

## **Appendix - B**

### **The Planning Policy Context**

This section demonstrates how the Stourbridge Area Action Plan (AAP) document is integrated with existing national, regional and local borough-level planning policies and strategies.

#### **National Planning Policy context:**

National planning policy guidance is set by central Government and covers all of England. It is the role of this Area Action Plan to interpret national planning policy locally to ensure it is applied appropriately. There are a range of policy guidance on various topics for example climate change, housing, transport, etc.

Furthermore, there are other policy statements that the AAP needs to refer to these are Regional, sub-regional and other parts of the Local Development Framework (LDF). These have all been taken into account in the AAP and are detailed below.

#### **Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1) (2005) “Delivering Sustainable Development”**

Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1) (2005) “Delivering Sustainable Development” sets out the overarching planning policies on the delivery of sustainable development through the planning system. The guidance emphasises that planning should seek to maintain and improve the local environment and help mitigate the effects of declining environmental quality through positive policies on issues such as good and inclusive design, and protection and enhancement of the natural and historic environment. PPS1 reinforces the need to protect and enhance the quality and character of existing communities by creating sustainable, liveable and mixed communities with good access to jobs and key services for all members of the community.

#### **The Supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1) on climate change titled: “Planning and Climate Change” (December 2007)**

This national planning guidance provides expanded policy on planning’s contribution to mitigating and adapting to climate change. It recognises the important role and contribution to be made from existing and new opportunities for open space and green infrastructure to urban cooling,

sustainable drainage systems, and conserving and enhancing biodiversity.

### **PPS3 (2006) “Housing”**

National planning guidance on new housing development is set out in Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3) (2006) “Housing”. PPS3 sets out the national planning policies for housing which regional planning bodies and local authorities should take into account in developing regional spatial strategies and Local Development Frameworks (LDFs).

PPS3 confirms an emphasis on good design (including the need for new environmentally friendly energy efficient homes), mixed communities that incorporate more affordable housing and family homes. The guidance stresses that new housing should be well-connected to public transport and community facilities and services, with good access to green space and new housing developments should contain a wide choice of high quality homes, both affordable and market housing, to address the housing requirements of the wider community. In particular, those who are vulnerable or in need.

PPS3 is clear that design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, should not be accepted. It also considerable weight and importance to giving priority to re-using previously-developed land within urban areas, bringing empty homes back in to use and converting existing buildings, in preference to the development of green field sites.

### **PPS4 (December 2009) “Planning for Sustainable Economic Development”**

The recently introduced PPS4 replaces and incorporates PPG5, PPS6 and the economic aspects of PPS7. PPS4 urges planning authorities to carry out economic development, and make fuller use of land, while having proper regard to social and environmental considerations, especially climate change.

Under the umbrella of economic development, PPS4 covers retail, leisure and offices, both in town centres and elsewhere. It also includes light, general and heavy industry, storage and distribution, housing and tourism development.

### **PPS9 (2005) “Biodiversity and Geological Conservation”**

The guidance recognises the important role of urban green space areas for providing sites for biodiversity and nature conservation and attaches considerable weight and importance to protecting nature conservation sites of international, national and local importance. The valuable contribution natural green spaces areas and healthy functional ecosystems have in supporting

urban renaissance, improving the quality of life and people's sense of well-being is also recognised.

In paragraph 14, PPS9 reinforces that: "Development proposals provide many opportunities for building-in beneficial biodiversity or geological features as part of good design. When considering proposals, local planning authorities should maximise such opportunities in and around developments, using planning obligations where appropriate..."

## **PPS12 (June 2008) "Local Spatial Planning"**

PPS12 (June 2008) provides guidance on the procedures to be followed in the preparation of Local Development Documents (LDDs), paragraphs 5.4 to 5.6 of the guidance focus on Area Action Plans (AAPs). The guidance states that: "... Area Action Plans should be used when there is a need to provide the planning framework for areas where significant change or conservation is needed. Area Action Plans should:

- deliver planned growth areas;
- stimulate regeneration;
- protect areas particularly sensitive to change; and
- resolve conflicting objectives in areas subject to development pressures; or
- focus the delivery of area based regeneration initiatives", (paragraph 5.4).

In paragraph 5.6 the guidance goes on to confirm that; "... In areas of change, area action plans should identify the distribution of uses and their inter-relationships, including specific site allocations, and set out as far as practicable the timetable for the implementation of the proposals. In areas of conservation, Area Action Plans should set out the policies and proposals for action to preserve or enhance the area, including defining areas where specific conservation measures are proposed and areas which will be subject to specific controls over development ..."

## **Planning Policy Guidance Note 13 (PPG13) (April 2001) "Transport"**

Planning Policy Guidance Note 13 (PPG13) (2001) sets out the objectives to integrate planning and transport at the national, regional, strategic and local level and to promote more sustainable transport choices, both for carrying people and for moving freight. Key objectives of the guidance are to;

- promote more sustainable transport choices for both people and for moving freight;
- promote accessibility to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services by public transport, walking and cycling; and
- reduce the need to travel, especially by car.

