

SUPPLEMENTARY  
PLANNING  
DOCUMENT

# HILL TOP

OCTOBER 2006



**Sandwell**  
Metropolitan Borough Council

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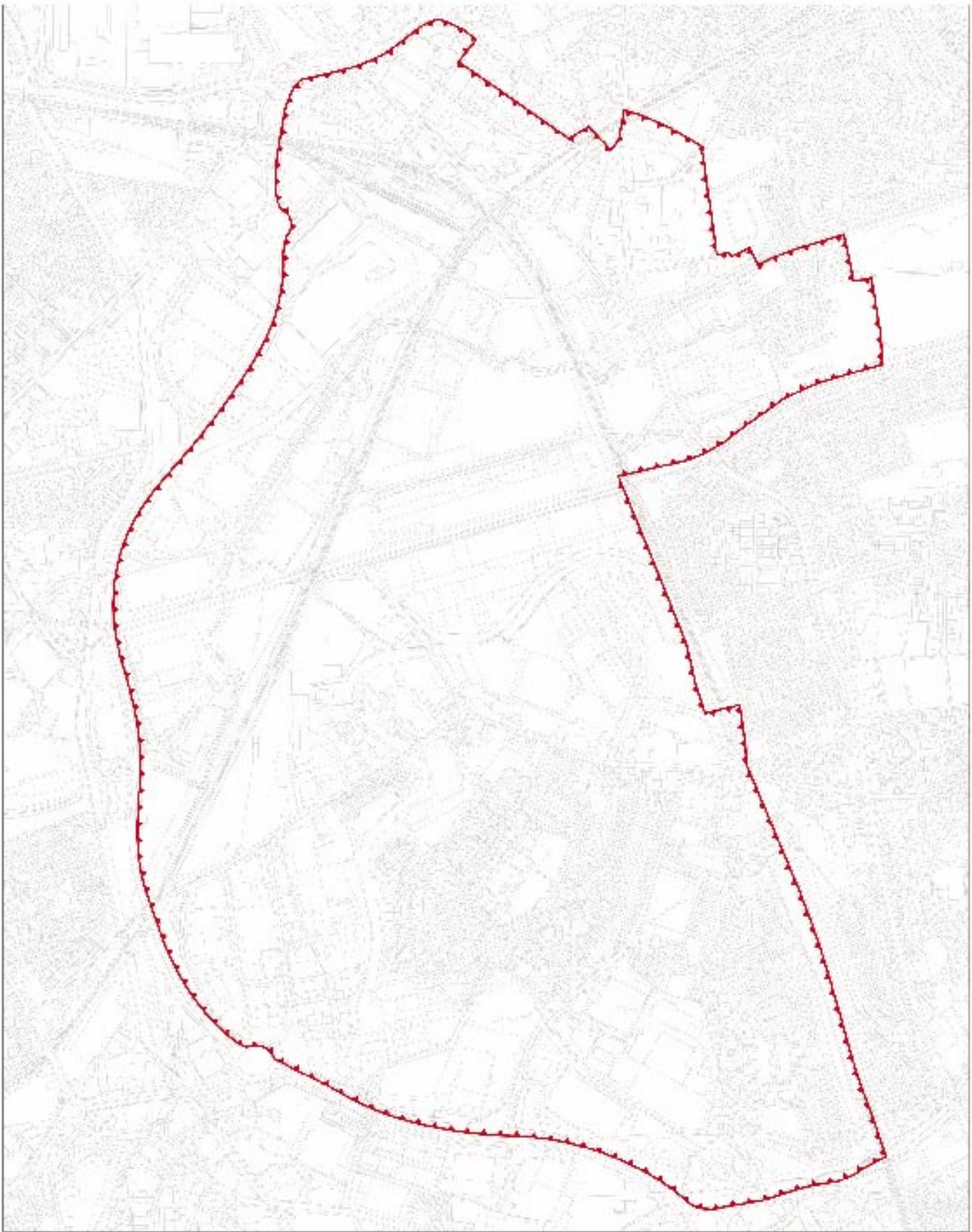
# 1. HILL TOP STRATEGIC CONTEXT

## Introduction

- 1.1. Planning Policy Statement 12, Local Development Frameworks, outlines the important role that supplementary planning documents (SPDs) can play in supplementing plan policies and proposals, whilst maintaining a consistency with national and regional policies, as well as those set out in Sandwell Council's adopted Unitary Development Plan or the Local Development Framework (LDF) under the new planning system.
- 1.2. The Hill Top area is allocated within the UDP as being a key Strategic Regeneration Site (Policy SO8). The strategic regeneration sites are considered to be crucial to bring about the regeneration of the Borough. The Hill Top area is allocated within a Business Zone (Policy E2) of the UDP, which is an area of predominantly industrial use and the focus for much of the future employment growth within Sandwell.
- 1.3. The regeneration of Hill Top as a sub regional employment site has a strong fit with national, regional and local planning and social policies. The site fits the criteria for a sub regional development site because of its size, location adjacent to the strategic highway network access to public transport.
- 1.4. Regenco, the Sandwell Urban Regeneration Company (URC), has the task of delivering on some of the key physical economic development priorities arising from the aims of the Regional Economic Strategy (RES) and the South Black Country and West Birmingham Regeneration Zone. Regenco's business plan highlights the goal of making Hill Top a potentially regionally important employment area.
- 1.5. Sandwell MBC and its partners Advantage West Midlands (AWM) and Regenco commissioned a report to develop a strategic regeneration framework for the area. Stage one of the report was to identify the barriers to investment for Hill Top. Stage two assessed the range of investment options and stage three focused on how the preferred option for creating a sub regional site could be delivered. Within the report Hill Top has been identified as a potential location for a Resource Recovery Park (RRP), due to the availability of sites and as a number of companies located in the area are involved in waste recovery.
- 1.6. Hill Top is considered as important in playing a key role in the regeneration of the Borough. However in order to unlock and deliver the potential of the area a strategy needs to be developed that addresses the many complex issues facing the regeneration of the area.
- 1.7. This Supplementary Planning Document seeks to achieve this as well as providing in a co-ordinated way detailed guidance on development and design issues and will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications on sites within the Hill Top Strategic Regeneration Area.

## Hill Top Strategic Regeneration Area

- 1.8. The Hill Top strategic regeneration area covers 268 hectares of Wednesbury South ward in Sandwell. It features 50 hectares of residential area, which includes the Harvills Hawthorn PFI project to improve the quality of the estate. As such this SPD does not deal with this area, but clearly will have an impact on its immediate environment. New industrial and commercial investment has taken place along the edges of the Black Country New Road (BCNR), which runs from north to south along the western side of the strategic regeneration area. The BCNR has provided a good link with the strategic highway network, to the benefit of the firms based along it.
- 1.9. The area is currently characterised by old industrial premises set in a historic street pattern and occupied mainly by companies engaged in metal and engineering processes, distribution and repair. The area is a unique opportunity to redevelop a substantial brownfield employment area to provide the environment and infrastructure capable of meeting future business needs
- 1.10. The condition of the remaining 180 hectares in the central and eastern parts of the area contrasts strongly with the western side. Here the properties tend to be in poorer condition, access is more restricted and the environment is of poor quality. The strategic regeneration framework being developed is intended to help drive forward the regeneration of the area.



## Hill Top Strategic Regeneration Site



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FIGURE 1 - HILL TOP REGENERATION REDEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

1.12. **Objectives of the Supplementary Planning Document**

1. The regeneration of underused or vacant industrial land and premises, to arrest decline and retain jobs.
2. Ensure the high quality design and layout of new industrial developments.
3. Create the right conditions for growth by ensuring that the infrastructure is in the right place to support it.
4. Support sustainable local employment opportunities and the introduction of new jobs to diversify the economic base.
5. Make accessible new development sites, by opening up the area with new access routes from the A41 Black Country New Road and the A4196 Holloway Bank.
6. Ensure that new developments are accessible by a realistic, safe and easy access range of public transport, including bus and metro.
7. Make appropriate provision for walking and cycling through and within the area.
8. Assist with the development of an environmental cluster by building on the existing companies involved in environmental technologies located in the Hill Top area.
9. Allocate a site for a Resource Recovery Park (RRP).
10. Help deliver sustainable development through driving waste management up the waste hierarchy addressing waste as a resource.
11. Conserve, preserve and enhance the natural, built and historic environments.

## 2. POLICY FRAMEWORK.

### National Context

*PPS1, Delivering Sustainable Development.*

- 2.1. PPS1 sets out the overarching principles of sustainable development, including guidance on the protection and enhancement of the environment, sustainable economic development, design and community involvement and how they should be integrated with development plans in order to deliver.
- 2.2. At national level PPG4 sets out national policy regarding the redevelopment of urban development sites. In preparing its UDP the Council had regard to this policy guidance. It makes it clear that economic growth and a high quality environment have to be pursued together.
- 2.3. In allocating land for industry and commerce uses planning authorities should be realistic in their assessment of needs of business. They should aim to ensure that there is sufficient land available, which is readily capable of development and well served by infrastructure. Also they should ensure that there are a variety of sites available to meet differing needs.
- 2.4. It remains open to planning authorities to propose policies in development plans aimed at channelling particular types of business development into particular locations, although in each such case a clear justification for the distinction should be made. Where appropriate, plans should provide specifically for the types of industry which although necessary may be detrimental to amenity or a potential source of pollution.

*PPG4 - Industrial, Commercial Development and Small Firms.*

- 2.5. PPG4 states that many urban areas contain large amounts of land, once used for industrial purposes but now under used or vacant. Getting this land back into beneficial use is important to the regeneration of towns and urban areas. Optimum use should be made of potential sites, taking into account factors such as accessibility by public transport. Local planning authorities should identify such areas and indicate their appropriate uses including industrial and commercial.
- 2.6. Industry and commerce have always sought locational advantages in response to various external factors. These include; the demands of customers, access to raw materials and suppliers, links with other businesses, workforce catchment area and various transport considerations.
- 2.7. In the case of Hill Top, the area has been identified as a strategic regeneration site in Sandwell's UDP.

