

SMETHWICK AREA ACTION PLAN

A DEVELOPMENT PLAN
DOCUMENT

SANDWELL M.B.C

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Since the approval of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act in 2004, - local authorities have to prepare Local Development Frameworks (LDF) to provide the spatial planning strategy for their areas. Contained within the LDF is the Local Development Scheme which sets out the details of the Local Development Documents to be produced for the area together with their timescales for preparation and adoption for a three year period.

- 1.2 A Local Development Framework must include a Core Strategy, Site-Specific Allocations of land, a Proposals Map and may also contain additional optional development documents such as Area Action Plans. Area Action Plans provide the planning framework for those areas which are considered to require significant change or conservation which could include major regeneration areas. Area Action Plans should identify the distribution of uses and focus on implementation.

2. SMETHWICK AREA ACTION PLAN

2.1 The purpose of the Smethwick Area Action Plan is to set a framework for the future development and aid the regeneration of the North Smethwick Area in line with the Government's agenda for creating sustainable communities. It seeks to allocate sites for specific uses which will provide a range of housing, close to local services and facilities, as well as safeguarding appropriate land for employment uses, aiding movement through the area by a choice of means of transport and protection of the historic environment.

2.2 The AAP will incorporate work already undertaken by partner agencies where these fit in with the overall agenda to meet local, regional and national aspirations. This work, together with additional evidence base information has informed the options contained within this AAP which aims to transform the area through land use change.

2.3 The Local Development Scheme for Sandwell was submitted in June 2005, and has recently been reviewed and approved by Government Office. It sets the timescale for preparation and adoption of the Smethwick Area Action Plan. The policies and proposals within the UDP are to be saved for three years from the first submission of the LDS, and will provide the policy framework on which to base decisions for future development within the Borough until such time as they are replaced.

2.4 There are a number of proposals contained within this Area Action Plan which are currently subject to further studies. However, an Area Action Plan should be prepared where there will be significant areas of change within the timescale of the Plan. Since there are a number of regeneration initiatives operating within the Smethwick Area at the current time, with the potential for significant investment to create a total transformation of the land uses within North Smethwick, it is considered appropriate to include these proposals in order to prepare a structure which will enable the transformation to occur within an established statutory planning framework. The results of these further studies will provide more detail and justification for the proposals which have been included within this Submission document.

2.5 In order to seek change in this area which will meet the Government's agenda for sustainable developments, certain sites have been allocated for specific land uses in order to deliver good quality housing, retain sites for employment use as well as consider other issues such as the provision of a range of services and facilities which reduce the need to travel and the creation of quality environments. These sites have resulted in a change to the Proposals Map and are shown on Plan 1. Where it is considered that the existing UDP proposals will contribute to this programme, these have been retained and there will be no change shown.

2.6 The Unitary Development Plan and the Smethwick Area Action Plan policies and proposals will be used to determine future planning applications until such time as further Development Plan Documents are prepared and adopted which will supersede them. Until then, the policies contained within the AAP will promote regeneration schemes once finally adopted in February 2009. The AAP has a timescale for the implementation of local policies and proposals up to 2021 once it is adopted. These developments will take place in a phased manner throughout the AAP period supported by the policies in this Plan and where relevant, the saved policies of UDP.

3. BACKGROUND TO THE AREA ACTION PLAN

3.1 In April 2004, the statutory land use plan for Sandwell was adopted, which set out the policies and proposals for the Borough up to 2011. The policies and proposals contained within the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) were reflective of the Borough at that time. However, during the lengthy process of preparing and adopting the UDP, new Government initiatives were introduced, which meant that this particular area of the Borough required more detailed assessment.

3.2 Further work was undertaken, commissioned by Smethwick Regeneration Partnership (SRP), which looked specifically at the North Smethwick Canalside. In tandem with this work the Planning Authority prepared Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Unitary Development Plan which provided a more detailed look at parts of the Smethwick Town area, identifying sites which could lead to a transformational change in the land uses and which mirrored the studies undertaken on behalf of SRP.

3.3 Some of these allocations were incorporated into the Smethwick Town Plan, adopted in May 2004. Whilst many of the allocations reflected those of the UDP, land was identified for uses which did not conform to those of the Statutory Plan and therefore could not be treated as Supplementary Planning Guidance. However, it was considered that the identification of these sites for alternative uses, provided a vision for a transformational change in this area and were therefore treated as Council Policy and could be used as a material factor should comprehensive schemes be submitted.

3.4 The Smethwick Town Plan acts as an interim document, setting Council Policy on which to base the Smethwick Area Action Plan. With the introduction of Local Development Frameworks, it has become possible to review the allocations and policies of the UDP at an earlier stage and to highlight where those proposals require change in order to meet the needs and requirements of the residents and businesses within the Smethwick area.

3.5 Whilst the Smethwick Regeneration Partnership programme has come to the end of its life, responsibility for addressing the investment required to attract regeneration in Smethwick has transferred to Regenco, the Urban Regeneration Company for Sandwell which covers West Bromwich and Smethwick. The Council is currently working in partnership with Regenco to provide a planning framework which will enable this regeneration to be pursued and delivered. For Smethwick, the key focus is on the North Smethwick Canalside, with English Partnerships taking a lead on the strategy for intervention. Whilst the majority of the AAP area falls within their remit, it also includes an area of housing to the north which may be affected by proposals of this Plan. Opportunities exist in North Smethwick Canalside to radically change the make-up of the area from industrial to a residential-led mixed use area, concentrating on promoting the canal as an exciting and attractive place to live.

3.6 In addition to this, Sandwell was identified as a Pathfinder Scheme for Housing Market Renewal, which was established to tackle areas where the housing market was failing. Whilst Sandwell's housing market had not deteriorated as much as other Pathfinder areas, the Government felt that there was a danger this may happen unless there was a significant level of investment made in improving the housing choice. The Pathfinder area runs from West Bromwich, through Smethwick and into the Aston area of Birmingham and has recently been awarded around £45 million to bring forward projects with the aim of producing better neighbourhoods and improving the housing choice to meet the needs of the area.

3.7 The Local Authority is also committed to working in partnership with other agencies, stakeholders and authorities within the area. In particular, Sandwell has been working with the NHS and Birmingham City Council in identifying an appropriate site for a new hospital and community hospitals which will serve the needs of both Sandwell and Birmingham residents and which will bring regenerative benefits to both areas. The NHS Trust is a key stakeholder in Sandwell and a close working relationship has proved invaluable in the preparation of the Smethwick Area Action Plan. The vital intervention areas are shown on Plan 2.

4. DESCRIPTION OF THE AREA

- 4.1 The area covered by this Plan concentrates on land to the immediate north and south of the Birmingham Canal within Smethwick, around Lewisham Road and Rolfe Street. The boundary stretches to the east incorporating the industrial areas of Rabone Lane and Foundry Lane. The most eastern boundary of the site adjoins the City Of Birmingham administrative boundary.
- 4.2 The AAP area also incorporates industrial land to the south including Cranford Street and Grove Lane as far as Dudley Road. To the west the area encompasses Cape Hill Town Centre and the residential area to the north around Windmill Lane and Smethwick High Street District Centre. Plan 3 shows the Area Action Plan Boundary.
- 4.3 The northern part of the AAP area covers land either side of the Birmingham Canal, commonly, referred to as Brindley II, and Rolfe Street. The Brindley II site which currently consists of vacant land and industrial uses already possesses an allocation for residential/mixed use within the Adopted Unitary Development Plan which is being retained and is the subject of a detailed Supplementary Planning Document to bring forward its delivery. Whilst contained within the Smethwick AAP to provide a context to the wider area, this site does not form part of the proposals within the AAP and will not, therefore, be subject to consultation. The canal itself is covered by the Smethwick Summit Conservation Area which was designated in 1985 and reviewed in 2003 and includes adjoining land and buildings.
- 4.4 The Rolfe Street area however, is currently predominantly industrial, consisting of a range of uses which occupy premises of mixed type, age and condition. One of the assets of this particular area is the Birmingham Canal which runs east-west through the Smethwick area and which is also part of the Smethwick Summit Conservation Area, containing listed structures, buildings of local interest and areas for conservation of wildlife.

- 4.5 To the east, adjoining Birmingham City Council boundary is Black Patch Park and Soho Foundry. This area contains a mixture of uses, dominated by industrial processes, including scrapyards and with a large portion of the area taken up by Avery Weigh Tronix. This area also includes Soho Foundry, a Grade II* Listed Building which is currently the subject of a study for its future protection and potential reuse. The rest of the area is occupied by Black Patch Park, which includes football pitches, a brook and a community hall which is currently closed. There are also vacant sites opposite the park, formerly occupied by maisonettes which were demolished over the last couple of years. There still remains an enclave of semi-detached properties owned by Focus and a Hostel off Foundry Lane. The most eastern point of the AAP area is taken up by statutory allotments which are very popular and well used.
- 4.6 Grove Lane and Cranford Street areas are exclusively industrial with a range of properties of varying qualities. Cranford Street is a main route through from Smethwick into Birmingham with large, under-occupied premises flanking the road. Grove Lane contains larger, older industrial buildings, some of poor quality or vacant/derelect. Many of the premises are being used for storage or warehouse purposes apart from premises on Abberley Street, occupied by BG Plating.
- 4.7 The Windmill Lane area is predominantly residential in nature, being a mixture of public and private sector housing together with retail and community uses. The area is covered by Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder and is one of the main project areas. Two centres are included within this area, Cape Hill Town Centre and Smethwick High Street (Lower) Local centre. This area is currently subject of a Housing Product Study, the results of which will help to inform the strategy for the future of this area, where intervention is required and at what level.

5. POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 5.1 The purpose of this section is to consider the links between Smethwick Area Action Plan (AAP) and other, related planning and regeneration policies and strategies. These policies range from national and regional planning guidance to more local strategies and initiatives directly affecting Sandwell.
- 5.2 This Area Action Plan is being prepared before the development of a Core Strategy for the Borough. Sandwell is currently in the process of commencing a Joint Core Strategy with the other Black Country Boroughs in line with Regional Spatial Strategy and which will develop a spatial strategy and core policies. This work is discussed later, but given the level of regeneration initiatives within the North Smethwick area and the potential for future growth, it is considered appropriate to focus on preparing a planning framework now, which is consistent with current and emerging policy, and the general thrust of the Regional Spatial Strategy. In order to present the summary in a clear, logical manner a hierarchy of national, regional and local frameworks is presented.

National Context

- 5.3 At the heart of good planning is the pursuit of sustainable development. **Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (PPS1)** sets out the Government's overarching planning policies on the delivery of sustainable development through the planning system.
- 5.4 Key principles include the promotion of sustainable and inclusive patterns of development by making suitable land available for development in line with economic, social and environmental objectives to improve the quality of people's lives. Furthermore, PPS1 expects development plans to protect and enhance the natural and built environment, as well as ensuring high quality development through good design and the efficient use of resources.

Indeed, ensuring that development supports existing communities and contributes to the creation of safe, sustainable, liveable and mixed communities with good access to jobs and key services for all is a key objective of national policy.

- 5.5 Additional guidance covers a range of issues that affect the Smethwick AAP. Of key importance is the policy guidance relating to the provision of housing, **Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing (PPS 3)**. PPS3 has recently been issued as a replacement to the previous advice on this subject, Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: Housing (2001). In general terms, the key objective for Government is to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent home, which they can afford. More specifically, Local Development Documents such as the Smethwick AAP should seek to ensure that a wide range of housing, by tenure and price is available, to meet all housing needs. Furthermore, plans should seek a better balance between housing supply and demand and improve affordability, where necessary, with new developments located with good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure (PPS 3, 2006, paragraph 10). In determining which sites to identify, Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) should review all their non-housing allocations and consider whether some of this land might be more appropriately re-allocated for housing development (paragraph 44).
- 5.6 A key aspect of the guidance in PPS 3 relates to managing the delivery of outcomes. All LPAs are required to identify at least five years worth of housing land, which is suitable, available, and viable (paragraph 54). The delivery of the sites identified in the Smethwick AAP will need to be monitored annually as part of the borough's annual monitoring report, in order to assess the progress of development set against the targeted level of housing provision for the borough as a whole. The guidance in PPS 3 sets out the actions that the Council should consider in circumstances where housing policies in the AAP are not being delivered (paragraph 76).

5.7 Other important national planning advice exists and will be highlighted when necessary in the relevant parts of this document.

Regional Context

5.8 The current strategic planning framework at a regional scale is expressed in the **West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) 2004**. The RSS marks a step change in regional policy that seeks to reverse the trend in out-migration of people and investment from major urban areas (MUA) into the surrounding settlements and beyond. The approach taken in the RSS supports the Government's own agenda for change in both urban and rural areas, set out in *Sustainable Communities: building the future 2003*.

5.9 The principal challenge therefore facing the region, including places like Sandwell, is one of Urban Renaissance. The challenge will be to develop the MUA in such away that it can increasingly meet its own economic and social needs in order to counter unsustainable outward movement of people and jobs, facilitated by previous regional strategies.

5.10 In response to this challenge, the policies in the RSS are underpinned by a range of key strategic objectives, a number of which are relevant to the Smethwick AAP. These are:

- to make the Major Urban Areas of the West Midlands increasingly more attractive places where people want to live, work and invest;
- to create a joined-up multi-centred Regional structure where all areas/centres have distinct roles to play;
- to support the cities and towns of the Region to meet their local and sub-regional development needs;
- to support the diversification and modernisation of the Region's economy while ensuring that opportunities for growth are linked to meeting needs and reducing social exclusion;
- to ensure the quality of the environment is conserved and enhanced across all parts of the Region;
- to improve significantly the Region's transport systems. (RSS, 2004, paragraph 3.14).

5.11 Regional planning policies of particular relevance to Smethwick concern issues such as housing, employment, transport, and the environment. Policy UR4 deals with Social Infrastructure, Policy CF1 promotes housing within major urban areas, whilst Policy CF3 addresses the level and distribution of new housing. In addition, Policy QE3 promotes the creation of a high quality built environment for all, Policy QE4 deals with the protection and enhancement of green spaces in urban areas, whilst Policy QE5 covers issues relating to the historic environment.

5.12 It is considered that the emerging Action Plan for Smethwick reflects these policy objectives. The preferred options in the AAP will identify new residential development sites that will provide new, high quality homes that meet existing and future needs within improved local neighbourhoods where existing conflicts between incompatible land uses is reduced. These sites will be allocated on previously-developed land, rather than greenfield sites, supporting the Council's commitment to utilising land in the most efficient means possible. In support of new housing development, the AAP will pursue the provision of key services, including health and community facilities, as well as seeking the improvement of community open space provision in the area, or new provision where required. In addition, the AAP recognises the historic significance of the area and the need to safeguard the future use of the historic environment and assets located there.

5.13 It was recognised in the current RSS that there were particular issues facing the four Black Country authorities (Sandwell, Wolverhampton, Dudley, and Walsall) that required further consideration and analysis on a sub-regional basis. A partial review of RSS, Phase One - the Black Country Study, was subject to an Examination in Public in January 2007. A report on the findings of the Panel was published in March 2007. Phase Two Revision considers housing, employment, transport, waste and climate change in terms of broad spatial options.

5.14 The WMRSS Phase One Revision clarifies the regional policy context for regeneration, housing and employment by defining centres and corridors as the primary focus for regeneration activity and development and investment, which incorporates the Smethwick area. The Revision also sets the context for development and environmental enhancement encouraged in other locations which support the network of local centres and communities, take advantage of the availability of suitable sites and are accessible by public transport.

5.15 The WMRSS Phase One Revision also goes on to identify the regional policy context for the environment and climate change emphasising the need to look at the reduction in carbon dioxide emissions and effective use of renewable energy, reducing waste and the promotion of sustainable drainage systems combined with precluding development within identified flood zones.

The Panel report suggested the following amendments to the Phase One revision;

Policy UR1A: Black Country Regeneration Priorities

(i) In the Black Country the primary focus for regeneration activity, development and investment will be the four strategic centres and growth corridors broadly defined on the revised spatial strategy diagram. The centres and corridors will be defined in the Black Country Joint Core Strategy and local development documents.

(ii) Development and environmental enhancement should also be planned for and encouraged in other locations across the Black Country which:

- support the network of local centres and communities;
- take advantage of the availability of suitable sites; and
- are accessible by public transport.

Policy UR1B: Housing and Employment

(i) Within the growth corridors the Black Country Joint Core Strategy and local development documents will define the Employment Land Investment Corridors shown on the revised spatial strategy diagram.

(ii) Within the growth corridors and the Employment Land Investment Corridors, local authorities through the Joint Core Strategy and local development documents will:

- identify and protect those sites most suitable for employment purposes to ensure the provision of sub-regional employment sites (10ha - 20ha) and a portfolio of employment land;
- identify sites, including through the transfer of employment land, for housing and mixed uses to ensure that the housing requirements in policy CF3 are met; and
- work towards the balanced development of both uses, and
- produce water cycle strategies to ensure the quantity and quality of surface and ground water produced by developments does not exceed the capacity of supply and treatment infrastructure.

5.16 The study has identified a number of issues and trends facing the sub-region that will remain problematic unless action is taken to remedy them. These include continuing loss of population due to out-migration, restructuring of employment sectors with too many low value jobs, poor education and skills levels, declining retail centres, poor quality housing and limited choice in the housing market, increased congestion, poor quality local environments, and poor quality development opportunities to support future growth in new areas of the economy (Knowledge-based).

5.17 In response, a 30-year vision has been established, which sets an ambitious and bold agenda for change. The vision is set out in four parts: to reverse net out-migration and grow the population by 1.2 million people; to raise income levels to 90% of the UK average, from 81% today; to accommodate a more balanced population more comparable to the national average; and create high quality, sustainable environments.

The vision has been articulated into a number of proposed revisions to housing, employment, and retail land and floor space requirements, which is set out in the Draft Phase One Revision: The Black Country document. This document has been supported by the Black Country Study work referred to above. The remaining stages of the review process will establish the policy revisions required in order to take forward the vision in land-use planning terms, by re-examining future housing, employment and commercial land requirements in the light of an updated evidence base.

- 5.18 In November of 2006 work commenced on a Joint Core Strategy for the Black Country. The Joint Core Strategy will set out the spatial vision and strategic objectives for the Sandwell, Wolverhampton, Walsall and Dudley together with a spatial strategy and core policies. The Core Strategy will build upon the work done on the Black Country Study and RSS Phase 1. The strategy set out in the Smethwick AAP preferred options is considered to be consistent with the direction of travel established in RSS Phase 1 and which will be further developed as part of the Joint Core Strategy.
- 5.19 It is considered that the Smethwick AAP is supportive of the emerging regional agenda which seeks to transform the Black Country by concentrating future development within the conurbation on previously-developed land, improving the choice and quality of new housing, whilst protecting and enhancing local environments to benefit local residents. Smethwick is within the growth corridors for housing and employment which will set to transform the offer for housing within the conurbation, as well as attracting further investment to boost the economy of the area and provide jobs for local people.

Local Context

Sandwell Plan 2006

- 5.20 At a local level the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), or Sandwell Partnership, has put in place 'The Sandwell 2020 Vision'. The vision seeks to ensure that:

"The Sandwell of 2020 will be a thriving, sustainable, optimistic and forward-looking community."

Sandwell residents will live in a transformed borough. They will enjoy excellent health, a safe environment, have access to rewarding employment, leisure and cultural opportunities, and have a positive view of life in Sandwell, in a revitalised West Midlands.

It will continue to be a diverse, but harmonious mix of industrial/commercial activity and attractive neighbourhoods." (Sandwell Plan, 2006, p5)

- 5.21 In order to achieve this vision the Partnership recognises the importance of delivering genuinely 'sustainable communities'. Such communities balance and integrate social, economic and environmental goals, as well as meeting the needs of existing and future generations (Sandwell, Plan, 2006, p9). It is considered that the preferred options document for Smethwick not only has regard for but also is pursuing this objective by promoting the transformation of Smethwick through appropriate land-use change and the development of supporting education, health and community services, whilst safeguarding acknowledged environmental and historic environment that exist across the area.

Sandwell Plan 2008

5.22 Since the AAP was submitted the Sandwell Partnership has undertaken a review of the Community Strategy and the Sandwell Plan 2008 has now been published. It recognises the importance of the links with Sandwell's Local Development Framework and particular emphasis is given to the Black Country Joint Core Strategy. In carrying out the review of the Sandwell Plan, linkages were established with the Sandwell Partnership and this has ensured that the approach adopted in the AAP is consistent with the Sandwell Plan 2008.

