sub-areas within corridor 12 that also lie in part within the Smethwick to Birmingham Corridor: Area 7 Smethwick High Street and Environs, Area 8 North Smethwick Canalside, and Area 9 Cranford Street. Areas 8 and 9 are identified on the policies map as 'long term residential'.

Area 9 Cranford Street includes two sites which broadly correspond to the Grove Lane site. The policy table says the following of the Grove Lane site: "Masterplan prepared for site to include residential and Business B1 uses. Will need to be done in phased manner. Some occupiers will need relocating.". Area 9 is listed as a housing allocation to which SADDPD Policy SAD1 applies. SAD1

supports residential development and states that other uses appropriate for residential areas, such as health facilities, community facilities and local shops, may be acceptable where there is a gap in service provision and where they can be integrated successfully into the residential environment.

Smethwick High Street, a designated district centre, is also within corridor 12 and the SADDPD identifies opportunities to improve the centre through redevelopment of the Tollgate Precinct for town centre uses and to develop land between St Paul's Road and Tollhouse Way for a health centre and retail uses.

Sandwell Residential Design Guide SPD (2014)

Sets design principles for development.

Black Country Plan (emerging)

The Black Country Plan, which will replace the Black Country Core Strategy and the Sandwell Site Allocations and Delivery DPD, is currently being prepared.

Birmingham City Council policy

Birmingham Development Plan (2017)

The Birmingham Development Plan (BDP) is the principal planning policy document for Birmingham covering the period to 2031. Most of the part of

the corridor lying within Birmingham City Council's administrative area is designated by BDP Policy GA2 as within the Greater Icknield Growth Area. Policy GA2 allocates Icknield Port Loop, Soho Loop and City Hospital as residential development sites.

The supporting policy text for the City Hospital site states "Following the relocation of the City Hospital (note that not all of the hospital facilities are moving, the Birmingham Treatment Centre, BMEC and other services will be retained) to the new Midland Metropolitan Hospital in Sandwell the site will be redeveloped for a new mix of living and local shopping facilities, with some medical facilities retained.".

The supporting text to Policy GA2 states that "New family-based models of urban living will be explored and will be supported by a full range of community facilities, local shopping and working opportunities, and better-quality streets, parks, squares and gardens. Connections by public transport, walking and cycling will be enhanced including links to the City Centre utilising the canal network and existing primary routes.". Improvements to Dudley Road shopping centre, which is listed as a local centre in BDP Policy TP21 (The network and hierarchy of centres), are also identified as needed.

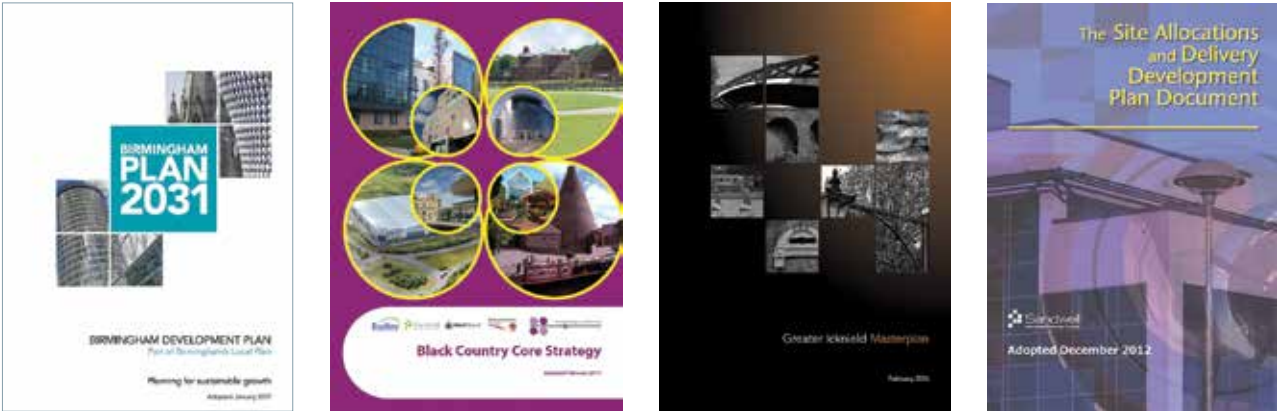
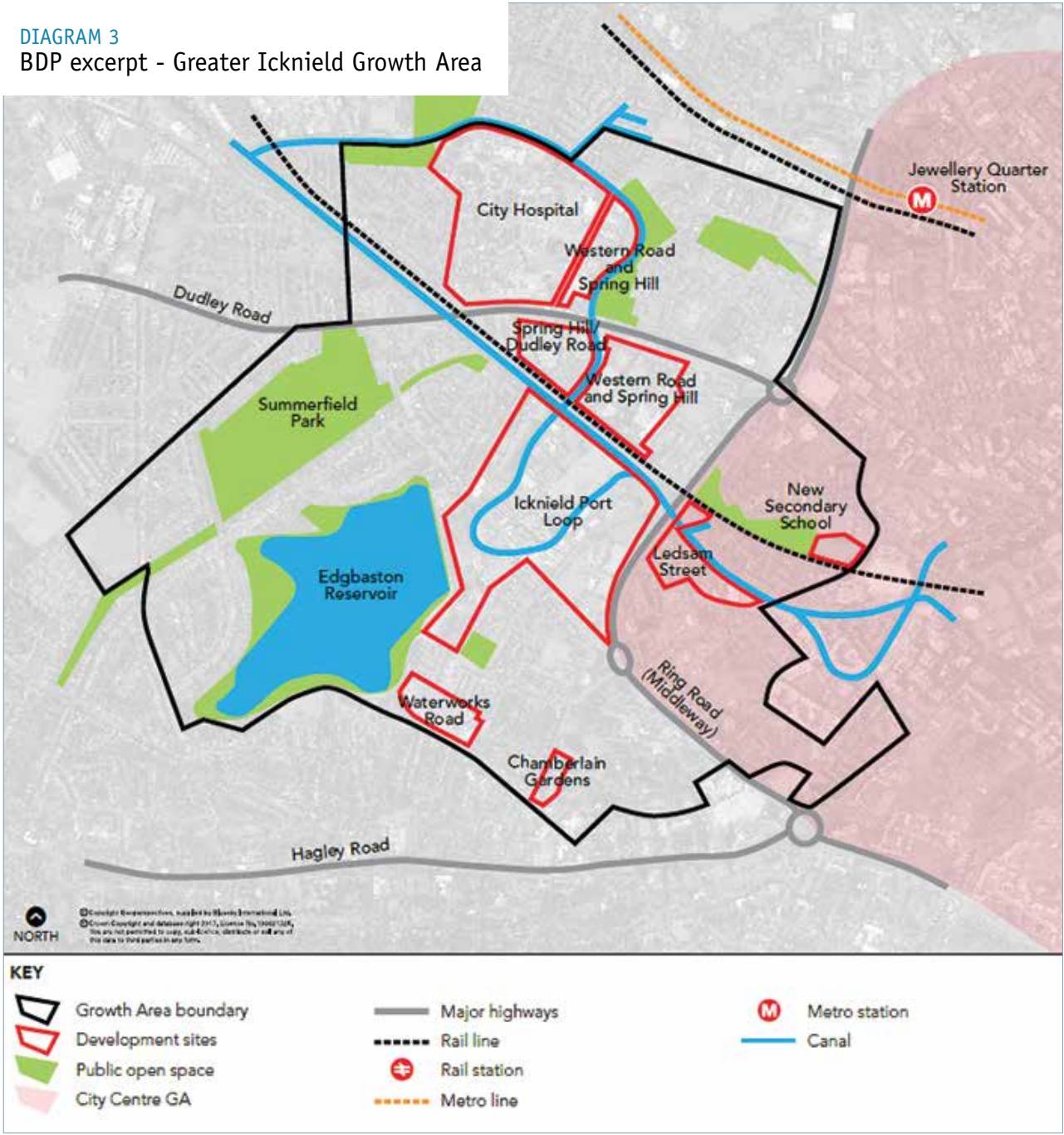


DIAGRAM 3
BDP excerpt - Greater Icknield Growth Area



Development Management in Birmingham DPD (emerging)

The plan supplements the BDP and includes additional policies.

Greater Icknield Masterplan (2016)

Adopted a year before the BDP, the masterplan provided evidence to support BDP policy on the Growth Icknield Growth Area and identified development principles for the BDP site allocations. Once approved, The Smethwick to Birmingham Corridor Development Framework will update parts the Greater Icknield Masterplan.

Future planning policy

Preparation of the Birmingham Plan (BDP update) is now underway with details of the latest plan-making timetable available in the council's Local Development Scheme available on its website.

Birmingham Supplementary Planning Documents

A number of SPDs have been adopted by Birmingham City Council and would apply to development in the Birmingham part of the corridor. The Birmingham Design Guide is of particular relevance.

Overarching objectives

Inclusive growth

Inclusive growth is an important agenda across the West Midlands. The West Midlands Combined Authority has defined inclusive growth as: "A more deliberate and socially purposeful model of economic growth - measured not only by how fast or aggressive it is; but also by how well it is created and shared across the whole population and place, and by the social and environmental outcomes it realises for our people.". This is reflected in the West Midlands Inclusive Growth Framework (2018).

Sandwell Council is giving effect to these objectives through its Inclusive Economy Deal (2020) which represents the start of a new partnership between Sandwell Council, businesses, residents, the voluntary and community sector and Sandwell's anchor institutions. The Midland Metropolitan University Hospital and surrounding regeneration is highlighted in the deal. This recognises the opportunity for the new hospital as an anchor institution to drive inclusive growth in the area.

Net zero

In Birmingham and Sandwell, the two largest contributors to carbon emissions are residential buildings and road transport. This framework provides an opportunity to contribute to reducing future emissions from these sources.

In summer 2019 the West Midlands Combined Authority set a target of the region becoming new zero carbon by 2041. The WM2041 Plan proposes a range of actions towards this target, including active travel and cleaner transport, zero carbon homes, tree planting and energy devolution. The plan also links the net zero target to inclusive growth, seeking to change the economy without leaving anyone behind.

Sandwell Council's Climate Change Strategy 2020-2041 sets out Sandwell's plan for achieving the 2041 target. This includes action plans for important sources of emissions, including the built environment and transport. The built environment action plan includes a commitment to undertaking studies on the development of heat networks. The transport action plan seeks the implementation of highway measures and transport facilities that fully accommodate and promote the use of public transport, cycling and walking, making journeys by such methods easier, faster and safer, alongside measures to discourage car use. In also promotes

the Introduction of facilities at developments through the planning system to increase use of shared and cleaner transport modes and reduce car parking spaces. The resilience and adaption and natural capital action plans focus around enhancing and creating green spaces.

Birmingham City Council is seeking to achieve net zero carbon by 2030, ahead of the wider West Midlands target. The council's publication Route to Zero Call to Action (2021) mirrors Sandwell's focus on emissions from residential buildings, in particular municipal housing, and transport. The Birmingham Transport Plan will be an import focus for action to reduce transport emissions.

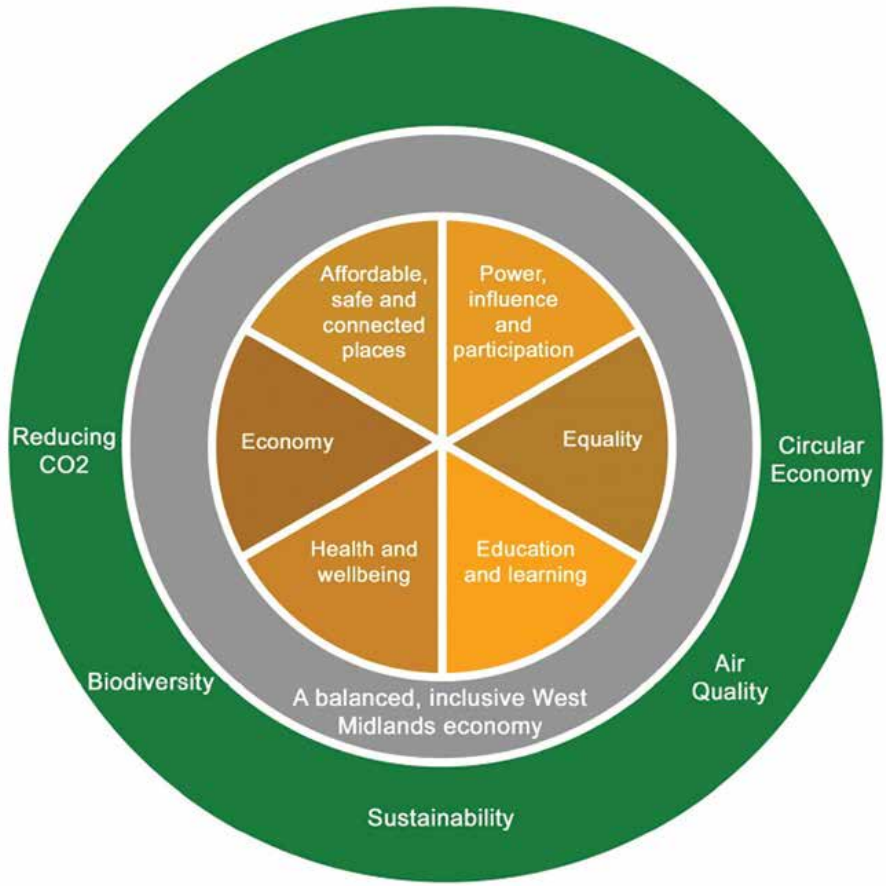


DIAGRAM 4
WM Inclusive Growth Framework

Transport policy

In April 2021, the UK government announced its intention to set the world’s most ambitious climate change target into law to reduce emissions by 78% by 2035 compared to 1990 levels. This was the latest of several government initiatives in recent times that reflect the growing urgency to reduce greenhouse gas emissions generally, with emissions from transport being a focus.

In March 2020, the government published ‘Decarbonising Transport (Setting the Challenge)’ in which the Secretary of State for Transport wrote that “Transport has a huge role to play in the economy reaching net zero. The scale of the challenge demands a step change in both the breadth and scale of ambition and we have a duty to act quickly and decisively to reduce emissions.”

This was followed up, in July 2020, with the publication of ‘Gear Change - A Bold Vision for Walking and Cycling’, which stated that “We want - and need - to see a step-change in cycling and walking in the coming years. The challenge is huge, but the ambition is clear. We have a unique opportunity to transform the role cycling and walking can play in our transport system, and get England moving differently”.

The government’s sense of urgency is further demonstrated by the fact that Point 5 of its ‘Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution (November 2020)’ is green public transport, cycling and walking. “We must increase the share of journeys taken by public transport, cycling and walking. We will therefore accelerate the transition

to more active and sustainable transport by investing in rail and bus services, and in measures to help pedestrians and cyclists”.

The urgent need to decarbonise transport is one of the reasons why WMCA, TfWM, Birmingham and Sandwell have all formally declared or otherwise acknowledged that there is a Climate Emergency, and this is reflected in a range of policy documents, several of which pre-date such declarations and respond to other key policy priorities including, economic growth, the provision of new homes, public health and social and economic inclusion.

TfWM’s Movement for Growth strategic transport plan takes into account all these challenges, stating specifically that “local air quality needs to be improved... transport related ambient noise needs to be reduced... (and that) the West Midlands will play its full part in reducing carbon emissions in line with the national target”. As noted above, that target has now changed significantly - from an 80% reduction of 1990 levels by 2050 to a 78% reduction by 2035.

In the same vein, TfWM’s new draft Local Transport Plan Green Paper entitled Reimagining Transport in the West Midlands notes that “Significant challenges remain in tackling the defining issues of our time, such as climate change, air quality, our health, and our economic recovery from the pandemic (but that) by thinking and acting differently we can create a place where transport improves the opportunities available to all”.

The West Midlands Cycling Charter sets out the strategic approach to increasing cycling in the West Midlands, with a target of a 5% mode share of all journeys by cycling by 2023, and 10% by 2033.

The foreword to the draft Birmingham Transport Plan is explicit about the need for and benefits of changing how we move: “Over-dependence on private cars is bad for the health of ourselves and our families, bad for our communities and bad for business as measured by the millions of pounds of lost productivity caused by congestion. Ultimately, it is bad for the future because of the very significant damage caused by vehicle emissions and their impact on climate change. The more journeys we take by walking and cycling, the more we will improve air quality and our health and the more we will reduce congestion. For longer journeys, buses, trams and trains will be the backbone of a new, go-anywhere transport system.”

The Council further emphasises the pressing need for radical change in the Introduction to Our Future City Plan: “The urgent need for action to tackle climate change has been set out through the City Council’s ambitious commitment to eliminate carbon emissions through the ‘Route to Zero’ initiative. Birmingham aims to become a global leader in tackling climate change, meeting the challenges head-on and grasping the opportunities of being at the forefront of a green revolution.”

For Sandwell’s part, Action Plan 3 (Transport) of its Climate Change Strategy 2020-2041 has these themes: promotion of sustainable travel; develop a low carbon transport system; and planning policies to support sustainable transport choices. On developing a low carbon transport system, the Strategy couldn’t be clearer in describing the first of the actions that the Council can take as being to “implement highway measures and transport facilities that fully accommodate and promote the use of public transport, cycling and walking, making journeys by such methods easier, faster and safer, alongside measures to discourage car use”.

Throughout all these documents referenced, and others, there is the explicit or implicit juxtaposition of “the need for change” with “the challenge is huge”. This neatly encapsulates the scale and importance of the task faced in developing a Transport Strategy for the Smethwick-Birmingham Corridor.

“Accelerate the transition to more active and sustainable transport by investing in rail and bus services, and in measures to help pedestrians and cyclists”



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IMAGE
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Page number:	Project name and location:	Developer:
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p23 righth	The Chocolate Quarter, Keynsham.	velodenz is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0 (photographer), St Monica Trust (developer), KWL Architects.
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p33 top	Woden Road, Wolverhampton.	Accord Housing Association.
p33 middle left	Marmalade Lane, Cambridge.	Mole Architects/Jamie Buchanan.
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p43	Derbyshire Street, London.	Julian Walker (photographer), Greysmith Associates (landscape architect).
p45	Kings Crescent Estate Phase 3 & 4 or Barley Court, London.	Jim Stephenson (photograph), Karakusevic Carson Architects.
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p49 bottom	Abode development, Cambridge.	Tibbalds Planning and Urban Design (photograph).



SMETHWICK TO BIRMINGHAM CORRIDOR

FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT
FEBRUARY 2022

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SMETHWICK TO BIRMINGHAM

Grove Lane MASTERPLAN
January 2022

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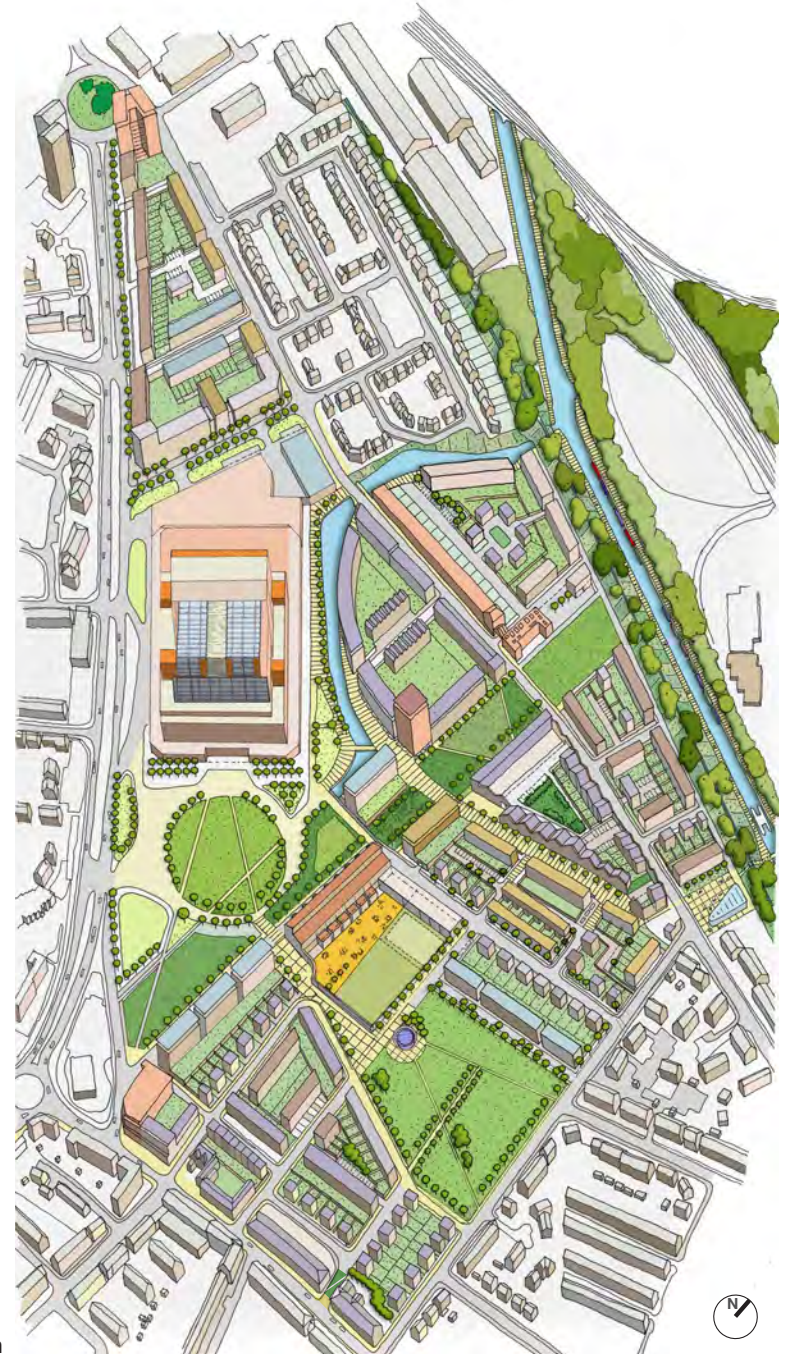


Fig. 0.1 - Grove Lane Illustrative Masterplan

The Delivery Partners



Sandwell Council is leading on the preparation of the development framework and the Grove Lane masterplan in collaboration with the other partners. The Council is the largest Black Country authority and is pursuing an ambitious and proactive inclusive growth agenda.



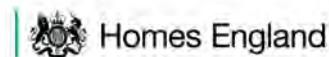
Birmingham City Council is leading of the preparation of the development framework in collaboration with the other partners. Birmingham is the largest local authority in Europe and has an extensive track record of delivering large-scale urban renewal.



West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) is the combined authority for the West Midlands. The authority works collaboratively to deliver on its priorities including housing and regeneration, productivity and skills, economy and environment. WMCA is working with partners on the redevelopment of the area around the new Midland Metropolitan University Hospital.



Transport for West Midlands co-ordinates investment to improve the region's transport infrastructure and create a fully integrated, safe and secure network.



Homes England is the government's housing accelerator. It is focussed on making possible the new Homes England needs, helping to improve neighbourhoods and grow communities. Homes England is working with Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust to bring forward the redevelopment of the City Hospital.



Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust operates City Hospital and its new hospital, the Midland Metropolitan University Hospital, is under construction. The trust is the largest employer in the corridor and is committed to improving the lives of local people, maintaining an outstanding reputation for teaching and education, and to embedding innovation and research.



Canal & River Trust is the charity that looks after and brings life to 2,000 miles of waterways in England and Wales, including the Birmingham Main Line Canal within the corridor. The Trust is working to transform canals into spaces where local people want to spend time and feel better.



Fig. 0.2 - Engine Arm Moorings, Smethwick

INTRODUCTION

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1

INTRODUCTION

1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The Smethwick to Birmingham corridor is Birmingham and Sandwell's historic canal district, stretching from The Roundhouse just west of Brindley Place to Galton Bridge in Smethwick. It is the historic link between Birmingham and the Black Country and a cradle of the industrial revolution. Today the corridor is one of the most significant areas of brownfield urban renewal in Europe.

At the heart of this corridor, the Grove Lane area of Sandwell Council is the location of the new Midland Metropolitan University Hospital (MMUH), which will open in 2022. With the surrounding land, it is one of the major intervention sites in Sandwell. Alongside this masterplan, a high level strategic framework has been prepared to guide development across this area.

The Grove Lane area, which takes in land between Grove Lane, Cranford Street, Heath Street and the Main Line Canal, has been awarded Housing Zone status with potential to deliver approximately 800 new homes over almost 18 ha of brownfield land. Some of these have already been provided with approximately 140 constructed north of Cranford Street.

The development of the land parcels should be comprehensive, creating a people centred neighbourhood that supports existing local centres, provides a new school, connects with the canal and promotes active travel. It is important that development is not purely based on achievable numbers of homes but delivers a quality place that raises aspirations for the regeneration of the wider area.

This masterplan is prepared jointly by Sandwell Council and Birmingham City Council in close collaboration with Homes England, The West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust and the Canal & River Trust.

Status

The Grove Lane Masterplan is approved by Sandwell Council and Birmingham City Council as a non-statutory planning document. It provides guidance to support the councils' statutory planning policies for the area. It will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Fig. 1.1 - The new Midland Metropolitan University Hospital (MMUH) is being built at the heart of the Grove Lane area. It is located close to the canal and Moilliett Street Park.



PURPOSE





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PURPOSE

2

PURPOSE

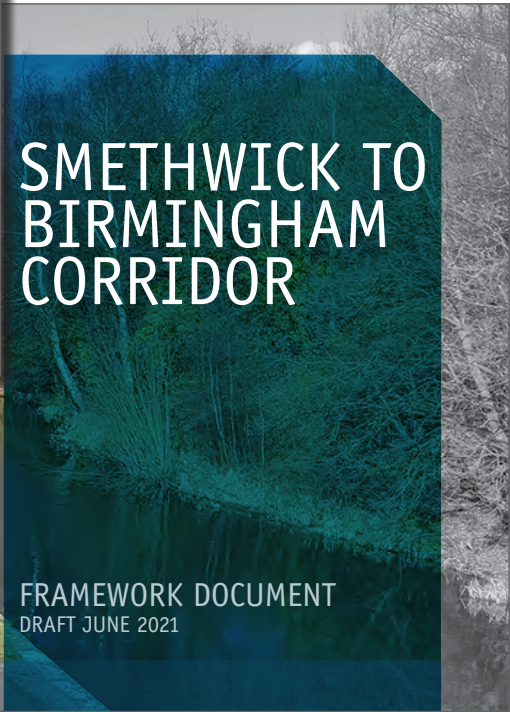
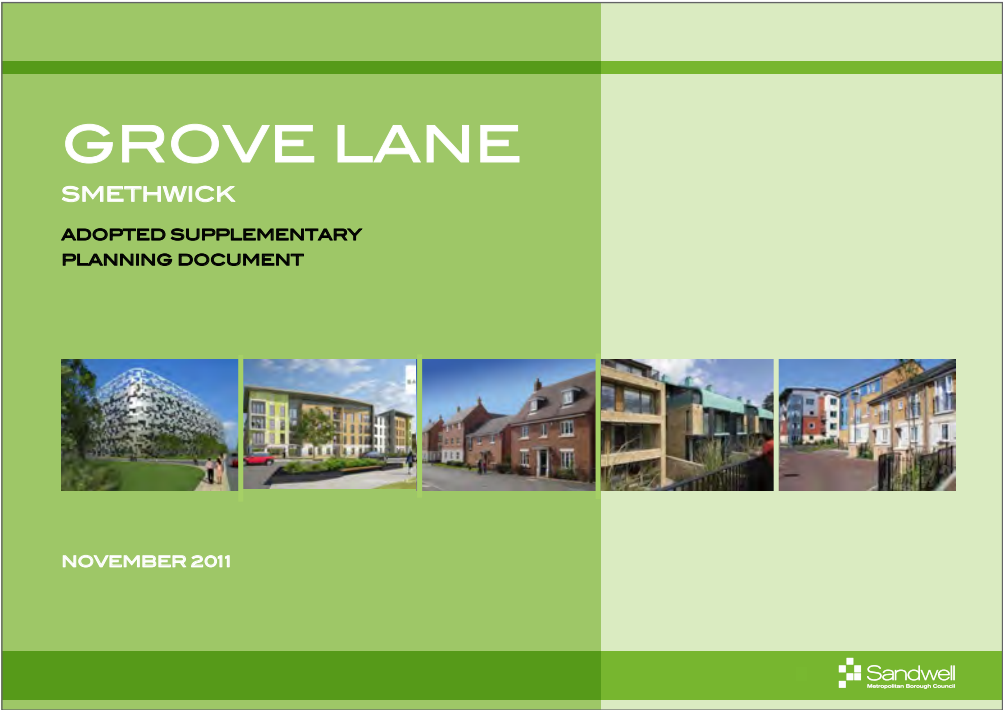
Purpose

A Masterplan & Delivery Strategy document for Grove Lane was produced in 2010 which considered potential development in part of the Grove Lane area, setting out proposed land uses and phasing of development. However, given the passage of time and the adoption of the Sandwell Sites and Delivery DPD, this document is now out of date and a review is required.

The purpose of this document is to prepare an amended masterplan to take account of recent changes and the current context, and to visualise how the area could look and function in the future. The masterplan has considered factors that would influence its viability and delivery, and these provide further grounding for the vision and objectives.

Relationship to the Smethwick to Birmingham Development Framework

The Smethwick to Birmingham Framework sets out a strategic plan for the whole Smethwick to Birmingham corridor. The Grove Lane masterplan builds on the framework and sets out in more detail how the Grove Lane area surrounding the Midland Metropolitan University Hospital can be developed.



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- School).
- Address the scale of, and provide connectivity to, the new hospital.
- Reinforce the network of mutually supporting uses required to help the neighbourhood function.
- Overcome land ownership constraints to enable the creation a smooth, unified and seamless network of streets and spaces with an attractive public realm for people to enjoy.
- Convert some existing buildings to maintain an element of history and add variety to the built fabric.
- Establish a mix of houses and flats to offer a range of accommodation to existing and new residents.
- Locate higher buildings at focal points.
- Improve Cranford Street/Heath Street.



Fig. 2.1 (top) - Grove Lane SPD,
Fig. 2.2 (middle), Fig 2.3 (bottom) - Extracts from Corridor Framework

CONTEXT

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3

CONTEXT

Site Context

Wider Location

The Grove Lane area sits within the wider Smethwick to Birmingham corridor, which is itself sited on the western side of Birmingham city centre, roughly 2.5km from the main retail and commercial areas.

At this point in the city, the dense urban character of the city centre is beginning to break up, and the corridor represents a transition between the urban and the suburban, with the scale and form of development and the nature of the environment less dense, lower and becoming more spread out.

That said, the corridor was defined during the Industrial Revolution by the Main Line Canal, and was characterised by industrial development, and housing has developed historically around it. The A457 and the main line railway between Birmingham and Wolverhampton all now pass through the corridor, and other radial routes stem from the city centre north and south of this corridor (notably the A41 and Snow Hill railway line to the north, and the A456 Hagley Road to the south).

The corridor remains a place where small and medium industrial interests remain, attracted by competitive and lower property values, and good access to wider transport networks – the M5 is a short drive to the west – and the local labour force. Outside of the corridor area, residential neighbourhoods dominate, the closest of which is the Windmill Eye.

The Grove Lane area has a new prominence in the area because of the construction of the new Midland Metropolitan University Hospital (MMUH).

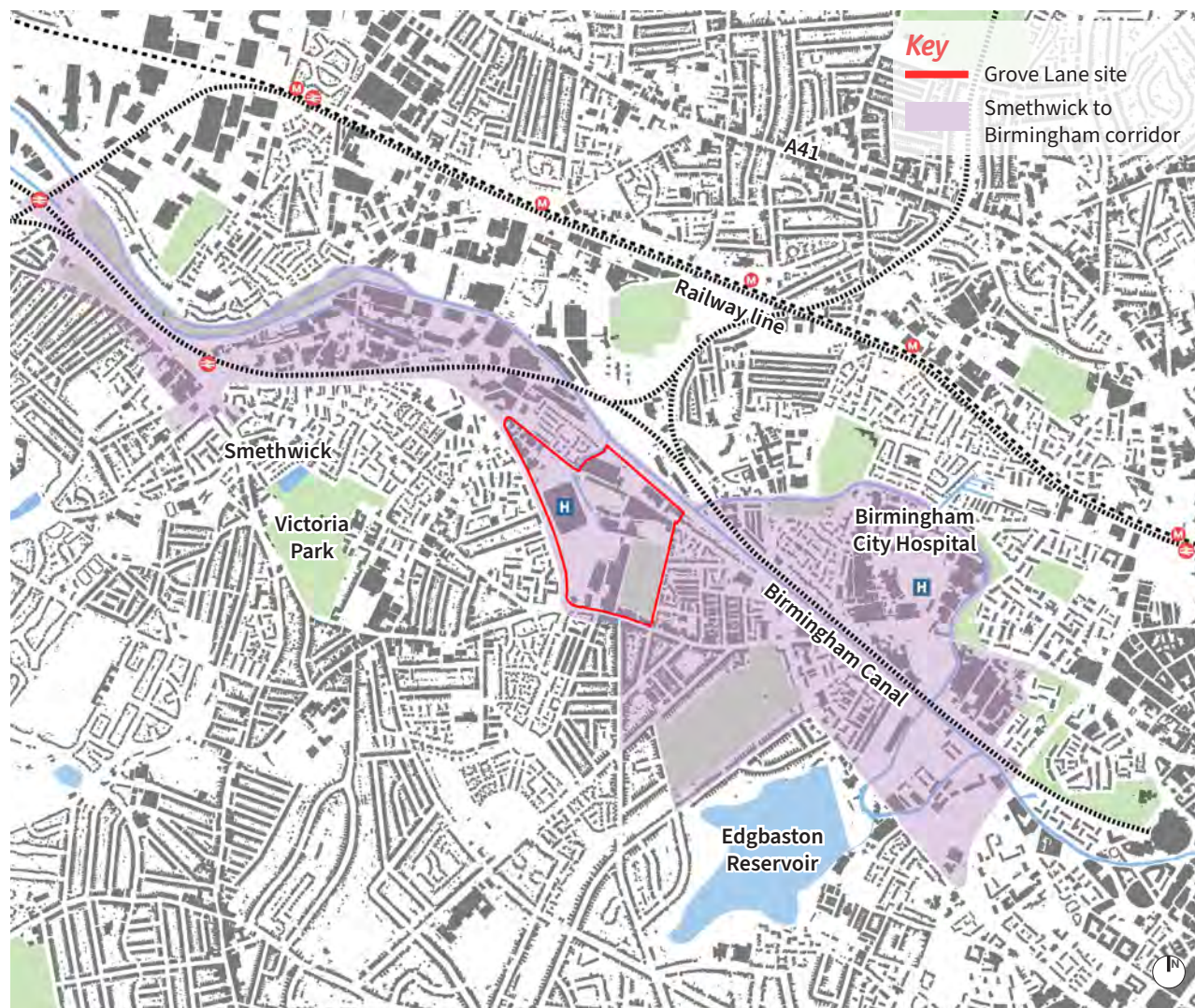


Fig. 3.1 - Location of the Smethwick – Birmingham corridor in the wider context of west Birmingham

It will replace some of the functions that are presently carried out by Sandwell General Hospital in West Bromwich and Birmingham City Hospital which will transfer services from its location a short distance to the east, when the new hospital opens.

The new hospital will transform the area. It will see people coming into this area who have not engaged with it before. This will include professionals, visitors, employees, students and people looking to live in the area. It will mean that current residents will see significant changes over a long period.

The Site

The Grove Lane area comprises land between Grove Lane to the west, Dudley Road to the south, Moilliett Street Park and Winson Street to the east and the Birmingham Canal to the north. The new hospital is located centrally in this area, abutting Grove Lane. A series of sites surround the hospital to the north, east and south.

The hospital itself is a dominating presence; a prominent, tall building that is significantly taller than most of the surrounding development. To the south of the hospital building, a large open space is planned as an entrance point which is intended to be used as a public open space. South of this space, the Hospital Trust have ambitions for a learning campus and for temporary living accommodation (e.g. a hotel).

Much of the surrounding area is occupied by dense, low rise industrial activity and is characterised by warehouses, workshops and surface parking areas. The range of industry is varied, but some of it is noisy and unsightly (e.g. scrap, vehicle storage). Parts of this area have become derelict and underused, particularly around Abberley Street, while other parts have already been redeveloped (Cranford Grange, north of the hospital) or have been the subject of speculative planning applications. Areas left open – such as front yards and service spaces – are often used for parking.

Many of the industrial buildings to the east of the hospital is low rise and over fifty to sixty years old, and much of it seems tired. However, elements speak to the area's history and heritage, and some of the brick patterns and openings have a distinctiveness that is worthy of note in redevelopment ideas. To the west, across Grove Lane, Windmill Eye is a residential neighbourhood that has already seen significant regeneration through funding from the Homes & Communities Agency.

The Cranford Grange development to the north of the hospital is the first area of redevelopment for residential use. The scheme is a suburban style development of two and three storey semi-detached family homes with front and rear gardens and off-street parking.



Fig. 3.2 - Boundary of the Grove Lane masterplan area

Key

Grove Lane site

Land Ownership

Public ownership in the Grove Lane area around the site of the new hospital is limited. The WMCA have a relatively large land holding on the north side of Abberley Street, and have received a demolition consent for the removal of the current buildings, granted in early 2021. Birmingham City Council owns Moilliet Street Park; the Council is considering development of part of the park to support improvements to the park.

There are significant private landholdings in and around the Grove Lane area, which are characterised by their industrial and commercial uses. The history of the area as a focus for industry and its transport routes contribute to the area remaining a relatively successful location for commercial and industrial activity, albeit characterised by older, smaller and lower quality stock. This also contributes to a fragmented land ownership picture, which makes land assembly and redevelopment in Grove Lane more difficult.

Within this general picture, there are larger sites in single ownerships and this includes key sites north and south of Cranford Street immediately east of the Cape Arm canal branch .

Sites around Halberton Street and to the north of the hospital are both within multiple ownerships, and some include long term leaseholders.

Land Parcels

The masterplan addresses the Grove Lane area holistically, but with the definition of the Housing Zones, the mix of land ownerships, development planning activity and the nature of physical characteristics, the area can be seen as a series of parcels. In practice, these factors will influence the masterplan, particularly through the phasing and delivery. Initial activity on delivering the new neighbourhood will be driven by those characteristics of each part of the area that makes delivery easier, or more complex.

The parcels that have provided a structure for the masterplan proposals is set out at Appendix B.

Opportunities

The masterplan responds to a number of opportunities that will enable it to contribute to the regeneration of the wider Smethwick to Birmingham corridor and benefit existing communities. These are:

- Integrating the area with the Dudley Road high street;
- Incorporating the Cape Arm canal into the design strategy;
- Reconnecting Cranford Street/Heath Street with Dudley Road;
- Replacing a large industrial employment site with a predominantly residential neighbourhood (element of mixed use/education campus/school);
- Addressing the scale of, and provide connectivity to, the new hospital;
- Reinforcing the network of mutually supporting uses required to help the neighbourhood function;
- Overcoming land ownership constraints to enable the creation of a smooth, unified and seamless network of streets and spaces with an attractive public realm for people to enjoy;
- Converting some existing buildings to maintain an element of history and add variety to the built fabric;
- Establishing a mix of houses and flats to offer a range of accommodation to existing and new residents;
- Enabling the creation of green and blue open space network as a structure to the neighbourhood and to meet recreational demands, including improvements to Moilliett Street Park;
- Distributing scale and density to reflect a changing character; and
- Locating higher buildings at focal points.

Characteristics of the Grove Lane Area

Connections

The site is well defined by Grove Lane and Dudley Road, and by the canal. The internal connections are defined by Cranford Street and Heath Street – which connects the Soho Way roundabout and the east end of Dudley Road – and the streets coming off this north – south, which include London Street and Winson Street. Internal connections will be improved by the development of the hospital, particularly around its entrance, and the Cape Arm, which currently has no access for boats or pedestrians, also offers the opportunity for a distinctive connection to the canal.

Connections beyond the site are more difficult. Grove Lane is a wide, busy dual carriageway with limited crossing points to and from Windmill Eye, and connections to Dudley Road – particularly Halberton Street and Dugdale Street – are compromised by the industrial environment and the poor quality of Moilliett Street Park as an open space. Whilst the canal is just to the north, there are no connections to it which limits pedestrian and cycle access to the areas to the north. Notwithstanding the width of Grove Lane, walking routes to Cape Hill are relatively straightforward.

Grove Lane and Dudley Road offer public transport routes, which can only improve as the hospital opens. They are both part of the A457, a significant route into Birmingham and the primary link between the MMUH and the City Hospital site. This route is part of the key route network, along with Cranford Street / Heath Street. This latter connection provides an alternative to the Grove Lane / Dudley Road, which has made it something of a rat-run; this will need to be addressed sensitively if it is to see its context change markedly from industrial to residential.

Open spaces

The principal open space in the area is Moilliett Street Park. The park was created from slum clearance in the 1970s. It has a regular shape and provides play space and neighbourhood green space for the residential areas around, which are principally to the east. The space is largely grass, but has some trees and is open on all sides.

The park is compromised by being surrounded on two sides by industrial land, and the Dugdale Street frontage is entirely blank. The park has had issues with anti-social behaviour, which is longstanding and perpetuates the perception that the park is not fulfilling a purpose.

There are no other open spaces within the Grove Lane area, though the canal network offers potential if a connection can be made. The space in front of the hospital is intended to form a new public space with a community function and promises to be well managed. It could form the basis of an open space structure if combined with Moilliett Street Park and the canal.



Fig. 3.3 - The hospital is nearing completion, and has a prominent frontage on to Grove Lane



Fig. 3.4 - The canal corridor close to Grove Lane, though connections to and from it are limited



Fig. 3.5 - Moilliett Street Park

Massing and built form

The Grove Lane area is a traditional industrial area, and has been dominated by low rise, small scale traditional industrial buildings, which still cluster around the eastern side of the new hospital on Cranford Street, Halberton Street, Heath Street and Abberley Street. Where newer industrial buildings have appeared in the post war period, buildings have tended to maintain the form, mass and height of the area (see Fawdry Street), though more recent warehouses on the north side of Heath Street have introduced a functional form more in tune with modern businesses and the needs of vehicles serving them, notably with buildings set back behind a service apron or parking area.

Cleared land exists behind the frontages to the south side of Cranford Street along Cape Arm, and Abberley Street has also recently been cleared. These are close to the open space of Moilliett Street Park. To the east, low density family housing begins to dominate, mixed in with older terraces.

Nearby Dudley Road is the closest retail and commercial centre, and is dominated by two and three storey terraced units. A former cinema remains on the western end of Dudley Road – currently being used as a kitchen and bathroom showroom -, which has a landmark status through its size, isolation on the plot and its architecture. Dudley Road has a bustling atmosphere, partly on account of it being on the main route to the city centre.

The new hospital has altered the dynamic significantly, bringing in a large building of up to ten storeys, which does allow for an increase in height in redevelopment to echo the new scale in the area.

Grove Lane does border significant areas of residential development as well, especially to the west in Windmill Eye. There are some significant residential buildings of scale here, notably the high-rise flats on the roundabout which do have some impact on the acceptability of scale on the neighbouring Grove Lane/Cranford Street corner.

Heritage

Whilst the canal is within a conservation area further to the west, the stretch of canal closest to Grove Lane is not. There are no listed buildings within the Grove Lane area, though there are industrial buildings of note remaining on Cranford Street, which retain some interesting industrial architecture, including two-tone brick and vertical windows fronting Cranford Street.



Fig. 3.6 - The former cinema at the western end of Dudley Road



Fig. 3.7 - Older industrial buildings fronting Cranford Street, some of which retain interesting architectural features



Fig. 3.8 - Dugdale Street alongside Moilliett Street Park

Strengths and Challenges

As a whole, the area is compact, and has within it a varying urban environment with both strengths and challenges to be considered.

Strengths

- Proximity of the canal; the canal is a potential asset with recreational value and which provides historic context
- Cape Arm branch; the branch off the Main Line provides additional waterfront potential which could be capitalised upon
- Potential for good public realm and spaces around hospital; the scale of the hospital gives it the potential to frame significant public spaces. This could lead to a range of interesting spaces for varied purposes
- Good connections by road; the nearby road network links well to surrounding places of note, particularly radial routes
- Some interesting heritage / older buildings, particularly in Cranford Street
- Proximity to local centres, including Cape Hill and Dudley Road, which offer a diverse set of commercial and retail services

Challenges

- Poor pedestrian and cycling infrastructure; pavements and roads are often narrow and can be compromised by rat-running and heavy traffic. The non-vehicular network is poorly maintained.
- Poor connections to rail-based public transport. Links to the Metro and traditional rail are difficult, and stations are not within easy walking distance.
- The area is dominated by a traditional industrial built environment
- Heavy traffic serving the industrial area
- Pavement parking



Fig. 3.9 - The Cape Arm branch off the Main Line Canal, with a strong relationship to the hospital



Fig. 3.10 - Typical industrial uses in the Grove Lane area

Fig. 3.11 - Typical view of the Main Line Canal through the corridor



THE MASTERPLAN

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4

THE MASTERPLAN

The Masterplan

The masterplan relates back to the Smethwick to Birmingham Corridor Development Framework, and our Vision for the wider corridor is:

Making a Healthy Community

The Framework also sets out 5 key principles for the corridor to support this vision, which apply to the development of the Grove Lane area. These principles are:

- Healthy centres: Resilient local centres within walking distance
- A new hospital as an anchor institution: Integrating the Midland Metropolitan University Hospital with its surroundings and maximising the improvements it brings to the local area.
- A green corridor: Enabling the corridor to become a green artery contributing to improving biodiversity and responding to climate change.
- An active travel exemplar: Encouraging walking and cycling as sustainable modes of transport to support the principle of '15 minute neighbourhoods' within the corridor.
- Green new neighbourhoods: Embracing the opportunity to demonstrate best practice in design and sustainability.
- Healthy sense of place: Capitalising on the industrial heritage and diversity of the corridor to give people a sense of pride and belonging.

In addition the Framework sets out the corridor's contribution to net zero: through the guiding principles summarised above the corridor will contribute to achieving net zero by improving green spaces, encouraging sustainable travel choices, reducing congestion and delivering sustainable

new homes. The Midland Metropolitan University Hospital is a significant catalyst for change; change will happen, and the Smethwick to Birmingham Framework will guide it. The hospital will be integrated effectively into existing communities, whilst acting as an anchor institution for the area's regeneration.

New development will enhance the best of what already exists – in particular the area's historic importance and its diverse population. Existing local centres will continue to be places where people can meet everyday needs and be a focus for community.

The area will accommodate a significant number of new homes alongside improvements to education provision including further and higher education and job creation.

Connected neighbourhoods will encourage active travel and a reduction in car use and traffic dominance. The Corridor will benefit from improved green spaces, with the canal network as a blue and green spine providing the common visual and physical connection.

The masterplan has been developed based on a series of robust urban design principles and in accordance to the objectives for the corridor area set by the delivery partners.

(Top) Fig. 4.1, (middle) Fig. 4.2, (bottom) Fig. 4.3 - The Port Loop development to the south east of Grove Lane represents new development of a high quality that has good open spaces and waterfront. The ambition for Grove Lane is one of a coherent community that enjoys living in its neighbourhood.



Creating a vision for the site that is shared amongst the whole community and key stakeholders is critical to the long term success and viability of the scheme.

The vision needs to be robust and deliverable and seeks to create a fully integrated mixed use quarter and place that people enjoy to live, work and visit.

The masterplan aims to show a preferred approach to the comprehensive redevelopment of the Grove Lane area over the coming years, which will see a new community develop alongside the exiting community, and integrate the hospital and its community into this part of the city.

Brief for the Grove Lane Area

The MMUH sits within the Grove Lane area. It is expected to accommodate around 800 homes alongside a new primary school. The new neighbourhood must encourage active travel and a reduce car use and will benefit from improved green spaces, which includes connections to the canal.

The partners have identified the following objectives for the Corridor which are pertinent for the Grove Lane area and include:

- Housing provision –a mix of good quality housing typologies, tenures and densities that reflect local need, meet design standards, can adapt to changing lifestyles and property market considerations.
- Economic regeneration through construction opportunities and through the expansion of healthcare, research, commerce, environmental science and technology and the enabling of start-up and small businesses
- Active travel and connectivity – prioritise active travel and create '20-minute neighbourhoods' (i.e. the availability of most services or needs within a 20 minute walk or cycle from home)
- Canal network – enhance its recreational and daily commuting role. Create direct and barrier free linkages. Green the canal corridor. Create opportunities for waterside living.

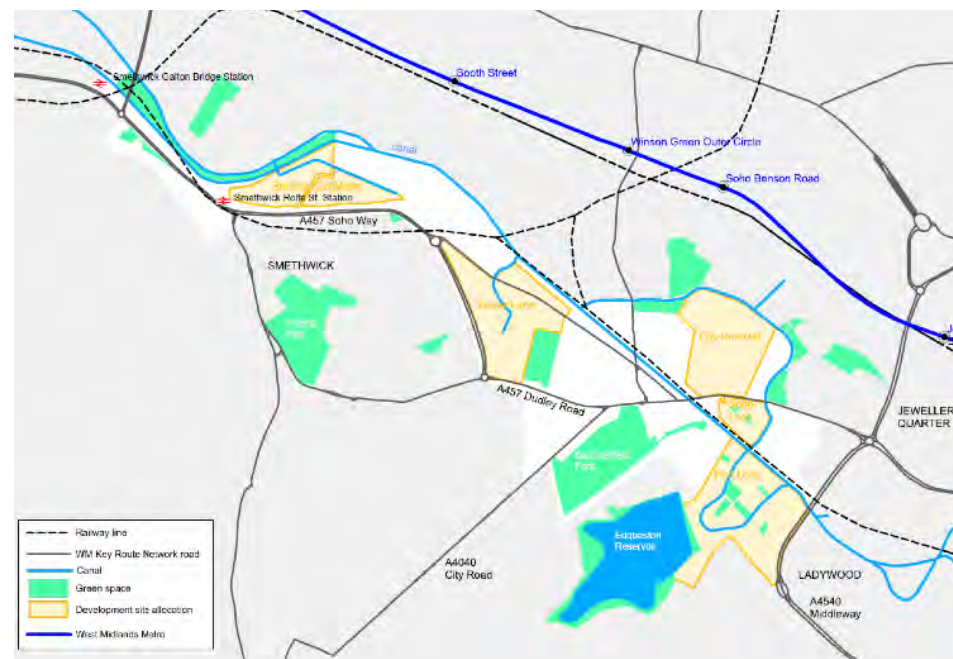


Fig. 4.4 - An overview of the whole of the Smethwick to Birmingham corridor

- Place-making people-centred communities and existing local centres. Enhance the existing characteristics of the area as well as creating a distinct identity informed by the historic environment.
- Education – meet defined education needs through provision of a new primary school at Grove Lane. Seek a higher education presence linked to the Midland Metropolitan Hospital.
- Sustainability – reduce air pollution and help de-carbonise transport. Explore opportunities for renewable energy generation, sustainable construction and a heat network.