*PPS10 - Planning for Sustainable Waste Management.*

- 2.8. The objective of government policy on waste is to protect human health and the environment and by using it as a resource whenever possible. Through more sustainable waste management, moving the management of waste up the 'waste hierarchy' of reduction, reuse, recycling and composting. Waste management should be considered alongside other spatial planning concerns, such as transport, housing, economic growth, national resources and regeneration. Waste planning authorities should identify in development plan documents sites and areas suitable for new or enhanced waste management facilities for the waste management needs of their areas.
- 2.9. The Hill Top area has been identified as a potential site for the location of a resource recovery park due to availability of sites and there being a number of companies located there that are involved in waste recovery.

*PPG13 - Transport.*

- 2.10. Local transport plans have a central role in co-ordinating and improving local transport provision. A key planning objective is to ensure that jobs are accessible by public transport, walking and cycling. This is important for all, but especially for those who do not have regular use of a car and promote social inclusion. Local authorities should give particular emphasis to accessibility in identifying the preferred areas and sites where uses should be located to ensure they offer realistic, safe and easy access by a range of transport modes and not exclusively by car.
- 2.11. Local authorities should seek to make maximum use of the most accessible sites such as those, which are, or will be, close to major transport interchanges. They should be pro-active in promoting intensive development in these areas and on such sites. They should develop a clear vision for development of these areas, prepare site briefs and where appropriate consider using compulsory purchase powers to bring development forward.
- 2.12. Local authorities should review their development plan allocations and should allocate sites, which are (or will be) highly accessible by public transport.
- 2.13. The Hill Top area benefits from the Birmingham to Wolverhampton Midland Metro line running through the eastern part of the area and there are plans to open the Wednesbury to Brierley Hill line by 2011. Sandwell MBC in conjunction with their partners Regenco and AWM, are looking to open up the northern part of the area with a new access road running from the Black Country New Road (A41) to Holloway Bank. This will open up the northern part of the Hill Top area and act as a catalyst for the development of the area.

*PPS23: Planning and Pollution Control.*

- 2.14. The planning system plays a key role in protecting the natural environment, public health and safety and amenity. Local Development Documents (LDDs), which set out the strategic framework for development of an area, can prevent harmful development and mitigate the impact of potential polluting developments over the medium and long term. Decisions on land use, including the siting of polluting activities, are important complements to pollution control decisions for realising sustainable development and achieving the best balance of social, economic and environmental considerations.
- 2.15. PPS23 is supplemented by two documents;  
Annex 1: Pollution Control and water quality states that LDDs can prevent harmful development and mitigate the impact of potentially polluting developments over the medium and long term.  
Annex 2: Developments on land affected by contamination; states that Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) need to take into account any potential implications of land contamination. LPAs should recognise that the development process is often the most effective way of achieving action to remove unacceptable risks arising from contaminated state of the land.

*PPG25 - Development and Flood Risk.*

- 2.16. In accordance with guidance contained in PPG 25 and Environment Agency advice, any planning application for a site which covers an area of, or greater than one hectare will require a Flood Risk Assessment to be carried out and submitted prior to determination. Appendix F of PPG 25 details the content of such a FRA.



- 2.17. Unless properly planned, Hill Top's redevelopment will put a heavy strain on the environment and infrastructure of the area. The Council and partners will work with the Environment Agency to ensure that appropriate measures are taken to manage and minimise the risk of flooding. In bringing development forward these environmental issues will have to be addressed.
- 2.18. The Environment Agency have advised that Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) is a requirement under PPS25 'Development and Flood Risk' (currently PPG25) due for adoption October 2006. This should inform documents produced under the LDF to ensure that plans, programmes, and policies are sustainable from a flood risk viewpoint. Sandwell has begun the process of preparing the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for the Borough as part of the Joint Black Country Core Strategy. The SFRA will be in place in 2007, and will therefore be used to assess and amend as necessary the Hill Top SPD prior to its adoption in 2008/2009.
- 2.19. There are areas of land adjacent to the River Tame which are at risk from flooding, these areas are shown as Flood Zone 2 and Flood Zone 3. Any development in these areas should first be subject to a Flood Risk Assessment, in accordance with guidance contained within PPG 25 (Development and Flood Risk).
- 2.20. Flood Zone 3 is categorised as high risk area and Flood Zone 2 is categorised as low to medium risk.
1. Developing a diverse and dynamic business base, through encouraging innovation and supporting the development of new and existing sectors.  
 2. Promoting a learning and skilful region by developing a workforce that is highly skilled and encouraging a culture of life long learning.  
 3. Creating the right conditions for growth, by ensuring that the infrastructure is there to support it.  
 4. Regenerating communities, by targeting resources at those suffering from poverty or social exclusion.
- 2.22. Under these pillars, AWM outlines a number of aims, some of which may be pertinent to the development of Hill Top. The site has been identified with much brownfield land and significant development potential.
- 2.23. One of AWM's focuses for action, Regeneration Zones, seek to match areas which offer development potential with those in need and suffering from poverty or social exclusion. The Hill Top area features within the South Black Country and West Birmingham regeneration zone.
- 2.24. A further focus for AWM action is in supporting the development of sectors and clusters within the region, with environmental technologies being one.
- 2.25. Hill Top will not only contribute to meeting Advantage West Midlands objectives of furthering economic development and employment growth in the West Midlands, but will also do in a sustainable manner and contribute to Sandwell's urban renaissance and to reducing social exclusion in its communities.

### **Regional Context**

#### *Regional Economic Strategy.*

- 2.21. The regional economic strategy (RES) for the West Midlands outlines how the region has a history of innovation. It describes how the competitive edge of its manufacturing base has been eaten away by overseas markets. The regional economy has strong foundations on which to build.

#### *Regional Planning Guidance*

- 2.26. The regional planning guidance for the West Midlands sets out an employment land hierarchy designed to support economic growth. Wherever possible economic growth should be focused on major urban areas, with an emphasis on creating greater opportunities for development and support for existing activities with agreed regeneration areas and employment areas in need of modernisation and renewal.

- 2.27. It encourages local authorities, AWM, local economic partnerships and other agencies to work together at a local level to improve significantly and maintain the physical and business environment of the region's established employment areas.
- 2.28. To assist in this process local planning authorities should consider the designation of those employment areas within their areas, which are particularly in need. These areas should be reflected in development plans and backed by implementation plans drawing on relevant powers and funding regimes. In the case of Hill Top, Sandwell MBC in its UDP has identified through specific policies the area as a key employment site, which is in need of regeneration.
- 2.29. The regional planning guidance for the West Midlands also sets out an employment land hierarchy designed to support economic growth. The Hill Top site fits into the second tier of employment sites as a sub regional employment site, which is classified as a site over 10 hectares in size and located in sustainable urban locations. In addition Policy PA6 outlines that local planning policy must facilitate the modernisation and renewal of employment areas suffering from a poor environment or image.
- 2.30. The Black Country Study has been undertaken as part of the revision of the RSS and to feed into the local development frameworks being prepared by the four Black Country authorities. The study was asked to give attention and advice on issues such as employment land and ways of improving access to regeneration sites, particularly in the eastern side of the Black Country.
- 2.31. The creating wealth through revitalising the Sandwell economy theme, aims to build on the best of the existing economy, provide jobs through investment in both existing and new economic activity and give priority to the creation of thriving, diversified and modernised business activity.
- 2.32. Within the delivery of the plan, Theme A: Urban Form, The Hill Top feasibility study is seen as a key objective of Aim 2; to create an environment, which is able to support and attract investment.
- 2.33. Sandwell's UDP calls for sustainable development throughout the borough, which is based on central government policy and the premise of supporting social progress, which recognises the needs of everyone, effective protection of the environment, prudent use of natural resources and maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth.
- 2.34. The industrial areas of Hill Top are identified on the proposals map of the UDP as being a Strategic Regeneration Site (Policy SO8) and within a Business Zone (Policy E2, Employment and Economy).
- 2.35. The UDP has identified Hill Top as a Strategic Regeneration site, which are sites crucial to the regeneration of the borough. It is perceived that they will create new employment opportunities and improve the environment.
- 2.36. The UDP identifies specific objectives for the Hill Top area:
1. Promote competitiveness of existing industry, to arrest decline and retain jobs.
  2. Bring derelict sites and underused land/premises back into economic use and to create jobs.
  3. Create a high quality environment that will attract and retain investment.
  4. Promote sustainable development through promotion of employment opportunities linked to public transport and to local deprived neighbourhoods.

*Sandwell Unitary Development Plan*

**Local Context**

*Sandwell Plan*

- 2.31. The plan is based on a vision for the future and it identifies five themes where attention and action must be focused.

- 2.38. The aim of the policies in the economy and employment section of the UDP is to strengthen the Borough's economic base, maximise employment opportunities and reduce unemployment, within a framework of sustainable regeneration and secure the development of key areas such as Hill Top.

Other relevant UDP policies (though not exclusively):

*Employment.*

- 2.39. Policy E1, Key Industrial Allocations: which seeks to safeguard key sites for the future economic prosperity of the Borough.
- 2.40. Policy E4, Existing Premises: Supports the refurbishment or redevelopment of existing industrial premises and areas.
- 2.41. Policy E5, Relationship between Industry and other uses: Seeks to avoid conflicts between industrial and residential or other uses in close proximity. It advocates the introduction of buffer zones where necessary to reduce conflict.
- 2.42. Policy E7, Design Quality and Environmental Standards: Seeks to secure a high standard of design to improve the existing quality of the environment.

*Transport.*

- 2.43. Policy T3, Public Transport Accessibility and Location: Seeks to link land use to the level of public transport accessibility and vice versa to ensure that sustainable development patterns are achieved.
- 2.44. Policy T10, Roads: Supports the development of new infrastructure to facilitate regeneration schemes.

*Nature Conservation.*

- 2.45. Policy NC1, Nature Conservation and New Development. The Council will seek to promote development in accordance with ecological process and nature conservation interests. New development will be required to address retention of existing natural features, including geological and habitats and protecting them during construction. Incorporating creative measures such as the development of new habitats, or where possible the opening up of fresh geological exposures. Positively addressing adjacent or nearby conservation resources.

- 2.46. Addressing these issues at an early stage in the design process can develop a built environment, which contributes to the protection and enhancement of the wildlife resource for the benefit of the community.