A key part of the Sandwell Plan 2008 is the vision for Sandwell which reads as follows:

Sandwell: Great People, Great Places, Great Prospects.

- People will choose Sandwell for their home, their job and their leisure;
- An inspiring place, easy to get around, with quality homes, schools, shops and great places to go to;
- Sandwell will realise its abundant talent and potential through the success of businesses, schools and communities.

5.23 The Sandwell Plan 2008 sets out more specific priorities such as providing more affordable housing alongside the provision of more aspirational housing. The Windmill Eye area, one of the proposals of the AAP, is specifically mentioned as a priority for the Sandwell Plan 2008. Thus the AAP is consistent with its vision, strategy and priorities and will be a key part of ensuring its approach can be realised in the Smethwick area.

5.24 The current Development Plan for Sandwell comprises the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) 2004 and the Sandwell Unitary Development Plan, adopted April 2004. In terms of the plan preparation process, the RSS was adopted shortly after the Sandwell UDP, in June 2004. However, the emerging RSS was taken into account during the review of the UDP to ensure that it was broadly consistent with the RSS in terms of housing, employment, transport, and regeneration policies.

The Sandwell UDP therefore provides, in association with the RSS, the current statutory planning framework (or 'Development Plan') for the Smethwick Area Action Plan.

5.25 The Local Development Scheme for Sandwell (LDS) sets out the project programme for the new round of plans forming the Local Development Framework (LDF), including the Smethwick Area Action Plan. In line with the regulations, the scheme will 'save' the policies of the UDP for at least three years from its adoption whilst the new Framework is being prepared. However, the proposals set out in the Area Action Plan reviews those of the UDP and moves forward to meet a changing agenda. It provides a re-evaluation of the existing land uses to provide a rejuvenation of the Smethwick area and seeks to take forward the priorities and strategies of partner agencies charged with undertaking regeneration activity and investment in the area (RegenCo, HMRA, Towards 2010).

5.26 Nonetheless, there are a number of policies that are relevant to the future planning framework for Smethwick. Whilst these are some of the more relevant policies, it is not an exhaustive list. These are summarised in Appendix 1.

5.27 The Council has also issued **Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) Residential Design**, which seeks to ensure that residential areas are attractive, integrated, accessible, flexible, comfortable, and identifiable. The SPG addresses general design issues as well as density and local character, and reflects the approach by Planning Policy Statement 1 in making good design a priority. This has been further enhanced by a **Supplementary Planning Document on Residential Intensification** which addresses the pressures arising from an increase in housing densities in what the Council considers to be unsustainable locations. The overall approach broadly reflects the new PPS 3, which encourages a more flexible approach to density taking into account local circumstances. Reference will also be required to other Adopted Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance.

- 5.28 The Environment Agency has advised that Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) is a requirement under PPS25 'Development and Flood Risk'. This should inform documents produced under the LDF to ensure that plans, programmes and policies are sustainable from a flood risk viewpoint. Sandwell has begun the process of preparing the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for the Borough as part of the Joint Black Country Core Strategy. The SFRA will be in place later in 2007, and will therefore be used to assess and amend as necessary the Smethwick Area Action Plan prior to its adoption in 2009.
- 5.29 Additional work has been carried out to inform the potential of flooding to sites contained within this Area Action Plan and to inform future development of the sites. Where it is considered necessary, further assessments will need to be carried out, identifying the potential for flooding and any mitigation measures required. There will be a presumption against development in Flood Risk Zones 2 or 3a (medium and high probability respectively), especially for developments considered to be vulnerable uses, unless it can be demonstrated that appropriate measures can be taken to reduce the impact.
- 5.30 Sustainable Drainage Systems will be a requirement of new developments and the opportunity to open up culverted watercourses that may minimise the risk of flooding should be investigated.
- Local Regeneration Strategies*
- 5.31 There are a number of other strategies and initiatives that provide local context for the Smethwick Area Action Plan, including the West Midlands Local Transport Plan, Sandwell Urban Regeneration Company (RegenCo), Urban Living Pathfinder, and the Towards 2010 Programme.
- 5.32 The **West Midlands Local Transport Plan (WMLTP) 2006** sets out the framework for investment in transport across the region and the transport priorities locally that will support housing growth and economic regeneration. The scheme included that relates to Smethwick is the Soho Way/Soho Street Junction Improvement, which is identified under the Minor Works Programme. The scheme forms an important part of the infrastructure works required in support of wider regeneration in the North Smethwick Canalside area, activity that is being promoted by RegenCo.
- 5.33 In addition, but separately, a section of **National Cycle Network (NCN)** established by the charity Sustrans passes through the AAP area running east-west alongside the Birmingham Canal. The NCN provides a non-car link for cyclists and pedestrians between Smethwick, other parts of Sandwell and the western side of Birmingham. A proposed cycle route identified by Sandwell MBC also links other areas of north Smethwick providing access for cyclists to the Midlands Metro at The Hawthorns.
- 5.34 The **Sandwell Urban Regeneration Company, or RegenCo**, is a partnership of Sandwell MBC, English Partnerships and Advantage West Midlands, the West Midlands Regeneration Agency. Set up in October 2003, RegenCo were formed as a delivery body for a number of important regeneration projects in Smethwick, as well as other parts of the borough including West Bromwich and Wednesbury.
- The role of RegenCo will be to drive forward the large scale, physical economic transformation, making a concerted effort to overcome obstacles in order for the potential to be realised. In Smethwick, the main focus of activity will be around the Rolfe Street area of the North Smethwick canalside. The emerging AAP reflects the agenda for change in this area and will provide the statutory planning framework under which future redevelopment plans will be progressed.

- 5.35 **The Birmingham and Sandwell Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder, or Urban Living**, is a major 15-year Government-backed project to regenerate neighbourhoods in a major part of Sandwell, including Smethwick, and north-west Birmingham. Established since 2004, the programme aims to create a balanced local housing market, which is characterised by stable and well-managed neighbourhoods with high quality housing that meets the needs of diverse communities. It aims to achieve this by stimulating the housing market by replacing obsolete properties with modern, sustainable accommodation, through demolition, refurbishment and new building. It will also ensure that other essential requirements of sustainable communities are addressed - such as economic prosperity, good quality services, design excellence, and delivery of clean, safe, healthy and attractive environments in which people can take pride. Investment activity has already begun in Smethwick with a number of development sites acquired and cleared ready for redevelopment. Future funding, up to April 2008 at least, has been secured and it is likely that investment will be targeted at specific locations in Smethwick, including north Smethwick and the Windmill Eye area to facilitate future development. Once again, the Smethwick AAP will assist in setting the planning framework for any development proposals promoted through the pathfinder programme.
- 5.36 The Council is also in the process of undertaking a **Housing Product Survey for Smethwick**. The main objective of the survey is to form part of the evidence base for the Smethwick AAP covering a range of housing-related issues, including housing stock condition, population and household structure, housing needs, options for achieving a more balanced housing market, as well as displacement issues relating to potential clearance and redevelopment in the area. It is recognised that the findings of this survey are not yet available and so will need to be fed into the AAP process. Therefore, in order that the survey can form part of the evidence base the results of the research will need to be taken into account prior to the Submission stage of the plan process.
- 5.37 A key issue facing the AAP relates to need for adequate community facilities to support the current and future population in the area, in particular health services. The Health Authorities plan to invest £700 million in health and social care in Sandwell and the heart of Birmingham. The plans are the subject of public consultation, currently on-going, entitled **Towards 2010: Investing in a healthy future**. This is being undertaken on behalf of all the National Health Service and social care organisations and sets out a preferred solution for the long-term configuration of health and social care services. Amongst the key changes proposed is a new 600-700 bed hospital in Smethwick to replace the current City and Sandwell Hospitals. Notwithstanding that these proposals are in draft only, it is clear that the Council will need to respond to future healthcare demands and work pro-actively with the NHS in order to secure appropriate land to cater for new facilities in Smethwick, where required. Clearly, the AAP will play a key role in facilitating the identification of sites appropriate for future health care provision in Smethwick.

6. THE FRAMEWORK FOR THE SMETHWICK AREA ACTION PLAN

6.1 In preparing the planning framework for the Smethwick AAP, direction has been taken from the objectives of the Regional Spatial Strategy. This sets the context for the Urban Renaissance of the West Midlands, developing areas to meet their own social and economic needs and making it a place where people want to live, work and invest. The main objectives identified by Regional Spatial Strategy are to;

- Reverse net out-migration.
- Raise income levels.
- Accommodate a more balanced population.
- Create high quality sustainable environments.

6.2 The Regional Spatial Strategy, the RSS Review and the regeneration initiatives active in this area will steer the proposals of this Plan.

6.3 At the borough wide level, the Unitary Development Plan sets out policies aiming to provide sustainable developments whilst contributing to the regeneration of the Borough and the protection and enhancement of the natural environment. Some of these policies were taken forward as part of the Smethwick Town Plan, adopted in May 2004 as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the UDP, whilst the Town Plan also identified areas which could be considered for alternative types of development. These were adopted as Council Policy as they were not in conformity with the UDP allocations.

6.4 However, it is now considered that the Smethwick AAP covers an area which is ripe for change. The Plan will provide a land use framework which contributes to the quality of life for local people, meeting their needs as well as contributing to the visions and aspirations of the Sandwell Plan and Regional Spatial Strategy.

The implementation of the proposals will see a revitalized Smethwick develop over time. The Issues and Options Paper provided an initial vision for the area, which has been further enhanced;

6.5 The Vision for Smethwick is;

“The preparation of an Area Action Plan for this select part of Smethwick, will achieve a step-change in the area, to accommodate a range of land uses which individually, will provide quality, sustainable environments in which to live, work or visit but will also contribute to the spatial objectives throughout the Borough and the Black Country.

There will be a choice of housing which addresses the needs of the current and emerging residents, located close to shops, services and facilities which will aid sustainability. Housing choice will enable existing residents to be retained, whilst attracting new residents by providing a range of dwellings to suit requirements. The inclusion of appropriate levels of affordable housing will address the needs of the diverse population who choose Smethwick as a place to make their home.

Rejuvenation of the canalside for a residential led, mixed-use scheme will create an aspirational living environment and bring new life into one of Smethwick’s assets, the canal corridor. New investment in commercial properties within the North Smethwick area will provide quality employment sites for existing and new businesses, catering for a wide range of needs and contributing to the local economy and providing employment for local people.

Pressure on the road infrastructure will be alleviated by the promotion of more sustainable modes of transport, increased journeys by public transport and better integrated transport systems, located close to shops and services which will reduce the need to travel by private means. Heavy goods vehicles will be directed through the area on appropriate roads away from residential areas, improving the environmental amenity.

There will be major investment in health services, with the provision of a new multi-million pound acute hospital facility, set within a wider regeneration scheme to the east of the area, serving Sandwell and the West of Birmingham. This will act as a catalyst for future regeneration for employment and residential uses on adjoining sites, and enable the re-use of vacant or underused land to be actively promoted for more beneficial use.

The new communities will be supported by the provision of appropriate additional services for education, community, sporting and leisure facilities where existing provision is insufficient. Schools in the area which are currently being developed through Building Schools for the Future will act as a hub for services including health and community access to facilities such as Information Technology and sports. There will be an extensive greenspace network, including local provision in parks, linking through residential and business areas to provide a sense of place and extending through the Borough by using the existing linear network such as the canals.

Enhancement of the historic environment through protection and redevelopment of historic buildings and areas for conservation will ensure that the local distinctiveness and history of Smethwick is retained and promoted for future generations to enjoy.”

6.6 Strategic Objectives for Smethwick Area Action Plan

A number of Issues have also been identified facing this particular part of Smethwick. The policies set out in the Plan set out to address these strategic objectives;

- *Encouraging the provision of a range of new, high quality homes to meet local and future needs, including affordable housing.*

- The creation of well designed residential developments which provide a choice of housing types to meet the needs of the local community.

- Ensure that the developments have reasonable access to shops, facilities and services as well as accessibility to a choice of sustainable transport options.
- Promote sustainable development principles within new developments
- Provision of appropriate levels of affordable housing to cater for demand.

- *Identifying new employment sites or appropriate relocation sites which will aid local employment opportunities.*

- Improve the quality of employment land by introducing new areas for commercial and industrial uses.
- Aid in the relocation process for those businesses displaced by new development but wishing to stay in the area.
- Promote local jobs for local people.

- *Evaluate, protect and enhance existing open spaces and green spaces and provide new facilities where there is an identified need.*

- Protect and enhance the existing green infrastructure and areas of wildlife interest and biodiversity contained within the area including parks, natural greenspace and the canal corridor
- Ensure an appropriate level of community open space and play space is provided within or near to new developments which link with the wider network of green infrastructure.

- *Improving accessibility for all modes of transport through and within the plan area.*

- Promote sustainable transport modes throughout the area which link residential areas with employment and services, especially the new health facility at Grove Lane including public transport and walking.

- Improve links with the cycle network and canal towpaths and promote as more sustainable modes of travel.
- Improve the existing road infrastructure to direct traffic through the area on the most appropriate routes without detriment to the residential areas.

- *Ensuring that the social infrastructure, such as education, health and community facilities, is appropriate to serve the existing and proposed communities within the plan area.*

- Identify and promote appropriate sites to deliver a whole range of health care options for the area.
- Ensure that appropriate education provision is available within areas of new housing growth to meet future demand
- Promote the dual uses of facilities to act as a hub for community engagement and capitalize on the efficient use of land and facilities.

- *Protecting and enhancing the historic environment of the Smethwick Area.*

- protect and enhance the historic environment, including listed buildings, the Conservation Area incorporating the canal network, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, and
- support the protection and enhancement of existing heritage assets during the development process, and protect further assets which may be discovered during redevelopment.
- promote the appropriate re-use of buildings of special architectural value especially Soho Foundry and those on the Local List.

6.7 As previously mentioned, Smethwick falls within an area covered by a number of initiatives working towards the regeneration of the area for a sustainable living environment which meets the needs of those wishing to live, work and visit as well as to invest. The combined regeneration activities within the North Smethwick Canalside area and the Windmill Eye make this area attractive for investment by those who appreciate the close links to the transportation infrastructure and of being within easy access of other areas, such as Birmingham, but with facilities and attractions also close to hand within the Borough.

6.8 The aims of the Smethwick Area Action Plan are;

- to produce areas which meet the needs of the communities,
- to provide good quality, affordable housing,
- ensure the provision of services and facilities within easy reach, good transportation links
- ensure there is good access to employment
- enhance the quality of employment land and make Smethwick a place where people wish to invest.

6.9 There also needs to be appropriate accessibility to health and education, leisure and recreation facilities whilst protecting and enhancing the historic environment of the area. In order to achieve this, an overview of the area has been taken, with a strategy for future implementation which provides the planning framework on which to base future decisions for development. This needs to reflect national, regional and local guidance.

7. AN OVERVIEW OF THE PLAN AREA

Housing

- 7.1 The Regional Spatial Strategy has identified that Sandwell, as a whole, needs to accommodate 900 dwellings per year up to the year 2011. For the period 2011 to 2021, the annual figure is increased to 975 per year. Obviously, some of this can be accommodated within the Smethwick Plan area.
- 7.2 There are approximately 2700 households within the Smethwick AAP area, with an approximate population of 7400 many of which are contained within the Windmill Eye. There is a mixture of housing, of varying type and tenure, and of varying ages and condition. Approximately 48% of the households are public sector stock with about 35% being flats, maisonettes or apartments.
- 7.3 The Draft Housing Strategy (2006) identifies that Smethwick has a higher demand for larger family homes due to its high ethnic make-up. It also identifies a need for smaller dwellings, for two bedroomed accommodation, especially in the affordable housing sector. The Housing Strategy for Smethwick has also stated that there is a shortfall of quality accommodation for the elderly, both in the public and private sector. Further surveys undertaken on behalf of the Birmingham Sandwell Pathfinder have ascertained that there is a desire for 3 bedroomed homes within the Smethwick area.
- 7.4 Many of the families are unskilled and therefore on low incomes. They therefore require larger housing which is affordable, either for rent or to buy. This is in short supply. In addition to the lack of larger housing, a high proportion of the housing across the town is privately owned terraced housing, but due to lack of funds, many are in disrepair. It is in these areas where funding for improvements is required. Some of this funding will be provided through Housing Market Renewal but where properties are beyond viable repair, alternative options may be considered.

- 7.5 In looking for new sites for residential development, consideration has been given to redeveloping brownfield land currently in other uses, in line with current planning guidance. During the preparation of the Smethwick Town Plan (2004), sites within the Rolfe Street/Bridge Street North area were identified as possible sites which could accommodate residential development and pleasant environment along the canalside and within reach of existing facilities at Smethwick High Street. This capacity has been incorporated within the Black Country Study for future housing projections.
- 7.6 New residential schemes will need to reflect the high aspirations for good quality developments not only from existing residential design guidance contained in the Unitary Development Plan and Supplementary Planning Guidance, but also reflecting the aspirations of Urban Living and other partner agencies responsible for the regeneration of sites within the area. In order to ensure delivery of housing in some areas, for example Windmill Eye, there will be a need to create residential opportunities elsewhere, which will free up sites within the Windmill Eye following decanting and clearance, and thus provide new sites for redevelopment in a phased programme.

Employment

- 7.7 Quality of life for the communities is strongly linked to the economic performance of the Region, especially related to access to employment for disadvantaged groups and where there is high unemployment. The success of the Regional Spatial Strategy is focused on the future economic performance and the need to improve various factors such as housing, environmental quality, transport and access to leisure facilities which will lead to the Region becoming attractive for inward investment.

- 7.8 The Regional Spatial Strategy identifies the need for economic growth to take place in Major Urban Areas and within Regeneration Zones and there should be policies to support this. Within the Smethwick area, which is located within the South Black Country and West Birmingham Regeneration Zone (Arc of Opportunity), there is a need to locate employment on appropriate, good quality sites which have improved transport links for both goods and people. The RSS also recognises the need for improved education, training and employment opportunities which is of relevance to the North Smethwick area where unemployment levels are high.
- 7.9 A large expanse of the Plan area is covered by a range of industrial sites and buildings, concentrated mainly, and historically, adjacent to the Birmingham Canal and railway lines. An Employment Land Study of the AAP area has identified that the quality and condition of the industrial buildings varies from extremely poor to good quality new build. The manufacturing industry has changed over the years with many of the traditional companies moving out of the area or closing down entirely. The buildings left by these companies have in the main been occupied for storage and distribution uses, and as the rentals are quite cheap, many are under occupied.
- 7.10 There are five Unitary Development Plan sites allocated for Industrial Use that are also within the area covered by the Smethwick Area Action Plan. Four of these are located within the Soho Park area (Sites EE37,44, 45 and 48) and one on Bridge Street North (Site EE43). The revision of the Business Zone and employment sites provides an opportunity to bring forward a transformational change in the consolidation and rationalization of sites which use a smaller area more intensely and therefore more efficiently.
- 7.11 One of the other problems faced in this area is that of scrap metal recycling facilities. These are evident throughout Sandwell as a whole but there is a high concentration in the North Smethwick area in particular. There are a few major sites, primarily located in the Soho Park area and along the canalside which hinder the regeneration of the area due to the noise and disturbance often associated with this type of use and the generally poor appearance and effect on the environment.
- 7.12 It is evident that scrapyards provide a conflict with the wider regeneration strategy proposed by this AAP. The cost involved in relocating such operations, and finding suitable relocation sites is a major issue which needs to be dealt with on a more strategic level and one which cannot be fully addressed within this Plan. Policies within the Unitary Development Plan encourages these uses to locate within industrial areas where it is considered their operation will cause less harm and disturbance to other neighbouring uses. The AAP can aid the reduction in the number of scrapyards establishing themselves in this area with a change in the allocations for the future land use. This will enable the uses to continue, but rationalising them into specific areas where their impact can be reduced.
- 7.13 With the potential redevelopment of many of the larger under-utilised sites currently occupied by small businesses, there will be a need to identify suitable relocation sites. This will not only ensure that businesses can continue operating, but will also aid the diversification and intensification of employment throughout the area. It may be possible to develop a relocation strategy on certain schemes by working with Regenco and other appropriate agencies.

7.14 Employment sites should be identified where easy access to the strategic highway network can be achieved and where their presence will not adversely affect existing residential areas through noise, disturbance or traffic congestion. They should also ideally be located away from town centre locations which will be safeguarded for retail and community uses, and also other areas which contain schools or health centres where there is a possibility for safety to be compromised.

