

WEST BROMWICH AREA ACTION PLAN

ADOPTED DECEMBER 2012



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Part 1 - Context.

1. Foreword.

1.1 This Document sets out a vision and strategy for the future development of West Bromwich Town Centre and its immediate catchment area. It is intended to guide future change and development in the area over the period to 2026. West Bromwich is a strategic centre for growth within the Black Country and the principal town centre in the Metropolitan Borough of Sandwell.

1.2 The Adopted Plan follows consultation with the community, business interests, partners and other key stakeholders on provisional Issues and Options in June 2006, Preferred Options in June 2008 and Changes to Preferred Options in January 2011. Having considered the consultation responses this document contains those policies and proposals the Council considers are most appropriate in achieving the long term vision set out in this document.

1.3 The West Bromwich Area Action Plan has been prepared in parallel with the Black Country Core Strategy, and as with the whole of the Council's Local Development Framework (LDF), it is in conformity with this and other regional and national planning documents, including the current Regional Spatial Strategy.

1.4 West Bromwich is defined in the Black Country Core Strategy as a Strategic Centre with an important retail role. The area covered by the AAP sits within Regeneration Corridor 12 of the Black Country Core Strategy, which covers Oldbury, West Bromwich and Smethwick. It is considered that by 2026 this area will be a major contributor to the economic prosperity of the Black Country through its High Quality Employment Land locations & major office developments. The environment will have been transformed through major environmental and public realm improvements. There will be a mix of housing types in sustainable locations that are both affordable and able to attract new residents into the area.

1.5 The Area Action Plan is promoting significant change within the area, and over the plan period will deliver something in the order of:

- 220,000 sq m of new office floorspace
- 65,000 sq m of comparison retail floorspace (gross)
- 4,800 sq m of convenience shopping provision (net)
- Up to 4600 new homes up to 2026
- Improved transport network
- Improved public realm

1.6 Policy EMP1 of The Black Country Core Strategy details how it is intended to support the growth and diversification of the economy via three priority sectors. The priority sectors include:

- Diversified manufacturing, including high value added, advanced engineering, specifically, aerospace, food production, offsite construction and health products,
- Business, financial and customer services,
- Green industries; including environmental technologies, waste management and research.

To facilitate this within the AAP area it is proposed to protect 62 ha of employment land to the south of the town.

1.7 The AAP is set out in four parts: Part 1 sets out the Context within which the AAP has been prepared including the vision and strategy for the area; Part 2 sets out the Policy

Approach for dealing with development in the area; Part 3 defines a number of sub areas within the plan area within which the various policy approaches may apply and a number of development opportunities and Part 4 deals with Delivery and Implementation mechanisms that will be employed to bring about the vision for the area.

1.8 The West Bromwich Area Action Plan was adopted on 4th December 2012.

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2.0 Context.

Vision.

2.1 At a local level the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), or Sandwell Partnership, has put in place the Sandwell Plan, which establishes 'The Sandwell 2021 Vision'. The vision for Sandwell is:

“Sandwell : Great People, Great Place, 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,
- Sandwell will realise its abundant talent and potential through the success of its businesses, schools and communities. ”

2.2 This vision has been translated into a physical vision for the AAP area which is set out below. At its heart are the principles of creating a sustainable, viable and attractive environment for future investment to take place:

- A compact, vibrant and vital retail core will sit at the heart of a significantly expanded town centre and provide the catalyst and confidence for investment in wider commercial activity. This new commercial confidence will be supported by the existing and remodelled residential communities within the immediate area adjacent to the town, as well as new strategic employment opportunities that maximise the benefit of its good accessibility linkages and public transport.
- The town will contain new high quality retail and leisure uses together with cultural, civic and public service uses. It will also be a place to live, with new mixed use development providing the opportunity for people to live in the town centre. To the north, links to Dartmouth Park and Sandwell Valley beyond will be improved, recreating its role as a town park offering recreational opportunities for local residents and visitors. There will also be improvements to the built and natural environment.
- The town will be defined by the quality and innovative architectural design of the buildings set within a high quality urban environment, which puts the pedestrian environment uppermost. The place will have a strong, consistent and distinctive identity that will provide it with a new and contemporary image, created by new public spaces, streets and squares that people will want to be in and enjoy using. It will have an active and vibrant feel to it throughout the day and late into the evening.
- An integrated and efficient public transport system will provide easy access to this area, whilst also providing the focus for new office and higher density residential accommodation. The east to west corridor defined by Metro, running parallel to High Street, will link new business and office opportunities at Junction 1 of the M5 into the town. To the north and south, improved bus services will serve the existing and new residential areas immediately adjacent to the town centre, as well as connecting with the wider Black Country.
- The High Street will be reinforced by encouraging pedestrian activity along its length, with new improved crossing points and reduced traffic flows. A variety of uses will exist, including new higher density residential development at upper storeys and in adjoining areas to High Street, to reinforce and maintain active uses. The new north-south movement axis along New Street / St Michael's Street will link the town centre

functions in the south and the expanded retail offer to the north. The new town square will define the centre of the new town.

- Gateways to the town will be defined by development that provides a high degree of visual impact and interest. Other key nodes within the town centre will be linked through high quality treatment of the public realm, with street furniture and signing providing a unifying effect and sense of place.
- The town centre boundary will extend south of Metro, with public and community uses providing the main focus of activity, but also uses that provide significant employment or generate significant trip movements. Adjacent to these will be higher density residential accommodation, to reinforce the commercial and leisure uses and take advantage of the high accessibility provided by public transport. A range of accommodation will be built, of high quality architectural design, set within well defined spaces offering a safe, secure pedestrian environment.
- Moving further away from the town centre in all directions the activity will become less intensive as densities reduce to provide a more suburban feel with housing of a more traditional style and character overlooking newly created parks and open space.
- New health, education and leisure facilities will be developed to serve the existing and new communities within the town. These will not only deliver enhanced services, they will enable the physical transformation of the area providing the opportunity to create landmark buildings that define a new sense of place.
- Movement and access will be critical to making the town attractive as a place to live and visit. A clear hierarchy of streets will be defined that prioritise pedestrian movement and activity at the core, with public transport taking priority over the private car. However, access around and into the town and core area itself by car will be critical to its viability and future growth. Expansion in retail and commercial floor space will need to be matched by investment in infrastructure.
- Additional car parking will be provided at strategic locations to cater for increased demand. Key junctions and existing access points will need to be remodelled to enable car parks to be accessed without using town centre streets with strong pedestrian connections being provided.
- New traffic management measures will give priority to pedestrian and public transport movement and discourage through traffic whilst maintaining access to shops and facilities for those arriving by car. A new road link to the southwest will enable through traffic to bypass the Town Centre Core.
- Where appropriate the existing historic environment and heritage assets of the area will be conserved and enhanced by linking it to other regeneration projects within the town. This will ensure that the heritage of the area is retained within a high quality and well designed environment, providing a distinctive identity as well as sustaining the Borough's heritage.

Current Position.

2.3 The regeneration of West Bromwich is seen by the Council and its partners as a key priority. A strategy for growth has been pursued for a number of years, which has proved successful in attracting significant levels of public and private sector investment. Many of the opportunities identified through this strategy, which are incorporated in the current Development Plan of the Council, have either been developed or are now subject to detailed proposals that are likely to deliver significant physical changes to the centre over the next three to four years. However, since they contribute to the overall strategy set out for West Bromwich, they are included within this AAP to provide the appropriate context.

2.4 The challenge now facing the town is to build on the success of this strategy and continue its structured expansion in a planned and co-ordinated manner to fulfil its expected role as one of the four strategic centres in the Black Country. This will require a further expansion of the core area of the town and in some locations a bold new approach to the re-ordering of land uses.

2.5 In recent years West Bromwich town centre has experienced a physical decline as it's predominantly nineteenth and twentieth century building stock has aged. The town centre has also experienced a decline in its perceived role within the regional and sub regional shopping hierarchy. From its former position (last fulfilled in the early 1980s) of performing a strategic role, the town centre now acts much more as a local centre; mainly based around the sale of convenience goods. It is the recognition of this structural decline that has been the driving force behind the Council and its partners' strategies and programmes in prioritising West Bromwich for action.

2.6 Notwithstanding these perceived weaknesses, West Bromwich town centre has a number of strengths and advantages, which should be exploited to improve its current standing within the regional and sub-regional hierarchy and re-establish the town centre as a vibrant and popular shopping and leisure destination.

2.7 The town centre's geographic position at the heart of the West Midlands conurbation adjacent to the national motorway and principal road networks would suggest that it should perform a strategic role.

2.8 The town centre also has excellent public transport links with Metro and bus services providing links to the locations within the wider conurbation. This fact, together with the town centre's geographic location relative to the highway network, means that the town centre constitutes a highly sustainable location in planning terms.

2.9 The town centre has a potentially substantial catchment population upon which to draw. The Primary Catchment Area extends across much of the Borough but is restricted by the presence of competing centres.

2.10 West Bromwich town centre is the principal urban centre for the Borough of Sandwell and as such has a significant contribution to make to the overall prosperity of the wider area.

2.11 The AAP has been prepared following consultation with local communities and key stakeholders. By creating the conditions for private sector investment and building on existing initiatives, mechanisms and partnership working, the AAP promotes a holistic and integrated multi agency approach to regenerating the area. Together with the Core Strategy for the Black Country, the AAP will provide the new statutory land use planning framework for the area and the basis upon which planning decisions are made.

2.12 Within the Black Country Core Strategy, West Bromwich is identified as one of four strategic centres and sits within a regeneration corridor with the objectives of achieving sustained economic growth through; increasing employment opportunities, with an emphasis

on office based employment; providing a range of housing opportunities which will provide high quality living environments; supported by improvements to infrastructure and the quality of the built form and public realm.

2.13 The area also lies within the Black Country Regeneration Zone. This was formerly established by Advantage West Midlands (AWM), targeted at sustainable economic, social and environmental development.

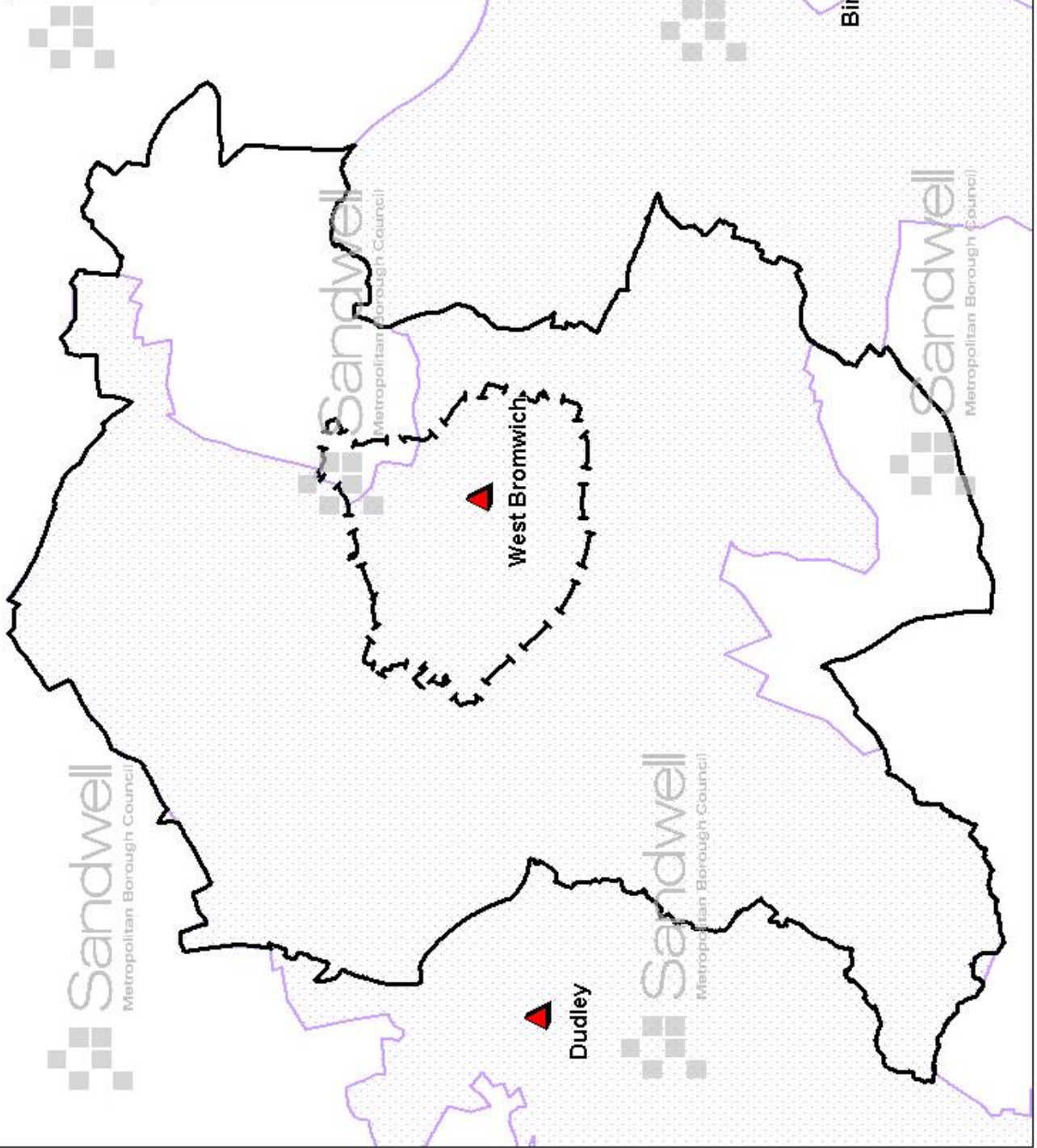
2.14 In addition the area has benefited from a number of Area Based Initiatives. A significant proportion of the AAP area sits within the former Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder Area. This initiative aims to tackle the problem of housing market failure. The area suffers from large tracts of homogenous, low quality housing stock and a lack of aspirational housing.

2.15 Greets Green New Deal for Communities has been a key programme in the Government strategy to tackle multiple deprivation in the most deprived neighbourhoods in the country. This initiative lay within the AAP area and has only recently come to the end of its term. NDC partnerships tackle the five key themes of: poor job prospects; high levels of crime; educational under-achievement; poor health; and problems with housing and the physical environment.

2.16 There are also a number of other programmes which are live within the area that are improving existing and developing new services, for example: Extended Schools and Building Schools for the Future in relation to education; the Lift Scheme and Right Care, Right Here in relation to health. Figure 1 places the AAP area in the context of a number of regeneration initiatives.

Figure 1

-  West Bromwich AAP
-  Regeneration Zone



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Issues.

2.17 The following broad issues have been identified that the Area Action Plan seeks to address.

- Compared with the other strategic centres in the Black Country, the size of West Bromwich as a shopping and commercial centre is limited, with the other centres enjoying more recent investment, with larger proportions of multiple retail outlets. The town will need to improve and increase its retail offer just to retain its place in the retail hierarchy and perform its function as a strategic centre. Clawing back lost expenditure from its catchment area is fundamental. The recent decline in the economy has exposed the fragile trading position of the town further and only heightened the need to take action to reverse the current position.
- The town has few anchor stores and lacks a range of quality comparison goods shops. The size of units on offer does not meet the requirements of multiple retailers. There is a need to extend both the range and quality of comparison goods.
- The centre has also declined as a location for office development and experiences levels of vacant poorer quality accommodation. No new speculative office development has taken place in the town centre since the mid 1970's. This poor offer also limits the potential of businesses within the town to expand.
- A major problem with the town is that it lacks cohesion; the ease with which the various functional elements can be identified illustrates this clearly. In particular, for many years the primary shopping area was tightly defined by the existing Ringway, which has acted as a barrier to growth.
- The level of activity after shopping hours is very low across the whole of the centre, a contributory factor may be the lack of leisure and entertainment uses in the town, alternatively it may be attributed to the current economy, safety issues or availability of alternative facilities elsewhere.
- There is a limited leisure and entertainment offer across the AAP area, there is a lack of existing sports facilities to meet the needs of the existing population and there needs to be improvements in the quality of open spaces. The commercial leisure offer is particularly weak.
- Physically, much of the town centre appears 'tired' and in need of modernisation. Much of the redevelopment that took place in the 1970s has remained unaltered. Outside the core shopping area the physical decline is more evident.
- The environment of the town is poor in parts both in terms of streetscape and buildings, which does not encourage visitors to dwell for long periods. The condition of the Conservation Area needs improving and there are few areas of quality public open space.
- Crime, security and safety are key concerns of everyone associated with the town, the recent Health Check of the centre undertaken by the Council (2007) identifies this as a key issue for those visiting and working in the centre.
- If the town is to be successful it needs to offer a wide range of choices not only in terms of new shopping facilities, but also leisure, entertainment and cultural attractions.
- There are barriers to walking into and within the town centre, with traffic being too intrusive making some routes indirect, unclear and unattractive. Providing new

alternative routes to remove traffic from the core area and improve pedestrian and public transport is a priority.

- There is a need to improve the transport infrastructure in the AAP area to cater for the level of anticipated growth.
- Older industrial areas immediately adjacent to the town and some areas further to the south of the town no longer meet modern day requirements and offer the potential through alternative land uses to contribute to the wider regeneration agenda. There is also a need to safeguard higher quality employment uses and locations against intrusion of inappropriate uses.
- West Bromwich is a very desirable location for people wishing to locate, there is a need to increase housing choice in the area both in the rented and market sector.

Community Infrastructure Levy

2.18 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a charge, which the Local Authority can impose on developers to ensure that appropriate infrastructure which is required as a result of their development proposals can be funded. CIL will be based upon simple formulae that relates the charge to the size and character of the development from which contributions will be sought.

2.19 The money will be spent on local and sub-regional infrastructure to support the development of the area. In some cases it may be appropriate to pool funds from a number of developments to contribute to identified infrastructure needs in the area.

2.20 Many of the proposals within this plan will be subject to the Levy. These are indicated in the Implementation Table in the Appendices. The Core Strategy has identified the need for infrastructure contributions in policy DEL1 but there is a need to produce a more localised policy for Sandwell through the preparation of more specific guidance. The Local Development Scheme identifies that Community Infrastructure Levy will be in place by 2014, therefore it is anticipated that work will commence on this during 2012.

2.21 It is envisaged that through this mechanism the level of future developer contributions will be arrived at, and the processes identified for how funds will be collated, managed and allocated towards specific infrastructure projects. In the interim, any identified requirement for mitigation measures (for example through a Travel Plan/Transport Assessment) will be the subject of appropriate planning conditions or through legal agreements in accordance with Sandwell's adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance: Planning Obligations.

Core Strategy

2.22 The Black Country Core Strategy has been developed by the four Black Country boroughs of Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton and provides the spatial dimension for how the Black Country should look by 2026. It is a spatial document which looks further than traditional land-use development plans, and seeks to address economic and social issues, including the requirement for sufficient infrastructure that will achieve sustainable communities and tackle climate change. It takes forward the longer term aspirations for the area as set out in such documents as The Sandwell Plan, to ensure that the spatial issues are addressed by using a Regeneration Corridor approach across the Black Country boroughs.

2.23 The Core Strategy provides the overarching spatial policies and strategy for the Black Country boroughs. More detailed documents within each Authority's Local Development Framework will address local issues through Area Action Plans, Site Allocation Documents and other Local Development Documents.

2.24 Policies within the Core Strategy seek to address a number of interrelated issues to assist in achieving this vision covering Housing, Economy and Employment, Centres, Transportation and Accessibility, Environmental Infrastructure, Waste and Minerals. The Core Strategy sets out three major directions of change to underpin the strategy; Sustainable Communities, Environmental Transformation; and Economic Prosperity. Together with the sustainability principles, the Core Strategy outlines the Spatial Objectives which, by 2026 will help to deliver;

- Focussed investment in shopping, office employment, leisure, tourism and culture within the four Strategic Centres
- Provision of sufficient high quality employment land at the best locations within Regeneration Corridors
- Sustainable communities on redundant employment land in the Regeneration Corridors
- Enhancement of the existing residential areas
- A network of town, district and local centres
- High quality environment
- High quality transport network for all modes of transport
- Provision of easily accessible social infrastructure
- Sufficient waste recycling and waste management facilities in appropriate locations, and
- Making the most sustainable use of the areas mineral resources.

2.25 In developing the Core Strategy, a number of studies were undertaken to provide the evidence base for these specific issues. These included the Black Country Employment Land Review, Black Country Employment Sites Study, Black Country Centres Study and the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments.