- 2.47. Policy NC2, The Nature Conservation Network: Recognises the importance of nature conservation and seeks to protect, maintain and enhance the existing network where possible. The policy is supported by a number of related policies, which define a hierarchy of sites and corridors that are offered varying degrees of protection during the development process. Policy NC6 states that the Council will contribute as far as possible through the development process, to the implementation of the Biodiversity Action Plans on habitats, thereby enhancing both the quality and the quantity of the resource.

*Physical Constraints on the Development of Land.*

- 2.48. There are a number of policies within this section of the UDP that are of particular relevance to this SPD, given the nature of the past and existing uses, but also because of the strategy proposed for the area.

2.49. Policy PC6, Land Affected By Contaminants, Mineshafts of Unsatisfactory Load bearing Capacity or other Constraints: Recognises that in the past contaminants may have arisen directly from the industrial processes that were carried out. Thus all planning applications for built development must be accompanied by information relating to ground conditions together with detail of remedial measures to deal with the contaminants, mineshafts of unsatisfactory load bearing capacity or other constraints.

2.50. Policy PC7, Surface Water: The Council recognises the importance of the natural water system for providing essential drainage, which will be protected when considering any form of development.

*Urban Design.*

2.51. Policy UD1 - General Urban Design Principles: Sets out the Council's expectation for design quality, and that new forms of development should be designed to relate to their surroundings, provide convenient connections for all users and a safe, managed environment.

2.52. Policy UD2 - Design Statements: Identifies when a design statement is required and what it should contain.

*Waste Management.*

2.53. Policy WM7, Public and Private Waste Management Facilities: Recognises that such facilities are required in order to meet the wider agenda of seeking to reduce, re-use, recover and dispose of waste. It considers that these are best located within industrial areas. Policy WM6 defines a number of criteria, which will be used in order to control and minimise the environmental impact of such facilities.

*Conservation and Heritage.*

2.54. Policy C7, Canals: Given the Tame Valley Canal provides such a strong physical feature within the area covered by SPD, regard will need to be had to this policy. The Policy sets out to safeguard the heritage features associated with the canal, whilst also identifying criteria against which to assess new development adjacent to canals, Development Control Policy DC4 also supplements this policy.

*Strategic Regeneration Framework for Hill Top.*

2.55. Sandwell MBC and AWM commissioned the Strategic Regeneration Framework for Hill Top study in November 2003. The report was split into three parts, the first aimed to identify the barriers to redevelopment, the second part assessed the need for public sector intervention. The third part looked at why the market is failing to regenerate the Hill Top site and what options the public sector could pursue to arrest the decline of the site and how these fit with local, regional and national land use and regeneration policies.

2.56. The report concluded that Hill Top needs a set of comprehensive measures to turn it around. These are unlikely to be provided by the private sector and more likely to be brought forward by the public sector. However it recognised that the various agencies and their strategies were aligned to delivering the required step change to regenerate the area. They share the goals of diversifying the economy, building on existing strengths and developing into new markets only where the locality can be seen to truly add value. They promote a holistic approach to regeneration, through matching the development of opportunity sites with the regeneration of disadvantaged communities. This approach and these policies are particularly appropriate to Hill Top.

- 2.57. The report stated that if development does take place the foundations can be laid for communities across Sandwell and more particularly Hill Top to benefit from the downstream development of its key sites. The appropriate forms of development within the area can act as a spur for improving the participation of local people in economic activity through the creation of employment, business development and up-skilling opportunities. Development of Hill Top industrial area will offer clear benefits to the economy and the community of what it will contribute to the remedy of market failure and the issues of inequity.
- 2.58. Sectors identified for the site including waste/recycling and food processing would generally be more readily suited to local labour markets. The redevelopment can also improve the environmental character of the area and act as a catalyst for wider regeneration. Given these findings a final piece of work was commissioned by the Council and its partners, which looked specifically around the opportunities facing the manufacturing sector in responding to regulatory change governing the sustainable uses of resources and what key elements would be required to develop a Resource Recovery Park.
- 2.59. The report on "The feasibility of delivering a Resource Recovery Park in Sandwell" concludes that an opportunity exists to link a range of policy objectives at national, regional and local levels by linking the need to develop modern, high quality waste management facilities with the RES's plan of fostering an Environmental Sector business cluster that could generate new jobs and reduce social deprivation in the area.

### 3. A NEW DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK FOR HILL TOP

#### Strategy

- 3.1. Hill Top is well placed to make a contribution to the realisation of objectives which underpin the planning framework in Sandwell on matters such as creating and retaining employment, providing jobs in areas with good links to the transport network and opportunities for employment in areas suffering from social exclusion.
- 3.2. The successful redevelopment of a strategic regeneration site such as Hill Top is considered to be crucial to bring about the regeneration of the borough, creating new employment opportunities and improving the environment in the immediate vicinity and Sandwell as a whole.
- 3.3. Given this and the strategic context set out in the previous section, the future strategy for the area is to promote its continued use for employment but with a focus on uses related to waste and recycling focused around the development of a Resource Recovery Park. This will involve the development of:
  1. B1 (b) Research and Development, Laboratories, High technology;
  2. B1 (c ) Light industry including limited work/live opportunities;
  3. B2 - General
  4. B8 - Storage and Distribution.
  5. Given that most waste management facilities fall outside the normal categorisation of development, 'sui generis' uses.
- 3.4. It is envisaged that the majority of the sites will be developed out with new modern industrial uses, consistent with the UDP, through the development of vacant sites and potential redevelopment of tired and under utilised infrastructure. This represents a significant opportunity to bring land forward for these uses; including a Resource Recovery Park (RRP).

- 3.5. The Resource Recovery Park will be established through the co-location of a number of businesses that are involved in the collection, processing and re-use of previously used materials. Wastes from one business become the resources of another, reducing costs and obtaining added value from discarded materials.

#### Development Principles

##### *Transport Services and infrastructure*

- 3.6. A vibrant and sustainable Hill Top requires a sustainable and integrated transport network offering access to employment areas through a real choice of transport modes. The vision for public transport requires extensive, efficient, reliable and safe convenient connections at regional and sub regional level. The prosperity of the area is reliant on the knitting together of the metro, heavy rail and bus networks. Walking and cycling will be the preferred options for local access and the use of the car and road based freight will be managed carefully to balance the priorities of economic efficiency, environmental protection and social inclusion.
- 3.7. A number of routes are being considered to provide vehicular access to the area, primarily from the A41 Black Country New Road. These include from Golds Hill Way, Power Way and via George Henry Road. An access is also being considered from the A4196 Holloway Bank adjacent to Bilport Lane as approved to serve the permitted development. A northern route from Atlantic Way is likely to prove too problematical. Other existing accesses such as those off Potters Lane are also not favoured due to existing physical constraints.
- 3.8. Initial work seems to suggest that an access into the area from the A41 Black Country New Road via an improved Golds Hill Way may present the best opportunity for maximising development benefits and meeting traffic demands.

- 3.9. In principal it would be possible to create a new route right through the area linking the A41 Black Country New Road and the A4196 Holloway Bank. This could potentially fundamentally change movement patterns in the area and consequent flows on the existing highway network. Further modelling work would be required to test this option and define the implications.
- 3.10. The area could be served by both the existing Metro Line 1 to the east, Birmingham/Wolverhampton and to the west by the proposed Wednesbury/Brierley Hill route. Stops would need to be provided to maximise Metro accessibility.
- 3.11. On the western side of the area is the disused rail alignment linking Stourbridge and Bescot. The western side of this rail alignment will accommodate the proposed Wednesbury/Brierley Hill Metro route. The eastern side of the alignment is being safeguarded for future rail freight use. There is an existing private siding, which could potentially serve future development north of the Tame Valley Canal.
- 3.12. The development of a new access road will be deemed an essential part of the overall regeneration scheme for Hill Top and will provide improved access to developments. Based on preliminary work which has still to be finalised, two proposals are being considered as the most likely options for improving the access within the Hill Top Strategic Regeneration Area.
- Option One*
- 3.13. This option involves extending an improved Golds Hill Way over the Tame River into Site 8, constructing a bridge under the proposed Metro/heavy rail line south of the Tame Valley Canal providing access into Site 5. The under bridge would be completed as part of the Metro works, with work currently programmed to start on Metro in 2008.
- 3.14. The access road could also link up with Shaw Street. This would provide improved access to the Hill Top Estate (Site 3) and Site 5. In addition there would be the potential to provide access to George Henry Road from the new access road, although this would be dependent on a number of serious constraints being overcome.
- 3.15. In the east of the Hill Top area, development of Site 3 requires the construction of an access road in the vicinity of Bilport lane at its junction with Holloway Bank (A4196). Where the access road crosses the Metro, a Metro crossing with signal control will be required, similar to the existing crossing at Swan Lane just south of the Black Lake Tram stop.
- Option Two*
- 3.16. This option involves extending an improved Golds Hill Way over the Tame River into Site 8, constructing a bridge under the proposed Metro/heavy rail line south of the Tame Valley Canal providing access into Site 5. As with option one the under bridge construction would be included within the Metro works.
- 3.17. The access road would travel north and bridge the Tame Valley Canal and then travel in a direction parallel to the canal. An island junction would be constructed to the South of the existing Newby Foundry site, providing access to this site, which is not included in the overall regeneration scheme.
- 3.18. The access road from Holloway Bank, as described in option one would meet up with the western access road at the island to the south of the existing Newby Foundry site.
- 3.19. This option would create a new through route linking the A41 Black Country New Road and A4196 Holloway Bank. It would not only open up the Hill Top area but would prove attractive for other sites in the surrounding area and could assist wider regeneration.