Transport

7.15 The Regional Spatial Strategy identifies that in order to achieve some of the objectives for the urban renaissance of the area, improved accessibility and transport is essential. In particular, ensuring that accessibility to the Major Urban Areas is enhanced and there is improved access for goods and services. It also highlights the need for appropriate transport policies, ensuring the enhancement of the environment through promoting new sustainable ways to travel and through mitigation measures where there is a need for more road building. Decisions on the future land uses for the Smethwick area will seek to achieve these aims and are considered in the preparation of this AAP whilst having due regard to the potential impact that these proposals will have on the Strategic Highway Network and requesting where necessary that a Transport Assessment is submitted which will be assessed against the Council's aspirations for improving sustainable travel patterns for the area. Where required, contributions towards sustainable travel infrastructure and services will be secured through S.106 Agreements and implemented through Travel Plans.

7.16 There are a number of transport routes running through the Smethwick AAP area, including a major route to Birmingham City Centre, and easy access to the M5 motorway at Junction 1. The area also contains the main line railway which runs between Wolverhampton and Birmingham, and from Worcester towards London.

There are three stations, Galton Bridge, Rolfe Street and The Hawthorns. The Birmingham Canal also runs through the northern part of the area which forms part of the transport infrastructure as a route for walkers, cyclists and boaters. Although not included within the AAP area, the Metro line operating between Birmingham and Wolverhampton runs to the north of the boundary and provides a sustainable means of travel for existing and future residents to and from the area with nearby stops at The Hawthorns (rail interchange), Booth Street and Winson Green.

7.17 Bus routes run regularly through the residential areas and there is also a National Cycle Route which runs along the canal which provides an alternative form of sustainable transport.

7.18 One of the major issues which face the Plan area is the bisection of north and south Smethwick by the road, rail and canal network which runs through the area from west to east. The access and linkages for pedestrians is particularly bad with busy dual carriageways and the rail line to cross, and poor pedestrian routes. With the potential for further redevelopment of the sites to the north of Tollhouse Way and around the canalside, access to facilities at Smethwick High Street will become a major issue. With the amount of residential development planned for this area, it is crucial that links across these main severance points are improved, especially for pedestrians. There will be a need to have safe and direct access to shops, services, schools and open space.

7.19 Studies into the traffic movement in the North Smethwick area in particular have identified a number of junction and highway improvements which would ease the traffic through north Smethwick, avoiding the residential areas and therefore improving the quality of life for residents. The increase in potential housing developments alongside the canal and in the Rolfe Street area will require a movement strategy to look at the road hierarchy to allow access to businesses without creating rat runs for larger vehicles.

Green Infrastructure

- 7.20 In order to improve the quality of life of the Borough's residents, it is essential that there is good access to quality green space which fulfils many roles as a place to walk, relax and play. It is imperative that where green spaces contribute to a good quality of life, that they are protected and enhanced where resources permit. English Nature standards suggest that at least 2 ha of accessible greenspace should be available within 300 metres of the home and that there should be at least one site of 20 ha or more within 2 km of homes. Consideration should also be given to the provision of Local Nature Reserves within easy reach of the population.
- 7.21 Sandwell is a dense urban area and access to green infrastructure is an important issue for improving the quality of life for its residents. Providing a network of connected green spaces which may or may not be totally accessible by the public will enhance and strengthen biodiversity, create a more sustainable environment and complement and balance the growth areas of housing and employment uses.
- 7.22 A Green Space Audit was undertaken for the whole of the Borough in 2005, which assessed all of the green spaces in Sandwell including parks, playing fields and amenity space, outdoor sports facilities, cemeteries as well as the canal corridor. The assessment concentrated on the quantity of greenspace, as well as the quality and accessibility to the general public. The Audit concluded that as a Town, Smethwick scored better than the Borough average on the quality of greenspace, although the quality per 1000 population was 2.91, below the average of 4.24. However, the distribution between the Smethwick wards varies from 5.06 ha per 100 population in St Paul's ward to 2.70 in Soho & Victoria. Both of the Wards contain the area which is subject of the Area Action Plan.
- 7.23 Generally, the parks contained within the plan area score highly in terms of quality and value to local residents which includes Black Patch Park, Galton Valley canal and Victoria Park. Unett Street Open Space is considered high quality but low value. However, some of the greenspaces are not very accessible when the various severance lines such as roads, rail and canal are taken into account. For the AAP area, restrictions on access are worse on the Brindley Village area.
- 7.24 The quality and quantity of future open space can be affected by redevelopment of the surrounding areas. For example, there is the vision for the area of North Smethwick to change from a primarily industrial to residential led mixed use area. Through existing Policy H7 of the Unitary Development Plan, this will necessitate the provision of open space and children's play space to serve any new and existing residents. It may be appropriate to identify one area of open space within the AAP area to serve all of the sites to be developed. Funding for this new provision will be via a commuted sum from the developer, or by incorporating it within the development itself where appropriate.
- 7.25 Accessibility to areas of green space is also of concern, especially those which have the potential of hosting many different uses such as the canal corridor. The Galton Valley canal corridor is underused at present which has the potential of becoming an area for relaxation and recreation, leisure use, cycling, walking and an events space as well as the potential for freight carriage. Sandwell Council currently has officers working with partners on raising the canals profile as a place to carry out these activities and together, with appropriate funding, improvements are being made which will make the canal corridor more accessible and safe place for all users.
- 7.26 Within the AAP is Black Patch Park and allotments. The allotments are well used and have recently been improved with new fencing. The Park is also used by adjoining Birmingham residents for leisure and recreation. Part of the park area was allocated in the current Unitary Development Plan for industrial uses, to attract investment for a technology park.

This proposal has never materialised but the allocation itself has been the subject of a recent campaign by Friends of Black Patch Park who wish to see the parkland reverted back as such. The long term aspirations for this area, including potential reuse of the Soho Foundry, has been the subject of further research work which will lead to a Framework being developed as part of this Area Action Plan.

Work is being undertaken on identifying a suitable re-use for the Soho foundry building which will not affect its status as a Listed Building, as well as looking at the adjoining land and the best regenerative options available for future development.

7.27 The other asset that the area has in terms of greenspace provision is the Birmingham Canal which runs east to west through North Smethwick and which forms part of the Conservation Area. The Galton Valley canal corridor is an underused area at present which has the potential of becoming an area for relaxation and recreation, leisure use, cycling, walking and an events space. Promotion of the canal network can only be successful if it is perceived to be safe. The increased natural surveillance which may come about from the development of residential and business uses on the canal frontage will aim to achieve this.

7.29 Smethwick has a number of Listed Buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments and areas of archaeological importance which all contribute to the interest of the area as a source of history. It is therefore important that the historic environment is not only protected, but is also enhanced and its profile raised in order to examine how it contributes to the sense of place, influencing design of new development and contributing to the regeneration of the area.

7.30 Within the Plan area, there are 15 Listed Buildings on the statutory list with Soho Foundry also being a Scheduled Ancient Monument. These include Churches, Smethwick Council House, Smethwick New Pumping Station, War Memorial as well as a number of bridges and locks along the canal network. However there are many more structures considered as locally important which appear on the local list and, although have no statutory protection, their retention and protection will be supported wherever possible and supported by adopted Policy. The area also contains a number of sites of archaeological importance included within the Sites and Monuments Record. A programme of Heritage Assessments is being carried out by Urban Living, based on the model briefs produced by English Heritage, aimed at providing further guidance on detailed proposals in the AAP.

Historic Environment

7.28 One of the assets that Smethwick can boast is its rich and diverse heritage. One of its many strengths is the collection of buildings, structures and links to history as well as the Smethwick Summit Conservation Area which was designated in 1985 and recently reviewed in 2003. The Conservation Area stretches along the Birmingham Canal, extending to adjoining land and buildings and runs throughout the Area Action Plan and beyond. The extent of the Conservation Area is such that it will require careful consideration when proposals are put forward for development within or adjoining its boundary. There is the possibility that other Conservation Areas may be identified following appraisals of Cape Hill and Smethwick High Street centres although this will be pursued through other mechanisms. Soho Foundry is declared as the birthplace of the industrial revolution, with Watt and Boulton both having an important link to this area.

7.31 A large proportion of the Smethwick Town is covered by areas of potential archaeological importance. It is vital that before any development proposals within areas of potential archaeological importance or likely to affect any archaeological remains in the Sandwell Sites and Monuments Record are considered, archaeological assessments, including field evaluations, are undertaken to determine whether the impact on archaeological remains is acceptable.

Conditions may be imposed requiring archaeological excavation and/or historic building recording in advance of commencement of development, which will reveal structural remains and artefacts that will contribute to knowledge of the area's historic development and have educational potential.

- 7.32 It is necessary to ensure that any redevelopment within the Plan area, not only protects the historic environment, but also enhances it. Re-use of older historic buildings and incorporating them within newer developments have proved successful in the Borough in the past and with the range and amount of historic structures within the Plan area, careful design will be essential in developing sympathetic schemes which both complement both the new and old alike.

Social Infrastructure

- 7.33 In order to meet the government's agenda of developing sustainable communities, it is necessary to ensure that sufficient and appropriate social infrastructure is in place to serve the needs of the communities which they serve. As well as local shops and services, there is also a requirement to identify appropriate locations for community and leisure facilities, education and health provision, to serve the existing as well as the new communities within the Plan area.

Education

- 7.34 There are six primary schools and no secondary schools within the Smethwick Area Action Plan. There are a number of schools just outside the plan area, including Holly Lodge Secondary School which is the closest. At present, according to the School Organisation Plan 2004 - 09, these schools are currently coping with demand. However, some are very close to being at full capacity. With new and emerging developments coming forward, it is necessary for close negotiations with the Local Education Authority and Planning to ensure that additional education provision is made

where there will be a need and also to work together on developing the Building Schools for the Future Programme. The BSF programme aims to provide services and activities all year round to children, young people, families and the community and act as a hub for services, including health and community access to facilities such as IT and sports.

- 7.35 Where there is an identified need resulting out of new development, it will be necessary to secure funding by way of a Planning obligation to meet long term future for educational needs, which may necessitate improvements to existing schools where achievable, or maybe the building of a new school where extensions to existing schools are not viable.

- 7.36 This will be especially relevant in the Rolfe Street and Brindley II areas where the nearby schools already run at capacity. However, the issue regarding school capacity will also need to be addressed in the Windmill Eye area where there is the potential for a phased clearance and redevelopment programme. This may require the rationalisation of schools, or the building of new schools once redevelopment and occupation of the units materialises. This approach is supported by existing UDP Policy and will be calculated by application of a standard formula.

Health

- 7.37 Accessibility to a range of health facilities is vital for the quality of life of residents within the Borough. Whilst the Plan area already contains a number of health facilities catering for the existing population, the provision of future housing proposed in this vicinity will obviously necessitate the need for increased health facilities for local GP's. The NHS is also looking at their delivery of care within the Sandwell and West Birmingham area and have identified, through their Towards 2010 agenda, that there is a need for a range of facilities, from doctors and health centres up to a new hospital to serve these areas.

7.38 As part of the Framework for the Smethwick AAP, facilities for future healthcare have been considered and appropriate sites identified which will serve the residents of the borough, located within their communities and designed to be accessible, and act as a focal point within the community. Further discussions will be required with the Primary Care Trusts when new residential developments come forward in the future to ensure that an appropriate level of care can be maintained, and additional needs identified or, either through new local health centres or extensions to existing ones.

Leisure and Community Facilities

- 7.39 There are a number of leisure facilities within the Smethwick area, including sports halls catering for racquet sports, keep fit and weights gym as well as outdoor sports pitches, running track and a swimming pool. Although these facilities are close to the Area Action Plan, the Plan area, being predominantly industrial in nature, contains none of the major facilities although it does have access to the parks and cyclepaths as mentioned previously. There are a number of community facilities dispersed across the plan area, mainly in the north, within Brindley Village and the Windmill Eye area where there are a vast range of community groups.
- 7.40 Accessibility to existing facilities may be a problem for new residents, particularly on sites coming forward in the north where provision is limited. Planning guidance suggests that the most appropriate sites are within town and district centres which are easily accessible by public transport and therefore contributes to the sustainability agenda. However, there may be scope to include limited leisure facilities as part of a comprehensive residential development to serve the local catchment.

7.41 Community facilities will be encouraged to locate within the local area. Where possible, sites suitable for leisure or recreational facilities have been identified, however, future supply will need to be assessed against a survey of existing facilities, their quality and quantity and the demand for new facilities within the new communities arising from new development. As no such study exists at present, there is a need for such a study to be undertaken to inform future demand. Consideration will be given to requesting contributions to facilities from future developments where a need can be demonstrated.

Centres

- 7.42 Whilst a number of small shops are dispersed within the Plan area, the main centres covered by this Plan are that of Smethwick High Street District Centre, Cape Hill Town Centre and Smethwick High Street (Lower) Local Centre. All three centres provide an important role within the communities that they serve and will continue to be enhanced and protected wherever possible to ensure their future vitality and viability.
- 7.43 Smethwick High Street District Centre serves not only a shopping role, but also provides a focus for community life. The centre has a good range of shops and services with very few vacancies. A refurbishment of the once failing Tollgate Precinct has breathed new life into this formerly run down part of the town, ensuring the continued viability of the centre and the Temple located on the High Street provides a focal point and meeting place which is visited from afar.
- 7.44 Cape Hill has always been a popular location for general shopping needs although in the recent years, properties on the outskirts have become vacant thereby constricting the retail core. These outer areas have been allocated for mixed uses to ensure that other uses, not necessarily for retail purposes, can be accommodated within the centre. More recently the town has benefited from a new foodstore, other retail and leisure units and car parking provision.

7.45 Smethwick High Street (lower), located next to Smethwick Council House, caters for the more day-to-day needs of the local catchment area. It has small convenience stores, a range of specialist shops and take aways and a number of offices. It also has a post office and a public house and lies on a good public transport route.

7.46 A recent Health Check on all of the Borough's centres has not identified any major problems with any of the three centres mentioned, although there are issues which may need attention in the future such as parking provision and any redevelopment proposals that come forward for any of the allocated sites. An assessment of these centres for Conservation Area status has identified a potential Conservation Area for parts of each of the centres although this will be progressed at a later stage and through other planning legislation so is therefore, not a proposal of this plan. The objective of an Area Action Plan is to identify areas of major change. It is not therefore the intention of this AAP to make any alterations to the proposals within the centres, but to retain those outlined in the Unitary Development Plan and to deal with any future issues by reference to the policies contained therein.

Urban Design

7.47 Future development within the Smethwick Area Action Plan will need to be assessed against Adopted Urban Design Policy in the Unitary Development Plan, and the Supplementary Planning Guidance - Residential Design. Those sites adjoining the canal, especially within the Conservation Area, will need to have regard for the setting of buildings within a Conservation Area in line with Planning Policy Guidance and be sympathetically designed. Development sites adjoining the rail line, especially those considered acceptable for residential development, will require a suitable buffer.

7.48 Regard will need to be had for the topography which varies by 15 metres across the area, dipping at the point of the Birmingham Canal. There are a number of Listed and Locally Listed structures across the plan area, including bridges, public houses and a malt house. Where possible, these will need to be retained and incorporated sensitively into any new development.

7.49 Some of the AAP sites will benefit from further design work being undertaken, possibly in the form of Supplementary Planning Documents to support the allocations in the AAP. Existing Briefs may require updating to support the policies of this AAP and meet the changing agenda.

7.50 In order to meet the aspirations of the Local Authority on Urban Design Matters, and to relate to any other supporting guidance for this area from other agencies, it will be necessary for developers to meet and discuss potential redevelopment schemes to ensure they are complementary to the aims and objectives of this plan, and the regeneration of the AAP area.

Linkages

7.51 As mentioned previously, North Smethwick is bisected by the Birmingham Canal and rail line which runs west to east through the area. Whilst an important resource for recreation and leisure, and as a sustainable means of transport, they also, together with Tollhouse Way, act as a severance point for residents in the north from accessing shops and facilities in the south and vice versa.

7.52 Linkages across the canal, rail and road are currently very poor. With the introduction of a new community to the north of Tollhouse Way, there will be more of a need to ensure that existing links are improved, as well as introducing new means of accessing vital facilities. New linkages will be funded by a range of developer contributions from sites served by these improved linkages. Past research has suggested that a landmark bridge be created from the Rolfe Street area to the High Street to avoid pedestrians having to cross at this very busy and confusing junction. However, this has proved to be too costly to implement and other methods are still being considered.

7.53 There is also a need for a linkage between the Brindley II development and the land adjacent to the canal arm. Although there are bridges which provide access across the canal, this is limited and not easily accessible for those in wheelchairs or with pushchairs due to the size and style of the bridges. Further work has been undertaken on identifying a suitable location for a bridge to span the canal which will provide a safe means of accessing land both to the north and south.

7.54 In addition to this, the transport infrastructure must be in place to meet the demands for both people and goods to be able to move freely and in the most sustainable manner. This will include good transport links by public transport by bus, train and Metro, but will also include the appropriate road network to cope with the demand for heavy goods to serve the industrial areas. Access at present is poor in certain places, in particular, Foundry Lane. Therefore, any future development proposals will need to ensure access is improved, and if necessary, contributions for highway works are obtained from the developer. Studies on the traffic movement pattern for the North Smethwick Canalside area has already been undertaken with a scheme of recommended works which will aid ease of movement through this area. These recommendations have been approved by the Local Authority and will be expected to be incorporated within future development when these are forthcoming. There will also be a need to ensure good linkages to the wider area, including the facilities offered by Birmingham City, by all modes of transport.

Planning Obligations

7.56 The Smethwick Area Action Plan recommends a number of proposals which will transform the land use pattern across North Smethwick and the Windmill Eye areas. Many of these proposals include the provision of housing to meet the needs of the existing population as well as attracting new residents.

However, in order to ensure that the developments are sustainable, and that the social infrastructure is in place to serve these residents, it will be necessary to request funding by way of S.106 agreements in order to finance these facilities. This will be a direct cost to the developer and will depend upon the size of developments and the number of residents generated. Examples of contributions required will be for open space, where this is not provided on-site, education provision, where there is an identified shortfall arising out of new development, highway infrastructure costs, where development could not be carried out without highway improvements for access or safety reasons, and linkages such as bridges where they are required in order to provide easy and safe access to shops, services and facilities.

7.57 Contributions will also be required in order to improve the public realm or for the provision of public art, for example, where it will benefit the environmental quality of an area. Public Art is contained within adopted UDP policy (Policy UD6) for large sites to provide for public art within the development. Cross boundary working with Birmingham City and Urban Living will ensure that sufficient contributions are received for social infrastructure to support the new communities being created within the Birmingham and Sandwell Pathfinder area.

7.58 The Government is keen to promote good quality design and materials for new developments which has been embraced by the Local Authority in raising the aspirations for design of new developments in the Borough. Smethwick, due to its industrial past, has a poor quality environment and it is necessary, therefore, to ensure that any new developments are designed to the highest standard. New developments, especially in the Rolfe Street and Rabone Lane areas will require improvements to the public realm to reflect the aspirational residential and commercial area that is to be created.

- 7.59 The public realm are those areas publicly accessible which includes streets, paths, spaces, canals and open spaces. The public realm should provide a sequence of legible spaces which link character areas in a pleasant and safe way. These linkages should create attractive spaces which attract people living, working or visiting the area. For Smethwick, it will be necessary to refer to the old and the new, to reflect the history as well as looking ahead to the future, therefore, careful and sympathetic design will be required.
- 7.60 A detailed Public Realm Strategy will be prepared which highlights the issues which need to be incorporated for future S.106 contributions and included in the future planning framework for the North Smethwick and Windmill Eye area. This will be particularly relevant in the Rolfe Street and Rabone Lane areas where the land use is set to be transformed on a grand scale from industrial to a residential/commercial area and which is required to be attractive for future investment potential.

8. LOCAL POLICIES

The following local policies relate to individual development sites within the Smethwick Area Action Plan which are identified on the Proposals Map as areas of change. The identified sites are:

Local Policy Sme1 - North Smethwick Canalside

This area has been identified for a residential led mixed-use scheme which may incorporate some commercial uses, for minor office development, B1 uses and a limited amount of retail. This will exploit the prime site in a canalside location, close to public transport links and the canal network.