2.26 The West Bromwich Area Action Plan has been prepared with the Joint Core Strategy as the context, with the vision, aims and objectives of the AAP being aligned with those of the JCS but at a more detailed level and developed to assist in the delivery of the regeneration agenda set out in the corridor work of the Joint Core Strategy.

Strategy for the AAP Area.

2.27 There are a number of strands to the strategy to securing long term and sustained growth for the AAP area. It is important to recognise that the plan does not start from a blank sheet; the initial impetus for growth is already in place through a number of major committed schemes. Many aspects of the strategy are being taken forward and are evolving.

Significant progress to regenerate the town centre has already taken place and therefore the preferred strategy has been influenced by this success and the next phase of growth is predicated on established commercial confidence, and confidence from the private sector to invest, against downward pressure on public sector expenditure.

2.28 The strategy being promoted is to regenerate the town centre through pursuing a more balanced economy, by encouraging a greater variety of town centre and employment uses within a tightly defined primary shopping area and expanded town centre core. In undertaking this, attention also needs to concentrate on safeguarding and promoting high quality employment uses at strategically accessible locations.

2.29 This needs to be matched by improvements to the quality of the public realm and built environment. This will be pursued through developing a hierarchy of streets and places with particular emphasis on the treatment and development of key gateways and routes.

2.30 By providing a wider range of additional uses, together with improvements to key services, the town will become a more attractive place for people to live. Identifying opportunities for new residential development within the core area and through the wider AAP area will offer a wider housing choice and provide an integral and supporting role to the overall strategy.

2.31 Fundamental to this growth agenda is an integrated transportation strategy that flows from the anticipated levels of growth and delivers an easily accessible town centre for pedestrians, cyclists, public transport users and vehicles entering the town. Closely linked to this, and only deliverable as a consequence of it, are the aspirations to create a far more pedestrian friendly centre and enhanced public realm.

2.32 The following core objectives have been identified:

Objective 1 - To encourage sustained economic growth by:

- Increasing and improving the quality and choice of retail provision in the town centre.
- Increasing and diversifying the level of employment, leisure, cultural and social opportunities within the town centre.
- Enhancing the image of the area to encourage indigenous and inward investment.
- Providing easy access to a wide range of employment opportunities and services within the town centre.
- Defining an appropriate town centre boundary, including a primary shopping area and areas of predominantly leisure, business and other main town centre uses.
- Protecting and promoting existing and potential high quality employment areas outside of the town centre which is accessed by good strategic highway links, and only releasing poor quality sites for alternative uses where appropriate.

Objective 2 - To improve the quality of the public realm and built environment by:

- Modernising the built form and urban fabric to transform the town's identity and provide it with a new contemporary image.
- Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.
- Raising standards in architectural design and quality.
- Creating a balance between vehicular traffic and cycle and pedestrian movement.
- Creating streets and spaces which people want to be in and enjoy using.
- Reinforcing key gateways and nodes throughout the area.
- Reviewing and interpreting the Public Realm Strategy for specific sites and areas of the town.

- Developing planning and design guidance for strategic sites and areas and, where necessary, developing detailed master plans.

Objective 3 - To improve the attractiveness of West Bromwich as an area to live by:

- Improving the range, quality and affordability of accommodation on offer within the town centre and adjoining neighbourhoods.
- Reducing the actual and perceived level of crime and anti social behaviour.
- Improving the quality of and access to public open spaces.
- Working closely with key service providers, such as Education and Health, to ensure improvements to infrastructure can be delivered.
- Promoting a vital and vibrant town centre that offers a wide and varied range of facilities, including leisure and culture, capable of meeting the community's needs.
- Identifying and allocating sites to fulfil the housing needs of the area.
- Incorporate environmental infrastructure within new developments and creating sustainable living environments

Objective 4 - Improving accessibility and movement to and within the area by:

- Giving greater priority to pedestrian movements in certain parts of the town centre.
- Developing routes and crossings that are safe and attractive and balance the needs of the pedestrian and the car.
- Promoting the use of public transport, through improvements to infrastructure and accessibility to services.
- Promotion of greater priority measures for public transport to improve service provision both in and around the centre.
- Developing a hierarchy of roads across the town that meet the needs of an expanded town centre.
- Providing appropriate levels of short and long stay car parking that meet the future long term needs of the town.
- Providing a co-ordinated approach to signage, furniture, lighting and paving materials to create a stronger sense of place and identity.

2.33 The policies and proposals set out in the subsequent section have been developed and identified to achieve the above objectives. The policies provide a clear framework to guide development in general and the proposals section indicates how the sites identified will contribute to achieving the strategy.

2.34 The strategy will be delivered by a variety of means, but the Council and its partners will be instrumental in implementing many of the changes required to achieve a coherent and comprehensive improvement in the AAP area.

2.35 The spatial strategy for the town centre, as set out on Figure 2, seeks to:

- Reinforce the existing Primary Shopping Area;
- Define an expanded town centre core to locate commercial development including a new office sector;
- Identify strategic gateways and nodes for targeted environmental treatment;
- Identify strategic access corridors along which to focus development;
- Identify required improvements to infrastructure;
- Define employment areas that will be retained;
- Identify new residential locations and a density range for their development.

Figure 2

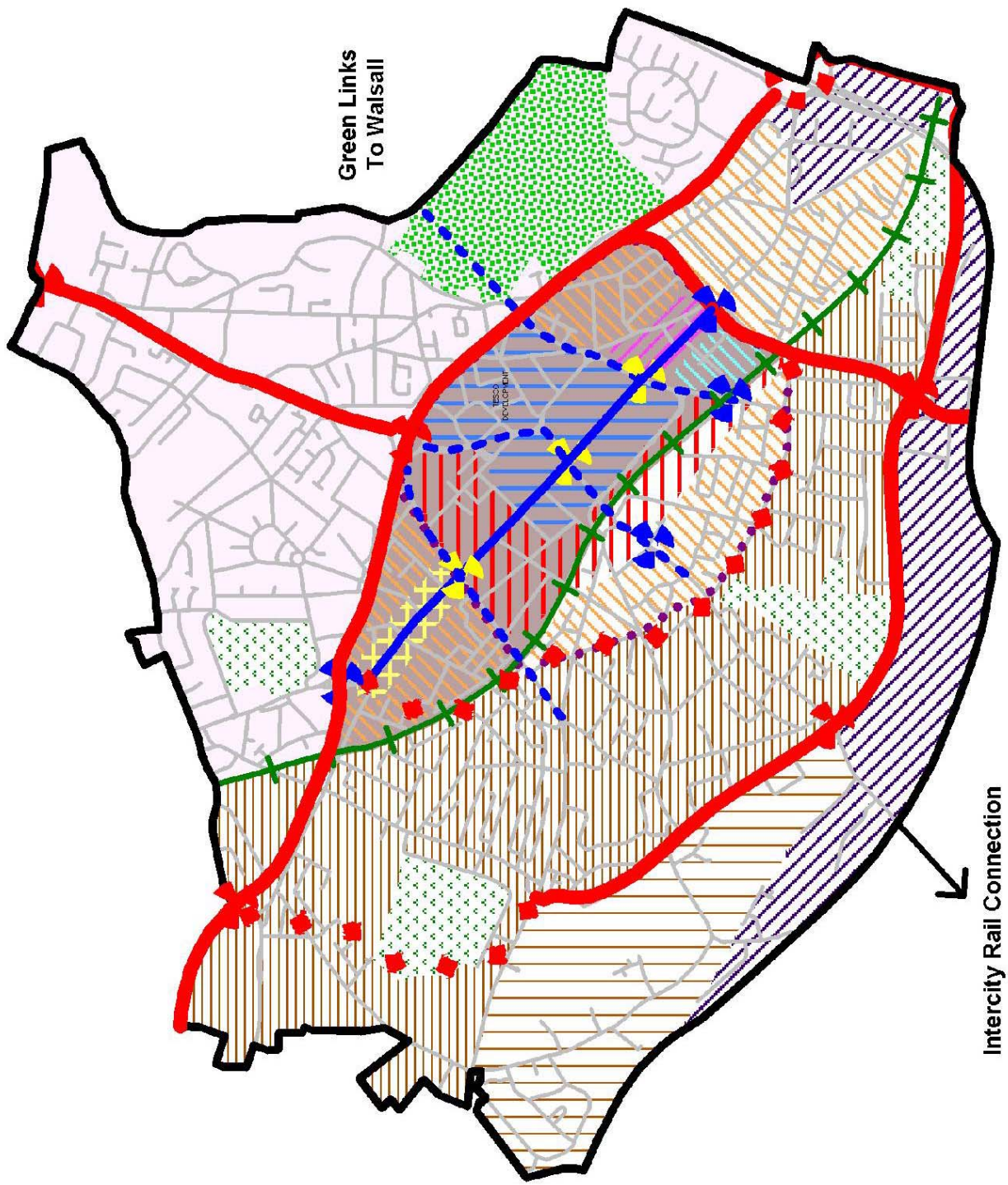
- A New Spatial Plan - Vision**
- Action Plan Area Boundary
 - Strategic Gateway
 - Town Centre Gateway
 - Local Gateway
 - Key Pedestrian/Cycle Routes
 - Strategic Access Corridors
 - Infrastructure Improvements
 - Primary Shopping Area
 - Improved Metro Links
 - Core Area
 - Sandwell Park
 - Leisure
 - Mixed Use
 - Residential Town Centre
 - Business District
 - Carriers Green District
 - Office/Civic Quarter
 - Medium Density Residential
 - Low Density Residential



May 2011

N.T.T.O.S.C.A.F.
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**Green Links
To Walsall**

Intercity Rail Connection

PART 2 - Policies

3.1 This part of the AAP provides the policies that will be needed to guide development and inform decisions on planning applications within the area. These policy areas have been developed in order to achieve the core objectives which have been set for the AAP area.

Improving the Retail Offer.

Objective 1 – To encourage sustained economic growth.

3.2 One of the core elements of the regeneration strategy for West Bromwich is about revitalising its role as a shopping centre. Whilst making it a more attractive environment to shoppers is a significant part of this, there is also a need to strengthen its role through increasing the retail offer. Studies undertaken have identified that the centre underperforms in terms of low level of spending it attracts from its catchment area, has high shop vacancy levels and compared to other strategic centres in the Black Country does not operate at the same level in the retail hierarchy. A number of retail studies have identified the need for significant new shopping floor space and the RSS indicates the centre can absorb an additional 45,000 sq.ms from 2006 – 2021, with an additional 20,000 sq.ms gross 2021-2026. In addition to this 4,800 sq m net is currently proposed.

3.3 A strengthened shopping role will enable the town centre to better serve the local community by providing for their needs closer to home. A town centre with an increased draw from within its local catchment area will reduce the need to travel to more distant centres. Shorter shopping journeys also provide the potential to maximise sustainable forms of transport, including walking, cycling and public transport.

3.4 The development of a vibrant and thriving shopping destination will also serve as a catalyst for further investment in complementary uses.

New Shopping Provision.

Policy WBP1: New Retail Floor space.

To strengthen the role of the centre as a shopping destination and to broaden its catchment population the Council will:

Encourage an increase in new comparison floorspace of 65,000 sq.m up to 2026.

Encourage the take up of vacant premises and more efficient use of poorly performing floorspace, or redevelopment within the Primary Shopping Area, allowing for primarily non-food shopping.

Sites outside the Primary Shopping Area will not normally be considered.

Additional, new shopping development should aim to:

Consolidate the primary shopping area by providing anchor stores in the weaker shopping areas.

Provide a range of unit sizes, initially this will be large and medium size to redress the current imbalance.

Give priority to locations which currently do not enjoy active frontages.

Contribute to the improvement of the public realm through design of the building and streetscape around it, including good pedestrian routes and linkages.

Be well integrated into the rest of the core area.

Contribute to the town centre parking provision.

3.5 In the short to medium term, opportunities exist for refurbishment and major expansion of the retail offer within the defined Primary Shopping Area, with the proposals being promoted by Tesco Stores Ltd for a major new shopping centre and other plans to refurbish Queens Square.

3.6 As a consequence, as well as providing a key catalyst to stimulate demand and achieve the first significant step in the transformation of the centre, these developments are likely to raise the longer term capacity of West Bromwich both as a comparison shopping centre, but also as a genuinely strategic commercial leisure centre, with a strong evening economy. Therefore additional capacity is likely to be required towards the end of the plan period, and given the existing pattern of retail in the centre and defined primary shopping area the most appropriate location for this next phase of growth is that south of High Street currently occupied by Kings Square and the Farley Centre.

3.7 Furthermore, the majority of floor space proposed currently is in a non-intensive format, whereas future proposals that churn the existing retail core are more likely to be more intensive allowing future additional floor space to be created without any significant physical extension. It is proposed not to extend the Primary Shopping Area beyond that previously defined as the retail core in the Unitary Development Plan adopted in 2004. This will allow existing retail commitments to be built out and ensure that a compact town centre is maintained well accessed by public transport and served by car parking, with future increases in floor space being achieved through redevelopment of existing areas in a more intensive format.

3.8 In the long term, if demand exists, further opportunities for retail development should be considered within the town centre boundary, however preference will be given to sites within the Primary Shopping Area. The Primary Shopping Area is predominantly occupied by shops but where a range of supporting uses, such as cafes, restaurants, banks and building societies may also co-exist. The proposed boundary of the PSA is set out at Figure 3.

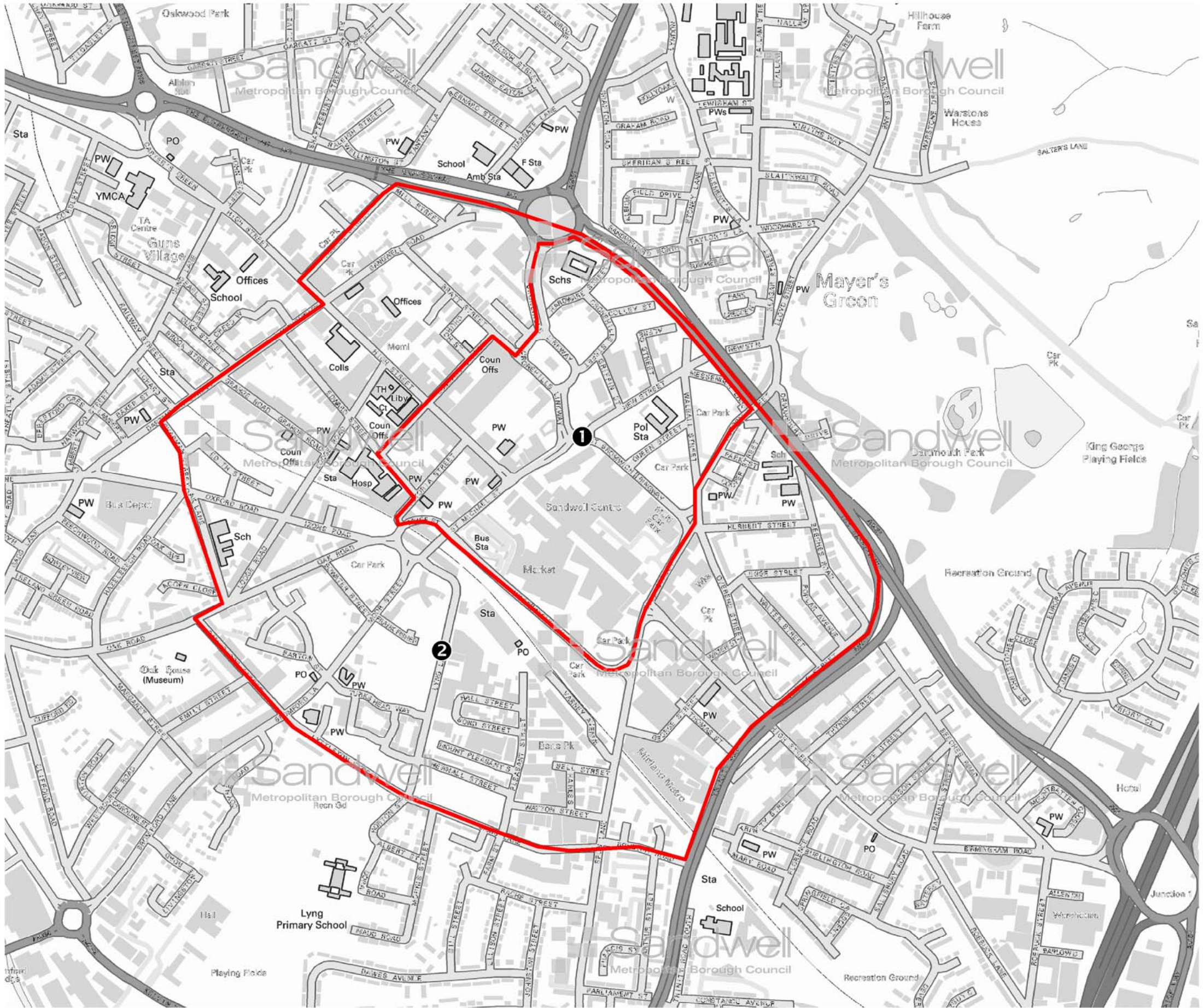


Figure 3

- 1** Primary Shopping Area Boundary
- 2** Town Centre Core



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Supporting Town Centre Uses.

Policy WBP2: Other Town Centre Uses

Within the town centre core, including the Primary Shopping Area, a wide range of uses will be encouraged in order to complement and support the retail activity, these include:

The development of office floor space (B1(a) and A2 uses), with the priority being given to core town centre opportunities and strategic gateways;

The development of leisure, recreational, cultural and social and community facilities (D1 and D2 uses);

The development of Hotels and Conference facilities;

The development of housing, at first floor level and above in appropriate locations.

Mixed use development will be encouraged in order to increase the capacity of the town centre and to create vitality and diversity.

These uses will be encouraged subject to meeting criteria for a healthy town centre economy, including:

Maintaining a concentrated Primary Shopping Area with active frontages;

Retaining and enhancing strong direct pedestrian links within the town;

The quality and amenity of the environment to be created because of the potential for disturbance from certain types of town centre activity, such as pubs and drinking establishments.

3.9 Government policy encourages a wide range of uses within town centres, providing choice to meet the needs of the community and to take advantage of infrastructure that serves accessible locations by a choice of means of transport.

3.10 The Council's preferred approach is to promote a mix of leisure, employment, residential and community uses in the town centre, to complement and support the retail base. This approach is considered to offer a far more sustainable town centre than currently exists and will address a number of its current weaknesses. A wide range of activities will widen the attraction of the town hopefully to a wider catchment population, encourage linked trips and increase the shopping spend. Employment and residential uses will also increase footfall and potential spending power for the shops as well as potentially extending the operation of the centre into the evening. This will hopefully increase the vibrancy as well as the vitality of the town making it a more attractive and safe place to be in.

3.11 The focus for office development should be within the defined town centre on the edge of the defined primary shopping area, although there is clearly the opportunity within the "wider West Bromwich Town Centre" to accommodate the level of growth identified in the RSS especially if opportunities at Junction 1 and the metro corridor adjacent, are considered.

3.12 A key opportunity for office development has already been identified and is in the process of being brought forward with the proposed redevelopment of the former Council Depot on All Saints Island adjacent to the A41. The "Providence Place" development is expected to deliver somewhere in the region of 25,000 sq m of high quality modern office accommodation and re-establish the office market in the town. A significant amount of the floorspace has already been let, with BT Liberata in partnership with the Council. The development has already commenced on site and is expected to be open by late 2011.

3.13 The Sandwell Cultural Strategy promotes the strengthening of towns and neighbourhoods, and appreciates the links between culture and other local priorities and the vital role it performs in renewing neighbourhoods and building stronger communities. Access for people from all communities to arts, sports and leisure and recreational activities is therefore perceived as a priority, to which the promotion and hosting of events of regional and national significance will contribute. The Strategy establishes that the development of an excellent cultural offer within West Bromwich Town Centre is the overall priority.

3.14 Developing the role of the centre as a visitor destination will also be supported by identifying opportunities for the provision of other cultural attractions such as theatres, concert halls and conference facilities. It is also of great importance that improvements are made to infrastructure for visitors to West Bromwich and that efforts are made to market and promote Sandwell's cultural offer in order to maximise the visitor potential of residents and tourists whilst also supporting the economic vitality of Sandwell. The promotion of the town as a location for new hotel development will also be encouraged to support new business and visitor attractions, but also to maximise the locational advantage of the town to the national motorway network and Birmingham City Centre, which is within 15 minute travel time by Metro.