Purpose of the Masterplan

Based on the assessment of the area, and its existing character and features, the masterplan has established a set of principles for redevelopment.

Purpose

The purpose of the Illustrative Masterplan set out within this document is to set a vision for the area, to provide inspiration for the design of a viable, high-quality place and to raise aspirations for the regeneration of the wider area. The illustrative material is drawn to inspire, and it is acknowledged that in some places it doesn't fully comply with the current policies set out within the Sandwell MBC Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document SPD. Where this occurs, the principles shown within this document have taken inspiration from best practice projects across the country, to demonstrate how the appropriate densities and capacities on the site could be achieved as part of an exciting, forward thinking new development around the major new hospital. This document does not provide a template for a planning application, rather an illustration of the vision for the sustainable and high-quality place that the Partners are looking to deliver.

The illustrative masterplan demonstrates how the agreed objectives can be translated into an environment that:

- Encourages walking and cycling through compact development forms and attractive street environments that prioritise people, such as mews streets;
- Provides access to green space and nature;
- Provides a variety of different housing typologies to enable a mixed community; and
- While meeting local standards, allows future flexibility should the anticipated modal shift towards less car usage be achieved.

Car Parking

The Illustrative Masterplan is based on current best practice parking approaches. This incorporates flexible parking approaches that provide sufficient car parking spaces in line with current standards, but in a way that is in line with the overarching health and wellbeing objectives. The provision of a higher percentage of on-street and shared parking spaces would accommodate a shift change to reduced private car use in the future. Any detailed design will need to take account of local car parking standards.

Residential Design

The Illustrative Masterplan comprises a range of housing typologies that respond to the existing market needs, the predicted future market and the responses received from developers in the local area. This includes family housing in the form of terraces, semi-detached and detached homes alongside town houses and mews typologies. Flat provision is located within the areas of the site most suited to higher density development.

The masterplan is drawn at a high-level and does not drill down into the detail of housing design. At the detailed design stage, the amenity of the existing and new dwellings must be considered not only in terms of back-to-back distances, but with a view to using articulation of rooms and windows to achieve the required privacy levels. The detailed design of specific blocks and buildings will need to consider sun- and day light considerations alongside the aforementioned privacy to protect the amenity of all residents.

Aims and objectives for the area

Based on the assessment of the area, and its existing character and features, the masterplan has established a set of principles for redevelopment.

Layout principles

- Develop clear edges using retained historic buildings where possible, and complementary new buildings, to reflect the historic nature and identity of the area as part of the canal corridor
- Opening up the canal (Cape Arm) creating a public route through and forming a positive relationship with the hospital edge
- Integration of focal buildings and celebration of Smethwick heritage
- Integration of the canal within a design strategy
- Location of new primary school within the heart of the site to be fully integrated within the community
- Introduce a number of housing typologies including an identified need for family housing

Midland Metropolitan University Hospital site

- Integrate the hospital building and grounds into the masterplan to create neighbourhood that responds to its form and size, and also allows the existing neighbourhoods to accept new development
- Improve public realm and walking routes to and around the hospital site, particularly crossings over the A457 to and from Windmill Eye, links to and beyond Cranford Street and Heath Street to the canal and links to Dudley Road
- Create a strong edge on Grove Street to address the hospital in order to help contain the large open space

Heritage

- Recognise the industrial context and buildings on and around the site and consider their re-use where possible and where it enhances the sense of place. Key buildings are located on Cranford Street and Heath Street
- Establish connections to the canal, both through the layout of the built form, and through the connections made from the site to canal access points
- Aim to bring into use the Cape Arm branch, and reflect former canal lines where they cannot be reintroduced. Development on the Grove Lane site must not undermine the stability or structural integrity of the canal infrastructure.

Movement networks

- Enhance canal pathways and open spaces to enable movement and encourage activity (see overarching strategy for canal corridor)
- Enable clearer and safer links between development parcels and nearby centres and facilities (e.g. Dudley Road local centre, Cape Hill, Moilliett Park)

Open Space

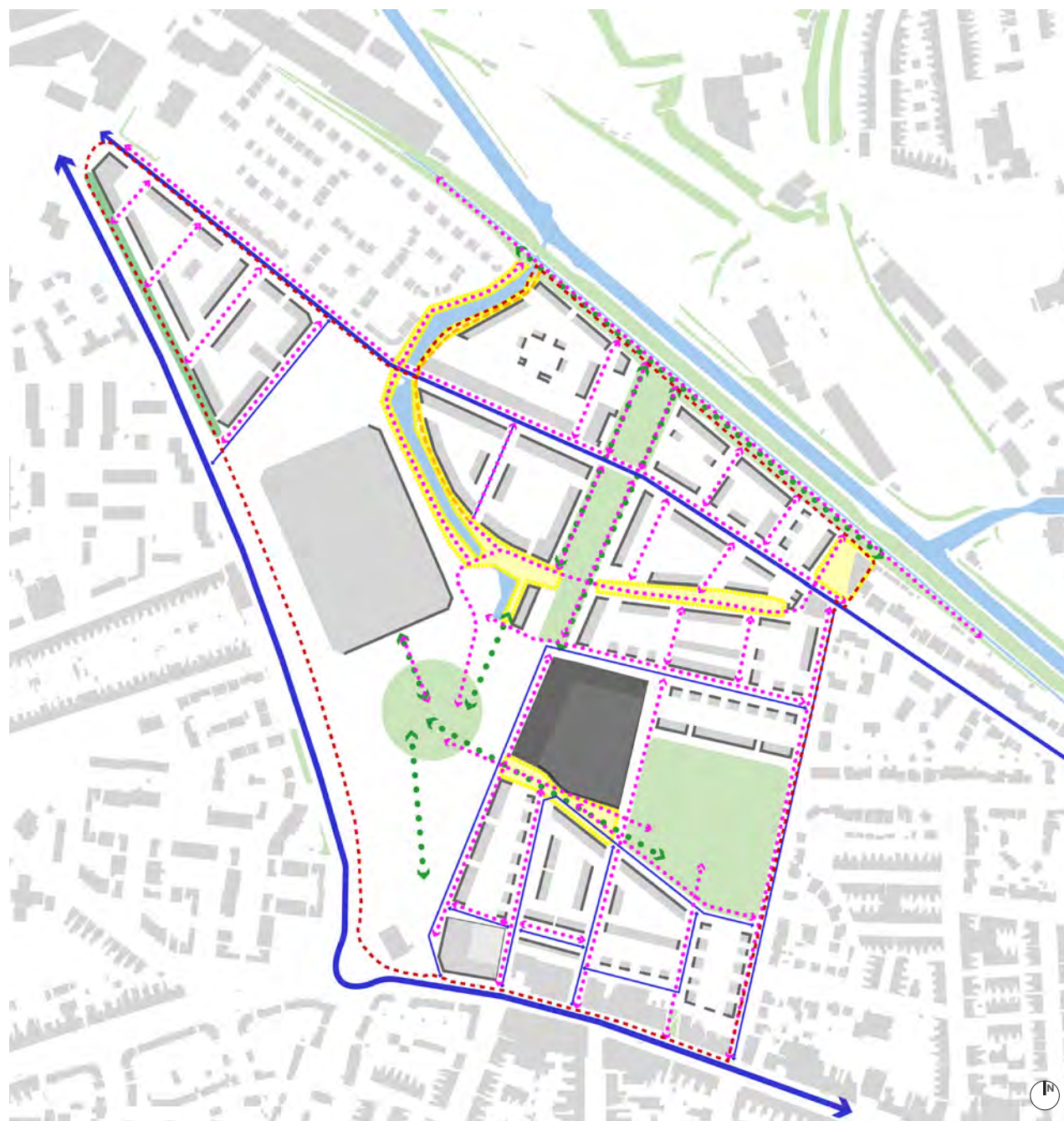
- A series of linked high quality open spaces – creating a public route through a series of public spaces, linking the area to the hospital, to the canal basin and to the canal to the north
- Establish a clear structure of green and blue infrastructure within the area that complements the built form, provides connections within and beyond the area, and provides different forms of outdoor recreation for people who engage with the spaces (e.g. play areas, neighbourhood parks, spaces for hospital users)
- Use the internal open space structure to provide pointers to green space beyond the area (such as Summerfield Park) to widen the opportunity to find natural space and recreation
- Maintain and rejuvenate Moilliett Park as a local park

Site-wide Principles

- **Connectivity**
- A series of linked public spaces
- Establish an edge along the canal to create a positive relationship with the water
- Integration of primary school
- A mix of housing typologies
- A future for Moilliett Park
- Land Uses
- Movement
- Retention of heritage buildings - creation of a strong edge along Cranford Street
- Tall buildings
- Character areas

Key

- Site boundary
- Key pedestrian / cycle link
- Key pedestrian link
- Secondary vehicular connection
- Primary vehicular route
- Green links and connections to open space
- Green buffer
- Active frontage
- Open spaces
- Key areas of public realm
- Primary School



Key Principles

Fig. 4.5 - Site-wide Key principles



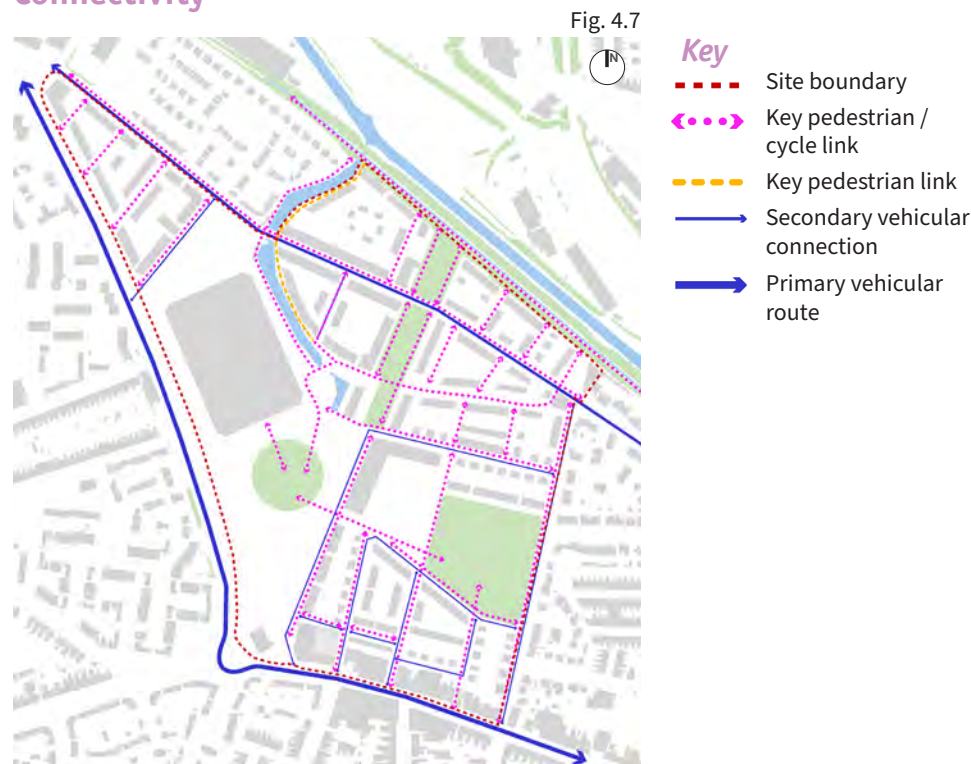
Preferred Option

Note: this masterplan is subject to further viability testing with regard to the housing proposed on Moilliett Park.

Fig. 4.6 - Preferred option

Site-wide Principles

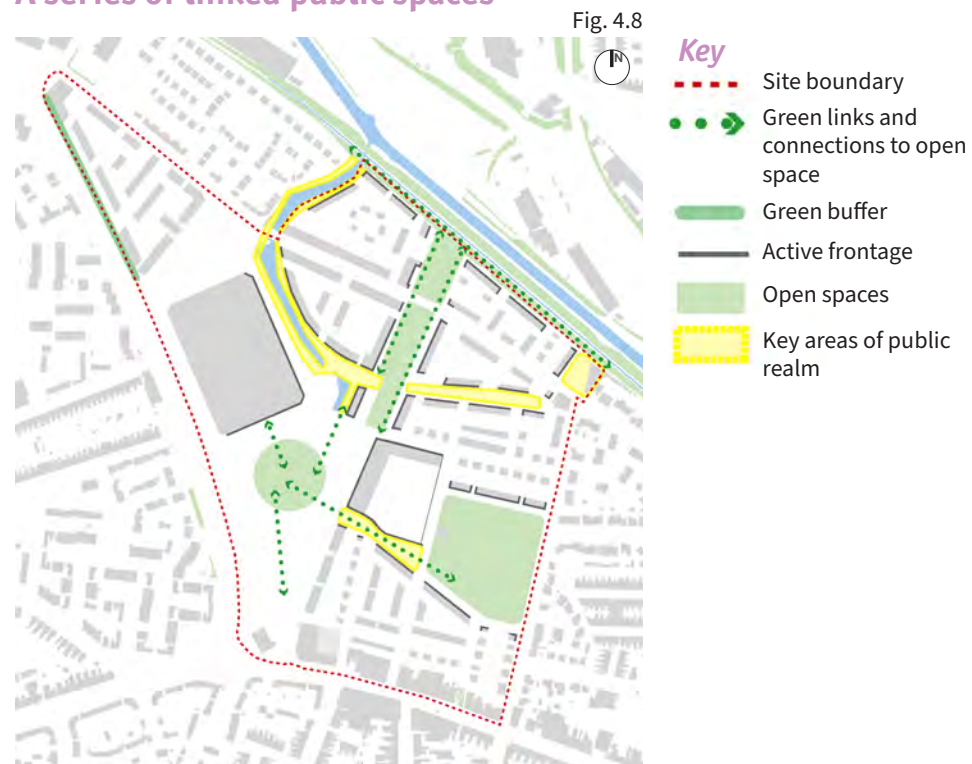
Connectivity



Connectivity

- Proposed and existing – pedestrians, cycles, vehicles
- Streets to end in streets
- Enable movement through and across the site through clear pathways
- Pedestrian focus within development areas, through improved walking environment and external links
- Through traffic encouraged towards A457
- Traffic movement limited on Heath Street
- Bi-directional cycle route on Cranford Street / Heath Street
- Importance of links to Dudley Road Centre, particularly to and from the hospital

A series of linked public spaces

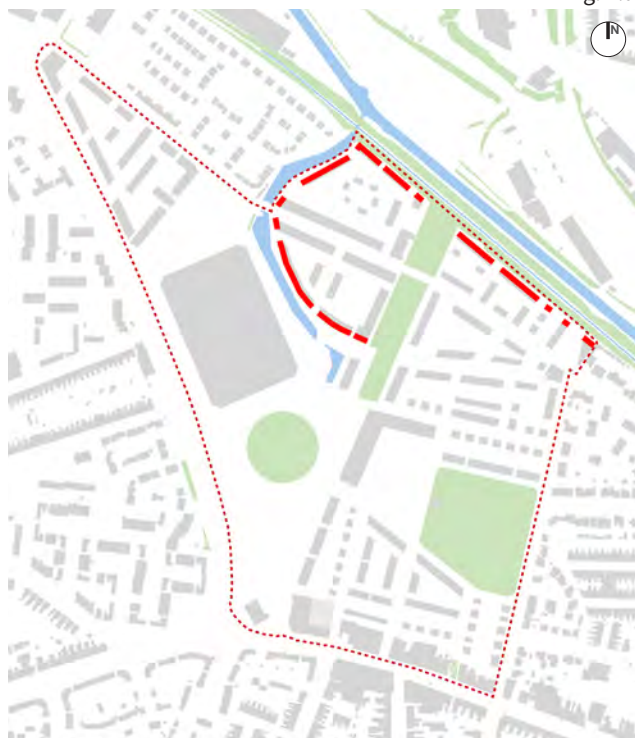


A series of linked public spaces

- Public space to be of varying scale and form, creating a series of destination spaces interlinked with one another
- Key public and community space to the front of the hospital as a focal point and link to Moilliett Street Park and Heath Street
- Importance of high quality linkages between spaces
- Moilliett Street Park as a reimagined neighbourhood park
- School spaces to be secure, but integrated into wider open area
- Green infrastructure to link with the available blue infrastructure

Establish active edge with canal

Fig. 4.9



Key

- Site boundary
- Waterside frontage

Establish an edge along the canal to create a positive relationship with the water

- Buildings to positively address water frontages on Cape Arm
- Frontages to face key features – inc. hospital elevations and waterfront – to help define and enclose public spaces

Integration of primary school

Fig. 4.10



Key

- Site boundary
- Primary school

Integration of primary school

- Provision of a 2FE primary school into the heart of the community, including indoor and outdoor space
- Innovative approach seeks to provide a compact school appropriate to a new urban neighbourhood drawing on good practice
- Safe and secure whilst contributing to the overall townscape
- Seek to include elements of parking, but ensure safe routes for non-vehicular access
- Avoids proximity to busiest roads

Site-wide Principles

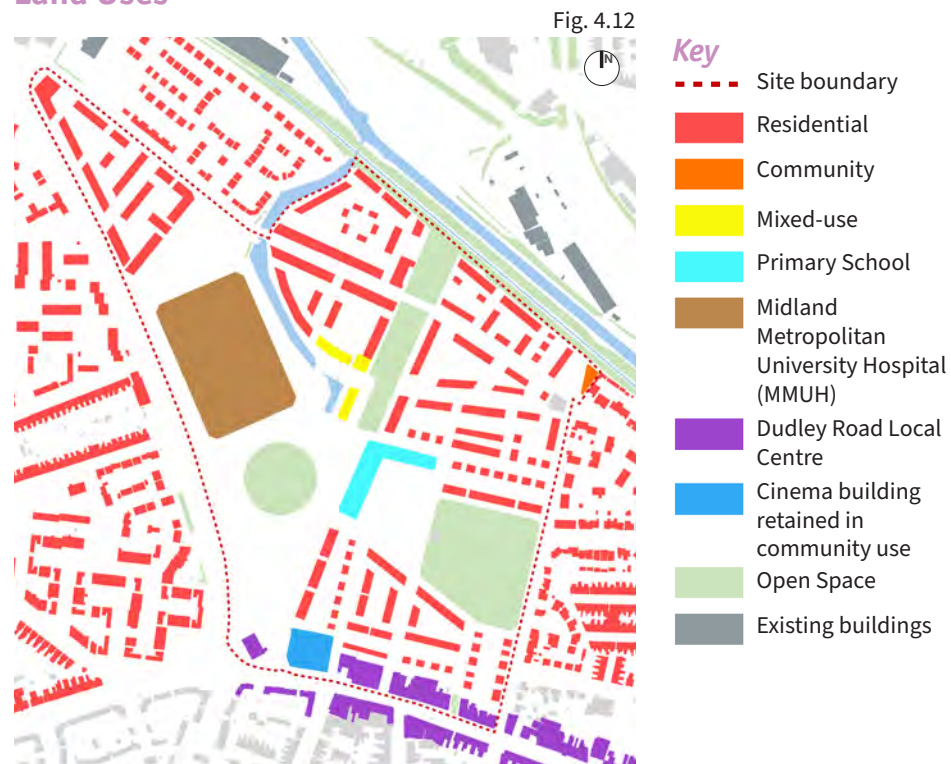
A mix of housing typologies



A mix of housing typologies

- Responsiveness to a local need for family housing
- Open to new groups looking for accommodation, drawn by the impact of the hospital (e.g. key workers, professionals, students)
- Reflective of prevailing market conditions
Responsive to the urban nature of the opportunity
- Aim to create critical mass and a place where people want to live, and stay

Land Uses



Land Uses

- Predominantly a new residential area, connecting existing neighbourhoods in Windmill Eye, Cape Hill and Summerfield
- Mix of housing types and forms
- Commercial and community uses in key locations, particularly towards the heart of the neighbourhood
- Primary school located away from main roads and close to family housing
- Focus for retail and commercial services remains Dudley Road

Movement

Fig. 4.13



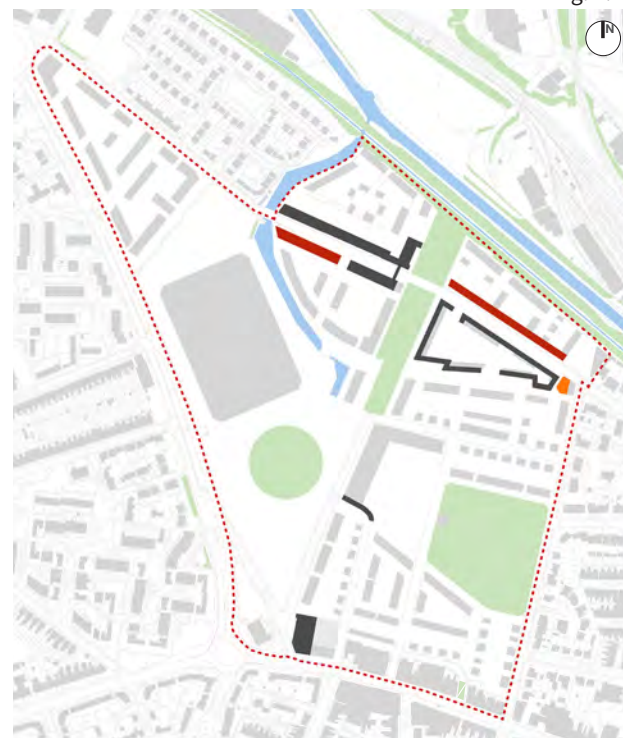
- Key**
- Site boundary
 - Tertiary vehicular route
 - Secondary vehicular route
 - Primary vehicular route

Movement

- Movement is based upon a clear hierarchy of streets and waterways
- Key route network (KRN) for through traffic (Grove Lane and Cranford Street / Heath Street)
- Network of existing roads within the area, particularly London Street, Winson Street and Grove Street
- Series of footways, access roads and servicing links to provide comprehensive connectivity within the housing areas

Retention of heritage buildings

Fig. 4.14



- Key**
- Site boundary
 - Removed heritage buildings
 - Retained heritage buildings / façades
 - Other buildings of townscape interest for retention

Retention of Heritage Buildings – creation of a strong edge along Cranford Street

- Where possible, and supported through technical and financial evidence alongside detailed design strategies for the configuration of buildings, encourage retention and conversion of heritage buildings
- Maintain a strong building line to Cranford Street / Heath Street
- New development to echo existing patterns of built form

Illustrative heights strategy

Fig. 4.15



Key

- Site boundary
- Primary pedestrian/cycle route
- Key vehicular links
- 10 Storeys
- 8 Storeys
- 5 Storeys
- 4 Storeys
- 2 - 3 Storeys
- 1 Storey
- Buildings or façades to be retained at current height

Note: The heights shown on this plan are indicative only

Tall buildings

- Taller buildings placed at focal points on Grove Lane, including Soho Way roundabout and London Street
- Opportunity for a focal taller building at canal basin, at the heart of the neighbourhood
- Height used in a way to provide scale around the hospital building, and provide stepped decrease to lower heights and forms in the surrounding context

A future for Moilliett Street Park

- A neighbourhood space at the heart of a community
- Create frontage to the park, enclosing, defining and overlooking
- Enable easy access and routes to and across the park
- Resolve perceptions and issues with the park through thoughtful design response

Parking

- All hospital parking provided within the building
- Public transport and non-vehicular options improved, reducing the need for car travel
- Residential parking provided in a mix of on and off-street locations
- Residential parking off-street in a mix of methods, including integral / undercroft and parking courts
- Parking solutions responsive to housing typologies and context

Improving connections - a transport strategy

The wider corridor framework document proposes a transport strategy based around improving the overall infrastructure for walking and cycling, and encouraging that shift from an area dominated by cars and car use, to one where other options are more practical and positive. The Grove Lane area is an important area for this change, and to achieve a coherent and connected community, the Grove Lane area needs to see the delivery of a package of improvements that will feature:

- Improving footway condition
- De-cluttering/widening footways
- Removing footway parking
- Narrowing bellmouth junctions
- New 'green man' signal stages
- New formal/informal crossings
- Signage/wayfinding measures
- A focus on new protected cycleways on key routes, with supporting traffic calming and other measures on other roads and local streets

One key element of this is the establishment of a bi-directional cycleway between the Soho Way roundabout and the eastern end of Dudley Road via Cranford Street and Heath Street, which is discussed in more detail in Character Areas 2 and 6.

Landmark Buildings

The use of landmark buildings within the masterplan will help to create a legible urban quarter and will also contribute to reinforcing the distinctiveness of the neighbourhood. The diversity of the different types of landmarks from historic to new build will give a richness to the experience of moving through the area.

The key landmark buildings are:

- The three retained warehouse buildings - symbols of the industrial heritage of the site, refurbished for residential use
- The taller building on Cape Arm - a visual marker and key node by the canal and open space will create a distinct skyline
- The taller buildings along Grove Lane
- The former cinema at the western end of Dudley Road
- The new MMUH

Within the masterplan the taller elements cited as landmarks within the list above have been appropriately located to address the new and existing townscape within, and around the site. These address the key focal point in the heart of the site, and major gateways into the development. The heights strategy for the wider site adopts a lower scale of development that sensitively weaves the site into its existing urban context. This reduction in scale also provides the opportunity for these taller point blocks to rise above the skyline to create distinctive and legible landmarks.

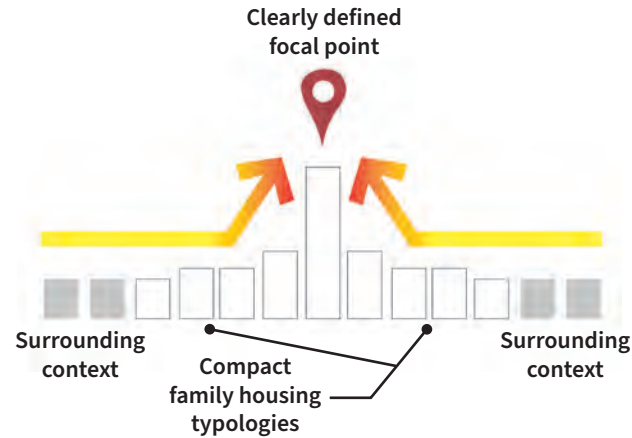


Fig. 4.16 - The heights strategy for the masterplan supports generally lower scale development with strategically placed taller buildings to mark definitive focal points for the site.

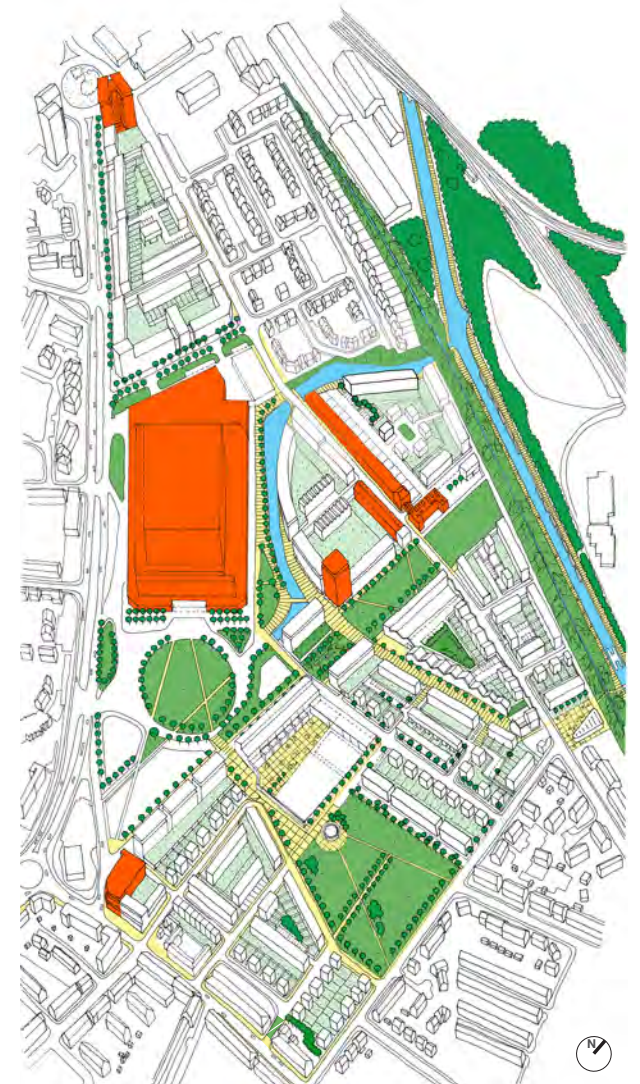


Fig. 4.17 - Illustrative sketch highlighting landmark buildings

Landmark buildings

Smethwick Heat Network

Sandwell Council is exploring the opportunity for a heat network within the Grove Lane area as part of the regeneration opportunity. The operation of the system – which would ideally utilise heat from a low carbon source – requires some high-level information from the masterplan about the nature and number of residential units proposed in the area. Whilst no specific site has been identified within the area, the needs of the energy centre can be accommodated without significant impact upon the preferred option. Alternatively, space could be taken within proposed building blocks.

Key points to note:

- the heat network will accommodate potential changes in 2025 restricting the installation of boilers in new build properties;
- provide an opportunity for new homes to be connected to low-carbon alternatives;
- will assist in future-proofing development;
- complement the Climate Change agenda and address fuel poverty currently an issue in Smethwick;
- will require laying on heat pipe work / cabling between an energy centre and each connected property;
- the energy centre will need to be appropriately

located, centrally within the development land or potentially built within a property;

- use could be made of the canal subject to Canal & River Trust approval; and
- an additional option is to investigate an extension to an alternative heat source potentially located in West Bromwich.

CHARACTER AREAS

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5

CHARACTER AREAS

CHARACTER AREAS

Introduction

Seven character areas are identified within the masterplan area to help define distinctive spaces.

Each one has unique characteristics that respond to specific location on site, to local conditions and to the relationship it has with the external context.

They are all shown on the adjoining map and are:

Cranford Street / Heath Street / Canal

Cape Arm

The Open Space network

Grove Street / MMUH / School

Moilliett Street Park

Abberley Street

Grove Lane / Cranford Street / London Street

Each character area has a mood board that comprises aspirational images for the area. These mood boards are intended to communicate a 'feel' for the required character. The intention is not that these images are prescriptive in design terms.

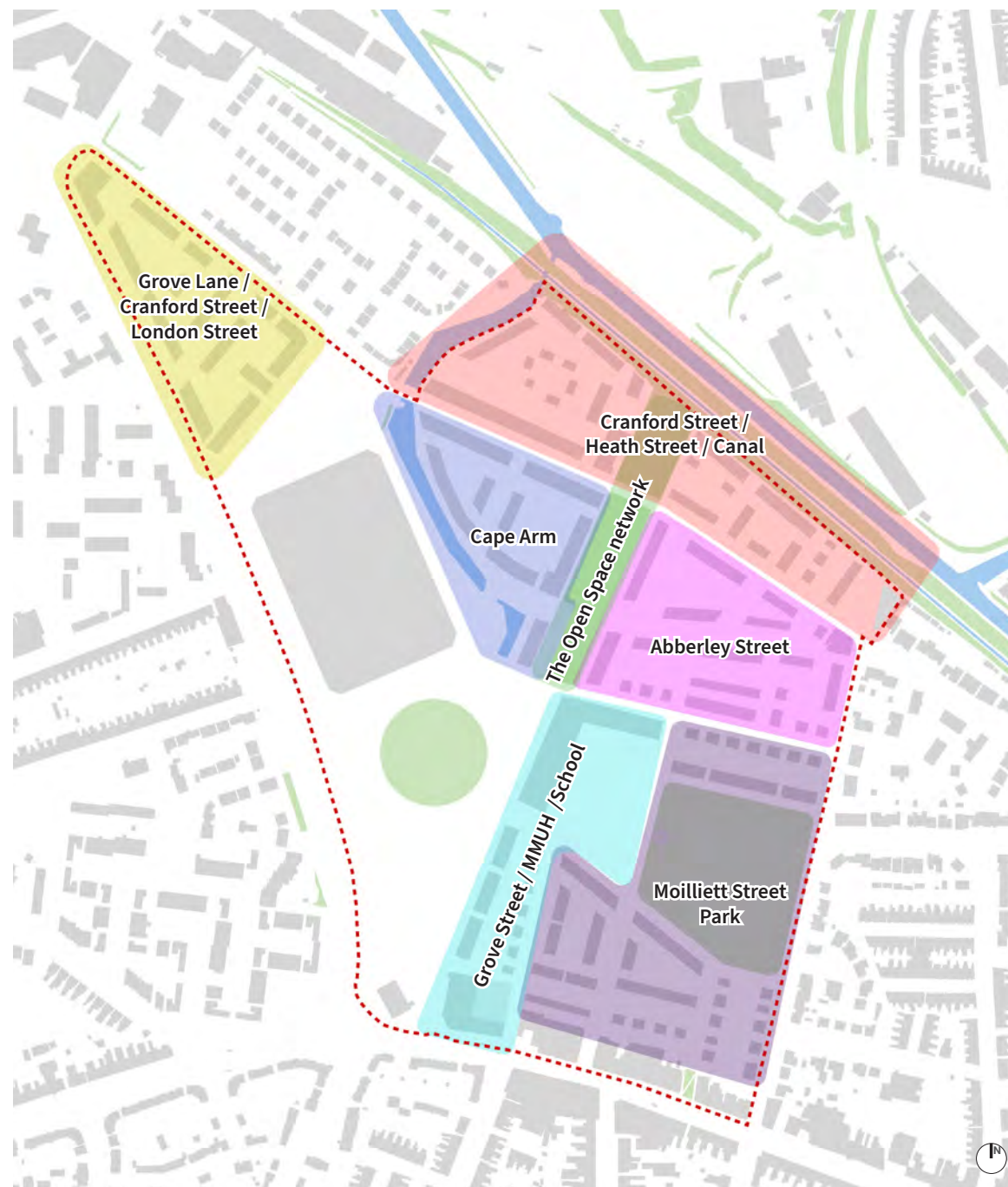


Fig. 5.1 - Character areas plan

Cranford Street / Heath Street / Canal sits between Cranford Street and the canal in the north of the Grove Lane area. The masterplan envisages some retention of the existing buildings to Cranford Street and a mix of housing typologies that can provide a frontage to the Canal feeder. A new north-south public space would connect Cranford Street to the northern boundary.

Cape Arm sits within the boundary formed by the canal branch and Cranford Street. The masterplan envisages a development that can sit alongside the scale of the hospital, perhaps providing a landmark building on the canal basin. Public space along the canal front / towpath can create a public space that animates the waterside space.

The Open Space network provides some structure for the Grove Lane area, enabling movement between different spaces and beyond the site to adjoining areas. The spaces are of different scales, character and function, related to their immediate context.

Grove Street / Hospital / School is an important area between two key community functions required in the area, and the form of Grove Street needs to enclose the space and enable a link across the character area to Moilliett Street Park and beyond to Dudley Road. Residential blocks will be higher, closer to the hospital. The school will front Grove Street.

Moilliett Street Park is the heart of the residential neighbourhood, and the reimagined park will be a central feature. The current park is not well used, and a smaller park, framed by surrounding and new development, with clear paths to and through it, should enable the space to function more effectively and become an asset for residents.

Abberley Street is central to the residential neighbourhood, but also an important link between the north-south open space and Heath Street. The western end has a relationship with the canal basin, and will be an important point both on this and on the proposed north-south link.

Grove Lane / Cranford Street / London Street is a more isolated triangular island of mixed use, compromised to some extent by the tapering nature of the northern end and the proximity to the roundabout and the road junctions. It is, however, a prominent site on the main road and can take taller buildings as a focal point and pointer along the strategic road network and within the heart of the corridor itself. The site could take a mix of housing typologies across its area.

Character Area 1: Cranford Street / Heath Street / Canal

Residential neighbourhood with a strong relationship to the waterways, with an urban structure that maximises views and fosters connections towards the canal and Cape Arm.

Indicative capacity:

Density: Up to 38 dwellings per hectare (dph)

Residential dwellings: Approx. 100-115 no.

A long, narrow site fronting Cranford Street and backing onto the canal, this area has potential to deliver a mix of housing types across its tapering area.

Structurally, the site is split into two halves by the north-south open space that seeks to make that connection between the canal basin / hospital and the canal to the north east, over the raised canal feeder.

The western half is characterised by the long industrial building that fronts Cranford Street and is to be retained, if possible, and converted to a residential use, maintaining the two-tone brickwork of the front. A second existing building, which is currently connected to the bridge over Cranford Street, is also sought to be retained, and marks the southern edge of the site.

The masterplan foresees a residential development to the rear of the site, making the most of the frontage to the Cape Arm – enabling access to a new towpath and making a connection at the Cranford Street Bridge – and also fronting the canal to the east. Three storey housing at the canal boundary would have a view over the canal feeder embankment to the canal beyond.

Parking provision can be made on the site through integrated and surface parking. A mix of houses and flats can be provided, with a balance in favour of houses, suggesting a relatively low rise, lower density quarter of the overall area.

The eastern half has a longer frontage to Heath Street, but becomes narrower in depth as it gets closer to Winson Street. The masterplan again proposes a residential mix of houses and flats, with a strong balance towards houses, and parking provided within the site. Whilst some frontage

can be maintained to Heath Street, orientations may need to be varied to maximise the potential of the site. The masterplan provides for a small commercial block at the southern end, where the site is narrowest.

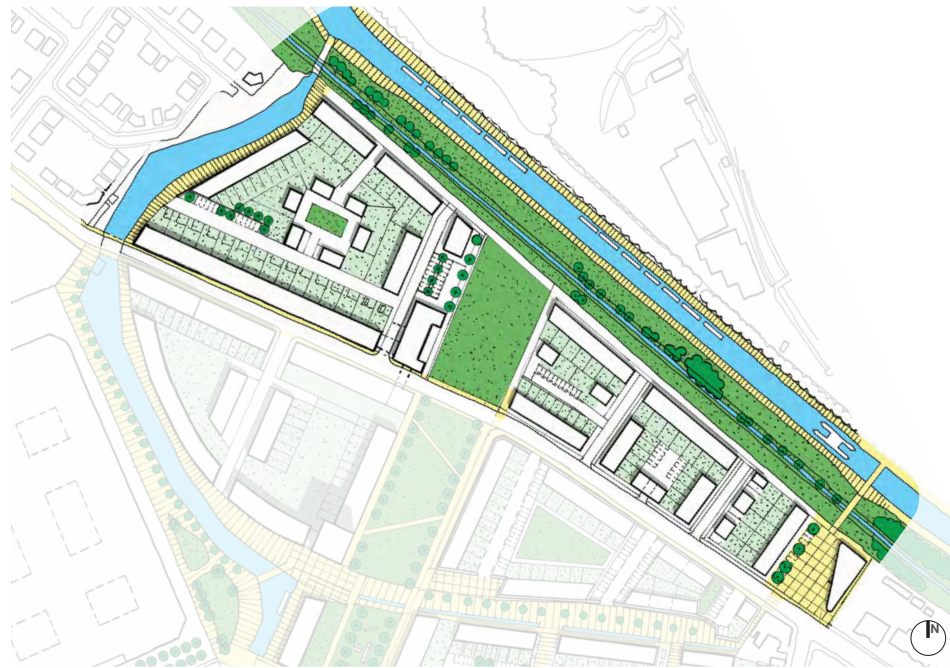
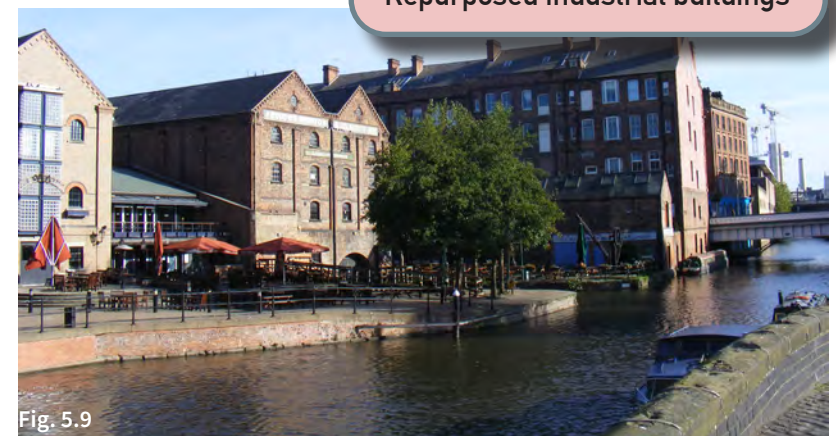
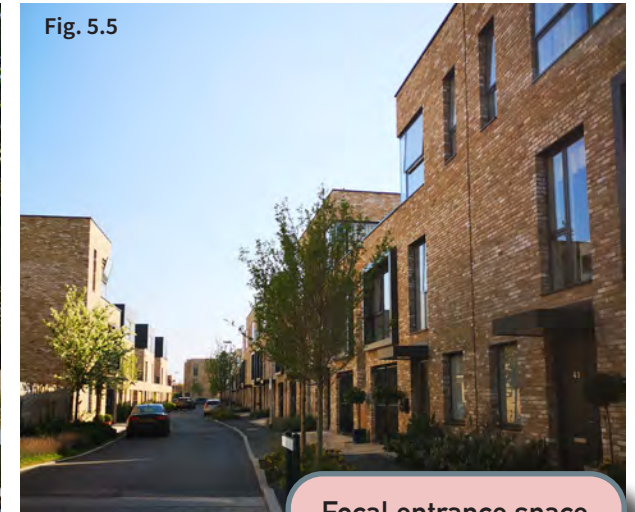
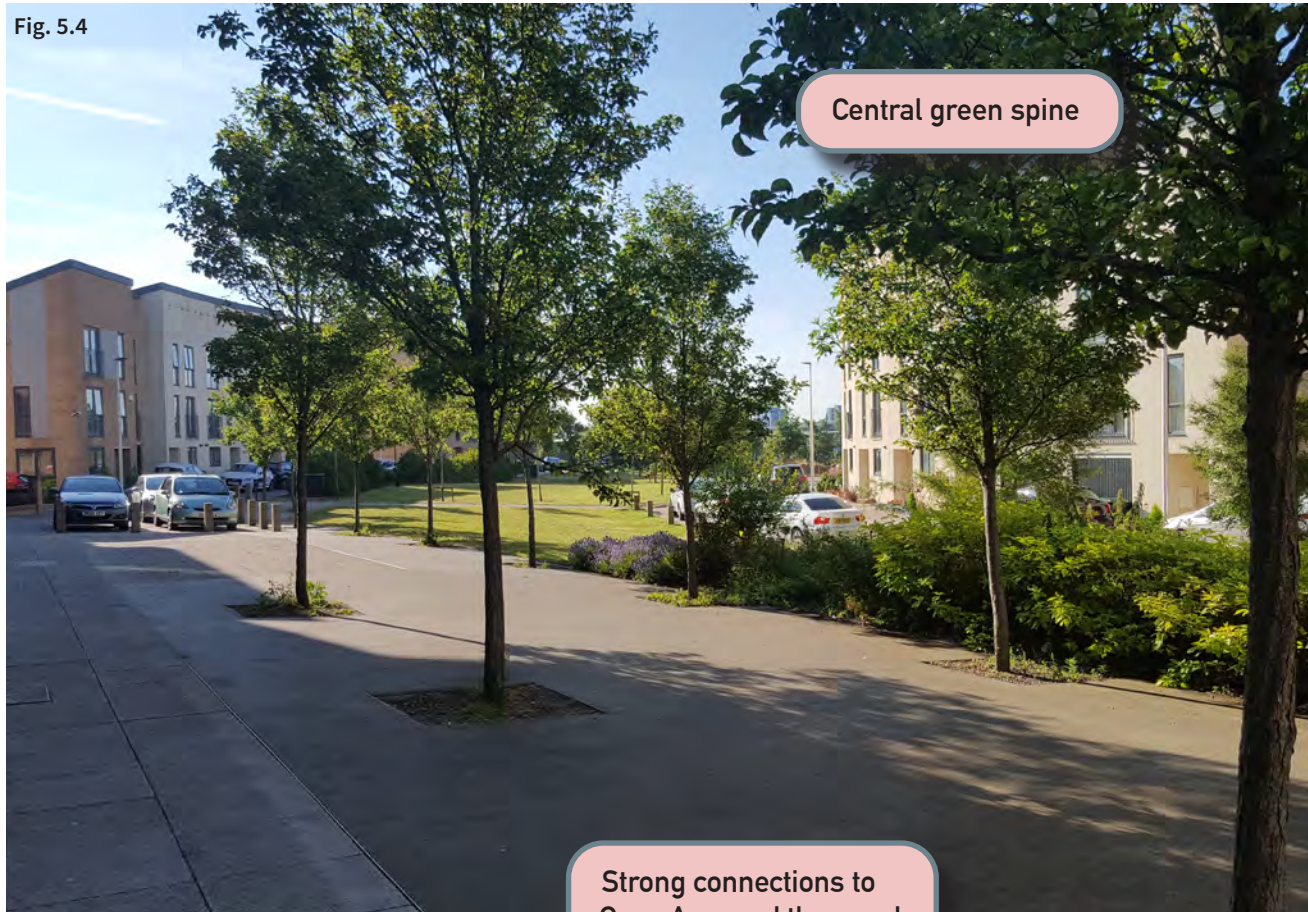


Fig. 5.2 - Cranford Street / Heath Street / Canal: Extract from Illustrative masterplan



Fig. 5.3 - Character Area Extent



Key Principles:

1. **Existing industrial buildings** - retained refurbished and converted into residential use offering a special type of architecture and materiality
2. **Positive relationship with the feeder canal edge** – three storey family houses will form a continuous built edge opposite the raised feeder canal with a new public pedestrian/ cycle shared surface route running along allowing limited car access for residents and servicing
3. **Building form to create visual interest and respect the retained historic buildings** – it is envisaged that the built form will break down into individual elements to provide a distinct rhythm scale and enclosure
4. **Visual and physical links to the canal** – a continuous 2-3m wide public towpath will provide access to pedestrians and cyclists at all times as well as connecting to the wider network beyond
5. **Active edges** – all external edges of the residential blocks will be animated with entrances and windows keeping blank façades to an absolute minimum
6. **Strong urban form to the canal edge** – three storey family townhouses will form the new edge on to the canal providing an appropriate scale next to the retained two storey industrial building.
7. **New public space forming a gateway to the canal crossing** – a small square forms a setting for a pavilion structure with community uses. The space acts as a key link to the areas east of the canal and the new hospital on Grove St and the areas across the canal. Depending on the detailed design of this north eastern gateway, the pavilion could be replaced by public art or a landscaped gateway space, for example with education boards linking to the canal heritage trail.
8. **Landscaping** – the landscape design must take into consideration the direct relationship of the site with the feeder canal embankment as well as the open space creating a seamless visual and physical connection between the two.
9. **Direct connection across to the canal from the Grove Lane** – direct physical and visual connections from the existing residential neighbourhoods in the southwest
10. **Parking** – access is directly off Cranford Street and parking accommodated in a number of ways, either within the building footprint, in external garages or in parking courts where they will be fully integrated within the overall landscape strategy

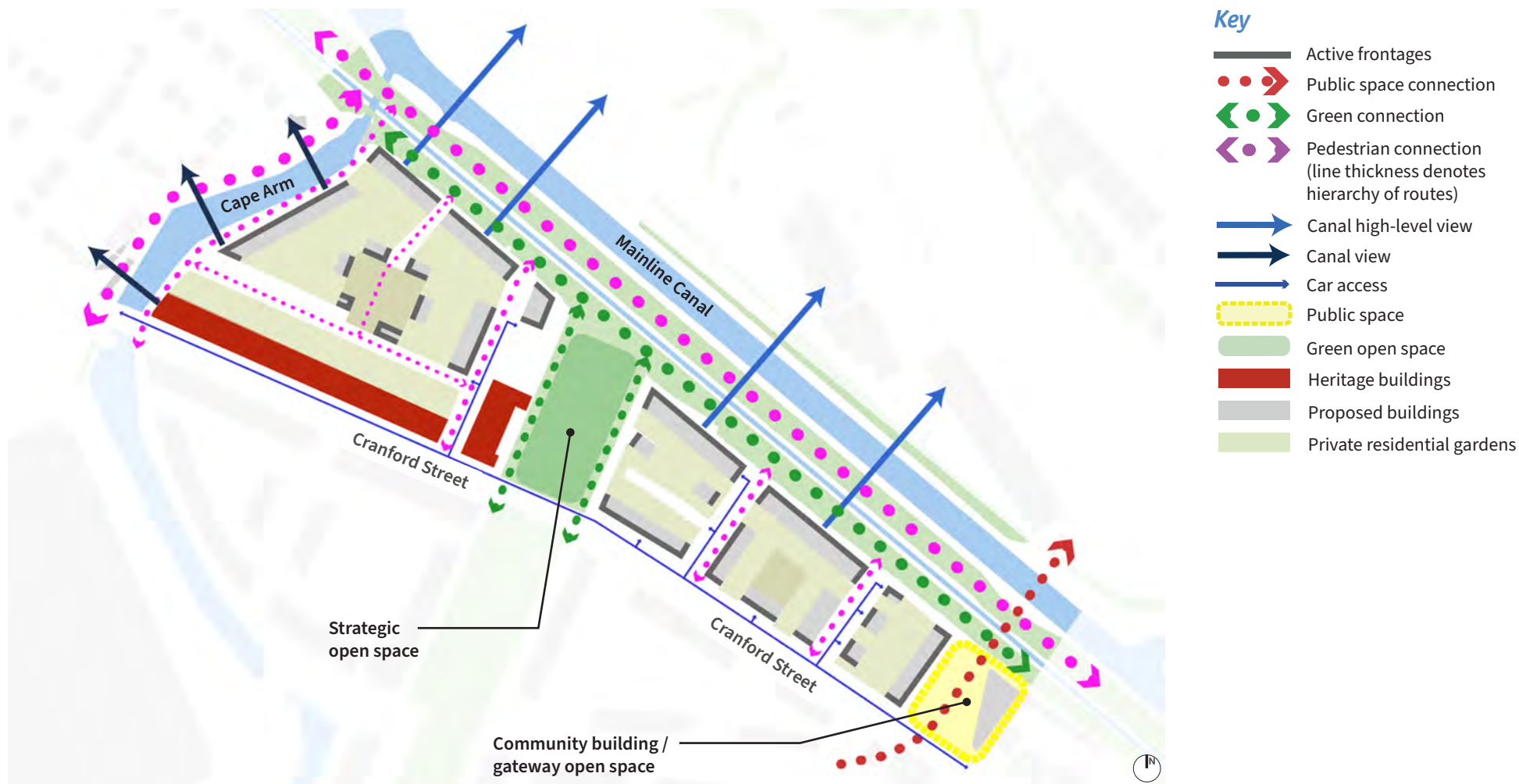


Fig. 5.10 - Key principles diagram

This page illustrates how the preferred option of the masterplan could be designed to achieve the design principles set out for this character area.