The north side of Rolfe Street close to Rolfe Street Station will be predominantly residential to take advantage of the canalside setting. High density, apartment type dwelling would be best suited to this location where links to public transport are easily accessible. Some commercial uses could be accommodated at ground floor.

Further along Rolfe Street on its northern side, sites will be allocated for mixed use, for commercial, residential and retail with residential uses predominantly fronting the canal, and more commercial to the Rolfe Street frontage.

Residential uses could be accommodated on land to the south of Rolfe Street, north of the rail line where through traffic is limited. The area is more suited to family type dwellings. A suitable buffer will be required.

This site can accommodate up to 400 residential units of varying type and tenure based on 50 dwellings to the hectare.

Development within this area will need to incorporate up to 25% of affordable housing in line with adopted Council policy, which based on current figures would be approximately 100 units.

Land between the Enterprise Centre and Rolfe Street could accommodate a pub/ restaurant and limited retail uses to cater for the passing canal users and immediate residential catchment and serving as a central hub, or Village Heart where people can meet and socialise.

Any development will need to be of high quality in terms of design and materials and in line with adopted council policy. Regard should be had to the Conservation Area which covers much of this site.

Highway improvements will be required as part of the adopted North Smethwick Canalside Access Study for junction improvements on Rolfe Street at the junctions of New Street and Bridge Street South.

Transportation Assessments will be required as part of any application for development to establish additional transport improvements required. The provision of future public transport will need to be discussed with the appropriate transport providers before development commences.

The site will require a detailed flood risk assessment to ascertain any issues of flooding arising from development and identify mitigation measures required prior to development to reduce the risk of flooding. Sustainable drainage systems will be required.

Open Space should be included within the development area, in appropriate locations and subject to maintenance agreements. There may be a need to make a contribution for any remaining open space and play space provision within the vicinity where this is not provided on-site.

Contributions may also be required for education provision, public art and historic interpretation and improvements to the canalside including towpaths, footpaths and bridges and the public realm. The need for community facilities within the area will also be considered where appropriate. Contribution towards sporting facilities will be considered once a Sports Strategy for the Borough has been completed.

Supplementary information

This area lies to the south of the Birmingham Canal, straddling Rolfe Street and encompassing land between Birmingham Canal and the Engine Arm. The area at present contains a number of businesses ranging from light to general industrial and some office uses, within premises of varying quality. The site is within a large number of ownerships. This area also includes the Smethwick Enterprise Centre which contains a number of smaller workshop type businesses. Adjacent to the Enterprise Centre is the former Fire Station building which is now owned and run by Focus Housing Association. The Council owned site of the former Rolfe Street Baths is vacant and located in a prime site next to Rolfe Street Station. The total site area is approximately 8.77 ha.

It is proposed to seek comprehensive development of the land to the north and south of Rolfe Street with a mixture of residential and commercial uses. Creating a more active frontage to the canal will increase natural surveillance and improve usage of the canal network, improving linkages between north and south Smethwick. To the north of Rolfe Street, commercial uses would be best suited fronting the road with residential uses adjacent the canal.

Due to the pattern of traffic movement, it will be necessary to contain the commercial uses to the New Street frontage; a mixture of commercial uses at ground floor with apartments above may be acceptable with appropriate planning. A suitable buffer will also be required to any residential development adjoining the rail line. Family housing would be best suited to the land south of Rolfe Street where through traffic is reduced, to accommodate the needs of the existing residents who wish to stay in the Smethwick area, or to attract new ones.

The future of the Enterprise Centre is still under debate. However, future development on this site could incorporate some commercial or workshop uses within the existing Locally Listed building, and possible redevelopment of the site close to the canal edge for residential use.

Studies on the current housing market suggest that up to 600 dwellings could be accommodated within the North Smethwick area. This equates with approximately 40 dwellings per hectare across the site, although higher density will be located closer to Rolfe Street Station and close proximity to public transport provision at Smethwick High Street. Lower density housing can be located to the south of Rolfe Street. This will be clarified further on the publication of the most up to date Sandwell Housing Needs and Demands Survey 2007, when available. The provision of affordable housing will need to be agreed with Housing Strategy, based upon the above Survey but current figures suggest there is a requirement for 2 bed and 4+ bed housing within this area with tenures of rented, shared ownership and low-cost home ownership.

Design should be of the highest quality and reflect the key design principles of the Council. In this respect, regard will need to be had to the Supplementary Planning Guidance on Residential Design. Apartment blocks should be 3 storeys high, with the potential of increasing this to 4 storeys on key landmark corners. Town houses should be 2 storeys on the area adjoining the Engine Arm, although there is the potential for 3 storey development to the area south of Rolfe Street. This will require careful design to avoid an over intensive development.

There will be a need for highway works at the junctions of Rolfe Street and New Street, and also at the junction with Bridge Street South to provide traffic signals and change in priority in line with the adopted study produced as part of the work on accessibility to the North Smethwick area. These are part of a package of improvements which will aid the movement of heavy goods vehicles through the area without detriment to the residential uses. This would enable the downgrading of Rolfe Street to discourage through traffic.

It is the intention to consider a relocation strategy in order to accommodate those businesses displaced by development, especially from the Enterprise Centre. Some of these uses may be able to be accommodated within new commercial premises within the vicinity.

Given the past industrial uses in the North Smethwick area, provision of sporting and community facilities is practically none existent. However, the residential developments proposed for this area will generate a need for more facilities to cater for potential increased demand, or the enhancement of existing facilities nearby with a contribution by S.106. Whilst a recent Green Space Audit and Sports Pitch Strategy can support enhancement to the provision of open space and pitches, there is no up-to-date survey on sporting facilities to justify additional contributions from developers. However, this will need to be considered in the future.

Retail uses will need to be located within the Rolfe Street area to cater for the day to day needs of the new community to be established by new residential development. It may also attract some business from canal users for top-up provisions, although accessibility from the canal requires further improvement for this to be fully utilised, as will the connections across the canal to Brindley II. However, the amount of retail floorspace within the Rolfe Street or Brindley II areas will need to be limited to 1500 m² across this site and Sme2 in order to ensure immediate needs are met in the locality but also to retain the vitality and viability of the Smethwick High Street District Centre.

Future development will need to assess the impact on the biodiversity and geodiversity, especially along the canal corridor. As the Smethwick Summit Conservation Area covers most of the site area, there will be a need to ensure appropriate and sympathetic design is achieved without detracting from the qualities of the Conservation Area, or any of the archaeological remains, buildings or monuments contained within it. Appropriate studies will need to be submitted regarding the effects on the historic environment arising from any development.

This site falls within the flood zone 3 which is identified as high probability of flooding and flood zone 2 which is of medium probability. However, further work has established that the culvert will convey the 100 year flood flow underground and therefore this site will not be affected by Zone 3a but will fall within Flood Zone 2. The existing structure of Smethwick generally provides ample opportunities for dry escape routes to be used during a flood event. The risk of flooding in Smethwick is considered to be low. However, as the proposals put forward for this site include residential which is considered to be a vulnerable use, a detailed flood risk assessment will be required.

Sustainable Drainage Systems should be incorporated within new development proposals, seeking to reduce current surface water runoff.

Development may require contributions by way of Section 106 where a need can be demonstrated. Funding will be acquired from housing and commercial developers, Urban Living, British Waterways as well as public sector contribution where necessary.

The proposed land use changes are shown on Plan 4

Local Policy Sme2 - *Rabone Lane*

This site has been identified for a residential led mixed-use development. The predominant use will be residential with commercial uses as a secondary use. Any commercial uses will need to be compatible with a residential area and a suitable buffer introduced to any development adjoining the rail line.

Commercial uses could be accommodated at ground floor level on the Rabone Lane and New Street frontage. Apartments may be appropriate at second and third storey. Family housing would be better suited to the south of the site. An appropriate buffer from the rail line will be required.

This site can accommodate up to 200 residential units of varying type and tenure based on 40 dwellings to the hectare.

Development within this area will need to incorporate up to 25% of affordable housing in line with adopted Council policy, which based on current figures would be approximately 50 units.

Any development will need to be of high quality in terms of design and materials and in line with adopted council policy.

Highway improvements will be required as part of the adopted North Smethwick Canalside Access Study for junction improvements on Rolfe Street at the junctions of New Street and Bridge Street South. Other highway improvements may be necessary arising from development of this site.

Transportation Assessments will be required as part of any application for development to ascertain any additional transport improvements required.

The site falls within Flood Zone 2 (medium probability of flooding). A detailed Flood Risk Assessment will be required for this site to ascertain the mitigation measures required to enable development to commence. Sustainable Drainage Systems will be required to reduce water run-off.

Open Space should be included within the development area, in appropriate locations and subject to maintenance agreements. There may be a need to make a contribution for any remaining open space and play space provision within the vicinity where this is not provided on-site.

Contributions may also be required for education provision, public art and historic interpretation and improvements to the canalside including towpaths, footpaths and bridges and the public realm. The need for community facilities within the area will also be considered where appropriate. Contribution towards sporting facilities will be considered once a Sports Strategy for the Borough has been completed.

Funding will be acquired from housing and commercial developers, Urban Living, British Waterways as well as public sector contribution where necessary.

Supplementary Information

Land to the north of the canal, currently occupied by Bridge Street Industrial Estate and Rabone Park, is currently allocated as a Business Zone in the Adopted Unitary Development Plan. This allocation will remain for the future of the Smethwick Area Action Plan, and will, therefore, be safeguarded for industrial uses within the classes of B1, B2, and B8.

Land to the south of the canal is currently used for a number of uses including manufacturing and engineering. There are also two small areas of housing, vacant sites and residential moorings alongside the canal within this area. The total site area is approximately 5.96 ha.

The strategy for this site is to seek comprehensive development incorporating a range of residential uses including apartments and traditional family housing. Due to the pattern of traffic movement through the site, it will be necessary to contain the commercial uses to the New Street frontage, accommodated at ground floor level to provide a buffer to the road.

Residential development on the canal side will increase natural surveillance and activity on the canal network and increase its usage, potentially by pedestrians and cyclists, contributing to sustainable transport patterns.

Residential development to the south, where through traffic is reduced, should consist of family housing of two or three storeys. A suitable buffer will also be required to any residential development adjoining the rail line. Family housing required for this area, based upon the latest studies, include 2 and 4+ bedroomed accommodation. However, this may change once a revised Housing Needs Survey is produced.

This site may accommodate up to 200 dwellings based on 40 dwellings per hectare. A lower density is acceptable in this location due to limited public transport provision and the need to accommodate more family housing. A lower density will prevent the over intensification development of this site.

The provision of affordable housing will equate to up to 25%, in this case 50 dwellings, which will need to be agreed with Housing Strategy, based upon the above Survey but current figures suggest there is a requirement for 2 bed and 4+ bed housing within this area with tenures of rented, shared ownership and low-cost home ownership.

Design should reflect the key principles adopted by the Council in its policies on Urban Design, with particular reference to the Supplementary Planning Guidance on Residential Design. The mixed use blocks of commercial and apartments should be 3 storeys high, with the potential of increasing this to 4 storeys on key landmark corners. Town houses should be 2 or 3 storeys to the area south of Rabone Lane.

As mentioned in Local Policy Sme1, improvements to the junctions of Rolfe Street/NewStreet and Rolfe Street/Bridge Street South will be required to contribute to easing traffic movement in this area and direct heavy goods vehicles away from predominantly residential uses.

Where possible, the Council and its partners will aim to secure new premises for current occupiers displaced by any future redevelopment of this area. Some of these uses may be able to be accommodated within new commercial premises within the vicinity.

The site lies within Flood Zones 2 where there is medium probability of flooding. Historically, some flooding has been observed at Rabone Lane which is understood to occur quite regularly (estimated to be within the range of once every two years). This type of flooding does not affect any property, but occasionally causes the road to become impassable. It is expected that this flooding is primarily caused by localised surface water arising from heavy rainfall. Due to the vulnerability of the proposals for residential, a detailed flood risk assessment will be required for this site and mitigation measures identified. There will also be a requirement for sustainable drainage systems to be incorporated into any future scheme.

The amount of residential proposed for this area will generate a need for more sporting facilities to cater for potential increased demand, or the enhancement of existing facilities nearby with a contribution by S.106. A recent Green Space Audit and Sports Pitch Strategy has identified the quality and quantity of sites within the Borough and can support enhancement to the provision of open space and pitches. However, there is no up-to-date survey on sporting facilities to justify additional contributions from developers at this stage but this will need to be considered in the future.

Limited retail will be allowed within the North Smethwick area to cater for the day-to-day needs of the new community to be established by new residential development. However, the amount of retail floorspace within the North Smethwick area will be limited to 1500 m² in order to ensure the vitality and viability of the Smethwick High Street District Centre is not prejudiced.

Future development will need to assess the impact on the biodiversity and geodiversity, especially along the canal corridor. The Smethwick Summit Conservation Area covers some of the site, therefore appropriate design is required which is sympathetic to this designation and reflects the qualities of the Conservation Area. Regard is also required to enhance and protect any of the archaeological remains, buildings or monuments contained within this area where necessary. Appropriate studies will need to be submitted regarding the effects on the historic environment arising from any development and allow appropriate recording to be undertaken before development takes place.

Development may require contributions by way of Section 106 where a need can be demonstrated. Funding will be acquired from housing and commercial developers, Urban Living, British Waterways as well as public sector contribution where necessary.

*The proposed land use changes are shown on **Plan 4**.*

Local Plan Sme3 - Windmill Lane/Soho Way

The area has been identified for future intervention for residential and associated social infrastructure on completion of a Housing Product Study.

A strategy for a phased approach of areas within Site Sme3 which will require intervention, has been prepared.

Residential development will commence on cleared sites, incorporating adjacent sites where appropriate, to ensure comprehensive development is achieved.

Affordable housing will be required based upon adopted policy up to a level of 25%.

Where a need can be demonstrated, inclusion of appropriate social infrastructure will be considered including educational, community and sporting facilities. These will be funded by Section 106 contributions arising from residential development.

Consideration should be given to design solutions which incorporate Buildings or structures on the statutory or local list, into new developments to ensure their continued use.

Transport Assessments will be required to ensure the effects of development on the Strategic Highway Network.

A detailed Flood Risk Assessment will be required for the Crocketts Lane College site which lies within a potential Flood Zone.

Supplementary Information

The area is predominantly residential supplemented by a range of uses contributing to the social infrastructure, which provide some important services to sustain the resident population. These include the area identified as the Cape Hill Centre, Smethwick Lower High Street Local Centre, Victoria Park, and a number of health facilities, local schools, and community buildings including the recently built Windmill Community Action Project. The area also appears to include some small-scale employment uses. The total site area is approximately 109 ha.

The vision for the Windmill Eye is to transform the housing offer within the area to cater for a wide range of household groups; to create a local environment that is safer, cleaner, and more pleasant a place to spend time, and to support and promote access to community facilities and local services that meet the needs of people in the area. It will also be designed which promotes accessibility and movement through the area, particularly by modes other than the car, and will promote new housing that responds positively to issues such as energy efficiency and climate change.

The future strategy for this area can only be set with baseline information and robust evidence on the state of the current housing market supply which will then inform the changes required to meet the housing needs and demands of future residents and identify those parts of the area that will remain/be improved, and those subject to a phasing approach to clearance and redevelopment. In order to obtain this information, a Housing Product Study is being undertaken within the Windmill Eye area, including adjacent areas.

This will assess the condition and quality of homes and their environment, advise on character areas, establish the housing needs in the area to ascertain the type and tenure of housing requirements and consider the impact of any interventions / demolitions and how this may effect or influence future housing need. It will also advise on type of homes to be constructed to consider phasing of developments and impacts on the wider area. However, the timescale for the results of this Study is unfortunately out of synch with the production of this AAP. Therefore, whilst this AAP proposes a phased approach in line with the general thrust of the Regional Spatial Strategy in creating attractive places where people wish to live, work and invest, further details on the individual proposals will be the subject of Supplementary Planning Documents based upon the results of the Housing Product Survey and following adoption of this AAP. For the purpose of this Area Action Plan, only the sites identified for possible future intervention have been identified.

In order to achieve this, the Strategy for this area is to prepare a plan for the future regeneration of the Windmill Eye with the objectives of creating a more balanced, mixed tenure community by improving the choice and quality of housing within the area for a range of different households. Urban Living has already contributed funding for clearance projects in this area, subject to a wider 'masterplan' being produced which sets out a more detailed approach to tackling and improving the housing market which meets the aims and objectives of Housing Market Renewal. This Strategy aims to achieve this detailed approach. Accessibility to and from adjacent areas, particularly to the north, is compromised by the A457 (Soho Way) strategic highway, making attempts at integration between areas very difficult. Bearing in mind the scale of residential development envisaged to the north of the area, there may be a need for new residents to access community facilities in the Windmill Lane and Cape Hill area.

To achieve better integration in the future would require the improvement of linkages between the two areas, which at present is very limited. This could include new crossing facilities or bridges to encourage safer movement for pedestrians and cyclists.

Sites already allocated within the adopted Unitary Development Plan will be retained. These are sites around Messenger Road (Ho80) totalling 2.69 ha and with a capacity of 80 dwellings and Sandwell College (Ho162) which is 2.24 ha and could accommodate approximately 84 dwellings. The latter includes a listed building which will also be retained and promoted for conversion to either residential or another appropriate use.

Further sites have come forward as a result of demolition with funding from the Birmingham and Sandwell Housing Market Renewal Area (Urban Living). The cleared sites are;

- James Watt House site (approx 1.4 hectares) - part of UDP Housing Site 80
- Windmill Precinct and Cheshire House (approx 0.75 hectares)
- Hamilton House (approximately 0.5 hectares).

It is envisaged that these sites will be brought forward as part of the comprehensive redevelopment strategy for the whole area, rather than on an ad hoc basis.

An important objective of the framework is to ensure that any redevelopment or remodelling of existing residential areas is phased in such a way as to minimise the impact on local service provision. This covers a range of issues relevant to the area, including education, health, affordable housing, and open space.

It should be noted that a need for additional education provision has been identified as part of the Cape Hill Brewery development. This new provision could offset the immediate impact of major clearance and redevelopment in the short term, due to the proximity of the site to the Windmill Eye area. Nonetheless, future development proposals will need to be assessed in the same way.

Health services may also be affected due to a fall in numbers of patients accessing local GP practices, which may mean people having to travel greater distances due to relocation. Specialist health facilities at certain practices may also need to be moved or relocated, or perhaps removed entirely as a consequence of falling patient numbers in the area.

The issue of affordable housing will require a sensitive approach, bearing in mind the predominance of housing in the area provided to meet the needs of lower income households, managed by both Sandwell Homes and a number of Registered Social Landlords.

The current policy encourages the provision of up to 25% of homes to meet housing needs. Nonetheless, the challenge for the framework and, indeed, more detailed proposals governing specific sites will be to address the needs of existing households whilst securing the mix of tenures that will support the Council's sustainable communities objective.

The area has two principal open spaces providing access to formal play areas, including tennis courts and children's play space, and landscaped areas for more informal enjoyment. These are Victoria Park, and Unett Street open space. Victoria Park includes five sports pitches, a cricket table, flood lit multi use games area and tennis court, children's play area, a lake, and network of tree-lined pathways. The War Memorial, at the entrance from the High Street, is a listed Grade II structure along with the adjacent Smethwick Council House. The Park provides a recreational facility in what is otherwise a dense, built up area. Consideration will be given to including appropriate open space and play space within future remodelling or redevelopment.

The Green Space Audit recently carried out by Sandwell Council and Community First Partnership/Scott Wilson identified Victoria Park as being both High Quality and High Value, whilst Unett Street Open Space was classified as High Quality, but Low Value. Consequently, a proportion of any expenditure secured through the planning process should be used to address this issue.

The College site has been identified as being within Flood Zone 2, within Medium probability of flooding, within the catchment of the Hockley Brook river system, incorporating Thimblemill Brook. Current Environment Agency Flood Zone maps indicate that there is risk from fluvial flooding. However, further work from consultants working on the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for the Borough has identified that the risk of flooding within Smethwick is considered to be low, especially for sites within the Windmill Eye area.

However, any submission for development should include more detailed assessment of the potential for flooding and any mitigation measures required. The inclusion of Sustainable Drainage Systems within designs should be considered, seeking to reduce current surface water runoff.