### *Other Transport Modes*

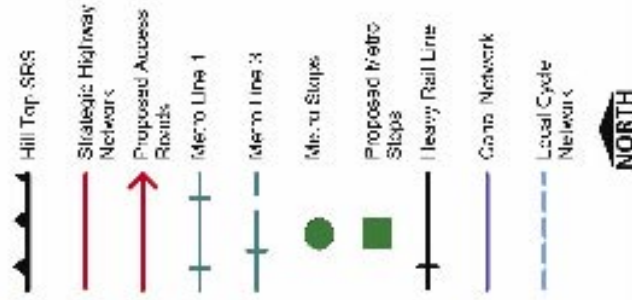
- 3.20. The improvement of existing and the provision of new pedestrian and cycling routes must be undertaken. The northern towpath of the Tame Valley Canal already provides an east/west cycle route through the heart of the area and further provision will be developed. Existing footpath links will be reassessed as part of the development proposals to enable a coherent and good quality pedestrian network to be provided.
- 3.21. A provisional Metro stop is included within the proposed Midland Metro Extension from Wednesbury to Brierley Hill but the stop will only be completed when the area is developed. This stop is seen as a vital link in ensuring public transport adequately serves the area. The potential for an additional stop on Metro Line 1 between the existing stops at Black Lake and Great Western Street has been identified by Travel Midland Metro and Centro.
- 3.22. Transport Assessments, Transport Statements and travel plans will be required to accompany planning applications for development. For major proposals, the Assessment should illustrate accessibility to the site by all means and the likely modal split of journeys to and from the site. It should also give details of proposed measures to improve access by public transport, walking and cycling.
- 3.23. For smaller schemes, the Assessment should simply outline the transport aspects of the application.

### *Design and Layout*

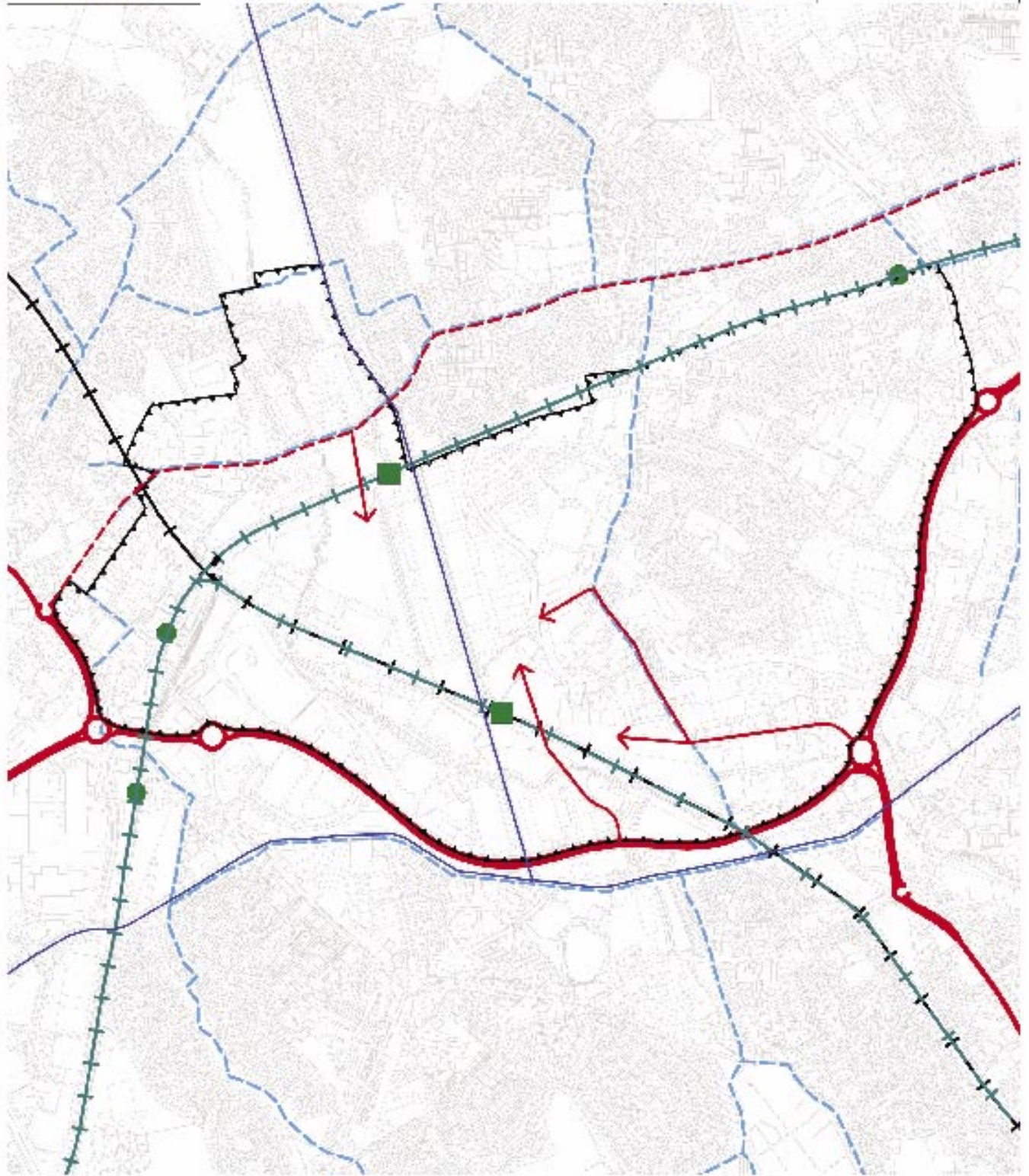
- 3.24. The Black Country New Road in parts has a well established green edge which is regarded as a strong visually pleasing design code. Development will be resisted in these areas and further enhancement will be secured through new development proposal where possible. In addition, major road islands along the route are considered to be major gateway locations. The potential for enhancing these spaces is recognised, particularly in terms of reinforcing legibility and a sense of place through the provision of public art. Funding will be secured through future Section 106 provision for public realm improvements.
- 3.25. The River Tame and Tame Valley Canal are important wildlife corridors running through the plan area. With the River Tame also designated as a main river by the Environment Agency, who have permissive (not mandatory) powers to carry out maintenance and improvement works on the River. As such the Environment Agency seeks to maintain an open corridor alongside both open channel and culverts in order to ensure the necessary maintenance can be undertaken. Development within 8 metres of the top of the bank would therefore be resisted.
- 3.26. The Canal network within the area is considered to be a major asset to future development, in accordance with Policy C7 Canals of the UDP, the Council will seek to protect the Borough's canal heritage and where the opportunity exists, encouragement will be given to the use of the canals as a feature to enhance the quality of development through appropriate layout and orientation.
- 3.27. Positive steps should be taken to increase the nature conservation aspects of the development sites' design and the landscape should provide linkages with existing landscape, environmental and wildlife corridors. Quality landscaping will be an important and integral feature of any development proposals.



**Transport Network  
within Hill Top**



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**FIGURE 2 - TRANSPORT LINKS WITHIN THE HILL TOP STRATEGIC REGENERATION AREA**

- 3.28. Proposals for development must exhibit a high quality of design and materials, and the design statements in support of planning applications must demonstrate how the proposals make a positive contribution to their context, particularly key gateway locations and the canal environment. Where appropriate, the enhancement of gateways and the canals and their settings will be secured through S106 Agreements.
- 3.29. Given the topography opportunities exist to enhance key vistas, which connect long views of Wednesbury and the historic church spires of Saint Bartholomew's and Saint Mary's. Given the number of new points of access to be forged into the area an opportunity also exists to use the built form to create a positive statement through creating new landmark buildings and structures at strategic locations within the area to create a new sense of place and character. These locations are identified in the Action Area plans 1-8.
- 3.30. The design and layout of new industrial development should be of a high standard and designed to mitigate any potential impact upon established environmental assets and to improve the building quality in the Hill Top area. New industrial development will be expected to achieve a high degree of sustainability. This can be achieved through good design of buildings and the use of appropriate building materials, with the emphasis on creating energy efficient development and good environmental design. Opportunities for reuse of recycled materials and resources should be explored. How the building is designed to operate and function is also a sustainable design consideration particularly when considering movement and how safe and convenient access is achieved. Achieving good pedestrian and cycle connections are essential both internal and external to the site.
- 3.31. The layout of new development and the design of buildings and the improvements to the physical environment must have regard for safety and security of the users of the area and should discourage opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour.
- 3.32. Buffers and green landscaping using appropriate techniques will be considered an integral part of any proposal for development, especially along new and existing boundaries and at road junctions or entrances to developments, in order to improve the environment and to screen or mitigate existing or new development.
- 3.33. Design layouts must clearly define public and private space and seek to manage private space with appropriately designed boundary treatments. Strong boundary treatments that are visually pleasing will be encouraged along key connecting routes. The restriction and reduction of surface water run off from new developments can be encouraged by the provision of surface water storage areas, flow limiting devices in conjunction with surface or sub surface storage or, where ground conditions permit, the use of infiltration areas or soakways.
- 3.34. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) can help total or peak flows of run off, these systems can contribute substantially to good design in improving the amenity and wildlife interest of developments, as well as encouraging natural ground water. The Council will work with its partners and the Environment Agency to enable surface water run off to be controlled as near the source as possible by the encouragement of SUDS.