3.15 Dartmouth Park is a considerable asset in the town, being located within 5 minutes walk just across the Expressway. As well as serving the surrounding residential communities, it has the potential to contribute to the vitality of the town centre. It offers scope for linked trips to the park and the shops, particularly for families with young children, or can offer a relaxing break from a shopping trip.

3.16 The Council has commenced improvements to the Park, providing new facilities that will give more people increased reason to use it. The aim is to integrate it within the life of the town centre and provide another attraction to strengthen the town's draw. Funding has been received from Heritage Lottery.

3.17 It has long been recognised that a weakness of West Bromwich is its lack of commercial leisure offer. At present the centre lacks a number of basic facilities that one would expect to see in a town of its size. Facilities such as a sports or leisure centre including a swimming pool and a cinema are considered to be important gaps in the town's leisure offer if it is to fulfil its potential.

3.18 Whilst the existing retail proposals being promoted by Tesco contain an element of leisure, principally a cinema at first floor level and a number of food and drink units, this will not be adequate to meet either existing demand or the projected growth in leisure expenditure identified as part of the Black Country Centres Study.

3.19 The Local Authority has identified an appropriate site for a swimming pool within the town centre which can be funded by the Council. The AAP will carry this forward, as well as identifying other sites that can accommodate facilities that support and complement the use. For example there may be benefits in co-locating health, leisure and education facilities. Additional leisure facilities will need to be funded by the private sector.

Creating a New Place

Objective 2 - To improve the quality of the public realm and built environment.

3.20 It is accepted that major work and resources are required to enhance the public spaces, squares, streets and routes throughout the AAP area, but particularly the Town Centre, to underpin investor confidence and help sustain the regeneration agenda. A high quality environment where people are encouraged to walk can also bring significant social and community benefits in health and well being as well as making places feel safe and secure. The Council cannot secure this objective alone. It must be with the support of its partners and the development community who are stakeholders within the town.

3.21 West Bromwich Town Centre benefits the wider AAP area and the Borough as a whole in terms of jobs, investment, amenities and facilities it provides. The image, attractions and environment of the town centre are important in terms of attracting investors, employers, employees, residents, shoppers, visitors and tourists in getting them to stay longer and to return. Indeed, creating a high quality, welcoming and attractive environment is of equal importance with the provision of a wider range of facilities in improving the town centre. The quality of the public realm is fundamental to the town's ability to compete with other centres in the sub region.

Public Realm.

3.22 Objective 2 of the AAP is to improve the quality of the public realm and built environment; in order to create a safe and attractive environment that provides a sense of identity to which people relate and take pride. The Public Realm and Linkages Study, for West Bromwich adopted by the Council in 2005 as SPD, has been reviewed and updated as part of the AAP process. The revised document, now called West Bromwich Streetscape Strategy, October 2007 by Tibbalds, sets out a strategy for the core of the town and the basis for the strategy and policy direction set out below. In addition to this the Council appointed consultants Arup, to look in more detail at some of the practicalities raised by the Streetscape Strategy and to provide indicative costings and designs for implementing some of the schemes. Their recommendations form the basis of the public realm implementation plan. Plans showing the improvements from the Streetscape Strategy are shown in Appendix 1.

3.23 There is a need to create a strong consistent and local identity. With the development of the Town Square, providing a new focal point for activity, the opportunity exists to develop a new, distinctive public realm capable of transforming the town's identity, providing it with a new contemporary image. To achieve this, a clear hierarchy of streets needs to be developed. Not all streets need to be treated equally, reflecting the role they serve and the activity levels they support. Strategic gateways and nodes need to be reinforced and improved, this will provide a better first impression and assist in increasing and aiding pedestrian movement. A three tier hierarchy of treatment has been identified: gold; silver and bronze that reflect the importance, nature and function of the street to the town centre network.

3.24 The public realm strategy aims to provide a series of public spaces, streets and squares that people will want to enjoy using. The use of the spaces by pedestrians and cyclists will take precedence over the car. Pedestrian footways should be wide, particularly in the core area of the town, and pedestrian crossing points should be direct, straight and wide, facilitating easy access for people.

3.25 A fundamental and integrated element of delivering this strategy will be to address traffic management within the town. The Transportation Strategy set out later in this document for the AAP area is both complementary and supportive and has the promotion of pedestrian accessibility and movement at its core.

Policy WBP3: Public Realm.

To improve the town centre environment by creating a high quality public realm and new public spaces, the Council will develop a programme of public realm works in accordance with the West Bromwich Town Centre Streetscape Strategy.

Opportunities to create new public spaces will be sought as part of new developments.

All development will be expected to make either a physical or financial contribution to the implementation of these works. Where physical works are directly undertaken by the developer a contribution will be required for ongoing maintenance. This will be calculated as a rate per m² of the public realm works being undertaken. This rate will depend on the standard of finish adopted (see table at Appendix 2)

The specification of materials and street furniture will be expected to be consistent with the Streetscape Strategy.

3.26 The priority for delivering improvements to the public realm will be given to the Town Centre Core and the key strategic gateways of the AAP area (see Figure 4), although all development within the AAP area will be expected to be of a high quality in terms of design and materials.

3.27 All town centre uses and users can benefit from high quality public realm and all developments will place some demands on the public realm within the town centre. All development within the town centre core should therefore contribute to public realm improvements. A key benefit of public realm improvements is to support investment and value of developments by improving the setting of the site. Public space improvements add to the general improvement of the whole of the town centre not just those sites in the immediate area.

3.28 A town centre is not just equal to the sum of its constituent parts, it is far more than that. Nor is the public space within one area of the town only accessed by, or of benefit to, users of buildings within the same locality. Public spaces tend, by their very nature to be linked, like activities and uses that occupy the buildings that abut the pedestrian streets, squares and nodes in the town. Workers employed within the civic and business district of the town, for example, shop at lunchtime within the primary shopping area. Thus for the town centre core it is intended to seek contributions from all development and to pool those contributions to deliver a programme of works that bring a coherent character to the Town Centre.

3.29 The level of public realm contribution should be proportionate to the scale of development, i.e. the larger the development the more the contribution should be. The level of contribution will be set when planning permission is granted and index linked through a planning obligation and be payable on commencement of development.



3.30 Small scale development and changes of use will be exempt from contributions. New development or extensions to existing buildings of less than 200 sq.m on all categories of existing development will be exempt. For development in excess of 200 sq.m a contribution based on a rate per sq.m will be required. This rate will depend on the rate of finish adopted. An additional contribution will be added for ongoing maintenance (See table at Appendix 2).

3.31 Large scale developments could and should contribute to public realm contributions as well as provide new public spaces. However, there should be some recognition of the degree to which, new high quality public spaces within a major development can be said to contribute to the wider town centre. This may need to be taken into account when assessing the public realm contribution required by the development. An identified Programme of Works is shown in Appendix 3. The total cost of public realm works required for the Town Centre will far exceed the ability of Section 106 contributions to meet that need. Other sources of funding will have to be sought. In this respect, an ERDF funding bid has recently been successful which will assist in the improvement to specific public areas within the town which will in turn improve accessibility and movement, attract investment and job creation.



Figure 4

Strategic Access Corridors

-  Strategic Gateways
-  Key Nodes

NORTH

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Design of New Development.

Policy WBP4: Design Principles.

New Development will be required to be of the highest quality of design and demonstrate how physical and functional integration with the existing surroundings is to be achieved through:

- **Appropriate location, siting, orientation, scale, massing, design and means of access.**
- **Providing appropriate physical pedestrian and visual linkages.**
- **Providing safe vehicular access to avoid conflict with pedestrian movement.**
- **Placing particular emphasis on the relationship between new development and street frontages to promote activity and surveillance.**
- **Promoting safe and secure public and private spaces through appropriate design and layout, incorporating appropriate levels of lighting and possibly CCTV where considered necessary.**
- **Addressing key nodes and routes as identified in Figure 4 with the appropriate mix of uses and density of development to define neighbourhoods and character areas.**
- **The introduction of taller buildings at key landmark locations which assist in improving the built form and legibility of the area in keeping with the town's role as the Borough's Strategic Centre.**

3.32 Policy ENV3 of the Black Country Core Strategy provides the overarching design principles which need to be reflected in each of the Black Country Boroughs. This plan identifies a number of sites for redevelopment. Over the lifetime of the plan, it is envisaged that other sites are likely to come forward. Thus the opportunity exists to transform the image of the area through new high quality development and improve parts of the area that don't function well at the moment.

3.33 Whilst the importance of the town's historic environment and the need to provide an appropriate setting for it will remain a priority, a positive response to the local context does not always need to be a replication of existing building styles. Contemporary design has the potential to enrich a place through providing differing contrast of styles and design of the highest quality.

3.34 Introducing taller buildings at key nodes in the town taking advantage of its position on a ridgeline. This will provide a landmark which can assist in the provision of a legible, landmark quality development. Not all locations will be appropriate for taller buildings, each proposal will need to be assessed on its merits, consideration being given to how it will complement and contribute to the area as a whole and how it relates to the existing built form in terms of design, scale and massing. This will be particularly important when dealing with proposals that include, or lie adjacent to Listed Structures or Conservation Areas such as fronting the Town Square in the vicinity of St Michael's Church.

Housing and Supporting Infrastructure.

Objective 3 - To improve the attractiveness of West Bromwich as an area to live.

3.35 A key objective of the West Bromwich AAP is the need to identify opportunities for the provision of a range of new, high quality homes to meet existing and future needs and aspirations. By doing so, this could lead to an increase in the local population, which will help improve the vitality and viability of the town centre, as well as supporting other health and community facilities and public transport services in the area. In its widest sense, however, the delivery of new housing in the town will, if well designed, contribute towards the creation of sustainable communities in West Bromwich. Not only will this meet the objectives of the West Bromwich Area Action Plan, but the Black Country Core Strategy which identifies a housing requirement of 21,489 units from 2006 – 2026. It will also contribute toward achieving the long-term objectives of the Sandwell Plan as well as other local initiatives concerned with regeneration in the area, including Urban Living. The Council's approach to housing mix and location is set out in Core Strategy Policies HOU2 and DEL2 respectively.

Policy WBP5: Housing

To increase the population living within and on the edge of the town centre in order to support the economy and contribute to the vitality of the town a range of housing will be required in order to meet local need.

On all sites of 15 dwellings or more a proportion of affordable units will be required in accordance with the Affordable Housing Policy in the Joint Core Strategy.

The Council will seek to develop a density hierarchy for residential development, reducing in intensity as you move away from the town centre core, but seeking to maximise capacity where sites are particularly accessible by public transport. The following hierarchy will be used to guide development:

- **Town Centre Core 60+ dph net,**
- **Edge of Centre and key access routes 45 – 60 dph net,**
- **Out of centre 30-35 dph net.**

Where new housing development is proposed on sites currently in alternative use the Council will require proposals to come forward on a comprehensive basis or to an agreed master plan that demonstrates how development can take place to a phased programme of works.

New residential development will be required, due to the demands it places on infrastructure, to make contributions in line with the Council's Planning Obligations SPD.

3.36 The town centre and immediate environs are sustainable locations for housing given their access to public transport, shops, services and jobs. Residential development is considered a vital element in the regeneration of the town. It will ensure that the town is populated in the evening and night time, making it busier and safer, and creating a wide customer base for a wide range of businesses. It will enable more people to live within walking distance of a wide range of facilities and choose a lifestyle which is not dependent on car travel.

3.37 The future scale of new residential development within the West Bromwich area is significant and reflects the requirements set out in the Core Strategy for the Oldbury-West

Bromwich-Smethwick Regeneration Corridor. In identifying these opportunities it is recognised that some are more likely to be more long term than others and are likely therefore to come forward towards the end of the plan period. Their inclusion in the AAP is to ensure they come forward in a phased and controlled manner and that the necessary infrastructure is in place to support this scale of planned growth. The AAP sets out broad principles for the development of these areas, but having established the principle of development, this will need to be supplemented by more detailed planning documents.

3.38 Within the town centre core, flats, apartments or town houses are generally considered to be more appropriate than family housing. This will provide the opportunity to maximise densities taking advantage of access to services and public transport. The density considered appropriate for the area should facilitate quite intensive use of land, at around 60 or more dwellings per hectare. This would encompass residential development at a number of storeys. Particular care will need to be taken with the design of town centre housing in order to establish strong communities. Thus they should offer generous internal space standards and good quality accommodation capable of meeting the long term needs of all age groups and not just a short-term first step on the housing ladder.

3.39 Given the good public transport infrastructure and proximity of a wide range of facilities, low parking standards will be encouraged in the town centre. When residential development comes forward as part of mixed use schemes the promotion of parking management agreements to facilitate shared parking will assist in minimising the amount of land taken up by car parking in development.

3.40 As with all residential development there will be a requirement to meet the Council's Affordable Housing Policy, although within the core area where the urban form may result in a particular property type the precise make up of this contribution may need to be dealt with in a more flexible way, being more representative of the scheme.

3.41 The provision of open space within residential schemes in the core area will generally be dealt with via the provision of commuted sums for the improvement of existing open space within the locality. This will also include public realm improvements to improve pedestrian linkages to gain access to open space provision.

3.42 The area that abuts the core is characterised as an established residential area situated in close proximity to the town centre and public transport nodes, in particular the Metro Line. Within this area are identified a number of regeneration opportunity sites that will be brought forward in order to reshape the residential living environment, as a means to increasing the choice and type of dwellings available in the local market. This will involve redevelopment of both existing residential and industrial sites, in particular around the former Lyng housing estate and Lyng Lane Industrial area, but also in Greets Green. The density considered appropriate for the area should facilitate development layouts that take advantage of this accessible and well-connected location, but which acknowledges the traditional residential character of the area. Therefore, a mix of densities and dwelling types including family housing should form a key requirement of new development, at a range between 45 and 60 dwellings per hectare.

3.43 More suburban areas exist further to the north and south of the AAP area, that provide the opportunity for more family housing. To the south of the town, are predominantly industrial uses with pockets of residential development in a canalside setting. The area is also characterised by areas of open space, which are to be improved for the benefit of residents as part of the New Deal for Communities plan in the area. To the north, a more widespread residential area exists dispersed with health, community, education and industrial development, as well as major parkland, Dartmouth Park.

3.44 Physical connections between these areas and the town centre are fairly restricted, either by the existing highway network (north) or due to their distance from the town

(south). A number of large development sites have been identified in these locations that could create the focus for larger, aspirational family housing built at a lower density range, as well seeking some higher density development along key transport corridors and the canal network that exists in this area. This approach could be appropriate on those sites in close proximity to Sandwell and Dudley Rail station, which is situated on the southern edge of the AAP area. Therefore, densities should range from between 30-35 dwellings per hectare, especially on large sites. A Housing trajectory which shows the growth of housing in the Plan period is shown on Appendix 9.

3.45 The Council's approach to the design of housing schemes is set out in the Council's Residential Design Guide and Building for Life Supplementary Planning Documents, which seek to improve the environment and quality of new housing areas. Housing proposals should meet the principles outlined in the design guide and should be designed so internal spaces are appropriate and fit for purpose.

Supporting Infrastructure.

3.46 Improving the attractiveness of West Bromwich is not just simply a question of improving the housing offer, it is about being able to offer a whole range of social and community uses that are important to the quality of life of residents. As regeneration and growth takes place across the Borough, there is a need to develop new and improve existing facilities. The town centre provides an ideal location to strengthen the Borough's range of existing facilities, providing choice in an accessible location well served by public transport. These uses will also add to the success and vibrancy of the town centre, creating additional attractions for shoppers, as well as town centre residents and employees.

Policy WBP6: Green Space and Recreation

Significant new development close to existing amenities will be expected to:

- **contribute to their improvement, enhancement and where new areas are created add to the variety of open space in the area.**
- **improve and enhance pedestrian linkages to it.**
- **where appropriate incorporate formal play space, including sports pitches to address a shortfall in provision identified in the playing pitch strategy.**
- **Contribute to achieving the Local Open Space standards.**

Opportunities that arise from Building Schools for the Future and the Primary Capital Programme will also be examined to see what facilities can be provided to improve access to sport.

Developer contributions will be calculated through the formula set out in the Council's Planning Obligations SPD.

3.47 One of the greatest contributions to improving the quality of the physical environment and attractiveness of the area is the safeguarding and enhancement of green spaces. Local green space should be available to be used and enjoyed by all. Green space may be formal parks, or playing fields, areas of rough land for informal play or nature conservation, school or private playing fields, children's play areas or local amenity spaces.

3.48 The thrust of the strategy within the AAP in relation to green space will be to extend and build on the existing network with a particular emphasis on improving the quality of existing provision, whilst also providing new high quality strategic open spaces to meet any

increasing needs. Reinforcement of linkages to provide safe and pleasant routes within the area to link existing provision with its users will also be a priority. Dartmouth Park and Sandwell Valley beyond offer a major strategic resource for the town and the Borough that need to be promoted as a tourist destination that can be linked to the regeneration of the town.

3.49 The network of green spaces will be supplemented and complemented by the high quality treatment of public areas within new developments through the creation of new squares, pedestrian friendly streets and spaces.

3.50 The key message flowing from the Black Country and Sandwell Sports Facility Strategic Analysis is that at both a Black Country level and Borough level there is not the full hierarchy of facilities to meet the needs of the existing population. Therefore there is a need to invest in facilities to bring them up to a standard to enable the delivery of increased levels of participation in physical activity and sport, and to support health and well being.

3.51 It is essential that future participation in sport is considered now to ensure that appropriate planning of facilities to meet the projected increases in demand can be undertaken. Shortfalls and surpluses exist for each type of sport, it is therefore important that opportunities are taken to maximise the availability of accessible playing pitches and improve the quality of and access to existing sites to ensure that provision meets the needs of the community. In order to help meet need and demand, Section 106 Agreements are seen as a means of contributing to the provision or qualitative improvement of outdoor sports facilities.

3.52 Based on the current shortfalls in provision revealed by the playing pitch strategy and substantial housing growth in Sandwell advocated by the Core Strategy, it is increasingly important that all pitch sites are afforded protection within the emerging LDF and AAP and should not be developed unless it can be proved through the application of both the playing pitch methodology and PPG17 that sites are surplus to requirements or can be substituted to an equivalent standard.

3.53 It is also important to ensure that the quantity of provision is sufficient to exceed local needs as some degree of spare capacity is an integral part of playing pitch provision to accommodate for latent and future demand for existing pitch sport teams, to enable the development of new clubs and teams, for the development/expansion of new pitch sports and to accommodate backlogs.

Education Provision.

3.54 Another key factor which influences the attractiveness of an area for people to want to live is the quality of its education and schools. Whilst the AAP can have little influence on the quality of the Education Service provided, it has a role to play in ensuring the appropriate physical infrastructure is in place to support it.

Policy WBP7: Education Provision

Where development generates a need for extra educational places over and above existing capacity, improvements to schools and early years children's facilities will be required from developer contributions. The level of contribution will be determined through the formula set out in the Council's Planning Obligations SPD.

3.55 Given the level of anticipated housing growth relating to the West Bromwich Area Action Plan area, the potential impact on the education resource for the area has been assessed. It is estimated that there is a minimum need for an additional 400 primary school places in West Bromwich. It is proposed in the first instance to meet this through the expansion of Hargate, Holy Trinity and Lyng primary schools each to 2 forms-of-entry (fe), giving a total of 6fe compared with 4fe at present. It is expected that this expansion will be dealt with through developer contributions as part of s106 agreements, although the size of the Holy Trinity site at 1.27 ha is an issue as there seems little scope for site expansion. So ideally it would be preferable to relocate Holy Trinity to a new site.

3.56 There are likely to be issues in relation to the future expansion of Lodge Primary School, which is currently situated on a very small site offering no facilities for outdoor recreation. There are added complications around Listed status of the buildings, which are poor in terms of condition and suitability. So on balance this seems to point towards looking for a new site so that the existing site may be released for alternative uses.

3.57 For a two-form entry primary school (such as Lodge and as proposed for Holy Trinity), there is a minimum site requirement of around 2.1ha including for nursery and childcare provision. The figure is inclusive of a statutory requirement to provide outdoor team games area, so where a school falls substantially short in regard to area there will be a requirement to take opportunities to rectify the situation where this is possible and realistic, through site enlargement or relocation.

3.58 Clearly at this early stage the physical possibility of school expansions and the design implications have not been developed.

3.59 In addition, there is an option for housing development on industrial sites south of Brandon Way and in the Newton area. It is anticipated this might require provision of a new 2fe (420-places) primary school and site, this is currently undergoing further analysis. Assuming the case for a new primary school is confirmed, the Council will then look to developer contributions to support the provision.