1. The retention of the industrial buildings will positively contribute to their surroundings by providing strong edges along Cranford Street, the public open space and the residential neighbourhood
2. The introduction of a public space and community pavilion at the intersection of the new public route through the masterplan and Winson street will mark and celebrate the only canal crossing within the vicinity and create the opportunity to learn about the history of the site.
3. Three storey houses will form interface with the feeder canal. Viewing balconies at the upper levels will allow views across to the Mainline canal and beyond.

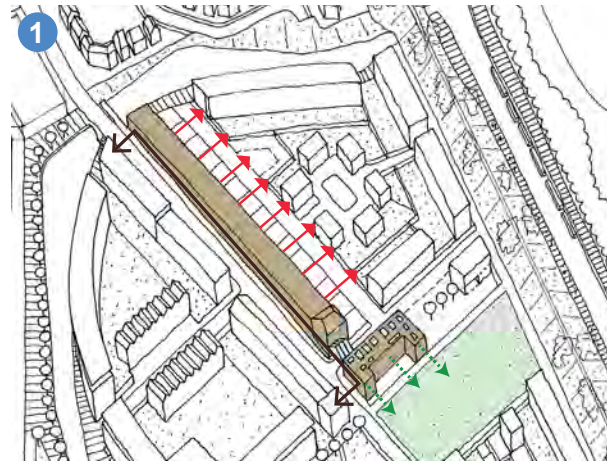


Fig. 5.11 - Retained industrial building

- Retained and restored heritage frontage onto Cranford Street, activated through occupation
→ Access through gardens
→ Views towards open space



Fig. 5.12 - Public space and potential community pavilion

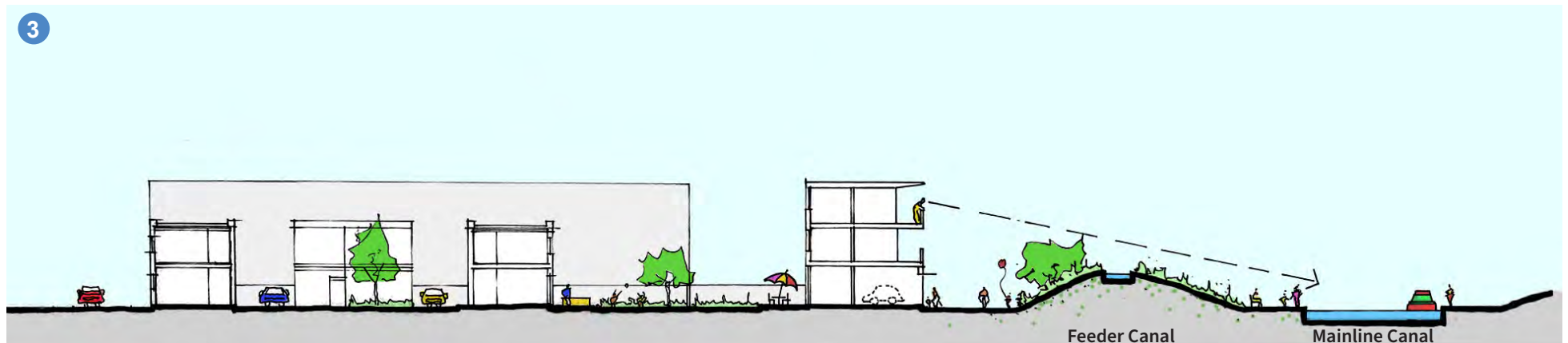


Fig. 5.13 - Interface with Mainline Canal

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Character Area 2: Cape Arm

Formal urban structure with waterfront frontages within the heart of the development.

Indicative capacity:

Density: Up to 80 dph

Residential dwellings: Approx. 160-170 no.

Cape Arm is a crucial part of the site, centrally located and adjacent to both the water and the hospital. The masterplan proposes the retention of an industrial building (with conversion to residential) on the southern side of Cranford Street if possible, although other potential proposals such as the bi-directional cycle route which requires road widening may alter this (see below).

New development would be primarily for residential use. There is scope for taller buildings along the waterfront, both to define the public realm along the waterfront, and to reflect the height of the hospital on the southern side.

The ground floor of the waterfront development lends itself to commercial development because it is alongside key public spaces and close to the heart of this new community – both the hospital community and new residents. This location also lends itself to a focal building. High quality public spaces and good connectivity with help to animate the public realm. Apartments are favoured on the landmark blocks over the ground floor commercial uses, with houses on the remainder of the site; the balance between houses and flats is more equal. The commercial offer will need to reflect the requirements of the local catchment and be in line with local planning policy thresholds.

Development on all sides frames public space, and strong frontages are required; this applies to the north-south open space on the south side of this plot.

Learning campus

The NHS are considering developing the second phase of their learning campus within this Cape Arm character area, and is seeking to acquire a small landholding within this area to help enable this (the first phase would take place on land

close to Dudley Road). The Trust would require up to 5,000sqm of space, either as a standalone building or as space shared with another use. This requirement would be for simple classrooms and community / administrative space.

However, should the Learning Campus Phase 2 not come forward, development of the site for residential would be considered the most appropriate option.

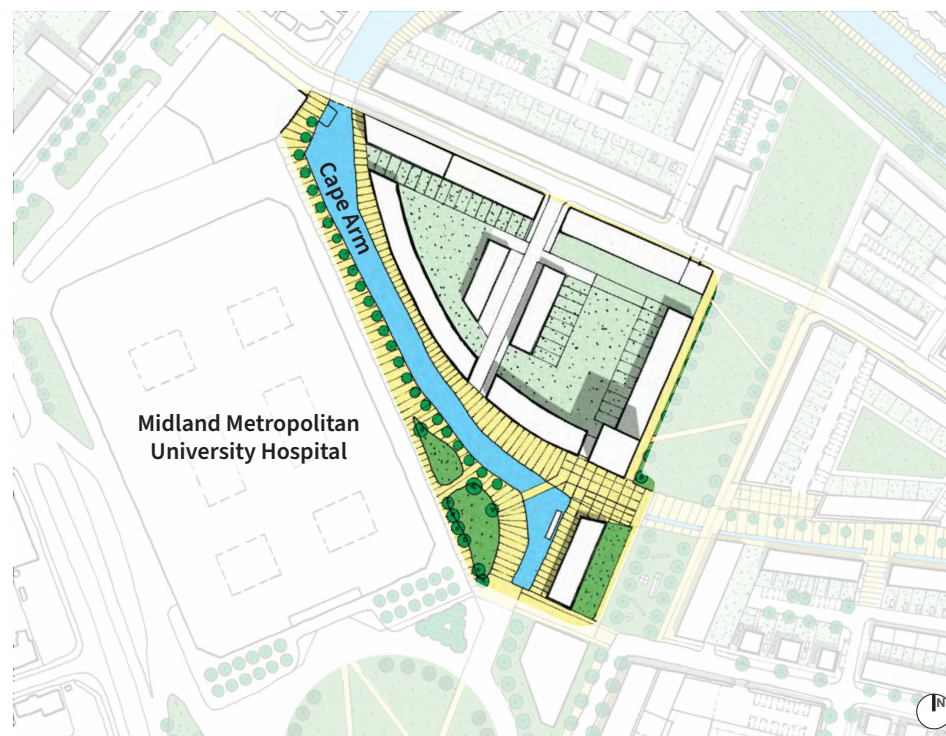
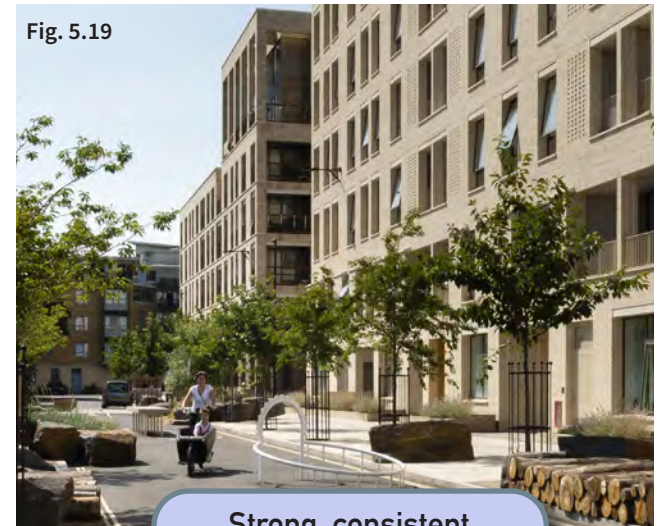


Fig. 5.13 - Cape Arm: Extract from Illustrative masterplan

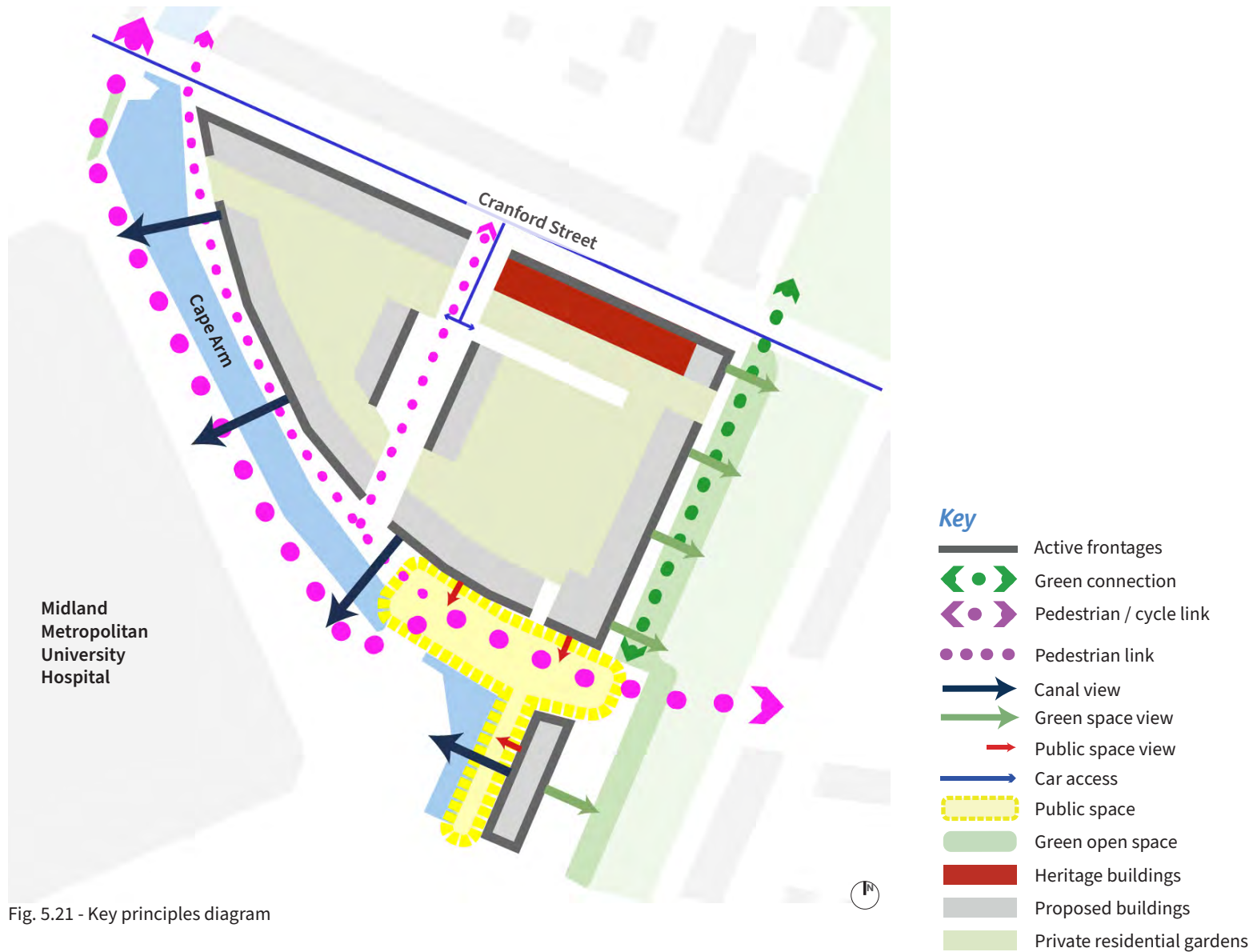


Fig. 5.15 - Character Area Extent



Key Principles:

1. **Strong urban form** – clearly defined perimeter blocks of minimum three to five storeys with raised courtyards. The blocks will form a strong edge facing the public realm
2. **Existing industrial building** - retained refurbished and converted into residential use offering a special type of architecture and materiality
3. **Positive relationship with canal edge** – four storey townhouses will form a continuous built edge along the canal opposite the hospital
4. **Five storey apartment block** – will front the canal side stepping up from the 4st townhouses culminating in a 10 st tall building
5. **10 storey residential tower of landmark status** – the canal and open space together will form the setting for a tall building at this key junction. This is the hinge point where the two public routes meet
6. **Building form to create visual interest and respect the retained historic buildings** – it is envisaged that the built form will break down into individual elements to provide a distinct rhythm scale and enclosure
7. **Positive relationship with the open space** – 4 storey townhouses will form a continuous built edge along the open space
8. **Visual and physical links to the canal** – a continuous 2-3m wide public towpath will provide access to pedestrians and cyclists at all times connecting to the wider network beyond
9. **Active edges** – all external edges of the residential blocks will be animated with entrances and windows keeping blank façades to an absolute minimum
10. **Strong urban form to the canal edge** – four storey family townhouses will form the new edge on to the canal stepping up to 5 storey apartment block and the landmark building to provide an appropriate scale to the open spaces and hospital across the canal building.
11. **Landscaping** – the landscape design must take into consideration the direct relationship of the site with the canal as well as the open space creating a seamless visual and physical connection between the two.
12. **Direct connection** across the canal to the hospital
13. **Parking** – access is directly off Cranford street and parking accommodated within an undercroft arrangement with raised residential courtyards.



Cranford Street highway widening

The proposed Birmingham to Oldbury cycle path has a missing link which runs along Cranford Street. Sandwell Council has plans to widen the highway between Cape Arm and Winson Street, which would require the removal of all existing buildings on the southern side of Cranford Street (see also Abberley Street character area). The current carriageway would remain the same, but the bi-directional cycleway would be added to a minimum width footway. These plans are at an early stage, and further work will be required to understand the full extent of the impact on adjacent land.

The masterplan seeks the retention of some historic buildings to both give character to the new development by drawing on the past, and to reflect the industrial nature of the area, which is so important to its identity.

A solution to these two positive elements may require a compromise. The retention of the buildings would require a different traffic solution to this stretch of Cranford Street or the building's loss will have to be accepted. However, any radical solution may undermine its role on the key route network. The masterplan presents the two options to help develop the thinking in this area.

Fig. 5.22: Section location plan

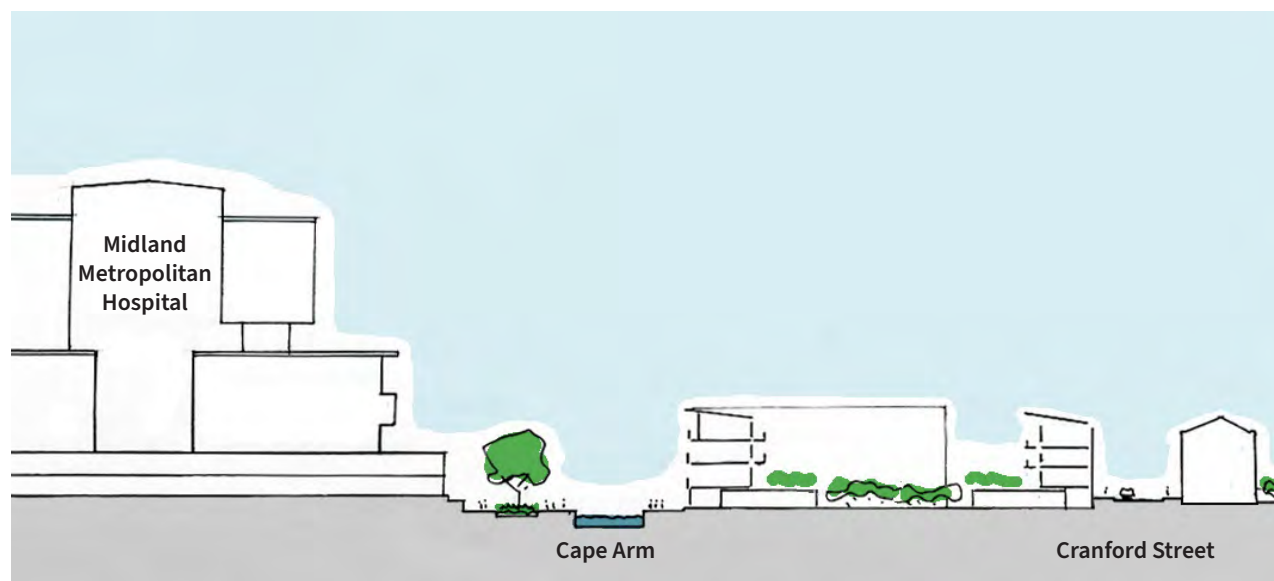


Fig. 5.23 - Illustrative section showing Cranford Street as existing within the Cape Arm character area.

Proposed cycle route on Cranford Street



Fig. 5.24 - Cranford Street as existing, overlaid on masterplan.



Fig. 5.25 - Cranford Street widened to accommodate the cycle route on its southern side, overlaid on masterplan

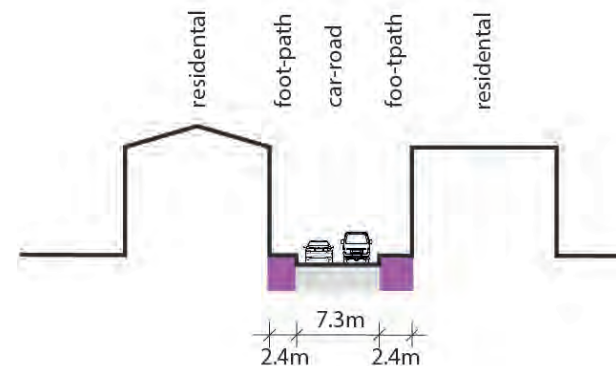


Fig. 5.26 - Section A-A: Cranford Street as existing

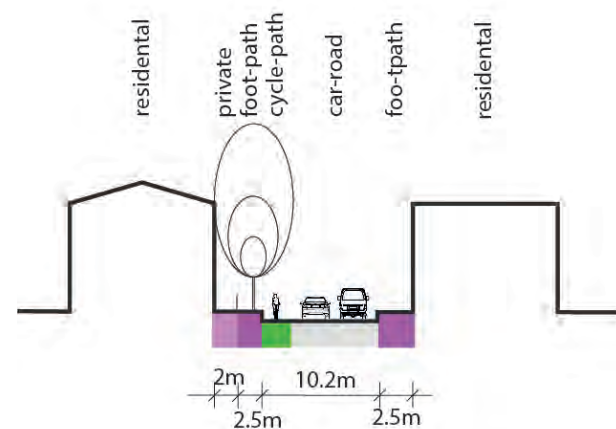


Fig. 5.27 - Section B-B: Cranford Street widening as proposed.

The tallest point of the masterplan is within the Cape Arm area, where the canal branch terminates in the main open space. This point, close to the adjacent hospital, is at the heart of the area and can provide a focal point and a landmark for the neighbourhood. It also provides an important connection between the Cape Arm waterside and the principal open space, enabling movement, connection and orientation.

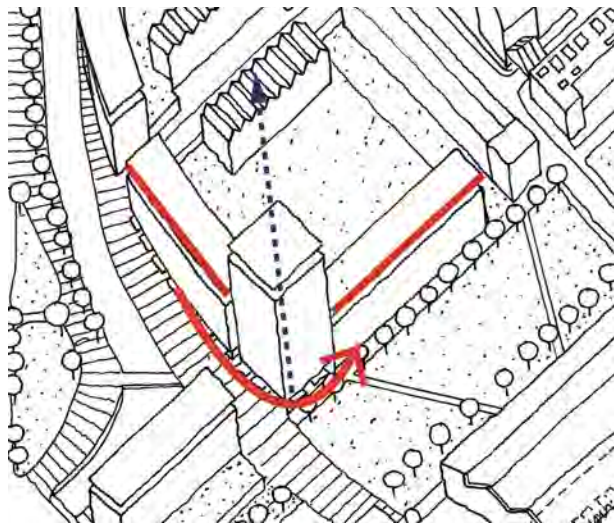


Fig. 5.28 - The focal building provides an important connection between areas of open space

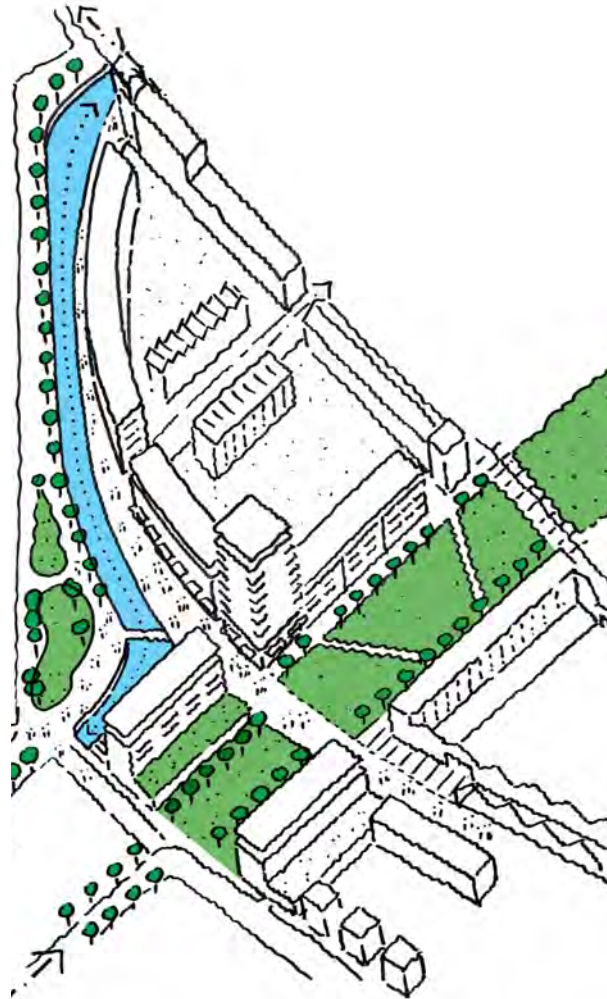


Fig. 5.29 - 3D illustration showing how the tallest element within the masterplan marks the heart of the site where the blue and green network converge.

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Character Area 3: Open Space network

Open space overlooked by strongly defined frontages forming the green spine through the site.

The open space network is crucial to the structure of the new neighbourhood. The large public space is planned and under construction for the front of the hospital, and is designed as a place for all.

Moilliett Street Park is presently an underperforming local park, but the masterplan seeks to allow development on the northern and southern sections of the park to create a higher quality neighbourhood park framed by the community it serves, and overlooked making it feel safer. The connections to and across the park are defined by the streets around it and make connections beyond the Grove Lane area itself – into Dudley Road and across Winson Street to Tudor Street.

From the hospital entrance, a spur of open space drives north towards the canal, seeking to make that connection to the canal – itself an important and underused open space. It is a key structural space, requiring development to frame it, and defining the character areas within the overall scheme.

Whilst not reinstating the canal loop that did exist between the basin and the Winson Street junction with Heath Street, the masterplan acknowledges this route and allows the opportunity for a reinstatement of the canal if this becomes possible in future.

The masterplan allows for a range of types of open space to be provided. This ranges from the expansive formal space provided by the hospital entrance, to the neighbourhood park, which could provide general amenity space alongside children's play space. More natural space can be provided by the canal corridor, if a link can be created, and the waterfront spaces around the canal arm offer an opportunity for leisurely urban space.

It is vitally important that the structure of the public realm provides easy, clear, safe routes between major public spaces both within the Grove Lane area and beyond it, to spaces such as Summerfield Park and amenity areas in Windmill Eye where new residents may connect with the existing communities.

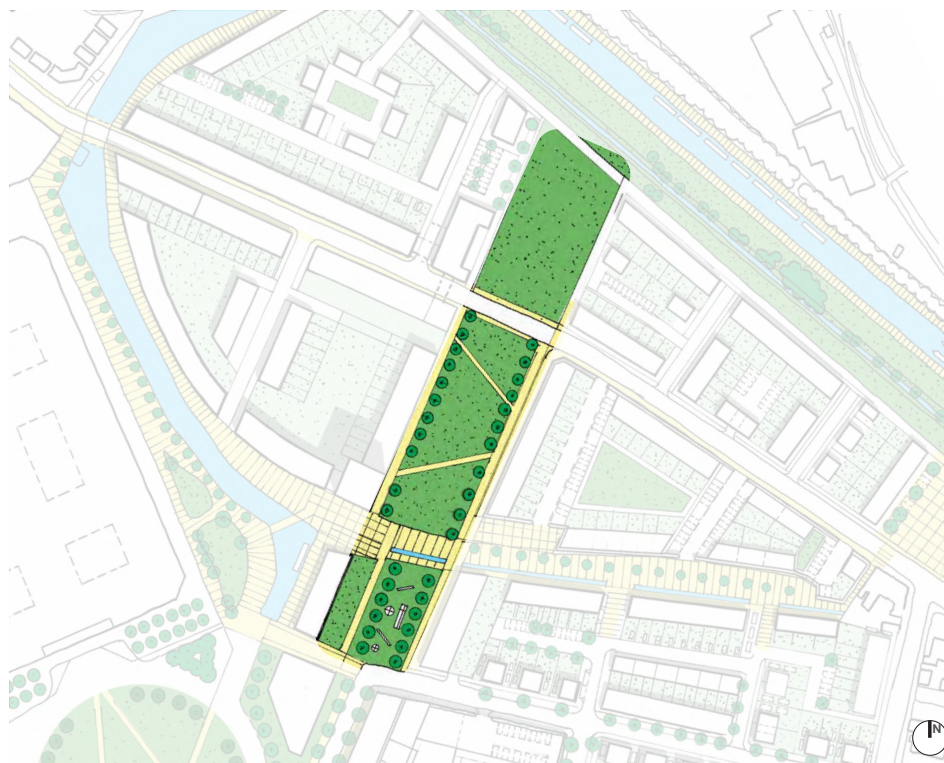


Fig. 5.30 - Open Space Network: Extract from Illustrative masterplan

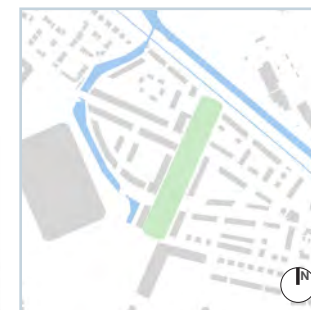


Fig. 5.31 - Character Area Extent

Precedent Images



Fig. 5.32



Fig. 5.33



Fig. 5.34



Fig. 5.35



Fig. 5.36

Recreation opportunities

Overlooked by development

Character Area 3: Open Space network

The main linear open space sits within the core of the neighbourhood, and has a role not only in enabling movement between places, but in providing different settings and activities within it. Towards the north, the lower rise buildings make for a more informal setting that feels wide and open and may lend itself to walking, informal activity and reflection.

Towards the south, as the building height and density changes, the space between them feels more contained and more structured, which may allow for greater numbers to gather for events and formal activity, whilst also providing overlooking from the higher buildings. This area may lend itself to a more structured form of public realm with harder landscapes and more street furniture.

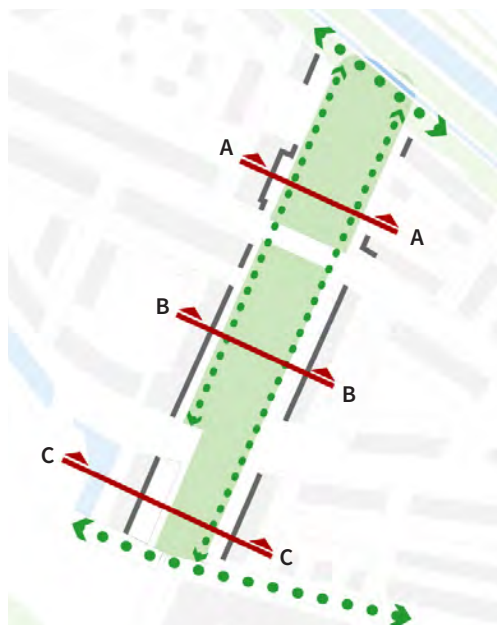
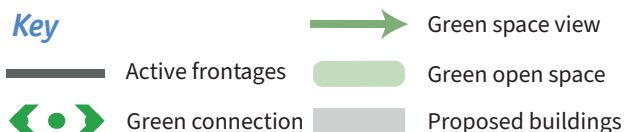


Fig. 5.37 - Section location plan

Type A - Informal

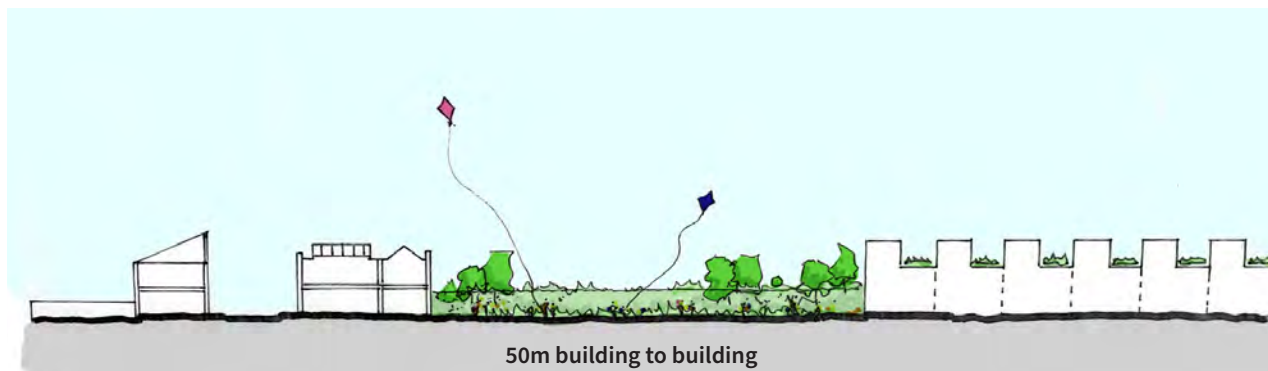


Fig. 5.38 - Illustrative section of informal open space

Type B - Formal



Fig. 5.39 - Illustrative section of formal open space

Type C - Playspace



Fig. 5.40 - Illustrative section of playspace

Open Space Standards

Sandwell Council have standards for the provision of open space for new developments, and the standards are set on the basis of an assessment of open space already available in the borough. Open space is defined across a range of different types of space, which includes allotments, amenity space, natural space, children's play areas and parks. Sandwell sets the standard per 1000 people at a rate of 4.42ha across all types of open space.

The masterplan for Grove Lane proposes around 800 new homes, which would imply an overall need for around 9 or 10 hectares dependent on the household size assumption, though the masterplan provides for between 3 to 4 hectares, including the hospital's public space. This is a significant under provision.

However, consultation with Sandwell officers has clarified that the standards ought not to be regarded as an absolute on quantity; there is a regard to the quality of open space as well. With existing green spaces easily accessible within the vicinity – including Green Flag park, play areas and the canal network - the provision of open space as part of a planned structural network that would enable movement between spaces and to spaces beyond the Grove Lane area is therefore considered to be suitable. If a connection can also be made more directly to the canal, this would be further improved.

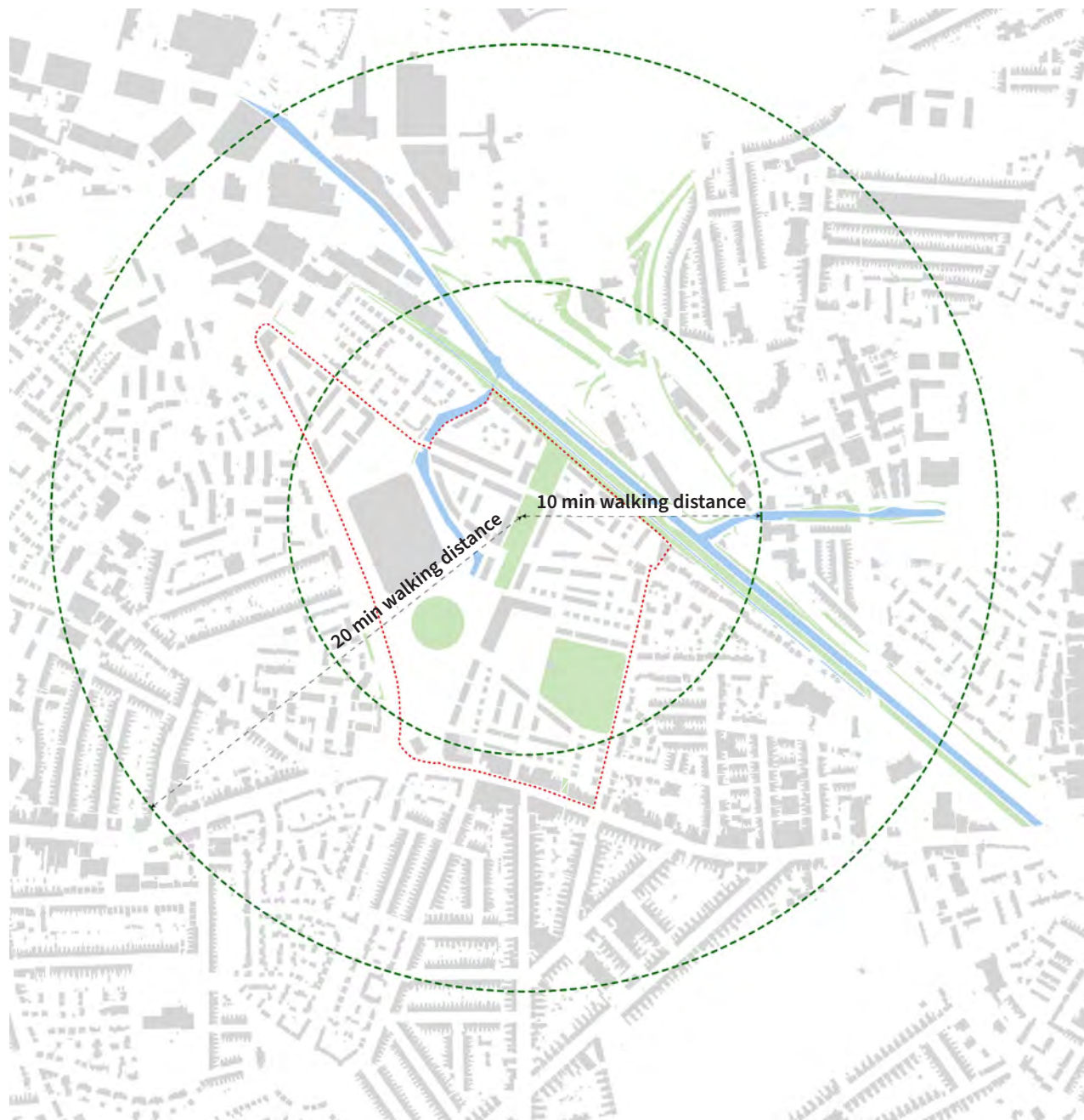


Fig. 5.41 - Grove Lane masterplan - Walking Distances - Central green Wider context

Character Area 4: Grove Street and Primary School

Neighbourhood creating gateway entrance to the site from Grove Lane and a considered transition between the hospital and Moilliett Street Park

Indicative capacity:

Density: Up to 145 dph

Residential dwellings: Approx. 70 - 85 no.

The Grove Street area faces the MMU hospital entrance and its open space and will provide a key access to the preferred school location, which is bounded by Grove Street, Abberley Street and Dugdale Street. In addition, the Grove Street area incorporates an important connection that links two areas of strategic open space: the landscaped area in front of the hospital and Moilliett Park.

In respect of the housing provision on the southern parts of this area, the importance of the frontage needs some height and mass, and the masterplan looks to have five storey buildings on Grove Street, and a housing mix that strongly favours flats and apartments over houses. Houses would front Halberton Street.

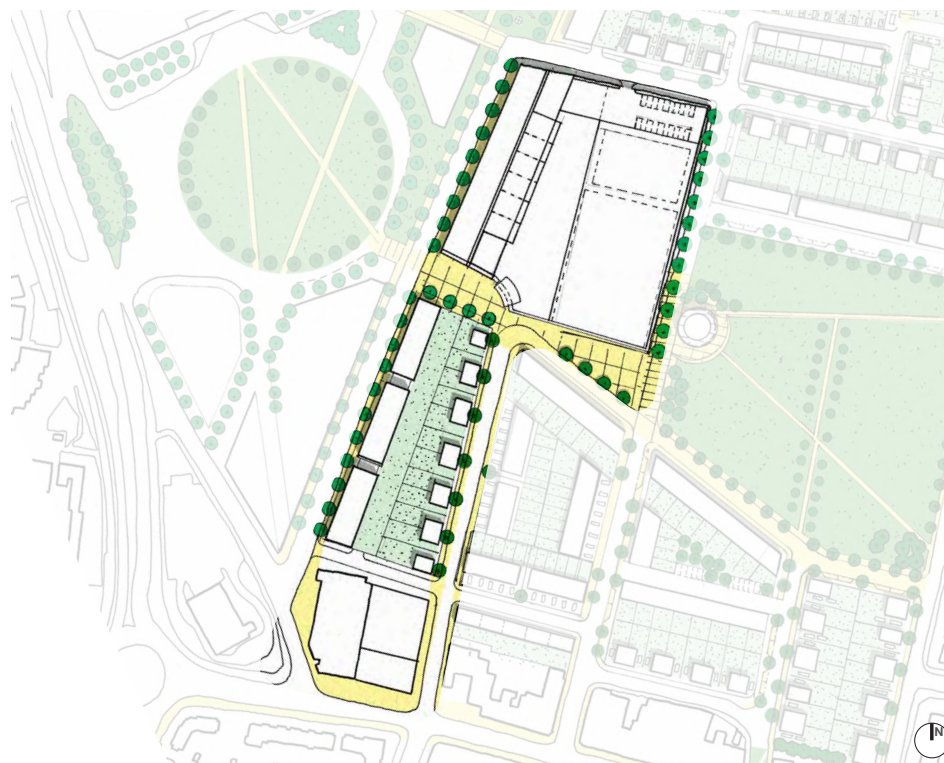


Fig. 5.42 - Grove Street and Primary School: Extract from Illustrative masterplan



Fig. 5.43 - Character Area Extent



Grove Lane school

The area requires the provision of a 2 form entry primary school to serve the future community. Engagement with the Sandwell Education team set out a preference for:

- A site area of between a minimum 2.3 ha and a maximum of 2.8 ha;
 - both playing fields and hard-standing / playground areas;
 - a securely enclosed playing field that could be made available for public use. There is a statutory requirement to provide 'team game area' (playing field) for children age over 8 years of age for new school developments. Preference for a playing field in school control to overcome continual risk assessment processes.
 - a site exclusively in education use (i.e. the shared shouldn't be shared with other uses, particularly residential use due to safeguarding issues).

The Grove Lane area has few potential sites that might be suitable for a school, but the provision of any site to meet the above expectations would have a significant impact on the overall masterplan. The map, right, shows a red line boundary / shaded area across the preferred site and the adjoining site to the southwest. Assuming this would include playing fields, this level of land take takes 125 units (71 flats and 54 houses) dwellings from the overall capacity of the Grove Lane area, but also compromises the compactness and connectivity of the area as a whole.

The preferred location is between Grove Lane and Heath Street at the northern end of Halberton Street. This location is distant from the main traffic corridors (and so from traffic pollution and noise), is close to the open areas at Moilliett Street Park and the front of the hospital and would be at the heart of the family housing in the new neighbourhood. A compact site central to the community encourages walking and cycling.

At the detailed design stage, the school boundaries must be secure, yet attractive. The boundary treatment may be a hedge and railing – continuous solid fences or galvanised security fencing should not be promoted. Railings should be painted or powder coated to appear painted. Where fences are unavoidable alongside streets, these should be designed to be attractive and make a positive contribution, by for example integrating art work or hedges.

The preferred masterplan has drawn on examples of urban schools within Sandwell and Birmingham and in other parts of the country where a smaller land provision is required. By providing a two-storey building with innovative use of available surfaces (including roof space) a compact facility can be provided that provides safety and security in a modern, stimulating environment and maintains other elements of the masterplan that are important, including sustainability, connectivity and a healthy neighbourhood.



Fig. 5.49 - Existing land take for school (1.1ha)

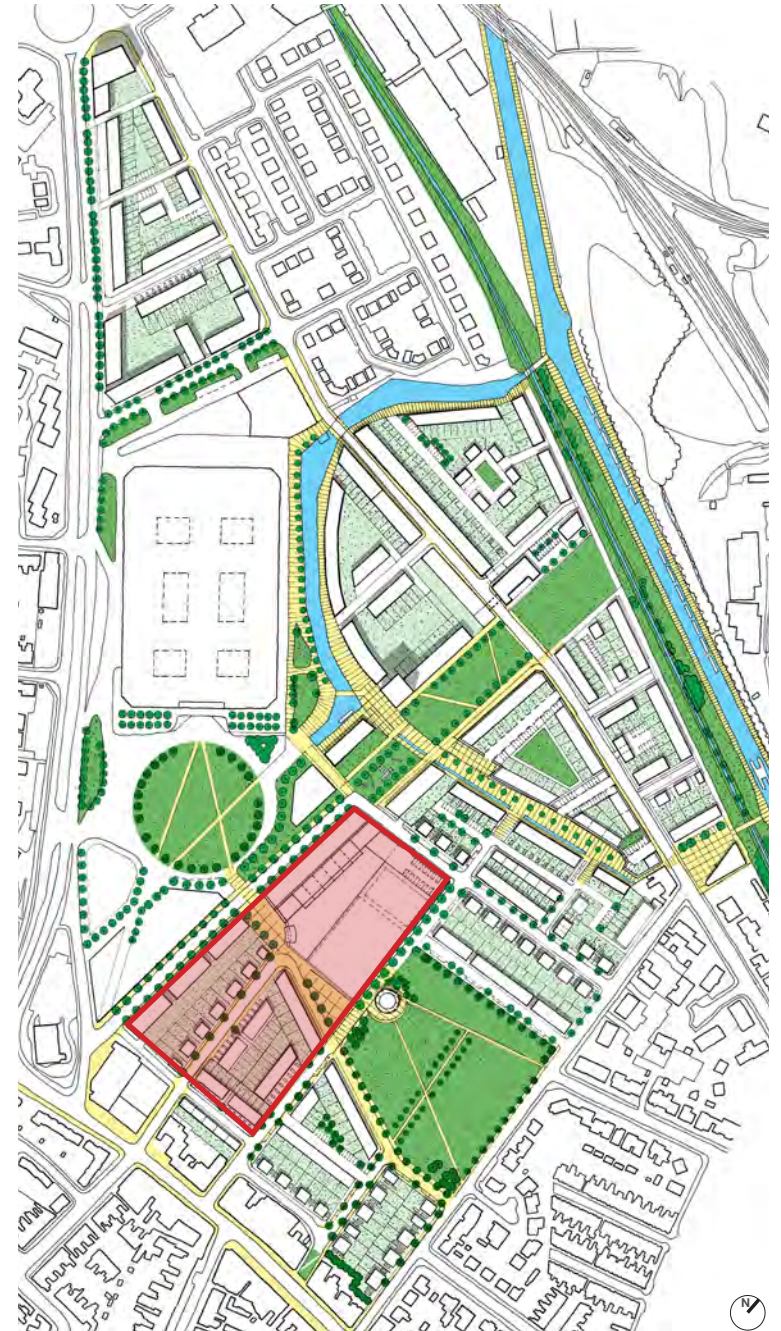


Fig. 5.50 - Larger school site (2.6ha)

Key Principles:

1. **Strong urban form onto Grove Street** – five storey apartment block will form a new edge on this primary route into the site and opposite the hospital
2. **Location of Primary school** – will form a strong presence along the main route with its entrance along the key connecting route between the hospital and Moilliett Street Park
3. **Retained historic curved wall** – this is an important urban fabric with a distinct form that needs to be retained and incorporated within the school design strategy if feasible to do so.
4. **A safe and attractive environment** – the tree lined street is the main route into the site and will form an important part of the public realm and must be of the highest quality. The key pedestrian and cycle connection that passes the school to the south and provides the link between the hospital and Moilliett Park must be designed to be multifunctional. This space, or series of spaces, should provide some enclosure to create variety and interest when moving between the two larger areas of open space at its eastern and western end. This should be designed to accommodate urban landscaping, spaces for people to sit, waiting space for parents outside of the school and opportunities for play
5. **Views** to the Hospital landscaped grounds
6. **Active edges** – all external edges of the residential blocks will be animated with entrances and windows keeping blank façades to an absolute minimum
7. **Scale** - Three storey family houses on Halberton Street will step down from the taller block fronting Grove Street and form a new residential edge and appropriate scale within the residential neighbourhood
8. **Gateway** – retained art deco cinema refurbished and extended to form a cultural quarter at this key location along the high street. This will turn the corner into the site, connecting into both Dudley Road Local Centre and the new development
9. **Strong visual and physical link** between the hospital landscaped open grounds and Moilliett Street Park
10. **Parking** – access to the school will be off Abberley street, residential access will be off Grove Street immediately on entering the site thus limiting car movement within the development



Fig. 5.51 - Key principles diagram

The Grove Street character area has the potential to form the heart of the new community in Grove Lane. Central to the area, and adjacent to some of the taller landmark buildings, it also has a role in providing the primary school and in bringing the scale of the development down from the hospital to the family housing expected to be delivered towards the south and east of the area.

The section, below, shows how development fronting Grove Street plays a role in addressing the public space to the front of the hospital with a higher and denser form, before stepping down toward the lower, family housing which exists beyond Winson Street. The masterplan proposes some development on Moilliett Street Park, and this should reflect the need for family type housing whilst meeting other objectives for this character area. The section also shows how parking and building separation might be achieved, respecting privacy and integrating parking off-street where possible.

Residential development will surround the school, and access to the school by car will be expected, though a Travel Plan should be established to optimise all forms of travel and make walking and cycling attractive. Attention will need to be paid to the accommodation of on-street parking within the public realm.

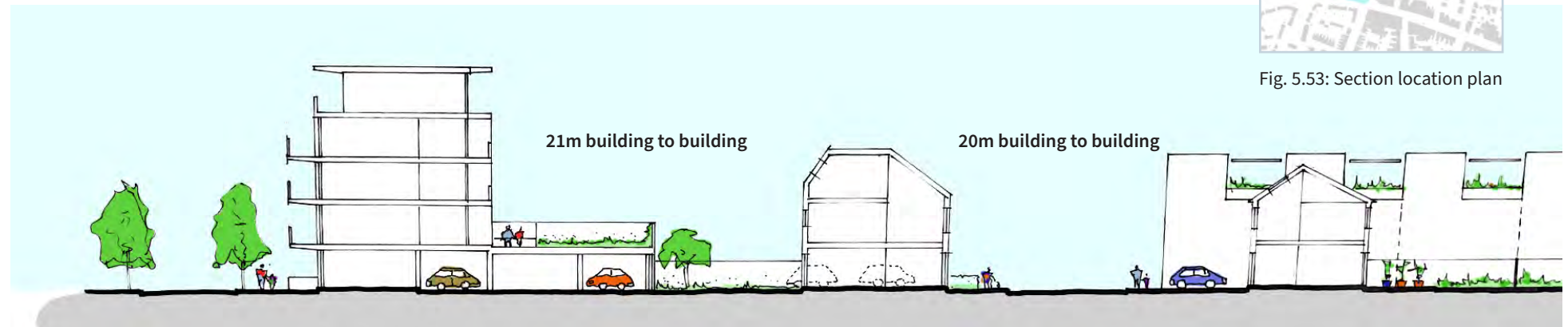


Fig. 5.52 - Illustrative section showing decreasing density from Grove Street towards Moilliett Street Park



Fig. 5.53: Section location plan

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Character Area 5: Moilliett Street Park

Open space well overlooked by development which forms a coherent link between Dudley Street Local Centre, the site and the canal.

Indicative capacity

Density: Up to 43 dph

Residential dwellings: Approx. 100 - 120 no.

Moilliett Street Park is an important green space in the locality, and one of very few amenity spaces in the area. In light of the acknowledged shortage of green space in the area, it should be retained and made to work in an improved way for the community. The park currently suffers from under-use and has associated problems that both contribute to, and result from, this. The masterplan proposes some development within the park to help to frame it, concentrate activity and encourage use.

The masterplan proposes a development of houses on the northern and southern parts of the park, framing it, and providing new footpaths



Fig. 5.54 - Moilliett Street Park

across it as part of the open space network. The new route would link Dudley Road to the MMUH. The park would be the heart of the new residential neighbourhood, which would meet a need for family houses in the area. The open space would still have sufficient area to provide family play activities and general amenity space. There should be some provision in Moilliett Street Park for interpreting the demolished Grade II* listed Bellefield Inn

Moilliett Street is currently an unattractive street to the rear of properties that front Dudley Road. The street is not overlooked by buildings and there

are problems with littering. The masterplan seeks to address this by providing a new building frontage to the northern side of the street.

A higher quality development could be achieved if the former pub site on Winson Road, and the car park at the north western corner of Moilliett Park, were planned together to achieve a comprehensive approach.

In addition, Plan 5.55 illustrates a proposal to close Moilliett Street at its southern end to vehicular traffic, instead creating a pocket park which would form an attractive entrance to the site from Dudley Road.