**Sandwell**  
Metropolitan Borough Council

## Hill Top

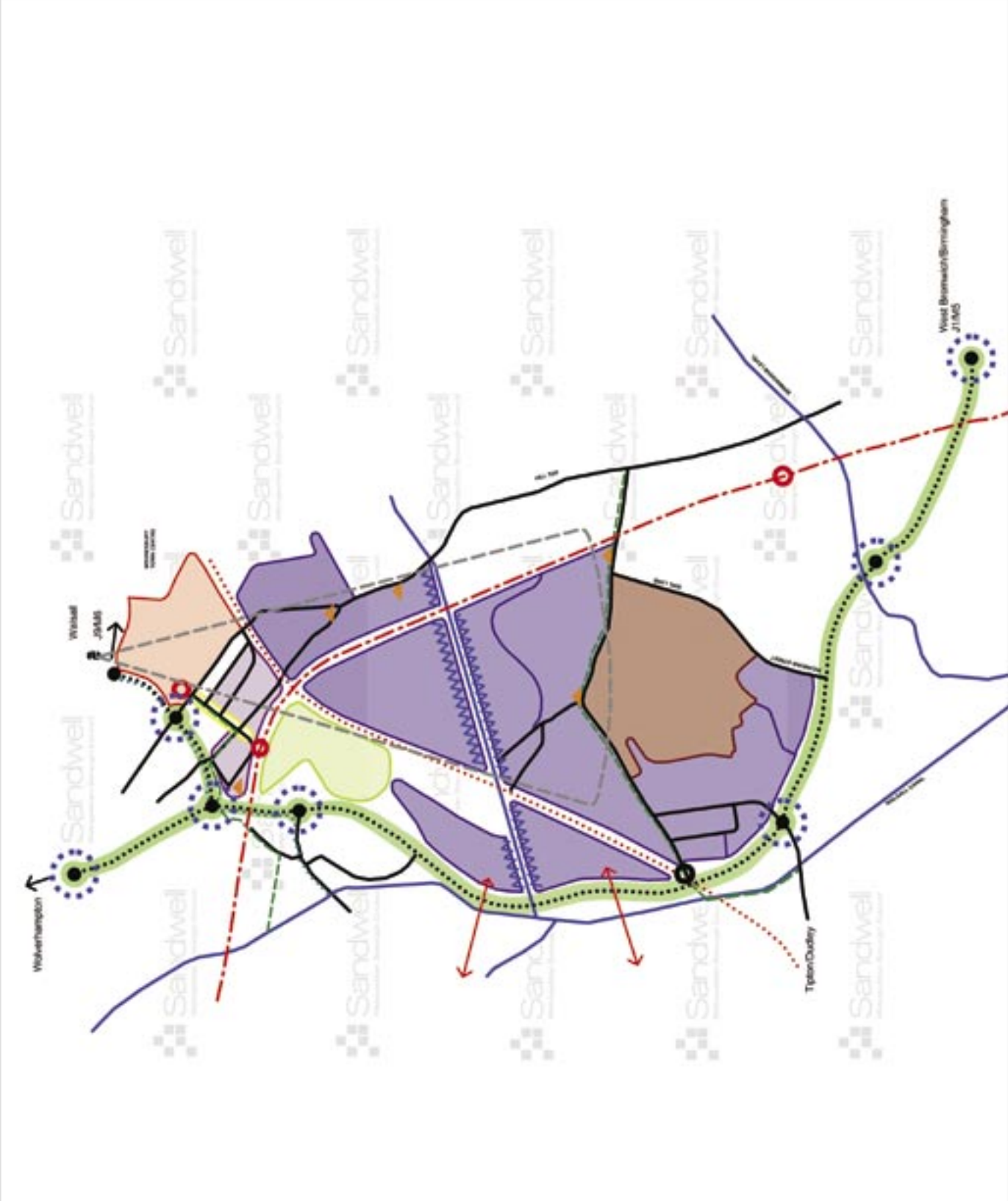


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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Black Country spine road</li> <li>Metro line 1</li> <li>Metro line 3</li> <li>Canal corridor</li> <li>National cycle network</li> <li>Major gateways</li> <li>Transport routes</li> <li>Proposed future transport route</li> <li>Improved pedestrian connections</li> <li>Environmental improvement</li> <li>Landmark building opportunities</li> <li>View Corse</li> <li>Key pedestrian connection environmental improvements</li> <li>Important 'green' edges</li> <li>Town Centre</li> <li>B1 Lakes</li> <li>B2/B3 users</li> <li>Existing residential</li> <li>Important green/blue/forest</li> <li>AA</li> <li>Action areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Black Country spine road</li> <li> Metro line 1</li> <li> Metro line 3</li> <li> Canal corridor</li> <li> National cycle network</li> <li> Major gateways</li> <li> Transport routes</li> <li> Proposed future transport route</li> <li> Improved pedestrian connections</li> <li> Environmental improvement</li> <li> Landmark building opportunities</li> <li> View Corse</li> <li> Key pedestrian connection environmental improvements</li> <li> Important 'green' edges</li> <li> Town Centre</li> <li> B1 Lakes</li> <li> B2/B3 users</li> <li> Existing residential</li> <li> Important green/blue/forest</li> <li> AA</li> <li> Action areas</li> </ul>
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**FIGURE 3 - ACTION AREAS**

## **4. ACTION AREAS.**

- 4.1 The above sets out the overall policy context and development principles that apply to Hill Top, the following section identifies a number of action areas within the Hill Top area to which they will apply. Within each action area the development opportunities have been identified together with acceptable land uses and detailed guidance for development. It sets out all the issues that would need to be addressed through the planning and development process.

### Action Area One - Potters Lane

- 4.2. This area is somewhat different in character from the main Hill Top area and is physically divorced from it by the existing Metro line, rail freight line and Black Country New Road. It sits adjacent to Wednesbury Town Centre and provides the opportunity given its location to provide a strong gateway for both the Town Centre and the Hill Top Area itself.
- 4.3. At present the area comprises a number of uses including a number of community uses and uses associated with the town centre. The area has excellent public transport links with the Wednesbury Great Western Street Metro stop and adjacent bus station. The area is also situated adjacent to Black Country New Road, providing good access to the Strategic Highway network.
- 4.4. Opportunities for development have the potential to contribute to the regeneration of Hill Top, as well as potentially benefiting the future of Wednesbury Town Centre through increasing the catchment by attracting employment uses. Given the location, the development of B1 Uses, (Research & development), that would support higher value jobs and create a high quality business environment are considered more appropriate. The area would also lend itself to other complementary uses that may be associated with a town centre such as office or community type uses that because of their scale cannot be accommodated within the existing boundary. In this respect applicants would need to demonstrate to the Local Planning Authority that no sites were either available or suitable for the development proposed within the defined town centre boundary. Its proximity to the town centre would also lend itself to uses which would attract a high number of visitors. Given the domestic scale of the Albert Street and Stafford Street block structure, consideration may also be given to work/live accommodation. The residential component would be considered as ancillary to the primary B1 use.
- 4.5. The design solution would need to be carefully considered so that a suitable environmental quality was achieved to support the residential component.
- 4.6. A key element of the strategy in this area will be to improve the physical linkage for pedestrians between the town centre and the Metro Stop at Great Western Street. The pedestrian access across A4196 Holyhead Road will be particularly important. This link is also identified as part of a local cycle network that would connect the Black Country New Road and the Town Centre. The Council seek to secure the implementation of this and improvements to this linkage through Planning Obligations.
- 4.7. With the area having a prominent location, the potential exists to create a number of landmark buildings at strategic locations to raise the profile of the area. Therefore at certain locations development will be required to achieve an appropriate mass in terms of height, whilst also being of high standard in architectural design and quality.

**Area 1 - Potters Lane**

-  Major gateways
-  Key gateways and nodes
-  Key development opportunities
-  Landmark elements
-  Improvements to public realm for pedestrian and office users
-  Key active frontages
-  2/3 Building heights
-  D1 uses / office
-  D1 low workuses opportunities
-  Important green edges to be retained
-  Metro Line



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## Action Area Two - Bridge Street

- 4.8. Located to the south east of Wednesbury Town Centre this area is severed from the main Hill Top area by Metro Line 1 and is bisected by the A4196 Bridge Street/Holloway Bank which provides the main approach into Wednesbury Town Centre. A number of commercial uses such as car sales are located along its length, with industrial uses extending off the adjoining streets. The area to the east of the road is at present fairly intensively used and it is considered not to be the subject of major redevelopment proposals in the immediate future. However, the area to the west is considered to have a key role to play in the wider strategy, in that it provides a number of development opportunities due to the existence of vacant and derelict sites and the opportunity to provide wider access into the Regeneration Area as outlined in option two above.
- 4.9. Since the opening of the Black Country New Road in the late 1990's the A4196 has been downgraded as a principal through route to the Borough. However, it still is heavily trafficked acting as an important local distributor road and approach to Wednesbury Town Centre. Thus the redevelopment of existing uses and vacant sites along its length could serve to raise the quality of the environment and profile of the area acting as a catalyst for further investment. In addition to being very visible from the road the area is also highly visible from Metro Line 1. Given this and the fact that the area could serve as a major access point into the wider area the development of sites in this locality are a priority and are considered to be an early phase to achieving the wider objectives set out in this SPD. Thus development here will assist in branding the area and thus will need to be of a high quality, helping to set a bench mark for further phases of development.
- 4.10. Given the area's proximity to the town centre, it could support B1 uses and other complementary uses as identified in Policy E2 of the UDP. However, the development of other employment uses would also be supported providing they could achieve a high quality environment.
- 4.11. With the potential to achieve access into the wider area from the Bilport Lane area the Council will require high quality innovative design for proposals in order to establish new gateways into the area with landmark buildings. The Council will also seek to safeguard future potential access points and seek developer contributions to their implementation through the development process.
- 4.12. Whilst the area is bounded by Metro Line One, the nearest stop is that situated at Great Western Street. The possibility to provide an additional Metro stop around the Bilport lane area is considered to be desirable in this locality and something which the Council and Centro would be keen to explore further, with the potential to fund the additional stop through planning obligations on development proposals through travel plans.
- 4.13. The redevelopment of the site should make use of the River Tame, which flows through the southern half of the site. Riverside development can present an opportunity to give an interest or focus to all types of development schemes. Proposals for development alongside the river must exhibit high quality of design and materials and the design statement must demonstrate how the proposals enable the movement of species through the site and make a positive contribution to the environment. Where appropriate the enhancement of the river and its setting will be secured through S106 Agreements.