3.60 In relation to secondary schools, it had been the intention to utilise the previous Government's *Building Schools for the Future* (BSF) programme to ensure a sufficient and well-distributed supply of secondary school places across the borough and in the AAP area. Following the cancellation of the later phases of the national BSF programme, only a few Sandwell schools have been included in BSF. Many Sandwell secondary schools will not now benefit from the planned investment and BSF will no longer provide a comprehensive solution to the changing requirements for secondary school places. The AAP proposals will need, therefore, to be considered in the light of any opportunities that might arise from the new Government capital strategy that is to be formulated after the Autumn 2010 Public Sector Spending Review and following the James Review of Education capital spending that is expected to report in early 2011. If there is shown to be a demand for secondary places over and above those already catered for in the initial (approved) phase of BSF funding, then there might be a requirement for developer contributions to meet the shortfall in the funding required to meet the revised demand.

Historic and Natural Environment.

Objective 2: To Improve the quality of the public realm and built environment.

Objective 3: To improve the attractiveness of West Bromwich as an area to live.

Historic Environment.

3.61 Developing Sandwell's Heritage, including both its built and natural environments is seen as an important part of the cultural evolution of the borough. There are 36 listed buildings and structures within the AAP area, the majority of which are concentrated within the High Street Conservation Area, West Bromwich. There are a number of canal related listed structures with those remaining being individual or small groups of sporadically located listed buildings e.g. Oak House, schools and churches. In addition there is also an Area of Potential Archaeological Importance at the 16th century settlement surrounding the Oak House, which survives in a good state of preservation below the modern housing constructed later.

Policy WBP8: Conservation Area

All new development, including extensions within or affecting the setting of the Conservation Area will adopt the principles set out in the Conservation Area Appraisal and Enhancement Scheme. It will preserve and enhance the character and interest of historic spaces and buildings within the Conservation Area.

The Conservation Area key frontages and views will be protected and enhanced.

The Council will use its statutory powers to protect the Listed Buildings within the Conservation Area and the AAP area in general, as well as seeking to preserve and enhance the settings of them by appropriate control over the design of new development in their vicinity.

Within the Conservation Area planning applications will be expected to show sufficient detail, so that the impact of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area can be fully assessed.

The demolition of a building within the Conservation Area will be granted only where it can be shown that its repair is not economically viable, that it is not of reasonable beneficial use, of inappropriate structure or design, or where its removal or replacement would benefit the appearance or character of the area.

Means of funding improvements to the current public realm within the Conservation Area will be investigated and where development takes place it will be expected to contribute to the wider enhancement and interpretation of the area.

3.62 A significant section of the west part of West Bromwich High Street and immediate surrounds was designated a Conservation Area in 1990 and has remained in the current state since alteration in 1997. In 2006 as part of the AAP production consultants were commissioned to produce a report that would identify the way forward for High Street Conservation Area and make necessary recommendations in response to a 'Character Appraisal Study and Boundary Review of High Street, West Bromwich Conservation Area'. The study identifies that insensitive and inappropriate development has detracted from the character and appearance of the special architectural and historic interest and recommends that the boundary of High Street Conservation Area is revised and drawn tightly in order to remove buildings and streetscape that devalue its status and in the interest of establishing a boundary that is defensible and can be rigorously enforced. The proposed revised boundary to the Conservation Area is set out at Figure 5 and is being formally consulted upon as part of the AAP process.

3.63 It is also recommended that opportunities to undertake Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme (HERS) and Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) projects for the

enhancement of existing buildings and frontages, through the reinstatement of period features are realised in order to increase the value of the Conservation Area and that additional, valuable protection should be sought through the designation of buildings worthy of statutory and local list status.

3.64 A Local List of important buildings has been produced by the Council which includes many buildings within the Area Action Plan. The buildings that have been identified for inclusion on the local list, although having no statutory protection, are considered worthy of retaining and the Council will seek to protect these from demolition or inappropriate development. It is proposed to adopt this list as a Supplementary Planning Document in autumn 2011.

3.65 An Article 4 Direction is also in force across certain areas of the existing Conservation Area. This principally relates to residential properties and requires planning permission to be obtained for certain forms of development of dwellings and their grounds, which otherwise would be classified as permitted development. The modification to the Conservation Area will require this to be reviewed and where appropriate, amended.

High Street, West Bromwich Conservation Area Review

Revised Boundary

Existing Boundary

NORTH

May 2010

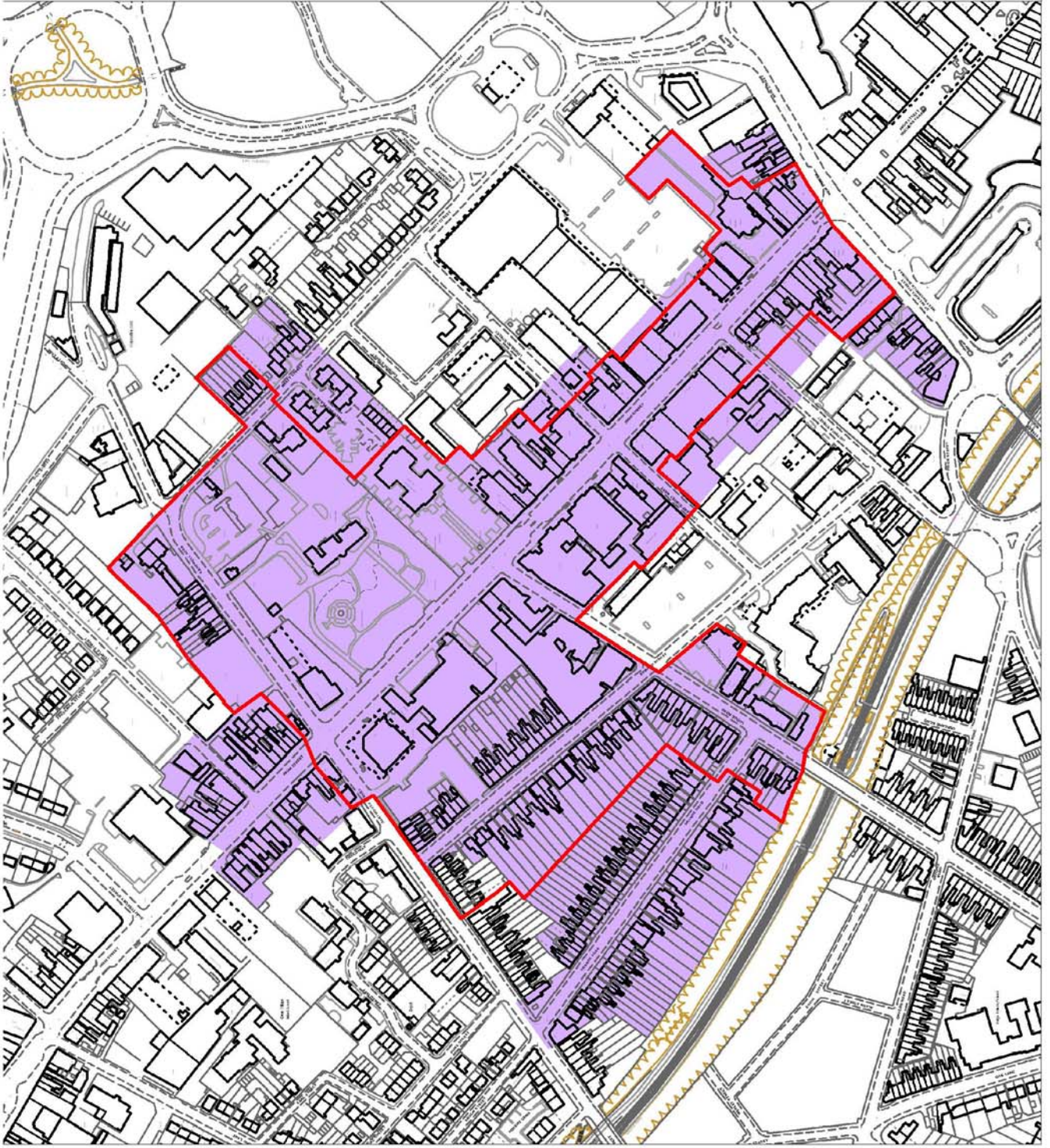
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Policy WBP9: Natural Environment.

The Council will seek to protect and enhance the AAP's natural resources.

Ensure that in making decisions in relation to development that issues on environmental sustainability, resource efficiency and energy efficiency are properly addressed.

All new developments within the AAP area will be required to make a contribution towards measures to offset any adverse air quality impacts of the development in those areas identified in the Air Quality Action Plan.

That opportunities be taken to enliven new development through incorporation of greenery. As part of major new development schemes opportunities will be taken to introduce and provide structural landscaping particularly through the introduction of trees.

3.66 The whole of the Borough has been designated an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) as a result of a number of areas within the Borough exceeding the national air quality objective for annual mean nitrogen dioxide (NO₂). The section of M5 J1 to J2, West Bromwich was identified as exceeding the NO₂ objective. Sandwell Council have prepared an Air Quality Action Plan (2009), which has set out how the Council intends to improve air quality in these areas and provides focus for action to improve Air Quality across Sandwell.

3.67 It is stated that the air quality along sections of road at Trinity Way/Kenrick Way, All Saints Way/Expressway, All Saints Way/Newton Road and Bromford Road is such that they will all require further monitoring.

3.68 As a requirement of PPS25 a flood risk assessment for the Borough has been undertaken as part of the Joint Black Country Core Strategy. A small section of land in the south west of the AAP area, located between the Birmingham Canal and the rail line is identified as being a flood risk. Appropriate assessments will need to be undertaken when these sites come forward for redevelopment to ensure appropriate mitigation measures are put in place. A Surface Water Management Plan is currently being prepared for the Borough and is almost complete. It is expected that any development proposals that come forward will consider flood risk to the site, including surface water run off.

3.69 Within the AAP area there are a number of protected sites, including Dartmouth Park, which is designated as Green Belt as well as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs), Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINCs) and wildlife corridors. Short sections of the Birmingham Canal, Walsall Canal, Balls Hill Branch Canal and the River Tame (which function as wildlife corridors) run through the AAP area. Canals also provide other important functions such as a water resource, heritage and cultural asset, open space and biodiversity, transport artery, tourist attraction and setting for new development.

3.70 As part of the Core Strategy, Environmental Infrastructure Guidance has been produced. It is anticipated that new or improved development will take account of the recommendations in the Action Plan and consider green infrastructure as part of the development. This can involve the inclusion of green roofs, street trees and improvements to pedestrian and cycle routes.

Transportation

Objective 4 - Improving accessibility and movement to and within the area.

3.71 Core Strategy Policy CSP5 sets out the wider transport strategy for the Black Country and the policy reflects strategic outcomes that include, amongst others:

- Enabling expansion of Strategic Centres
- Providing communities with improved access to employment, residential services and other facilities and amenities, with travel choices that are attractive viable and sustainable
- Improving accessibility of employment sites to residential areas and providing reliable access for freight to the national motorway network, and
- Facilitating access to quality employment land.

3.72 The Black Country LEP has also identified its four transport priorities:

- Access to Birmingham Airport
- Improvements to the motorways;
- Reinstatement of Stourbridge to Walsall freight line;
- Black Country Network Improvements.

These are reflected in the proposals contained in this Area Action Plan.

3.73 The large scale development proposed within the town centre and across the AAP area will result in increased travel demands on infrastructure that has seen little major investment since it was originally put in place in the late 1960s/early 1970s. The capacity of the strategic and local road network is limited. Further investment is required in order to accommodate the additional travel demand from new development. This may take the form of improvements to the existing network or the provision of new infrastructure, particularly in the medium to long term. Developments within the town centre will be contributors to the generally increased levels of movement, and will add to the need for transport schemes within the town centre and further afield.

3.74 Black Country Core Strategy Policy TRAN2 sets out the requirements for new development to identify and demonstrate their travel and transportation impacts together with proposals for mitigation, with measures to promote and improve sustainable transport facilities being agreed through Travel Plans and similar measures such as individualised travel planning. Within Sandwell the preparation of Transport Assessments (TA) and Travel Plans (TP) should be in accordance with the Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance: The Preparation of Transport Assessments and Travel Plans, DfT Circular 02/07, DfT 'Guidance on Transport Assessment and DfT Guidance 'Good Practice Guidelines: Delivering Travel Plans through the Planning Process' (April 2009).

3.75 West Bromwich is a highly sustainable location for a wide range of uses. It has a very good public transport network, reducing the need to travel by car. In particular, the town is well served by bus, and also sits on the mid point of the Metro line between Birmingham and Wolverhampton. It is also well connected to the strategic highway network with the A41 linking it to the national motorway network within three minutes drive time, as well as the wider sub-region.

3.76 It is recognised that an increasingly attractive and vibrant town centre with an enhanced retail offer will encourage more trips by local residents and attract more visitor trips as the centre appeals to a wider catchment area. Unless carefully managed, this could conflict with the objective of creating a more pedestrian focused town centre, with a safe walking environment. Thus there is a very strong link to the public realm strategy. The maximisation

of walking, cycling and public transport will be critical to this, however in order for it to compete with its rivals the town centre will need to cater for those arriving by car.

3.77 Traffic and car parking need to be managed in such a way that this does not act as a disincentive to those choosing to arrive by car, whilst ensuring the town is comfortable and attractive. It will be important to encourage through traffic to use other routes so that the appropriate road network is available for people coming into the town centre.

3.78 A number of transportation issues have been identified:

- The number and location of car parking spaces.
- The volume of traffic on the Ringway and High Street.
- The severance effect of highways, particularly the A41 and the Ringway.
- Congestion on the A41.
- Congestion at M5, Junction 1.
- The need to provide transport infrastructure to support the level of growth envisaged in the plan.
- The poor quality of the highway network in the south west part of the Town.
- Capacity and operational issues at West Bromwich Bus Station.

3.79 In addressing these issues the Strategy adopted in the AAP has been to look at a balanced approach to the provision of infrastructure to support the anticipated level of growth whilst at the same time seeking to promote modal shift from the private car. The major interventions required to support the role of West Bromwich as a strategic centre are set out in Core Strategy policy TRAN1.

3.80 Whilst it is not intended that an overall 'predict and provide' approach to transport is adopted, it must be recognised that the scale of growth envisaged, particularly in the medium/longer term, will require some improvements/additions to the Town's highway infrastructure. This remains the case even if relatively challenging modal shift targets are achieved. It is therefore necessary to consider what improvements will be required to take the Town forward.

3.81 In order to both inform the preparation of the AAP and test the various land use and transport scenarios being considered, a computer-based traffic model has been developed covering the whole of the AAP area. The model has been run for the preferred options in both 2011, 2016 and 2026 traffic conditions. The results have informed the proposed Transport Strategy as set out below.

3.82 The model will continue to be refined and the results re-assessed as development proposals become clearer, particularly following receipt of agreed Transport Assessments and Travel Plans. Post construction surveys will also be undertaken to ensure that the model remains a robust tool for evaluating the impact of the plan in future years. Further details regarding the traffic model are contained in Appendix 4.

3.83 New items of transport infrastructure are proposed as part of the regeneration of West Bromwich town centre although, combined with the existing infrastructure, it is unlikely that it will be able to accommodate all the extra journeys that are likely to be generated as a result of the intensification of land use in the town centre area.

3.84 The main aspects of the Transport Strategy will therefore be:

- Reconfigured road network and changes in use of some roads.
- The provision of improved passenger information systems for public transport users.
- Provision of new or improved highway infrastructure where current provision is either inadequate or non-existent.
- Variable message signing to make best use of the Town Centre infrastructure and car parking provision.
- Lower traffic speeds in town centre area within existing and proposed ring roads.
- Changes in amount and location of car parking provision and revised parking policy.
- Additional cycle routes and cycle parking.
- Extension of Metro station platforms (combined with the introduction of new, higher capacity trams).
- Identify how to maximise capacity and use of West Bromwich bus station.
- An Area Wide Travel Plan with a target to reduce the number of work related single occupancy vehicle trips to 55% for new developments.

The following sections provide further detail on the policy approach to transport within the AAP area.

Walking & Cycling.

Policy WBP10: Walking and Cycling.

The Council will promote pedestrian and cycling accessibility in the AAP area through requiring new major development to incorporate a series of measures which will reduce the dominance of the car such as:

- **Giving priority to pedestrian movement between key uses and public transport provision through appropriate design, location and access arrangements.**
- **Creating more direct, safe and secure pedestrian and cycle links through improved lighting, the use of surface level crossings and wider pavements.**
- **Using opportunities provided by development to redesign the roadspace to provide a greater focus on pedestrian and cycle movement.**
- **Ensuring that new development, particularly within the town centre core, provides activity at street level through active frontages.**
- **Ensuring that new development addresses the needs for all population groups to be able to access and use facilities.**
- **Ensuring new development makes provision for cycle facilities such as cycle parking; kit lockers; changing facilities and showers.**

3.85 There are significant residential areas within easy walking and cycling distance of the Town Centre and this is a considerable advantage in developing a cohesive, integrated centre. However, at present access to and from these areas is not always safe or convenient. With its part-pedestrianised High Street and two covered shopping centres the heart of the town is easy to walk around, beyond this, getting to where you want to easily and safely becomes more of a challenge.

3.86 Access from the residential areas to the north is severely hindered by the presence of the Expressway dual carriageway. Between Carters Green and Trinity Way there are six crossing points. Given that much of the Expressway is either in cut or on embankment, none of the existing crossings are 'at-grade'. The existing pedestrian subways beneath the junction of the Expressway with All Saints Way will be replaced with at-grade pedestrian/cycle facilities as part of the A41 underpass major scheme. This will significantly improve access at this important 'Gateway' to the Town. A further improvement is planned to the existing bridge at Reform Street which, in association with the pedestrian and cycle facilities included in the Tesco scheme, will provide a high quality link between the retail core and Dartmouth Park.

3.87 The existing Ringway provides a major barrier in certain locations to pedestrian movement and the ability to provide the necessary priority that should be given to pedestrians and cyclists within the town centre. In addition access from residential areas to the north is severely hindered by the presence of the Expressway dual carriageway and to a lesser degree the Metro Line to the south, with much of it being in cutting, has a similar severing effect.

3.88 The town caters for elderly and disabled people, as well as families with small children and babies, for which good well designed access can make the experience of using facilities far more pleasurable. Whilst some facilities are currently provided for these groups, it is important that as new development and improvement to public realm takes place, access and facilities for these less mobile groups is taken into account and improved, so that they may continue to use the town centre with ease in the future. This applies not just to mobility, but also measures to overcome other disabilities for example sight or hearing. Facilities to cater for the needs of families with young children will also be an essential element of new development, if they are to have full access to the range of facilities that the town centre offers in the future.

3.89 As part of the Public Realm Strategy it is intended to create strong pedestrian links within and between new developments such as those at All Saints, Eastern Gateway and the new Sandwell College.

3.90 In addition to these general improvements, more specific proposals have been identified:

- Dartmouth Street/Sandwell Road between the Metro stop and the proposed All Saints office development.
- Lodge Road between the proposed multi-storey car park, Metro stop and High Street.
- Clearly defined high quality pedestrian links between the proposed new multi-storey car parks at George Street and the Lyng and the retail core.

3.91 These routes will form an integral part of the overall public realm strategy outlined in Policy WBP3. Specific proposals relating to the provision of walking and cycling facilities are set out in Appendix 5.