It is considered that there are a number of 'character areas' within the Windmill Eye area which would benefit from further work being undertaken. This will be in the form of Supplementary Planning Documents, following adoption of the AAP, to deal with issues such as urban design, layout and access. Preparing SPD's which contain further detail will ensure that a co-ordinated approach is taken to providing a comprehensive scheme across the whole of the Windmill Eye area and ensure that services are maintained at all times.

All of the sites will need to meet the key urban design principles. For the sites on Messenger Road, design will need to be of a very high quality given their prime location adjacent to the strategic road network. It is considered that they will form the first phase for development of the Windmill Eye and provide accommodation for new residents, or for those being decanted from the next phase for clearance. The remaining phases and level of intervention will be informed by the results of the Housing Product Study. A Heritage Assessment of the Cape Hill area has been carried out by Urban Living, based on the model briefs produced by English Heritage, aimed at providing further guidance on the impact of the Local Policy on the historic environment.

As mentioned previously, this Strategy for the Windmill Eye has been prepared for a phased programme of intervention based on information held at present, and with knowledge of other proposed developments or interventions which are planned for the immediate area which may affect, or be affected, by this approach. The outcome of the Housing Product Study will provide further justification and certainty to the delivery of these proposals.

Therefore, the Strategy for the Windmill Eye as outlined above should be accepted as the preferred way forward, but with the proviso that it will only be implemented if supported by solid evidence arising out of this further supplementary work.

The proposed land use changes are shown on Plan 5.

Local Policy Sme4 - Grove Lane

Site identified for Employment Use to accommodate new health and ancillary uses for Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust.

Remainder of site to accommodate high quality B1 uses, Residential and other complementary uses.

This is a Gateway site into the Borough therefore a landmark building is required to the Dudley Road frontage.

The Hospital should be located close to Dudley Road/Cape Hill, within the identified site on Plan 6.

A local transport plan for the hospital development will be produced in close consultation with the Trust, SMBC and local transport providers.

Vehicular access to the Hospital for staff and visitors will be from Grove Lane. Access for emergency vehicles will be from Grove Lane and/or Cranford Street.

The residential and B1 uses may be accessed from Cranford Street, Dugdale Street, Abberley Street and London Street. Signalisation is likely to be required for the Grove Lane access, the details of which will arise out of future discussion. This will involve a contribution for transport infrastructure.

Land at Soho Way junction has been identified for B1 use only.

The land overlooking Moillett Street Open Space has been identified for B1 and residential uses to create an improved residential environment and provide natural surveillance to the open space.

The site could accommodate up to 108 dwellings. Apartments may be acceptable above B1 uses off Halberton Street where two, three or four storeys would be acceptable. Affordable housing will be required based upon adopted policy up to a level of 25%.

Family housing could be accommodated on Abberley Street. It may be appropriate to have three storey development in places where it will not be overlooked by adjoining development.

It is estimated that up to approximately 25,000 m² of commercial space could be accommodated across the site. This should be high quality in terms of design and materials and should reflect the Councils key urban design principles.

Limited retail, such as a small supermarket may be permitted towards Dudley Road. However, this will need to be of a scale and type which will complement the existing facilities on Dudley Road and not undermine the vitality of this centre or the nearby shopping centre of Cape Hill. Other complementary uses may be acceptable to the south of the development site.

Appropriate open space should be included within the developments across the site. Where it is not feasible to introduce sufficient open space, a contribution to enhance existing open space will be sought.

Consideration will also be given as to whether contributions will be required for education, community or sporting facilities where these can be justified.

Any development should attempt to incorporate the Cape Arm of the Birmingham Canal to provide a focal point. Consideration should be given to sympathetic design within the Conservation Area.

Whilst this site is not identified as having the potential to flood, the site includes Boundary Brook which is culverted and therefore a detailed Flood Risk Assessment is required.

A Transport Assessment will be required for the redevelopment of this site. Any improvements required as a result of this Assessment will be borne by the Developer.

Supplementary Information

In developing a future land use plan for the Smethwick area, a site has been identified to accommodate a new acute hospital as part of the Towards 2010 agenda for the Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust. The new acute hospital will be a key part of the improvements to the delivery of health services that the 2010 Project is seeking to provide. The 2010 Project has included extensive consultation and engagement and the proposal for a new acute hospital in Smethwick formed part of that consultation and engagement.

Identification of the Grove Lane site followed extensive research of other sites within the Smethwick and Birmingham areas, it was agreed by partners that this site was the optimum location for a new hospital to serve both Sandwell and West Birmingham for the NHS. Located on the border between the two authorities, it provides good access from the Strategic Road Network and would provide a state of the art facility for around 600-700 beds, 107,000 inpatient appointments and approximately 120,000 outpatient appointments each year. It will provide in excess of 4000 jobs and regenerate a brownfield site on a major gateway into the Borough.

The development would bring significant regenerative benefits to Smethwick and the wider area, especially with the possibility of spin off developments associated with the health industry. Since the hospital development will only require approximately 6.5 hectares, the remainder of the site can accommodate these B1 uses, as well as have the potential for some residential development, especially for key worker accommodation. It may be possible to include up to 180-200 dwellings on site. This would ideally be located to the north of Grove Lane, although the siting of the hospital will dictate where the other uses are located. It is anticipated that a planning application may be submitted around March 2008.

To achieve this, it was considered that a Development Framework was required to set out a clear strategy for its future development and design expectations. The Development Framework sets out the mix of acceptable land uses, the preferred locations and supplementary information such as access by a range of means, scale, massing and other design issues. The Development Framework will provide an additional layer of information from the Preferred Options document but will not be so prescriptive in order to allow for a certain degree of flexibility where site boundaries may change in the future.

In preparing the Development Framework, this site needs to be considered in relation to other developments or interventions being undertaken now, or planned for the future. The hospital development cannot be considered in isolation. The effects that the hospital development may have on the surrounding area also need to be considered against the wider regeneration potential of adjoining parcels of land and sites north of Cranford Street.

The AAP proposals have the active support of the NHS Trust and are seen as being a key mechanism for progressing the delivery of this major new facility. The council has worked closely with the NHS Trust to develop the proposals and there has been an alignment of processes, including the AAP to help deliver the new facility.

The partners involved in the hospital development and the wider regeneration of the Grove Lane site are looking to formalise working arrangements in order to deliver this site and a statement of intent/overarching collaboration agreement is being progressed. This will commit partners to work together to develop the scheme and will set out, for example, how land acquisition will be managed and resourced. A project plan has also been developed and agreed by partners.

Site Description

The Grove Lane site is situated adjacent to the boundary between Sandwell and Birmingham and covers an area of approximately 18.76 hectares. The area is bound by Grove Lane to the west, Cranford Street to the north, Dugdale Street to the east and Dudley Road to the south.

The area is almost entirely industrial with a few retail uses on the periphery of the area, on Dudley Road. Most of the industrial space is accommodated in buildings dating from the 1900s to modern space from the 1970s onwards. There is some more recent development such as the Unifix site on Grove Lane that provides a number of modern shed units.

More than half of the industrial and commercial land within the site is classified as poor quality or vacant/derelict. There are pockets of fair to good industrial space located in the area bounded by Grove lane, Grove Street and Cranford Street.

The Grove Lane site is well served by local facilities, including leisure, retail and education. The extensive facilities of Birmingham and West Bromwich lie within 5 km. Shopping and services are available to the south of the site along Cape Hill and Dudley Road. The Cape Hill retail centre, which is less than 0.5 km from the site includes food stores, fast food restaurants and smaller retail units. A large supermarket and other retail uses are located within the new Windmills Development at Windmill Lane.

A number of primary schools are located close to the Grove Lane site, but access to these schools is not easy due to their location across the Grove Lane dual carriage way. The schools are currently operating within capacity, however, where there is an identified need resulting from new development, it will be necessary to secure funding by way of a Planning Obligation to meet long term future educational needs.

There are no listed buildings with the Grove Lane area, although there is one building of architectural interest, the former cinema (Reflections Studio Bathrooms and Kitchens).

Opportunities for development have the potential to contribute to the wider regeneration of Smethwick and the Grove Lane area. Given the location, the development of B1 uses (Research & Development) that would support higher value jobs and create a high quality business environment are considered as appropriate, given the location adjacent to the new hospital development.

Given the residential nature of surrounding areas such as Windmill Eye, the new development on the former Cape Hill brewery site and the adjacent residential areas within Birmingham, housing within the Grove lane site will form an important part of the redevelopment of the area.

The area is surrounded by a dense network of residential streets on three sides and the Birmingham Canal to the north-east. To the south of the site is Dudley Road (A457), with many of the area's shops and local facilities located along this busy corridor, on which speeds are restricted to 30 mph. The A457 continues north at the junction with the A4092, into Grove Lane, a 40 mph dual carriageway forming a radial route from Birmingham and providing links to junctions 1 and 2 of the M5 motorway.

Consultation with Birmingham City Council for the regeneration of this area will be necessary given the close proximity of the boundary and the scale of development proposed, particularly as Moillett Street Open Space will contribute to the amenity in the provision of new housing in the area.

Key Gateway Considerations

With the area having a prominent location and being a key gateway into the Borough from Birmingham, the potential exists to create a number of landmark buildings at strategic locations to raise the profile of the area. Therefore at certain locations development will be required to achieve an appropriate mass in terms of height, whilst also being of high standard in architectural design and quality. Two key gateway locations into the Grove Lane site have been identified.

The first is situated on the northern end of Grove Lane, at the roundabout junction with Soho Way. This provides a gateway into the area from Sandwell. The second key gateway is located on the southern end of Grove Lane, the new roundabout junction with Cape Hill and Dudley Road, which provides a gateway into the area from Birmingham.

Development in these locations will be required to achieve an appropriate mass in terms of height, whilst also being of high standard in architectural design and quality. The gateway location at the northern end of Grove Lane could sustain a landmark building of 2/3 storeys in height. While the gateway location on the southern part of Grove Lane, could sustain a landmark building of 4/5 storeys in height. Higher storeys may be appropriate where a satisfactory design solution can be found and in context with the surrounding buildings.

Access and Linkages

A key element of the development of the Grove Lane site will be to improve the physical linkages for pedestrians between Grove Lane and Cape Hill centre. The pedestrian access across the A457 will be important. The Council will seek to secure the implementation of this and improvements to this linkage through Planning Obligations.

The A457/A4092 acts as a major bus corridor to the south and west of the site. Four different routes the 80,82,87 and 88 run west from Birmingham to West Bromwich, Bearwood, Oldbury and Blackheath. There is also a limited service operating along Grove Lane/Dudley Road, the 81 and 83. These bus routes operate between Birmingham and Brandhall. It is important that this provision is utilised and therefore, the hospital which will generate a large number of visitors will need to be located as close to Dudley Road as possible. Other measures, such as re-routing, or provision of new services into the site, may also be considered appropriate. Bus stops are already located on Grove Lane and Dudley Road although any changes to these locations, upgrades or additions will be subject to statutory procedures and consultations, and approval by Centro, the operators and highway authority. These would be funded by the Developer.

The site lies within 2km from Smethwick Rolfe Street station, from which trains operate between Birmingham New Street and Wolverhampton at half hourly intervals during the day and evening. The journey to Birmingham New Street takes approximately 6 minutes. The site also lies within 1 km of Handsworth/Booth Street station, from which trams operate between Birmingham Snow Hill and Wolverhampton.

Footways are provided along all highways surrounding the site although any development will need to pay due regard to ease of movement to and through the site which is direct and safe. Route 5 of the National Cycle Network (NCN) lies within 0.5 km to the north of site. This runs along the Birmingham Canal. Cycle parking will be a requirement within the development of the hospital commercial and residential areas. Further guidance is contained within the adopted Supplementary Planning Document on Cycling.

Key Features of the Grove Lane Development Framework

The Development Framework for this site sets out the principal issues for consideration for its future development. Therefore, the following have been identified as the key features of the strategy for the regeneration of this brownfield site and defines the amount, location and type of development envisaged for the site with the key points of consideration.

The key features of the site are;

1. The hospital site is located on the southern part of Grove Lane.
2. The area to the north of the hospital site, between Grove Lane and Cranford Street, has been identified as a site, which could be developed out for B1 uses.
3. The area situated on the south side of Heath Street has been identified for mixed use development for residential, B1 and small scale retail uses.

Hospital Site

It is proposed to locate the hospital within the area identified on Plan 6, the boundaries of which are Grove Lane, Cranford Street, London Street, Grove Street and the Cape Arm canal. The site covers approximately 6.5 hectares. The northern part of the site abuts the Birmingham Canal Cape Arm, which forms part of the Smethwick Summit Conservation Area, a small part of which lies to the North of this site adjoining Cranford Street. It is also designated as a wildlife corridor within Sandwell MBC's Adopted UDP.

Design of the hospital, parking provision and access issues will need to be considered during pre-application discussions, as will the location and orientation of any other development on this site. However, accessibility, a gateway location and good quality design and materials will be key drivers for any future discussions.

The development of the site should make use of the Cape Arm Canal. Canal development can present an opportunity to give an interest or focus to all development schemes. Proposals for development along side the canal must exhibit high quality of design and materials and the design statement must show how the proposals enable the movement of species and make a positive contribution to the environment. Where appropriate the enhancement of the canal and its setting will be secured through a S106 Agreement.

It is proposed to access the hospital from both Grove Lane and Cranford Street. Access from Grove Lane would be the main entrance into the site for staff, visitors and emergency vehicles, although access may also be required for emergency and service vehicles from Cranford Street. There may be the requirement for traffic signalisation, the details of which will be determined through future discussions with the Highways Authority as the scheme develops.

There will need to be clear access to the main hospital entrance for pedestrians and cyclists with direct and signed routes from the major public transport routes. Facilities for dedicated patient transport drop-off points and public transport facilities, if appropriate, will also need to be provided in an easily accessible location as well as the provision of cycle stands.

Business and Residential Development

The Grove Lane area is located in an established urban area, with local facilities and good public transport provision providing a high density development. Two sites within the Grove Lane area have been identified for mixed use residential and B1 development.

1. Grove Lane and Cranford Street (B1 Uses)
2. Abberley Street and Dugdale Street (Mixed Use)

Due to the area at the north being flanked by two busy roads, it seems appropriate to identify this area for B1 uses only. This will contribute to the employment land required in this particular area, but will be higher quality in terms of design and materials to attract further investment on this prime site adjacent to the strategic highway network. The site is fairly narrow, especially at the most northern point and would not, therefore be of sufficient depth to accommodate residential development and achieve a satisfactory living environment.

The land overlooking Moillett Street Open Space, off Abberley Street and Dugdale Street, has been identified for B1 and residential uses. Providing a more active frontage to the park will help to create an improved residential environment and provide natural surveillance to the open space which is presently underused.

This part of the site could accommodate up to 108 dwellings of mixed type and tenure. Whilst B1 uses would be acceptable at ground floor, apartments may be acceptable above B1 uses off Halberton Street where two, three or four storeys would be acceptable.

Family housing could be accommodated on Abberley Street. It may be appropriate to have three storey development in places where it will not be overlooked by adjoining development otherwise a range of 2 and 2.5 storey development could contribute to the demand for housing in the Smethwick area.

Affordable housing will be required of up to 25% of the total across the site which based on the above figure of 108, will equate to 27 units. Should the density of development increase, the figure for affordable housing will increase accordingly. Demand at present is for 2 and 4+ bed family houses, although the results of the emerging Housing Needs and Demands Survey may alter in due course. Discussions will be required with Housing Strategy to determine the tenure of the affordable housing which is currently split between rented, shared ownership and low-cost home ownership. The provision of affordable housing will be required unless it can be proved that abnormal costs will make the scheme unviable as set out in the Adopted SPD and accompanying paper.

The development sites will display a diverse density, created to ensure identifiable and distinctive areas within the area and to enable a mix of building types to meet differing housing needs.

The highest density areas are appropriately concentrated on the Dugdale Street area, being located close to the public transport corridor. Policy T3 - Public Transport Accessibility and Location, states that development that could generate high levels of public transport usage will be directed to land within 400 metres of quality public transport interchanges. Residential development within 400 metre radius of a bus service (with at least 10 minute frequency during peak times) will be expected to be at a minimum density of 50 units per hectare.

Any new development will need to address the councils key urban design principles and make reference to the Supplementary Planning Guidance on Residential Design. Further issues to consider are detailed later in this framework.

Flood Risk and Drainage

Whilst the site is not identified as being at risk of flooding, the proposed development of a hospital alongside Boundary Brook could become an issue from a sustainability perspective.

Hospitals are considered to have a high vulnerability, and therefore some further investigations are required regarding the Boundary Brook culvert and its current condition and capacity. A detailed flood risk assessment is therefore required.

In accordance with guidance in PPS25 and Environment Agency advice, any planning application for a site which covers an area of, or greater than one hectare will require a Flood Risk Assessment to be carried out and submitted prior to determination.

Unless properly planned, Grove Lane's redevelopment will put a heavy strain on the environment and infrastructure of the area. The Council and partners will work with the Environment Agency to ensure that appropriate measures are taken to manage and minimise the risk of flooding. In bringing the development forward these environmental issues will have to be addressed.

The Council recognises the importance of natural watercourse systems for providing essential drainage, which will be protected when considering any form of development.

Therefore the Council will;

- Endeavour to ensure that adequate foul and surface water provision is available to serve new development and that the ultimate discharge does not cause an environmental problem.
- Ensure that adequate pollution control measures are incorporated into new developments to reduce the risks of pollution.

The Council will promote the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage for the disposal of surface water. Sustainable Urban Drainage is a term used to describe techniques that minimise the quantity of water collected as well as minimising the quantity of water discharge, thus reducing levels of nitrogen dioxide would be expected to be high.

Failure to install adequate oil interceptor facilities or trapped gullies as appropriate on surface water systems serving industrial, highway, residential or commercial schemes can result in pollution as drainage from these areas is discharged into watercourses and canals.

It is essential that the ownership and responsibility for maintenance of every sustainable drainage element is clear, the scope for dispute kept to a minimum and durable, long term accountable arrangements made, such as management companies. These issues should be addressed as part of the FRA. Where the surface water system is provided solely to serve any particular development, the construction and ongoing maintenance costs should be fully funded by the developer. Section 106 Agreements may be appropriate to secure this.

Water and Waste Water

Water policy in England aims to protect both public health and the environment by maintaining and improving the quality of water. In England, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) oversees water policy. The Environment Agency makes sure that these policies are carried out.

Development affecting groundwater should have regard to the advice in the Environment Agency's document "Policy and Practice for the Protection of Groundwater".

Air Quality

The whole of Sandwell Borough has been declared an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). This is due to a detailed assessment showing that the natural air quality objective for annual nitrogen dioxide was exceeded in a number of locations.

The Grove Lane site has not been monitored by the Council for nitrogen dioxide levels, although the site is located alongside a major highway route, levels of nitrogen dioxide would be expected to be high.

Contaminated Land

Due to the long and largely unregulated industrial history of the borough, much of the land is affected in ways that affect its availability for development.

From reviewing historical maps of the Grove Lane area there have been industrial activity since at least the early 19th century. There are no reports of major land contamination in the area, which will prevent the development from taking place.

Urban Design Considerations

Public Realm and Landscaping

The quality of the public realm created by new development proposals is a key consideration in Sandwell. The public realm consists of everything outside the private house and includes highways, footpaths, links, open space, play areas, street furniture and public art.

Consideration must be given to the greening of new development and its future maintenance. New housing developments will be expected to contribute to the amount and maintenance of open space within the borough. This will be either through new provision on larger sites or by means of a commuted sum, secured by S106 Agreements, to improve the quality of existing spaces that are within any walking distance of the proposed development. Generally the latter is more acceptable depending on the scale of development being proposed. Good quality spaces enhance the quality of the residents and reinforce a sense of place.

The design of the public realm must;

- Enable people to have views of connecting places and spaces and where possible provide places for people to stop and enjoy their surroundings.
- Public space and private space should be clearly defined.
- Leftover spaces must be avoided where ownership is unclear or where management is problematic

- Design new developments to provide focal points and sometimes landmarks on key connecting routes, as this helps people find their way around.
- Existing landscape features need to be retained whenever possible. Justification needs to be given where the removal of established features is proposed. For example, topography, buildings or landscape features which lend a particular identity to places.
- Where open space and play space designs are included in new development proposals they must be integrated into the development. Open spaces and play spaces must relate to the context of the area and have safe and easy access. Open space and play spaces must not be pushed to the edge of development proposals where natural surveillance is restricted and ownership becomes confused.
- All routes must be designed so that they are well lit and overlooked by surrounding development.