**Area 2 - Bridge Street**

-  Key gateways and nodes
-  Key development opportunities
-  Landmark elements
-  Improvements to public realm for pedestrian and office users
-  Key active frontages
- 2/3**  Building heights
-  B1 uses / office
-  B2
-  Existing and proposed improvements to access



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### Action Area Three - North of the Tame Valley Canal

- 4.14. This area is mainly a vacant brownfield site, with industrial premises located on the south part of the site adjacent to the canal and the eastern part adjacent to the proposed Metro line from Wednesbury to Brierley Hill. The area is land locked by the Tame Valley Canal to the south and the Metro lines to the north east and north west.
- 4.15. The north western part of the site is affected by the access to a proposed asphalt coating plant which has been granted planning permission. This facility would be much better served from a new access road instead of the existing private access off Smith Road.
- 4.16. In total the site is some 25 hectares in size, with 20 hectares considered to have the potential to come forward for development. The regular shape of the site and its level nature lend itself to the development of larger industrial or warehousing/distribution units B2/B8 units, with ancillary office uses. These could be related to the Resource Recovery Park concept being promoted to the south west of the canal. This is considered to be the most significant opportunity within the Hill Top Area, to bring underused land back into beneficial use. The development of a high quality business environment is what the Council and its partners are seeking to achieve in this locality.
- 4.17. The key to unlocking this area and a prerequisite to it coming forward for development is through the provision of new access points. The only means of access at present is via a substandard under bridge across Metro Line 1 at Bilport Lane. Two new potential access points have been identified into the area. These are outlined in the options set out earlier in the document, but in summary potential exists to provide a new access road into the area from the south west from Golds Hill Way over the canal and from Bilport Lane in the east. There may be the potential to link the access roads to provide a through road. The Council and its Partners are willing to work with land owners or developers to bring forward a package of development and funding for the area which will maximise and realise the regeneration potential of this area. The Council will also seek to improve access by public transport into this area through the provision of a Metro stop on the planned Metro line to the West. This would be located to the south west corner of this area, adjacent to the canal and close to where any new access road was provided.
- 4.18. The redevelopment of the site should make use of the Tame Valley Canal adjacent to the south of the site. Canal side development can present an opportunity to give an interest or focus to all types of development schemes. Water features can give an attractive outlook or view and overlooking buildings can also assist with canal safety.
- 4.19. Proposals for development alongside the canal must exhibit a high quality of design and materials, and the design statement must demonstrate how the proposals make a positive contribution to the canal environment. Where appropriate, the enhancement of the canals and their settings will be secured through S106 Agreements. There are also prominent views of the area from the Metro lines, therefore the development should be of a high quality.

**Area 3 - Land north of the Tame Valley Canal**

-  Key gateways and nodes
-  Key development opportunities
-  Landmark/focal point elements
-  Opportunity for environmental enhancement
-  Key active frontages
- 2/3** Building heights
-  B2/BS uses
-  Key access points



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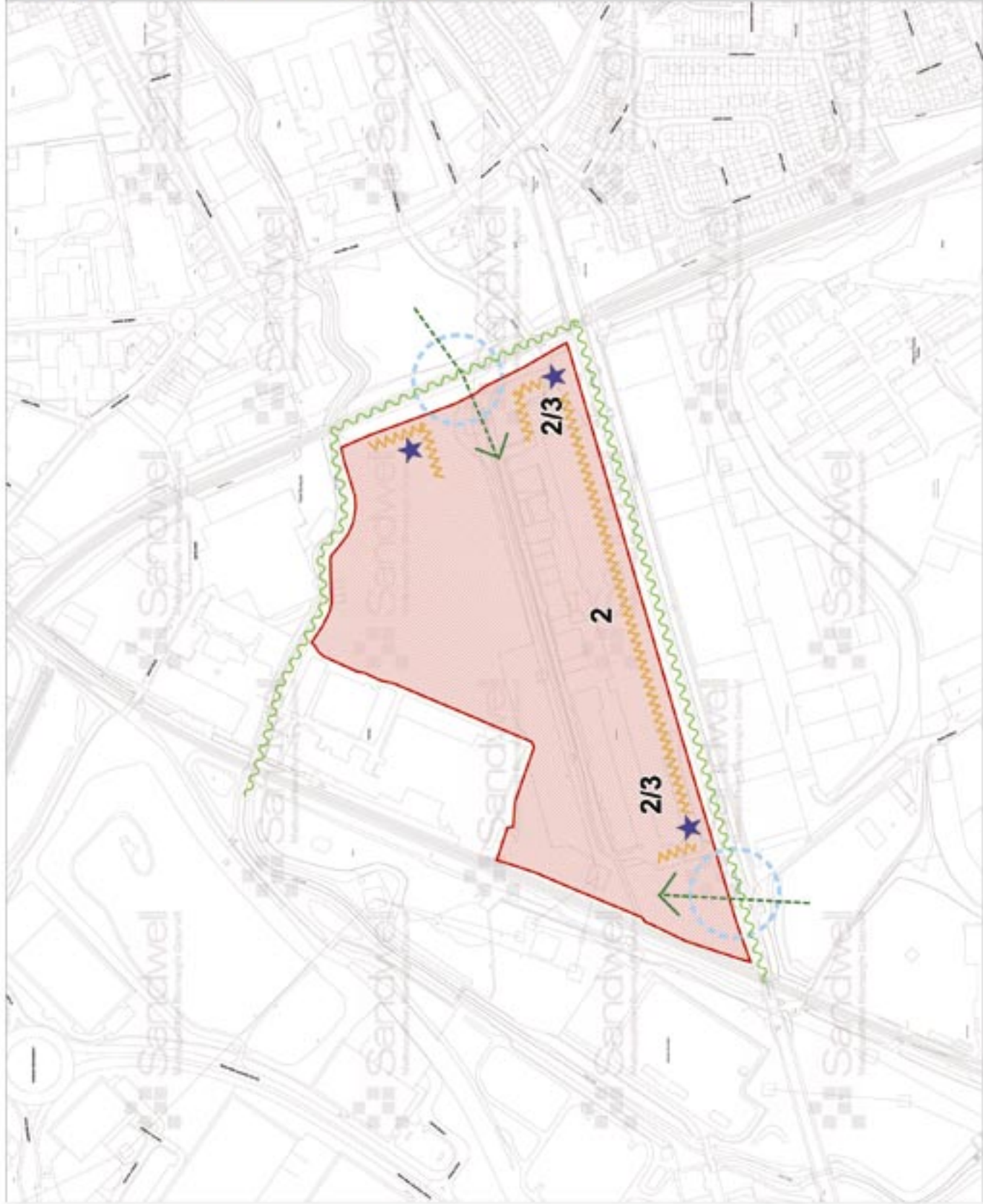
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#### Action Area Four - Hill Top Estate

- 4.20. The Tame Valley Canal is located to the north of the site. To the south of the site there is a filled old canal, which is a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation. The area comprises an active industrial estate built in the 1970s, that has seen some recent refurbishment. However, there still appear to be a number of vacant units and characteristic of much of the area is considered to be under performing.
- 4.21. Again access to the area is considered to be a key weakness, with the existing access being off a long 'cul de sac' off Harvills Hawthorn and the topography of the area with the land falling away resulting in the area lacking any visible profile. Limited views can be seen of the area from the adjoining Metro Line 1, which forms the eastern boundary. The redevelopment of the area to the north of the canal will potentially raise the profile of this area, particularly as development will address the canal frontage positively and the proposal to provide a new access road into the area from the south west from Golds Hill Way provides the opportunity to provide more direct access to the Black Country New Road immediately to the west of this site. The site is also located between the proposed Wednesbury/ Brierley Hill Metro line and Metro Line 1 Birmingham/Wolverhampton. A stop is proposed at Golds Hill Crossing on the Wednesbury/Brierley Hill line and the site could be linked into this improving public transport access.
- 4.22. Therefore the opportunity exists through the adjoining redevelopment proposals and improving access to facilitate further investment in this area and to increase its viability. This could take the form of further refurbishment or even redevelopment of it in part.
- 4.23. In bringing proposals forward the Council will require greater recognition of the canal boundary and seek the orientation of the development to positively address it. The site would lend itself to the development of units suitable for B1(b)(c), B2 and B8 uses with ancillary office uses facing the Tame Valley Canal (where appropriate). Given that this area will sit immediately adjacent to the Resource Recovery park the potential exists to develop a cluster of industrial uses in this locality that could use or process recycled materials in their operation.
- 4.24. A contribution through a planning obligation may be required to facilitate direct access to the Black Country New Road.

**Area 4 - Hill Top Estate**

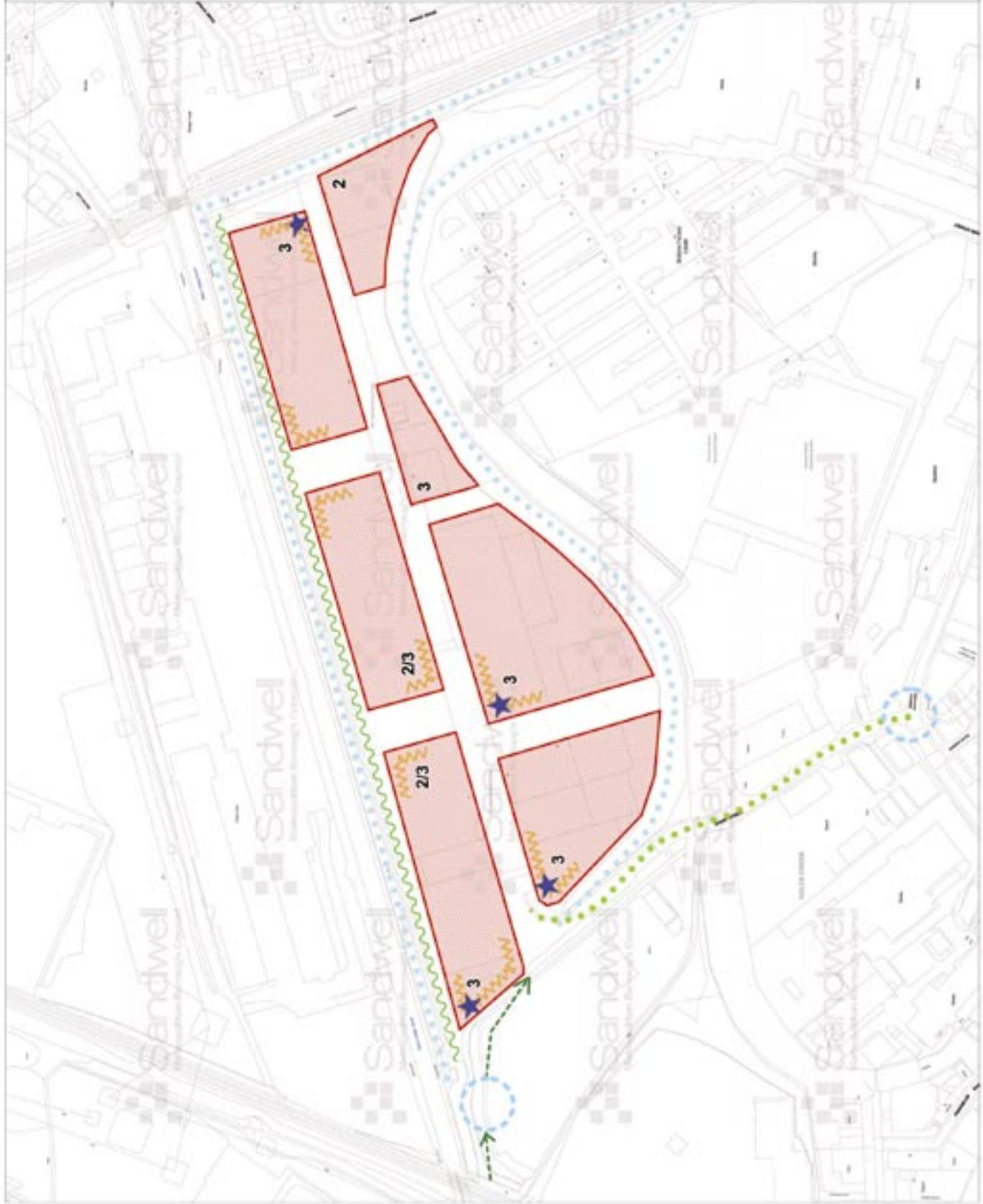
-  Key gateways and nodes
-  Key development/refurbishment opportunities
-  Landmark elements
-  Existing space improved
-  Improved pedestrian links
-  Key active frontages
- 2/3**  Building heights
-  B2/with ancillary
-  New improved access
-  Environmental improvement and opportunity for new public space