3.92 The Council has identified a cycle network in its Cycle Strategy: Cycling In Sandwell. The routes within the AAP area are shown at Figure 6. As with the highway network provision is relatively poor to the south of the Town Centre in comparison with the north. The

introduction of the 20 mph zone will mean that the majority of the town centre highway network will be 'cycle friendly'. All new or improved highway infrastructure will incorporate appropriate cycle facilities within their design. However this needs to be considered within the context of a network of safer routes as identified in the cycle strategy. A number of potential new routes have been identified which will complement the existing network and can be brought forward through the AAP Transport Strategy. These routes are designed to link areas of new development with both the Town Centre and the wider cycle network. The following new routes are proposed:

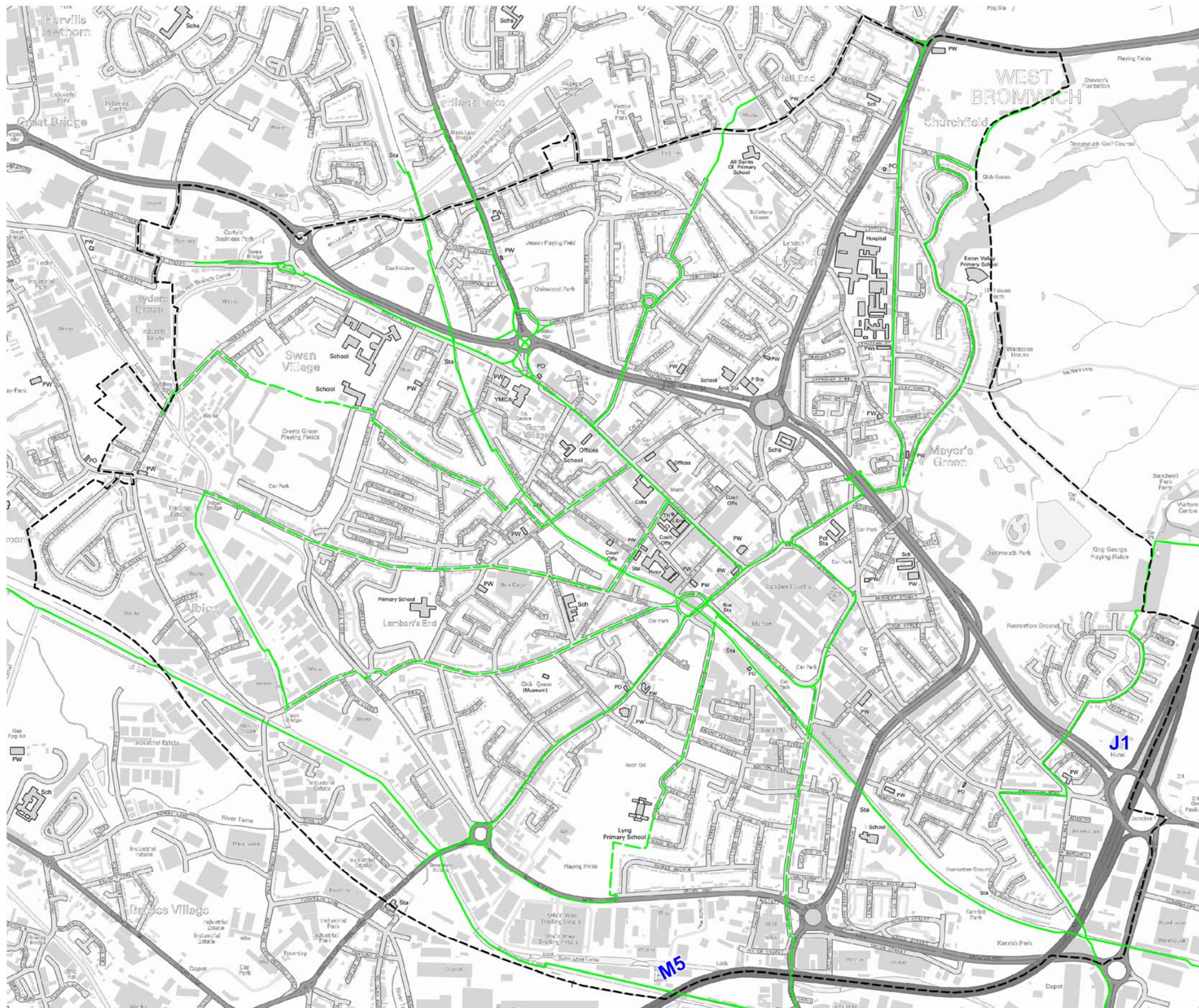
- Spon Lane corridor.
- The Lyng 'spine'.
- Albion Road/Oak Road corridor.
- Greets Green Road/Wood Lane corridor.
- Turner Street/Dartmouth Street corridor.

Figure 6 shows the proposed cycle route network in the AAP area, identifying proposed new or improved facilities which are detailed in Appendix 5.

Figure 6

Existing and Proposed Cycle routes

- AAP Boundary
- Existing Cycle routes
- - - Proposed Cycle routes



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Sustainable Transport & Travel Plans.

Policy WBP11: Travel Plans

In order to promote modal shift and limit and manage the amount of traffic generated by development, the Council will require all major new development proposals to be supported by a Travel Plan in accordance with the targets and measures identified in the Area Wide Travel Plan, for the AAP area.

Whilst the Travel Plan will primarily apply to new developments, many of the measures included in it could be applied to existing town centre users and the Council will encourage their take-up through such initiatives as Company Travel Wise and Car Share Sandwell.

3.93 The Plan promotes significant new development and it will be important to limit and manage the amount of traffic generated by this new development. An Area Wide Travel Plan has been developed for the AAP area with the objective of establishing a broad framework for how individual travel plans related to specific development proposals should be prepared in order to ensure a consistent approach. The aims of the travel plan are:

- To reduce congestion, car parking difficulties and other transport related problems in and around West Bromwich that are likely to arise from increased retail and employment activity in town centre.
- To widen travel choice and perceptions of travel choice for employees and shoppers travelling to West Bromwich.
- To bring about an improvement in air quality.
- To bring about the use of a more sustainable mix of transport methods.
- To achieve a target for work related single occupancy trips to new developments of 55% of all person trips.
- To move towards achieving this target for all work related trips into the AAP area.

3.94 The Area Wide Travel Plan will include the following measures. These will need to be prioritised and in some cases specific budgets identified:

- Travel Plans for all existing businesses in the area.
- Companies to join Sandwell Company TravelWise – further subsidise travel cards, e.g. match 5% TravelWise discount, i.e. 10% in total.
- Set up public area on carsharesandwell.com – subsidise companies to join.
- Promote homeworking, video-conferencing and use of satellite offices to reduce the need to commute.
- Extensive use of home delivery services to be promoted.
- Regular events to promote sustainable modes, especially showcase routes, Metro and TWM/Centro Partnership services.

- Other events: competitions for participating companies, free one-day Centro cards for Public Transport try-out, Dr Bike sessions at companies and in public areas, information sessions and displays for car sharing, routes, timetables, info cards, other giveaways.
- Special Website for West Bromwich Area Wide Travel Plan.
- Set up a Transport Management Association – companies to bring travel issues to attention of Highway Authority and act upon them swiftly, i.e. a partnership but the companies have to actively promote sustainable travel in return and prove that people are changing to sustainable modes.
- Contingency plans for highway problems to be devised and backed up by installation of VMS.
- Review car parking policy to enable parking spaces to be dedicated for people who car share as part of an incentive package.
- Incentivise take up of recommendations of Sandwell bus network review as carried out by Centro.

The Area Wide Travel Plan is contained at Appendix 6.

Public Transport

Policy WBP12: Public Transport

The Council will work to implement the agreed recommendations of the Bus Network Review are implemented and also that further local reviews are carried out in response to new development.

The Council will seek to implement measures to increase capacity at West Bromwich Bus Station.

New development will be required to make appropriate provision for public transport access, either through on-site facilities or via contributions to off-site works.

3.95 West Bromwich has no railway station, the nearest being Sandwell and Dudley some 1.5 km to the south. Strategic public transport links are provided by Line 1 of the Midland Metro tram system and by high frequency bus services. The cities of Birmingham and Wolverhampton and the majority of towns in the Black Country are connected by either metro or by a single bus journey.

3.96 An initial examination of the bus route map for the AAP area (see Figure 7) indicates that the area is well served in terms of network coverage. However, some areas are poorly served in the evenings and/or weekends. For example, the large industrial area to the south and west of Brandon Way is particularly poorly served both in terms of route coverage and, frequency and period of service. Whilst this is not surprising given the nature of the existing land use, the future shift towards residential development in this area proposed in the Plan will result in changed demand.

3.97 Centro intend to carry out a Network Review in Sandwell early in 2012. This will be undertaken in conjunction with the Council. Whilst this review will primarily concentrate on

ensuring that the network meets the needs of the Borough as of 'today', it will clearly be necessary to have a mechanism to ensure that future needs resulting from redevelopment can be met. This is particularly important for the AAP area where significant land use changes are envisaged such as the redevelopment of industrial areas in the south west of West Bromwich for housing. The Council will therefore work to ensure that the recommendations of the Network Review are implemented and also that further local reviews are carried out in response to new development.

3.98 Whilst of relatively recent construction, it is apparent that the bus station is operating at or beyond capacity. This will, in future years, act as a constraint on improving bus patronage and service provision. The proposed down-grading of the southern section of the Ringway will provide the opportunity to consider locating some stands on the public highway thus increasing the overall capacity of the facility. The operation of the signalised access to the bus station on the Ringway will also be reviewed with the aim of reducing the level of congestion experienced by buses exiting the station. This will contribute to service reliability, especially for none terminating services.

3.99 Line 1 of Midland Metro has now been in operation for around a decade. The existing trams, and some stops, experience overcrowding at peak periods. The granting of DfT 'Full Approval' status to the Birmingham City Centre Extension and Enhancement Package in February 2011 will result in the introduction of new higher capacity trams and associated modifications to existing stops to help alleviate these capacity problems.

Figure 7

Public Transport Network

- AAP Boundary
- Bus Routes
- Metro Line



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Highway Infrastructure

Policy WBP13: Highway Infrastructure

New or improved highway infrastructure will be provided to support the planned levels of growth within the AAP area.

Major projects (those over £5m) will be subject of bids for Department for Transport major scheme funding with the required local contributions being drawn from the CIL and other sources. Schemes under £5m will be funded through a combination of CIL, Local Transport Plan funding and other DfT grants where appropriate.

Key transport priorities are;

- **Junction improvements on the A41**
- **Extended Town Centre Ringway**
- **Modifications to the Ringway south of High Street**
- **South-West bypass**

Site specific transport measures, such as access or road safety improvements, required as part of new developments and identified through their respective transport assessments/travel plans should continue to be funded directly by the development.

3.100 The AAP area enjoys good strategic highway links both to the rest of the region and nationally. The A41 runs west - east through the area linking it Wolverhampton, Dudley (via the A461), Smethwick and Birmingham. It also provides the link to the national network at junction 1 of the M5 motorway which lies on the extreme eastern edge of the AAP area. The A4031/A4034 runs north - south through the town providing links to Walsall and Sutton Coldfield to the north, and the south west of the conurbation. The junction of these two routes lies immediately north of the Town Centre and is one of the major 'Gateways' to the town.

3.101 The combination of the A41 (The Expressway), the A4031 (Trinity Way) and A4182 (Kenrick Way/Kelvin Way) provides a partial ring of bypasses around the Town. At the time of their construction in the late 1960s/early 1970s, it was intended that the unclassified Brandon Way would ultimately complete the south west section of the ring via Claypit Lane. However, this never actually came to fruition.

3.102 Locally, vehicular traffic is distributed around the Town via series of secondary routes which radiate from the Ringway that encircles the current retail core. The majority of these routes are narrow with high levels of frontage development and on-street parking.

3.103 Congestion on the Strategic Highway Network continues to be a problem in the AAP area. The SHN plays two important but, to a degree, competing roles; i) It carries large volumes of through traffic, particularly trips to and from Birmingham and ii) The junctions at Carters Green and All Saints Way on the A41, Junction 1 of the M5 the Trinity Way/High Street Junction all serve as gateways to the town centre for both car and public transport trips. Problems resulting from the latter will only increase as the Town experiences the growth resulting from its role as one of the Black Country's four strategic centres. In addressing the problems at these junctions, the requirement to serve both functions needs to be considered. In the case of Junction 1, the impact on the operation of the motorway itself is also of major importance.

3.104 The existing highway network is shown on Figure 8. The lack of strategic provision in the south west corner of the Town is readily apparent. This results in vehicles travelling south to north west having to journey east and then utilise the A41 or travel through the Town Centre, picking up the A41 at Carters Green. There is a particular issue with vehicles travelling to and from Smethwick which currently use Junction 1 to access the A41.

3.105 The highway network has a significant severance effect. The A41 Expressway runs in a segregated corridor which effectively forms the northern boundary of the Town Centre. There are relatively few points at which this dual carriageway can be crossed and thus it deters pedestrian movement from the large residential areas immediately north of the Town Centre. In considering improvements to the A41, the need to provide high quality safe pedestrian and cycle routes across it must be a priority.

3.106 The Ringway around the existing retail core also has a major severing effect. Both the design of the road and the amount of traffic which continues to use it, contribute to its impact. This was lessened to some degree, as a result of the conversion of the Ringway from one-way to two-way working in 2001. The works included the infilling of most of the pedestrian subways and their replacement with at-grade crossing facilities.

3.107 The traffic modelling work undertaken to support the AAP shows that much of the traffic using the Ringway is not through traffic but 'destination' traffic. This is particularly true of the Bull Street/Reform Street section which serves a multi-storey car park and will also serve one of the two new car parks which form part of the Tesco development. This area also provides the key access points to Dartmouth Park and Sandwell Valley beyond so pedestrian movement is also particularly important in this location.

3.108 As stated above, improvements and additions to the highway network within the AAP area will be required to support the scale of growth envisaged in the plan even if the modal shift levels anticipated in the Area Wide Travel Plan are achieved. These changes to the highway network will consist of the following:

- Junction improvements on the A41 Expressway at All Saints Way and Carters Green.
- An extended Ringway to the north of the retail core to enable the expanded shopping area to be fully integrated.
- Modifications to the Ringway south of High Street to discourage through traffic, improve integration with sites to the south and improve public transport and pedestrian safety.
- A south west bypass to complete the route between Kenrick Way (A4182) and the A41 at Swan Village.
- Possible additional junction improvements to the south and east of the centre.

These proposals are detailed in Appendix 5 below and are illustrated on Figure 9.

3.109 The Black Country Core Strategy identifies requirements for improvements at Junctions 9 and 10 of the M6 and Junctions 1 and 2 of the M5. The Highways Agency has highlighted particular concerns in relation to the M5 junctions where detailed modelling work has identified they are likely to reach operational capacity during the early part of the plan period. This requirement has subsequently been carried forward into the draft West Midlands Local Transport Plan 3 which came into affect in April 2011. The final nature of the improvements at Junction 1 has yet to be determined but LTP3 identifies the proposal as a priority for the period 2016-26.

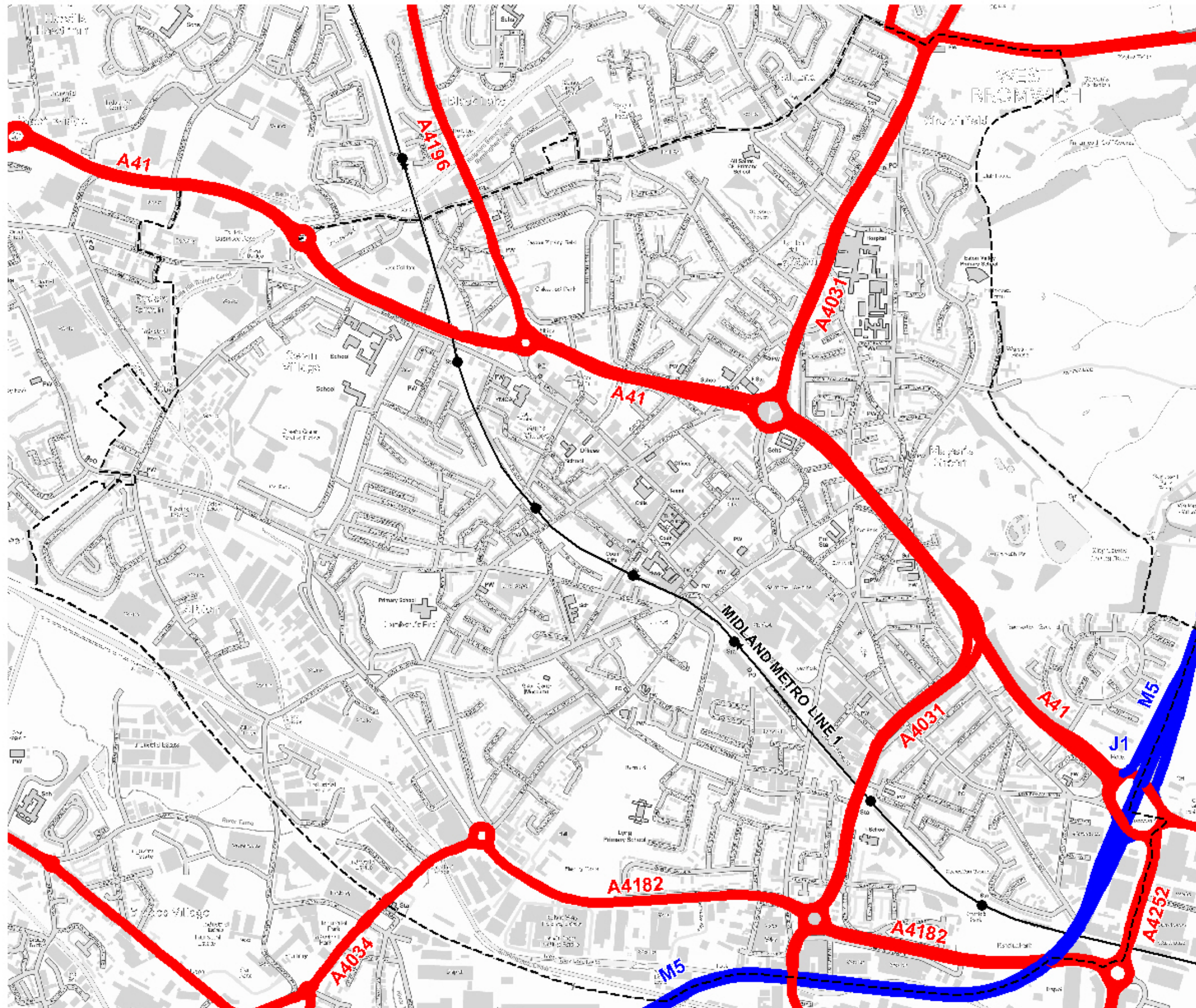
3.110 In the short term, the Council will work with the Highways Agency to minimise any impact either through the Area Wide Travel Plan (see above) or through traffic management proposals. In addition, the proposed new South West Bypass will re-route some traffic away from this key junction. However there will remain a requirement to carry out improvements at this location and the Council will work with the Highways Agency to develop proposals and produce a major scheme business case to support a bid for Department for Transport funding.

3.111 The successful achievement of the proposals outlined above will be dependent upon the identification of appropriate funding and delivery mechanisms. It will also be dependent on joint working between all stakeholders, including the Highways agency, Centro, neighbouring authorities and the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership in order to ensure the timely and effective delivery of the mitigation identified, linked to appropriate phases of development.

Figure 8

Existing Transport Network

- AAP Boundary
- Motorway
- Strategic Highway Network
- Metro Line
- Stop



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Traffic Management

Policy WBP14: Traffic Management Schemes

The Council will adopt traffic management measures within the Town Centre aimed at making the most efficient use of the highway network whilst maintaining appropriate levels of vehicular access to all parts of the centre.

Vehicle speeds will be reduced and road safety improved with the Town Centre through the introduction of a 20mph zone.

3.112 The changes to the town's highway infrastructure proposed in the plan along with new car parking will give an opportunity to create a more structured traffic management system within the central area. Whilst further work is required to identify such measures as one-way streets, the following specific proposals will assist in making the most efficient use of the infrastructure within the Town Centre.

3.113 It is proposed to make the whole of the Town Centre a 20mph zone. This zone will be bounded by the A41 to the north, Trinity Way to the east and a combination of Sams Lane/Lyttleton Street, Cambridge Street/Oak Lane and the metro line to the south and west (see Figure 9). The 20mph zone will improve safety for all road users, particularly pedestrians and cyclists. Lower speeds enable measures to be implemented which would be undesirable or inappropriate where a higher speed limit existed. Traffic modelling work carried out to support this AAP shows that the introduction of such a zone will also discourage through traffic from using the Town Centre.

3.114 The proposed alterations to the Ringway associated with the expanded retail core will require a review of direction signs on the approaches to, and within, the AAP area. In the longer term a more far reaching review of direction signage will be required following implementation of the South West Bypass. This will enable traffic to be routed away from congestion spots where more appropriate alternatives exist, e.g., signing traffic from Oldbury to Wednesbury via Brandon Way and the new bypass.

3.115 A Variable Message Signing (VMS) will be introduced which will operate at two levels. Strategic signing on the approaches to town will warn drivers of congestion and advise on the most appropriate routes for particular destinations, whilst at a more local level, signs will advise on car park availability.

3.116 There is currently no specific signing for delivery areas in the Town Centre. The expansion of the retail core and the associated increase in service yards means that specific signing for delivery vehicles would be beneficial. Like the VMS signing for car parks, this would encourage delivery vehicles to use the most appropriate routes.