Massing Strategy - Residential

Massing of development across the site helps add to the sense of place, shaping the urban form, strengthening key routes and adding legibility.

Around the site boundaries, the mass of the proposed development will respect its surroundings. The established areas surrounding the site are predominantly two storey and this will be largely reflected by the new dwellings. However a change in scale will be used occasionally to emphasise important corners and focal buildings. The units along the eastern side of the site over looking Winson Green open space will be 2.5 and 3 storeys providing surveillance while helping to form the space.

The body of the development is to be largely two storey, with strategically located 2.5 and 3 storey buildings emphasising changes in alignment and bounding key spaces. Higher storeys may be acceptable in appropriate locations and within the context of the surrounding buildings.

The Grove Lane site will be designed using a variety of street structures to promote variety throughout the layout. The various structures will link the network of open spaces and enhance the individuality, character and legibility of the public realm.

Vehicular Movement Strategy

The Vehicular Movement strategy is based on the advice of the Urban Design Compendium; By Design; the Manual for Streets and the companion guide to PPG3; By Design: Better places to live.

The masterplan provides for functional and visual integration with the surrounding townscape and existing highway network, the key features are;

- Routes through the residential blocks are aimed at achieving general traffic speeds of 20 mph.
- Controlled vehicular movement by the arrangement of buildings and spaces.
- Routes designed to reinforce the character of the place.
- Minimise the negative impact on the areas through which roads pass.
- A new bus waiting facility incorporated alongside Dudley Road.
- Safe access to the hospital from Grove Lane and Cranford Street.

Walking and Cycling

Walking and cycling are supported within the Grove Lane development providing a sustainable transport option for local trips. Street layout will be designed to reduce traffic speeds and to avoid conflict between different modes of transport, allowing pedestrians and cyclists to co-exist safely.

95% of the site lies within 400m of an existing bus stop, with the majority within a 250m radius. Although it is recognised that actual walking distance may be slightly longer, this development is well located to take advantage of the routes serving Dudley Road/Windmill Lane.

Key walking and cycling features are;

- Footways to be provided alongside all highways within the development sites.
- A foot/cycle only link provided from Dudley Road to the hospital.
- Dwellings and businesses provide a high level of surveillance to foot and cycle paths.
- Provision of cycling facilities as outlined within adopted policy.

Landscape Strategy

The Grove Lane development requires total remodelling of the landscape to provide a suitable site for the hospital, housing and business uses. The development framework provides for a network of hard and soft spaces, which break up the residential block and structure and provide convenient and accessible facilities. The high quality landscape treatment of streets and open spaces throughout the development will help create attractive developments and good living and working environments.

Public, Private and Communal Space

It is important that the role of each space is clear and that the boundaries between different types of space clearly defined.

Public open space is potentially one of a community's greatest assets. The best open spaces are those, which not only cater safely for play, exercise and relaxation, but which also provide an area with a sense of identity and community.

Design has a crucial role to play in delivering and creating a sense of safety and security. A key issue is that of natural surveillance. Streets which are well over looked and which have activity in them throughout the day and evening benefit from presence and surveillance of residents and visitors.

Good planning and design can help by ensuring that;

- Dwellings fronting the street have their principal entrance on to it.
- Windows are designed to maximise overlooking of the street.
- Continuity of frontage and aspect is maintained on corners.
- Blank facades and areas, which are not overlooked are avoided.
- The mix of dwelling types and sizes encourage activity in the street throughout the day and evening.

Car Parking

Where and how cars are parked is crucial to the quality of housing development and to the choices people make in how they travel. The level of parking provision and its location are both equally important.

There are often opportunities to use a combination of dedicated and communal parking, especially in developments where secure communal provision can be made in integral part of the overall site layout. The particular context and requirements of a site can help to furnish an appropriate solution.

In new developments there is much to be said for on street parking but with the 'line of steel' interrupted at intervals. The best design solution to incorporate appropriate levels of car parking within the developments should be sought at pre-application stage.

Car parking to serve the hospital development will be subject to further discussions at pre-application stage. However, there needs to be sufficient, segregated car parking provided to cater for staff and visitors on site, or within the vicinity on an agreed shared arrangement.

Sufficient car parking provision will also need to be provided within the areas to serve the mixed-use development.

The proposed land use changes are shown on Plan 6

Local Policy Sme5 - Cranford Street

The site has been identified as a future residential site with the potential for business (B1) uses to provide a buffer from existing industrial operations. Access will be from Cranford Street which may require improvement arising from development from this and adjoining sites.

The site can accommodate up to 285 dwellings based upon 40 per hectare across the site.

Higher density development should be located closer to Soho Way, with lower density at Heath Street. Appropriate buffer treatment will be necessary.

Affordable housing will be required up to 25% in line with current Adopted policy, in this case this will equate to approximately 71 units.

Regard should be had to incorporation of the Birmingham Canal and the Cape Arm within the development. A contribution may be required for improvements to the towpaths or other enhancement works.

Should open space and play space not be provided on-site, a contribution will be required to enhance nearby facilities. Contributions may also be required for the provision of educational and sporting facilities.

The impact of traffic generation will need to be established and a Transport Assessment submitted as part of any application for development. New transport infrastructure required to mitigate any problems arising from this development will be borne by the Developer.

The general appearance of this area is poor in environmental and visual terms. The office building has been vacant for some time and Atlas Metals and other industrial uses in the vicinity has attracted little, if any, investment in recent years. The total site area is approximately 7.08 ha.

The identified use for this site is residential. Business B1 uses may also be appropriate on part of the site to create a buffer from adjoining industrial premises. The site is capable of being developed in two phases with the site currently occupied by Atlas Metals, Atlas House and the coach company coming forward in the first phase. The second phase, incorporating Heartlands Furniture site may be developed at a later date. Either way, the canal arm should be included within the development and an active frontage should be created on the canalside.

Supplementary Information

This site lies to the north of Cranford Street and to the south of the rail line and comprises a number of uses including scrap metal premises, small industrial workshops, coach parking storage and vacant office buildings. The Canal arm bisects the site north to south.

The site could accommodate up to 285 dwellings based on 40 per hectare. Appropriate buffers will be required to the north, adjacent to the existing industrial uses, and also to the west, adjacent to Alma Street. There should be a high standard of quality in terms of design and materials, and reference should be made to the Supplementary Planning Guidance on Residential Design. Higher density could be accommodated close to Soho Way, with the potential for some apartment living. The remainder of the site should incorporate housing suitable to accommodate families.

Affordable housing will also be a requirement for this site. According to the latest information available, there is a need for 2 bed and 4+ bed houses in Smethwick. However, an updated Housing Needs and Demands Survey is currently being undertaken therefore the make-up of the type and tenure of properties will be informed by this emerging information. Affordable housing will be expected up to 25% of the total units, which in this case equates to 71 units.

Accessibility to the site will need to be from Cranford Street which is general through route from Smethwick into Birmingham and may, therefore, require improvement with any new redevelopment. General urban design principles will be adopted as set out in the Unitary Development Plan and any other relevant adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance. Incorporation of the provision of acceptable and useable open space to improve the environmental quality of the area will be encouraged. It may be necessary to request a contribution for educational provision arising out of any residential development on this site.

*The proposed land use changes are shown on **Plan 7***

**Local Policy Sme6 -
Black Patch Park**

The primary allocation for this site is Open Space to retain its use as Black Patch Park.

Supplementary Information

This site is the northern and eastern part of the original Black Patch Park which has Foundry Lane to the south and west and Woodburn Road to the north. The area north of Kitchener Street once accommodated Merry Hill Infant School and terraced housing, both of which were demolished many years ago. The area is surrounded by trees and other vegetation, and Hockley Brook runs through the park dissecting it into three parts. To the east are Merry Hill Allotments, which are popular, especially with the Birmingham residents just over the border. Avery Weigh Tronix occupy a large site to the west of the Park, which also includes the Listed Soho Foundry, as well as a number of other Listed structures. The total site area is 3.31 ha.

This area of the park was previously allocated for industrial use in the Adopted Unitary Development Plan with the intention that its future could accommodate a Technology Park. However, this has not come to fruition, and recent studies have established there is no need at the present time for industrial land in this area, nor the prospect of delivery.

The surrounding area is poor in environmental terms, in both quality and visually. Within the vicinity there are a number of scrapyards and other industrial processes which have led to the degradation of this area. Over the last couple of years, the Local Authority has taken the decision to demolish blocks of unfit housing occupying land to the south of the park, leaving just a pocket of housing and a hostel, currently owned by Focus. These properties are fairly isolated since there are no local facilities or services which make up a sustainable community.

A community centre exists on the main park area to the south although this is no longer open and its future uncertain. Rail lines to the north and south of the park act as severance points to the residential community located within Birmingham and there is evidence of fly-tipping throughout the whole of this area.

The Green Space Audit of March 2006 rated Black Patch Park as High Quality and a High Value site. The retention of the Park will provide a place for people to walk, relax and play, whether from the existing housing at Foundry Lane, the employees of the local businesses or from the nearby residential areas in Birmingham. Should development be forthcoming on the other sites allocated within the Smethwick Area Action Plan, this open space will act as a green focal point for those developments and break up an otherwise densely developed area.

The High Probability Flood Zone within the catchment of the Hockley Brook river system affects this site. The problems with flooding are minor given that the proposals are for open space which is classed as water compatible in line with PPS25. A detailed flood risk assessment should be prepared to identify any mitigation measures required to control the likelihood of flooding. It is also advised that there should be no raising of ground levels within this area as this could off set the risk onto third party land.

Future enhancement may be considered in consultation with local stakeholders, Friends of Black Patch Park and other interested parties. However, every effort should be made to protect and enhance the biodiversity of the site.

*The proposed land use changes are shown on **Plan 8***

Local Policy Sme7 - Foundry Lane

This site is allocated for Employment uses (Light Industrial/B1 uses) which may include associated office development.

Large scale or stand-alone offices will not be **permitted**.

Supplementary Information

This is an area of cleared land which once contained Local Authority Maisonettes, leased by Focus Housing. They were demolished during 2005. The site also contains an enclave of houses and a hostel, currently owned by Focus and cleared land flanking Kitchener Street which previously was terraced housing. The total site area is 2.69 ha.

Part of the site adjoins Avery Weigh Tronix with Black Patch Park to the north. Uses to the south of the site include a number of industrial units, a Social Club and a small area of woodland which helps to provide a buffer from these bad neighbour uses.

Development of this area for light industrial uses will aid the provision of employment land in this particular part of the Borough. This will also complement the uses proposed to the north and change the environmental character of the area from general to light industrial. It will provide an area suitable for relocated businesses as a result of other proposals coming forward on alternative sites within the Plan.

A Transport Assessment will need to be carried out to establish the effect on the existing strategic highway network and surrounding roads and to identify any improvements necessary.

New development will require to be high quality in design and materials to raise the profile of this area. As Kitchener Street currently bisects the site, it may be necessary to stop up the road to ensure a more comprehensive development is achieved. Traffic will be re-routed around Perrott Street and Woodburn Road.

The High Probability Flood Zone within the catchment of the Hockley Brook river system affects this site. A detailed flood risk assessment should be prepared to identify any mitigation measures required to control the likelihood of flooding. It is also advised that there should be no raising of ground levels within this area as this could off set the risk onto third party land.

*The proposed land use changes are shown on **Plan 8***

Local Policy Sme8 - Soho Foundry

This is a mixed use allocation, primarily industrial (B1 uses) but with potential to include elements of Community, Leisure and Educational uses.

Any development must have due regard to Soho Foundry, a Grade II* Listed Building as well as other Listed Structures within the site.

Access to the site, for Avery Weigh Tronix and other uses, will initially be off Foundry Lane. Future access may be possible off Rabone Lane.

Supplementary Information

This is primarily the site of Avery Weigh Tronix which contains the historic Soho Foundry. The Foundry is in a poor state of repair and is currently on English Heritage's Buildings At Risk Register. Funding has been applied for in order to make the Foundry weather-tight whilst an appropriate re-use is found for this Listed building. This is the subject of further studies, yet to be undertaken.

Avery Weigh Tronix operates from the remainder of this site. It may be possible that in the future, relocation of part or all of this operation will release some of the land for redevelopment. An area of woodland to the south has also been included. It is essential that the site be dealt with as a whole to ensure that any short term development can be sustained, as well as considering the longer term vision that a more comprehensive scheme can achieve.

One of the main disadvantages to this site is its close proximity to Dunn's scrapyards, an established business which has recently expanded further. The presence of this operation immediately adjacent to this site conveys a poor image for the area, is visually unattractive and prevents private investment for the rest of the area being forthcoming. The total site area is approximately 8.91 ha.

The strategy for this site is to enable the continuation of the existing employment use on the site, albeit possibly reduced in size, and to promote the remainder of the site for good quality employment use. There is also the potential for additional community, leisure and educational uses to establish on the site in the future with the re-use of Soho Foundry. Development of this site will also promote more usage of the canalside which may necessitate a commuted sum for improvement to the canal infrastructure.

The mixed use allocation has been extended onto land currently occupied by Dunn's to enable a more comprehensive development to come forward should this use relocate in the future. The allocation for B1 uses only will remove heavy industrial operations on this prominent site, and therefore improve the environmental quality of the area. However, this is still subject to the preparation of costed options to ensure its feasibility. The area of woodland may be kept in part to ensure an appropriate buffer is created between new employment uses and the rail line.

A Mixed Use allocation will enable a flexible approach to be taken with this site, enabling B1 Industrial use to be continued as well as facilitating other uses, compatible with the employment use, to be introduced. This is especially relevant to the Soho Foundry building once studies have been completed and a potential future use established. Some Community and/or Leisure uses may be considered appropriate for the building as well as educational facilities to highlight the importance of the historic site and buildings and to act as a catalyst for future development.

In addition to the Soho Foundry which is a Grade II* Listed Building, there are other Listed structures within the site, such as the Office Row at the entrance which will need to be preserved as part of any redevelopment. Other sites of archaeological remains may also be present and a study will be required prior to development commencing.

Recycling uses will not be permitted within the boundaries of this site. They are more appropriate to a general industrial area and will only be permitted if contained within appropriate buildings to prevent further deterioration of the quality of the area.

The design of any new buildings within this site should be of a high quality and in line with the Key Urban Design Principles of the Unitary Development Plan and other supplementary planning guidance. Regard should be had to ensuring that new development pays particular attention to materials, landscaping, safety and security issues, pollution and noise control and the environmental impact on the surrounding area, including any wildlife habitats.

Proposals for development will require the submission of a Transport Assessment to identify potential problems with accessibility and establish appropriate mitigation measures. There may be a need for highway works to improve the transport infrastructure in this area and to improve access to the site. The cost of which will need to be borne by the Developer.

The area currently has inadequate public transport access, a limited bus service runs throughout the week and Booth Street Metro Stop is a short walk from the site. The promotion of additional businesses into the area will require additional public transport provision and will necessitate discussions with public transport providers.

The High Probability Flood Zone within the catchment of the Hockley Brook river system affects this site. A detailed flood risk assessment should be prepared to identify any mitigation measures required to control the likelihood of flooding. It is also advised that there should be no raising of ground levels within this area as this could off set the risk onto third party land.

*The proposed land use changes are shown on **Plan 8**.*

9. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

9.1 The implementation of the various proposals outlined in this AAP will depend upon a number of factors. Not all of the proposals are to be delivered by the local authority, in fact, the majority are reliant upon a significant amount of private investment into the area. However, the delivery vehicle for these proposals to be brought to fruition is a combination of a number of agencies such as Regenco, Urban Living, Advantage West Midlands and English Partnerships, who, working in partnership with the local authority, will steer investment to the most appropriate areas.

Brindley II

9.2 As a site which already benefits from an allocation within the Unitary Development Plan, development of this site is not reliant on the adoption of the AAP and can come forward at any time. A Planning and Design Brief has been adopted by the Local Authority as Supplementary Planning Document, which provides guidance on the expectations with regard to layout and design of the site for primarily residential purposes. The Local Authority has been working with a number of agencies in order to bring forward this prime development site which will kickstart the regeneration of the North Smethwick Canalside. However, due to constraints on the site, it is envisaged that a substantial amount of gap funding will be required in order to commence development in conjunction with an appropriate development partner to fund potential compulsory purchase acquisitions if necessary.

9.3 The lead on this development has been taken by a joint agency of Advantage West Midlands and Langtree Group, known as PXP. Submission of a planning application is expected to be in the early part of 2008. Should permission be granted within 3 months, the first phase of remediation can commence approximately April 2008 and construction commence in approximately October 2008.

Rolfe Street/Rabone Lane

9.4 This area of the Plan has been the subject of multi agency working in order to develop a planning framework which will set the principles of its future regeneration. Working in conjunction with the local authority, Regenco, English Partnerships, Advantage West Midlands and British Waterways have developed a planning framework which forms the basis of this AAP allocation which looks at the long term viability of the area in transforming the land use from primarily industrial, to that of a residential mixed-use scheme. Further work on design, movement and the public realm will aid developers in bringing forward appropriate schemes. However, the implementation of any proposals will be by the consideration of schemes put forward by the private sector for the most part, which are in line with the main principles of the framework and with any additional or supplementary guidance relevant to this site, such as that relating to urban design, for example. There are also Planning Briefs prepared for some of the local authority sites which will need to be referred to.

9.5 Constraints on redevelopment include the number of ownerships present in this area which may lead to the need for compulsory purchase acquisition being implemented. It is estimated that, subject to funding from partner agencies, more detailed proposals could be brought forward on a phased approach for parts of the site. However, it is envisaged that construction may commence in late 2009/2010, with a total transformation in land use taking place over a period of the next 5 to 10 years.

Grove Lane

- 9.6 Following research work undertaken on behalf of the NHS in developing their Towards 2010 Agenda, it has been decided that the optimum site for a new acute hospital facility is within the Grove Lane area. Dependent upon the actual positioning of the hospital building itself, it may be possible to include some of the land for alternative uses such as B1, and residential development such as key worker accommodation. Whilst a number of the properties within the area are under-used or vacant, there are industries still operating which will require relocation. The area is also a consideration zone for the Health and Safety Executive because of a licence held by one of these businesses. This issue will need to be resolved prior to any development being commenced. Consultation on the Towards 2010 agenda finished in mid-February, and it is anticipated that a planning application could be submitted early in 2008. Construction of the hospital site will commence in the later part of 2011, with a practical completion of the scheme by early 2014.

In tandem with this, the remainder of the site has been allocated for a mixture of B1 and residential uses. This development is likely to be steered by PXP, working in partnership with the Council and housebuilders to bring forward comprehensive development for the areas to the north and east of the site. This timescale will need to be in parallel with that of the hospital to ensure that the conditions are right, and comprehensive development is achieved. This will also aid in assessing how all the developments can work together to regenerate the whole of the site.

Windmill Eye

- 9.7 The phasing of development for the Windmill Eye area is dependent upon further research work being undertaken in the form of a Housing Output Study. This will identify and clarify a number of issues such as, assessment of the condition and quality of homes and their environment in both public and private ownership and to establish the housing needs to ascertain the type and tenure of housing requirements with relation to the demographic make-up of the area now, and with regards future migration or other interventions in the wider area.
- 9.8 Sites to the north of the area, being cleared and council owned, are likely to come forward as the first phase. Planning and Development Briefs prepared for these sites will need to be referred to for any future development. It is anticipated that development could come forward by 2008 on the first phase. The next stage of clearance could commence in 2010/11.

Soho Park

- 9.9 As previously mentioned, the Soho Park area is subject to a number of constraints. Some of the land is within Council ownership, although the majority is privately owned. There are a number of bad neighbour uses which need to be relocated before private investment will be forthcoming. The area's regeneration is also dependent upon the future re-use of the Soho Foundry and the success of the applications for Heritage Lottery Funding. This has been progressed through multi agency working by Sandwell MBC, Regenco and Advantage West Midlands as well as other partners.