### **PPG15 (September 1994) “Planning and the Historic Environment”**

PPG15 recognises the importance of effective protection for all aspects of the historic environment and acknowledges its significance to the quality of life, local distinctiveness, leisure and recreation.

### **Consultation paper on a new Planning Policy Statement 15 (PPS15) “Planning for the Historic Environment”**

The above consultation paper is an update of planning policy affecting archaeology, historic areas, buildings and landscapes. Once finalised, it will replace the current Planning Policy Guidance notes PPG15 and PPG16. The draft PPS is central to the Government's aims for heritage reform. It reflects a more modern, integrated approach, moving beyond the outdated distinction between buildings and archaeology to embrace all of the historic environment.

### **PPG16 (1990) “Planning and Archaeology”**

It recognises the importance of architectural remains and historic landscape both in their own right and in their role in education, leisure and tourism.

### **PPG17 (July 2002) “Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation”**

PPG17 (2002) recognises the importance of parks, green corridors, other green spaces, built indoor sports facilities and other recreational facilities for improving the communities health and well-being. It also recognises the valuable contribution of parks and green spaces in helping promote nature conservation and biodiversity, local distinctiveness and landscape and tourism. The economic importance of parks and green spaces is also recognised. For example, their important role in making the urban area an attractive place in which people choose to live, visit, work and invest.

### **PPS22 (August 2004) “Renewable Energy”**

It sets out the Government's policies for renewable energy, which planning authorities should have regard to when preparing local development documents and when taking planning decisions. The guidance reinforces that

local development documents (LDDs) should contain policies designed to promote and encourage, rather than restrict, the development of renewable energy resources. The guidance recognises that small-scale projects can provide a limited but valuable contribution to overall outputs of renewable energy and to meeting energy needs both locally and nationally.

## **PPS25 (December 2006) “Development and Flood Risk”**

PPS25 reinforces the important role that green infrastructure has to play in helping reduce flood risk by using opportunities offered by new development to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding. For example, surface water management plans, making the most of the benefits of green infrastructure for flood storage, conveyance and Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDs), re-creating functional floodplain and setting back defences.

## **Other national planning guidance**

The following national guidance is also relevant to the production of the Stourbridge AAP.

- Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism (2006)
- Planning Policy Statement 23 (2004) Planning and Pollution Control

## **Regional Policy context:**

### **Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the West Midlands (January 2008)**

The Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands (RSS) provides a spatial framework up to the year 2021 (i.e. it will set out the broad location of development proposals) for each region over a 15 year period including policies for housing, economic development and environmental protection. Policy PA12B (Non-Strategic Centres) stresses the importance of local authorities developing policies to help meet the local needs of existing town centres. It states that: “...Local authorities should be proactive in encouraging appropriate development to maintain and enhance their function as town and district centres, in particular:

- convenience shopping;
- local service and facility provision;
- day-to-day comparison shopping...”

It confirms that: “...The main focus of the non-strategic centres will be on meeting local needs, in particular convenience shopping, the provision of local services (such as banks, post offices, local health care facilities, sports centres, libraries and restaurants) and a limited amount of comparison

shopping...” RSS also makes specific reference to the importance of the Regions environmental, historical and cultural assets

The RSS Phase 2 Review covered housing figures, centres, employment land, transport and waste. The Examination in Public (EIP) for the Phase 2 revision has now closed. It took place between 28<sup>th</sup> April and 24<sup>th</sup> June 2009 and the Panel report was produced in Autumn 2009. The Phase 2 review had no adverse implications concerning the Stourbridge AAP.

### **Sub-Regional Policy context:**

#### **Emerging Black Country Joint Core Strategy (JCS) – Publication document (November 2009)**

The Black Country Joint Core Strategy (the Core Strategy) will be the key statutory plan guiding urban renaissance in the Black Country in accordance with the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the West Midlands and the key document in the portfolio of planning documents for each local authority (e.g. City of Wolverhampton and the Metropolitan Boroughs of Dudley, Sandwell and Walsall). It will set out the vision, spatial objectives and detailed spatial strategy for future development in the Black Country up to 2026 along with specific strategic policies and targets. The document will not just consider land use, but also a comprehensive range of environmental, economic and social issues.

It recognises the importance of the Black Country's Town Centres for helping achieve regeneration across the Black Country sub region, the importance of the natural environment and green assets, the need for affordable housing, high quality design in new development, and the importance of protecting and enhancing local character and distinctiveness. The Black Country Joint Core Strategy (JCS) provides the platform for the detailed proposal and allocations of the Stourbridge AAP.