Figure 9

Transport Proposals

-   Highway Alterations
-  Boundary of 20 mph Zone
-  Proposed New Pedestrian Route
-  Proposed New Cycle Route
-  Proposed New Car Park
-  Potential locations for Hackney Carriage Rank

Scale: Not to Scale

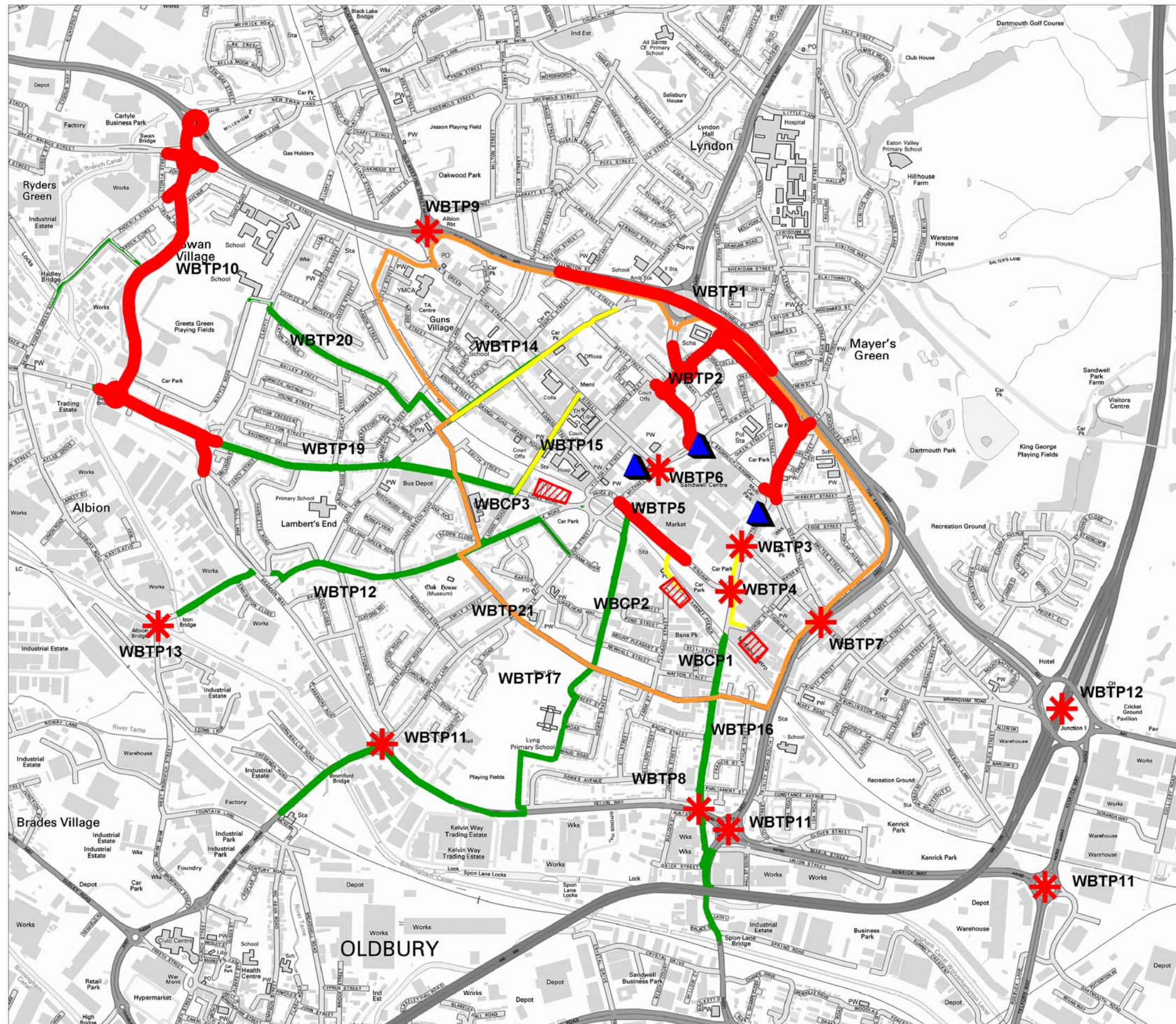


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Car Parking.

Policy WBP15: Car Parking

The Council will make provision through the allocation of sites for an appropriate level of convenient and suitably managed car parking to facilitate the regeneration and viability of the town centre.

Car parks should be located adjacent to the ring road and strategic highway network, to prevent the core area becoming congested and to minimise conflict with pedestrian movement.

Proposed new car parking, whether publicly owned or as part of new development, should seek to make the most efficient and viable use of land. Where appropriate decked or multi-storey solutions should be considered. New car parks will generally be available to all Town Centre users, the only exceptions to this being where dedicated spaces are required for key operational reasons or in association with Travel Plan targets for car share users.

Where new development takes place on existing public car park sites it will normally be a requirement that the lost spaces are re-provided unless previously agreed with the Local Planning Authority.

All new car parking, whether publicly owned or as part of new development, should provide 6% of spaces reserved for mobility impaired users unless otherwise agreed with the Local Planning authority and in consultation with representative groups.

A flexible approach will be taken to car parking for new residential development. Reduced levels of car parking provision may be accepted, particularly in association with developments that are; within, or close to, the town centre core; close to quality public transport; where targeted at low car ownership groups; and where infill developments reflect local distinctiveness.

3.117 The location of car parks plays a significant part in the efficient use, or otherwise, of the local highway network. At present the majority of spaces are located north of High Street which results in the vehicles travelling from the south having to make unnecessary journeys around or through the Town in order to access them. However, the provision of significantly more spaces in the south of the Town designed to remedy this would overload the relatively poor highway network, particularly in the south west. For this reason, new parking provision in this area is linked to the provision of new or improved highway infrastructure as detailed above.

In developing the future parking strategy the following was considered:

- The role of car parking within the wider transport and land use strategy.
- The need to locate parking to meet development needs and be accessible from the strategic highway network.
- The need to make more effective use of the existing provision via a variable message service (see para 3.115 above).

- The development of an Area Wide Travel Plan to promote modal shift and thus reduce overall parking demand (see Policy WBP13 above).
- The need to make the most efficient use of land within the Town.
- The quantum and location of 'Blue Badge' spaces (dedicated for mobility impaired users).

3.118 The provision of good quality, conveniently located car parks to the south of High Street would significantly reduce the number of vehicle movements on Bull Street and High Street (East) as well as other roads within the Town Centre and is therefore considered to be a priority. However, the distance that people are prepared to walk from their car is a critical factor. Therefore, any new provision should not only be located adjacent to the strategic network to reduce the need for circulatory trips but also where good quality pedestrian links to the remainder of the town can be provided. Where new development does not include site specific car parking, then the location of the nearest 'blue badge' spaces should be checked to see if access criteria are met. Where this is not the case then appropriate provision must be made within the development in order to comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.

3.119 The long term strategy requires the provision of three new car parks. The first of these would be located in the George Street area associated with the redevelopment of the Eastern Gateway South site. This car park would initially comprise of surface spaces for visitors to the retail and commercial premises in the south-eastern quadrant of the town, the Eastern Gateway and Sandwell College developments. Access would be from the strategic network at Trinity Way with the possibility of an additional egress on Spon Lane Pedestrian linkage to the core of the centre via George Street and Spon Lane would be improved as part of the public realm works detailed in Appendix 3. In the longer term a decked car park could be constructed here should future developments justify this. Decked car parks ensure a more sustainable and efficient use of land in a town centre location.

3.120 The second proposed site for a car park is on the northern boundary of the Lyng Lane Industrial Estate adjacent to the Metro Line. This car park should contain a mix of short and long stay spaces and decking should be considered in order to make the most efficient use of the site. Pedestrian access to the retail core would be via a new crossing of the Metro Line and at grade crossing of the southern section of the Ringway at Metro Plaza.

3.121 The location of these two car parks would enable traffic visiting the town from the south to access good quality, secure parking without the need to make a significant journey round either the Ringway or Trinity Way/Expressway.

3.122 As a result of increased demand from an expanded office quarter around the western end of High Street, a third car park will be required to serve that area. This will be located at Izons Road. Surface-only provision will be made initially but the potential to construct either a decked or multi-storey car park remains for the longer term should this be justified. Improvements to pedestrian routes along Lodge Road will link this car park to the new office provision.

3.123 The location of all three car parks and their points of access will be designed to minimise the need for vehicles to use roads within the core area to reach them.

3.124 All 'Blue Badge' parking in West Bromwich town centre was surveyed in February 2011. This survey showed that there is adequate provision within the Town Centre as a whole. However it also highlighted that demand for spaces frequently outstrips supply in the surface car parks to the north of Queens Square. As these car parks will be incorporated into the Tesco development, it is recommended that a further survey is conducted following its

opening in order to understand if any changes to either location or number of spaces is required in this area.

Provision for Hackney Carriages/Private Hire Vehicles.

Policy WBP16 : Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles

The Council will support an appropriate level of convenient, well located Hackney Carriage ranks to cater for existing license numbers and any future increases.

Where major new development takes place, developers should consult the Local Planning Authority and representative groups to ascertain the likely demand for specific Hackney Carriage facilities and safe drop-off/pick-up points for Private Hire Vehicles and provide these where appropriate.

3.125 Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles (PHVs), often collectively referred to jointly as 'taxis', can provide a means of access to shops, leisure, social activities and schools, especially for people who have mobility problems. For those without access to a car, taxis can supplement public transport, cycling and walking and provide variety of choice. Also some choose taxis as a convenient alternative to their own cars. This is of particular and increasing importance within West Bromwich Town Centre as the evening economy expands as new leisure, bar and restaurant uses come on stream in future years.

3.126 The number of Hackney Carriages licenses within Sandwell has risen in recent years. They represent a small but increasing share of the overall modal split. It is essential that appropriate provision be made within the town centre to avoid unauthorised parking and access, which may be a danger to pedestrians and hinder the lawful use of the highway network by other vehicles. In addition new developments will, where appropriate, be expected to incorporate provision for taxis, as part of their overall design and be highlighted within the Transport Assessments/Travel Plans of such proposals.

3.127 Figure 9 shows locations being considered for possible additional Hackney Carriage ranks around the Town Centre to cater for both increased demand and changes to the source of demand. Each site will need to be subject of a full assessment of its impact on highway safety, frontagers and other road users and some may ultimately prove unsuitable.

Delivery of the Transport Strategy.

3.128 The delivery mechanisms for the main aspects of the Transport Strategy outlined above are:

- *Reconfigured road network and changes in use of some roads.*
Delivered through West Midlands Local Transport Plan (LTP) Integrated Transport (IT) Block and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).
- *The provision of improved passenger information systems for public transport users.*
Delivered through Centro IT Block and by public transport operators.
- *Provision of new or improved highway infrastructure where the existing is inadequate.*

Delivered through Department for Transport (DfT) Major Schemes funding, LTP IT Block and CIL.

- *Variable message signing to make best use of the Town Centre infrastructure and car parking provision.*
Delivered through LTP IT Block, developer contributions and CIL.
- *Lower traffic speeds in town centre area within existing and proposed ring roads.*
Delivered through LTP IT Block, developer contributions and CIL.
- *Changes in amount and location of car parking provision and revised parking policy.*
Delivered through CIL and directly through developments.
- *Additional cycle routes and cycle parking.*
Delivered through LTP IT Block, CIL and Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF).
- *Modification of Metro station platforms (combined with the introduction of new, higher capacity trams).*
Delivered as part of the Birmingham City Centre Extension and Enhancement Package Major scheme.
- *Identify how to maximise capacity and use of West Bromwich bus station.*
Delivered through Centro capital programme/IT Block.
- *An Area Wide Travel Plan with a target to reduce the number of work related single occupancy vehicle trips to 55% for new developments.*
Delivered through LTP IT Block, CIL and Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF).

Full details of the delivery mechanisms and the bodies/agencies responsible for the individual projects that make up the transport strategy are contained in Appendix 7.

WBP17 – National Planning Policy Framework – Presumption in favour of sustainable development

When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. It will always work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area. Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan (and, where relevant, with policies in neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking account whether:

- **Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or**
- **Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.**

PART 3 – Opportunity Areas and Proposals

4.1 The Area Action Plan has been divided into a number of sub areas where opportunities have been grouped. These are identified on Figure 10.

4.2 Within some of the Opportunity Areas, proposals identified may already be fairly well advanced in construction and are likely to be delivered in the short term. These proposals will help in starting to shape the area on which to create the status of a regional town centre, and to enable further change to take place.

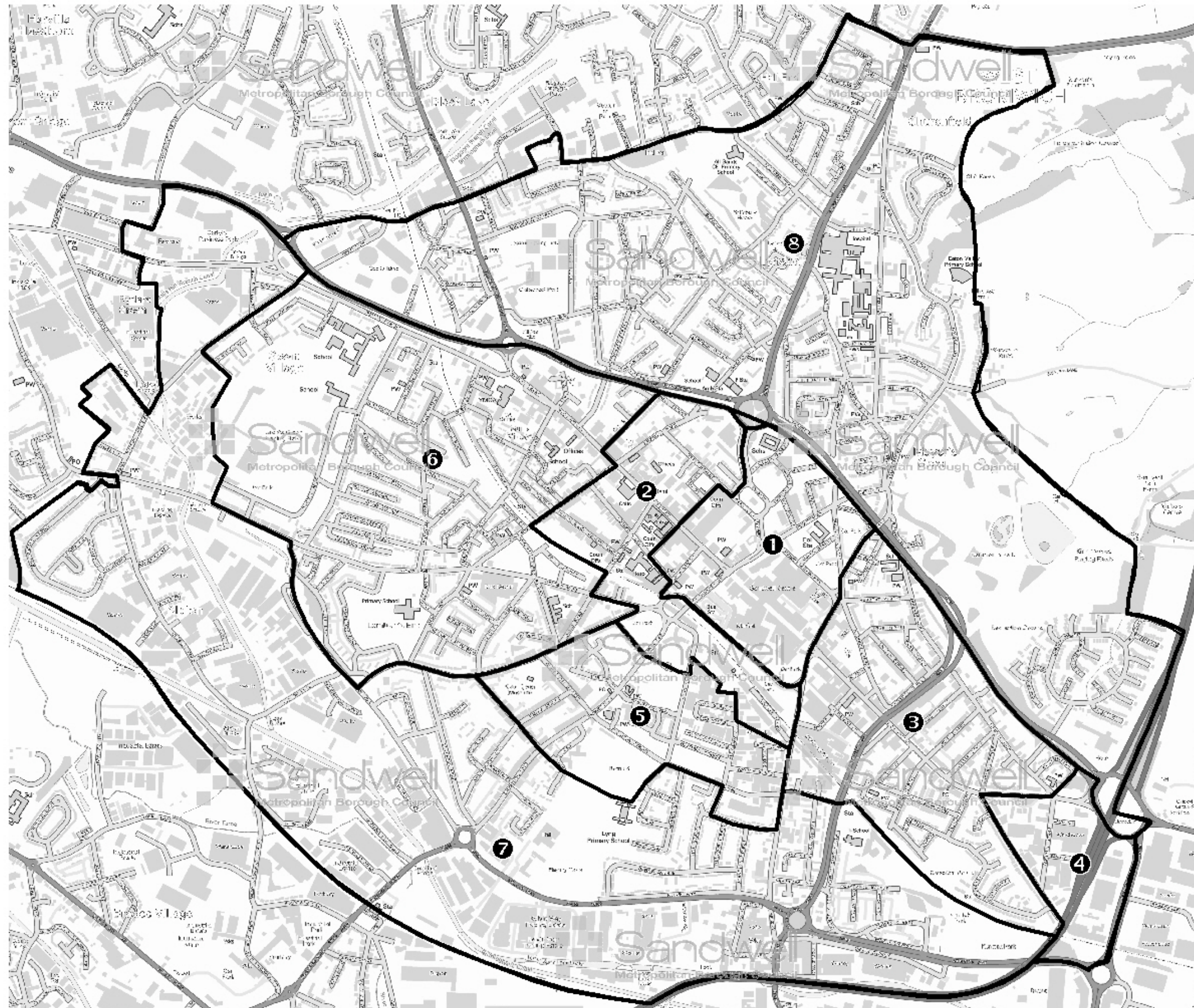
4.3 Some of the opportunity areas are considered to be more long term and in some instances will require other proposals to have come forward first before they can be delivered. In the meantime, further guidance may be produced, such as detailed Supplementary Planning Documents or Masterplans which will assist in bringing the sites forward which meet the overall aims and objectives of this Plan.

4.4 These proposals have resulted in changes to the Unitary Development Plan and therefore Figure 19 shows changes to the Policies Map.

Figure 10

Opportunity Areas

- 1 Primary Shopping Area
- 2 New Office Cultural Quarter
- 3 Eastern Gateway
- 4 Junction 1
- 5 Lyng
- 6 Carters Green/Greets Green
- 7 Brandon Way - Canalside West Brom
- 8 Northern Residential Quarter



NORTH

May 2011

NOT TO SCALE

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OPPORTUNITY AREA 1: PRIMARY SHOPPING AREA

Policy Statement

4.2.1 The retail core is the focus for predominantly retail uses and frontages with a small proportion of complimentary uses, including A2 and A3 uses. However, the prime function of the **Primary Shopping Area** must not be compromised through the permission of excessive numbers of A2 and A3 uses. Within the Primary Shopping Area uses other than retail at ground floor will be considered depending on their impact on the overall vitality and viability of the centre.

4.2.2 Major new retail development will be encouraged to locate within West Bromwich's Primary Shopping Area. Mixed use developments incorporating retail provision and complimentary uses will be permitted but only where the overall retail offer of the retail core will not be prejudiced.

4.2.3 Sites within the retail core originally identified in the 2004 UDP and consolidated within the West Bromwich AAP are identified for the provision of new retail development and the refurbishment of existing provision.

General Design, Character, Streetscape and Linkages

4.2.4 The standard of the public realm within the Primary Shopping Area will be important in setting and showcasing a benchmark for the quality of the environment within the town centre. The West Bromwich Town Centre: Streetscape Strategy establishes that the public realm within the Primary Shopping Area will be improved in accordance with the palettes set out for the Boulevard, High Street Conservation and Secondary areas. In addition to this, the High Street and Bull Street (within the Primary Shopping Area) will be pedestrianised.

4.2.5 The general character of the area will be focussed on the pedestrian and the ease and safety of movement with pavements widened, roads narrowed and areas identified for the creation of public squares. Vehicles will be restricted from certain areas and from achieving certain speeds through the use of covert more natural traffic calming measures. Tree planting and different surface materials will be used as traffic calming measures.

4.2.6 Existing linkages within the Primary Shopping Area to other parts of the town centre and edge of centre areas will be improved, therefore providing more legible access to public transport interchanges, public spaces and local housing and facilities.

Planning Obligations

New developments within the Primary Shopping Area will generate contributions towards the transport strategy and public realm improvements. Where developments include a residential element, contributions may be required for the provision of Affordable Housing and provision and maintenance of open space depending upon the number of dwellings provided.

TESCO LED RETAIL EXPANSION AND TOWN SQUARE PHASE II

- Proposal Site: **WBPr1** : Tesco Retail Expansion
- Site size: 12.8 ha approx.
- Allocation: A1 Retail with A3, A4, A5 and D2 uses
- Timescale: Short term commencement, long term completion

4.2.7 The Tesco led retail expansion adjacent to the Expressway, Cronehills Linkway and

Reform Street will play a pivotal role in the regeneration and revitalisation of a town centre site that will intensify the retail offer of the town.

4.2.8 The development will comprise of a Tesco Store, a second large anchor store, other comparison shopping and an element of complimentary leisure and A3, A4 and A5 uses to the north of the public square, which will generate a vibrant mixed use environment providing opportunity for evening economy. The scheme is to be developed as part of a phased approach and will also deliver Phase II of the Town Square.

4.2.9 The Public Realm Strategy highlights that any scheme on this site should establish links across the site to aid permeability and improve existing links to the existing town centre, public transport nodes and other notable destinations and landmarks. As part of the development, a central link should be established to provide a key linkage across the High Street, joining together the Tesco scheme, the Public, the High Street gateway around the distinctive St. Michael's Church spire, the bus station and the nodal point where routes to the Lyng and the Central Metro Stop converge.

4.2.10 It is identified in the interest of creating a well designed, usable space that the scheme establishes a number of nodal points at strategic locations and that gateway areas to and within the retail expansion are treated with high quality design and materials. It is important that new sociable spaces are created within the retail expansion.