- 9.10 Due to the many constraints and the uncertainty of the Foundry's future use being established, it is not anticipated that the wider area will be attractive to developers for the short or medium term. The proposals outlined in the Area Action Plan reflect the most appropriate uses for this area which meets the RSS and local objectives of providing appropriate levels of employment land. It is not considered appropriate for residential development in this area due to the severe lack of facilities and services to ensure a sustainable and quality living environment. Any residential development proposed for this area will be in the very long term, beyond the timescale of this AAP, and only be considered acceptable if other social infrastructure is put in place first or in conjunction with the new development.
- 9.11 A clear strategy for the relocation of some operations will inform better the timescale to be achieved. However, it is likely that some elements of these proposals could be progressed as early as 2009, although it is not anticipated that implementation of the larger proposals will take place until at least 2010.
- 9.12 As mentioned previously, the proposals require commitment and investment from a number of different agencies and mechanisms to bring them to fruition. An indicative timeframe for implementation has been prepared based on information available from development partners which is indicative and subject to change. Many of the proposals rely on effective partnership working and there will inevitably be a number of factors which are uncertain, and beyond the control of the local authority. The proposals are summarised in Table 1, with an indicative timeframe shown in Table 2.

Table 1: Implementation Summary Table

AAP Local Policy	Responsibility for implementation	Implementation mechanisms	Implementation funding	Land issues	Phasing Issues	Target phasing timescales
Sme1- Rolfe Street	The Council, private landowners and developers, Regenco, AWM and English Partnerships. Potential Urban Living involvement.	Planning Framework adopted as SPD Planning Applications	Private development. English Partnerships/AWM	Land in many ownerships, some requiring relocation. Future of Enterprise Centre still under discussion.	Commencement of Phase 1 (2010/11) dependent upon relocation. Some sites may have already been developed prior to Adoption of AAP. Possible remediation problems.	Phase 1 (2010/11) Phase 2 (2012/13)
Sme2 - Rabone Lane	The Council, private landowners and developers, Regenco, AWM and English Partnerships	Planning Framework adopted as SPD Planning Applications	Private development. English Partnerships/AWM	Land in many ownerships, some requiring relocation.	Relocation/ rehousing required prior to redevelopment.	2013-2015

Sme3 - Windmill Eye	Council, Urban Living, English Partnerships, Private developers	Completion of Housing Product Study will trigger Planning and Development Briefs/Masterplanning to be adopted as SPD. Planning Applications	Private development, Urban Living, English Partnerships	Subject to decanting of existing residents.	Second phase for clearance and redevelopment linked to completion of initial phase. Timing of development of College site linked to their relocation to alternative premises in West Bromwich.	2009-2016
Sme4 - Grove Lane	The NHS Trust and PXP. The Council indirectly through CPO powers	Planning Applications for Development in line with Planning Framework and following potential CPO by Council.	NHS Trust PXP Private Development	Timescales for CPO to be in line with NHS Trust application for Outline Business Case for PFI. Possible 'hot spots' requiring further remediation.	Initial phase (2011) subject to timescales being achieved for CPO/ PFI bid and relocation of existing businesses.	2011-2015
Sme5 - Cranford Street	Private Developer	Planning application/ Masterplan	Private Development	Subject to relocation of existing businesses.	Initial phase likely to be dependent upon relocation site for existing occupants.	2008-2013

Sme6 - Black Patch Park	The Council as landowner	Plan of works developed by SMBC in consultation with local interested parties	Planning Gains contributions or Council Main Programme	None	None	2009-2011
Sme7 - Foundry Lane	Private Developer	Planning Brief and planning application	Private developer	None	None	2008-2010
Sme8 - Soho Foundry	Private Developer, AWM, Regenco	AAP proposal and Masterplan	Private Developer, AWM	Subject to relocation of Avery Weigh Tronix	First phase subject to relocation of AWT. Second phase including Foundry, subject to funding.	2010-2012

Table 2: Indicative Implementation Timeframe**Sme1 - Rolfe Street**

Relocation of existing businesses on north Rolfe Street	2010
Submission of planning application for Former Baths site	2010
Submission of planning application for North Rolfe Street	2010
Redevelopment of north Rolfe Street sites	2011
Submission of planning application for Engine Arm site	2011
Construction commences on former Baths site	2011
Possible Relocation of Enterprise Centre (part)	2012
Commencement of development of Engine Arm site	2012
Completion of north Rolfe Street	2013
Completion of former Baths site	2014
Completion of Engine Arm site	2014

Sme2 - Rabone Lane

Relocation of existing businesses on Rabone Lane	2012
Submission of planning applications for development	2013
Development commences	2013
Development completed	2014

Sme3- Windmill Lane

Completion of Housing Product Study	2007
Commencement of Planning and Design Briefs (SPD)	2008
Marketing of sites off Messenger Road	2008
Planning applications submitted for Messenger Road	2009
Marketing of sites off Windmill Lane	2009
Planning application for Sandwell College site	2009
Planning applications submitted for Windmill Lane	2010
Relocation of Sandwell College to West Bromwich	2010
Future clearance of intervention sites	2011
Redevelopment of College site	2011

Sme4 - Grove Lane

Agreement of Collaboration Agreement	2007
Outline Planning Application submitted	2008
Outline Planning Application approved	2008
Trust Outline Business Case submitted	2008
Private Sector Planning Application submitted	2008
Private Sector Planning Application approved	2008
PFI Preparation	2008
CPO made	2009
CPO Inquiry	2009
Hospital Development Commences	2011
Hospital development completed	2014

Sme5 - Cranford Street

Planning application submitted	2008
Relocation of existing occupants	2008
Planning application approved	2008
Remediation of site	2009
Commencement on site	2010
Completion	2013

Sme6 - Black Patch Park

Enhancement of park/improvements 2009

Sme7 - Foundry Lane

Planning Brief prepared 2007
Marketing of site 2008
Planning application submitted 2008
Planning application approved 2008
Development commences 2009
Development completed 2010

Sme8 - Soho Foundry

Soho Park Masterplan completed 2007
Avery Weigh Tronix decision in principal to redevelop 2007
Further funding application to AWM 2008
Planning application submitted 2010
Planning application approved 2010
Development commences on AWT site 2010
Foundry options considered 2012

- 9.13 There are a number of risks attached to all of the above schemes, not least of all is the effective collaborative working of all the partners involved, including the Council, Regenco, Urban Living, Advantage West Midlands, English Partnerships and British Waterways. The schemes are dependent upon major investment being forthcoming from the private sector, at an appropriate time within the plan process for the developments to be considered within a sound planning framework and not to be considered premature.
- 9.14 With regard the new acute hospital facility, the timescales for the plan preparation and the Outline Business Case for the PFI led scheme need to work in tandem to ensure that the facility can be delivered on time and without needless delay. The adjoining development for B1 and residential will also need to be developed alongside these timelines to ensure total regeneration is achieved. Development to the north of Cranford Street will be reliant upon a new site being considered for relocation of the existing businesses and appropriate remediation being carried out.

9.15 There is risk associated with the intervention areas identified within Policy Sme3 for Windmill Eye in that there will need to be considerable development including affordable housing on the vacant sites prior to the next phases being implemented as an element of decanting will be required before clearance can be undertaken. The college site is reliant upon new development in West Bromwich being developed within the set timescale, and will also have to pay particular attention to design detail in incorporating the Listed Building within the new development.

9.16 Whilst the re-use of Soho Foundry is more of a long term project, there is little risk associated with the development of the adjacent site, dependent upon the reorganisation of land associated with Avery Weigh Tronix. Proposal site Sme7 can be brought forward for development through the sale of the site to a private development company. The enhancement of the park may be at risk of not coming forward as it will rely heavily on funding from the councils main programme.

Monitoring

9.17 The Local Authority is now required, under Section 48 of the Town and Country Planning Regulations, to monitor the effects of planning policies on an annual basis. These include the Policies contained within the Unitary Development Plan, as well as those within the emerging Area Action Plans as part of the Local Development Scheme.

9.18 The policies will be monitored against 27 core output indicators which have been set nationally and cover Housing, Transport, Local Services, Minerals, Waste, Flood Protection, Biodiversity and Renewable Energy. It is anticipated that these will be reviewed from time to time, and that Sandwell will also devise their own output indicators in the future.

9.19 The outputs will monitor many of the issues covered by the Smethwick Area Action Plan, especially with regard to amount of housing land available, demolitions, completions and affordable housing, the amount of employment land available and the amount of development for retail, office and leisure development close to local services. Monitoring of the other indicators will rely upon obtaining the information from the relevant agencies or departments dealing with these direct, or from other sections within the local authority.

9.20 Monitoring of the above issues as part of the AAP process will ensure that the anticipated outputs are achieved, and if necessary, reviewed and altered. It will also enable the risk factors to be assessed and the timescales or milestones altered arising from new information received on the development of the various projects.

9.21 To monitor the implementation of the AAP, a series of indicators have been derived in relation to the plan objectives. These are either Core Output Indicators, or Local Output Indicators, all of which are included in the Annual Monitoring Report.

Strategic Objectives of the AAP

- Encouraging the provision of a range of new, high quality homes to meet local and future needs, including affordable housing.
- The creation of well designed residential developments which provide a choice of housing types to meet the needs of the local community.
- Ensure that the developments have reasonable access to shops, facilities and services as well as accessibility to a choice of sustainable transport options.
- Promote sustainable development principles within new developments
- Provision of appropriate levels of affordable housing to cater for demand.

Indicator (Core/Local Reference)	AAP Target
Projected net additional dwellings up to 2020 (C2a(iii))	2006-2010=0; 2011-2015=600 within sites Sme1, Sme2, Sme3 and Sme5; 2016-2021=865 within sites Sme1, Sme2, Sme3, Sme4 and Sme5.
Percentage of new dwellings completed at: i. less than 30 dwellings per hectare (dph) ii. between 30 and 50 dph iii. above 50 dph. (C2c)	1015 units @ 40 dph within sites Sme1, Sme2, Sme3 and Sme5 in 2011-2015; 250 units @ 40 dph within sites Sme1, Sme2, Sme3, Sme4 and Sme5 in 2016-2021; 150 units at 50 dph within sites Sme1, Sme3, Sme4 and Sme5, in 2016-2021.
Affordable housing completions (C2d)	366 units by 2020. (2006-2010=0; 2011-2015=150 within sites Sme1, Sme2, Sme3 and Sme5; 2016-2021=216 within sites Sme1, Sme2, Sme3, Sme4 and Sme5).
Amount of new residential development within 30 minute public transport time of a GP; a hospital; a primary school; a secondary school; areas of employment; and a major retail centre (C3b)	100%. All AAP sites (1465 units) are within the relevant public transport times, and will be developed by 2021.
Proportion of eligible housing sites providing community open space (L3).	100%. The eligible sites will contribute open space as follows. 2011-2015-4.35ha; 2016-2021-0.52ha Sme1, Sme2, Sme3 Sme4 and Sme5.

- Identifying new employment sites or appropriate relocation sites which will aid local employment opportunities.

- Improve the quality of employment land by introducing new areas for commercial and industrial uses.

- Aid in the relocation process for those businesses displaced by new development but wishing to stay in the area.

- Promote local jobs for local people.

Indicator (Core/Local Reference)	AAP Target
Amount of floorspace developed for employment by type, in employment or regeneration areas (m ²) (C1b)	30,000 m ² . 2011-2015-12,000 m ² . 2016-2021-18,000 m ² .

Amount of employment land lost to residential development (C1f)	Existing Employment land converted to residential=24 hectares. 21.8 ha. (Sme1, Sme2, and Sme5) in 2011-2015; 2.2 ha. (Sme4) in 2016-2021.
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- Evaluate, protect and enhance existing open spaces and green spaces and provide new facilities where there is an identified need.

- Protect and enhance the existing green infrastructure and areas of wildlife interest and biodiversity contained within the area including parks, natural greenspace and the canal corridor

- Ensure an appropriate level of community open space and play space is provided within or near to new developments which link with the wider network of green infrastructure

Indicator (Core/Local Reference)	AAP Target
Amount of land (ha) granted planning permission away from open space use (L32).	0 ha. No open space land to be lost in the AAP area up to 2021.
Proportion of eligible housing sites providing community open space (L3)	100%. The eligible sites will contribute open space as follows. 2011-2015-4.35 ha; 2016-2021-0.52 ha Sme1, Sme2, Sme3, Sme4 and Sme5.

- Improving accessibility for all modes of transport through and within the plan area.

- Promote sustainable transport modes throughout the area which link residential areas with employment and services, especially the new health facility at Grove Lane including public transport and walking.

- Improve links with the cycle network and canal towpaths and promote as more sustainable modes of travel.

- Improve the existing road infrastructure to direct traffic through the area on the most appropriate routes without detriment to the residential areas.

Indicator (Core/Local Reference)	AAP Target
Amount of new residential development within 30 minute public transport time of a GP; a hospital; a primary school; a secondary school; areas of employment; and a major retail centre (C3b)	100%. All AAP sites (1465 units) are within the relevant public transport times, and will be developed by 2021.
Proportion of new development providing cycle parking (L23)	100%. All residential sites will provide cycle parking within the levels in the Adopted SPD.
Bus network coverage (L)	0. No loss of routes serving Smethwick AAP area in plan period to 2021. Increased routes by 25%.

- Ensuring that the social infrastructure, such as education, health and community facilities, is appropriate to serve the existing and proposed communities within the plan area.

- Identify and promote appropriate sites to deliver a whole range of health care options for the area.

- Ensure that appropriate education provision is available within areas of new housing growth to meet future demand

- Promote the dual uses of facilities to act as a hub for community engagement and capitalize on the efficient use of land and facilities.

Indicator (Core/Local Reference)	AAP Target
Amount of new residential development within 30 minute public transport time of a GP; a hospital; a primary school; a secondary school; areas of employment; and a major retail centre (C3b)	100%. All AAP sites (1465 units) are within the relevant public transport times, and will be developed by 2021.

- Protecting and enhancing the historic environment of the Smethwick Area.

- protect and enhance the historic environment, including listed buildings, the Conservation Area incorporating the canal network, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, and

- support the protection and enhancement of existing heritage assets during the development process, and protect further assets which may be discovered during redevelopment.

- Promote the appropriate re-use of buildings of special architectural value especially Soho Foundry and those on the Local List.

Indicator (Core/Local Reference	AAP Target
Percentage of Listed Buildings converted and/or reused within new development (L)	100%. All Listed Buildings will be reused and/or converted up to 2021.
Number of Listed Buildings demolished (L)	0. No listed building to be lost in the AAP area up to 2021.

APPENDIX 1 - RELEVANT UDP POLICIES

- **Policy H3 Windfalls** sets out the considerations to be applied to sites that are not previously identified for housing use;
- **Policy H6 Design of Housing Development** seeks a high standard of design in all new housing developments in line with good design principles;
- **Policy H8 The Relationship between Residential and Industrial Uses** restricts new housing development in locations that could cause adverse impacts to residents in terms of noise, pollution and other associated problems;
- **Policy E1 Key Industrial Allocations** identify the highest quality industrial proposal sites in the borough;
- **Policy E2 Business Zones** identifies those areas of the borough where industrial activity will be focused;
- **Policy E5 Relationship Between Industry and Other Uses** identifies relocation as a means to reduce any harmful impacts from industrial uses on residential areas;
- **Policy E6 Locational Factors** outlines the criteria for locating employment generating uses;
- **Policy T3 Public Transport Accessibility and Location** ensures that any future major development will make provision for public transport access as part of any new road infrastructure;
- **Policy T10 Roads** sets out the criteria for assessing the appropriateness of road improvements or new roads;
- **Policy T17 Transport Assessments, Transport Statements and Travel Plans** establishes the need for proper consideration of the transport impact of new major development proposals, including issues such as parking, modal split and measures to encourage access by non-car means;
- **Policy SRC6 District Centres and Policy SRC 7 Local Centres** seek to safeguard the form and function of these shopping centres, of which two exist in Smethwick;
- **Policy OS5 Community Open Space** sets out the current standards for open space provision across the borough;
- **Policy OS8 Community Open Space in Association with New Housing Development** seeks the provision of sufficient open space to support the needs of people living in new housing developments;
- **Policy UD1 General Urban Design Principles** sets out the framework for achieving high quality design solutions for all new development proposals, and what the Council expects from developers;
- **Policy C1 Conservation** recognises the importance of protecting and, where possible, promote those historic, architectural and archaeological assets within the borough.

SMETHWICK AREA ACTION PLAN

PLAN 1

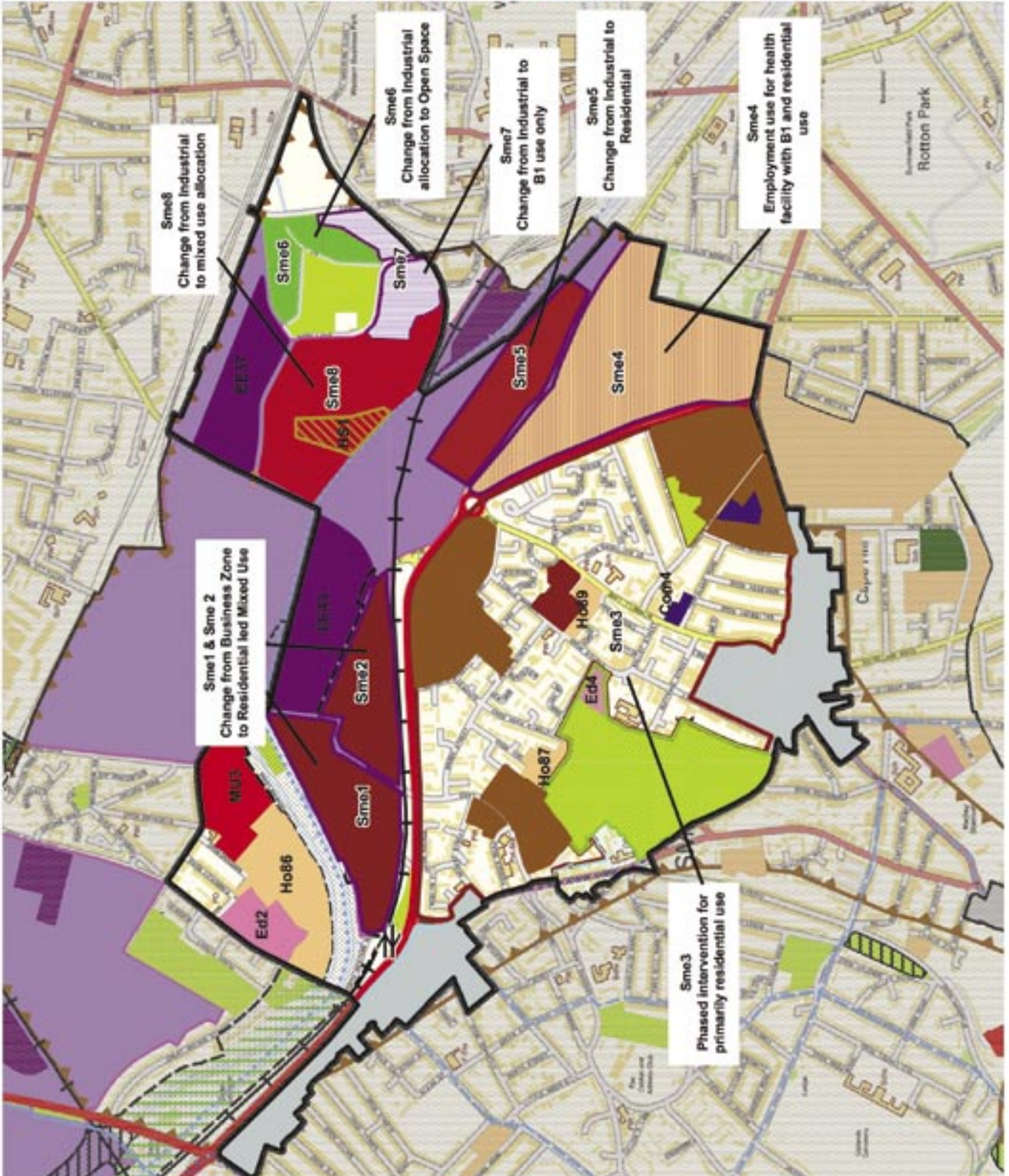
**Unitary Development Plan
Changes to Proposals Map**

- KEY**
- Proposed Business Zones
 - Community Open Space
 - Road Proposals
 - Education Proposals
 - Mixed Use Proposals
 - Community Proposals
 - Industrial Proposals
 - Residential Proposals
 - Residential / B1 Proposals
 - B1 Proposals
 - Employment/Businessland
 - Heritage Site
 - District Centre
 - Local Centre
 - Area of Potential Archaeological Importance
 - Conservation Area
 - Windle Corridor
 - Local Boundary
 - Mains
 - Mains Slope
 - Proposed Mains Route
 - Rail
 - Rail Station
 - National Cycle Network
 - Strategic Highway Network
 - Proposed Bus Stop/Bus Route
 - Borough Boundary

This address numbers on the proposals map relate to proposals not shown.