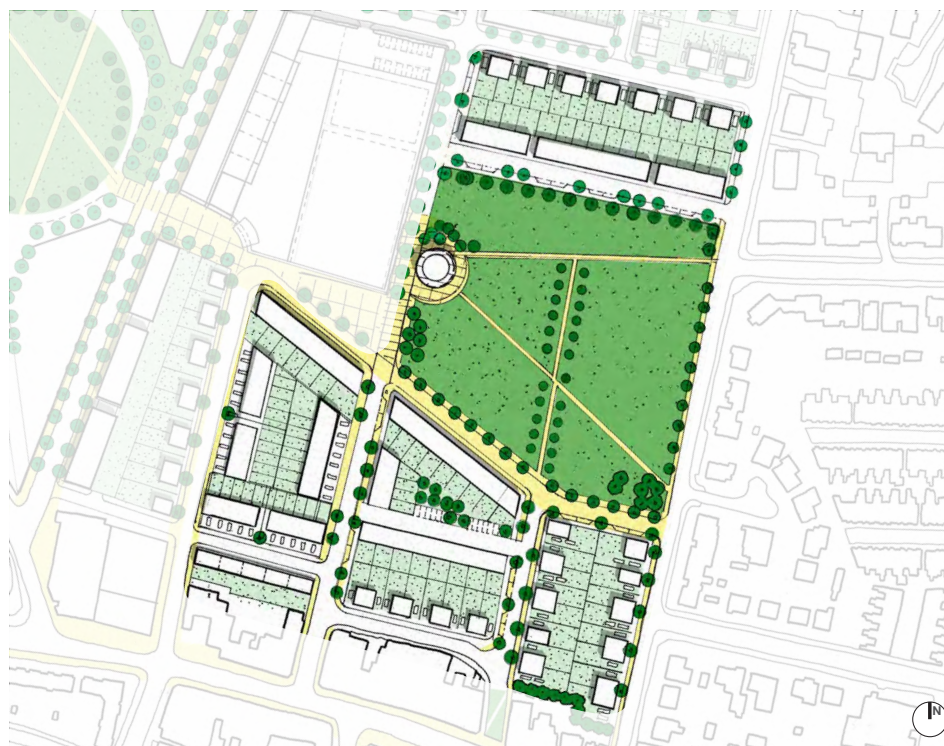
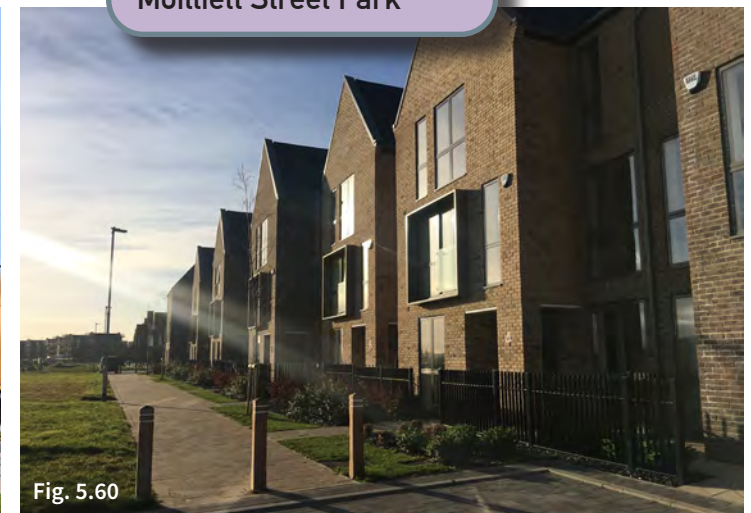


Fig. 5.55 - Moilliett Street Park: Extract from Illustrative masterplan

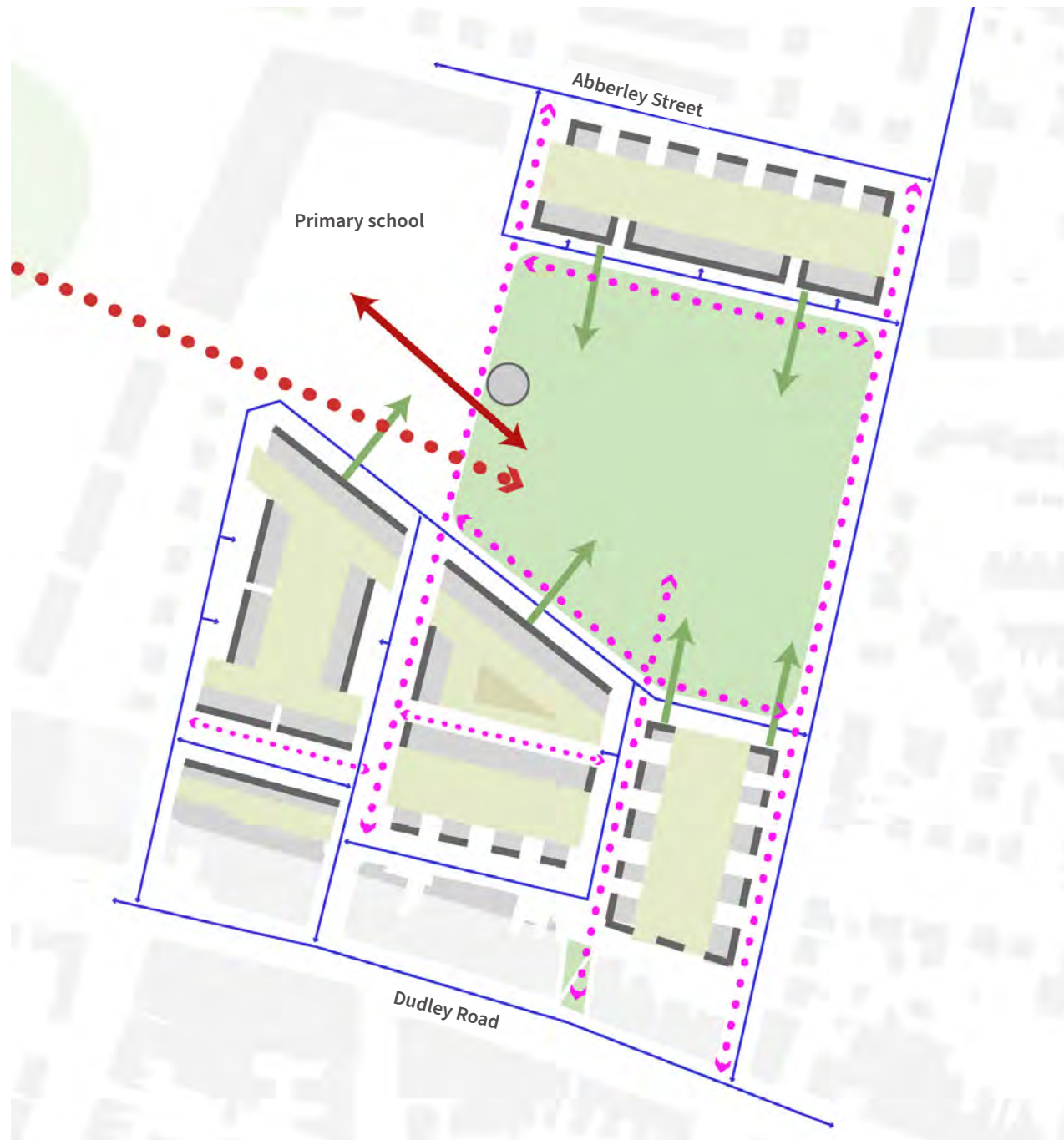


Fig. 5.56 - Character Area Extent













Key Principles:

1. **Moilliett Street Park** – a reconfigured and redesigned park of good proportions will become the focus for the surrounding residential community on a local and town wide scale. It must be a safe and attractive public space for people to visit and enjoy
2. **A well defined enclosure** – new buildings forming clearly defined perimeter edges to the north and south of the space will be three storey family houses of a distinct typology to frame the park.
3. **Active edges** – surrounding the park will be family houses, all frontages active with entrances and windows keeping blank façades to an absolute minimum
4. **Direct and visual link** to the hospital and to the open space network
5. **Direct relationship with the school** – opportunity to have direct connections and use of the open space
6. **Active edges** – all external edges of the residential blocks will be animated with entrances and windows keeping blank façades to an absolute minimum. Residential units to the north and south of Moilliett Park must front onto, and overlook the space.
7. **Key view to and from Grove street**
8. **Key views to and from Dudley Road**
9. **Routes through** – vehicular/pedestrian/cycle
10. **A range of housing typologies** of two to three storey dwellings to create variety and interest within the new neighbourhoods north and south of the park
11. **Landscaping** – a well considered soft landscaped open space providing amenity space for the residents of the immediate and wider area
12. **Parking** – parking access will be from the surrounding streets and will be accommodated in a variety of ways, either within the building footprint, at the front or sides of the houses or in small parking courts integrated within a landscape strategy.
13. **Provide a pocket park** at the south of Moilliett Street, which will create a gateway entrance into the site from Dudley Road.



Key

-  Active frontages
-  Public space connection
-  Green connection
-  Pedestrian connection (line thickness denotes hierarchy of routes)
-  School entrance
-  Green space view
-  Car access
-  Green open space
-  Proposed buildings
-  Private residential gardens

Making an entrance

Birmingham City Council have landholdings on the corner of Dudley Road and Moilliett Street which could allow environmental improvements to be made to the access point into Moilliett Street and the park as part of a connected and comprehensive approach to improving the park, the connections across it and towards the hospital and the environment on Dudley Road itself.



Fig. 5.61 - Dudley Road Local Centre

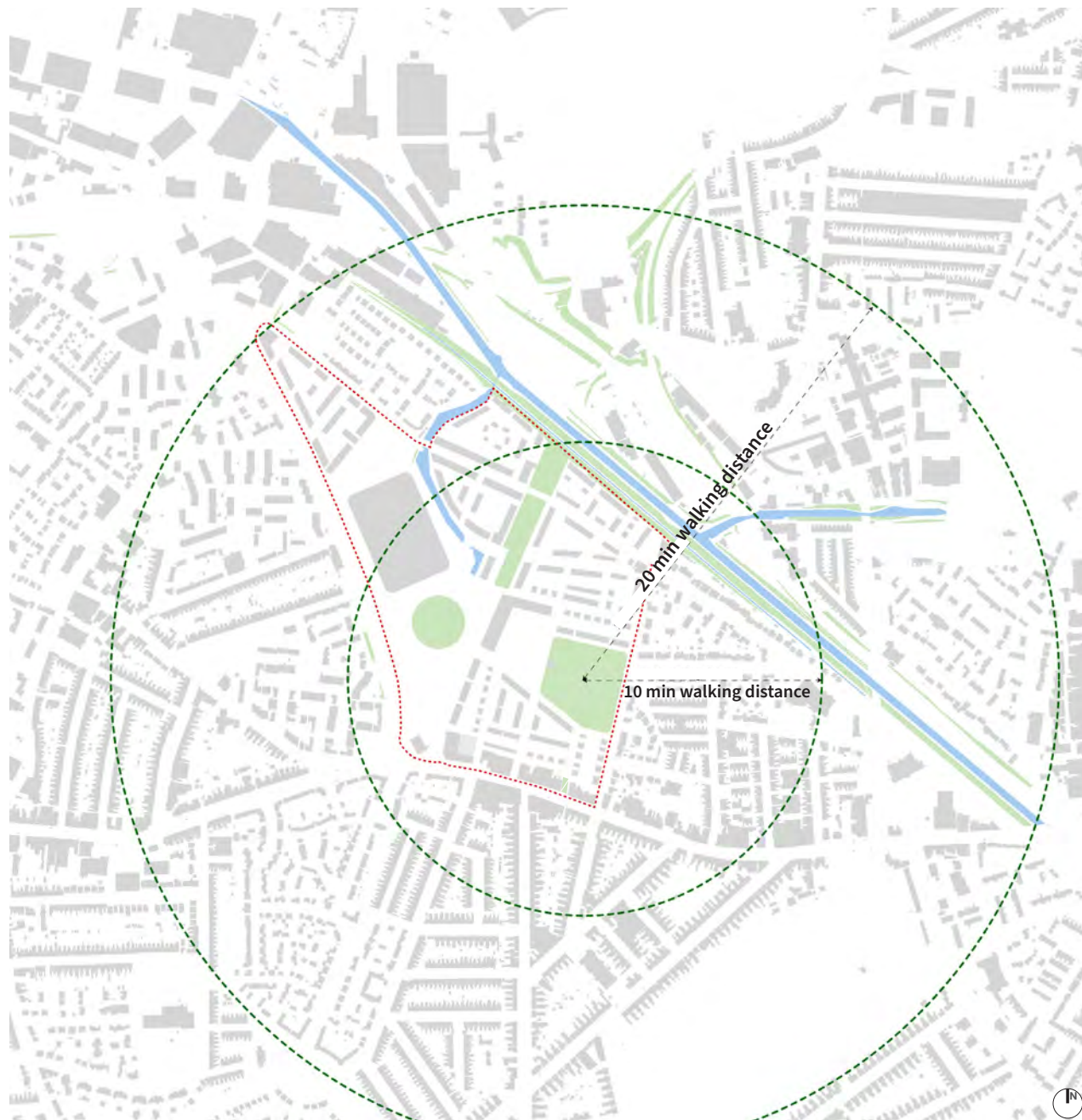


Fig. 5.62 - Moilliett Street Park Walking Distances

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Character Area 6: Abberley Street / New route

Residential area creating a key link between Moilliett Park and the strategic green spine through the site

Indicative capacity:

Density: Up to 50 dph

Residential dwellings: Approx. 120-140no.

Abberley Street is at the northern side of Moilliett Street Park, and connects with Grove Street to the west and Winson Street to the east. It is a key part of the movement network.

Development of the site has a number of roles to play, which are important to the success of the whole area. It has to frame the north-south open space at the western end, close to the canal basin; it has to provide a strong relationship to Moilliett Street Park and development that may take place at its northern end, and it needs consider its relationship with the route of the former canal, proposed as part of the movement network.

The masterplan proposes strong frontages to the movement channels and a particular emphasis on the western end of the site.

The preferred approach is set out in the masterplan that aligns with current evidence of need and demand for this area. The higher density solution scheme would only be possible if future demand dictates and subject to demonstrating that it meets spatial and parking requirements set out in the adopted design guidance.

The warehouse complex to the north – Heath Street Industrial Estate – is a historic element of the area, and the preferred approach of the masterplan has been to maintain this and

convert to residential. This, however, would be dependent upon the introduction of the bi-directional cycleway which would require land alongside the southern edge of Heath Street and would therefore prevent retention of these units. In addition, the masterplan currently retains the former Queens Arm building on the corner of Heath Street / Winson Street. The retention and restoration of this distinctive tiled frontage could form an attractive anchor to this north eastern gateway into the site.

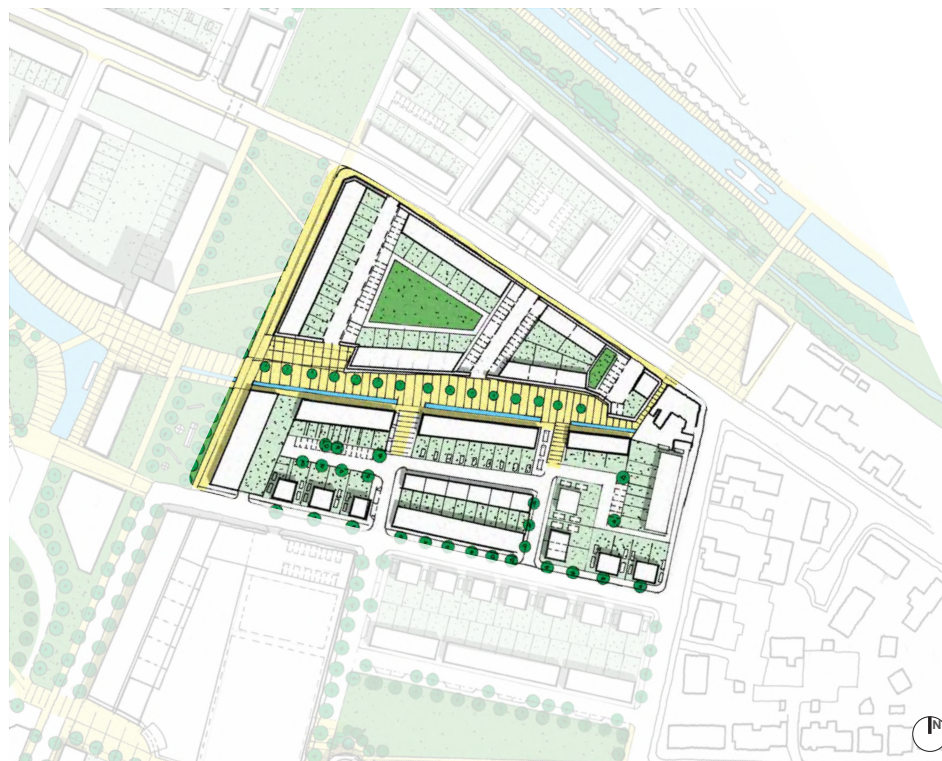


Fig. 5.63 - Abberley Street / New route: Extract from Illustrative masterplan



Fig. 5.64 - Character Area Extent



Key Principles:

1. **Existing industrial building** - retained refurbished and converted into residential use offering a special type of architecture and materiality and will form a continuous edge to the north side of the public route
2. **New pedestrian and cycle route** following the historic route of the canal will provide a direct link to the canal and will add quality and legibility to the place
3. **Proposed southern edge** – a mix of dwelling types will form the southern edge of the new public route facing the retained building, providing an appropriate scale and enclosure to the space
4. **Building form to create visual interest and respect the retained historic building** – it is envisaged that the built form will break down into individual elements to provide a distinct rhythm, scale and enclosure
5. **Active edges** – all external edges of the residential blocks will be animated with entrances and windows keeping blank façades to an absolute minimum
6. **Visual and physical link to the canal basin** - the new route will form an important part of the public realm providing direct views and links and fully integrating with the green open space
7. **Positive relationship with the open space** – the retained and refurbished building and an apartment block will form a continuous built edge along the open space
8. **Landscaping** – the landscape design must take into consideration the direct relationship of the site with the open space creating a seamless visual and physical connection between the two.
9. **Parking** – access is directly off Cranford Street in the north and Abberley Street in the south and parking accommodated in different ways, either within the building footprint, in external garages or in parking courts where they will be fully integrated within the landscape strategy

Cranford Street highway widening

As previously mentioned, whilst the preferred option is to retain some of the heritage buildings along the Cranford Street frontage, both to the north and south of the highway, proposals that assist in promoting more walking and cycling in the area would hinder the retention of the units.

Whilst the carriageway itself would remain as existing, to incorporate a bi-directional cyclepath that connects the cyclepaths both in Birmingham and Sandwell, the footpath itself would require widening, hence this would necessitate some land take on at least one side of Cranford Street.

Two options have therefore been provided to assist in finding a solution that would achieve the best outcome.



Fig. 5.70 - Key principles diagram

The Abberley Street area provides the opportunity to retain existing older buildings, though this would be more limited in the event of land being required on the northern side of the plot for the cycleway. Maintaining the existing façades could both offer a connection to the past and the heritage of the area, whilst also giving a prompt to the form and rhythm of new buildings.

The southern side of the character area forms a missing link between the Cape Arm basin and the Main Line, and could be retained as a focal space

and movement corridor, again reflecting past uses. The masterplan envisages development fronting this space and a link all the way to the canal towpath itself.

The section through this parcel demonstrates the lower nature of the intended built form, with good distances between buildings and parking integrated and provided for off-street where possible.

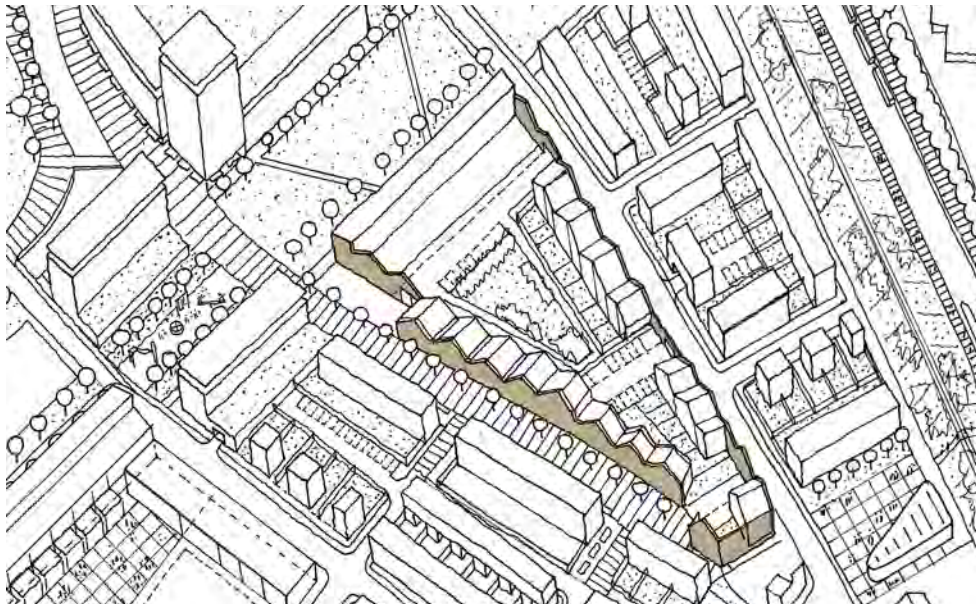


Fig 5.71- Distinct rhythm, scale and enclosure afforded by retaining the facade of the buildings that overlook the route to the north

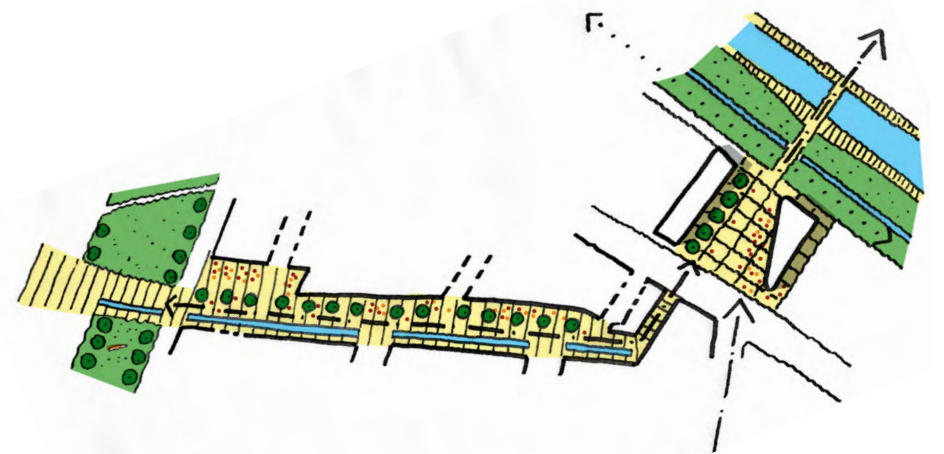


Fig 5.72 - Key route linking network of open space to the community facility, and onto the canal

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Character Area 7: Grove Lane / Cranford Street / London Street

Formal approach to MMUH from the west, with a landmark corner on Soho Way Roundabout.

Indicative capacity:

Density: Up to 105 dph

Residential dwellings: Approx. 200 220 no.

The triangular site north of the hospital is isolated from the main part of the Grove Lane area, but is linked to the remainder through its close relationship with the hospital.

The hospital is a dominant feature to the south of this site, which along with the heavy road infrastructure to the south, makes taller buildings appropriate here. The masterplan proposes a high proportion of flats against the number of houses (a 70% / 30% split) within this parcel. The site also lends itself to taller buildings as focal points, particularly on the northern edge alongside the Soho Way roundabout, and on the south western corner adjacent to the hospital which may relate to the high storey blocks of flats opposite.

There is a certain urgency to getting this site right, and connecting it to surrounding communities both to the south of it in the Grove Lane area, and to the west in Windmill Eye, partly because it lies to the rear servicing area of the hospital, and it also provides a challenge due to its shape and depth, particularly to the north.

Whilst being at the back of the hospital, this site remains highly visible within the wider corridor and all traffic using the A457 will see it, regardless of whether their journey involves Cranford Street or Grove Lane. It will have a huge impact on the perception of the area. The site context of this character area lends itself to higher density development, to address the scale of the streets to the south and west. Lower scale family housing would be at risk of being overwhelmed by the scale of the surroundings, and would potentially not succeed in providing adequate enclosure or frontage onto the street.

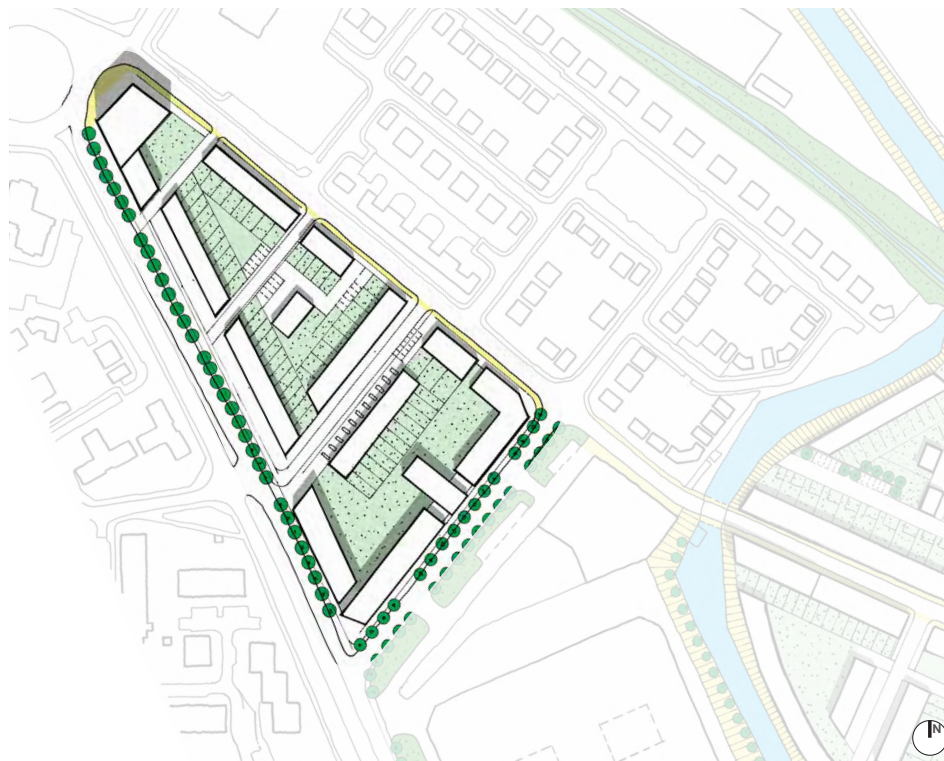
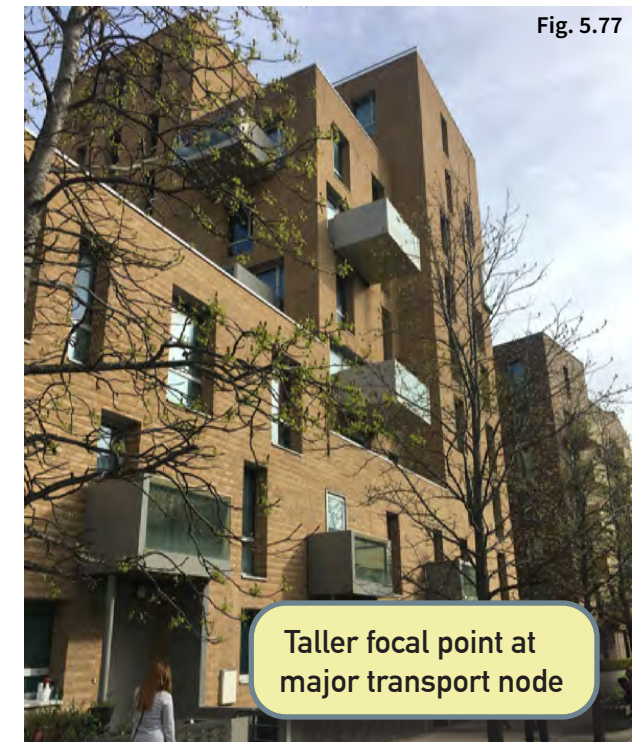


Fig. 5.73 - Grove Lane / Cranford Street / London Street: Extract from Illustrative masterplan



Fig. 5.74 - Character Area Extent



Key Principles:

1. **A well defined enclosure** – Buildings will line along the perimeter of the plot and clearly define the edge. Three storey houses will line up along Cranford Street rising to four storey town houses along part of London Street then to six storey apartment blocks with a nine storey elevated corner where London St / Grove Lane meet. To the north an eleven storey tall building will face the Soho Way Roundabout and at the western edge three storey houses are accessed via a slip road with parking arranged at the front in order to set back the buildings from the traffic ridden Grove Lane.
2. **Strong urban form** – the perimeter along this plot is clearly defined by five/six storey apartment blocks on London St and Grove Lane to address the scale of the hospital stepping down to four/three storeys on Cranford Street and responding to the existing context here. The blocks will form a strong edge facing the public realm whereas to the rear a landscaped communal area and some gardens will provide amenity space for the residents.
3. **Visual interest** created by variation in building form.
4. **11 storey residential building of landmark status** – the tall building will mark the entry to the masterplan area from the north. Positioned at this end of the site it will signal arrival and approach to the area creating a distinct landmark against the skyline
5. **Active edges** – all external edges of the residential blocks will be animated with entrances and windows keeping blank façades to an absolute minimum
6. **Private gardens and courtyards** – all houses and apartments will have some form of open space either as individual or shared gardens
7. **Strong landscape strip** – an appropriate landscape treatment will be required along Grove Lane in order to create an attractive aspect to the new dwellings along the perimeter as well as enhance the current character of the dual carriageway
8. **Parking** – access is directly off Cranford Street with parking accommodated in a number of different ways. Undercroft parking will serve the apartment blocks whereas the dwellings will either have on plot parking or in parking courts where they will be fully integrated within the landscape strategy



Fig. 5.78 - Key principles diagram

The development heights across the site have been influenced by the scale of the surrounding existing buildings, mainly the new Hospital on London Street in the southern part of the site and the existing tall point blocks of the Cuin Road estate in the north. The massing rises up to the south and north with two landmark buildings located at each end relate both to the approach to the site from each direction as well as acting as punctuation points to the lower development that runs through the middle of the site.

The scale of this is influenced by the 2/3 storey Aurora residential development to the east of Cranford Street.

The use of landmark buildings within the development will help to create a legible urban quarter but also contribute to the image of the 'place'. The sighting of the tall buildings will become markers to the site and act as a point of reference for the area.

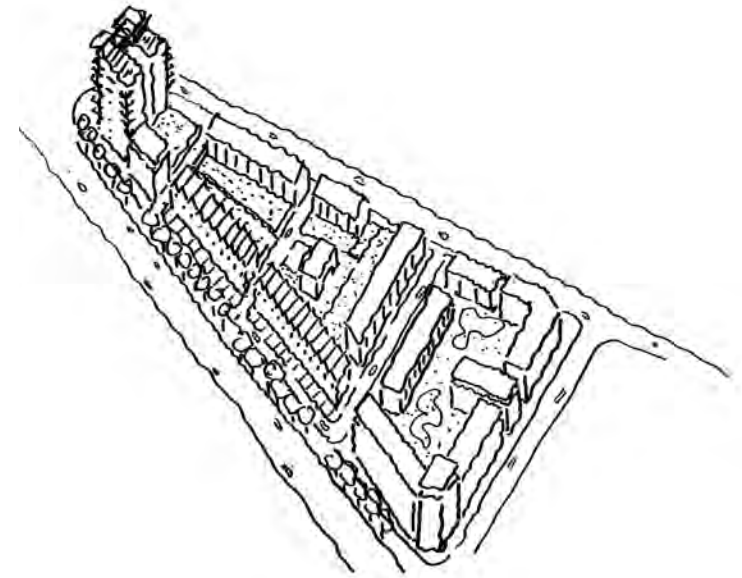


Fig. 5.79 - Illustrative sketch showing focal point marking the western entrance to the site.



Fig. 5.80 - Illustrative section showing massing and landmark building onto Soho Way

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APPENDICES





6

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Planning Policy & Context

The Grove Lane area was included within the Smethwick Area Action Plan as a residential and mixed-use allocation in 2008 but which has since been superseded by the Sandwell Sites and Delivery DPD. It is located on the border with Birmingham City Council and included within the Greater Icknield and Smethwick Housing Growth Area Prospectus produced jointly by the Local Authorities in 2016.

Black Country Core Strategy (2011)

The Core Strategy sets out the spatial vision, objectives and strategy for future development in the Black Country up to 2026. It identifies regeneration corridors of which Oldbury-West Bromwich-Smethwick is one.

Sandwell Site Allocations and Delivery DPD (2012)

The Site Allocations and Delivery DPD (SADDPD) adds further detail to the Core Strategy's regeneration corridors. The plan states that the focus for new housing within the next few years will be within the Smethwick area of the Oldbury-West Bromwich-Smethwick corridor (corridor 12). The plan identifies the following sub-areas within corridor 12 that also lie in part within the Smethwick to Birmingham Corridor: Area 7 Smethwick High Street and Environs, Area 8 North Smethwick Canalside, and Area 9 Cranford Street. Areas 8 and 9 are identified on the policies map as "long term residential".

Area 9 Cranford Street includes two sites which broadly correspond to the Grove Lane site. The policy table says the following of the Grove Lane site: "Masterplan prepared for site to include residential and Business B1 uses. Will need to be done in phased manner. Some occupiers will need relocating.". Area 9 is listed as a housing allocation to which SADDPD Policy SAD1 applies. SAD1 supports residential development and states that other uses appropriate for residential areas, such as health facilities, community facilities and local shops, may be acceptable where there is a gap in service provision and where they can be integrated successfully into the residential environment.

Supplementary planning guidance on residential design (Sandwell Council, 2014)

This guidance on residential design provides detailed design guidance for all aspects of new residential development. The comprehensive policy document sets out detailed design policies on a wide range of subject matter including highway design. It aims to raise residential quality consistently across the borough as well as ensuring that housing environments are attractive, integrated, accessible, flexible, comfortable, safe and identifiable for those people who live in the borough, as well as improve the perception of housing in Sandwell.

The guide is designed as a working document that enables developers, officers and other interested parties to reference detailed design policies linked to Building for Life 12 (BfL12).

Black Country Plan (emerging)

The Black Country Plan, which will replace the Black Country Core Strategy and the Sandwell Site Allocations and Delivery DPD, is currently being prepared. The draft plan (regulation 18) consultation took place in summer 2021. The outcomes will inform the next version of the plan, which is called the Publication Plan, and scheduled for consultation during 2022.

Planning applications

The area has not seen any significant change for several years except for the new hospital development and housing off Cranford Street. There have been a few key applications for some of the sites including a block of apartments and a multi-storey car-park, use of buildings for a Community Centre and Prayer Hall and demolition of one major building .

Appendix B: Grove Lane area - definition of parcels

Parcels

There are nine parcels in the Grove Lane area, defined on the basis of ownership and availability. They represent the way in which the pieces of the site may be able to come forward.

These parcels are:

- Parcel A: Heartlands Furniture,
- Parcel B: Heath Street Industrial Estate (north side of Heath Street)
- Parcel C: Pall Mall site
- Parcel D: Heath Street Industrial Estate (south side of Heath Street)
- Parcel E: Grove Street / Abberley Street (split into E1 (owned by the WMCA) and E2)
- Parcel F1: Eastern side of Halberton Street
- Parcel F2 and G2: Moilliett Street Park
- Parcel H: Western side of Halberton Street
- Parcel J: London Street

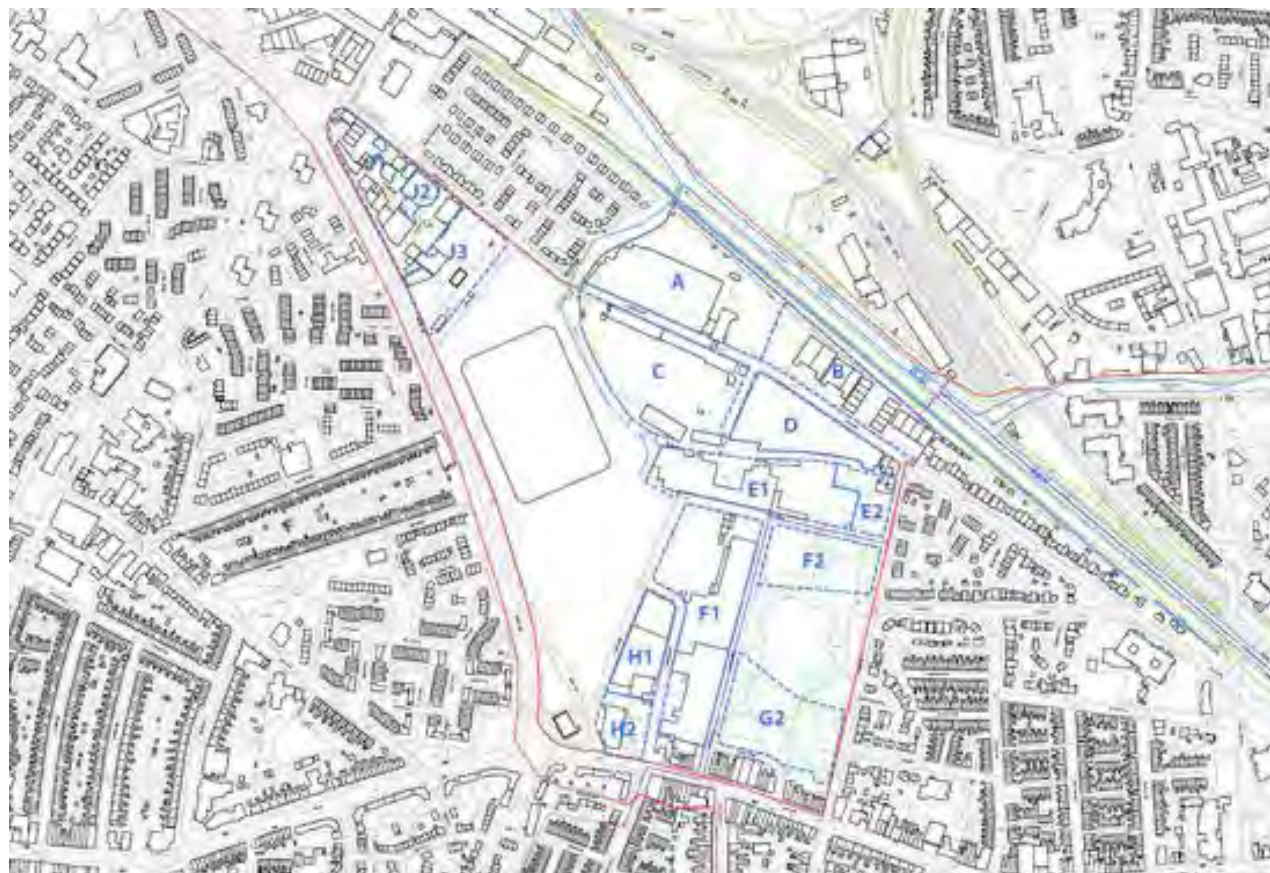


Fig. 6.1 - Land parcels plan

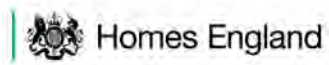
Grove Lane Area		800 homes, defined in the Grove Lane SPD (2011)
Parcel A: Heartlands Furniture, north side of Cranford Street	Site bounded by the old canal to the north and Cranford Street to the south and occupied by two storey red brick industrial warehouses.	
Parcel B: Heath Street Industrial Estate (north side of Heath Street)	Site bounded by Heath Street to the south and the canal to the north and occupied by a series of warehouses in industrial use	
Parcel C: Pall Mall site	Site bounded by Cranford Street to the north and Cape Arm / the former canal line to the south. Occupied by former industrial buildings to the north, and parking to the inner areas. Site appears to house the project office and parking for the hospital project. Frontage to the remaining canal arm to the west.	
Parcel D: Heath Street Industrial Estate (south side of Heath Street)	Site bounded by Heath Street to the north and by the access road to the south (the access road comes off Abberley Street). Occupied by densely packed light industrial warehouses	
Grove Lane Area		800 homes, defined in the Grove Lane SPD (2011)
Parcel E: Grove Street / Abberley Street (1.3ha) Status: north of Abberley Street owned by WMCA	[E1] The site ownership extends to the full length of Abberley Street, and to the line of the former canal on the northern side. No planning application has been submitted. The site gained demolition consent on 1 February 2021. [E2] The eastern end of the parcel is outside of the ownership of WMCA	
Parcel F1: Eastern side of Halberton Street	Site occupied by a series of larger commercial and industrial uses, including Orbit International, Golden Foods and open storage for Thandi Coaches. Dominated by large, low rise warehouses and industrial buildings. Little frontage to Moilliett Street Park.	
Parcel H: Western side of Halberton Street	[H1] Site occupied by various industries in low rise industrial buildings. [H2] Former cinema located on Dudley Road frontage in a prominent position now used for worship, surrounded by hardstanding used for parking and storage / metal recycling.	

Grove Lane Area		800 homes, defined in the Grove Lane SPD (2011)
Parcel J: London Street	<p>Triangle of land in mixed industrial use that includes car sales, van hire and a petrol station. Opposite the Aurora development, and adjacent to the major roundabout to the north on the A457.</p> <p>[J1] Small area bounded by Grove Lane and Cranford Street with a mix of industrial, commercial and retail uses</p> <p>[J2] Building on Cranford Way owned by WMCA, who have ambitions to develop residential block on the site, preferably as part of a wider approach.</p> <p>[J3] Southern side (between Fawdry Street and London Street) has a planning application pending.</p>	<p>[J3] Proposed erection of a multi-storey car park and a mixed-use building of between 6 and 9 storeys to include 201 dwellings and commercial floorspace (flexible within Use Classes A1 (shops), A2 (financial and professional), A3 (restaurants), A4 (drinking establishments), A5 (hot food takeaways), D2 (assembly and leisure) or mix thereof), office (Use Class B1) plus associated amenity space and demolition of existing buildings].</p>

Appendix C:

Reference image copyrights

<i>Page no.</i>	<i>Project name and location</i>	<i>Developer</i>	<i>Architect / Landscape architect</i>	<i>Local authority</i>	<i>Image credit</i>
Page 51, fig. 5.19 Page 81, fig. 5.75	Kings Crescent Estate Phase 3 & 4 or Barley Court, 3 Casbeard Street, London N4 2GD	-	Karakusevic Carson Architects / KCA / Muf architecture/art	The London Borough of Hackney	Photograph © Jim Stephenson



Sandwell MBC

Smethwick to Birmingham Corridor Framework and Grove Lane Masterplan

Consultation Statement

February 2022



Birmingham City Council & Sandwell Council

Smethwick to Birmingham Corridor Framework and Grove Lane Masterplan Consultation Statement

1. Introduction

Birmingham City Council and Sandwell Council consulted on the Draft Smethwick to Birmingham Corridor Framework Document and Grove Lane Masterplan from 18th October to Friday 3rd December 2021. This statement sets out the engagement strategy, describes the level and type of responses received, the main issues raised and how they have been addressed in the final Documents. The statement has been prepared in accordance with Birmingham Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

2. Purpose

The Smethwick to Birmingham Corridor Framework has been produced jointly by Birmingham City Council and Sandwell Council. The area covers the corridor of the BCN Main Line and Soho Way/Dudley Road between Smethwick Galton Bridge Station (in Sandwell MBC) and the Ladywood Middleway ('the Corridor).

The purpose of the Area Framework is to promote coordinated regeneration and redevelopment within the Corridor. This includes a vision and guiding principles for the future development of the Corridor, design and development principles for the main regeneration sites, and a transport strategy.

Alongside, and informed by, Corridor Framework a masterplan has been prepared for the Grove Lane area of Sandwell immediately surrounding the new hospital, but also extending to include Moilliett Street Park in Birmingham.

3. Engagement Approach

The preparation of the Framework and Grove Lane Masterplan were undertaken at a time of national coronavirus restrictions and purdah in advance of local elections in Sandwell Borough. Notwithstanding that a webinar for local stakeholders and community organisations was held on 11th March 2021 via MS Teams at which the corridor and its main development sites were introduced and the draft vision and objectives shared.

Also in March a website for the project **smethwicktobirminghamcorridor.com** was set up as a platform for individuals and organisations to register their interest in the project and complete a short questionnaire. 29 people responded to register their interest and/or complete the questionnaire.

The project was introduced at the North Edgbaston Ward Forum meeting on 3rd December 2020 and briefings for ward members were held electronically on 10th March and 10th May 2021.

The Corridor Framework and Masterplan project was presented initially to the Smethwick Town Members Board on 25 February 2021 and updates on progress reported at subsequent meetings. Details of the consultation event were circulated to Members at the meeting on 14 October 2021.

In addition, as two Town Deal projects fall within the Corridor Framework area, details of the consultation were shared with the Smethwick Town Deal Local Board at meetings held on 18 August, 28 October and 18 November 2021 and Superboard on 23 September 2021.

The draft Corridor Framework and Masterplan were uploaded onto the City Council's website with an opportunity to comment via BeHeard (the City Councils engagement website) through a structured survey. Links to the consultation were similarly posted on Sandwell Council's website. The documents and survey were also hosted on the dedicated project website www.smethwicktobirminghamcorridor.com.

Emails and / or letters were sent to all contacts on the Planning and Development Consultation Database, including:

- Residents associations
- Community groups
- Neighbourhood forums
- Ward councillors
- Local Members of Parliament
- Local educational institutions
- West Midlands Combined Authority
- Neighbouring local authorities
- Chambers of commerce
- Local Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)
- Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership
- Disability user groups
- Landowners
- Developers and agents

Additionally, emails were sent to those who had registered their interest in the project earlier in the year.

Flyers advertising the consultation and how to respond were delivered to approximately 750 residential properties in Winson Green in the area between Dudley Road, Heath Street and Winson Street.

Sandwell Council also notified relevant consultees and interested stakeholders of the consultation, and shared the consultation on the council's Twitter and Facebook sites.

Hard copies of the consultation documents were placed at the Council's offices at Woodcock Street and in Spring Hill Library and Smethwick Library (in Sandwell) and at Sandwell Council House. Flyers advertising the consultation were also provided to the libraries to be distributed to persons expressing interest. A3 Posters advertising the consultation were put up in the foyer of the Tesco superstore on Dudley Road, the foyer of the Summerfield Community Centre and at Sandwell Council House.

On Wednesday 3rd November and Saturday 20th November officers of Birmingham and Sandwell Councils stood outside Lidl on Dudley Road and Smethwick Library with pull up banners and distributed flyers to raise awareness of the consultation. Officers presence on these dates was advertised on the Birmingham Be Heard website and by email to stakeholders. At these events officers discussed the proposals with members of the public.

On 15th November 2021 a special Edgbaston Ward Forum was held via MS Teams. The meeting was attended by 20 residents. At the meeting officers presented the consultation documents including the transport strategy and then a Q&A session was held.

The public consultation ran for seven weeks from Monday 18th October 2021 to Friday 3rd December 2021. Due to continuing high Covid 19 case rates in the area and government guidance to meet outside where possible it was decided not to hold indoor public meetings.

4. Responses

The consultation held in October to December 2021 received responses from 39 people and organisations. These comprised 14 emails/letters and 25 responses to the online questionnaire. A further 30 residents registered during the consultation period to receive further information about the project but did not complete the online questionnaire.

The main points raised during the consultation are summarised below:

- There was support from several respondents to improving biodiversity within the corridor and more detail was sought on this.
- There was a high level of support from respondents for active travel improvements, including reallocation of space away from motorised vehicles/parking.
- A number of respondents sought clarification on future plans for bus routes linked to the new hospital.
- There were divergent views on densities. Some responses considered densities to be too high whereas others considered them too low.
- There was support from several respondents for retaining historic buildings in the area and the contribution these could make to regeneration. Some respondents sought a stronger commitment to the retention of such buildings.
- Some respondents sought greater clarity as to the intended planning status of the Corridor Framework and Grove Lane Masterplan. Some respondents raised the issue of consistency with the new Black Country Plan (in Sandwell Borough).

- A number of respondents expressed support for a new railway station in the corridor. A number of respondents highlighted issues with levels of traffic and parking. There was considerable support for active travel provision.

In response to the representations the following principal changes have been made (additional changes are detailed in the responses to individual comments below):

- New text added to both the Framework and the Masterplan to make clear their planning status.
- Additional references to biodiversity have been incorporated into the Framework City Hospital section and expansion of the 'Green Corridor' text on Framework page 33.
- A number of the maps in the Framework were amended to clarify the identification of non-designated heritage assets.
- The cycle network map in the Framework has been updated to fully reflect the Dudley Road Improvement Scheme.
- Additional text on digital infrastructure.

Further details of the representations and how they have shaped the final Corridor Framework and Grove Lane Masterplan are provided in the schedule of comments received below.

Schedule of comments received and the council's response

Consultee	Main issue raised	Officer response and how the issue has been addressed
Victorian Society	The former Chance's Glassworks and the Soho Foundry sites should be included within the corridor framework area.	Sandwell Council considered the inclusion of these sites within the corridor at the outset of the project. It was decided that this would extend the corridor area too far and reduce its focus. However, Sandwell Council is working with the owners of both sites to develop their proposals.
Victorian Society	There should be some provision in Moilliett Street Park for interpreting the demolished Grade II* listed Bellefield Inn.	Wording added to the Grove Lane masterplan to reflect this aspiration.
Natural England	Agree SEA not required.	Noted
Historic England	Agree SEA not required.	Noted
Historic England	Generally supportive but express concern that the retention of historic buildings could be put in doubt by the proposed provision of a dual track cycleway on Cranford Street.	The buildings in question are non-designated heritage assets. Provision of a segregated cycleway in Cranford Street is one of the options being considered for delivering the missing link in the cycle network between Rolfe Street Station and the Birmingham City Council Dudley Road Improvement Scheme. While it would be desirable to retain these buildings, it is considered that the public benefits of delivering a cycle track would likely outweigh their loss. The buildings are also in a poor condition and it may not, therefore, be viable to retain and refurbish for future use.
Historic England	Timeline on page 16 should refer to late 1800s population growth	Change made

Consultee	Main issue raised	Officer response and how the issue has been addressed
Historic England	Retention of non-designated heritage assets should be considered further in relation to the city hospital site. There would be opportunities to incorporate the Victorian element within any wider scheme that may come forward as set out on P.55	<p>The guidance in the Framework is that the LPA wishes to see the retention of the Victorian infirmary building.</p> <p>However, any decision on the retention of the buildings on the City Hospital will be considered at the planning application stage informed by evidence including heritage advice, viability advice and design advice.</p>

Consultee	Main issue raised	Officer response and how the issue has been addressed
Historic England	on p. 52's statement that because of the location of the site within easy access of the city centre, there is some potential for higher density and higher rise living: "This seems a spurious statement since there is no sound evidence base to suggest that higher rise living would be appropriate at this location. The implications go beyond the parameters of Policy GA2 of BCC's BDP 2017 and we would question the inclusion of this statement and the message it is implying within the SPD."	<p>Birmingham City Council do not consider that there is a conflict between this statement and Policy GA2. Accordingly, no change is proposed.</p> <p>The current City Hospital campus is defined by a significant number of buildings of scale. The re-development of the site should promote an efficient re-use of this sustainably located brownfield site, close to the City Centre. The scale and density of the re-development will also need to respond to the local context including hospital buildings that are to be retained (for example, treatment centre, multi-storey carpark, eye hospital) in addition to the scale and massing of development in surrounding areas including high density development at Soho Wharf. These factors suggest that a higher density development could be appropriate here, but development will also need to be sensitive to neighbouring properties to the west as well as considering other issues such as identified housing needs and local housing market conditions. These issues will be considered further at the planning application stage.</p>
Canal & River Trust	On page 21 of the Framework it should be flagged up that the Smethwick Galton Valley Pumping Station is Grade II listed	Change made.
Canal & River Trust	On page 24 of the Framework, plan 7 the Enterprise Centre masterplan should refer to the adjacent Scheduled monument and designated heritage assets on the canal here.	Change made.