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## Action Area Five - Bagnall Street

- 4.25. The area is located adjacent to Bagnall Street which forms the southern boundary. The proposed Metro/heavy rail line forms the western boundary, area four above forms the eastern boundary, with the Tame Valley Canal forming the boundary to the north. The area is currently occupied by a number of open storage uses and under utilised no longer fit for purpose industrial units. The area is in fragmented ownership and requires to be assembled to bring forward comprehensive development.
- 4.26. This area is considered to be critical to the future regeneration strategy for Hill Top and is considered to be the priority and focus for early action, as it will provide the new gateway into the Hill Top area and most importantly have a direct access to the Black Country New Road. This will be provided via a new access road from Golds Hill Way that could enter the site via a bridge under the Metro/heavy rail line. This would allow the site to be serviced away from Bagnall Street and would assist a strategy of improving the Bagnall Street environment for residents. There is a proposal to have a Metro stop to the south of the Tame Valley Canal, providing improved access to the site via public transport.
- 4.27. The area will be the focus for the establishment of a Resource Recovery Park, and supporting B2 uses that are associated with waste recovery and recycling. The open treatment and storage of waste would not be permitted, unless it is demonstrated by the applicant that there are operational and safety reasons why the open treatment of waste is required. Where this is permitted the Council in accordance with policy would seek to protect the natural water courses and would also seek to mitigate the adverse impact of any operation through the provision of high quality boundary treatment. However, primarily the treatment and storage of waste would have to take place under cover within units of a high quality design.
- 4.28. Resource Recovery Parks have the potential to attract businesses that cater to a regional market or national market. Examples would include operations recycling or reusing materials such as tyres, glass, cardboard, plastic and paper.
- 4.29. Many current reprocessing facilities within the UK are running close to capacity. If the government's recycling targets are to be met it is important that more processing capacity is made available to meet increased demand. Thus it is considered that there is an opportunity that the area could capitalise on to secure the future regeneration of the area and meet a sub-regional or even regional demand. Key to the delivery of any form of RRP at Hill Top will be effective public sector funding and potential operations. A waste management licence will be required to operate a Resource Recovery Park.
- 4.30. Sandwell with AWM and possible assistance from other Black Country authorities must;
1. Define the site
  2. Assemble the land package
  3. Carry out decontamination and site preparation
  4. Develop appropriate infrastructure to facilitate development
- 4.31. These initial steps are essential to being able to offer attractive serviced sites to the sector and create a strategic site of benefit to the Black Country as a whole. A key objective of this SPD is to start this process off, by defining the site and providing the statutory planning framework to bring it forward.
- 4.32. At present all options in relation to waste recovery and recycling will need to be considered. However, it is envisaged that the site could incorporate a MRF, civic amenity site, in-vessel composting plant and a community recycling facility; these would require a site of a minimum of 20 hectares. In addition other waste reprocessing facilities will be encouraged and space made available. *cont'd...*

**Area 5 - Bagnall Street**

-  Key gateways and nodes
-  Key development opportunities
-  Landmark elements
-  Environmental buffer and high quality visually pleasing boundary treatment
-  Key active frontages
- 20** Building heights
-  Resource recovery park
-  Improved access
-  Proposed metro line 3
-  Proposed metro stop
-  Environmental enhancement to canal frontage
-  Long views and visual connection to Westbury Town centre

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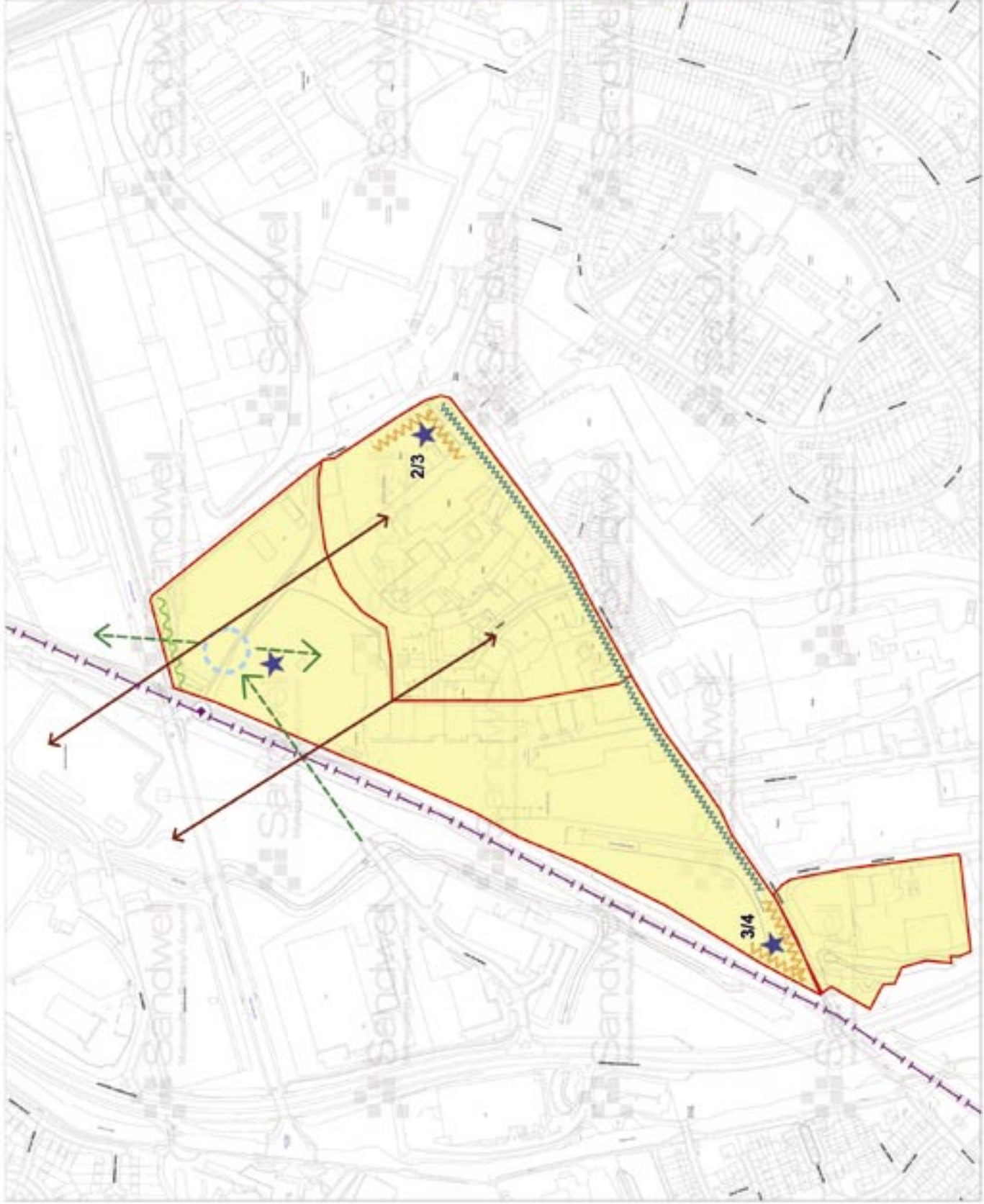
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The BCWMF and Atkins Waste Study recommends the Black Country Councils maximise recycling and composting, with an Energy from Waste, arising from Sandwell and Walsall. Fundamental to reducing the Black Country's reliance on landfill disposal is the need to find an alternative outlet for the furnace bottom ash from existing EfW plants at Dudley and Wolverhampton rather than the current land fill option. It is envisaged that such operations could be located within the planned Resource Recovery Park. As part of the process of defining and assembling the potential site, a conceptual layout of a fully integrated Waste Management Hub needs to be prepared. Planning permission has already been granted for MRF at a site off Chimney Street.

#### **Action Area Six - Harvills Hawthorn**

- 4.33. The area is located to the north of Harvills Hawthorn, with an adjacent residential area to the south.
- 4.34. The Midland Metro Line 1 from Birmingham and Wolverhampton travels adjacent to the eastern side of the site and under the industrial premises that front Tunnel Road although the nearest stop is at Black Lake. The site consists of derelict and underused industrial buildings and the Siddons Industrial Estate, which dates back to the late 19th Century. This provides accommodation for a number of companies, but is set out in a very tight grid pattern with narrow access ways. Any proposals for the redevelopment will need to be appraised in terms of the buildings' historic and archaeological importance and key buildings may need to be safe guarded in regards of any redevelopment proposals.