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SMETHWICK AREA ACTION PLAN

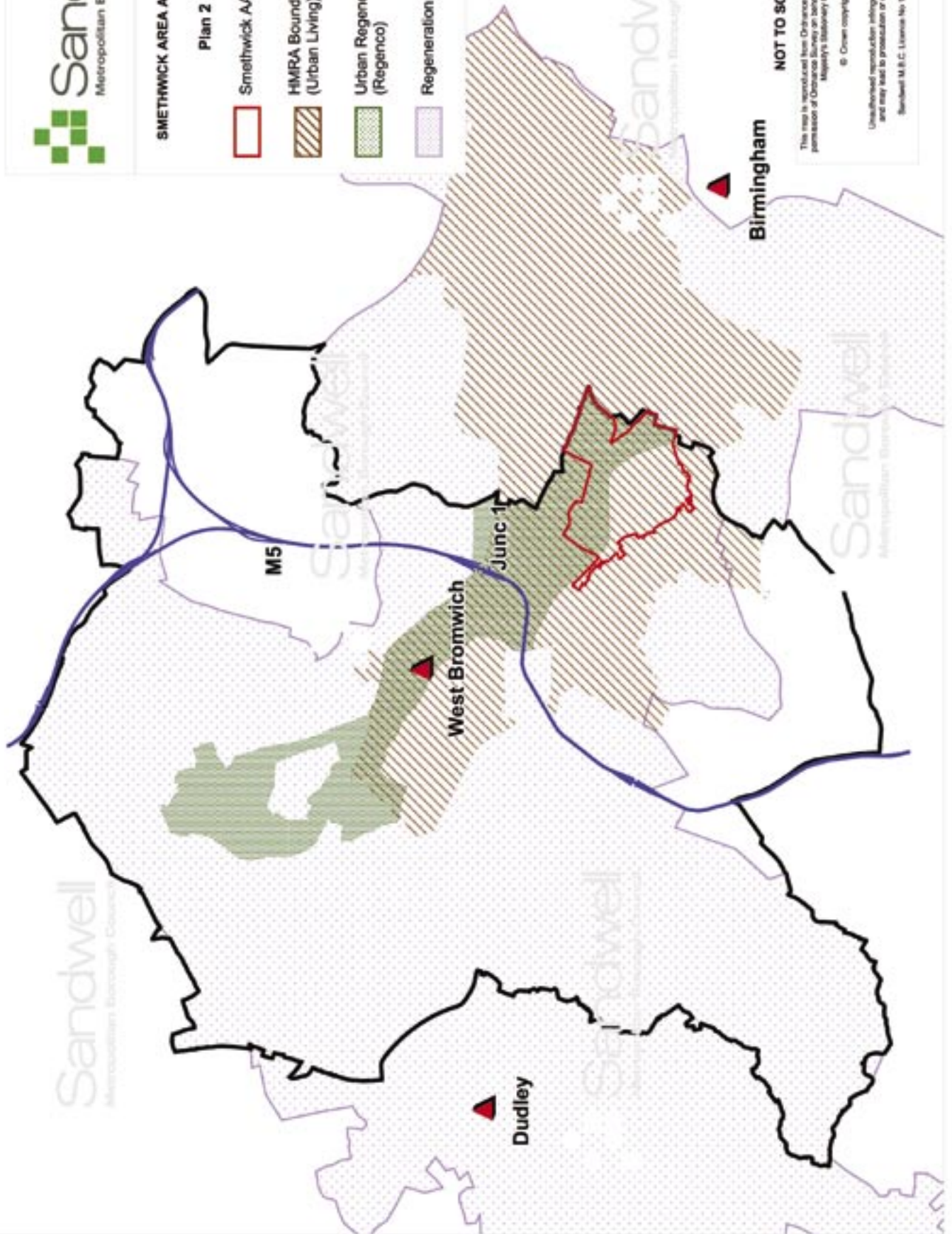
Plan 2

 Smethwick AAP

 HMRA Boundary (Urban Living)

 Urban Regeneration Company (Regenco)

 Regeneration Zone



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SMETHWICK AREA ACTION PLAN

Plan 3

Area Action Plan Boundary

Scale: Not to Scale

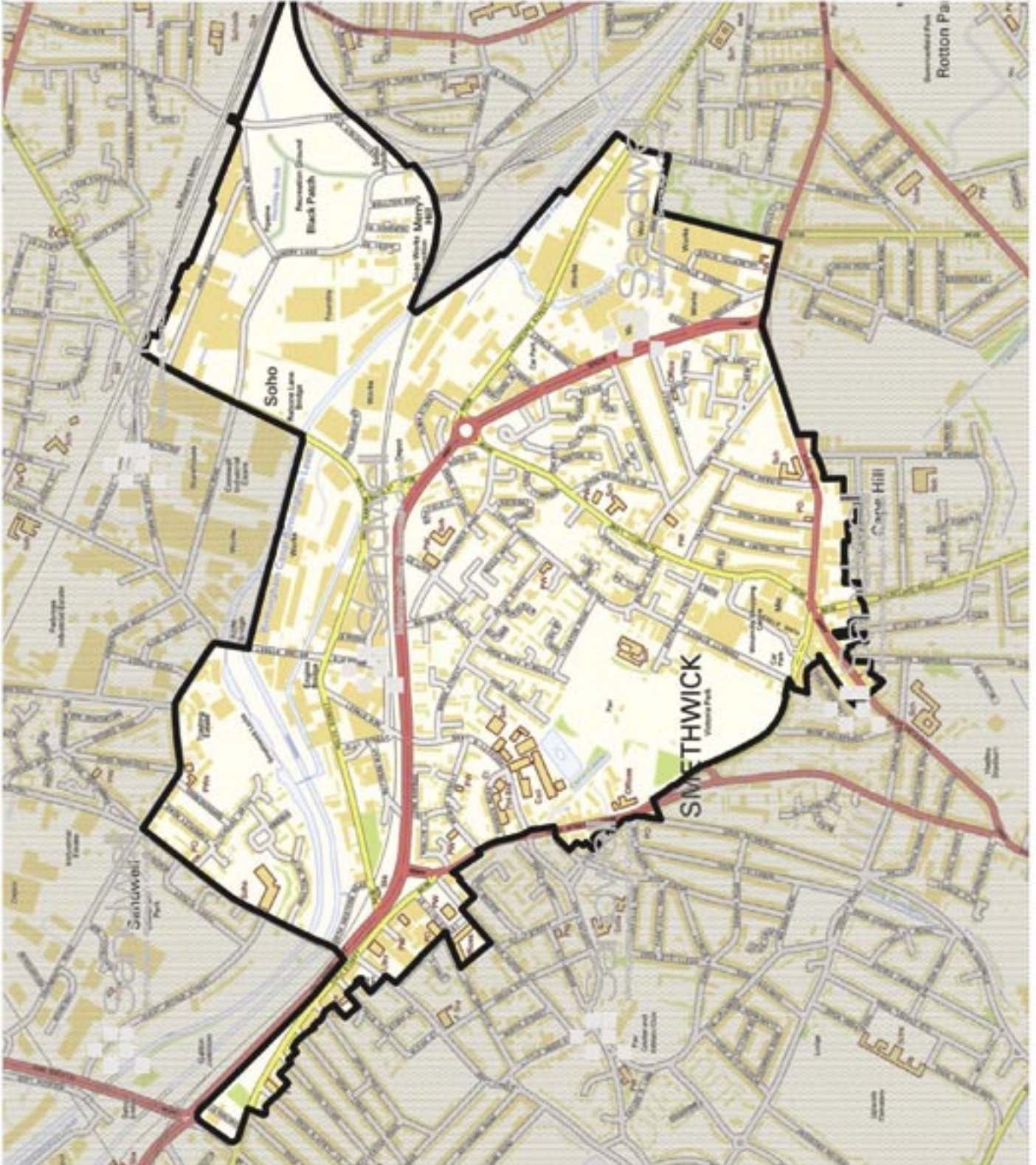


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 Area Action Plan Boundary

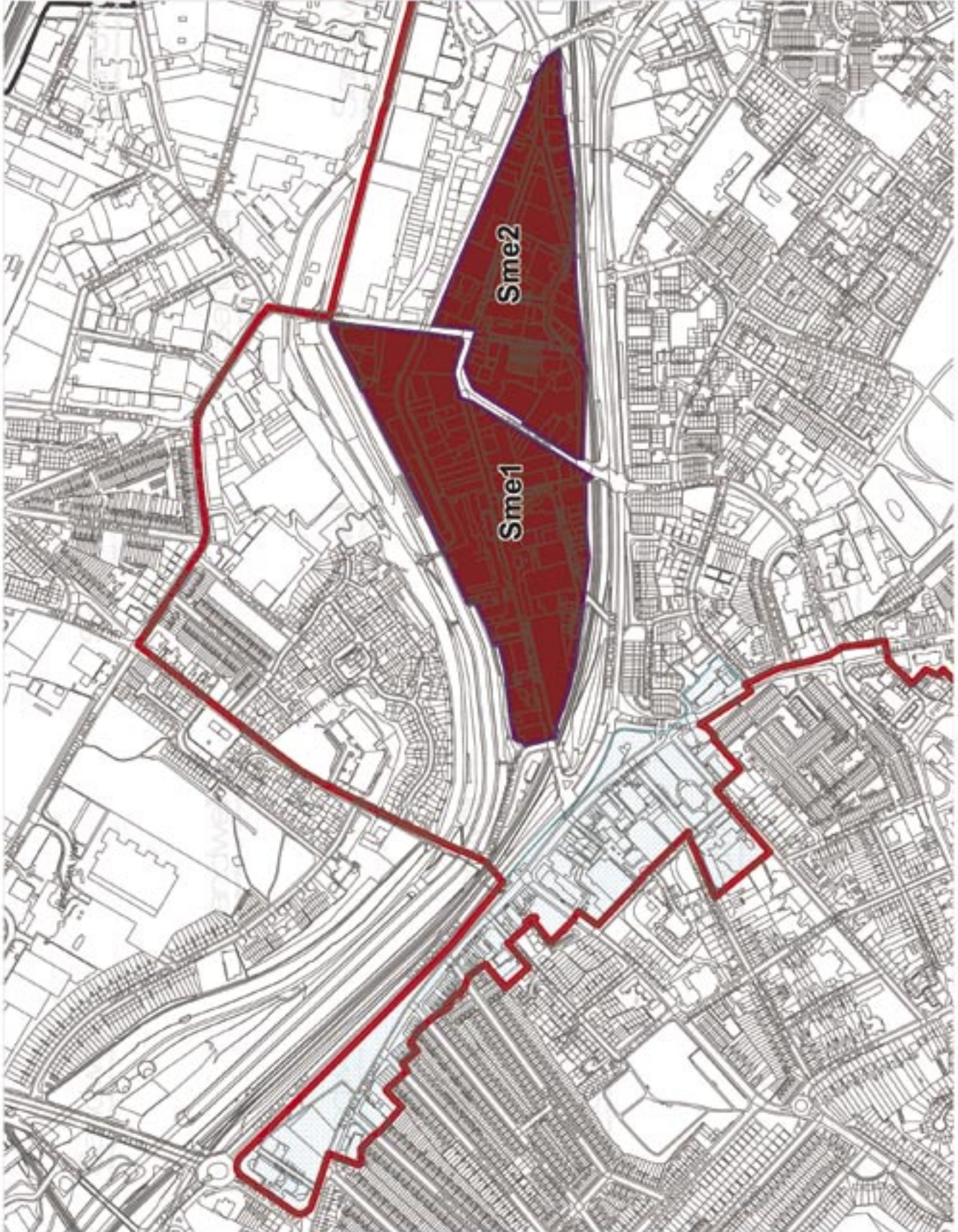
 Mixed Use
(Primary Residential with
Commercial/Limited Retail
ancillary uses)






 Town, District and Local
Centres

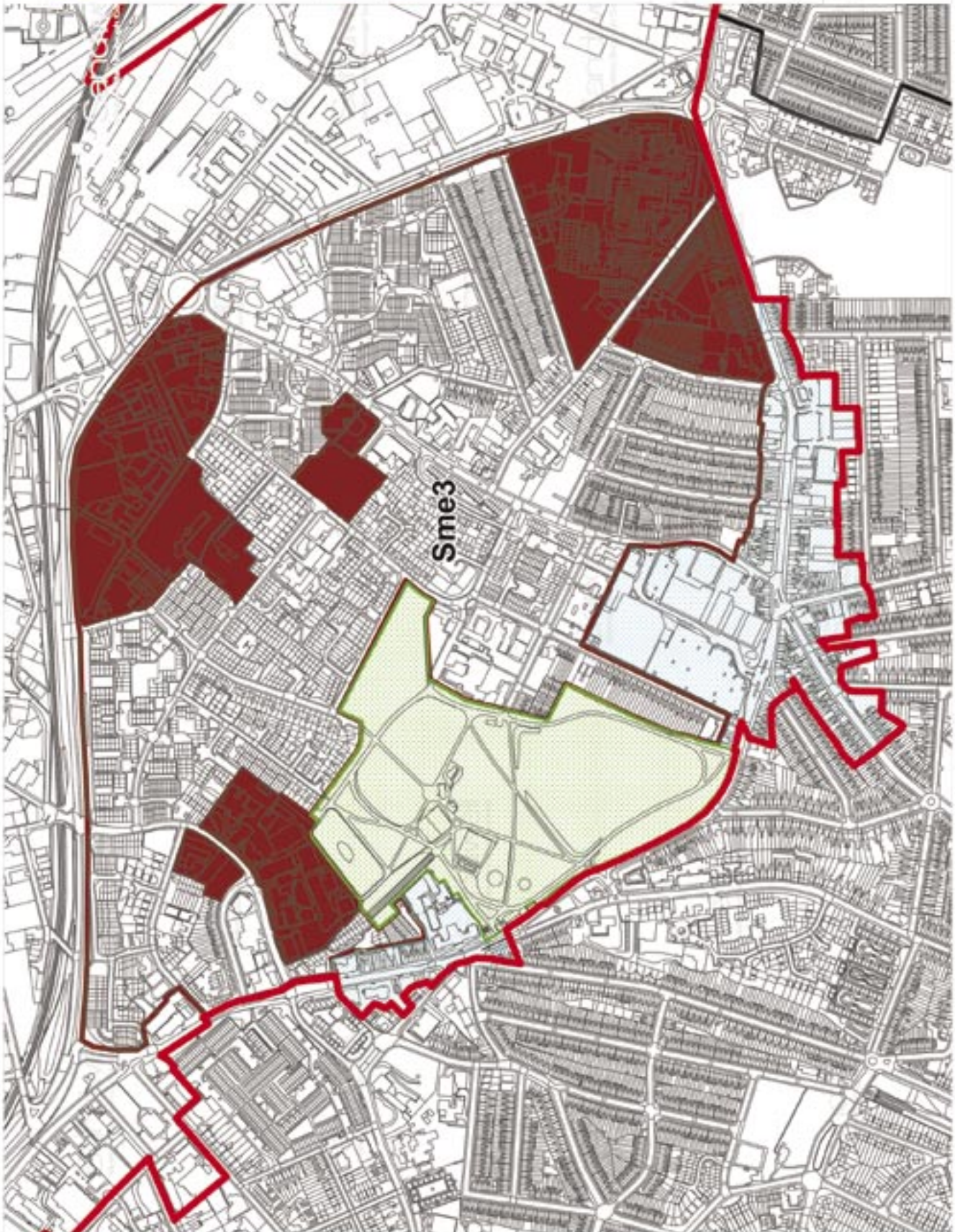
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-  Area Action Plan Boundary
-  Windmill Eye Boundary
-  Areas of Future Intervention
-  Town, District and Local Centres
-  Greenspace allocations



SMETHWICK AREA ACTION PLAN

PLAN 6

- Hospital Site
- Mixed Use Development
- Residential Development
- B1 Development
- ★ Key Landmark Building
- ⋈ Key Active Frontages
- ~ Environmental Improvements
- Conservation Area
- Wildlife Corridor
- ↻ Major Gateways
- ↻ Key Gateways and Nodes
- ⋈ Improvements to the public realm for pedestrian users

Scale : Not to Scale

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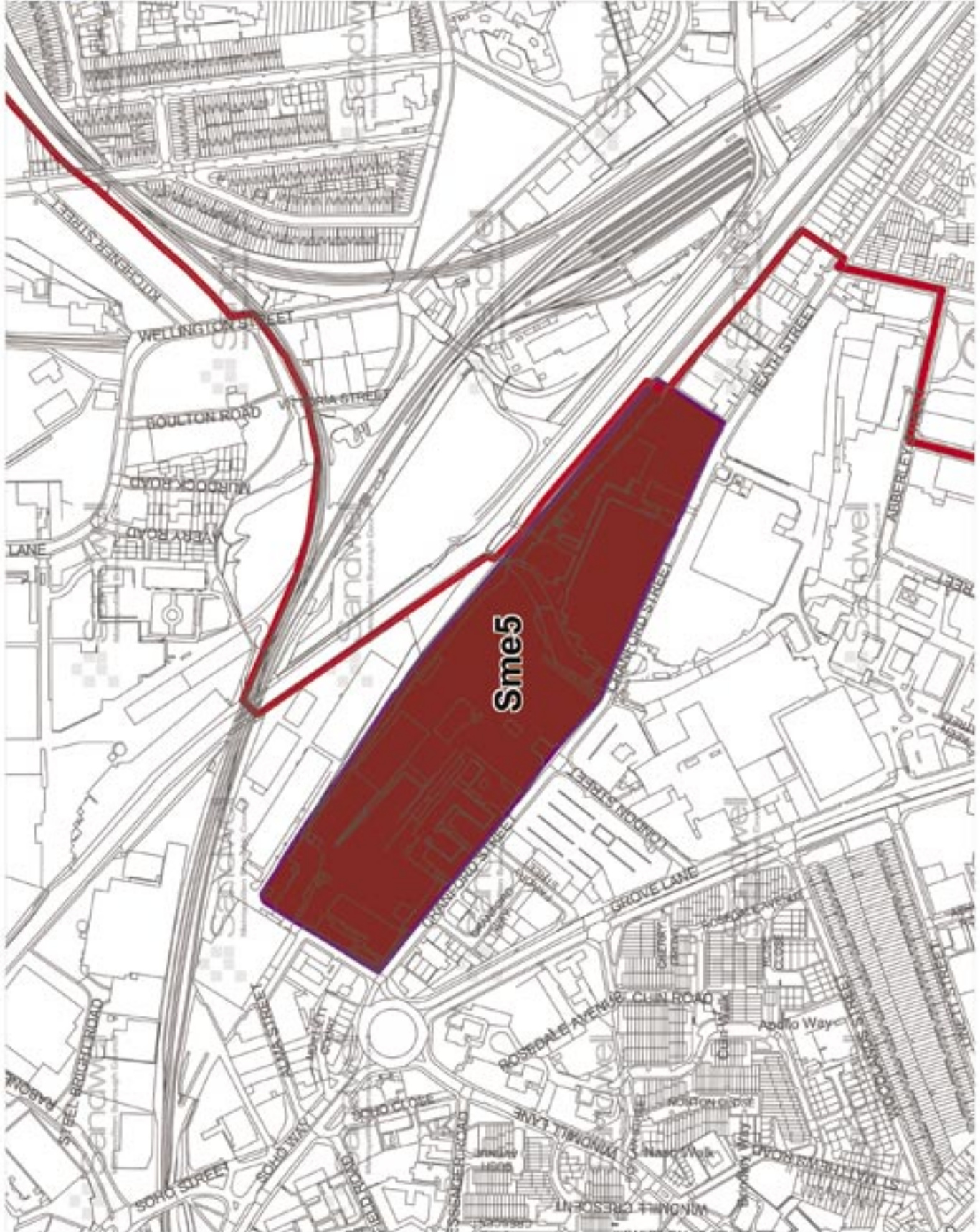


Area Action Plan Boundary

Mixed Use
(Primarily Residential with
Commercial/Linked Retail/
ancillary uses)

Scale : Not to Scale

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SMETHWICK AREA ACTION PLAN

PLAN 8

Area Action Plan Boundary

Open Space

Employment
(Light Industrial/offices)

Mixed Use
Industrial/Community/
Leisure/retail/educational

Scale : Not to Scale



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