4.2.11 It is important that the design of the scheme fully considers its outward projection by providing an active frontage to Cronehills Linkway that will resonate high quality development, as this area will form the northern gateway to the retail expansion and will influence the perception of the new West Bromwich.

4.2.12 There are a number of other strategies to be implemented in West Bromwich Town Centre that will have an impact on, or are impacted by the development of this site. The two West Bromwich Town Centre Streetscape Strategies, which were produced in 2007 and 2009, identify a number of links on site and in close proximity that should be incorporated in the development in order to aid connectivity and permeability. The strategies also advocate the creation of social/meeting spaces as part of the retail expansion.

4.2.13 The regeneration of the area will incorporate the proposals of the Transport Strategy to extend the Ringway to the north, integrating the site into the retail core and enabling improved access.

Delivery and Implementation

4.2.14 A reserved matters planning application was granted permission in August 2008 for the design, external appearance and landscaping pursuant to condition 1 of planning permission DC/01/38551 for demolition of existing buildings and redevelopment to provide a covered shopping centre comprising a large retail store (including ancillary uses) and retail shops (Class A1), restaurants/cafes (Class A3), other service uses (Class A2 and sui generis), leisure uses (Class D2) and a petrol filling station together with realignment of the Ringway, access and other highway works, car parking, landscaping and other related works.

4.2.15 A full application (DC/09/50896) was submitted in August 2009 which finalised the proposal and provides information regarding the planned phasing. It is envisaged that the proposal will be developed in two phases, with the main Tesco and a number of retail units developed in Phase One and the remainder of retail units and the leisure offer in Phase Two. The decision notice was issued in May 2010.

The public realm improvements are outlined in Appendix 1.

4.2.16 Since October 2008, the Tesco scheme has been the subject of a fundamental commercial and design review in order to ensure it can be delivered viably in the current economic climate. In revising the scheme, the Tesco design team has also taken account of CABE's observations and comments to the earlier proposals as well as consulting with Sandwell Council. The scheme has also been revised to ensure a pedestrian link to Queen's Square.

4.2.17 A revised scheme was submitted for the two phases of development providing an increase in retail floorspace and a lower amount of leisure per sq.m..

Phasing of Development/Form of Application

4.2.18 The principal change is to deliver a scheme in two distinct phases resulting in the submission of a hybrid planning application.

4.2.19 Comprehensive phased redevelopment of the site to provide a shopping centre development (up to 53,000 sq m):

- (i) Detailed planning permission for a large retail store (including ancillary uses) (Class A1), other retail shops (Class A1), food and drink uses (Class A3), leisure use (Class D2), petrol filling station, together with the realignment of the Ringway, access and other highway works, car parking, public realm, landscaping and other related works (i.e. Phase 1)
- (ii) Outline planning permission for retail shops (Class A1), decked car park, public realm (including link to Queens Square Shopping Centre) and landscaping, a hotel (Class C1) and other related works (i.e. Phase 2).

4.2.20 This approach will support the delivery of a contemporary development consisting of modern retail units of varying sizes and thereby remain within the requirements of the Council's masterplanning framework, the AAP. The 2009 revised scheme for the site will remain the subject of an environmental assessment taking account of the two phased approach.

QUEEN'S SQUARE

- Proposal Site: **WBPr2** : Queen's Square
- Site size: 2.9 ha approx.
- Allocation: A1 Retail with a small proportion of complimentary uses
- Timescale: Medium term development opportunity

4.2.21 Queen's Square in its current condition is somewhat dated and unwelcoming for a main indoor shopping mall serving a strategic centre within the Black Country. In its current condition, Queen's Square would be a poor contrast to the new Tesco led retail expansion.

4.2.22 The expansion and refurbishment of Queen's Square is to be closely linked with the Tesco led retail expansion and will effectively be incorporated within the phased approach. This should provide a seamless link to the new retail extension in terms of design, scale and ambience by way of a pedestrian link from the new Tesco development.

4.2.23 The development will be primarily retail and will incorporate the creation and improvement of new and existing pedestrian links through to the retail expansion to the north and High Street, King's Square and the transport interchange to the south. There may be

scope in the longer term to incorporate additional development on the edge of the site for either residential or maybe hotel uses.

4.2.24 The refurbishment of the site will incorporate and enhance the existing connecting link through Queen's Square to the proposed retail expansion. It will provide an important catalyst for retail within Queen's Square and the town centre as a whole. Retail in King's Square and along the High Street will also benefit if links to Queen's Square are improved.

Delivery and Implementation

4.2.25 Planning permission was granted in July 2006 for the major redevelopment, refurbishment and extension of the existing shopping centre to provide a mixed use scheme with residential units. Whilst this permission has now expired, it is still envisaged that future refurbishment of the centre will be forthcoming in line with the additional retail development for Tesco although the previous proposal for residential on site may not come forward as part of the initial refurbishment. It is envisaged that this is a medium term development opportunity.

TOWN SQUARE WEST

- Proposal Site: **WBPr3** : Town Square West
- Site size: 2.31 ha approx.
- Allocation: A1 Retail, B1 Business and C3 residential uses
- Timescale: Medium to long term development opportunity

4.2.26 The site at Town Square West provides the opportunity for a retail and office led mixed use scheme in a central location, which will complete the final phase of the Town Square. This site provides the opportunity to introduce new residential accommodation into the town, whilst providing appropriate active frontages onto the public square and Astle Park. It will also provide a major pedestrian link. The redevelopment of this area provides the opportunity to enhance the appearance of the Conservation Area and the frontage to High Street through the relocation/redevelopment of Wesley Church within the development, which is considered to provide an important community function.

4.2.27 Since the Preferred Options document, the site area has been extended to incorporate units along the pedestrianised area of the High Street which back onto the Bus Station. Incorporation of this block of shops would enable comprehensive development to come forward on one of the gateway locations, offering the opportunity to include a landmark building at this end of the High Street, acting as a focal point and to complete the town square feel around the Public. Tailored design of this area will assist in providing better linkages with the Bus Station to the High Street as well as reducing use from unauthorised motorists and therefore addressing safety concerns which currently exist.

4.2.28 Development of this site will also provide the opportunity to connect Astle Park with the retail core and retention of the Church Yard will provide an opportunity to enhance this as an area of public space. The redevelopment of the first group of units on the south side of New Street will provide a high quality active frame to the public square.

4.2.29 Any new development will need to be in scale with the existing built form and complement the adjoining Conservation Area. Taller buildings can be considered within this site to provide a focal point and landmark within the area, to aid legibility and complete the Town Square. However, these will also need to relate to the Conservation Area and adjoining buildings in terms of their scale, massing and design.

Other strategies

4.2.30 Redevelopment and refurbishment of the area will compliment the use of the public square and the connecting links to the retail expansion, which will be aided by the proposed highway alterations.

The public realm improvements are outlined in Appendix 1

Delivery and Implementation

4.2.31 Discussions are ongoing to determine the preferred option of development for the site and the potential link with development further along St Michael Street. It is the intention to prepare a Planning and Design Brief in the near future to establish design principles for any future development which takes place on this site. It is envisaged that this is a medium to long term development opportunity.

FARLEY CENTRE

- Proposal Site: **WBPr4** : Farley Centre
- Site size: 2.1 ha approx.
- Allocation: A1 Retail
- Timescale: Medium to long term development opportunity

4.2.32 The Farley Centre comprises of a group of retail units fronting onto the east end of High Street, with a large food retail unit concealed behind them to the south. The area is of a generally tired appearance and does not evoke a vibrant retail experience.

4.2.33 The Council would support the future refurbishment or redevelopment of the Farley Centre, which is recognised as a prime location for an anchor store at the south east end of the High Street. The proposed uses south of the Ringway including the College and proposed leisure quarter will necessitate the need for new and improved pedestrian connections. Attention should be paid to the quality of the public realm given the links to the Eastern Gateway and transport interchange.

Other strategies

4.2.34 Redevelopment and refurbishment of the site will compliment the public realm improvements at the south end of the High Street and the connecting links from south of the Ringway. In addition the refurbishment of the Farley Centre will project a higher quality image of West Bromwich.

Delivery and Implementation

4.2.35 The refurbishment and redevelopment of the Farley Centre is not yet seen as a priority, though it may become increasingly so as improvements are made to the town centre. The land is mostly in Council ownership and refurbishment and redevelopment is envisaged to be a medium to long term opportunity.

KING'S SQUARE

- Proposal Site: **WBPr5** : King's Square
- Site size: 1.5 ha approx.
- Allocation: A1 Retail uses
- Timescale: Medium to long term development opportunity

4.2.36 King's Square currently provides the most contemporary under roof retail experience in the centre of West Bromwich and therefore is not in drastic need of refurbishment or modernisation. However, there is future opportunity to redevelop and extend Kings Square and to provide a new anchor for the south end of the High Street. The indoor market also plays an important role in the shopping provision for the town and its future will also be an important issue. Development must appreciate the need to provide greater presence through active frontages to the Ringway whilst retaining and strengthening links to the central retail area, the market, transport interchange and uses outside of the Ringway.

4.2.37 Redevelopment and refurbishment of King's Square will compliment the public realm improvements along the High Street and the connecting links from the retail expansion south of the Ringway. In addition the refurbishment of the Farley Centre will project a higher quality image of West Bromwich.

Delivery and Implementation

4.2.38 It is anticipated that the retail expansion and improvements planned within the town centre will provide the catalyst for the redevelopment of King's Square though given its current good condition it is seen as a medium to long term opportunity. SMBC own the freehold though London Commercial Properties hold the head lease.

VICTORIA STREET/PRICE STREET/ST MICHAEL'S STREET

- Proposal Site: **WBPr6** : Victoria Street/Price Street
- Site size: 1.4 ha approx.
- Allocation: A1 Retail with A3, A4, A5 and D2 uses
- Timescale: Medium to long term development opportunity

4.2.39 Although this area lies within the designated Primary Shopping Area, it is severed by the Ringway and is generally in a poor condition. Units with frontages onto Victoria Street are hidden and isolated from the town centre.

4.2.40 There is a completely different ambience to this area, which feels cut off from the High Street. Plans for public realm improvements in this area will address the isolation by carrying the interest from the new public square and mixed uses north of the High Street through to the south and thus tying this area into the town centre.

4.2.41 It is important that a high quality active frontage is created onto Price Street, Victoria Street and St Michael's Street, which along with public realm improvements will provide a more vibrant streetscape.

4.2.42 There is potential for the redevelopment and improvement of the above area, which forms a key gateway to the town centre through creating a comparatively high density mixed use scheme incorporating retail, office, residential or potentially a location for a hotel supported by excellent public transport provision. In conjunction with the regeneration of this area the pedestrian links from Victoria Street north to Astle Park and the retail expansion, and south to the Lyng area require improvement.

The public realm improvements are outlined in Appendix 1

Delivery and Implementation

4.2.43 It must first be determined whether a refurbishment scheme or a transformational redevelopment approach is desired for the site. It is anticipated that this provides a medium to long term development opportunity.

Figure 11

Primary Shopping Area

WBPr1 - Tesco Scheme - T.Sq Ph II

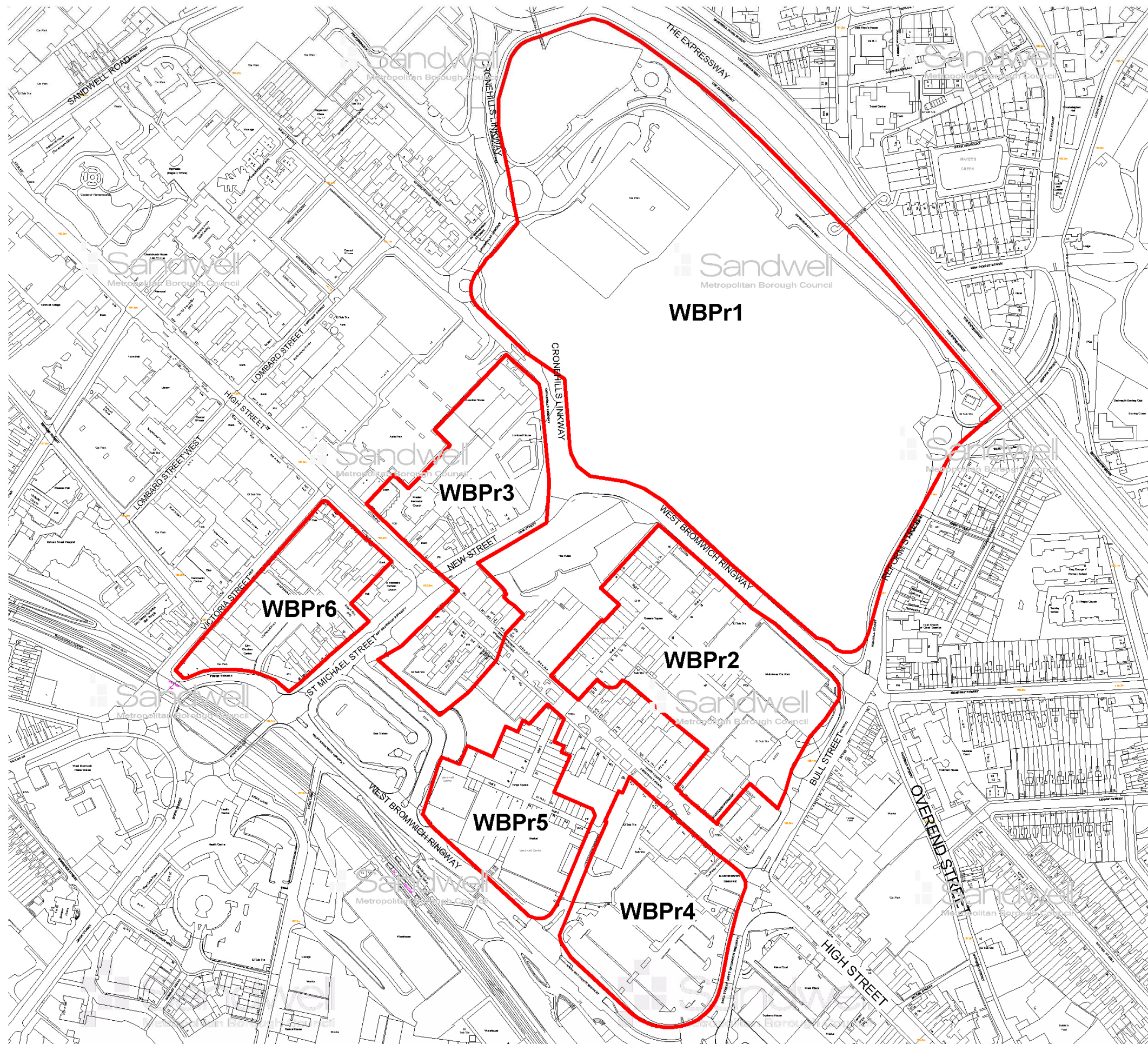
WBPr2 - Queens Square

WBPr3 - Town Square West

WBPr4 - Farley Centre

WBPr5 - Kings Square

WBPr6 - Victoria Street/Price Street



September 2012

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OPPORTUNITY AREA 2 - OFFICE AND CULTURAL SECTOR

4.3.1 Office employment provides a fundamental component of any successful town centre as it offers a key source of skilled employment opportunities, attracts AB households and provides a captive population to generate demand for and sustain facilities, thus aiding the viability and vitality of the town centre.

4.3.2 Opportunity Area 2 is the remaining portion of the area within the town centre boundary as originally identified in the 2004 UDP that is not located within the Primary Shopping Area. This is seen as the preferred location for new office space as it is both central and exhibits good links and connections to the strategic highway network.

4.3.3 New sites and existing sites are identified within this area for office use and other complimentary uses including education and car parking. New sites are identified for redevelopment from the existing or previous use. Existing buildings such as the Town Hall complex are identified for redesign and refurbishment of internal layouts to cater for a different use.

4.3.4 The town centre provides a sustainable location for office development, given the access to the local strategic highway network and local facilities.

General Design, Character, Streetscape and Linkages

4.3.5 The design of new development within the Office and Cultural Quarter will be key to providing a high quality image and promoting the development of the town whilst complementing and enhancing the Conservation Area which covers much of this area.

4.3.6 Existing linkages to central locations, public transport interchanges, public areas and other places of interest will be improved in order to provide a more legible and permeable environment. Where new development is planned, linkages will be incorporated in the final scheme through the design process.

4.3.7 The public realm within the office and cultural quarter will be improved in accordance with the West Bromwich Town Centre: Streetscape Strategy (2007), which sets out a range of streetscape palettes for the area including Providence Place, Boulevard, High Street Conservation, Metro Station Pedestrian Linkages and Secondary.

Planning Obligations

New developments within the Office and Cultural Sector will generate contributions towards the transport strategy and public realm improvements. Where developments include a residential element, contributions may be required for the provision of Affordable Housing and provision and maintenance of open space depending upon the number of dwellings provided.

PROVIDENCE PLACE PHASE I

- Proposal Site: **WBPr7** : Providence Place
- Site size: 2.7 ha approx.
- Allocation: B1 Office
- Timescale: Development is scheduled On site 2010, completed 2011

4.3.8 This town centre site was identified for office development within the 2004 UDP and the allocation has been carried over into the West Bromwich AAP in order to promote office use, to attract significant new employment opportunities to the area, increase the vitality and viability of the town and local facilities and services. The site provides a key gateway opportunity for high quality architectural design, both to the natural frontage and that to the Expressway (A41) and public realm treatments that will project a positive image of West Bromwich.

The regeneration of this area will:

- be primarily office led mixed use scheme with public car parking (25,000 sq.m and approximately 750 car parking spaces);
- provide linkages to the town centre;
- need to create an identifiable character to a site divorced from the town centre.

4.3.9 An outline planning application has been approved for the demolition of existing buildings and redevelopment for mixed-use comprising shops (A1), offices (B1), financial and professional services (A2), restaurants and cafes (A3), drinking establishments (A4), hot food takeaways (A5), residential units (C3), vehicular access, associated on and off site highway works, new public domain, car parking and soft landscaping.

4.3.10 A further detailed application for a 7,800 sq.m. building for BT Liberata has also been approved. Demolition of the existing buildings has already taken place and work has commenced with completion expected Autumn 2011. It is envisaged that further applications will be forthcoming to add to the office provision and complete development of this prime site.

4.3.11 Regeneration of this site will incorporate provision for high quality pedestrian linkages to other parts of the town centre and thus aiding integration to the wider area. Linkages along Sandwell Road to High Street and beyond linking up with the Metro stop in Dartmouth Street are important to increase public transport accessibility to the employment site and the legibility and permeability of the townscape.

4.3.12 This regeneration will be complimented by the public realm improvements proposed in the West Bromwich Town Centre: Streetscape Strategy (2007).

Delivery and Implementation

4.3.13 Planning permission for the development of an office led mixed use scheme has been granted and the regeneration of the Providence Place Phase I area is seen as a short to medium term development opportunity, with construction of the first stage set for completion by Autumn 2011. It is anticipated that the remainder of the site will be built out by 2015.

PROVIDENCE PLACE PHASE II

- Proposal Site: **WBPr8** : Providence Place Phase II
- Site size: 0.7 ha approx.
- Allocation: B1 Office
- Timescale: Medium Term

4.3.14 Unlike the Providence Place Phase I site, Phase II is a new allocation which is primarily office led but with greater opportunity to introduce elements of residential accommodation. The site sits within the Conservation Area and has potential implications for the setting of a Listed Building, Highfields Register Office, which will therefore require a high quality scheme that respects and enhances the setting.

4.3.15 New development will highlight the link to the new retail expansion, public square and High Street and Metro stops at Dartmouth Street and Lodge Road. Though the new office development will be connected to the town centre it will need to create an identifiable character to a site divorced from the town centre.

4.3.16 Since development of this site is not envisaged in the short term, there is the potential to use the site in the interim for surface car parking to address parking requirements in this part of the town. When a proposal for office development comes forward on this site, there may be a need to relocate the existing car parking provision elsewhere.

Delivery and Implementation

4.3.17 The regeneration of the Providence Place Phase II area is seen as a medium term development opportunity. The second phase has been planned and designed to compliment the first phase and bring the office development further into the town centre. Unlike the first phase, planning permission for development has not yet been sought.