Consultee	Main issue raised	Officer response and how the issue has been addressed
Canal & River Trust	Page 24, Plan 7 appears to show a new crossing alongside the Engine Arm Aqueduct. This would not be supported because of its impact on the Grade II* listed aqueduct.	Reference to a new crossing deleted.
Canal & River Trust	Biodiversity should be included in all of the main area-based sections of the framework and there should be more reference to it in the Grove Lane Masterplan. For example, Soho Loop currently has a fantastic "green feel" that should be maintained / enhanced by the City Hospital development.	<p>Changes made to reference green feel of the canal in the city hospital text and enhance text on page 33.</p> <p>Large buildings and areas of hard standing occupy areas near to the canal edge. The treatment of this edge and opportunities to green it will be considered at the planning application stage.</p>
Canal & River Trust	error within the Grove Lane Masterplan in terms of the route for the pedestrian / cycle way along the Cape Arm, which is currently shown on the wrong side. We have agreed with Sandwell Council to design and construct this on the Smethwick side (as opposed to Birmingham side) of the Cape Arm	Change made.
Canal & River Trust	Query the need for another bridge link across from City Hospital to All Saints Park as shown on plan 30, consider that improved routes using existing links would be sufficient here. Express concerns in terms of the deliverability and construction of a further canal crossing given the available land.	The guidance in the Framework is to seek a new canal crossing to All Saints Park, but this will be subject to technical design and delivery agreements.
Canal & River Trust	The proposed bridge link from the Soho Loop (Soho Wharf) development which is currently under construction provides linkage with the towpath which would provide a more direct access for residents to get towards Edgbaston Reservoir and the city centre.	Bridge within the Soho Loop development added to the plans.

Consultee	Main issue raised	Officer response and how the issue has been addressed
Canal & River Trust	Signage / wayfinding should be integrated and co-ordinated between the different modes of movement.	There is already reference to signage wayfinding in the walking part of the transport strategy, this has been amended to reference coordinating between different modes.
Canal & River Trust	We would like to see the document specifically include aspirations for integrating/linking the boating communities at Hockley Port and Engine Arm to the wider communities	While this would be a worthwhile aspiration, it is not clear what action in line with the development framework could be taken to achieve this. Therefore no change has been made.
Canal & River Trust	We note there is another link / bridge indicated towards Winson Green Bridge, but it is not really clear how / why this is included other than as an aspiration.	No new bridge is proposed near to Winson Green Bridge.
Canal & River Trust	It would appear that there would be instances of side elevations and private gardens facing the Cape Arm waterside. The visualisations/plans also suggest some tight spaces on the towpath aside active frontages which seemingly have little margin for spill out/shared space. Clearly there is a further level of design detail that would be required at the application stage, however we would recommend firming up the proposals within parameter plans showing building footprints proximity, height, towpath active and frontage directions and setting out that side elevations and private gardens to the canal should be avoided.	With the exception of the retained building line along Cranford Street, where the buildings will turn the corner onto the canal arm, the intention is for frontages to be provided along this edge. This ambition is set out in the character area, where it states that a continuous built edge should be provided to create a positive relationship with the canal arm. The detailed design stage will address how the buildings turn the corner, to make sure this positive edge is achieved.
Canal & River Trust	We would welcome reference being made within the document to the need to ensure that any development on the Grove Lane site would not undermine the stability or structural integrity of the canal infrastructure.	Text added to the Grove Lane Masterplan to reflect this.

Consultee	Main issue raised	Officer response and how the issue has been addressed
Canal & River Trust	Contact Maurice Bottomley of the Trust about the potential for thermal energy from the canal, and nearby Rotton Park Reservoir.	Sandwell Council has contacted Mr Bottomley.
Pall Mall Investments	Support proposals for residential use of site north of Midland Metropolitan Hospital	Noted
Pall Mall Investments	Status of the documents needs to be clarified. If they are SPDs this needs to be clear on the front of the documents and they should identify the development plan policies to which they are supplementary	Only the document proposed to be adopted as an SPD at this stage is the Corridor Framework and only within Birmingham. This document is not being adopted as an SPD in Sandwell because changes are needed through the new Black Country Plan to ensure alignment with the development plan.
Pall Mall Investments	The following types of development on the Grove Lane site are not viable/attractive to developers: high rise buildings, four storey town houses, undercroft/underground car parking, apartments, courtyard-style perimeter blocks.	The precedent imagery illustrates the townscape/character ambitions for the area. The masterplan has inherent flexibility in its typologies to allow it to adapt to changing market requirements.
Pall Mall Investments	Remove reference to retention of bridge structure across Cranford Street these are post-war additions and their retention won't be viable. All reference to retaining historic buildings should be qualified as subject to technical feasibility and viability.	Reference to the bridge structure being a landmark has been removed, but the proposed text qualification in relation to all historic buildings is considered to be unnecessary.

Consultee	Main issue raised	Officer response and how the issue has been addressed
Pall Mall Investments	The scale of new open space proposed on the Grove Lane site will not be achievable, query decision to develop on Moilliett Street park	The Grove Lane Masterplan recognises that it may not be possible to meet the full Sandwell Council standards for quantum of open space within the development area. However, as a significant residential population is envisaged and existing open space provision within the area is limited it would not be acceptable to further reduce/dispense with the open space, as suggested. Development of part of Moilliett Street Park is intended to facilitate improvements to the security, attractiveness and use of this space,
Pall Mall Investments	Consider both documents are seeking unrealistically to increase density on the site. Masterplan Page 50 indicative capacity for Cape Arm character area based on 80dph is unrealistically high and won't match market demand. Bottom range should be set at 70 homes (35dph).	The densities are informed by market analysis/advice. Other respondents seek higher densities. The proposed densities are considered to strike an appropriate balance.
Pall Mall Investments	Proposed widening of Cranford Street would create excessive carriageway widths which would not be good for pedestrians. Query why widening is proposed only on the southern side. Framework page 42 on pedestrian and cycle networks should include text on Cranford Street widening 'these proposals should be subject to further technical and feasibility work demonstrating that there is a robust and justified case for the requirements set out in the Masterplan'	Proposed widening is for enhanced cycling and walking provision. There is sufficient description of issues relating to this in the text. No additional text considered necessary.
Pall Mall Investments	Framework and masterplan should clarify whether or not developments themselves are intended to be net zero	This clarification is unnecessary as the framework does not and could not introduce such a requirement.

Consultee	Main issue raised	Officer response and how the issue has been addressed
Pall Mall Investments	Framework chapter 3 page 37 should be clarified to say that the Grove Lane Masterplan is illustrative and strategic and subject to both market demand and development viability as and when sites come forward.	This clarification is considered unnecessary.
Pall Mall Investments	The following Framework proposals should be qualified as being subject to feasibility and viability: page 38 and 39 objectives on layout principles, focal buildings, heritage and canals, and movement networks.	As the Grove Lane Masterplan and Smethwick Corridor Framework are non-statutory in Sandwell, clarifying every proposal as being subject to feasibility and viability is not considered to be necessary.
Pall Mall Investments	Framework page 40 aspirations for comprehensive development should be caveated to be 'as far as possible'	The partners maintain an aspiration to comprehensive development.
Pall Mall Investments	Framework Plans 23, 27 and 28 and diagram 2 should be marked as 'illustrative/indicative'	As the Grove Lane Masterplan and Smethwick Corridor Framework are non-statutory in Sandwell, labelling this plan as indicative is not necessary.
Pall Mall Investments	Page 12 of the masterplan should add the following to its viability and delivery text: further work will be required at the development management stage to ensure that the proposals are aligned with market demand and are viable and deliverable'.	This amendment is considered to be unnecessary.
Pall Mall Investments	Masterplan page 31 additional text should make clear the preferred option is illustrative and subject to further viability analysis.	This amendment is considered to be unnecessary.

Consultee	Main issue raised	Officer response and how the issue has been addressed
Pall Mall Investments	The following masterplan requirements should be qualified as subject to feasibility/market demand and viability: page 21 reference to tall building of up to 10 storeys; page 28 the description of house types; page 29 references to layout principles, focal buildings and heritage buildings; page 32 discouragement of cul-de-sacs; page 34 commercial and community uses; page 35 retention of heritage buildings; page 36 tall buildings; page 37 parking; page 38 landmark buildings; page 50 buildings fronting public square	As the Grove Lane Masterplan and Smethwick Corridor Framework are non-statutory in Sandwell, clarifying every proposal as being subject to feasibility and viability is not considered to be necessary.
Pall Mall Investments	Masterplan Page 34 Figure 4.11 flatted element should be moved so that it faces the Cape Arm.	The flatted development at this node has been located to address the two key spines: the canal arm and the green link. The taller element on the corner plays a vital role in connecting the two primary areas of open space, which both present the opportunity for flatted development. Flats overlook what is potentially the widest area of the canal arm, with the heights stepping down to the west to a townhouse typology with front doors onto the street, activating the space and introducing a human scale to the space.
Pall Mall Investments	Masterplan at page 50 should be clear that learning campus won't preclude development of residential if it doesn't come forward	Text added to clarify that residential would be considered if Learning Campus not pursued in the future.
Pall Mall Investments	Key principle 8, page 52 requirement for 3m canal footways is excessive, more than what is there already, should be deleted	The council disagree, there is an opportunity to enhance the canal paths through development and this should be taken.
Birmingham Civic Society	Commend the councils collaborative working on the framework	Noted

Consultee	Main issue raised	Officer response and how the issue has been addressed
Birmingham Civic Society	Bus services could also be enhanced along Icknield Port Road to allow the Port Loop/Edgbaston Reservoir area to have enhanced services to Birmingham City Centre and Smethwick.	The 80 service route serves this area and is currently every 12 mins weekday daytime. As well as serving West Bromwich and Birmingham city centre, it has interchange opportunities with the 8, 11 and 82/87. Frequency of this route will be kept under review as new development occurs in the corridor.
Birmingham Civic Society	The feasibility of providing a railway station on the New Street to Smethwick Rolfe Street line to serve the Grove Lane area and in particular MMUH could be investigated – as the crow flies the distance between entrance of the MMUH and the railway line at the Soho EMU Depot is less than 500 metres. Consideration could also be given to the provision of a station in the City Hospital-Port Loop area.	We agree this would be desirable, but Network Rail has advised that “there is no feasible way, without a significant investment in capacity above what is proposed by HS2 and Midlands Rail Hub, that will enable a station in this location to be reliably served by a credible train service”. West Midlands Rail Executive (WMRE) will consider the issue further as part of West Midlands wide rail development work on potential new stations.
Birmingham Civic Society	Although there are no listed buildings at the City Hospital site heritage assets (such as the Gothic Infirmary entrance building) should be retained and incorporated into the new development	Noted, the current Corridor Framework text anticipates this but the retention and conversion will be subject to technical feasibility and financial viability.
Birmingham Civic Society	Housing should be low carbon	It is not within the scope or powers of the framework SPD to set building sustainability or energy usage standards. These are proposed to be set nationally through the Building Regulations under the Future Homes Standard but will also be considered as part of the new Birmingham Plan (BDP review)
Birmingham Civic Society	Icknield Square/Freeth Street site should be designed to enhance the links between Port Loop and Ladywood Middleway/Birmingham City Centre.	Text added to Framework page 57 to reflect this point.

Consultee	Main issue raised	Officer response and how the issue has been addressed
Birmingham Civic Society	Welcome the commitment on page 51 for appropriate lighting in high-use areas along the canal to increase security and encourage use	Noted
Birmingham Civic Society	Comment on the importance of the Grove Lane Masterplan and links to Birmingham with regard providing 800 new homes and a new hospital, providing medical facilities and being a major employer.	Noted
Birmingham Civic Society	Accessibility to Birmingham [from the new hospital] is important – not only along the corridor to Birmingham City Centre but also to the south to Bearwood/Harborne/QE Hospital and the north to Handsworth.	Noted. A workstream led by Transport for West Midlands is underway on planning new bus service enhancements and new shelters to serve the new hospital. Further consultation with residents will take place in relation to this.
Birmingham Civic Society	A small bus station similar to the one at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital but with comfortable waiting facilities should be included at the MMUH entrance	Noted. A workstream led by Transport for West Midlands is underway on planning new bus service enhancements and new shelters to serve the new hospital. Further consultation with residents will take place in relation to this.
Birmingham Civic Society	Support for Smethwick Heat Network, Cape Arm Moorings	Noted
Birmingham Civic Society	The lack of certainty regarding the retention of some of the heritage industrial buildings, their loss could result in loss of character of the area. Adaptive reuse of buildings is important from an environmental perspective.	Encouragement will be given to retention of heritage industrial buildings where possible and viable to do so. In addition, where redevelopment does take place, inclusion of interpretation of or reference to the industrial heritage/history within the new development will be encouraged.
Birmingham Civic Society	Need clarity over where industrial tenants will go to	This concern is mainly applicable to Grove Lane. A relocation strategy workstream is underway
Birmingham Civic Society	Biodiversity is not discussed in any detail	Text added to Framework page 33.

Consultee	Main issue raised	Officer response and how the issue has been addressed
Birmingham Civic Society	There doesn't appear to be any commitment to housing standards - though there are various images of successful schemes elsewhere, how will quality, both in terms of aesthetic appearance and spatial performance be managed in practice?	In practice the development management process, through application of development plan and supplementary policy – such as the Sandwell Residential Design Guide and the Birmingham Design Guide – is the council's main mechanism for seeking to ensure quality. However where land is assembled for development by public sector agencies there is potential for the use of their powers as landowners to support quality.
Future Garments Limited	Landowner of land within Grove Lane Masterplan area. Generally supportive but requests councils engage with them.	Sandwell Council will make contact with the landowner as suggested.
Future Garments Limited	Recommend that the next stage of the Black Country Plan Review matches the Councils' aspirations for the delivery of an indicative 200 to 220 residential dwellings at a density of up to 105 dph in Character Area 7, as set out in the dFD and the dGLM.	Sandwell Council will work with the Black Country Plan team to ensure the next version of the Black Country Plan is aligned with the Grove Lane Masterplan and Corridor Framework.
Metropolitan Holdings (Birmingham) Ltd	The status of both documents needs to be explicitly stated within each document.	This change has been made.
Metropolitan Holdings (Birmingham) Ltd	The provisions differ in these documents to those of the emerging Black Country Plan.	Sandwell Council will work with the Black Country Plan team to ensure the next version of the Black Country Plan is aligned with the Grove Lane Masterplan and Corridor Framework.

Consultee	Main issue raised	Officer response and how the issue has been addressed
Metropolitan Holdings (Birmingham) Ltd	Object to the proposals in their current form, as they relate to the land to the north of the Midlands Metropolitan Hospital (MMH) in that they fail to make the most effective use of the land. Suggest Masterplan should support taller buildings here. States that Sandwell Council's planning committee did not object to 200 dwellings or proposed building height of 6-9 storeys on parcel J3.	The densities are informed by market analysis/advice. and the proposed densities are considered to strike an appropriate balance. The Masterplan suggests the preferred building type and height in principle, with the detail of any proposed scheme will need to be discussed at pre or planning application stage with reference to the masterplan once approved.
Environment Agency	Support for six guiding principles.	noted
Environment Agency	Support for development corridors, suggest "Perennial wild flowers, flowering native shrubs and small flowering/fruited trees or multi-function corridors such as Sustainable Urban Drainage swales with wetland plants would all provide multiple benefits to biodiversity, water management, climate change and carbon reduction."	Text added to the Framework 'Corridor Projects green corridor' on page 33 to address this point.
Environment Agency	Canals: "efforts to establish marginal vegetation would be very beneficial to biodiversity and the aesthetics of these areas" suggest also "opportunities to install flowering islands e.g Thamesmead canal"	Text added to the Framework 'Corridor Projects green corridor' on page 33 to address this point.
Environment Agency	Parks: suggest cutting and bedding plants is a waste of resources. Recommend "The only areas that really need to be regularly cut are those for access, sports and resting" recommend "Perennial wildflower areas only require 1-2 cuts per year and can be zones to grade into flowering shrubs, scrub and flowering/fruited trees". Also recommend edible plants.	Arrangements for management of parks are beyond the scope of the development framework and a decision for the councils' respective parks departments.

Consultee	Main issue raised	Officer response and how the issue has been addressed
Environment Agency	If brownfield land is developed or formalised this needs to be done in a sensitive manor in order to preserve habitat and biodiversity resource. Specifically reference land at Heath Street.	Text added to Framework p.57 to address this point.
Resident	Concern over delivery "Many proposals are good, but as yet there is no clear idea of how they will actually be funded".	This is a fair comment. The intention of the partner organisations working together is to maximise prospects of securing delivery of the changes and funding to support deliver.
Resident	Car domination is a key feature of this corridor and has numerous downsides. Pedestrian travel is not generally pleasant, cycling does not feel safe, the buses are not reliable and in recent times the trains are not reliable either.	We agree and the transport strategy sets out steps to make non-car modes more attractive.
Resident	On page 34, the cycling map does not appear to show the segregated cycle paths promised in the so called "Birmingham City Council (BCC) Dudley Road Major Scheme". Why not?	The map has been amended to properly reflect the cycle improvements in the Dudley Road Improvement Scheme. The has been amended to show blue arrow going south to Summerfield Park.
Resident	Concern about the Dudley Road improvement scheme facilitating increased car traffic levels within the corridor	The Dudley Road improvement scheme is a committed and funded scheme. It is not being reconsulted upon as part of the corridor framework.

Consultee	Main issue raised	Officer response and how the issue has been addressed
Resident	Introduce a new railway station in the southern-most part of the Framework area. Ideally located on the West Coast Main Line and historically a railway station (by Spring Hill Industrial Estate). New railway station could include facilities to promote active travel. The delivery of a new station will also enable enhanced landscaping and greening of the canal, where it may be possible to integrate access to the station from the towpath in a similar fashion to Bournville and University stations.	We agree this would be desirable, but Network Rail has advised that “there is no feasible way, without a significant investment in capacity above what is proposed by HS2 and Midlands Rail Hub, that will enable a station in this location to be reliably served by a credible train service”. West Midlands Rail Executive (WMRE) will consider the issue further as part of West Midlands wide rail development work on potential new stations.
Resident	Spring Hill Industrial Estate has potential for redevelopment in the future to complement the new residential uses at Port Loop and Soho Wharf.	This will be considered through the review of the Birmingham Plan.
Resident	Purpose of cycle links not clear, which age group of the community are they for?	<p>The cycle links will improve conditions for cycling for local trips of residents and for longer trips as part of wider increased cycling in the corridor and beyond.</p> <p>LTN 1/20 design guidance for cycling by the Department for Transport (DfT) requires that provision needs to be suitable for anyone 8 to 80 years and beyond.</p>

Consultee	Main issue raised	Officer response and how the issue has been addressed
Resident	Improvements to buses and transport don't go far enough.	A workstream led by Transport for West Midlands is underway on planning bus service enhancements and new shelters to serve the new hospital. Further consultation with residents will take place in relation to this. This will further improve bus provision in the corridor. Many other schemes and measures in the strategy will significantly improve conditions for public transport, walking and cycling
Resident	Seeks investment in GPs, chemists, leisure	Ladywood Leisure Centre, part of the Port Loop development area, opened in 2019. The developments at Port Loop and potentially also City Hospital and Grove Lane will include space for non-residential uses which could include GPs and chemists if there is demand.
Resident	Should retain as many industrial buildings as possible.	The framework and Grove Lane masterplan both identify historic buildings which should be retained. They also support the objective of heritage-led regeneration. As many of these characterful industrial buildings in the corridor are non-designated, paragraph 203 of the National Planning Policy Framework will apply. This requires the effect of planning applications on such assets to be taken into account and a balanced view reached.
Sport England	The planning status of the Grove Lane Masterplan should be made clear.	This has been clarified in the text.

Consultee	Main issue raised	Officer response and how the issue has been addressed
Sport England	Sport England would advocate an amendment to the objectives (of both Masterplan and Framework) referencing the aspiration to create a place that promotes physical activity (ie. an active environment) including through active means of travel.	The framework sets as an objective the area becoming an 'active travel exemplar' it also sets an objective of greening the corridor. It is considered that these objectives will further the goal of creating a place that promoted physical activity without specific use of these words being needed.
Sport England	Framework misses the opportunity to recognise the importance of the role of Victoria Park, Summerfield Park and Edgbaston Reservoir to meet proposed residents needs for facilities for sport and physical activity. Existing parks and opens spaces would benefit from investment, there is no reference to this in the masterplan or framework.	Victoria Park and Edgbaston Reservoir are outside of the corridor area.
Sport England	The linear open space to connect to the canal is supported in principle but Cranford Street bisects it so priority needs to be given to cycling and pedestrians in this space.	Thank you for your comment. This is a detailed design matter that will need to be resolved later. We agree that priority should be given to active travel in this space.
Sport England	Grove Lane Masterplan should reference improved links to Victoria Park	The Grove Lane Masterplan identifies as an objective on page 29: "Enable clearer and safer links between development parcels and nearby centres and facilities". Local facilities includes Victoria Park.
Sport England	Support primary school next to park. Support larger school site options in Grove Lane as this would allow provision of a playing field which is not possible in the smaller school site option.	Noted.

Consultee	Main issue raised	Officer response and how the issue has been addressed
Sport England	Lack of opportunities for physical activity within the City Hospital development is a concern. The improvements to connectivity via a new bridge to All Saints Park is supported. Opportunities to strengthen links for walking and cycling to and from Summerfield Park and Edgbaston Reservoir should be referenced.	The guidance in the Framework is to seek a new canal crossing to All Saints Park, but this will be subject to technical design and delivery agreements.
Sport England	Missed opportunity to identify opportunity to undertake improvements to open space at Perry Street/Dartmouth Road/Great Arthur Street	This open space is outside of the corridor area.
Theatres Trust	Theatres Trust is supportive of the key principles for Site H2, the former Grove. This non-designated heritage asset is worthy of retention and would benefit from refurbishment. There is great merit in returning this building to community/cultural use as envisaged within the Masterplan.	Noted.
Be Heard respondent (works in area)	The retention and reuse of historic buildings will enhance the sense of place	We agree.
Inland Waterways Association	Wish to see 1. Enhanced/new residential and visitor moorings along the Main Line Canal through the Smethwick to Birmingham Corridor 2. Provision of a service block with all necessary boater facilities at an appropriate location along the Main Line Canal	Opportunities for residential moorings are referenced in the Grove Lane section of the Corridor Framework. Provision of a service block is a detailed matter beyond the scope of the Corridor Framework.

Consultee	Main issue raised	Officer response and how the issue has been addressed
Inland Waterways Association	<p>On the Cape Arm they wish to see:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Restoration of the Cape Arm to full navigability 2. Restoration to full navigability of the junction between the Cape Arm and the Main Line Canal 3. Provision on the Cape Arm of both residential and visitor moorings 4. Provision of a service block with all necessary boater facilities on the Cape Arm 	<p>We note the aspirations, but it is not at present considered feasible to restore navigability between the Cape Arm and Main Line.</p>
Inland Waterways Association	<p>The canal route would be considerably improved by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bringing into full use towpaths on both sides of the canal 2. Ensuring the safety of walkers and cyclists by establishing separate lanes for both types of user 	<p>Table 1 of the transport strategy section includes Scheme 21: "Canal towpath improvements, including 'dualling'"</p> <p>The widening of canal towpaths is not always possible due to restrictions on available space. For this reason, segregating cyclists and pedestrians is not possible, and it is understood to be a shared use path with communication and messaging to "share with care".</p>
Be Heard respondent (visitor to area)	<p>A large hospital like this will attract significant staff numbers and visitors from a wide area. The whole bus strategy needs rethinking to give physical connectivity on a radial route basis. Loss of the no 11 bus connection is a poor outcome.</p>	<p>A workstream led by Transport for West Midlands is underway on planning bus service enhancements and new shelters to serve the new hospital. Further consultation with residents will take place in relation to this.</p>

Consultee	Main issue raised	Officer response and how the issue has been addressed
Be Heard respondent (visitor to area)	Priority should be improving public transport and exploiting the industrial heritage with first priority Soho Foundry	<p>The Dudley Road Improvement Scheme and Cross City Bus Route Scheme are both funded. Construction has started on the Dudley Road scheme (Western Road junction). The Cross City Bus Route Scheme will be on-site in 2022. These will deliver significant improvements to public transport.</p> <p>The framework seeks to use industrial heritage as a catalyst for regeneration. Soho Foundry is outside of the corridor area.</p>
Be Heard respondent (visitor to area)	There should be proposals to show or interpret importance of the area to world history	New wording added to the 'Corridor Timeline' section of the Corridor Framework to reflect this ambition.
Resident	A solution to littering and fly tipping is needed	Noted but this is an operational matter outside of the scope of the framework and masterplan.
Be Heard respondent (works in the area)	Highlights issues of cleaning, waste, maintenance in area	Noted but these are operational matters outside of the scope of the framework and masterplan.
Be Heard respondent (works in the area)	More investment needed for residents already living in the corridor and their longstanding concerns should be taken into account	The framework seeks to ensure that investment in the corridor through regeneration will benefit existing residents as well as new residents.
Be Heard respondent (works in the area)	Hopes the consultation will be highlighted to the wider community	Efforts were made to highlight the consultation to as wide an audience as possible as detailed in the consultation statement above.
Be Heard respondent (works in the area)	The consultation is too focused on planning/building and needs to include other services	The focus of the corridor framework and masterplan are on planning and development, however, we work with other council services.

Consultee	Main issue raised	Officer response and how the issue has been addressed
Resident	More cycle lanes, less space for cars. More one-way single lane streets and wider pavements and cycle provisions.	The transport strategy contains many measures to improve conditions for walking and cycling and promote a mode shift from car use to sustainable transport.
Resident	Needs much higher residential densities, build tall and make this a walking and cycling neighbourhood	The Grove Lane masterplan is informed by market and viability advice. Based on that advice the proposed density is as high as we could reasonably go. The intention is to make this a walking and cycling focused neighbourhood.
Resident	I think this is a brilliant start to what could be a much more ambitious plan. It should be the total opposite to the awful new housing estate on Cranford Street behind the hospital site, which is a massive wasted opportunity. There should be absolutely no "classic" housing unless it is high density terrace. Build taller, build bolder, and make the most of this impressive site.	Thank you for your comments.
Resident	Would like to see bolder plans for Rolfe Street. Make it one way, or pedestrianise, put in a giant cycle lane, pivot away from vehicles and make it a centrepiece avenue which will attract investment	Comments are noted. Sandwell Council will be looking at the wider masterplanning of the Rolfe Street area during 2022 which will consider these issues.
Resident	Area has an opportunity to be the "Digbeth of Smethwick" and plans should reflect as such. There should be high density new housing mixed with heritage industrial assets, creating a mix of creative/hospitality/experience	Thank you for your positive image for the future of the area. We agree and the documents seek to incorporate your ideas.
Resident	Must link last mile to Bearwood etc to help make more useful and more users	The transport strategy sets out bus, walking and cycling links to areas adjoining the corridor.

Consultee	Main issue raised	Officer response and how the issue has been addressed
Other Be Heard respondent	<p>The wording of the key to plans 5, 21 and 30 is unclear (“Industrial/ heritages/ existing buildings and features for retention”) Does it mean heritage assets?</p> <p>P24 Enterprise Centre: Buildings highlighted within the Conservation Area Appraisal as having local heritage interest should be retained [“could” is too weak a word to use]</p>	<p>The key to plans 5, 21 and 30 has been amended to state that these buildings are non-designated heritage assets.</p> <p>The Smethwick Enterprise Centre is currently being considered as part of Smethwick Town Investment Plan and whilst they are not statutorily protected buildings, their potential reuse is being assessed. No change to the wording is considered necessary.</p>
Other Be Heard respondent	<p>p52 The original Victorian buildings on the City Hospital site are non-designated heritage assets and they contribute to the character of the area.</p> <p>p54 Retained buildings. The intention to retain the Gothic infirmary frontage building facing Dudley Road is strongly welcomed. Retention of this building should be a requirement. The final sentence "Retention and conversion will be subject to technical feasibility and financial viability" should be deleted.</p>	<p>The guidance in the Framework is that the LPA wishes to see the retention of the Victorian infirmary building.</p> <p>However, any decision on the retention of the buildings on the City Hospital will be considered at the planning application stage e informed by evidence including heritage advice, viability advice and design advice.</p>
Resident	<p>Plan too car focused. Need to remove car lanes and replace them with cycle lanes. Cycling is too focused on canals which is too unsafe to use, and can't be used at night. Want to see more space reallocated away from cars.</p>	<p>The framework's transport strategy is based on modal shift away from car to sustainable transport. Cycle measures proposed will significantly improve conditions on the highway network through new segregated cycle tracks with supporting traffic calming and other measures on other roads and local streets. Canal towpath improvements complement these measures.</p>

Consultee	Main issue raised	Officer response and how the issue has been addressed
Resident	“I am so sick of my family and I almost getting killed by motorists because we travel by bike or on foot, and so sick of planners and designers who actively put us in danger because they only care about catering to the motorist's every whim. Grove lane, for example, should have a concrete-protected cycle lane on each side, and you should take space away from motorists to do that.”	Cycle measures proposed will significantly improve conditions on the highway network through new segregated cycle tracks with supporting traffic calming and other measures on other roads and local streets. Improvements to conditions for walking are another important element of the framework's transport strategy. Sandwell MBC's Smethwick Connected transport improvements will provide improvements for cycling on the A457 in Sandwell.
Resident	Moilliett Street Park is a vital green space and should be protected. Increased housing would create more demand for green spaces and green spaces are what makes an area pleasant to live	Birmingham City Council agrees that green space is important. However, the park at present is not as pleasant and well used as it could be. The concept in the Grove Lane Masterplan is to develop part of the park to improve the remainder and link it to a wider open space network. The future of the park will be considered through the Birmingham Plan.
Resident	The Dudley Road is not a pleasant place to shop due to the amount of traffic and street parking. Street parking should be prohibited and enforced. The pavements should be wider and there should be more pedestrian crossings.	The transport strategy states that “The management/ enforcement of parking in high street locations (Smethwick High Street and Dudley Road) and trials of footway parking exclusion zones are core proposals.” These will improve conditions. There is also a MMUH – City Hospital via Dudley Road Walking Route proposed which will also improve conditions for walking.
Resident	The strip of land between Heath Street and the canal is a vital "green lung" it should not be cleared and built on.	The wording of this section has been amended to recognise the importance of retaining the site's biodiversity value in any future development.

Consultee	Main issue raised	Officer response and how the issue has been addressed
Resident	There should be new train stations at Port Loop/Soho Loop and by the new hospital.	We agree a new station would be desirable, but Network Rail has advised that “there is no feasible way, without a significant investment in capacity above what is proposed by HS2 and Midlands Rail Hub, that will enable a station in this location to be reliably served by a credible train service”. West Midlands Rail Executive (WMRE) will consider the issue further as part of West Midlands wide rail development work on potential new stations.
Resident	A proper network of active travel routes should be created by narrowing/removing traffic lanes of parking and reallocating space to cycling.	Cycle measures proposed will significantly improve conditions on the highway network through new segregated cycle tracks with supporting traffic calming and other measures on other roads and local streets. Improvements to conditions for walking are another important element of the framework’s transport strategy.
Other online respondent	Tram lines would be great and please make the cycle lanes segregated/ protected from traffic	Transport for West Midlands current plans for future tram provision in the West Midlands do not include a new tram line for the Dudley Road corridor. Tram improvements for the corridor are based on improved walk and cycle links to existing Metro Line One stops. The Cross City Bus Route scheme will improve core bus public transport provision in the corridor. Cycle measures proposed will significantly improve conditions on the highway network through new segregated cycle tracks with supporting traffic calming and other measures on other roads and local streets

Consultee	Main issue raised	Officer response and how the issue has been addressed
Resident	We need a golf course to replace Brandhall	The corridor is a densely developed urban area. Planning for a new golf course in this location is not considered to be feasible and is not in line with the allocation in the Local Plan.
Resident	Wants to see less traffic lights, better parking areas	The Dudley Road Improvement scheme and Cross City Bus Route scheme will consider suitable traffic management measures. These will support the promotion of sustainable transport to reduce traffic pressures from high car use.
Resident	Concern about maintenance of existing roads in the area	Subject to approval in January 2022 by the West Midlands Combined Authority Board, the new West Midlands City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement for 2022/23 to 2026/27 will contain an increased amount for maintenance in the West Midlands. This will be able to help improve road maintenance in the corridor.
Resident	Apartments are unsightly and not many people want to live in them outside of city centres. Suggests need more modern and green design to make people feel more proud of their places and look after them	The masterplan and development framework both seek to encourage best practice in design and sustainability. Modern green design is therefore encouraged.
Resident	We have to have more bus services because of City hospital. There are only 3 bus services now 11, 82 & 87 only at present.	A workstream led by Transport for West Midlands is underway on planning bus service enhancements and new shelters to serve the new hospital. This will consider provision for City Hospital. Further consultation with residents will take place in relation to this.

Consultee	Main issue raised	Officer response and how the issue has been addressed
Resident (x2)	You want to build a block of high rises directly opposite our flats and completely block of our view and direct sunlight that shines on us from sunrise to around mid-morning.	The sunlight and daylight on the adjacent properties will be addressed at the detailed design stage in line with statutory planning requirements. Residents will be consulted through the planning application process and will have further opportunities to comment on the detailed design as it comes forward.
Resident	Wants to see 20mph limit rigorously enforced	Sandwell Council and Birmingham City Council will get new moving traffic enforcement powers in 2022. This will enable better enforcement of speed limits.
Resident	Plant more trees	The proposals in the Framework and Masterplan promote the expansion and improvement of green areas in the corridor area, including tree planting.
Resident	Want to see traffic calming measures as main roads used as racetracks	Traffic calming and other measures on other roads and local streets are part of the framework's transport strategy. Sandwell Council and Birmingham City Council will get new moving traffic enforcement powers in 2022. This will enable better enforcement of speed limits.
Resident	Concern about access to bicycles for residents	The Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games Active Travel Legacy Package – "Cycling for Everyone" programme includes measures to help people on low incomes loan and purchase bikes.

Consultee	Main issue raised	Officer response and how the issue has been addressed
Resident	Concern about maintenance of cycle paths	Subject to approval in January 2022 by the West Midland Combined Authority Board, the new West Midlands City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement for 2022/23 to 2026/27 will contain an increased amount for maintenance in the West Midlands. This will be able to help improve maintenance of cycle provision in the corridor.
Resident	New homes should be affordable to people living in the area.	The councils will work through the planning process to seek to deliver affordable housing as part of development within the area in line with the Black Country Plan and Birmingham Development Plan.
Resident	There is a need for a new secondary school, college, adult education facility, GP clinic and leisure facilities.	It remains the intention of Birmingham City Council to seek deliver of a new secondary school within the area as part of the Ladywood Estate regeneration in line with Birmingham Development Plan Policy.

Report to Cabinet

9 February 2022

Subject:	Sandwell Urban Bike Park project
Cabinet Member:	Cabinet Member for Tourism and Culture Cllr. Danny Millard
Director:	Director of Borough Economy Alice Davey
Key Decision:	Yes The Council will incur expenditure in excess of £250,000 and The project will be significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards of the Borough.
Contact Officer:	(Interim) Service Manager – Parks, Sandwell Valley & Events. Matthew Huggins Matthew_Huggins@sandwell.gov.uk Senior Lead Officer – Sport and leisure. Rob Marlow robert_marlow@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That approval be given to create a series of cycle trails within Sandwell Valley, West Bromwich, close to the Swan Pool area and on neighbouring land within Birmingham (The former Hill Top Golf Course).
- 1.2 That the Director of Borough Economy, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer, be authorised to:
 - Prepare the necessary Tendering documentation




- Procure, in accordance with the public procurement rules, the Council's procurement and financial regulations a contractor(s) to develop, on behalf of the Council, the proposed scheme; to award a contract and to enter into or execute under seal any financial agreement(s) as may be deemed necessary in relation to the scheme.
- Accept Grant funding from both Sport England (£400,000) and Birmingham City Council (£100,000) on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Director of Borough Economy in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer.
- Commit match funding of £100,000 towards the project.




2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 The creation of new cycle trails will help to increase visitor numbers to Sandwell Valley and make it a popular destination for cyclists within the region. The facility will be a 'Legacy' from the 2022 Commonwealth Games and encourage people to visit the area.
- 2.2 Cycling for sport and recreation can provide many health benefits and help individuals to meet their recommended levels of physical activity. In addition, cycling can help reduce social isolation and encourage community cohesion.
- 2.3 The recommendations above will allow the project to be delivered in line with the project plan which has been submitted to, and agreed, by both Sport England and Birmingham City Council.
- 2.4 By authorising the Director of Borough Economy to oversee the implementation of recommendations will remove the need for further reports and use of Cabinet time.

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p>The Best Start in Life for Children and Young People</p> <p>The new cycle trails will offer enhanced facilities for families, children and young people to access physical health and wellbeing opportunities together.</p>
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	Trails will be designed to offer opportunities for cyclists with different abilities so that they can progress steadily as they grow, learn, gain experience and become more confident.
	People Live Well and Age Well <p>The new cycle trails will provide an opportunity for people to exercise, keep fit and have fun within an open space. It is also believed that the trails will encourage more people to take up cycling and explore other cycle routes across the Borough of Sandwell.</p>
	Strong Resilient Communities <p>Cycling is widely acknowledged as being a social activity and it is hoped to see more 'informal groups' develop along with increased memberships of cycling clubs.</p>
	A Strong and Inclusive Economy <p>The project will deliver a cycling legacy for Sandwell, Birmingham and the Black Country supporting wider tourism-based growth and will further establish Sandwell Valley as a 'gateway' visitor destination.</p> <p>It is hoped that further developments will occur in the future including road cycling, triathlon events, outdoor water sports etc. This is likely to bring extra investment into the Borough.</p>
	A Connected and Accessible Sandwell <p>Sandwell Valley already has Cycle Network route 5 within it. By encouraging cycling, it is realistically expected that Sandwell Residents will become more aware of cycle routes across the Borough and hopefully use these for commuting / active travel purposes.</p>



4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 This project has been developed over a lengthy period and involved a number of agencies including Sport England, British Cycling, Birmingham City Council and specialist track designers. The scope of the project has altered on several occasions due to the level of funding that could be made available.
- 4.2 A significant level of background research and consultation was completed during the initial development of the project, this is captured within the report compiled by Jon Sheaff & Associates. This is attached as Appendix A
- 4.3 A total funding package of £600,000 has recently been agreed. This is made up of:
- £400,000 from Sport England
 - £100,000 from Birmingham City Council
 - £100,000 from Sandwell Council
- It should be noted that the total funding package will also need to cover professional fees and charges.
- 4.4 As the main funder and to secure their investment, Sport England has insisted on a fast delivery of the project. A detailed project plan has been prepared and submitted. This is attached as Appendix B.
- 4.5 In order to keep within project timelines, the initial appointment of both Landscape and Ecological consultants have been made.
- 4.6 The new cycle trails will be built within areas of Sandwell Valley classed as Nature Reserves, therefore ecological considerations and biodiversity are given careful consideration at each stage of the project. Appropriate mitigations against any ecological and biodiversity impacts will be made as required.
- 4.7 Due to the recent changes in project scope, Sandwell Council's Strategic Investment Unit has requested a new project appraisal to be carried out. This process is currently underway and is anticipated to be completed in mid-February. Grant funding will not be accepted until a satisfactory appraisal has been completed by Strategic Finance.



- 4.8 There will be no charges made to public use of the cycling trails and they will be open access. In the event of extremely inclement weather or damage to the trails then they will be closed for use. Appropriate decision making processes on these closures will be put in place.
- 4.9 Future management responsibility of the trails will rest with Sandwell Valley, this will include ongoing safety inspections, repairs and maintenance.

5 Alternative Options

- 5.1 No alternative options have been considered for this project, however as the scheme will be delivered on a 'design and build' basis, the final designs can be altered to fit with on-site factors such as environmental / ecological matters.

6 Implications

Resources:	<p>There will need to be a financial 'Match Funding' contribution of £100,000 from Sandwell Council. The cost centre this will come from is currently under discussion but may be found through potential underspends that have been identified.</p> <p>There are no staffing implications other than site safety inspections which will be conducted by Sandwell Valley staff.</p> <p>Ongoing maintenance and repairs of the tracks will be funded via a budget held within Sandwell Valley. This is expected to be 1.5% of the capital costs per year. Assuming a capital build cost of £510,000, this will be £7,650 per annum. It is also recommended that an annual sinking fund of £7,650 for longer term maintenance is included within budgets. Plans are currently being developed to fund this ongoing maintenance through the addition of a walkers coffee bar hut at Swan Pool.</p>
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Legal and Governance:	There will be a need for legal support in entering grant funding agreements with both Sport England and Birmingham Council. Particularly around potential restrictions on title. Initial discussions have been held with Legal Services who will support this process moving forward.
Risk:	There is a risk that members of the public may become injured whilst using the cycle tracks and this matter will be addressed with Risk Management. However, it should be noted that there are already cycle tracks in and around Sandwell Valley including the 'Miners Trail' which does not currently present issues.
Equality:	<p>The cycle trails will be open access and can be enjoyed by everyone regardless of ethnicity, gender or any protected characteristic.</p> <p>An initial stage Equality Impact Assessment will be completed.</p>
Health and Wellbeing:	The project will have a significant positive impact on the health and wellbeing of residents. By creating new cycle trails, residents will be able to enjoy the benefits of outdoor sport / physical activity for free. It is likely that many residents will continue to enjoy the sport at a competitive level whilst others may introduce recreational cycling as a means of active transport.
Social Value	<p>The project will be 'labelled' as a Legacy project from the 2022 Commonwealth games and help to celebrate Sandwell's involvement. This will help to engender a sense of pride in Sandwell.</p> <p>The project will help to encourage people to cycle, train and compete together (particularly along the slalom track) and provide opportunities to meet with new people.</p>



	<p>The project will help to put Sandwell 'On the Map' as a place that values sport and physical activity. It will hopefully demonstrate that Sandwell is a place that 'gets things done' and supports large scale inward investment. There are many other potential areas within Sandwell Valley and across the Borough that will benefit from future inward investment with associated benefits to suppliers within the hospitality industry such as hotels, café's and restaurants</p>
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7. Appendices

Appendix A - Report compiled by Jon Sheaff & Associates.

Appendix B – Detailed project plan submitted and approved by Sport England.

8. Background Papers

None



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Sandwell Valley and Hilltop Golf Course Cycling Feasibility Study

Project Sandwell Valley and Hill Top Golf Course Cycling Feasibility Study					
Client	British Cycling				
Version	Date	Version Details	Prepared by	Checked by	Approved by
Outline	17 -08-20	Outline proposals	JS/EW/MW	RH	JS
Outline Rev A	27 -08-20	Outline proposals	JS/EW/MW	RH	JS
Outline Rev B	11-09-20	Outline proposals	JS/EW/MW	RH	JS
First draft	02-10-20	Final report first draft	JS/EW/MW	RH	JS
Second draft	11-01-21	Final report second draft	JS/EW/MW	RH	JS
Final	18- 01-21	Final report	JS/EW/MW	RH	JS

Executive Summary

This study considers the viability of a proposed new Urban Bike Park in the Sandwell Valley on land owned by Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council and Birmingham City Council. The two councils have joined forces to apply to British Cycling for funding to design and implement the scheme. The Feasibility Study has been developed in response to a brief issued by British Cycling in March 2020.

The Feasibility Study considers the Urban Bike Park proposal in the context of the 2022 Commonwealth Games and pertinent national regional and local strategies both for cycling provision and for strategic networks for cycling in the north-west of the Birmingham conurbation. The study also considers the relevant local planning constraints as set out in the Local Plans for Sandwell and Birmingham. These constraints are discussed in Sections 3 and 9 of the study.

Any new provision for cycling must be planned in the context of existing provision of different types of cycling offer. This analysis will support the long-term viability of the proposed Urban Bike Park and ensure a comprehensive spread of complementary cycling offers across the region. A full assessment of current cycling offers is presented in Section 4.

Section 5 of the study analyses the characteristics of the land upon which the proposed facility would be situated and identifies any constraints attached to these current conditions that should be factored into the detailed design process.

The project team has considered a number of options for the development of an Urban Bike Park in Sandwell Valley and these are discussed in Section 6 of the study. The main constraint that has been identified has been the lease agreement between Birmingham City Council and Mytime Active in respect of Hilltop Golf Course. This has defined two preferred options for the proposed Urban Bike Park.

Section 7 describes the two preferred options in detail including the types of cycling trails that will be offered, the supporting facilities that would be required and options for a new cycling hub building.

The Feasibility Study has canvassed opinion amongst a group of key stakeholders. Engagement has been limited to online interaction in response to the Covid 19 pandemic. Section 8 describes the methodologies deployed and reports on the results. Responses have been generally favourable but some concerns have been expressed in respect of the impact of the proposed scheme on habitat and biodiversity, since much of the land identified for the scheme is protected by designations. The study team proposes that these matters can be addressed during later design stages if the scheme proceeds and could be offset by proposals for net gain included in the scheme.

The financial sustainability of the scheme is an important consideration. Section 10 considers the capital costs of the two options identified in Section 6 and assesses the revenue performance of the proposed Urban Bike Park over a 5-year period. This analysis concludes that the proposed facility would self-sustaining in revenue terms over this period.

In summary, the study concludes that there is a robust business case for the proposed Urban Bike Park both in respect of regional provision and financial sustainability.

Contents

- 1.0 Introduction and background information
- 2.0 Project brief
- 3.0 Strategic need and rationale
- 4.0 Supply and demand analysis
- 5.0 Site context
- 6.0 Options appraisal
- 7.0 Scheme components – preferred options
- 8.0 Consultation and engagement
- 9.0 Pre-application advice
- 10.0 Financial and governance considerations of preferred options

Appendix A Preferred options layout plans

Appendix B Mytime Active consented scheme

Appendix C Consultation and engagement matrix

Appendix D Engagement session transcripts

Introduction and background information

Jon Sheaff and Associates, working in collaboration with 'Architrail Velosolutions UK' and Shared Assets, have been commissioned to complete a feasibility study to assess the potential for the development of new cycling facilities in Sandwell Valley Country Park and Hill Top Golf Course.

The objective of the study is to consider the development of long-term infrastructure in the Sandwell Valley which supports all cycling disciplines and contributes directly to local and national priorities for cycling.

Sandwell Valley comprises of over 500 hectares of countryside in an urban setting. The site is designated as Green Belt, includes two working farms, three Local Nature Reserves, an RSPB Nature Centre, a Scheduled Monument and a mosaic of farmland, countryside and woodland.

Hill Top Golf Course adjoins Sandwell Valley and is an 18-hole public parkland golf course. The golf course is operated by Mytime Active on behalf of Birmingham City Council and is currently closed for re-development. The topography of the golf course offers opportunities for the development of mountain biking facilities.

There are existing cycling facilities within Sandwell Valley, including National Cycle Network Route 5, a Pump Track, cycle hire facilities and a network of cycle routes for cyclists of different abilities.

A number of major interventions are influencing the development of the proposals considered in this feasibility study.

The **XXII Commonwealth Games** are being hosted by Birmingham in the summer of 2022.

The Games programme includes competition in 26 different sports at 11 different venues across the West Midlands (with London's Lee Valley Velodrome hosting indoor cycling). The swimming and diving competitions will take place at a new Aquatics Centre being developed in Smethwick to the south of Sandwell Valley. Mountain Bike, Road Racing and Cycling Time Trials will all take place at Cannock Chase to the north of Birmingham.

The Games will include an extensive Cultural Programme, running between March and September 2022.

The **Sandwell Valley Master Scoping Study** has been commissioned by Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council and is being developed in parallel with this feasibility study. The objective of the study is to strengthen Sandwell Valley's identity as a 'destination gateway' in Sandwell and the West Midlands region and to develop its potential as a locally, regionally and nationally significant visitor attraction.

The Study explores Sandwell Valley's potential and will guide its development over the next five years with the aim of developing a compelling cultural offer that will deliver a wide range of social, economic and environmental benefits for residents and visitors. The Study will include a spatial masterplan, a future business model a detailed action plan and funding strategy. Key components of the Master Scoping Study are likely to include:

- The development of a new Urban Bike Park centred on Swan Pool and Hilltop Golf Course (the subject of this feasibility)

- The re-purposing of Sandwell Park Farm as part of Sandwell's 'Inclusive Economy Deal'
- The re-definition of Sandwell Valley's urban agriculture offer and the development of Forge Mill Farm as a farming-related visitor attraction
- Measures to improve infrastructural connectivity to and within Sandwell Valley to reduce car dependence

The UK Government announced the £3.6 billion **Towns Fund** in September 2019. West Bromwich is one of three towns proposed by Sandwell Council that have been selected by the UK Government for the opportunity to bid for up to £25 million in funding.

The Towns Fund will seek to deliver against three priorities:

- Urban regeneration, planning and land use
- Skills and enterprise infrastructure
- Connectivity

The current West Bromwich AAP, which includes part of Sandwell Valley, will be qualified by an Interim Planning Statement to support the delivery of these priorities.

Sandwell Valley can contribute to outcomes two and three by providing capacity and partnerships for skills and through the development of 'green corridors' that will reinforce pedestrian and cycling infrastructure and connect the Valley's core offers (including the Urban Bike Park) to West Bromwich Town Centre.

2.0

Project brief

The project brief includes consideration of options for the provision of a new bike park in Sandwell Valley and on Hill Top Golf Course.

The new facility could include the enhancement of the existing NCN5 provision, wider cycling connectivity locally and sub-regionally, the extension of the current MTB route, incorporating the new bike park into existing bike trails across the site, developing new family trails and a 'Learn To Ride' area.

In parallel, the project will consider the provision of cycle hire facilities, inclusive cycle facilities for people with disabilities, volunteering coaching and mentoring (a Women's Shed initiative) and the provision of community participation programmes.



Strategic Need and Rationale

The development of proposals has been based on an assessment of strategic need in the context of the following national, regional and local policies and strategies.

3.1 National Strategies

3.1.1 Sporting Future – A New Strategy for an Active Nation

Sporting Future was adopted by the UK Government in December 2015 to make the sport sector more resilient and to focus it on five key strategic outcomes:

- physical wellbeing
- mental wellbeing
- individual development
- social and community development
- economic development

The strategy aims to increase rates of participation in sport, in sports-related volunteering and experiencing of live sport for people from every background. The strategy further considers how national and international sporting success can be fostered and seeks to develop a more productive, financially sustainable sector with effective governance and leadership.

3.1.2 These principles are further expressed in Sport England's **'Towards an Active Nation'** strategy (2016-21), which sets out in detail how Sport England will invest resources in seven different programmes to support the delivery of the Government's Five Outcomes.