- 4.35. In order to facilitate the development of the area, it requires improved access from the north west which would be provided by a spur off the proposed new access off the Black Country New Road via Golds Hill Way. The site offers the opportunity for a mix of industrial and distribution uses of varying size. The northern part of the site is capable of taking larger units, whilst to the south adjacent to the residential areas smaller incubator units are considered more appropriate that would be smaller in scale providing a more appropriate interface with the residential properties on the other side of Harvills Hawthorn.
- 4.36. There is a change of level across the site from Harvills Hawthorn northwards. This creates difficulties in servicing the whole of the site from any new access. Therefore options for development would have to be examined in detail. To the north of the site there is the old canal, which is a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation. The estate contains occupiers that would require relocation.
- 4.37. Along the frontage of Harvills Hawthorn, there may be a need for restrictions on the hours of operation of businesses fronting the adjacent residential dwellings. The Council will also seek to provide a high quality frontage through appropriate treatment and landscaping in order to raise the quality of the environment for residents in this area.

### Area 6 - Harvills Hawthorn

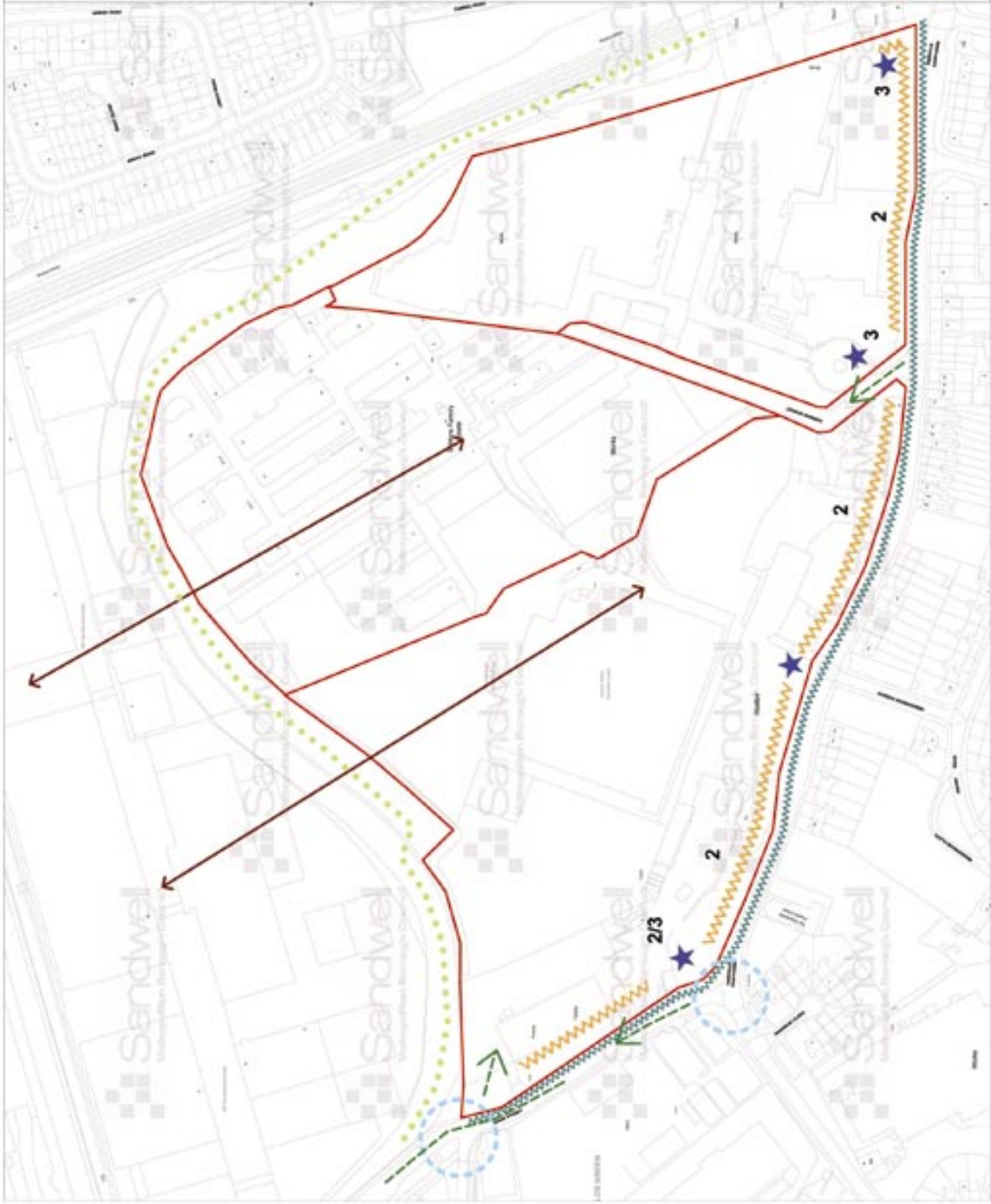
- Key gateways and nodes
- Key development opportunities
- Landmark/focal point elements
- Opportunity for improved public open space and environmental enhancement
- Key active landmark frontages
- 2/3** Building heights
- Environmental buffer
- Improved access
- Significant long views to Wednesbury Town centre

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## Area Seven - George Henry Road

- 4.38. The area is a major gateway into the Hill Top Area, situated adjacent to Black Country New Road, providing good access to the Strategic Highway network. Given this prominence the opportunity exists to make a positive statement through the built form with the development of landmark features.
- 4.39. Whilst the area saw some benefit from the construction of the Black Country New Road with new development fronting the road, as you move back into the area many of the buildings are very old and the environment created by them poor. The redevelopment of this area will be encouraged for a range of industrial uses including B1 given the good access to the strategic highway network, public transport and its proximity to Great Bridge Town Centre. It is also recognised that given the high profile nature of the site that large 'sui generis' uses such as Car/Vehicle Businesses may also be an appropriate form of development at this location.
- 4.40. This area also interfaces with the Harvills Hawthorn PFI area and therefore the treatment and orientation of development along this boundary will need careful consideration. At present this is formed by a former canal arm, which has been filled and is allocated as Community Open Space. The development of this area will be required to enhance this to create an appropriate buffer between the competing land uses.
- 4.41. The development fronting The Black Country New Road will need to make a positive design statement on this major through route to the Borough and the Council would wish to see active frontages created where possible. The improvement of existing and provision of new pedestrian links from Great Bridge Town Centre will also be required.

**Area 7 - George Henry Road**

-  Major gateways
-  Key gateways and nodes
-  Key development opportunities
-  Landmark elements
-  Environmental improvements
-  Key active/landmark frontages
- 2/3** Building heights
-  Primarily B1, B2 and B8
-  Key access

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## Area Eight - Golds Hill Way

- 4.41. The area is a major gateway into the Hill Top Area, situated adjacent to Black Country New Road, providing good access to the Strategic Highway network.
- 4.42. With the area having a prominent location, there are opportunities to create a high quality environment through urban design with landmark features, to support the existing developments adjacent. The area would lend itself to the development of high quality B1 and B2 units.
- 4.43. Redevelopment of the area will make use of both the River Tame and Tame Valley Canal which both flow through the area. Proposals for development alongside both the river and the canal must exhibit a high quality of design and materials and the design statement must demonstrate how the developments make a positive contribution to the river and the canal environments.
- 4.44. The key issue for this area is one of providing a gateway to the wider regeneration area. This will be facilitated by the proposal to extend Golds Hill Way over the Tame and under the Metro line/Freight line, adjacent to the east of the area. In doing so this will give direct access to the Black Country New Road via a traffic signalised all movements junction. There may also be a need to widen Golds Hill Way so that it is capable of serving the area in this strategic capacity.

**Area 3 - Golds Hill Way**

-  Key gateways and nodes
-  Key development opportunities
-  Landmark elements
-  Environmental improvements
-  Key active/landmark frontages
- 2/3** Building heights
-  B1, B2 and B8
-  Key access
-  Proposed metro line 3
-  Proposed metro stop

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## 5. DELIVERY

### Key Partners

- 5.1. Realising the Council's vision for the sustainable regeneration of the Hill Top area will be a complex, multi faceted and long-term project. The Council along with its partners Advantage West Midlands and Regenco have been in discussions on the regeneration of the area since 2004.
- 5.2. These partners have been working together to prepare this framework and are committed to working together with the private sector to deliver its aims. The role of the public sector agencies should not be to supplement private initiative and investment, but to enable, manage and complement it in order to remove the constraints and ensure that new development delivers the vision of sustainable regeneration of the Hill Top master plan area.

### Priorities and Phasing of Development

- 5.3. The overall phasing strategy will be focused on improving the access across the Hill Top area. This will be from the Black Country New Road on the western side of the area and Holloway Bank in the east. The improved accesses will open sites and estates to redevelopment that previously suffered a lack of investment in the past due to poor accessibility.
- 5.4. This section will set out the anticipated planning of the development activity needed to regenerate Hill Top. Public sector investment will follow a different, but related timetable. In some cases public sector investment will immediately precede development activity, eg site remediation. In others others, eg transport projects there could be a significant time lag. The phasing of public sector investment will be addressed further through detailed investment programming.

### *Early Priorities 2006 - 2009*

- 5.5. In the next few years activity on enabling the regeneration of the area will be concentrated on addressing the creation of improved highway access to the area. To achieve this requires securing access under a new bridge beneath the proposed Metro/heavy rail route, which will unlock the industrial areas to the south and north of the Tame Valley Canal for regeneration. Action areas 3 and 5 in particular cannot move forward physically without improvements to access being implemented and areas 4 and 5 would clearly benefit from the uplift created by improved access.

### *Land Assembly*

- 5.6. In bringing forward land for development the Council will wish to see wherever possible comprehensive development to take place. In order to achieve this the Council would be willing, supported by its development partners, to use its statutory powers to acquire land. In bringing schemes forward for development the Council will support the preparation of detailed masterplans which illustrate how individual proposals fit within the context of this SPD.

### *Planning Obligations*

- 5.7. In bringing forward sites for development the Council will consider where development should provide opportunities to enhance the local environment and assist in securing any necessary infrastructure. The Council may seek to enter into legal agreements with developers under Section 106 of the Planning and Compensation Act 1991. Such agreements could relate to the provision of infrastructure, adoption of transport assessments and the improvement of cycling and pedestrian networks.