DARTMOUTH STREET/HIGH STREET

- Proposal Site: **WBPr9** : Dartmouth Street/High Street
- Site size: 1.1 ha approx.
- Allocation: B1 Office led mixed use
- Timescale: short to medium term

4.3.18 This site provides a key inner gateway location within the core of the town centre and Conservation Area. The present West Bromwich Building Society Headquarters provides a strong focal point on the approach to the town centre. The Council will support the refurbishment of the existing building or the redevelopment of the site together with the former 1950's college block fronting High Street. This would provide the opportunity for an office led mixed use scheme, with potential for a greater mix of use at ground floor level fronting High Street to create an active frontage extending the normal working hours associated with office development. Within the site are a number of terraced properties that have fallen into disrepair and detract from the Conservation Area. The Council would support their refurbishment if this is determined to be economically viable, but would also support them being redeveloped subject to a comprehensive scheme coming forward on the wider site.

4.3.19 A Planning and Design Brief has been prepared to provide more detailed guidance on this opportunity which was adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document early 2011.

Delivery and Implementation

4.3.20 Development of the new Sandwell College site was granted permission in January 2009, which will therefore make part of this site currently in use as Sandwell College available for development once the new college is operational. The regeneration of this area is seen as a short to medium term development opportunity.

TOWN HALL COMPLEX

- Proposal Site: **WBPr10** : Town Hall Complex
- Site size: 1.1 ha approx.

- Allocation: Mixed use including cultural, leisure, office, retail, cafes, bars, restaurants
- Timescale: Short to Medium term

4.3.21 This site sits within the Conservation Area and contains a number of listed buildings and buildings of a special architectural and historic interest. Other buildings adjacent to the site include some outdated office accommodation with new floorspace, whilst continuing to utilise the heritage and cultural offer of the Listed Buildings fronting the High Street for community uses. This could take the form of the provision of a flexible concert hall/performance space; the creation or enhancement of an expanded and improved central library for the Borough, including Archives and Museums and Specialist Collections.

4.3.22 As well as the above Sandwell Council is keen to see ancillary uses within the site. These could include cafes, bars, restaurants and a small retail element that is ancillary to the main cultural uses, for example a book shop or art shop.

Delivery and Implementation

4.3.23 Some design work has been undertaken to depict a potential scheme, but the regeneration of the Town Hall complex is seen as a medium to long term development opportunity.

NEW CAR PARK

- Proposal Site: **WBPr11** : Izens Road
- Site size: 0.8 ha approx.
- Allocation: Car Park
- Timescale: medium term

4.3.24 This site is currently used by West Midlands Travel as an overflow facility to their main depot further down Oak Road, to store buses overnight. The main depot has been identified as a potential residential allocation within the AAP. It is proposed to develop additional public parking in the area to address potential demand created by the increased office provision in the area. This will require the relocation of the bus depot.

Delivery and Implementation

4.3.25 The development of the car park will play an important function in replacing existing car parking that will be lost as a result of development within the town centre. It is anticipated that it will be important to have alternative car parks in place to take the capacity ready for when early phases of development commence and render existing car parks out of use. The number and type of existing uses on site, some of which will require relocation and may require the undertaking of a CPO, will provide constraints to development and it is therefore seen as a medium term opportunity.

NEW POLICE STATION

- Proposal Site: **WBPr12** : Police Station
- Site size: 1.2 ha approx.
- Allocation: B1 Office
- Timescale: short term

4.3.26 The site is allocated for the new Police Station, which requires relocation due to the new Tesco development. The site has a detailed planning consent for the erection of new police operational command unit, together with associated hard landscaping, means of

enclosure, car parking and access from Oak Road. The development has already been commenced.

4.3.27 It is important that the design of the new facility provides a high quality frontage, considering each outward aspect, so as not to turn its back on Oak Road, Moor Street or the town centre.

Delivery and Implementation

4.3.28 The new Police Station will be built to seamlessly replace the existing facility when it is redeveloped as part of the retail expansion which was granted planning permission in April 2005. Due to the retail expansion being seen as a medium term development opportunity, the Police Station, which is set to be developed in synchronisation is set to be realised in the short term.

4.3.29 Development of the site, which was formerly a car park will have an impact on car parking in West Bromwich. There is a car parking strategy in place, which will need to identify suitable alternative car parking.

NORTH LYNG

- Proposal Site: **WBPr13** : North Lyng
- Site size: 2.6 ha approx.
- Allocation: B1 Office
- Timescale: medium term

4.3.30 Provides an opportunity to extend the town centre further south and redefine an important gateway. The strategy for this area is to continue to seek to integrate it into the town centre, by promoting a range of uses that continue to support and compliment the retail and commercial activity of the town, whilst also maximising the use of public transport. This is considered to be primarily office based activity. The development of this area will create a lot of activity and will need to be complimented by the development of new and improved pedestrian facilities to allow people to move into the retail core of the town.

4.3.31 The site will comprise new office space as well as Incubation Units developed in conjunction with the new Sandwell College facility to the north of the Metro Line. This will create a strong frontage overlooking the Metro, providing a buffer between it and the residential development across the southern and western parts of the area. Therefore, the new commercial development will need to be of a scale and nature that is compatible with this emerging residential location.

4.3.32 There is also a need to provide additional car parking in this area to meet the future needs of an expanded town centre. This location is considered to be one of the most appropriate to serve the southern parts of the town, as it can be easily accessed from the south without the need for traffic to enter the Ringway. A key factor in determining the location of any new parking provision will be to minimise the distance from the retail core and the ability to provide direct, safe pedestrian access.

Delivery and Implementation

4.3.33 The redevelopment of the North Lyng area is seen as a medium term development opportunity due to the difficulties including land ownership and contamination. Land acquisition will be achieved through negotiations, though given the large number of landowners the undertaking of a CPO may be required.

4.3.34 Multiple land ownerships on the site indicate that comprehensive redevelopment in one phase may not be feasible and therefore a phased approach may have to be undertaken. If this is to be the case development of early phases must not prejudice the comprehensive plans for the site and existing/remaining businesses and operations must also be considered. The site is envisaged to be a medium term development opportunity.

NEW COLLEGE

- Proposal Site: **WBPr14** : Sandwell College
- Site size: 1.4 ha approx.
- Allocation: Education (D1)
- Timescale: Under construction – completion anticipated end 2011

4.3.35 Sandwell College is consolidating its current operations at West Bromwich, Smethwick and Oldbury onto one new central site within the Town Centre. The College have acquired the site from the Council and proposals are at an advanced stage regarding the new facility, which will create a landmark building at this important gateway to the town.

4.3.36 From a design perspective the new college must address the potential dead façade and create an active frontage and provide a strong pedestrian route to West Bromwich Central Metro Station and links to the High Street. There may be potential for the introduction of supplementary uses around the Metro Station and pedestrian linkages to create a focal area.

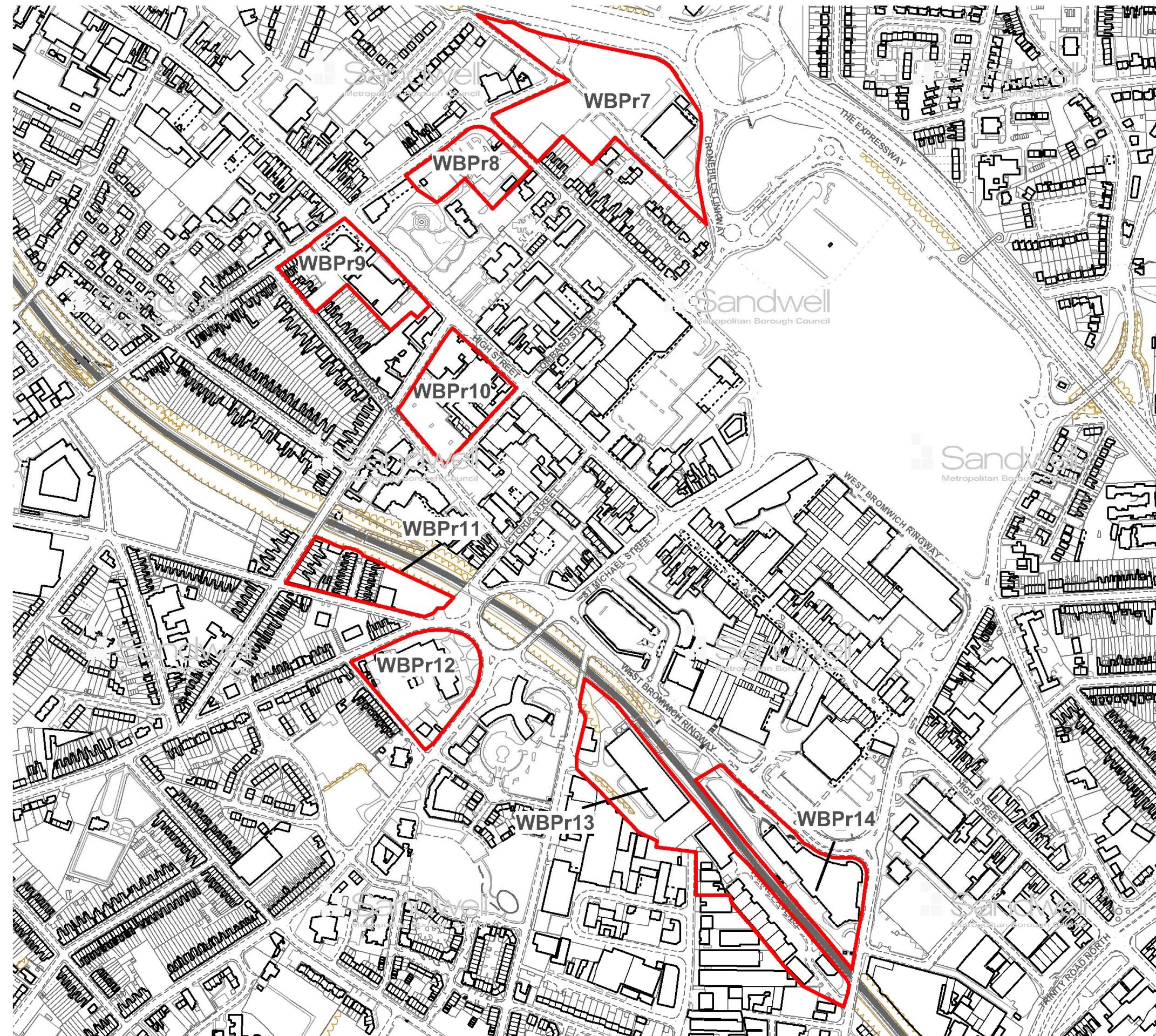
Delivery and Implementation

4.3.37 Planning consent has been granted for the development of a college of further education, services inlet building, car parking, landscaping and associated works, which will be delivered prior to the consolidation of the assets belonging to Sandwell College. The College is currently advanced in its construction and is due to open early 2012.

Figure 12

Office Sector

- WBPr7 - Providence Place Ph 1
- WBPr8 - Providence Place Ph II
- WBPr9 - Dartmouth Street/High Street
- WBPr10 - Town Hall Complex
- WBPr11 - New Car Park
- WBPr12 - New Police Station
- WBPr13 - North Lyng
- WBPr14 - New College



September 2012

NOT TO SCALE

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OPPORTUNITY AREA 3 - EASTERN GATEWAY

4.4.1 The Eastern Gateway area is located on the east edge of West Bromwich Ringway, with the continuation of High Street consisting of mainly retail shop fronts at street level with accommodation above and areas to the south around George Street, Thomas Street and Spon Lane consisting mainly of light industry.

4.4.2 The strategy for the regeneration of the Eastern Gateway area provides an opportunity to create a high quality, sustainable, living environment that meets local need, with access to local retail, office employment, leisure and public transport opportunities.

4.4.3 The regeneration of the Eastern Gateway area will provide a landmark transformation, which will assist in attracting further investment and in turn raising the profile of West Bromwich as one of the four strategic centres within the Black Country.

Planning Obligations

4.4.4 New developments within this Opportunity Area will generate contributions towards the transport strategy and public realm improvements. Where developments include a residential element, contributions may be required for the provision of Affordable Housing and provision and maintenance of open space depending upon the number of dwellings provided.

EASTERN GATEWAY NORTH

- Proposal Site: **WBPr15** : Eastern Gateway North Site
- Size: 3.7 ha approx.
- Allocation: Office, Retail and Residential with ancillary uses
- Timescale: Phase 1 Completed and occupied by end of 2012

Background

4.4.5 The site located north of the High Street within the Eastern Gateway area currently provides an uninspiring, tired gateway to the town centre that generally feels separated from the existing town centre core. The area exhibits a number of active commercial uses fronting High Street, though with some significant underused parcels of land and buildings immediately to the rear in appropriate use given this key location.

4.4.6 This area provides the opportunity to deliver a high quality scheme that will bring forward real physical, social and economic benefits to the town.

4.4.7 At the eastern entrance to the town the opportunity exists to re-brand it through introducing a form of development that is radically different in architectural form than exists presently. The comprehensive redevelopment of this area is considered to be the most appropriate way forward. Masterplanning work has been undertaken to assess the various options available and a preferred option chosen to take forward.

4.4.8 Revitalising the public realm will result in an environmental uplift of this gateway area and assist the establishment of a sustainable residential community in a central location. It is recognised that the successful redevelopment of this site is important to the overall regeneration of the town centre. The regeneration of the Eastern Gateway as well as other initiatives for West Bromwich will contribute significantly to the development of Sandwell's Strategic Centre.

Scheme Details

4.4.9 A design-led Masterplan for this gateway to the town has now been produced. The Council has appointed Accord Housing Association as a development partner to help deliver a high quality, residential-led, mixed-use scheme that will see around 100 new homes built in this part of the town centre along with a new office development. The scheme will be delivered in 2 phases. A hybrid planning application was approved in February 2011. This comprised a full consent for part of the residential element with outline consent for the office and mixed use part of the site.

4.4.10 Selected demolition will enable development to take place on part of the site for office and residential, with potential refurbishment of the remainder, if funds allow. As part of the redevelopment it is proposed that a public square is created at the Bull Street/High Street junction providing a frontage to the new development and provide an extension to the existing Dartmouth Square.

Mix of development

4.4.11 The site has been identified as the location for new office development for Accord Housing, with the remainder of the site earmarked for residential and retail and ancillary uses. Shops (A1); Financial and Professional Services (A2); Restaurants and Cafes (A3); Drinking Establishments (A4) and Hot Food Takeaways (A5); together with Offices (B1) are all considered to be appropriate for the scheme. However, as the site sits outside the Primary Shopping Area a scheme for pure retail use would not be acceptable. The location of Drinking Establishments (A4) will also need to be considered in relation to their position to the residential component of the scheme to minimise any potential impact on residential amenity through late noise and disturbance.

4.4.12 A 3/4 storey office building is proposed on the corner plot fronting Bull Street/High Street, with buildings set back along Bull Street and High Street to enable planting, creating boulevard and avenue environments. Pedestrian links are proposed through to Walter Street and on to Dartmouth Park. Residential development to the rear of High Street, and fronting Overend Street will be a mixture of houses and apartments, between 50-70 dwellings per hectare. It is proposed that the scheme will incorporate mixed uses with retail to ground floor, then one to two storeys of office, and residential above, thus enabling high density 'urban living'. New development is likely to provide approximately 1,000 m² of net office space and around 100 new dwellings with appropriate car parking spaces.

Density

4.4.13 It is proposed that housing density is highest in close proximity to the High Street and reduces further north from the High Street and Bull Street, with apartments overlooking the courtyards to the back of the High Street/Bull Street, and town house type buildings fronting a tree lined street (Overend Street) with on street parking and small privacy strips to building frontages.

Car Parking

4.4.14 It is proposed that car parking provision is made for residential use at 1 per unit. There will be 42 dedicated car parking spaces for the office development with car parking for retail assumed only along the Bull Street and High Street frontages.

Roads

4.4.15 The layout of highways within the site will allow the opportunity for the creation of a home zone type environment.

Phasing

4.4.16 It is proposed that the preferred development option could be developed in two phases, Phase 1: comprising the development of the new public square and a mix of retail, office and residential units fronting High Street/Bull Street. Phase 2 comprising the development of houses and apartments adjoining Overend Street.

Delivery and Implementation

4.4.17 The Eastern Gateway North site was recommended by Sandwell MBC for Growth Point funding, in order to facilitate development and has subsequently been included within the Black Country Programme of Development. The funding secured has assisted in carrying out feasibility and detailed master planning work. The regeneration of the Eastern Gateway North site is seen as a short to medium term development opportunity.

EASTERN GATEWAY SOUTH

- Proposal Site: **WBPr16** : Eastern Gateway South
- Site size: 3.2 ha approx.
- Allocation: Mixed use development for Retail/Office/Leisure/Residential/Car Parking
- Timescale: Medium to long term

4.4.18 The area between Spon Lane and Trinity Way, adjacent to the Metro Line has good public transport access, as well as being adjacent to the retail core. At present there are a number of active retail/commercial uses fronting High Street, which already contribute to the vitality of the centre. However, some of the buildings are old and in need of repair, which serves to lower the overall quality of the environment. This is exacerbated by a number of uses that appear to provide inactive frontages to High Street, with roller shutters being left down throughout the day. Other uses within the area provide a more positive image upon which to build, such as a hotel, which provides a key landmark in the town. Further away from High Street, adjacent to the Metro Line are a number of large vacant and underused industrial buildings that provide an opportunity to act as the catalyst for major redevelopment of this area.

4.4.19 The Council would support the comprehensive development of this area for a mixed use development, including offices which would generate high levels of pedestrian activity with elements of retail and residential, particularly at first and second floor. Alternatively, development for a leisure use, particularly commercial leisure uses, could also be considered appropriate to meet the town's needs for additional leisure facilities. Due to the increase in activity envisaged for this part of the town with the proposed developments coming forward, the site is also considered appropriate for a multi-storey car park to meet the needs of visitors and employees to the southern end of West Bromwich centre.

4.4.20 The potential to maximise the public transport infrastructure and the visual impact of the site from all approaches will have a strong influence on how this site is developed. Whilst the end use of the site will to a certain extent determine its final built form, there will be a need to create very strong active frontages at ground floor level. In addition the development should establish a strong physical edge to the street, given the length of the frontage. Large areas of car parking should not be allowed to dominate the foreground to the development and ideally will need to be decked to maximise the development potential of the site. Car parking will also be expected to contribute to the town centre provision and any development will be subject to a car parking management agreement.

4.4.21 The Helical Works located on George Street has been recommended for local listing, which may subsequently have implications for the potential regeneration of the area.

Delivery and Implementation

4.4.22 Feasibility work examining the prospect of securing leisure uses in this location has been undertaken and it is anticipated that the allocation of the site for leisure purposes within the AAP will provide a catalyst for future development of the site.

4.4.23 Given the uncertainty of interest in utilising a leisure use as a potential regenerative tool for this site, it is unlikely that development of the Eastern Gateway south site will come forward prior to the medium to long term.

CORNER OF TRINITY WAY/HIGH STREET

- Proposal Site: **WBPr17** : Residential Corner of Trinity Way/High Street
- Site size: 0.6 ha approx.
- Allocation: Residential
- Timescale: Short to medium term

4.4.24 This site occupies a key location both fronting onto High Street and the busy junction with Trinity Way. The site is currently occupied by a number of under utilised buildings and their redevelopment would bring forward significant improvements to the built environment and potentially change the perception of this key gateway to the town for people passing through. The preferred use for this site is residential, though there may be potential to incorporate commercial activity at the ground floor level in order to provide an active frontage on this prominent corner.

4.4.25 This corner site occupies a prominent location on the Junction of West Bromwich High Street and the Expressway with opportunity to create a significant landmark corner development. This site will have an important relationship with the adjacent corners of the Eastern Gateway North and Eastern Gateway South development sites also located at the junction of High Street and the Expressway.

4.4.26 New residential development on this site must appreciate the context of adjacent buildings both on High Street and the Expressway and should provide active frontages to both main routes with the provision of undercroft access in order to retain the rhythm of the facade.

Delivery and Implementation

4.4.27 The site is in multiple ownership and therefore development of the site is dependent on a developer assembling the site. This may prove to be a complex and lengthy process though given the small area regeneration of the site is seen as a short to medium term development opportunity.

GEORGE STREET

- Proposal Site: **WBPr18** : George Street
- Site size: 0.7 ha approx.
- Allocation: Mixed Use – B1 Office, residential, leisure or civic uses
- Timescale: medium to long term

4.4.28 This site was the preferred location for a new Magistrates Court for the Town Centre. An application was received for consideration in February 2010 and granted consent in April. However, due to spending cuts a decision has been made not to locate a new Magistrates Court in West Bromwich which now leaves this site available for alternative uses.