The Sandwell Valley/Hilltop Urban Bike Park has the potential to deliver against most, if not all of these programmes:

- Tackling inactivity
- Children and young people
- Volunteering
- Taking sport and activity into the mass market
- Supporting sport's core market
- Local delivery
- Facilities

3.2 Regional Strategies

3.2.1 The West Midlands Combined Authority has adopted the **West Midlands on the Move Physical Activity Framework (2017-30)** which identifies the need to increase levels of physical activity across the West Midlands conurbation. The study identifies that around one third of adults in the West Midlands is currently inactive and spends less than 30 minutes per week on physical activity. The estimated annual cost of this inactivity to the region is £147 million. The strategy is based on four ambitions:

- Making it easier and more desirable to move around the West Midlands
- Making it easier and more enjoyable to be outdoors in green and blue spaces and urban environments
- Improving how it feels to live in the region's streets and communities
- Improving people's life chances, wellbeing, employability and access to work.

These ambitions are in turn expressed as six key themes which focus on the connectivity between physical activity, wellbeing and economic prosperity. These include:

Theme 1: Transport and HS2 growth - includes a commitment to encourage more people to walk and cycle by offering opportunities for everyone, including people with impairment, to participate in and enjoy the outdoor environment.

Theme 2: Housing and Land - includes a commitment to proactively seek to increase opportunities for outdoor exercise, both formal and informal (gyms, play equipment, health walks, games) by utilising outdoor spaces as much as possible in doing so, ensuring a systematic and joined up approach to the use of open green spaces, connecting open and wild spaces and canal networks with a clear outcome, focused around increasing activity levels and improving physical and mental wellbeing.

Theme 4: Creative and Digital – includes an aspiration to use technology, including open data sources, to get more people to take part in physical activity

Theme 6: Wellbeing – including a commitment to working with the community to extend community physical activity-based initiatives to raise awareness of mental health and improve wellbeing.

3.2.2 The Birmingham and Surrounding Areas Cycling Facilities Needs Analysis was produced in March 2020 by a partnership consisting of British Cycling, Birmingham City Council and Sport England. The Needs Analysis informs a long-term investment strategy for cycling facilities in Birmingham and the surrounding areas. The key drivers for the Needs Analysis are:

- Reducing physical inactivity
- Improving physical wellbeing, mental wellbeing, individual development and economic development
- Increasing physical activity through cycling
- Using the Birmingham Commonwealth Games as a catalyst to inspire more people to ride, connecting communities and building a lasting cycling legacy
- Making cycling the choice for shorter journeys and reducing car dependency
- Increasing cycling participation and opportunities for investment into traffic-free cycling routes, infrastructure and facilities
- Reducing car dependency, traffic congestion and improving air quality

The Needs Analysis assesses the provision of a number of different typologies of cycling provision:

- Community cycling hubs
- Closed circuit roads
- Indoor velodromes
- Cycle speedway
- BMX tracks
- Mountain biking

The Needs Analysis makes nine recommendations, including the following:

Recommendation 1: Invest in ancillary provision at cycling facilities in order to help facilitate the growth and development of clubs and improve the cycling participant experience. This recommendation is identified as a short to medium-term priority and a medium-scale investment.

Recommendation 2: Invest in discipline-specific facilities where there is an identified need, ensuring both existing and new facilities are of the appropriate quality and level of provision to cater for future demand. This recommendation is identified as a medium-term investment priority and a large-scale investment.

The Needs Analysis identifies investment opportunities, timescales and potential budgets for provision in each of the six typologies of provision, identifying the potential for the development of an Urban Bike Park in the south of the study area.

3.2.3 The **Black Country Walking and Cycling Strategy and Implementation Plan (2016)** was commissioned by Birmingham City Council and the West Midlands Combined Authority to 'realise the full potential of walking and cycling's contribution to the health and wealth of the Black Country – creating more sustainable suburbs, towns and cities that are healthier, safer and more desirable places to live, work and learn.' The Strategy has four aims:

- Making cycling more inviting and attractive for everyone
- Making cycling safe and secure
- Making cycling easy and intuitive

- Normalising cycling to reduce inequalities

The Strategy identifies West Bromwich as a 'Cycling Investment Corridor'.

3.3 Local Strategies

3.3.1 The **Birmingham Walking and Cycling Strategy** was adopted in January 2020 and sets out a 10-year plan to ensure that active travel becomes the popular choice for short journeys and to increase opportunities for walking and cycling. The strategy reflects and develops the proposals set out in the Birmingham Connected transport strategy of 2014 and the 2018-22 Council Plan. Priorities for investment in cycling and walking capacity are detailed in a parallel Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.

The strategy has three objectives:

- To enable walking and cycling. Providing training, improving access to bikes, tackling safety issues and securing funding.
- To develop a great city for walking and cycling. Providing safe infrastructure, managing traffic, and maintaining streets.
- To inspire walking and cycling. Organising events, distributing information and evaluating outcomes

The Strategy includes several policies that are relevant to this feasibility study:

- Policy 1: Training and education – developing the confidence of people to cycle through the provision of facilities and training.
- Policy 2: Access to bikes – promoting bike hire at community cycling hubs

- Policy 3: Personal safety - creating a safe and welcoming environment for cycling
- Policy 4: Funding - identifying resources to deliver the Strategy and Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.
- Policy 5: Walking and cycling infrastructure – designing, developing and promoting places to walk and cycle that are safe, convenient, comfortable, direct and coherent.
- Policy 11: Schools, business and local community - promoting cycling at places where people study, work and live.
- Policy 13: Events - support events that inspire more people to cycle.

The Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan includes a phased plan for the implementation of a comprehensive cycling network across Birmingham and improvements to the current network. Connectivity to Sandwell and Sandwell Valley will principally be through NCN Route 5 from Birmingham City Centre along the Birmingham Canal.

3.3.2 Sandwell Council adopted the **Sandwell Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan** in January 2020. The Strategy was developed in the context of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council's ambition to have 'a prioritised plan for the local network within Sandwell, which co-ordinates with the existing plans for the Black Country and for these to be integrated with the plans that are already in place for the West Midlands strategies for planning and transport.'

The Strategy assesses 15 cycle routes across the borough, identifying priorities for investment and proposing costs for a range of interventions on different routes.

The Strategy proposes improvements to National Cycle Route 5 to the south of Sandwell Valley

3.3.4 The **Sandwell Green Space Strategy 2020-30** recognises the important contribution made by green spaces to quality of life through the provision of social, economic and environmental benefits.

The Strategy references the physical and mental wellbeing benefits of the adoption of an active lifestyle and the opportunities for this presented by green spaces. The importance of walking and cycling in delivering these health benefits is also recorded.

The Strategy also suggests that the Sandwell Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan provides the strategic context for cycling provision and that the Highways, Transportation, Planning and Public Health departments are the delivery partners for enhancing cycling facilities and capacity across the borough.

3.4 Planning context

3.4.1 The **Birmingham Development Plan 2031** includes a number of policies that are relevant to this feasibility study:

Policy TP8 Biodiversity and geodiversity stipulates that the 'maintenance, enhancement and restoration of sites of national and local importance for biodiversity and geology will be promoted and supported'. These include Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), National Nature Reserves (NNRs), Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) and Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINCs). The northern edge of Hill Top Golf Course, where it fringes the Tame Valley, is designated as a SLINC site.

Policy TP 10 Green Belt stipulates that 'There is a general presumption against inappropriate development within the Green Belt and such development will not be permitted unless very special circumstances exist'. The Birmingham section of Sandwell Valley is designated as Green Belt.

Policy TP 11 Sports Facilities proposes that the City Council will 'keep the provision of sports facilities within the City under review in the light of changing demands and preferences and where deficiencies and oversupply are identified in an up-to-date assessment, aim to work with partners to address this.'

Policy TP38 A sustainable transport network proposes that the delivery of a sustainable transport network will require 'Improved choice by developing and improving public transport, cycling and walking networks'.

3.4.1 The **Black Country Core Strategy 2011-26** is the effective planning policy and spatial plan for Sandwell. The Core Strategy will be replaced by the Black Country Plan, which is currently in development. The Core Strategy includes a number of policies of relevance to this feasibility study:

Policy CSP 2: By 2026, the areas outside the Strategic Centres and Regeneration Corridors will provide a strong Green Belt to promote urban renaissance within the urban area and provide easy access to the countryside for urban residents where the landscape, nature conservation and agricultural land will be protected and enhanced. The Sandwell Section of Sandwell Valley is designated as Green Belt.

Policy CSP 5: The large-scale land use changes proposed in the Core Strategy require an effective and integrated transport network.

This will serve existing and new developments and promote greater use of sustainable transport modes, (walking, cycling, public transport and car sharing).

Policy TRAN 4: Joint working between the four local authorities will ensure that the Black Country has a comprehensive cycle network based on integrating the four local cycle networks, including common cycle infrastructure design standards.

Policy ENV 1: Development within the Black Country will safeguard nature conservation inside and outside its boundaries by ensuring that development is not permitted where it would harm internationally (Special Areas of Conservation), nationally (Sites of Special Scientific Interest and National Nature Reserves) or regionally (Local Nature Reserve and Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation) designated nature conservation sites. Locally designated nature conservation sites (Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation), important habitats and geological features are protected from development proposals which could negatively impact upon them. Parts of Jubilee Woods and the area surrounding and to the south of Swan Pool are designated as SINC sites and Priory Woods as a Local Nature Reserve.

Policy ENV 6: Development that would increase the overall value of the open space, sport and recreation network will be encouraged, especially in areas of deficiency. Each Local Authority will set out, in Local Development Documents and on Proposals Maps, policies and proposals for specific open space, sport and recreation facilities and planning requirements for open space, sport and recreation, in order to move towards the most up-to-date local open space, sport and recreation standards for each Local Authority.

Supply and demand analysis

The consultant team has assessed current local and sub-regional supply and demand and has identified gaps in provision to inform the development of options for the proposed bike park. This has been based on the consultant's database of facilities as well as the online mountain bike trail finding resources Trailforks.com and Moredirt.com as well as British Cycling's 'Birmingham Cycling Facility Needs Assessment'.

4.1 Current supply

Sandwell Valley Country Park has existing mountain bike (MTB) trails and a pump track nearby in Dartmouth Park. The Miner's Trail is a dedicated mountain bike trail in Jubilee Woods which includes 3km of Blue, Red and Black graded trails. These facilities are free to use, offer parking and bike hire (Valley Cycles in Dartmouth Park).

The trails are relatively short in length when compared with many mountain bike trail centres and venues, even for an urban location. The short length lends itself well to short, repeatable visits with beginners and improving mountain bikers however the offering doesn't have enough to occupy users for more than an hour or two. The technical red grade and black grade trails (braids from the main blue trail) are good for users to sharpen their skills but lack an adventure component as they quickly join the main trail again. The users capable of riding these sections are able to complete laps in only 10 minutes.

The trails themselves are well constructed, but could do with some maintenance and vegetation clearance to improve user experience and safety.

The pump track in Dartmouth Park is disjointed in terms of location from Swan Pool car park and its mountain bike trails, although it is in the area of other family attractions including an adventure play park. It has asphalt-surfaced bermed corners and crushed stone straights, which are in need of significant maintenance. The facility would benefit from a full asphalt surface/rebuild in order to provide facilities for wheel sports that are currently more popular than when the track was installed eight years ago.

4.2 Local supply

There are a number of locations for families and beginners to participate in off-road cycling within a 30 minute drive:

Pooley Country Park - B78 1JA (30 min drive)

Pooley Mountain Bike Trails is located at Pooley Country Park in Warwickshire and has three downhill runs graded red and black, as well as one blue cross-country trail. The offer includes:

- Parking - £1.50 up to one hour, £2.50 over one hour/all day.
- Toilets
- Café

Pooley Park Mountain Bike Club operates at the site and the club's aim "is to enable all riders the opportunity to develop their skills and fitness by developing the trails and social rides and coaching sessions". The club is currently redeveloping its 'Skills Area'.

Kingsbury Water Park Cycle Trails -B76 0DY (30 min drive)

Kingsbury Water Park has a number of surfaced trails around the site's 15 lakes and country park. These are targeted at family use.

The only off-road offering is the bridleway around the southern perimeter of the Park.

Cycle hire is available at weekends and Warwickshire school half terms from 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., (weather permitting). Other offers include:

- Car parking - Main Entrance £4.50 per car. £3.00 after 4 pm and all day November - February inclusive. Broomey Croft Entrance £3.00 per car.
- Toilets
- Bike Hire
- Visitor Centre

Cannock Chase Trail Centre - WS15 2UQ (40 min drive)

Cannock Chase trail centre is provided by the Forestry Commission and is the largest regional centre of its type. Trails are graded from Blue to Black and as downhill trails. Chase Trails volunteers operate at the site, working on maintenance and new trails. Facilities include:

- Parking
- Toilets
- Bike Hire
- Bike Wash
- Café

Expert riders looking for freeride/downhill riding would have to take a one hour-plus journey from Sandwell to FlyUp 417 Bike Park (Gloucestershire) or Eastridge Woods (Shropshire).

Ribbesford Bike Park, DY12 2TX (50 min drive)

Ribbesford is the only technical downhill site within one hour of Sandwell Valley. The site consists of 3 tracks with one being suitable for improving downhillers but has other facilities.

BMX Tracks and Pump Tracks

Despite being ridden primarily by BMX bikes, the growing popularity of public pump tracks lead to users of all wheel sports using them and a growing requirement for them to have a full asphalt surface. This drastically reduces maintenance and allows all users to learn and develop their off-road cycling skills. They are the ideal starting place for young riders and families, as well as providing a cycle playground that maintains children's interest, especially when combined with a café /retail/car park offer. These facilities ensure longer dwell-time and greater spend on parking and refreshments.

Sandwell Valley BMX Track (Dartmouth Park Pump Track) - B71 4AA (5 min cycle from Swan Pool or 10min drive). Facilities as follows:

- Asphalt berms and crushed stone straights (poor condition)
- Cycle Hire £6/hr/£9 for 3hrs/£12 for 5 hours

Perry Park BMX Track - B42 2EY (15 min drive)

National standard track with adjacent pumptrack (built in 2017).

Solihull Pump Track - B92 7RF (35 min drive)

- Asphalt berms and crushed stone straights
- Fair condition

Bilston Pumptrack (Greenway BMX Track) - WV14 0LH (20 min drive)

- Asphalt berms and crushed stone straights
- Fair condition

Dudley BMX Track - DY2 0DB (30 min drive)

- Unsurfaced
- Poor condition

Hilton Pumptrack/Play Track - WV4 6DN (25 min drive)

- Full asphalt surface
- Good condition

Mile Oak Pumptrack - B78 3NN (30 min drive)

- Asphalt berms and crushed stone straights
- Fair condition

Tamworth 4 Lane Track - B77 4BW (35 min drive)

- Asphalt berms and crushed stone straights
- Start Gate and events run regularly by the local club

4.3 Demand

Given the dispersed nature of competing offers and growing demand for family-friendly trails, there is a clear demand for further safe off-road cycle routes in north-west Birmingham.

There is a need to create longer trail networks as well as an urban 'bike park' for jumps and repeatable use. Blue grade trails should be at least 5km in length to attract more users and longer stays.

A bike park element is ideal for the location. To enjoy similar facilities, Birmingham residents must travel over an hour to Flyup Bike Park in Cheltenham.

4.4 Other sports facilities in and around Sandwell Valley

Sandwell Valley is predominantly a semi-rural area and the main leisure activities are walking and cycling.

Valley Cycles are based in the southern hub on the boundary between Sandwell Valley and Dartmouth Park and offers the following facilities:

- Enclosed 5 -7 a-side astroturf pitch
- Enclosed tennis courts
- 18-hole footgolf course
- 9-hole crazy golf course
- High ropes

Mytime Active are currently re-developing **Hilltop Golf Course** to offer the following:

- 9-hole golf course
- Driving range
- 18-hole footgolf course

Sandwell Park Golf Club to the south of Hilltop offers an 18-hole course.

Dartmouth Golf Course on the western edge of Sandwell Valley is a private 9-hole course offering 'a superb golf experience for golfers of all abilities'.

Sandwell Valley Sailing Club operates from the building on the northern edge of Swan Pool and offers opportunities for year-round casual sailing and competitive racing. The Club is also an accredited RYA training centre.

Dartmouth Park offers a cricket square.

To the west of Sandwell Valley, West Bromwich town centre offers a range of health and fitness offers including **West Bromwich Leisure Centre**, **Sandwell Gym** and **JD Gyms**, West Bromwich.

Site context

5.1 Site context

5.1.1 Topography

Land within the study area forms the valley of the River Tame and shelves gently from south-east by south to north-west by north. The 140m contour runs approximately east-west across the southern edge of Hill Top Golf Course and most of the land lies between this level and the 100m level of the river itself.

There are some local variations in level, some of which are man-made (the local interventions to levels that form part of the golf course) and some natural (the small hillocks that exceed 120m within Jubilee Woods).

5.1.2 Soils (see Figure 1)

The geology of Sandwell is dominated by the Great Boundary fault that runs approximately north to south between Hurst Green and West Bromwich and then north-eastwards towards Great Barr.

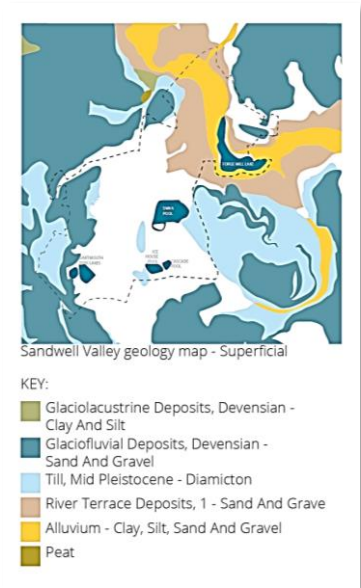


Figure 1: Surface Drift geology

Sandwell Valley is dominated by rocks of the Keele formation of mudstones and sandstones.

The larger part of the Valley is blanketed by extensive superficial glacial deposits of sands and gravels laid down periodically through the Quaternary Period. Most of these deposits are Till (boulder clay) or glaciofluvial sands and gravels. These deposits have been an important source of sands and gravels locally.

5.1.3 Drainage (see Figure 2)

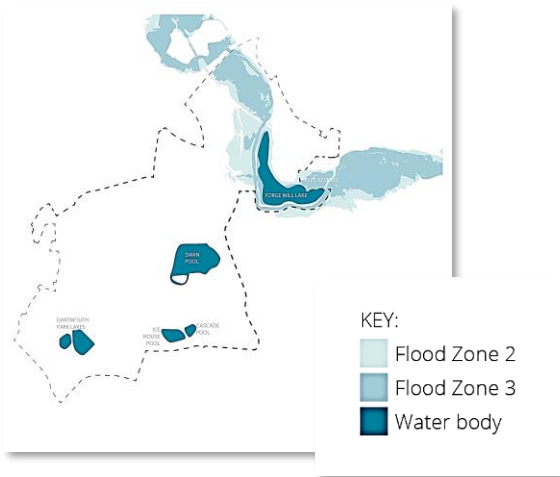


Figure 2: Drainage and Flood Risk

The valley of the Tame is the dominating feature of the drainage of north-west Birmingham and Sandwell Valley. The river runs for 95 kms from Oldbury, through north Birmingham to its confluence with the Trent north of Lichfield.

The course of the river within Sandwell Valley is designated as Zone 2 and Zone 3. Flood attenuation was created in Forge Mill lake in the 1980's and the lake's capacity is currently being expanded as part of a major flood alleviation project being implemented by the Environment Agency.

5.0

5.1.4 Landscape Character (refer to Figure 3)

Sandwell Valley is located within the Cannock Chase and Cank Wood, National Character Area (67). This National Character Area (NCA) sits on higher land that predominantly consists of sandstone and the South Staffordshire Coalfield.

Sandwell Valley has a predominately semi-rural character, consisting of a mosaic of small open fields bounded by mature hedgerows, interspersed with areas of woodland (some designated as Local Nature Reserves) and open water. Current agricultural practice combines land set to arable production with areas set to pasture for the animals housed at Park Farm and Forge Mill Farm.

Hill Top Golf Course was formerly an 18-hole course consisting of open fairways, greens and sand bunkers, separated by belts of native and non-native trees.

The course has been in an un-managed condition for a number of years and is reverting to a natural condition with native wildflowers colonising open grasslands and scrub encroaching onto these from adjoining woodland zones.

5.1.5 Linkages

Sandwell Valley has an extensive network of footpaths and cycle routes, the most important of which is National Cycle Network Route 5 which runs along the western and northern edges of Swan Pool and connects Birmingham city centre to the south with the northern West Midlands and East Wales to the north.

The Valley is not well-served with public transport with bus services operating on roads to the north, west and south of the Valley. The nearest rail connections are West Bromwich to the south-west and Hamstead to the north-east.



Figure 3: Land Use

Options appraisal

6.1 Options

Initial discussions took place with Mytime Active (who lease Hill Top Golf Course from Birmingham City Council) on 23 August 2020.

Mytime Active communicated the fact that they have a fully consented scheme to re-develop Hill Top Golf Course (2019/0646). They are intending to commence work on site to deliver this scheme on or after 1 October 2020. The main components of the scheme are follows (see also Appendix 1: drawing 1940/06):

- The reduction of the existing 18-hole golf course to a 9-hole golf course, provided on the eastern side of the current site
- The development of a driving range in the centre of the southern area of the site
- The development of a foot golf facility on the western side of the site
- Alterations to ingress and egress arrangements
- The installation of an aggregates washing plant in the south-west corner of the site with materials from this being deposited onto the existing site to form the new facilities

The red line drawing that forms part of Mytime Active's consented scheme suggests that an area of the current course would not be affected by these proposals and is thus potentially, surplus to requirements.

The options detailed below have been developed in response to the site re-development proposals provided by Mytime Active.

6.1.1 Option 1

Develop new bike park facilities on the northern and western edges of the current golf course. Reduce the golf course to 9 holes on the eastern side of the site.

Strengths:

This proposal would provide the best set of outcomes from the perspective of cycling provision. The re-development of the western side of the site would take advantage of the prevailing topography and would be of a sufficient scale to offer a comprehensive range of offers.

Weaknesses:

This option does not coincide with Mytime Active's consented plans for the site. It is unlikely that Mytime Active would support this option given the momentum behind their current site re-development plans.

Mytime Active will derive revenue from the driving range and other golf facilities and a royalty from the deposition of materials associated with the aggregates washing plant onto the golf course. These revenues are likely to be integral to their business case for the management of the site.

Mytime Active has suggested informally that any lease agreement for use of all or part of the western edge of the current course would have to take this lost revenue into account. The cost of leasing this area of land is thus likely to render this option for the bike park unviable from a commercial perspective.

6.0

6.1.2 Option 2

Develop new cycling facilities at the northern end of the current golf course to the north of the Mytime Active development 'red line'.

Strengths:

A good amount of space to develop new cycling facilities as part of an Urban Bike Park offer. Good connectivity across Park Lane to the proposed Bike Park hub and other Bike Park facilities/offers.

The option offers the potential to build green infrastructure and biodiversity connectivity within Sandwell Valley.

Weaknesses:

This is not the most topographically interesting part of the site. Earth-forming interventions might be required to create the levels needed for a good quality offer. Mytime Active would charge a rent for the use of this land. This is likely to be a sub-lease of their current lease agreement with Birmingham City Council. This cost has been factored into a viability assessment in the business plan.

6.1.3 Option 3

All cycling facilities offered on Sandwell Borough Council land.

Strengths:

The new facility would build on the existing Miner's Track mountain biking facility and would offer a tightly arranged series of offers, focused on the cycle hub. It would not be necessary to cross Park Lane to access facilities. The commercial case could be enhanced by not having to lease land from Mytime Active.

Weaknesses:

Loss of potential space on the east side of Park Lane would restrict the range of facilities on offer.

This might undermine the viability of the site as a regional attraction from a commercial perspective. This option would not offer the possibility of strengthening biodiversity linkages to Forge Mill lake.

6.2 Preferred Options

Following an assessment of Options 1-3 by the client team, it was agreed that the feasibility study should focus on Options 2 and 3.

Given the impact of Option 1 on Mytime Active's re-development proposal and the cost of using the western area of their site, this option was not considered to be commercially viable.

Scheme Components – preferred options (see also Appendix 2)

Drawings SAN002_1 and SAN002_2 describe two options for development based on the land available in the context of the two options. Option 1 uses the northern portion of Hilltop Golf Course. Option 2 uses the series of fields to the south of Swan Pool. Details of the trail-based elements for both options are as follows.

7.1 Green trail

This multi-use trail could circumnavigate Swan Pool providing a circuit of approximately 1.5km. Option 1 provides a further 1.6km loop on the Hilltop golf course side. Option 2 provides an additional 1.4km loop to the south of the site. The trail would have gentle gradients with a smooth crushed stone surface and can include some basic rolling features and be enjoyed by adapted bikes and beginners. There is also potential for this intervention to be used for trail running and ‘park runs’. The trail tread is recommended to be 2m in width.

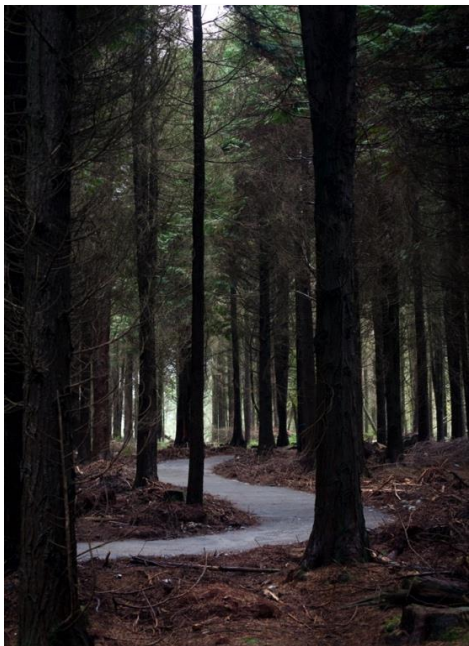


Figure 4 Green Grade Trail, Lanhydrock Estate, Cornwall

7.2 Blue grade MTB trails

When combined with the existing trails, the total trail length of Blue grade trail can be increased to in excess of 5km. A crushed stone MTB trail for beginner mountain bikers will make use of the existing topography to create an undulating trail with rolling features and banked turns. This is to be a fun trail that would also be enjoyed by more advanced riders and could be used as a warm up trail. Included in the Blue trail is a dual slalom track where riders can race head to head. Both layout options feature an extension either onto Hilltop golf course or the agricultural land to the south of Swan Pool. The trail tread is recommended to be 1.2m in width.



Figure 5: Blue grade flow trail, Plym Woods, Plymouth



Figure 6: Dual slalom blue grade trail, Hadleigh Country Park, Essex

7.3 Red Grade MTB trails

Trails of this nature (for intermediate-expert mountain bikers) have been purposely omitted by the consultant team. There is little steep topography, technical terrain, length or exposure that a true Red grade route requires. It's not impossible to construct this but a significant volume of imported material would be required to construct technical features typically found on Red grade trails. To compensate for the trail length, lack of trees and gradient, boulders and rock armouring would be required throughout. This is unlikely to be financially viable. Riders looking for this type of technical challenge are usually happy to travel long distances for it.



Figure 7: Red grade trail, Davagh, Northern Ireland

7.4 Orange grade MTB trails

The proposed options include 1.8km of descending bike park-style trails, with jumps, berms and other machine-built features with an all-weather crushed stone surface. There is ample space in the fields to the south of Swan Pool (marked on the plans) to take 4 x 450m jump trails. These are recommended to progress in level of difficulty from beginner to advanced. This is the approximate length of trails offered by Leeds Urban Bike Park. Users would travel around the Green or Blue route then ride and repeat the bike park trails.



Figure 8: Orange (2 Dot) Jump Track, Cathkin Braes, Scotland (dual slalom shown on left of image)

7.5 Learn to ride area

An area would be allocated for learning basic bike skills, such as stopping, starting, balance, steering and braking. This facility would have a smooth surface and would be suitable for British Cycling's 'Ready, Set, Ride' programme. Additional elements such as basic balance beams and rock steps could also be included to help beginner riders practice key bike handling skills.

7.6 Pump Track

A pump track is an off-road cycling facility defined as a closed loop with closely spaced rollers and rolling features with tight, bermed corners. Pump tracks provide a technical learning facility for the different disciplines and are a facility where riders can relax, ride themselves and watch and socialise with other riders.

A learning rider will initially pedal around the loop, but as their speed and skill increases, they will be able to generate speed from the corners and rollers without pedalling, which is the overall concept behind a pump track.

Once a rider is able to do this they can progress to being able to manual and jump between features in various combinations, limited only by their ability and creativity.

This highlights the inclusive nature of a pump track and its appeal to the widest possible range of rider abilities and bike users (both BMX and larger bikes).

Pump tracks also offer a range of other benefits. All features on the track are relatively low in elevation and the speeds involved are also low, keeping the safety risk factor to a minimum, whilst offering an exciting facility to ride. The pump track is also an excellent cross training facility for multiple biking disciplines. Riding a pump track involves using not only your legs, but also works your upper body and core muscles. Although riding without pedalling sounds easy, it is physically much more tiring than pedalling alone.

For riders who have mastered any given pump track, the number of laps completed is then usually only limited by individual fitness levels. The pump track will have a full asphalt surface to provide a maintenance free facility. This surface will also support use by other wheeled sports such as scooters and skateboards.



Figure 9: Pump track, Chopwell, Newcastle

7.7 Biodiversity enhancements

Sandwell Valley contains a number of designated Local Nature Reserves and SINC sites, including SLINC's that fringe the banks of the River Tame at the northern edge of Hilltop golf course. The scheme offers the opportunity to develop improved green infrastructure and biodiversity connectivity between these protected 'islands'.

Hilltop golf course has not been managed for golf for a number of years and provides a series of mosaic habitats that are currently being re-colonised by native species, providing important habitat for small mammals, nesting birds and invertebrates. The formerly defined edges of the SLINC now include areas of extending scrub that also offer significant habitat potential.

Option 1 offers the possibility of forging stronger green infrastructure linkages between the Forge Mill RSPB Reserve and the Jubilee Woods and Priory Woods Local Nature Reserves.



Figure 10: Regenerating scrub – Hilltop Golf Course

Urban Bike Park hub building

The development of a hub building as a central service point is critical to both the operational and financial model for the proposed bike park.

The building on the northern edge of Swan Pool adjoins both the car park and the current Miner’s Track. The building is located next to NCN Route 5.

The current building is partly occupied by the Sandwell Valley Sailing Club but is not fit for purpose. The cost of converting the current building to a new set of uses would not be economic when compared with the cost of providing a new building.

Sandwell Valley is designated Green Belt and there is a presumption against development as a consequence. Any proposed development would have to demonstrate that it had no significant impact on the visual quality of the Green Belt and that any proposed uses would be ancillary to the uses to which Green Belt land would be put.

A building on the same footprint and of the same scale and massing as the current building is likely to conform to these requirements (see Section 9.0).

Figure 11 shows the current configuration of the building.

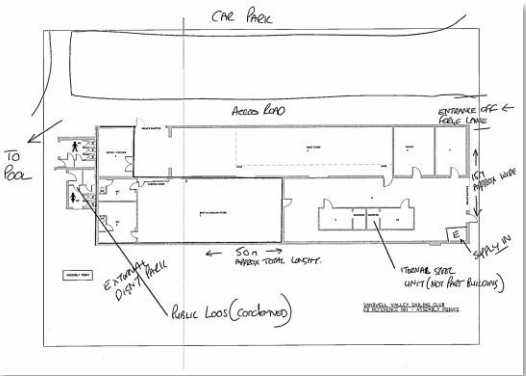


Figure 11: Swan Pool Sailing club building current configuration

In order to deliver a comprehensive set of outcomes in respect of health, wellbeing and social inclusion and to support the overall business case for the proposed bike park, a detailed schedule of accommodation has been developed for the building to include the following elements:

- Public toilets
- Showers for Sailing Club club patrons
- Reception/back office/staff toilets
- Café with outdoor space
- Training workshop suitable for training students to Cytech level 2 standard, including tools and equipment.
- Storage containers for bikes and equipment for recycling
- External storage for boats

A sketch design has been developed to capture these requirements (Figure 12)

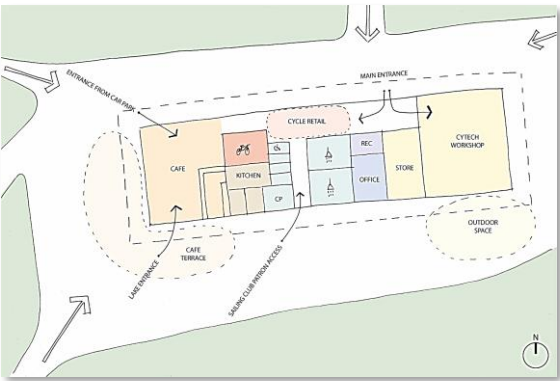


Figure 12: Bike Park hub building proposed configuration and schedule of accommodation

Café Seating:	150m ²
Servery:	30m ²
Kitchen & Store:	45m ²
Cycle Hire/ Repair:	30m ²
Cycle Retail:	60m ²
Female Changing Room:	35m ²
Male Changing Room:	35m ²
Changing Places:	12m ²
1no. Accessible WC	
3no. Unisex WC	
Staff Office/ Welfare:	35m ²
Reception:	15m ²
Cytech Training Space/ Multipurpose Room:	200m ²
Store:	55m ²

7.0

Given constraints on budget, a further option for the hub building has been considered. This could be a temporary solution while funding for a new building is secured. This option would not offer facilities for the Sailing Club that makes use of the existing building

As part of the Places to Ride fund, an investment is being made to enhance the support facility offered at existing sites, through procurement of a small number of modular/container clubhouses, changing facilities and storage units.

British Cycling can offer support to clubs and organisations to create a base to develop their membership and participation across all cycling disciplines. To enable this, temporary building options have been developed to provide simple spaces to meet, change and socialise.

These modular units can be rented to clubs and groups with access to off-road cycling facilities, for a period of 3-5 years, with the aim of supporting the revenue streams that can support long-term sustainability.

A simple oversail structure would be installed to enhance the aesthetic qualities of the modular units and provide additional covered public realm

The modular/container solutions can be applied in a variety of settings to support existing cycling facilities, such as BMX tracks, speedway circuits, outdoor velodromes or closed road circuits.

Section 10 includes capital cost options for a modular approach and for a permanent building.

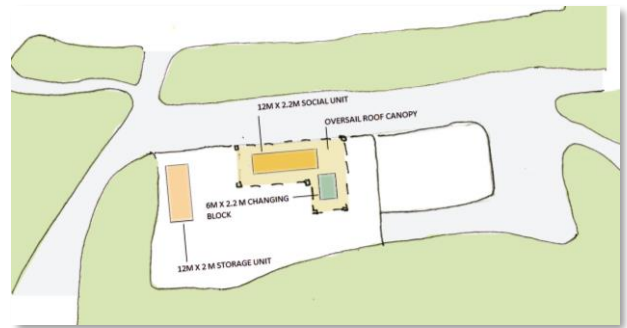


Figure 15: Potential configuration of modular units



Figure 13: Sketch of proposed fully-designed cycling hub building at Swan Pool



Figure 15: Simple timber oversail structure for modular units

Consultation and engagement

8.1 Engagement methodology

In order to assess local aspirations for the provision of new cycling facilities in Sandwell Valley and Hilltop Golf Course, an engagement process has been undertaken.

Appendix C lists organisations and individuals consulted in the course of developing this study. Consultation and engagement has been carried out in the context of Government and Local Authority advice on safe practice during the Covid 19 pandemic. Appendix C also details the engagement methodologies deployed in respect of each stakeholder. A full report of consultation and engagement can be found in Appendix D.

8.2 Summary of Engagement Findings

Responses to the feasibility proposals for the proposed urban bike park have been generally favourable. There is a recognition that the proposed bike park would add considerably to the leisure offer within Sandwell Valley and north-west Birmingham. Consultees also acknowledged the contribution that the bike park would make to physical and mental health and wellbeing and that the comprehensive range of offers would attract a large and varied audience.

Proposals for a new hub building to replace the current Sailing Club building were particularly well-received and there was a perception that a good quality building in this location would be a popular addition to facilities in the valley.

Concern was raised in respect of the possible impact of the proposed development of ecology, especially in the area to the south and east of Swan Pool. However, it was acknowledged that the

project offers potential for the enhancement of habitat continuity between the SLINC's along the Tame valley and the Local Nature Reserves to the south of Swan Pool

8.3 Impact of consultation on the proposed scheme

The consultation has not suggested a need to re-design the proposed scheme at this stage.

Concerns raised in respect of the impact on habitat and biodiversity will have to be carefully considered in the next stage of development, based on a comprehensive survey process.

Working closely with external partners (Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust, Sandwell Naturalists and the Environment Agency) will grant access to a considerable amount of existing data and expertise and will ensure a collaborative approach to design development that complements and reinforces current initiatives.

Planning advice

Views in response to the RIBA 2 Concept Design have been sought from Planning Officers from both Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council and from Birmingham City Council.

Officers consulted have raised a number of issues in response to the proposals that are summarised below. Planning officers have recommended an assessment of the need to commission an Environmental Impact Assessment for the proposal. It is recommended that a planning consultant should be commissioned to provide this advice in advance of any further design development culminating in a full planning application.

1) Green Belt

The land that forms the site of the proposed urban bike park development is designated as 'Green Belt' both within Sandwell and within Birmingham. 'Green Belt' designations include a presumption against development that might adversely affect the fundamental character of land. Areas of the site are already in lawful recreational use and a change of use to outdoor recreational use is not contrary to the Green Belt policy of the NPPF and is therefore not contrary to adopted Local Plans.

The provision of a new building is included within the concept design. New buildings to provide 'appropriate facilities' for outdoor recreational uses within the Green Belt are not inappropriate in principle, subject to them preserving the openness of the Green Belt and to their not conflicting with the purposes of Green Belt land. The site of the proposed building is that of the existing Sailing Club building and thus essentially a 'like-for-like' replacement and thus likely to be permissible in the context of a 'Green Belt' designation.

This new building would need to be designed to minimise its impact on the openness of the 'Green Belt' and the rural character of the area in general.

2) SLINC's and Nature Reserves

Sandwell Valley on both sides of the local authority boundary contains a number of Sites of Interest for Nature Conservation. Those of immediate relevance to the proposed site are:

Sandwell Valley SLINC
Tame Valley SLINC
Forge Mill Local Nature Reserve
Priory Woods Local Nature Reserve
RSPB Sandwell Valley Nature Reserve

It should also be noted that land in the vicinity of the proposed site is the subject of planning conditions requiring ecological mitigation in relation to the River Tame flood defence works.

The NPPF stipulates that Local Planning Authorities need to identify, map and safeguard components of the local ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity.

This Feasibility Study has identified opportunities to enhance connectivity between existing designated sites. More detailed design development will need to consider how biodiversity connectivity can be enhanced across the site.

3) Sites of archaeological importance

There is an area of potential archaeological interest within the BCC part of the site.

Planning advice

The 'Manwoods' site marks the position of a former timber-framed house dating to the 1600's.

To the south-east of the site, Park Farm is a Grade II-listed structure. However, given this site's distance from the proposed bike park and the nature of the development proposed development, it is not considered likely that there would be any significant conflict in terms of the impact of the development on the setting of this building.

Financial and governance considerations of preferred options

10.1 Scheme capital costs

Bike Park Options

Option 1

Item	Length (m)	Cost/m	Cost
Green Trail	3150	£60	£189,000
Blue Trail	4230	£50	£211,500
Orange 'Bike Park'	1800	£100	£180,000
Learn to Ride Area	Item		£50,000
Pump Track	Item		£125,000
Total			£755,500

Option 2

Item	Length (m)	Cost/m	Cost
Green Trail	2800	£60	£168,000
Blue Trail	4260	£50	£213,000
Orange 'Bike Park'	1800	£100	£180,000
Learn to Ride Area	Item		£50,000
Pump Track	Item		£125,000
Total			£736,000

Hub building – existing footprint of 789.36m²

Demolition @ £756/ m2 £59,200

New building as Figure 13 @ £2,700/ m2 £2,131,245

Landscape enhancements

Allowance for footpaths/cycle way enhancements, signage, interpretation £75,000

Allowance for habitat and biodiversity enhancements £50,000

Total scheme costs - Option 1 £3,070,945

Allowance for fees @ 10% £307,094

Sub total £3,378,039

Plus contingency – design risk @ 7% £236,463

Total Cost – Option 1 (with new building) **£3,614,450**

Total scheme costs – Option 2 £3,051,445

Allowance for fees @ 10% £305,145

Sub total £3,356,590

Plus contingency – design risk @ 7% £234,961

Total Cost – Option 2 (with new building) **£3,591,550**

Financial and governance considerations of preferred options

10.1 Scheme capital costs

Bike Park Options

Option 1

Item	Length (m)	Cost/m	Cost
Green Trail	3150	£60	£189,000
Blue Trail	4230	£50	£211,500
Orange 'Bike Park'	1800	£100	£180,000
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Total			£755,500

Option 2

Item	Length (m)	Cost/m	Cost
Green Trail	2800	£60	£168,000
Blue Trail	4260	£50	£213,000
Orange 'Bike Park'	1800	£100	£180,000
Learn to Ride Area	Item		£50,000
Pump Track	Item		£125,000
Total			£736,000

Hub building – existing footprint of 789.36m²

Demolition @ £756/ m2 £59,200

Modular buildings with oversail as Figure 14

Large Park Storage	£43,760
Large Park Social	£63,650
Park change	£37,100
Concrete bases 75m ²	£10,000
Oversail 75m ²	£55,000
Allowance for M & E @ 10%	£20,951
Sub-total: modular buildings	£230,461

Landscape enhancements

Allowance for footpaths/cycle way enhancements, signage, interpretation £75,000

Allowance for habitat and biodiversity enhancements £50,000

Sub- total Option 1 £1,170,161

Allowance for fees @ 10% £117,016

Sub total £1,287,177

Plus contingency – design risk @ 7% £90,102

Total Cost – Option 1 (with modular building) **£1,377,279**

Total scheme costs – Option 2 £1,150,661

Allowance for fees @ 10% £115,066

Sub total £1,265,727

Plus contingency – design risk @ 7% £88,601

Total Cost – Option 2 (with modular building) **£1,354,328**

10.0

10.1 Overall model

It is assumed that the bike park and associated facilities will be run by the Sandwell Valley Country Park within the overall new model for the Country Park currently being delivered.

It is envisaged that Country Park overall will be run either by a separate business unit within the Council, an arms-length body owned by the Council, or by an independent organisation spun out from the current service. The final model is yet to be decided but the intention is that income generated within the park should be retained by the Country Park. Given that the bike park business model is reliant on secondary spend, we consider that the retail activities should be run by the Country Park who will be responsible for the costs and liabilities of maintaining the bike park.

10.2 Five-year financial model

Table 1 provides a five-year financial model for Sandwell Valley Bike Park.

10.2.1 Income

The income set out in the model assumes the following:

Contributions to two posts and associated activities by Sandwell Council Public Health and British Cycling of £87,500 per year in Year 1.

An additional grant of £35,000 secured to fund staff costs in Year 2 to replace the above funding.

The generation of income through:

- spend by visitors in the café
- spend by visitors in the bike shop and service centre

- additional income generated by securing grant
- commercial income to deliver training and education services and
- the retention of car parking fees – these are assumed to rise year on year (from £1.80 to £3.20) and the percentage of visitors arriving by car is assumed to fall year on year (from 20% to 16%) as sustainable travel to the site is promoted.

Income for the cafe, bike shop and service centre and the car park are calculated based on assumptions with respect to the number of trail rides. Based on the experience of the Leeds Urban Bike Park where annual trail rides of over 300,000 have been achieved, we assume 250,000 rides in Year 1 rising to 350,000 in Year 4 and Year 5.

10.2.2 Expenditure

10.2.2.1 Staffing

We have assumed that a Community Activator and Go Ride Coach will be employed full time and that additional sessional trainers will be employed. The budget for sessional trainers rises from £8,000 in Year 1 to £20,000 in Year 5, although this could vary depending on income secured from the delivery of educational and training services referenced above.

With respect to retail staff we have assumed that:

- bike shop and workshop staff rising from 1.5 FTE in Year 1 to 2.5 FTE in Year 5, and
- cafe staff will rise from 2.5 FTE in Year 1 to 3.5 FTE in Year 5.

Details are shown in Table 2.

No provision is made for an overall Facilities Manager post as this function will be included within the overall management of the Country Park and its assets. A recharge or contribution to these overall management costs is included separately.

10.2.2.3 Lease

Part of the site will need to be leased from MyTime Active. £15,000 / year plus VAT has been included to cover this cost.

10.2.2.4 Maintenance, repair and replacement

Annual maintenance costs for both the track and the building have been calculated at 1.5% of capital costs. With respect to the track, the full amount has been included from Year 1. For the building, the amount budgeted for maintenance and repair rises year on year to reach 1.5% in Year 4.

In addition to maintenance costs, it is recommended to set aside a sinking fund for both the track and the building for more substantial repairs and replacements. In each case, a figure of 1.5% of capital costs has been applied.

By Year 5 the total amount set aside for maintenance, repair and replacement is 18% of annual income.

10.2.2.5 Recharge to Sandwell Valley Country Park

An amount of £30,000 has been included annually as a contribution to the central management of the Country Park.

10.3 Profit and loss

Based on the assumptions set out above a cumulative surplus of £85,425 is anticipated over the course of the first 5 years of operation.

A small loss of -£6,265 is shown in Year 2 but this would be more than covered by the surplus in Year 1.

By Year 5 an annual surplus of £30,735 is anticipated.

Table 1: 5-year income and expenditure analysis

Sandwell Valley Bike Park - 5 Year Financial Model						
Income	Assumptions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
	No of trail rides (Leeds achieved 300,000)	250,000	275,000	325,000	350,000	350,000
Sandwell Council Public Health	Contributions to two posts	30,000				
British Cycling	Contributions to two posts and activities	57,250				
Other staffing grant (unconfirmed)			35,000			
Cafe	20% of trail rides x £3 / transaction (based on BC example)	150,000	165,000	195,000	210,000	210,000
Bike shop / service centre	0.5% of trail rides x £50 / transaction (based on BC example)	62,500	68,750	81,250	87,500	87,500
Education activities	Grant funded training, schools, alternative education providers	10,000	15,000	20,000	22,500	25,000
Other	Events, sponsorship, hire etc	10,000	12,500	15,000	17,500	20,000
Car parking	Starting at 20% of trail rides and decreasing by 1% / year Parking fees start at £1.80 and rising to £3.20	90,000	104,500	140,400	166,600	168,000
Total in		409,750	400,750	451,650	504,100	510,500
Expenditure						
Staffing	See 'Staffing' tab for assumptions	134,250	155,500	158,000	180,750	184,750
Cafe consumables	40% of turnover	60,000	66,000	78,000	84,000	84,000
Bike retail / workshop consumables	40% of turnover	25,000	27,500	32,500	35,000	35,000
Equipment		30,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Land lease	Land leased from MyTime Active estimated at £15k + VAT	18,000	18,000	18,000	18,000	18,000
Rates and insurances		8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000
Cleaning	756m2 at £15/m2	11,350	11,350	11,350	11,350	11,350
Utilities	Based on BC example	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Annual maintenance (track)	1.5% of capital costs (£755,500)	11,333	11,333	11,333	11,333	11,333
Sinking fund (track)	1.5% of capital costs (£755,500) - from Y2	11,333	11,333	11,333	11,333	11,333
Annual maintenance (building)	Rising to 1.5% of capital costs (assuming £2.2M) by Y4	10,000	15,000	25,000	33,000	33,000
Sinking fund (building)	1.5% of capital costs (assuming £2.2M)	33,000	33,000	33,000	33,000	33,000
Recharge to SVCP	For overall asset and staff management	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
Total out		392,265	407,015	436,515	475,765	479,765
Profit / loss		17,485	-6,265	15,135	28,335	30,735

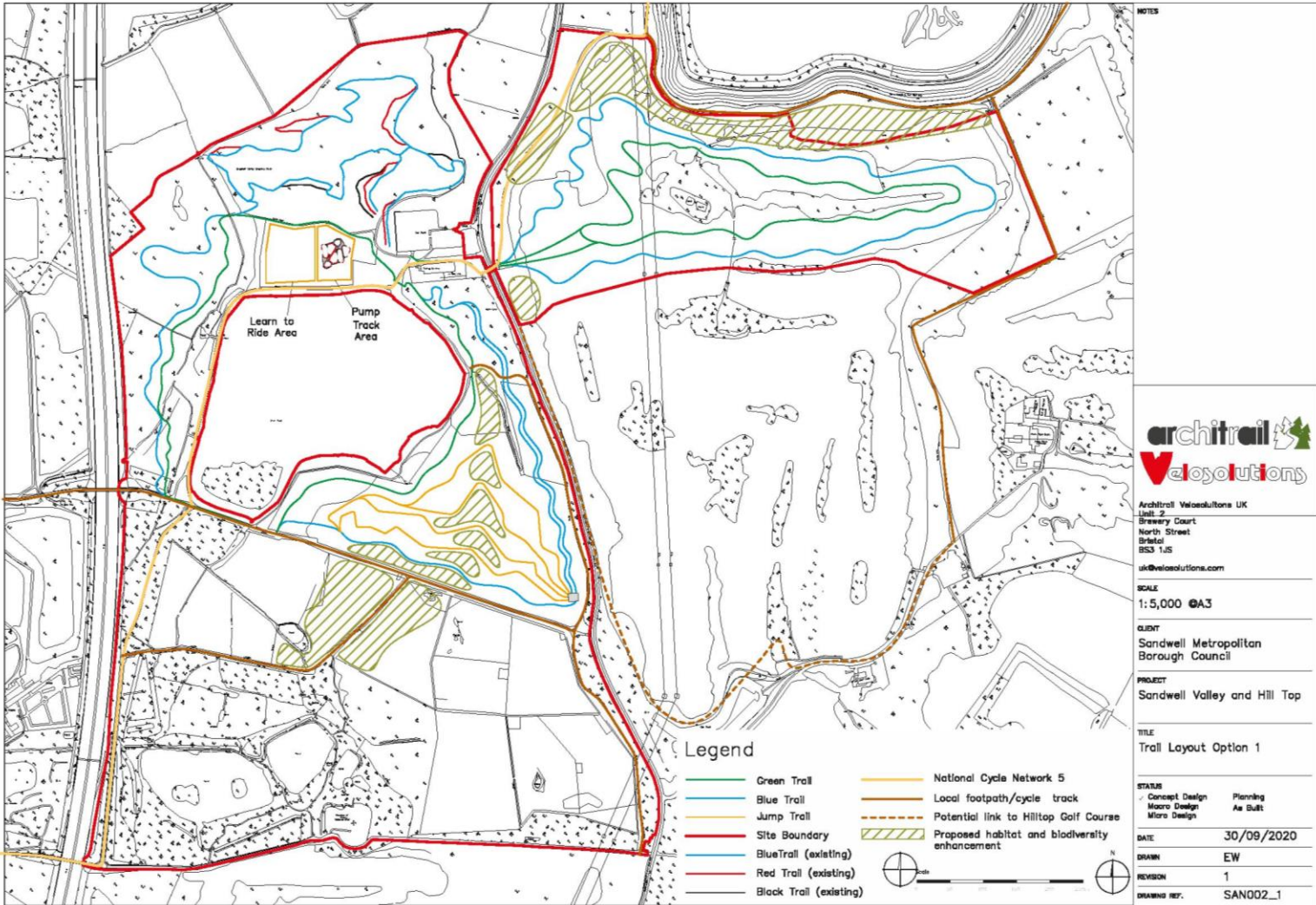
Table 2: Proposed staffing structure

Sandwell Valley Bike Park - Staffing cost assumptions					
Roles	Y1	Y2	Costs Y3	Y4	Y5
Community Activiator	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
Go Ride Coach	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
Trainers etc (sessional)	8,000	10,000	12,500	16,000	20,000
Bike staff (£10/h) - 1.5 FTE in Y1 rising to 2.5 FTE in Y5	30,000	40,000	40,000	50,000	50,000
Cafe staff (£9/h) - 2.5 FTE in Y1 rising to 3.5 FTE in Y5	46,250	55,500	55,500	64,750	64,750
Total staffing costs	134,250	155,500	158,000	180,750	184,750

Appendix A

Development option 1

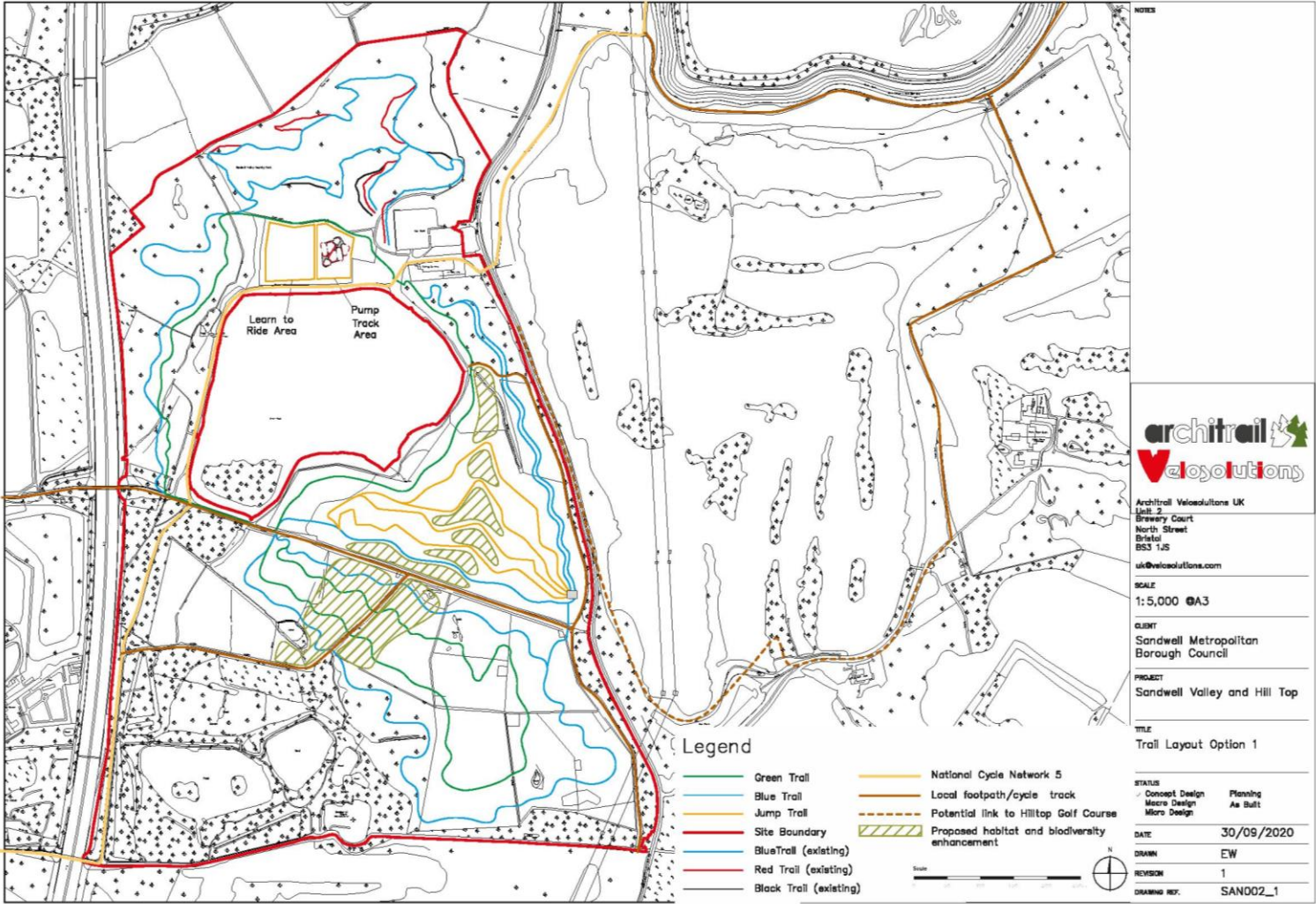
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Appendix A

Development option 2

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Appendix A

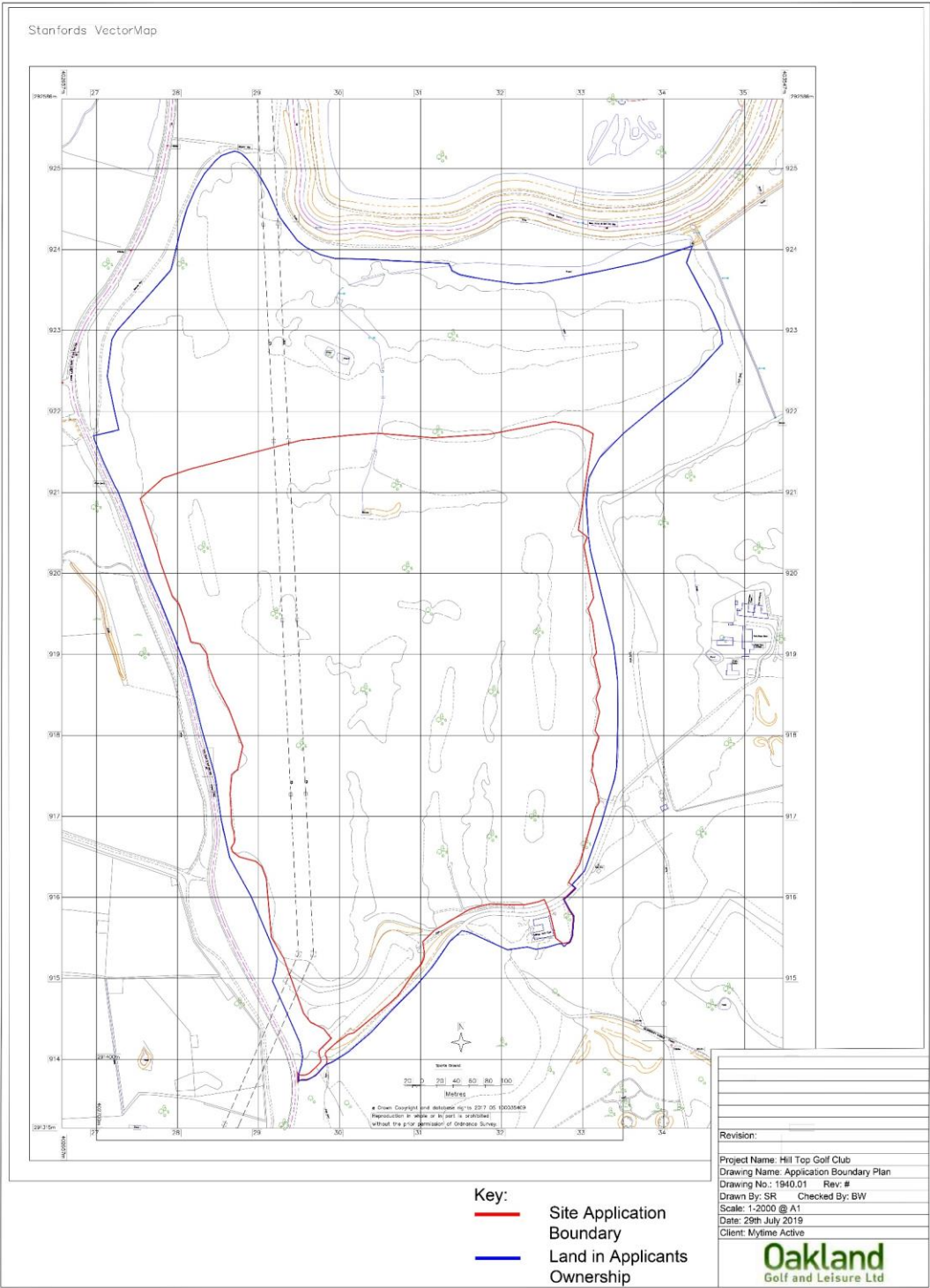
Preferred option masterplan

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Appendix B

My Time Active Planning Red Line and Lease Plan boundary



My Time Active consented scheme

My Time Active consented scheme



Appendix C

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consultation and engagement matrix

Sandwell Valley/Hill Top bike park feasibility							
Consultee approach list							
Jan-21							
Organisation	Name	Role	Contact details	Contact method	Status	Attended	Response
British Cycling	Andy Farr	Head of Business Planning and Transformation	andyfarr@britishcycling.org.uk	Monthly reports/email	Complete		Ongoing discussions
	Stephanie Allmark	Legacy Programme Manager	stephanieallmark@britishcycling.org.uk	Monthly reports/email	Complete		Ongoing discussions
	Amy Gardner	Cycling Delivery Manager, West Midlands	amygardner@britishcycling.org.uk	Monthly reports/email	Complete		Ongoing discussions
Sandwell Council	Cllr Maria Crompton	Interim Leader and Cabinet Member for Safer Communities	maria_crompton@sandwell.gov.uk	MS Teams	Complete		Meetings of 26 November and 13 Jan
	Cllr Jackie Taylor	Cabinet Member for Sustainable Transport	jackie_taylor@cllr.sandwell.org.uk	Email briefing	Complete		
	Cllr Bawa Singh Dhallu	Local Member	bawa_singhdhallu@sandwell.gov.uk	Email briefing	Complete		No response received
	Cllr Laura Rollins	Local Member	laura_rollins@cllr.sandwell.org.uk	Email briefing	Complete		No response received
	Cllr Mohinder Singh Taggar	Local Member	mohinder_singhtagger@cllr.sandwell.org.uk	Email briefing	Complete		No response received
	Jane Lillystone	Service Manager - Leisure and Tourism	jane_lillystone@sandwell.gov.uk	MS Teams	Complete		Ongoing discussions
	Andy Miller	Strategic Planning and Transportation Manager	Andy_Miller@sandwell.gov.uk	MS Teams/email	Complete		See Section 9 of report
	Sunish Patel	Business Manager for Sandwell Valley	Sunish_Patel@sandwell.gov.uk	MS Teams	Complete		Ongoing discussions
	Matt Darby	Sandwell Valley Manager	matt_darby@sandwell.gov.uk	MS Teams	Complete		Ongoing discussions
	Matthew Hill	Sandwell Public Health	matthew_hill@sandwell.gov.uk	Email briefing	Complete		No response received
	Andy Thorpe	Healthy Urban Development Officer	andy_thorpe@sandwell.gov.uk	Email briefing	Complete		No response received
Birmingham City Council	Cllr Narinder Kaur Kooner	Local Ward Cllr	Narinder.Kaur.Kooner@birmingham.gov.uk	Email briefing	Complete		No response received
	Cllr Gurdeep Singh Atwal	Local Ward Cllr	Gurdeep.Singh.Atwal@birmingham.gov.uk	Email briefing	Complete		No response received
	Dave Wagg	Project & Client Manager, Strategic Sport	Dave.Wagg@birmingham.gov.uk	Email briefing	Complete		Ongoing discussions
	Chris Jordan	Assistant Director – Neighbourhoods	Chris.Jordan@birmingham.gov.uk	Email briefing	Complete		No response received
	Lydia Hall	Principal Planning Officer	Lydia.A.Hall@birmingham.gov.uk	Email briefing	Complete		See Section 9 of report
	Joe Hayden	Parks Manager	Joe.Hayden@birmingham.gov.uk	Email briefing	Complete		No response received
	Lee Southall	Area Parks Manager	Lee.Southall@birmingham.gov.uk	Email briefing	Complete		No response received
Panikos Panayiotou	Panikos Panayiotou	Sports Development Manager	Panikos.Panayiotou@birmingham.gov.uk	Email briefing	Complete		No response received
Mytime Active	Chris Deadman		Chris.Deadman@mytimeactive.co.uk	Email/meetings	Complete		No response received
	Jason Stanton		Jason.stanton@mytimeactive.co.uk	Email/meetings	Complete		Comments on timing of possible lease discussions received
Stakeholders	Carol Hartill	Dartmouth Park Friends	carolh.fodp@btinternet.com	Zoom/MS Teams	Complete		No response received
	Adam Halling	Valley Cycles	info@valleycycles.co.uk	Zoom/MS Teams	Complete	6.1.21	See comments
	Ricky Burns Alex Mason	Lightwoods Community Cycling Club	ricky_burns@sandwell.gov.uk alex_mason@sandwell.gov.uk	Zoom/MS Teams	Complete		No response received
	Lesley Easter	Smethwick Beat the Streets Community Cycling Club	(See all contact details below)	Zoom/MS Teams	Complete		No response received
	TBC	Chasetrails	https://www.chasetrails.co.uk/trailbuilding/	Zoom/MS Teams	Complete		No response received
	Si Paton		si@pinkbike.com ; 07968229359	Zoom/MS Teams	Complete		No response received
	Gary Stock	Sandwell Valley Sailing Club	Gary.stock@colourcables.co.uk	Zoom/MS Teams	Complete		No response received
	Sam	Bikeability	tkahdra@hotmail.co.uk	Zoom/MS Teams	Complete		No response received
	Margaret Shucker	Sandnats	Margaret.shucker@virgin.net	Zoom/MS Teams	Complete		No response received
	Val Edkins	Friends of Sot's Hole	valerie@edkins.com	Zoom/MS Teams	Complete	6.1.21 & 7.1.21	See comments
	Simon Atkinson	Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust	simon.a@bbwt	Zoom/MS Teams	Complete		No response received
	Terri	Sandwell Valley Park Run	sandwellvalley@parkrun.com	Zoom/MS Teams	Complete		No response received
	Lesley Easter	Cycling Development Officer – West Midlands	lesley.Easter@cyclinguk.org	Zoom/MS Teams	Complete		No response received
	Adam	Skillsloop	info@skillsloop.com	Zoom/MS Teams	Complete		No response received
	Sammy Pritchard	Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust	sammy.p@bbcwildlife.org.uk	Zoom/MS Teams	Complete	6.1.21	See comments
	Melanie Dinnis	Environment Agency	Melanie.Dinnis@environment-agency.gov.uk	Zoom/MS Teams	Complete	6.1.21	See comments
	Mike Bloxham	Sandnats	mikebloxham@talktalk.net	Zoom/MS Teams	Complete	7.1.21	See comments

Appendix D

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consultation and engagement responses

Sandwell Valley/Hill Top bike park feasibility		
On-line consultation events - comments received		
January 6th		
Abr.	Attendees:	Organisation
VE	Valerie Edkins	Chair, Sandwell Valley Naturalists
AH	Adam Halling	Valley Cycles
MD	Melanie Dinnis	Environment Agency
SP	Sammy Pritchard	Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust
Comment No./by	Content	Consultant team response
1 - AH	Will recording be available for participants	Refer to BC for view on GDPR
2 - VE	Can you forward the slide deck to participants	Yes - we will distribute the slide deck
3 - VE	Sailing Club building used to be the miner's rest club	
4 - VD	Are you aware of the pool in Jubilee woods that is the only site with Gt Crested newts	Thanks for this information
5 - MD	Need to discuss statutory consents with other parts of the EA	These discussions would take place at a later design stage
6 - SP	Nicola Ferrin is leading on ecology and biodiversity projects	We will contact her now and in any future design stage
7 - MD	Also working with Nicola on projects with european funding	We want the process to be joined up with existingsv initiatives
8 - MD	Also contact Simon Needle from BCC	We will contact him
10 - MD	Have you contacted Matt Darby?	We have discussed this project with him and Sunish Patel in context of Sandwell Master Scoping Study
11 - AH	We operate bike hire and offer cycling facilities in the valley currently. These new facilities will be a positive thing	You will be an important consultee looking forward. Part of the feasibility looks at future management of the facility
12 - VE	Is the money frm BC enough?	More match funding will be needed. Funds will be needed from multiple sources
13 - SP	What's the time scale for the project?	A very tight timescale. Places to Ride projects need to be completed by March 2020. If funded, the immediate issues would be resources, Planning and the design and construction process.
14 - MD	So summer for a Planning application?	An autumn Planning decision
15 - SP	What surveys have been done - many of these are seasonal (e.g. bats and invertebrates). This could affect when you get permission	None yet - we've provided Sandwell MBC with a list of surveys required.
16 - SP	Have you factored in Net Gain	Very aware of net gain. But there is potential to add net gain through proposed wildlife corridors
17 - SP	Lots of potential here but would need to be inbedded in management of these corridors	Yes - agree ongoing management is important
18 - VE	Sandell Naturalists have done lots of survey work	It would be really helpful if we could access any survey information that you hold
19 - VE	Crossing at Swan Pool car park - is this safe?	We can look at this in a later design stage. We'd work with Sandwell Transport Planners and incorporate into planning application
20 - MD	Curent speed limit might only be because of EA works being carried out	
21 - MD	Forge Mill lake is a reservoir under the Reservoirs Act	Noted
22 - MD	The EA would be involved and can comment in more detail once design has developed to the next stage	We'd suggest that a collaborative approach is the best approach to developing the next design stages
23 - MD	There are landscape works carrying out though the winter so there are opportunities to join to this project	
24 - VD	Very muddy around the Swan Pool - quite exciting if you're on a bike but not so good for pedestrians	We do want to encourage connectivity for cyclists and pedestrians. There is a sum in the cost plan for paths but this will have to be prioritised



Appendix D

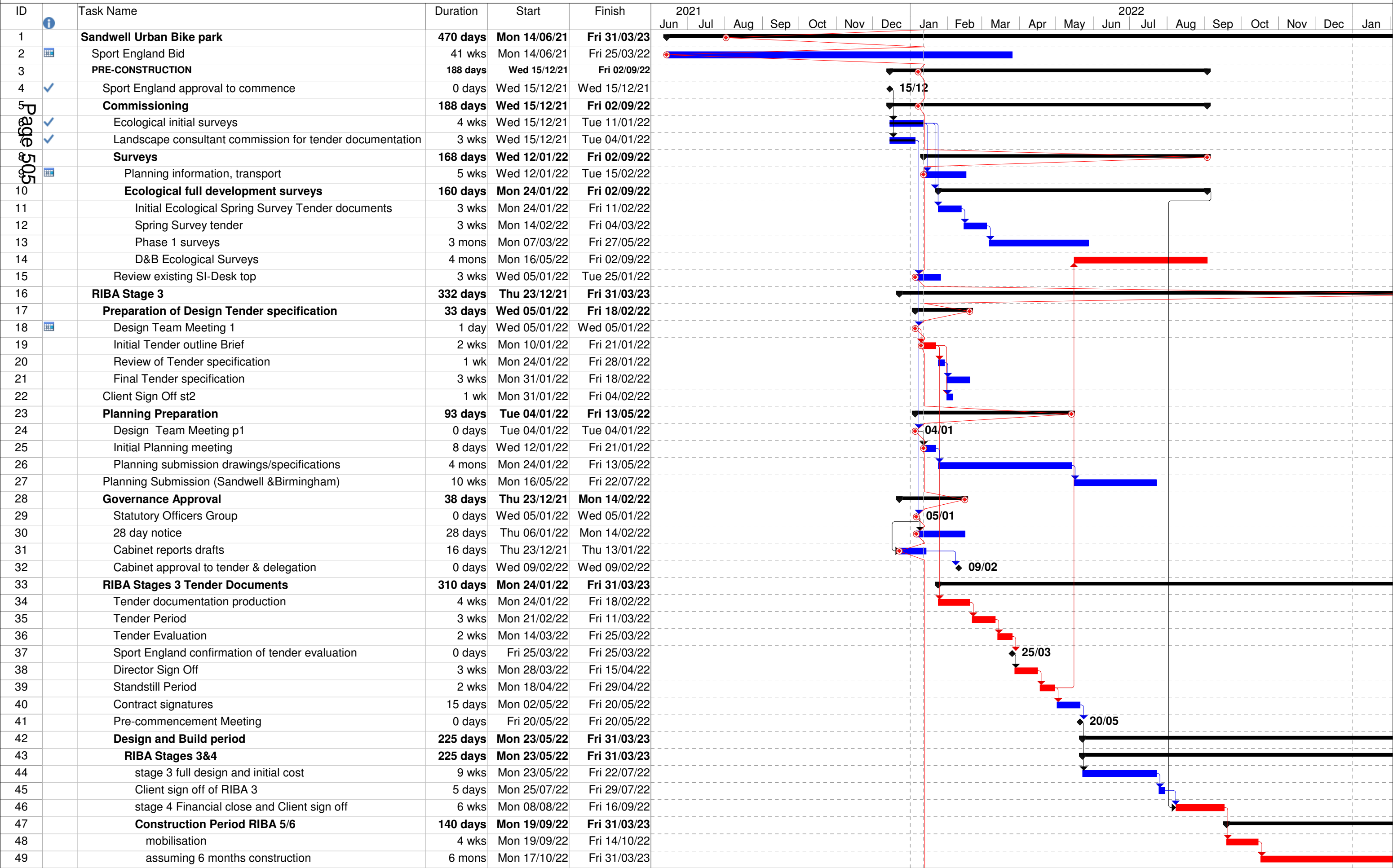
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consultation and engagement responses

Sandwell Valley/Hill Top bike park feasibility		
On-line consultation events - comments received		
January 7th 2021		
Abr.	Attendees:	Organisation
VE	Valerie Edkins	Chair, Sandwell Valley Naturalists
MB	Mike Broxham	Sandwell Valley Naturalists
	Comment No./by	Content
	1 - VE	What is the pale blue area at top of Hill Top?
	2 - VE	What are the black lines around the biodiversity enhancement areas?
	3 - MB	You're showing Hill Top golf course with nothing happening on it.
	4 - MB	Sandwell Valley has over 4,000 species and is a prime biodiversity site. Sandwell Valley Naturalists have been gathering data in the Valley for 50 years but we are not included in the list of people consultants.
	5 - MB	Very keen on cycling. Like the proposals for Jubilee Woods and Hill Top. Not so keen on areas to south of Swan Pool - these are critical for biodiversity already. The grass field to the south of Swan Pool is a skylark meadow. These are the issues that you must discuss. There is a risk of disturbance from public use in these areas.
	6 - MB	The proposed enhancements to the south of the diagonal path are already prime biodiversity sites and they can't be enhanced at all.
	7 - MB	You're proposing to re-purpose grass pasture used by the Sandwell Valley farms.
	8 - MB	Can the project make the areas safer? Pedestrian footfall around Swan Pool is heavy and the cycle path needs some delineation at this point.
	9 - MB	There would be room for special events - the Swan Pool area has formerly been used for Cyclocross but only for special events. The area around Jubilee Woods and Hill Top could have the permanent interventions. Also having these around Swan Pool might be rather more controversial
	10 - MB	You need to talk to the Wildlife Trusts as well.
	11 - VE	Have you contacted Andy Street
	12 - VE	Do want me to put you in touch with Brum Bats
	13 - MB	The new building would be brilliant
	14 - MB	You should also talk to Sandwell staff
		Response
		(post session note) This is an open water area
		The back lines are notional and are just a drawing device. In reality, these won't be sharp lines and they describe extended habitat areas.
		My Time Active who manage the golf course have planning consent for the southern half of the site but have no commercial interest in the northern section so it is potentially available for the bike park.
		We've put the list together based on information from Sandwell and Birmingham but we welcome discussion with as many stakeholders as possible. This is the first stage in a longer process that will require many more discussions.
		If this area needs to be re-thought then this will happen. The purpose of this discussion is to tease out these issues so that the right proposals are put in place. That's the purpose of the consultation and others to follow. This is a very early stage and by no means the final design
		We are also working on a master scoping study for Sandwell Valley that includes a re-focusing of the farming operation.
		We want to engage with as many partners as possible to develop effective and correct solutions.
		Not directly - the WMA was not on the list of people we were asked to talk to. But we can capture others as required when developing the project.
		If the project proceeds, we'll need to gather detailed biodiversity data and accessing any information held by other partners will be useful
		We are working with Sandwell staff in the context of the Sandwell master scoping study



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Report to Cabinet

9 February 2022

Subject:	Council new build homes on land at Beever Road, Tipton
Cabinet Member:	Cabinet Member for Housing Councillor Zahoor Ahmed
Director:	Director of Regeneration and Growth, Tony McGovern Director of Housing, Gillian Douglas
Key Decision:	Yes
Contact Officer:	Alan Martin, Housing Programme and Partnerships Manager Alan_martin@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That approval be given to make an application to the Secretary of State to appropriate the site for housing purposes and develop approximately 0.783 hectares of land at Beever Road, Tipton with new affordable rent council housing, as shown for identification purposes only at Appendix 1 and subject to the Secretary of State's consent.
- 1.2 That the Director of Finance be authorised to allocate adequate resources from the Council's Housing Revenue Account to deliver the scheme and to utilise grant funding offered by Homes England, under the extended Homes England Strategic Partnership 1 Programme 2016 to 2021, to assist with the delivery of the project.



- 1.3 That the Director of Regeneration and Growth in consultation with the Director of Finance and subject to confirmation of the funding rules applicable, be authorised to submit an application for funding to the West Midlands Combined Authority and in the event funding is successful, the Director of Regeneration and Growth in consultation with the Director of Finance and the Director of Housing be authorised to accept the funding and execute under seal any financial agreement in relation to the West Midlands Combined Authority grant on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Director of Finance;
- 1.4 That approval be given to authorise the steps necessary for the delivery of the proposed project, including:
- a) subject to 1.2 above, the Director of Regeneration and Growth in consultation with the Director of Finance and the Director of Housing be authorised to prepare tendering documentation and subsequently procure, in accordance with any statutory regulations and the Council's Procurement and Financial Regulations and if so chosen as a procurement route any appropriate requirements of the Homes England Delivery Partner Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) framework, a contractor/contractors as described in g) below to develop, on behalf of the Council, the proposed housing scheme; to enter into or execute under seal any financial agreement in relation to the Homes England grant on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Director of Finance;
 - b) subject to a) above, the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer be authorised to enter into or execute under seal any documentation in relation to award of the contract and/or development/partnership agreement, Homes England developer status, licence, undertaking, framework joining agreement, any consents or applications required for Planning or Highways appertaining to the delivery of the scheme and any other agreements with the procured contractor(s) and with the Homes England, as may be deemed necessary to facilitate development of the site with a housing scheme as described in below on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Director of Regeneration and Growth;



- c) subject to a) and b) above and following practical completion of each property the Director of Housing be authorised to manage and let the properties built in accordance with the Council's housing allocation policy.
- d) That the following action points identified within the financial appraisal of the funding application by Strategic Finance, be implemented to reduce the risk to the Council:
- That Cabinet consider the alternatives and are satisfied that the proposal to construct the new build homes will meet the Council's objectives in the most appropriate manner.
 - That a process is developed to prioritise the development of sites against pre-determined criteria and alternative options for achieving the Council's housing objectives within each locality.
 - That prior to submission of the external funding bid, review the planned use of Right to Buy receipts to ensure that HCA funding for the project would offer the most financially advantageous source of funding.
 - That the Risk Register is reviewed to ensure all risks relating to grant funding and the use of Right to Buy receipts are identified and adequately mitigated.
 - That approval is sought from the Secretary of State to reclassify the site for housing development.
 - That the site is appropriated, where necessary, from the Council's General Fund to the Housing Revenue Account.

2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 Following the introduction of greater flexibilities for local authorities the Council is able to develop this site with circa 18 homes, as part of the new strategic approach to provide more and better housing in the borough.



- 2.2 Historically, the site was occupied by a section of the disused 'Eagle Colliery' works. Since the late 1930's the site was occupied by residential housing. The houses remained on the site for a relatively short period of time and were demolished some time prior to the mid 1970's. The site was appropriated for allotment purposes in the 1980's, this appropriated use ceased in the 1990's following a report from Advantage West Midlands that the site was unsuitable due to contamination. The site has remained vacant since.
- 2.3 In summary, this project will deliver 18 new Council-owned affordable rented properties on a council-owned site including 10 bungalows and 8 apartments are 2 flats and 2 bungalows that are being built to M(4)3 full wheelchair compliant standard for people with specific needs.

The table below shows the schedule of accommodation to be delivered.
Schedule of Accommodation

Number of units	Property Type	Square metres
5	2 x bed 3 person bungalows	60.2
2	2 x bed 3 person bungalows	78.4
3	2 x bed 4 person bungalows	66.2
8	1 x bed 2 person apartments	52 - 73
18		

Please note that the number, layout and design of dwellings are subject to necessary planning approvals.

A site plan is attached at Appendix 1 and an indicative layout has been produced (Appendix 2). All units will be developed in accordance with current Building Regulations and an application for planning permission was approved on 3rd November 2021.



- 2.4 The development of this council site with new homes will result in the following benefits:
- reducing the amount of vacant, under-utilised land within its ownership which is incurring maintenance costs;
 - increasing the numbers of authority owned stock which will ease pressure on our existing housing;






- replacing housing stock lost through Right to Buy;
 - increasing income to the Housing Revenue Account;
 - Contributing positively to the financial position of the Council by generating New Homes Bonus and new Council Tax receipts.
-
- Developing fit for purpose accommodation.
 - Increased good quality, energy efficient housing provision in the Borough
 - Increasing the levels of new build Council housing stock within the Borough contributing to target forecasts.
 - Linking to the work of Think Local and Find-it-in-Sandwell approaches that will offer significant employment and training opportunities as well as additional community benefits to the local economy, including working with local supply chains and use of local labour.
 - Producing positive outputs for community safety through the redevelopment of a vacant site.

2.5 Strategic Finance have carried out an appraisal of the funding application, which has been evaluated against HM Treasury Green Book guidance. The appraisal process recorded a score of 76%, with some areas of risk identified. The full Appraisal Report can be found in Appendix 3. The appraisal has recommended actions to mitigate the risk to the council, as detailed in 1.4 (d) above.

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p>Best start in life for children and young people</p> <p>These new build properties will provide accommodation which better meets the needs of young families allowing / enabling for a better home educational environment</p>
	<p>People live well and age well</p> <p>The new properties will be built to the Building Regulations standard M4(2) "Accessible and Adaptable" which allows for easy adaptations of the properties and takes into consideration ease of access to the dwellings.</p> <p>In addition 4 properties are being built to Building regulations standard M4(3) "Wheelchair User Dwellings" which allows for simple adaptation of the dwelling to meets the needs of occupants who use wheelchairs".</p>



	<p>Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods</p> <p>The redevelopment of this under-utilised site with modern residential accommodation will improve the asset base of the borough by providing much needed affordable housing.</p> <p>The provision of this proposed scheme will provide Homes that meet people's needs. Sandwell's population is growing and people need quality housing that fits their individual requirements.</p> <p>The development of this site will be guided by the Local Planning Authority in accordance with approved planning and development guidance. This will seek to achieve a development of a quality that sets the highest architectural standards and which provides energy efficient buildings, in furtherance of the aims of the Environmental Policy for Sandwell.</p>
	<p>A strong and inclusive economy</p> <p>The development of this scheme will support investing in businesses, people and jobs that will create wealth and tackle poverty. It will also actively promote Think Sandwell with the inclusion of apprenticeships and training opportunities within the contractual arrangements.</p>
	<p>A connected and accessible Sandwell</p> <p>The location of the site is close to local amenities of Great Bridge. The A41 Black Country New Road Road which offers a direct link to Walsall, West Bromwich, Oldbury, Birmingham and Junction 2 of the M5 and Junction 9 of the M6 motorways. This, along with West Midlands Metro and rail network ensures that new residents are well connected to an array of services and facilities.</p>



4 Context and Key Issues

4.1 Consultation

Public consultation has been undertaken as part of the Statutory Planning process and the application process to seek the Secretary of State's consent to appropriate for housing purposes.

4.2 Sustainability

The development of this site will be guided by the Local Planning Authority in accordance with approved planning and development guidance. This will seek to achieve a development of a quality that sets the highest architectural standards. In addition, the new housing stock will be up to current Building Regulations and will provide high quality living accommodation that will be energy efficient and sustainable contributing to reduced living costs and better quality of life to the new Council tenants. All of which contributes to the aims of the Environmental Policy for Sandwell.

- 4.3 The construction of the scheme will be managed by Housing Partnerships Team and delivered by the selected contractor secured through competitive tender. The construction and development costs associated with the project will be met from within the Housing Revenue Account, by means of Prudential borrowing and the utilisation of grant funding through the Homes England Strategic Partnership 1 programme.
- 4.4 The properties once completed will be managed and maintained by the council and all the associated costs will be met from within the Housing Revenue Account.
- 4.5 The income generated from the rent will also go back into the Housing Revenue Account.
- 4.6 Planning approval for the proposal was achieved on 3 November 2021, with project start date June 2022 with completion due by March 2023.



5 Alternative Options

5.1 As part of the appraisal process the following options were considered:

Option A – Dispose of the Site on the Open Market

The site would be suitable for private sector residential development on basis of this, the site value is estimated to have a nil value. As the development would be in excess of 15 units, then it would be subject to planning policy HOU3 where consideration must be given to the provision of up to 25% affordable housing on site.

If this option is pursued it could result in the disposal of the land for market sale units only. Owing to very difficult ground conditions (the levels and the ground remediation) costs are relatively high and with current market conditions and inflationary costs the site is unlikely to provide commercial developers with the profit margins they require. Planning policy HOU3 where consideration must be given to the provision of up to 25% affordable housing on site is very likely to be challenged on viability grounds but it is likely that developers will overlook this site in favour of more viable options.

This option would also offer nil contribution to the Council's new build programme.



Option B – Work in partnership with a Registered Provider Partner with the assistance of Homes England to build new affordable homes for rent.

Indications are that Homes England funding may be available through various Homes England Shared Ownership and Affordable Homes Programmes which could provide grant funding for a Registered Provider Partner to deliver affordable rented homes. This would give the Council nomination rights to the new properties but would not increase the Council owned housing stock or replace properties lost through RTB and would result in the disposal of a council owned asset (land) that could be used for this purpose.

As with option A above the high build costs and viability issues may render this site less attractive to Registered Providers.

Option C – Leave the site undeveloped.

An option to consider would be not to build out the site and to leave it as it is. There are ongoing maintenance costs to the Council around litter picking, grounds maintenance and ongoing maintenance and liability for the un-adopted road that serves existing properties. These are difficult to quantify as they are carried out as part of larger services, although we anticipate costs would be significantly reduced if the site were developed for housing. This would also result in an under-utilised Council asset.

This option would offer nil contribution to the Council's new build programme.



6 Implications

Resources:	<p>The project cost of delivering the new council homes has been estimated in advance of tendering. This figure includes professional fees and supervision and support activities of project delivery.</p> <p>Resources totalling £184m were allocated by Cabinet on 18th October 2017 for the period 2017 to 2027 to increase the number of homes within the HRA stock. The associated financing costs of these resources are built into the HRA 30 year business plan.</p> <p>The rents charged on the properties will be affordable rents, which are 80% of market rent. This is in line with the recommendations approved by Cabinet on 14th November 2018 whereby all new build properties rent will be set as an affordable rent.</p> <p>Detailed financial modelling has been developed for this proposal based on the standard assumptions used by the Homes England for affordable housing. The financing of the scheme would be through Prudential Borrowing (which would leave the council with a debt to carry over the repayment period and beyond). This modelling shows that after the debt charges are factored in, the scheme shows an in year surplus position, in year 18, but the overall debt will not be repaid until year 34, with a cumulative surplus in year 50 of £2.9m. In context of the overall value of the scheme, these payback periods appear to be reasonable risk.</p> <p>The appraisal carried out on the project includes grant funding from the Homes England Strategic Partnership 1 Programme. This equates to £36,500 per unit. There is also funding available from the balance of 1-4-1 replacement receipts generated from the sale of HRA dwellings under the Right to Buy programme. The report requests approval to utilise funding to Homes England, however, this may not happen if there is a need to use the time limited receipts generated from</p>
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	<p>the sale of properties. This will be monitored in line with the recommendations from the appraisal report to ensure the most appropriate use of funding for the scheme.</p> <p>Land/building</p> <p>This land was acquired for Housing and was appropriated for allotment use and therefore remains a General Fund asset which will require appropriation to the Housing Revenue Account. Whilst there are no direct links to the Corporate Landlord Strategy the scheme helps bring forward undeveloped land supporting council demand for new housing.</p> <p>The completed properties will be managed within existing resources from within the HRA.</p>
Legal and Governance:	<p>There are no specific immediate legal or statutory implications arising from the proposal outlined in this report. However, on-going legal implications regarding the development of land or property will be addressed fully in accordance with legal requirements.</p> <p>Pursuant to the Localism Act 2011 (Ss 1 – 7), Local Authorities have a general power of competence to do anything that individuals generally may do.</p> <p>Advice will be taken from the Council's Procurement Strategy Officer and Legal Services to ensure that the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the council's procurement and contract rules are complied with.</p> <p>The Beever Road was originally acquired for housing purposes but was appropriated for use of allotments in 1983. Section 123(2A) of the Local Government Act 1972 states: "a Principal Council may not dispose under subsection (1) of any land consisting or forming part of an open space unless before disposing of the land they cause notice of their intention to do so, specifying the land in question, to be advertised in two consecutive weeks in a newspaper circulating in the</p>



	<p>area in which the land is situated, and consider any objections to the proposed disposal which may be made to them”.</p> <p>In these circumstances Section 123(2A) will need to be complied with to advertise the Council’s intention to formally categorise and appropriate the site for Housing purposes.</p>
Risk:	<p>The Corporate Risk Management Strategy (CRMS) will continue to be complied with throughout, in identifying and assessing the significant risks associated with this strategic proposal. This includes (but is not limited to) political, legislation, financial, environmental and reputation risks. Based on the information provided it is the officers’ opinion that for the initial risks that have been identified, arrangements are in place to manage and mitigate these effectively.</p> <p>The current assessment has identified not identified any “red” risks that need to be reported at this stage. Actions have been put in place to mitigate this risk.</p>
Equality:	<p>An Equality Impact Assessment screening exercise has been carried out and a full Equality Impact Assessment is not required.</p>
Health and Wellbeing:	<p>Currently the site is vacant and under-utilised. The redevelopment of the site with modern residential accommodation will improve the asset base of the borough by providing much needed affordable, high quality, energy efficient housing.</p> <p>This will result in creating sustainable communities, create wealth, tackle poverty, improve health and wellbeing and reduce certain types of anti-social behaviour and crime.</p>



Social Value	The development of this scheme will support investing in businesses, people and jobs. It will also actively promote Think Sandwell with the inclusion of apprenticeships, training opportunities and community engagement within the contractual arrangements.
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7. Appendices

- 7.1 Appendix 1 – Plan showing development Land at Beaver Road, Tipton for identification purposes only.

Appendix 2 – Indicative planned layout

Appendix 3 – Appraisal Report

8. Background Papers

- 8.1 Report to the Cabinet Member for Strategic Resources and Jobs & Economy, 21st November 2013 - Minute no. 1/13 refers
- 8.2 Report to the Cabinet Member for Strategic Resources and Jobs and Economy, 29th October 2014 Changing the Housing Landscape in Sandwell (Key Decision Ref. No. C043) Minute no 75/14 refers
- 8.3 Report to The Cabinet, 6th April 2016 Changing the Housing Landscape in Sandwell Summary programme for Council House New Build (Key Decision Ref. No. REI021) Minute no 61/16 refers
- 8.4 Report to The Cabinet, 7th December 2016 Proposals for the review of the 2017/18 council tenant rents and housing related property charges (Key Decision Ref. No. LR24) Minute no, 204/16 refers.
- 8.5 Report to The Cabinet, 8th February 2017 Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2017-20 Minute no 21/17 refers
- 8.6 Report to The Cabinet, 18th October 2017 Housing Revenue Account Funded Housing Investment Programme Minute no 167/17 refers



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Financial Appraisal Report - **PUBLIC**

HRA Capital Project – Construction of 18 new affordable homes at Beever Road, Tipton and submission of external funding application to Homes England

Report to Cabinet

Date Issued: 2nd December 2021

Contents:

1. Executive Summary
2. Issues Arising

1 Executive Summary

Introduction

Regeneration & Economy are seeking approval for a capital project to provide 10 new bungalows and 8 apartments for affordable rent on land at Beever Road, Tipton.

Approval is also sought to utilise grant funding offered by Homes England, under the extended Homes England Strategic Partnership Programme 2016 to 2021, to assist with the delivery of the project.

The proposed development site is in council ownership and is currently vacant. The site had previously been used for residential housing until its demolition in the mid1970s.

There are currently over 9,800 people on the Council's Housing Register, of which approximately a third are existing tenants requesting property transfers. With over 65% of all housing applicants requiring properties with 2 or more bedrooms, additional affordable housing is needed across the borough.

Whilst demand for houses remains far higher than for other types of property, recent bidding data shows sufficient demand for both bungalows and apartments in the area.

Strategic Finance has been asked to carry out an appraisal of the funding application, which has been evaluated against HM Treasury Green Book guidance. The appraisal process recorded a score of 76%, with some areas of risk identified.

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Project Objectives

- To increase the number of authority owned stock and reduce the amount of under-utilised land within council ownership.
- To support the Council's Vision 2030, where Sandwell has many new homes to meet a full range of housing needs, in attractive neighbourhoods and close to key transport routes.

Project Details

The proposed residential site will provide the following:

- 2-bedroom semi-detached bungalows (60.2 sqm) x 2
- 2-bedroom detached bungalows (60.2 sqm) x 3
- 2-bedroom detached bungalows (66.2 sqm) x 3
- 2-bedroom semi-detached bungalows (78.4 sqm) x 2
- 1-bedroom apartments (52-73 sqm) x 8

Homes England Strategic Partnership Grant Programme 2016 to 2021 has now been extended and provides grant funding for the provision of new affordable homes. Work on site will need to commence by March 2023 and be complete by March 2025 in order to comply with grant funding conditions. Details of each scheme will be submitted to Homes England for approval prior to commencement.

The proposed development site is currently designated as an allotment site and held as an asset in the Council's General Fund Account within the Neighbourhood's Directorate.

Planning approval for the proposal is expected by October 2021, with project completion due by March 2023.

Total project costs have been estimated by Urban Design & Building Services. Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council will utilise Homes England grant funding of £0.657m, with the remaining funding to be provided by the Council's Housing Revenue Account.

Prudential borrowing will be funded by the Housing Revenue Account over a 40-year period, with an assumed interest rate of 2.31%.

Accord Housing Association will manage and monitor grant funding from Homes England on behalf of the Council, at a cost of £417 per housing unit. The total revenue cost for the service of £7,506 will be funded through the Housing Revenue Account.

Scope and objectives of financial appraisal

The purpose of financial appraisals is to consider the guidance provided by HM Treasury in evaluating business case proposals and assessing the potential risk to

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the Council in achieving its objectives. The following components and risks are assessed:

HM Treasury Green Book	Potential Risks
<u>Strategic Case</u> Objective, need, demand and reasonableness	Insufficient justification for project/will not meet strategic objectives
<u>Economic case</u> Option analysis and risk	Poor use of council resources & excessive risk to Council
<u>Commercial Case</u> Legal and statutory implications	Project may contravene legal/statutory regulations
<u>Financial Case</u> Affordability	Proposals are not affordable or realistic
<u>Management Case</u> Governance, project management, monitoring and evaluation	Non-delivery of project and outputs
Limitations to scope of appraisal	Information provided by Project Officer

LEVEL OF ASSURANCE GAINED FROM FINANCIAL APPRAISAL

Limited (0%-65%)	Satisfactory (66%-80%)	Substantial (81%-100%)
There is a high risk of objectives not being met due to insufficient assurance within the project proposals. There is limited evidence to confirm that the risks to the Council could be adequately mitigated.	There is adequate assurance that objectives could be met, but further actions are required to adequately mitigate the risk to the Council.	There is good assurance that objectives will be met, with little risk to council resources.

Overall Conclusion

The appraisal scored 76% and provides **satisfactory assurance** over the adequacy of the proposals.

Financial appraisals will identify the following levels of issues:

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Fundamental

Action is imperative to ensure that the objectives of the project are met

Significant

Action is required to avoid exposure to significant risks in achieving objectives

Merits Attention

Action is advised to enhance operational efficiency

Summary of key issues identified

- The financial appraisal has identified 1 'fundamental' issues
- The financial appraisal has identified 2 'significant' issues
- The financial appraisal has identified 2 'merits attention' issues

2 Issues Arising

Action is imperative to ensure that the objectives for the area under review are met

Fundamental

2.1 Economic Case – Option Analysis & Value for Money

The unit cost to construct 2 bedroom bungalows and 1 bedroom flats on the proposed site have been estimated by Building Services. Estimated construction costs have been measured against the Building Cost Indices for the West Midlands region and include a 25% risk allowance due to a significant increase in construction costs in recent months. However, the unit cost does not take into account the estimated land value of the site.

a) It is understood that the site has never been marketed for sale and therefore the level of market interest from private developers is unknown.

b) Whilst the construction cost appears reasonable for 2 bedroom bungalows, current property prices for privately owned flats, for sale on the open market within Tipton, do not exceed £0.110m for 2 bedroom accommodation. It is acknowledged that local authority housing generally provides larger homes with a higher build quality than those of private developers, with privately purchased homes potentially requiring adaptations/modifications for council house use.

The high construction cost per unit compared to current property prices may also be associated with a number of other factors including current market conditions within the construction industry, small sites which do not offer economies of scale and poor ground conditions with high remediation costs.

Considering the high construction costs, it is not clear whether all other options have subsequently been explored to deliver the Council's objectives at a lesser

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cost, and the impact of these on its long-term goals. Such options may include site disposal, purchase of privately owned properties, alternative house types/construction methods, other grant funding options and temporary delay to construction to develop other sites at a lower cost.

Implication:

That the proposed option may not optimise value for money for the Council.

Recommended Action:

That Cabinet consider the alternatives and are satisfied that the proposal to construct the new build homes will meet the Council's objectives in the most appropriate manner.

Action is required to avoid exposure to significant risks in achieving objectives
Significant

2.2 Economic Case – Option Analysis & Value for Money

A list of sites for the Council's house building programme was provided, identifying council owned sites with potential for future development. Whilst the proposed site was included within the programme, it was unclear how sites are prioritised for development or processes for evaluation and approval.

Implication:

That development of the proposed site may not offer the most effective use of the Council's resources.

Recommended Action:

That a process is developed to prioritise the development of sites against pre-determined criteria and alternative options for achieving the Council's housing objectives within each locality.

2.3 Economic Case – Value for money

Although funding from Homes England will provide grant monies of £36,500 per property, the use of the Council's Right to Buy receipts could reduce the Council's funding requirement by £57,000 per property. Under the Local Government Act 2003, both types of funding cannot jointly be utilised on individual schemes. The use of receipts from Right to Buy house sales are time limited to 3 years, after which they must be returned to government with interest. Although it is advised that the use of grant funding on the proposed scheme will not reduce the Council's ability to use its balance of Right to Buy receipts, any slippage in current housing schemes may impact on the use of receipts.

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Implication:

Council resources may not be utilised in the most effective way.

Recommended action:

That prior to submission of the external funding bid, a review of the planned use of Right to Buy receipts is undertaken to ensure that HCA funding for the project would offer the most financially advantageous source of funding.

Action is advised to enhance operational efficiency
Merits Attention

- 2.4** **Economic Case – Risks** - A corporate Risk Register has been provided, identifying a large number of amber risks. However, risks in relation to grant funding or the use of Right to Buy receipts had not been adequately identified.

Implication:

Risks may not be identified and adequately mitigated, resulting in financial implications to the Council.

Recommended Action:

That the Risk Register is reviewed to ensure all risks relating to grant funding and the use of Right to Buy receipts are identified and adequately mitigated.

2.5 **Economic Case – Strategic Asset Implications**

The proposed development site is currently designated for use as allotments and held as an asset within the Council's General Fund under the Neighbourhoods directorate. It is understood that under the Allotments Act 1925, approval from the Secretary of State may be required to re-designate the land for housing development. Once developed for housing purposes, the land should be accounted for as an HRA asset.

Implication:

Without development approval from the Secretary of State, the site cannot be legally developed for housing. If an appropriation from the GF to HRA is not completed, Council assets are not accounted for correctly.

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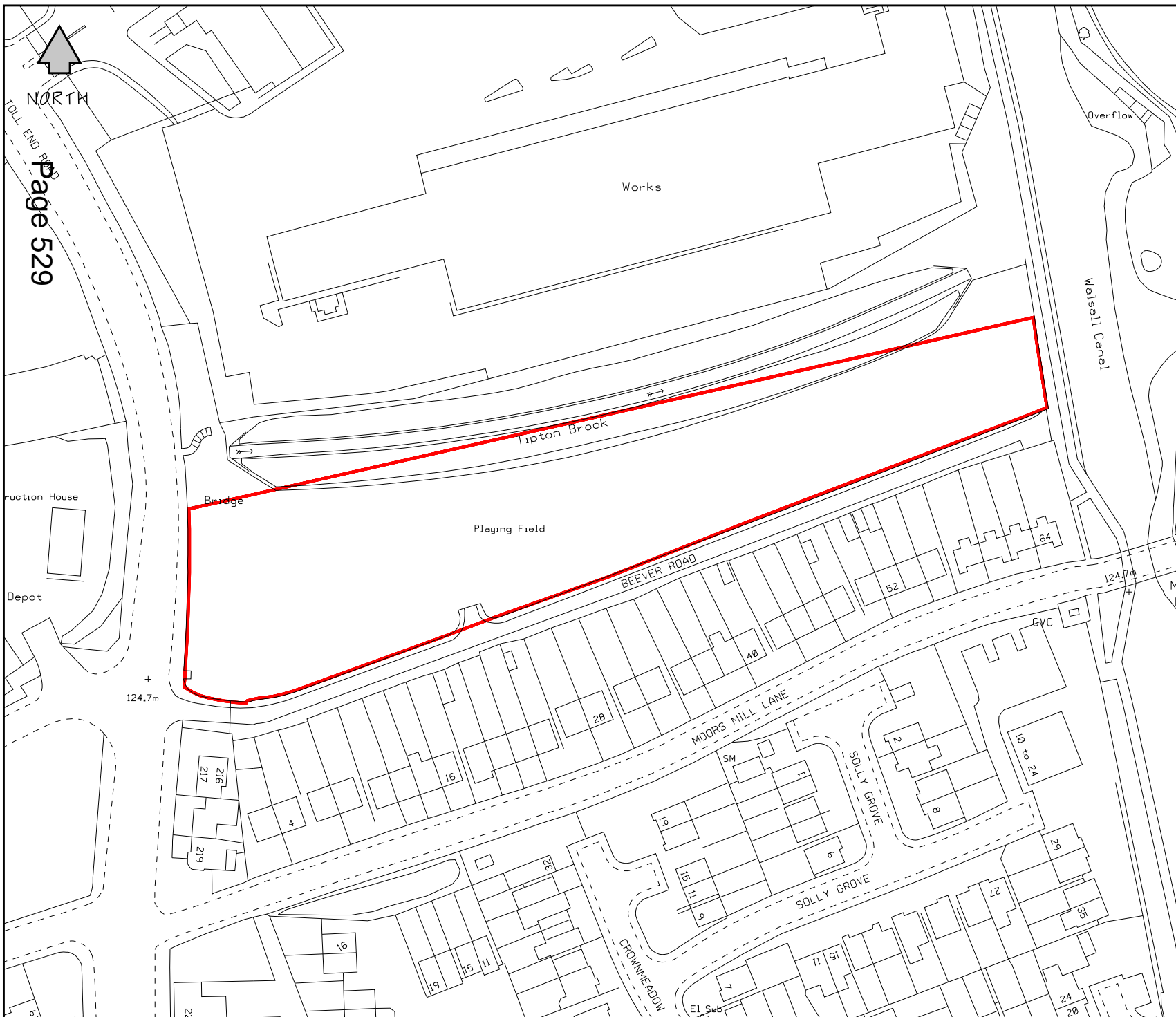
Recommended Action:

- That where required, approval is sought from the Secretary of State to reclassify the site for housing development.
- That the site is appropriated, where necessary, from the Council's General Fund to the Housing Revenue Account.

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REGENERATION AND PLANNING
STRATEGIC ASSET MANAGEMENT

LEGEND

DESCRIPTION

LAND OFF
BEEVER ROAD
TIPTON
TITLE NO: WM962007

AREA

0.783 HA 1.935 AC

PLAN NUMBER

N/A

SANDWELL

S09793SE

TERRIER

115

SCALE

1:1250

CENTROID

397582/293175

DRAWN

DM

DATE

11-JUL-2017

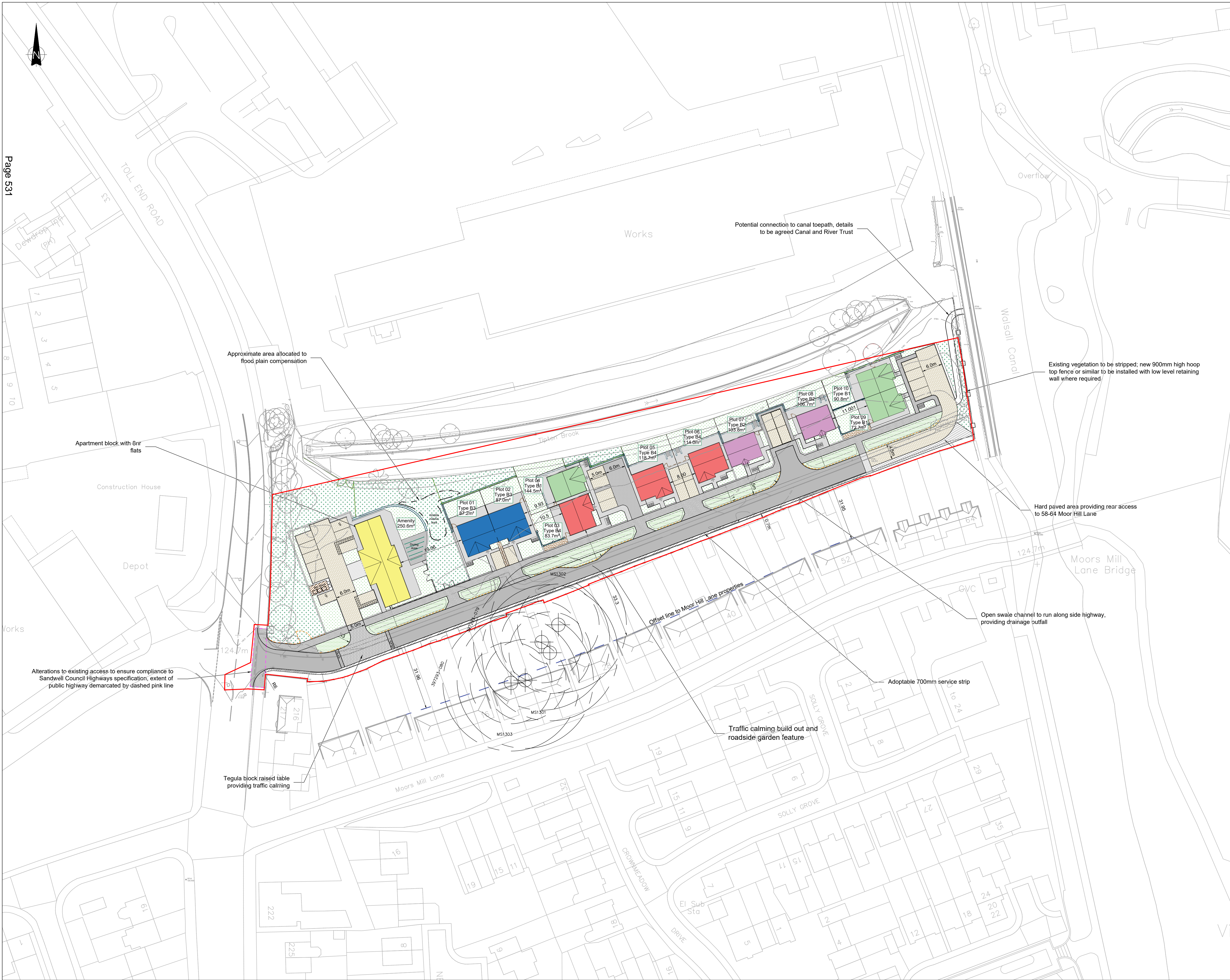
THIS MAP IS BASED UPON ORDNANCE SURVEY MATERIAL WITH
THE PERMISSION OF ORDNANCE SURVEY ON BEHALF OF THE
CONTROLLER OF HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE

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SANDWELL MBC
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2017

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Notes

- Topographical survey provided by SMBC and produced by Interlocks Surveys, survey dated September 2019.
- Drawing located to Ordnance Survey National Grid and all levels to Ordnance Survey datum (mtrs above sea level).
- OS mapping data provided under licence from SMBC under the PSGA Member Licence rights.
- Drawing based on Masterplan (provided by Sandwell MBC) referenced Q19005-UD-00-XX-DR-A-G(04)-01-Proposed Site Options Rev I.
- Landscaping principles based upon Sandwell Councils' Sketch Landscape; refer to GA 00-XX-LG9-01-SO-P0.2 (dated 10.02.21) for full details.
- Historic coal mine shafts and related zones shown for reference.

Key:

- Site boundary
- Gardens and similar landscaping
- Other landscaped areas (POS)
- Adoptable tarmac footway
- Adoptable tarmac access road
- Adoptable Tegula block paving
- Tegula block paving buff colour
- 400x400mm Tobermore paving slabs, silver colour
- Other private tarmac areas
- Resin bound surface to private areas
- Access to dwelling
- Existing Tree Removed
- Bin store location

Housing Key:

- B1 - 2 Bed 3 Person M(4)2 Bungalow GIA: 60.2m²
- B2 - 2 Bed 3 Person M(4)2 Bungalow GIA: 60.2m²
- B3 - 2 Bed 3 Person M(4)3 Bungalow GIA: 78.4m²
- B4 - 2 Bed 4 Person M(4)2 Bungalow GIA: 66.2m²
- Apartment Block - 3 Storey 8nr apartments - see floor plans for areas
- Bin store: 15m²

Apartment block floor plan details:

Floor Level	Flat Number	Bed/Person	M(4) Type	GIA sqm	GIA sqft
0	Flat 1	1B/2P	M(4)3	72.5	780
0	Flat 2	1B/2P	M(4)3	73	785.7
1	Flat 3	1B/2P	M(4)2	58.5	629.7
1	Flat 4	1B/2P	M(4)2	52	559.7
1	Flat 5	1B/2P	M(4)2	58.5	629.7
2	Flat 6	1B/2P	M(4)2	58.5	629.7
2	Flat 7	1B/2P	M(4)2	52	559.7
2	Flat 8	1B/2P	M(4)2	58.5	629.7

A	GIFA and I/scaped areas added	DJH	DES	16.04.21	
Rev	Modification	By	Chk	App	Date

By

Egniol Consulting Limited
1st Floor, 6 Canon Harnett Court,
Wolverton, Milton Keynes
MK12 5NW
Telephone: 01248 355996
Email: info@egniol.com

Beever Road, Tipton

General Arrangement

Drawn by	Checked by	Approved by
AA	DJH	DES
Date	Date	Date
14.04.21	14.04.21	15.04.21
Status	Scale @ A1	
Planning		1:500
Drawing Number	Revision	
ECL.8330.D01.003	A	

CAD File Ref:M:\CAD Projects\8330 Beever Rd\Drawings\Current Working Drawings\ECL.8330.D01.003 GA.dwg

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Report to Cabinet

9 February 2022

Subject:	Award of Contracts for Horticultural Products and Tools
Cabinet Member:	Cabinet Member for Culture and Tourism – Councillor Danny Millard
Director:	Director of Borough Economy Alice Davey
Key Decision:	Yes ‘incurring expenditure which exceeds that included in any approved revenue or capital budget’
Contact Officers:	Matthew Huggins Interim Service Manager – Parks & Grounds Maintenance Matthew_huggins@sandwell.gov.uk Tim Pitt Operations Manager – Grounds & Estate Maintenance tim_pitt@sandwell.gov.uk

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Director of Borough Economy be authorised to award contracts for the provision of Horticultural Products and Tools to the following organisations, at a cost of £475,000 from the period April 2022 to March 2026:





Lot No.	Description	Organisation
Lot 1	Aggregates & Turf	Green-Tech
Lot 2	Feeds, Seeds and Chemicals	Pitchmark
Lot 3a	Herbicides	Nomix
Lot 3b	Herbicides - Premixed	Nomix
Lot 4	Spraying Equipment	Tudor Environmental
Lot 5	Tools & Equipment	Corroy

1.2 That in connection with 1.1 above, the Director – Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer be authorised to enter into appropriate contracts with these organisations.

2.0 Reasons for Recommendations

2.1 This report seeks approval to award contracts for the provision of Horticultural Products and Equipment to the highest scoring tender organisations outlined in 1.1.

3.0 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p>Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods</p> <p>To support in making Sandwell a better place to live, work, learn and spend leisure time in. The products and equipment contained within these contracts will be used to maintain the various green spaces and communal areas across the Borough including Housing Estates, Parks and Open Spaces, Highways Verges, Sports Pitches, Cemeteries and Crematoria, and Sandwell Valley.</p>
	<p>A strong and inclusive economy</p> <p>The contracts adhere to the council's social value benefits providing opportunities to meet the council's key criteria requirements by providing value for money in terms of generating benefits to society and the economy e.g. employment and skills, health and wellbeing, whilst minimising the impact to the environment.</p>



4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 Sandwell MBC have a responsibility to maintain a broad range of green spaces and communal areas across the Borough, including Parks and Sandwell Valley, Cemeteries/Crematoria, Housing Estates, Industrial Estates, Corporate and Highways Land, etc.
- 4.2 Maintenance of these areas requires the use of products, materials, tools and equipment – some of which are of a specialist nature.
- 4.3 The total expenditure over the four-year life of these Contracts is estimated to be £475,000.
- 4.4 The Contracts were procured in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 following an EU compliant open tender process. Contractors were invited to submit tenders on an 80% price and 20% quality basis.
- 4.5 A specification for a range of 'Horticultural Products and Tools' was developed, generated from the needs identified by a number of Council Service areas.
- 4.6 Suppliers were asked to identify and tender for one or more of the available 'lots':

Lot No.	Description
Lot 1	Aggregates & Turf
Lot 2	Feeds, Seeds and Chemicals
Lot 3a	Herbicides
Lot 3b	Herbicides - Premixed
Lot 4	Spraying Equipment
Lot 5	Tools & Equipment

- 4.7 In response to the tender advertisement, Eight (8) tender submissions were returned by the deadline of 3rd June 2021.
- 4.8 Tender submissions were scored in accordance with the stated evaluation criteria by officers from the Council's Corporate Procurement Service, Grounds & Estate Maintenance and Bereavement Services.



- 4.9 The highest scoring tenders for each 'lot' are to be awarded the contract.
- 4.10 Social Value considerations formed part of the evaluation criteria and the commitments made will be monitored during the lifetime of contracts.

5 Alternative Options

- 5.1 Do nothing. The current contracts for Horticultural Products and Tools have lapsed, therefore in order to meet the Procurement Rules, the Council would need to go out for quotation/tender for individual items as and when they are required. This would result in numerous mini procurement exercises being carried out, which would be inefficient, likely to lead to breaches of the procurement procedures and is unlikely to be financially beneficial to the Council.

6 Implications

Resources:	<p>Financial, staffing, land/building implications</p> <p>There are no direct strategic resource implications arising from this report.</p> <p>Purchases are likely to be made from a range of budgets/cost centres, across various service areas where horticultural products, tools and equipment are required.</p>
Legal and Governance:	<p>Legal implications including regulations/law under which proposals are required/permitted and constitutional provisions</p> <p>The procurement exercise has been concluded in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.</p>
Risk:	<p>Risk implications, including any mitigating measures planned/taken, health and safety, insurance implications</p> <p>There are no direct risk implications.</p>



Equality:	<p>Implications for equality (all aspects and characteristics) including how meeting Equality Duty, equality impact assessments</p> <p>There are no equality implications</p>
Health and Wellbeing:	<p>Implications of the proposals on health and wellbeing of our communities</p> <p>There are no health and wellbeing implications.</p>
Social Value	<p>Implications for social value and how the proposals are meeting this (for e.g. employment of local traders, young people)</p> <p>The Contracts will adhere to the Councils social value policy by providing opportunities to meet the Councils key criteria requirements to by providing value for money in terms of generating benefits to society and the economy e.g. employment and skills, health and wellbeing, whilst minimising the impact to the environment.</p>

7. Background Papers

None



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Report to Cabinet

9 February 2021

Subject:	High Needs Block Funding Allocation
Cabinet Member:	Cabinet Member for Children and Education, Councillor Karen Simms
Director:	Director of Children and Education, Michael Jarrett
Key Decision:	Yes
Contact Officer:	Moira Tallents, Group Head, Inclusive Learning moira_tallents@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations



- 1.1 That the Director of Children and Education be authorised to distribute High Needs Block (HNB) grant funding allocated by central government to meet the needs of children and young people with additional needs, including special educational needs for the period 1 April 2022 to 21 March 2023.

2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 Approval is requested to distribute High Needs Block (HNB) grant funding allocated by central government to meet the needs of children and young people with additional needs, including special educational needs for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.
- 2.2 Every year the Council agrees with the Schools' Forum the local formulae through which the money is then distributed to schools and early years settings. The Council is also responsible for distributing the high needs funding to meet the needs of children and young people with additional needs, including special educational needs. This is also done in consultation with the Schools' Forum.



3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p>Best start in life for children and young people</p> <p>The proposals contained in this report support the Sandwell's Vision 2030 as stated in:</p> <p>Ambition 3: Our workforce and young people are skilled and talented, geared up to respond to changing business needs and to win rewarding jobs in a growing economy and</p> <p>Ambition 4: Our children benefit from the best start in life and a high-quality education throughout their school careers with outstanding support from their teachers and families.</p>
	<p>Strong resilient communities</p> <p>Ambition 1: Sandwell is a community where our families have high aspirations and where we pride ourselves on equality of opportunity and on our adaptability and resilience</p>

4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1** The Schools' Forum meeting held on 13 December 2021 received information on the HNB grant for 2022/23 and agreed proposals for the use of additional funding. This was ahead of the DfE settlement received on 17 December 2021. These proposals have formed the recommendations for this report.



4.2 The current position

4.3 In 2019 the announcement from the DfE identified that Sandwell's HNB grant would increase by £7.1m, from £40.9m for 2019/20 to £48.0m for 2020/21. This excludes funding for academies which is allocated directly to them. The DfE agreed a three-year increase in HNB funding and 2022/23 is the last year of that agreement. The funding for 2022/23 is £58.137million (announced 17 December 2021) Further announcements are anticipated for 2023/2024 onwards but no timescales have been given at the time of writing.

4.4 To manage the spend Local Authority Officers consulted with a range of stakeholders to develop proposals to improve services and specialist provision. Stakeholder groups included:

- Special School, PRU and Focus Provision Head Teachers Steering Group
- Primary School Steering Group
- Secondary School Steering Group
- Sandwell Parent Voices United
- Schools Forum Sub-group

The finalised consultation proposals and information:

- Joint Executive Group Head Teachers
- Secondary Headteacher Partnership
- Primary Headteacher Partnership
- Local Offer

4.5 The proposals focussed on three areas: school support, top-up funding for children/young people with Education, Health and Care Plans and specialist provision.

4.6 The full proposals sent out for consultation with schools and parents is provided in Appendix 1



4.7 School Support

- 4.8** Following the consultation process proposals were developed to change how secondary schools were allocated hours of support from Inclusion Support (Education and Child Psychologists, Special Advisory Teachers: Learning, Special Advisory Teachers: SEMH). It was agreed that this would change from a “flat rate” where all secondary schools receive the same number of hours to a needs lead formula model (similar to a model already used by primary schools). The formula and weightings of elements within it will be co-constructed with a steering group from Secondary schools during the Spring term 2022 ready for implementation in September 2022. This is a redistribution of resources and has no implications on High Needs Block funding
- 4.9** It was also agreed by Schools’ Forum to use money allocated within the High Needs Block to employ a Transition / Reintegration Team to support managed moves within secondary schools rather than a new Preventing Secondary Exclusion Team. The Transition / Reintegration team are currently funded by the school’s exclusion levy.
- 4.10 Top-Up Funding for children and young people with Education, Health and Care Plans**
- 4.11** It was agreed by Schools’ Forum to view the proposals on increasing levels of top-up funding for individual pupils alongside the financial implications of increasing specialist places as this would have a significant impact on High Needs Block funding going forward. After consultation and further consideration by Schools’ Forum, it was agreed that current levels of top-up funding would remain the same.
- 4.12 Specialist Provision**
- 4.13** Following the consultation process proposals were developed to increase specialist provision for children and young people with SEND. The High Needs Provision Allocation Grant would fund the capital works for building these provisions whilst the HNB would fund the revenue (pupil placements).



4.14 The following incremental increases to specialist provision were proposed and agreed by Schools' Forum:

- New Social Emotional and Mental Health Resource provision for KS3 pupils
- Expansion of KS3 / KS4 Social, Emotional and Mental Health Specialist Provision
- Expansion of specialist provision for children / young people with Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD) / Complex needs in both Primary and Secondary age ranges through either expansion of current provision, satellite schools or resource bases.

4.15 The proposals to use High Needs Capital Allocation grant to support development of specialist teaching environments in mainstream schools were not taken forward by Schools' Forum as the recommendation was to invest the capital funds in developing more specialist provision. The subsequent proposal to provide a small resource grant to support the establishment of specialist teaching environments was also not taken forward.

4.16 The proposals assume that pupils with the highest level of need will access the specialist provision. This will include existing pupils and not just new SEND pupils.

Details of the impact of costs associated with these proposals on the HNB are shown in Appendix 2 alongside the predicted increases of children and young people being supported by Education, Health and Care Plans

4.17 Outcomes / Service Improvements

4.18 Consultation

4.19 The stakeholders consulted with when developing the proposals are identified in Section 4.4.



4.20 The Schools' Forum formerly considered the proposals developed with stakeholders at its meetings held on 8 November and 13 December 2021. The outcomes of these meetings have informed the recommendations of this report.

4.21 Strategic Resource Implications

4.22 The Council receives HNB Grant from the Department of Education as part of its Dedicated Schools Grant. The Secretary of State for Education announced that Sandwell would receive HNB Grant of £58.137million in 2022/23.

4.23 A summary of the additional costs for the proposals described in section 4 is shown in Appendix 2. This uses the indicative grant known at the time of 57.782m.

5 Alternative Options

5.1 A range of alternative proposals were considered during the stakeholder engagement and consultation process, before the final proposals were submitted to the Schools' Forum for approval on 8 November and on 3 December 2021.

6 Implications

Resources:	The Council receives HNB Grant from the Department of Education as part of its Dedicated Schools Grant. The Secretary of State for Education announced that Sandwell would receive HNB Grant of £58.137 million for 2022/23. (This is after deductions for high needs places in recoupment academies, special and alternative provision academies , Further Education and Independent Learning Providers; place funding is instead provided to these institutions directly by the Education & Skills Funding Agency).
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	<p>The Council receives HNB Grant from the Department of Education as part of its Dedicated Schools Grant. The Secretary of State for Education announced that Sandwell would receive HNB Grant of £58.137 million for 2022/23. (This is after deductions for high needs places in recoupment academies, special and alternative provision academies , Further Education and Independent Learning Providers; place funding is instead provided to these institutions directly by the Education & Skills Funding Agency).</p> <p>The spend against the HNB Grant is monitored and reported to Schools Forum at meetings throughout the year. Mitigations to manage the perspective risks are agreed through consultation with schools. If the HNB grant does go into deficit then the Local Authority and Department of Education will agree a recovery plan.</p>
Legal and Governance:	The Authority has to adhere to the Schools and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2021 which will very shortly be updated for 2022.
Risk:	<p>The Corporate Risk Management Strategy (CRMS) has been complied with – to identify and assess the significant risks associated with this decision. This includes (but is not limited to) political, legislation, financial, environmental and reputation risks.</p> <p>If the proposal of this report is not approved, children and young adults with SEND will not receive the appropriate provision in a timely manner and resulting improved educational outcomes. A risk register is in place and is being managed as part of the overall governance arrangements.</p> <p>The council's Directorate Risk Register currently has SEND noted as a red risk. The recommendations above if approved, will assist in the continued mitigation of this risk.</p>



	The recommendation by Schools' Forum members to adopt the agreed proposals specified in the report.
Equality:	Any impacts on protected characteristics groups are positive because the focus of the support through funding is for identified children with SEND.
Health and Wellbeing:	Research has identified that children with SEND often experience lower levels of subjective well-being in their educational environment. The range of proposals identified in this report seek to provide greater support to children with SEN, and their families, and will positively impact on their well-being.
Social Value	See health and wellbeing section

7. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Consultation Proposals

Appendix 2 – Financial predictions and impact modelling on High Needs Block

8. Background Papers

High Needs Block Grant Provision 2020/21 reports to Schools Forum – 8th November and 13th December 2021.

<https://sandwell.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?MId=6032&x=1>



Summary of Specialist Provision Proposals

Proposals Description	No of places	Full Year cost*HNB £000
KS3 SEMH Focus Provision	10	231,290
KS3 / KS4 Expansion of Specialist SEMH Provision	10	347,370
SLD / Complex Needs Expansion of Specialist Provision / Satellite Schools / Resource Base	20	482,920

* Assuming full capacity



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SEND and HNB Review Consultation Proposals October 2021

Proposal 1: Time allocation of Inclusion Support Services to Secondary Schools

Currently all secondary schools receive the same flat rate of time from their Inclusion Support delivery team to support pupils with SEND. Current time allocation to each Secondary School

Education Child Psychology Team – 65 hours

Special Advisory Teacher: Learning – 67 hours

Special Advisory Teacher SEMH – 60 hours

In Primary schools the time allocation of Inclusion Support teams is based on a formula:

Number on roll, IDACI rating, Number of pupils with EHCPs and Number of pupils referred to Inclusion Support. Schools are then ranked according to the formula and placed within 5 bands of time allocation. Each element of the formula has the same weighting.

If a formula model based on need is agreed for Secondary schools, the distribution of hours of delivery time would mean that some schools will receive additional hours whilst others would receive less.

Please see below a sample model for the allocation for advisory teacher hours

Model A- School	School Type	NOR	# EHCP	IDACI	IS Referral	Overall Rank	Overall Quintile	Rank in Model A
	Sec	971	82	27%	90	1	A	A
	Sec	1110	58	25%	85	2	A	A
	Sec	1933	27	8%	63	3	A	A
	Sec	1221	38	5%	77	4	A	A
	Sec	1507	28	16%	65	5	A	A
	Sec	1635	28	23%	53	6	B	B
	Sec	1424	15	27%	69	7	B	B
	Sec	1328	19	12%	59	8	B	B
	Sec	1536	15	36%	42	9	B	B
	Sec	1336	21	49%	38	10	B	B
	Sec	1418	15	41%	44	11	C	C
	Sec	1110	23	36%	48	12	C	C
	Sec	1400	12	1%	60	13	C	C
	Sec	1086	16	24%	53	14	C	C
	Sec	331	7	121%	45	15	C	C
	Sec	1195	14	18%	41	16	D	D
	Sec	1133	27	4%	36	17	D	D
	Sec	1090	9	25%	46	18	D	D
	Sec	884	14	42%	37	19	D	D
	Sec	165	2	181%	6	20	E	E

A Band – 72 hrs

B Band – 67 hrs

C Band – 62 hrs

D Band – 57 hrs

E Band – separate banding for school due to very low numbers on roll

Using different weightings of elements within the formula changes the schools ranking and banding. This, and indicators used within the formula could be further discussed with Secondary Head Teachers.

Please indicate your decision by choosing one of the following options

Option 1

Align allocation of Inclusion Support delivery time in secondary mainstream schools with the primary school allocation model. Change delivery hours from a flat rate to all secondary schools to a formula model for similar distribution of time based on need.

Option 2

Align allocation of Inclusion Support delivery time to a formula model. Inclusion of specific elements and weightings in the formula to be further discussed and agreed by secondary school steering group.

Option 3

Maintain current flat rate so that all Secondary Schools receive the same amount of time allocation to all schools.

- **Proposal 2: Determine use of funding being held within SEN Support Service category of High Needs Block for Secondary Preventing Exclusions Team**

Currently this team have not been appointed following feedback from Secondary Heads and the impact of Covid.

Original proposal was to employ 7 central Preventing Exclusions Officers to work under-direction of the SAT SEMH team to prevent exclusion / support transition in KS3. This is based on a similar model and capacity of Preventing Primary Exclusions team currently working within primary schools. Staffing costs for team £198,600 from 2021/22 onwards. The reallocation of funding would total £1,390,200 over the 5-year period to 2027/28.

An alternative proposal of funding the transition/ reintegration team has been suggested. This team is part of the Fair Access and Exclusion team and supports the transition of pupils who are subject to agreed managed moves (in Secondary) and reintegration of permanently excluded pupils into mainstream settings (Primary) and a family support worker. Currently the positions are funded through the Primary and Secondary Exclusions Levy which is controlled by schools and separate to the High Needs Block. Positions have been previously agreed by head teachers at Fair Access Management Board and Joint Executive Group. These are temporary positions and continued funding is dependent on the Exclusion Levy set by Head teachers as part of the Fair Access Protocol and the numbers of permanently excluded pupils successfully transitioning to mainstream schools. Team consists of 2 Secondary Transition/Integration Officers, 1 Primary Transition Officer and 1 Family Support Officer. Staffing cost for team £109,260 from 2021/2022

Role	Students	Referral route	Support /outcome
Secondary Preventing Exclusions Officer	KS3 students with identified SEMH needs (SEN Support) at risk of exclusion	School referral to Special Advisory Teacher: SEMH (Inclusion Support) following period of specific school based intervention and advice. Identification starts in Yr.6 to support transition into Yr.7.	On-site support within current secondary school in 6-week block. Work with school staff and parents in modelling successful strategies to support student. Desired Outcome: Reduced risk of exclusion from school
Transition and Reintegration Officers	Secondary students at risk of permanent exclusion identified as requiring a managed transition to another school Primary students that are reintegrating into new mainstream school from Primrose PRU	School referral through Fair Access and Exclusions Team	Liaison between schools, pupil and family. On-site support in new school to establish trusted relationships with staff. Desired Outcome: Successful transition into new school to provide a fresh start

Please indicate your decision by choosing one of the following options

Option 1. Use HNB funding to employ new Secondary Preventing Exclusion Team

Option 2. Use HNB funding to employ Transition / Integration Team which are currently part of the Fair Access and Exclusion Team and funded through the Exclusions Levy.

Top up funding for Children / Young People with Education, Health and Care Plans

Proposal 3: To determine the level of top up funding allocated to C/YP with an Education, Health and Care Plan.

The amount of top up funding allocated to each individual child with an EHC Plan has been an area of debate with conflicting views. The options below reflect the differing views from school leaders across Sandwell. Alterations to “top up” funding will have a significant impact on the High Needs Block going forward if the numbers of students requiring EHC Plans continues to significantly increase.

The total funding allocated for a pupil with an EHC Plan in mainstream school is split between school budget (AWPU: element 1 and SEN Notional budget: element 2) and top up funding provided through the HNB (element 3). Top up funding is determined by a banding system based on level of need and support required. Schools are expected to use all elements within the C/YPs funding to provide provision specified in the EHC Plan.

Special Schools and PRUs are provided with £10,000 per place which replaces element 1 and 2 in mainstream schools. Each school then has a set amount of top up funding per pupil dependant on their setting.

Focus Provision schools are provided with additional funding to replace element 2 so that the placement cost is equivalent to £10,000 when element 1 (AWPU) is added. Each type of Focus Provision has a set amount of top up per pupil dependant on need

The school's forum sub-committee agreed to put forward the following options for consideration:

- Increase level of top up funding to all pupils each year from 2022/23 onwards.
Option 1 – 1% increase
Option 2 – 2% increase
- Increase level of top up funding for mainstream pupils from 2022/23 onwards
Option 3 – 1% increase
Option 4 – 2% increase
- **Option 5** - Maintain level of top up funding for all pupils

The table below shows the impact on individual levels of funding for each child according to the current banding system.

Mainstream		1% Increase	2% Increase	Variance 1%	Variance 2%
Banding	Top Up				
CL1	£3,260	£3,293	£3,325	£33	£65
CL2	£4,915	£4,964	£5,013	£49	£98
CL3	£6,310	£6,373	£6,436	£63	£126
CL4	£9,819	£9,917	£10,015	£98	£196
P1	£3,261	£3,294	£3,326	£33	£65
P2	£4,347	£4,390	£4,434	£43	£87
P3	£5,590	£5,646	£5,702	£56	£112
P4	£7,825	£7,903	£7,982	£78	£157
P5	£9,809	£9,907	£10,005	£98	£196

S1	£3,912	£3,951	£3,990	£39	£78
S2	£5,589	£5,645	£5,701	£56	£112
S3	£7,823	£7,901	£7,979	£78	£156
S4	£9,829	£9,927	£10,026	£98	£197
SEMH1	£2,794	£2,822	£2,850	£28	£56
SEMH2	£4,341	£4,384	£4,428	£43	£87
SEMH3	£5,569	£5,625	£5,680	£56	£111
SEMH4	£7,887	£7,966	£8,045	£79	£158
SEMH5	£9,839	£9,937	£10,036	£98	£197
SL1	£4,939	£4,988	£5,038	£49	£99
SL2	£6,351	£6,415	£6,478	£64	£127
SL3	£7,824	£7,902	£7,980	£78	£156
SL4	£9,780	£9,878	£9,976	£98	£196
MSA	£1,570	£1,586	£1,601	£16	£31

Special		1% increase	2% increase	Variance 1%	Variance 2%
School	Top Up				
The Orchard	£14,085	£14,226	£14,367	£141	£282
The Meadows	£14,146	£14,287	£14,429	£141	£283
The Westminster	£13,400	£13,534	£13,668	£134	£268
Shenstone Lodge	£24,737	£24,984	£25,232	£247	£495

Focus Provision		1% increase	2% increase	Variance 1%	Variance 2%
Type	Top Up				
ASD	£13,129	£13,260	£13,392	£131	£263
HI	£10,200	£10,302	£10,404	£102	£204
MLD	£9,400	£9,494	£9,588	£94	£188
PD	£12,600	£12,726	£12,852	£126	£252
SEMH	£13,129	£13,260	£13,392	£131	£263

PRUs		1% increase	2% increase	Variance 1%	Variance 2%
Type	Top Up				
Primrose	£11,920	£12,039	£12,158	£119	£238
SCS	£7,346	£7,419	£7,493	£73	£147
Albright	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0

The table below shows the estimated impact on the HNB for the different options. These figures are based on **the current baseline amounts and do not include predicted increases in pupils with EHC Plans**. They do include commitments to fund additional specialist placements in already agreed new free schools, Meadows and Westminster SPI.

Please refer to the financial spreadsheet (appendix 2) for full financial impact on the HNB.

Proposal 3 Option	Predicted year HNB goes into deficit	Predicted year HNB goes into full deficit
3.1 – 1% increase all pupils	2025 / 2026	2027 / 2028
3.2 – 2% increase all pupils	2024 / 2025	2026 / 2027
3.3 – 1% mainstream pupils	2026 / 2027	
3.4 – 2% mainstream pupils	2025 / 2026	
3.5 – no change	No deficit	

It is important to note that if the predicted increase of pupils with EHCPs is accurate than the HNB is estimated to go into in-year deficit in 2023/24 and full deficit in 2024 / 2025.

The table below shows the potential cost of predicted increases to students receiving additional funding through the HNB if the population of C/YP with EHC Plans follows it current trajectory

	Total Anticipated Increase in EHCPs 1300 over 5 Years	EHCPs Already accounted for	Total to fund over 5 Years	Cost 22/23 £m	Cost 23/24 £m	Cost 24/25 £m	Cost 25/26 £m	Cost 26/27 £m
Specialist Places 35%	455	-271	184	0.9	1.8	2.8	3.7	4.6
Mainstream Places 65%	845	0	845	1.4	2.8	4.2	5.5	6.9
Total	1,300	-271	1,029	2.3	4.6	7.0	8.3	11.5

As this is a five-year anticipated increase in pupil numbers and the HNB is not in deficit at the moment a management report should be submitted to the DFE on the anticipated future deficit. They will however expect the LA to make certain plans to meet the anticipated increase in SEN pupils and manage the deficit from within. The LA also needs to be mindful of reported school balances.

Please indicate your decision by choosing one of the following options

- Increase level of top up funding to all pupils each year from 2022/23 onwards.
Option 3.1 – 1% increase

Option 3.2 – 2% increase

- Increase level of top up funding for mainstream pupils from 2022/23 onwards

Option 3.3 – 1% increase

Option 3.4 – 2% increase

- **Option 3.5** - Maintain level of top up funding for all pupils

Increase in Specialist Places

Proposal 4. To incrementally increase specialist places for pupils with severe learning difficulties / complex needs and secondary aged SEMH students

The increase in specialist places will be subject to decisions in relation to top up funding if the HNB is not to go into deficit.

Only children with more complex special educational needs will require specialist places as specified in their EHC Plan. The decision to place a C/YP in a specialist placement is made by Provision Panel held by Inclusive Learning Service. Decisions are made using the needs assessment advice from a range of professionals from education, health and social care.

The chart below demonstrates the additional financial impact on the HNB for the predicted numbers of C/YP requiring specialist placement in the next 5 years. These figures do not include mainstream schools with focus provision or pupil referral units.

	Total Anticipated Increase in EHCPs 1300 over 5 Years	Already accounted for *	Total to fund over 5 Years	Cost 22/23 £m	Cost 23/24 £m	Cost 24/25 £m	Cost 25/26 £m	Cost 26/27 £m
Specialist Places 35%	455	-271	184	0.9	1.8	2.8	3.7	4.6
Mainstream Places 65%	845	0	845	1.4	2.8	4.2	5.5	6.9
Total	1,300	-271	1,029	2.3	4.6	7.0	8.3	11.5

The list below provides suggested examples of incremental changes to Specialist Provision within Sandwell to address the current short fall. Designation of need is based on current priorities for placement as specified in data analysis.

Provision for children / young people with ASD will be supplied through the opening of the 2 Free Special Schools

- KS3 SEMH FP – 10 places HNB £231,290 + capital costs
- KS3 / 4 SEMH Specialist – 10 places HNB £347,370 + capital costs
- Increase SLD / Complex Needs provision primary + secondary
Satellite Schools / extension – 20 places HNB £482, 920 + capital costs

Capital costs would be met through the High Needs Capital Allocation Grant (1.4 million) and monies already designated within the SEND Capital Grant (£600,000).

Further expansion of specialist provision would be based on increases to funding by the DfE via new SEND capital programmes and increases to the HNB.

Timeline for completion would be dependent on schedule of capital works

Please indicate your decision by choosing one of the following options

Option 1 – Agree to fund additional places proposed for pupils with severe learning difficulties / complex needs and Secondary aged students with SEMH needs.

Option 2 – Do not agree to fund additional places proposed

Support for developing specialist teaching spaces in mainstream schools

Proposal 5.

To use a proportion of the High Needs Capital Grant to support the physical development of specialist teaching environments within mainstream schools.

This proposal is to support further inclusivity in our mainstream schools to support the growing complexity of SEN Needs within our student population.

Currently some schools have developed their own small group teaching spaces for pupils with similar more complex needs in their schools. This is funded through combining individual top up funding to provide bespoke small group support that meets the children's needs and provision specified in their EHC Plans. The development of pilot "hubs" in schools has been supported by Educational Psychologist and Special Advisory Teachers through their allocated school hours. Inclusion Support staff have provided advice, guidance and specific staff training to develop effective supportive teaching strategies for the identified group of children.

Schools have used the "hubs" in a flexible way to meet the most prominent needs within their own school population and environment. Some hubs have been developed to provide pupils with ASD a structured teaching environment whilst others have focused on providing pupils with SEMH difficulties nurturing, therapeutic spaces

Mainstream schools have raised that suitable teaching environments and resources are an issue when creating spaces to support pupils with SEN. This is a barrier to greater inclusion of pupils with SEND.

The funding would be:

- Available to all mainstream schools

- Allocated through a bid process and schools would be expected to match fund the amount through their own capital monies.
- Upper limit of funding to an individual school = £10,000
- Limited to 1 bid per school
- To be used for capital works only

The total amount of funding available would be dependent on the capital spend of projects to support development of specialist places

Please indicate your decision by choosing one of the following options

Option 1 Agree with proposal to use High Needs Capital Allocation Funding to support development of specialist teaching / intervention spaces within mainstream schools

Option 2 Disagree with proposal

Proposal 6

Allocate HNB funding to support the initial establishment of specialist teaching environments within mainstream schools through access to a resource grant. The grant would be used to contribute towards the purchase specialist resources and equipment for use within the hub.

The funding would be:

- Available to mainstream schools establishing a specialist hub
- Allocated through a bid process
- Limited to an upper amount of £2000
- Limited to one bid per school

Total allocation from the HNB estimated £100,000 as a single expenditure.

Please indicate your decision by choosing one of the following options

Option 1 Agree with proposal to fund a limited resource grant to schools establishing a specialist hub

Option 2 Disagree with proposal

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APPENDIX 2

IMPACT OF THE COMBINATION OF PROPOSALS

NOTE RED donates and in year deficit and the year the HNB potentially goes into deficit overall

Table 1 Proposal 2, Proposal 3 (Option 3.5) & Proposal 4

Maintain element 3 top across Mainstream Schools and Focus Provision Schools special schools and PRUS plus the additional 1029 places to be developed

	2021/22 Estimated Outturn as at 31/10/21	2022/23 Estimate	2023/24 Estimate	2024/25 Estimate	2025-26 Estimate	2026-27 Estimate	2027/28 Estimate
Balance Bfwd as at 1 April Each Year	-596,873	-2,093,428	-2,932,122	-912,883	3,948,156	11,516,995	21,508,734
Indicative HNB Grant	-53,555,000	-57,782,000	-57,800,000	-57,800,000	-57,800,000	-57,800,000	-57,800,000
Indication outturn	52,058,445	56,943,306	59,819,239	62,661,039	65,368,839	67,791,739	67,791,739
In year (surplus)/deficit	-1,496,555	-838,694	2,019,239	4,861,039	7,568,839	9,991,739	9,991,739
Balance C/Fwd as at 31 March Each Year	-2,093,428	-2,932,122	-912,883	3,948,156	11,516,995	21,508,734	31,500,473

Table 6 Created Capacity over 5 years

The impact of the anticipated increase in the number of EHCPs over the next 5 years of approximately 1300 EHCPs. This table shows the implications of expanding Specialist Places and funding inclusion in mainstream for the shortfall of 1029 EHCPs that have not been budgeted for in the HNB. The costs are assuming no annual increases in top up on current funding levels. The additional capacity over the 5 years, year on year is also shown

CAPACITY						
Specialist Places	37	74	110	147	184	184
Mainstream with Support	169	338	507	676	845	845
	206	412	617	823	1,029	1,029

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Report to Cabinet

9 February 2022

Subject:	Action Taken on a Matter of Urgency – Uplift of Hourly Rate - Domiciliary Care Costing Model
Cabinet Member:	Leader of the Council Councillor Carmichael
Director:	Rashpal Bishop
Key Decision:	Yes, the financial threshold of £250,000 applies to the decision
Contact Officer:	Daljit Bhangal Operations Manager daljit_bhangal@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendation

- 1.1 That details of the urgent action taken by the Leader of the Council, in relation to giving approval to an addition to the costing model used to calculate the domiciliary care hourly rate to include the increase to National Insurance Contributions from April 2022 and to uplift the hourly rate of the updated costing model for existing domiciliary care framework contracts and for the new domiciliary care agreements that are to be procured for service delivery from 1 September 2022, be noted.




2 Reasons for Recommendation

- 2.1 The matter was urgent and could not be delayed until the next Cabinet meeting as procurement timescales were prohibitive to enable a report to Cabinet and legislative change requiring an increase to National Insurance Contributions was required from 6 April 2022



- 2.2 Under Part 4 of the Council's Constitution, the Scrutiny Procedure Rules provide that matters may not be called in for scrutiny when they are considered urgent. A matter is considered urgent where a delay would prejudice the Council's or the public interest.
- 2.3 The Rules also stipulate that decisions taken in this manner must be reported to the next available meeting of the Cabinet and Council, together with the reasons for the urgency.
- 2.4 This report indicates an action taken as a matter of urgency by the Leader of the Council since the last meeting.
- 2.5 The action taken was in accordance with the scope of authority of the Leader of the Council.

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p>People live well and age well</p> <p>Domiciliary Care Service support people to live longer healthier lives and maintain independence to remain in their own home with the care and support they need.</p>
	<p>Strong resilient communities</p> <p>The overall aim of domiciliary care is to maintain independence and prevent or delay the need for long term care away from the home.</p>
	<p>A strong and inclusive economy</p> <p>Given the nature of the service and delivery of it to vulnerable people who reside in Sandwell, the successful organisations are very likely to employ people from the local area, supporting the local economy.</p>



4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 The Council is statutorily required under the Care Act 2014 to carry out an assessment of anyone who appears to require care and support. Local Authorities' role is seen as critical, and under section 5 of the Care Act 2014, the duty to shape and maintain an efficient and effective market of services for meeting care and support needs in the local area is firmly placed with them. The duty applies in relation to services that the Local Authority commissions directly, but also to other non-commissioned services in its area that together create the marketplace.
- 4.2 Domiciliary care is one of the services that the Council commissions to ensure that people with assessed needs under the Care Act 2014 have provision to support them to continue to live independently in the community, and thereby delaying or preventing the need to access residential care.
- 4.3 On 23 May 2021 Cabinet approved (minute reference 94/21) the procurement of a new model of domiciliary care to secure alternative contracting arrangements for when the existing framework contracts end on 28 February 2022. On 20 October Cabinet authorised (minute reference 184/21) the extension to framework contracts from 1 March 2022 to 31 August 2022 should the result of the tender exercise not yield a successful outcome for service delivery on 1 March 2022.
- 4.4 The tender outcome did not enable award of contracts for a service commencement from 1 March 2022 and therefore extension of the existing framework agreements has been necessitated and this is currently being progressed. A new tender will be advertised in January 2022; there are no provisions to extend after 31 August 2022, and a new model has to be delivered to enable a service start on 1 September 2022. Given no further extension provisions exist, the tender has to be advertised by 10 January 2022 to enable evaluation, award and mobilisation.



- 4.5 The domiciliary care hourly rate is not able to be set for the lifetime of a contract and is one that needs to be reviewed annually, with a view to it being uplifted should there be, for example, an increase to the National Minimum Wage per annum. Failure to uplift the hourly rate to reflect increasing costs risks undermining the social care market and is likely to mean that the Council increasingly is unlikely to fulfil its statutory duties to provide care and support for vulnerable people it has assessed as needing such provision.
- 4.6 The domiciliary care sector is facing significant challenge in its ability to recruit and retain staff, with the mandating of vaccines for Covid-19 likely to lead to exits from the market by some care workers who have so far refused to have the vaccine. There is currently a piece of work to scope how many staff in each agency have not had the vaccine and the potential issues the new requirement will create in the sector, and the impact to the Council's obligations in being able to provide care and support. These pressures on top of a sector that is seen as in crisis due to issues around recruitment, retention and funding only serve to exacerbate issues already being felt by the market.
- 4.7 The Council has the lowest hourly domiciliary care rate compared to the Black Country and Birmingham Councils and is cited in national comparator tables as one of the lowest payers. To not uplift the hourly rate and take into account the increase to National Insurance contributions may result in reduced interest in the new tender and may also lead to exits from the market by existing providers who are unable to withstand increasing costs that the Council does not sufficiently remunerate.
- 4.8 In addition to increases to the National Minimum Wage and National Insurance contributions, the sector is also faced with increased costs as a result of higher indemnity premiums, mileage costs paid to carers due to rising fuel prices, amongst other costs. The government has supported the sector with grants to ease pandemic costs, but this is time limited funding, with no guarantee of its continuation, and strict rules around its use. It is imperative that the calculation of the hourly rate reflects and takes account of the increase to National Insurance contributions from April 2022 to mitigate risk to its ability to discharge its statutory duties to provide care and support to people whom it has assessed as in need.



5 Alternative Options

5.1 There is an option to do nothing and leave the model as it is, however it is likely that if it is not agreed, there is a risk to the ability of the Council to discharge its statutory obligations as a result of:

- Services becoming unviable and a lack of sufficient depth in supply;
- Providers handing contracts back;
- Recruitment challenges already experienced in the sector, increasing;
- Inability to discharge individuals from hospital when they are medically optimised, creating pressure in the wider health and social care system;
- Increased discharges to bed-based provision due to the lack of depth in supply of domiciliary care;
- Failure to properly take account of Care Act responsibilities around market shaping and market sustainability;
- Inability of Brokerage Teams to source packages of care;
- Reduction in quality and increased safeguarding issues, with providers potentially cutting corners due to a challenging hourly rate.

6.0 Implications

Resources:	<p>As a statutorily required service, the funding to pay for any uplift will be from the Adult Social Care budget. The additional cost associated with the 1.25% National Insurance levy has been reflected within the inflationary pressure on placements and included in the corporate budget planning assumptions.</p> <p>Packages of care commissioned will be paid for on an agreed set rate on a 'spot' basis, therefore there will be no guaranteed volume of service commissioned from prospective providers and the Council will only pay for what has been delivered.</p>
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	<p>The rate paid will be set and is calculated using an agreed methodology, including the increase to National Insurance contributions for employers to the model to reflect an hourly rate from 1 April 2022 of £16 an hour from £15.16.</p> <p>The projected impact of the proposal for the uplift to be applied in 22/23 is as follows:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Hourly Rate</th><th>£ per annum (based on current activity)</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>£15.88 (excluding NI increase)</td><td>£921,100</td></tr> <tr> <td>£16.00 (inclusive of N.I increase)</td><td>£1,081,600</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Hourly Rate	£ per annum (based on current activity)	£15.88 (excluding NI increase)	£921,100	£16.00 (inclusive of N.I increase)	£1,081,600
Hourly Rate	£ per annum (based on current activity)						
£15.88 (excluding NI increase)	£921,100						
£16.00 (inclusive of N.I increase)	£1,081,600						
Legal and Governance	<p>The Council has responsibilities under the Care Act 2014 to assess people who appear to have care and support needs and provide or commission services to meet these needs.</p> <p>The Council also has responsibilities under Section 5 of the Care Act 2014 to facilitate a healthy market of quality services through market shaping. Therefore, councils are responsible for sustaining the market and not paying below market levels in fees. As identified in 4.7, the hourly rate paid by the Council is lower than its neig</p>						
Risk:	<p>The corporate risk management strategy has been complied with to identify and assess the risks associated with the recommendations being sought in this report. This has concluded that there are no red risks that require reporting.</p>						



	<p>The plan to add the increase to National Insurance Contributions to the costing model is to mitigate risk and enable the Council to be in a stronger position to discharge its statutory obligations effectively. The recommendations if approved will assist in the mitigation of the directorate risk in respect of resilience in the care market, which is currently assessed as red.</p> <p>The support that a domiciliary care service provides enables a reduction of risk to service users who are supported to live in their homes for longer.</p>
Equality:	<p>An Equality Impact Assessment was completed for the Cabinet reports in May and October 2021, as referenced earlier in the report and a further assessment has been done to be read in conjunction with this report. There are no significant equality issues arising from this report. The commissioning of this provision will ensure that vulnerable people in need of care, including protected groups, will benefit from timely support, and therefore there are benefits to some of the protected characteristics.</p>
Health and Wellbeing:	<p>The recipients of Domiciliary Care will be supported and cared for to remain in their own homes and remain as independent as possible for as long as possible.</p> <p>To support the easing of pressure on acute hospitals through admission avoidance this service is also required to assist vulnerable people for whom the Council has a statutory duty through the provision of timely care and support in their own homes.</p> <p>Given the nature of the service and delivery of it to vulnerable people who reside in Sandwell, the successful organisations are very likely to employ</p>



	people from the local area, supporting the local economy.
Social Value:	<p>Providers of Domiciliary Care do not need to be based in Sandwell. Providers are supported and encouraged to recruit locally and engage with Colleges/Universities, and to procure local goods and services to support local communities.</p> <p>Social value has a fixed minimum % amount in the tender scoring process to allow an assessment of how bidders propose to achieve outcomes that promote social value.</p>

7. Appendices

Nil

8. Background Papers

None.



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