Within the Black Country Joint Core Strategy (JCS) draft 'Publication Stage document' (November 2009), on page 107, the Stourbridge area falls inside Regeneration Corridor 11b (Brierley Hill – Stourbridge). Regeneration Corridor 11b promotes new housing growth within existing industrial areas (employment land) located north of the town centre (including the Canal Street/ Lowndes Road and Old Wharf Road areas). Mixed use development comprising local employment retention and new housing growth is promoted within the adjacent Mill Race Lane Trading Estate area. Regeneration Corridor 11b also reinforces the importance of strengthening the existing wildlife corridor along the River Stour and Stourbridge Branch Canal network.

The JCS Publication Stage document stresses that Stourbridge Town Centre should be strengthened through improved shopping and leisure facilities and residential growth in and around the centre. It confirms that the Stourbridge

AAP document will provide detailed planning guidance to help deliver 4,500 square metres (gross) comparison retail goods floorspace.

## **Emerging “Environmental Infrastructure Guidance” (EIG) for the Black Country Joint Core Strategy (JCS)**

The initiative was shaped by the Black Country Study’s “Black Country as Urban Park” project and its core principles of strategic landscape corridors, beacons and communities. The Environmental Infrastructure Guidance (EIG) will identify Environmental Infrastructure requirements to each of the corridors, strategic centres and freestanding employment sites and will support and inform policy formulation in the Black Country Joint Core Strategy.

Green infrastructure corridors such as the networks of green spaces, parks, wildlife habitats, waterways and canals such as the River Stour corridor and Stourbridge Branch Canal network in Stourbridge are critical for achieving urban renaissance across the Black Country. They help support biodiversity and nature conservation by allowing movement of wildlife species between habitats which is becoming increasingly important as wildlife species are needing to adapt to the changing climate as a result of climate change. They also provide an important outdoor recreational resource for the local community, and are important for the environmental quality of the Black Country sub region.

### **Local Level Policy context:**

#### **Dudley Council Community Strategy (2005)**

The Dudley Council Local Development Framework (LDF) and saved policies in the Council’s Adopted Unitary Development Plan (adopted October 2005) provides the mechanisms for delivering the aspirations of the Dudley Borough Community Strategy, “Dudley Borough Challenge” (2005). The aim of the Community Strategy is to set out a vision up until the year 2020 for a prosperous and attractive Borough. The Community Strategy identifies a series of six key priorities all of equal importance which together contribute towards a “Stronger Communities” overall vision.

#### **Dudley Borough Challenge Review 2009 – 2012. Consultation Draft 2009**

The purpose of this review is to put forward a number of new and revised partnership objectives, framed with new strategic priorities, under the original themes of the Community Strategy that was launched in 2005. The revised strategy, currently under consultation sets out the Council’s aspirations for improvements in the following theme areas:

- Jobs and Prosperity

- Environment and Housing
- Health and Well-being
- Heritage, Culture and Leisure
- Individual and Community Learning
- Community Safety

Progress within each of these areas will contribute towards the creation of stronger communities and help deliver the national, local and regional objective of sustainable development within the Borough. Creating a 'sense of place' for Stourbridge through effective urban design and encouraging new investment in the area will play a significant role in contributing to the priorities identified within the Borough Challenge. It is therefore clear that the Stourbridge Area Action Plan will have a key role in supporting the aims and objectives of the Community Strategy.

## **Dudley Council Local Development Framework (LDF)**

The AAP will be a Development Plan Document (DPD) within the Dudley Borough Council's Local Development Framework (LDF). It is underpinned by the Black Country Joint Core Strategy (JCS) and Development Control policies. There are a number of saved policies from Dudley Council's Adopted Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (adopted October 2005) which are relevant to the Stourbridge AAP document. These are listed below.

- Policy CR5 "Regeneration and Development of Centres"
- Policy CR1 "Hierarchy of Town Centres and Regeneration Areas"
- Policies STC1 to STC2(XV) of the Stourbridge Town Centre Inset Plan
- Policy DD1 "Urban Design"
- Policy DD2 "Mixed Use"
- Policy HE1 "Local Character and Distinctiveness"
- Policy HE4 "Conservation Areas"
- Policy HE5 "Buildings of Local Historic Importance"
- Policy HE6 "Listed Buildings"
- Policy HE7 "Canals"
- Policy HE11 "Archaeology and Preservation"
- Policy AM1 "An Integrated, Safe, Sustainable and Accessible Transport Strategy"
- Policy AM2 "Public Transport Corridors"
- Policy AM3 "Strategic Highway Network"
- Policy AM5 "Bus Provision"
- Policy AM11 "Cycling"
- Policy AM12 "Pedestrians"
- Policy AM13 "Public Rights of Way"
- Policy CR2 "Expansion of Centres"
- Policy CR4 "Protected Frontages"
- Policy CR6 "New Retail Development – Comparison Goods"
- Policy CR7 "New Retail Development – Bulky Comparison Goods"



- Policy CR9 “Edge-of-centre and out-of-centre development”
- Policy CR11 “Retail (A3) Uses and Amusement Arcades”
- Policy CR10 “Conditions on Major Retail Development”
- Policy CR12 “Car Parking in Town Centres”
- Policy CR13 “Residential Development in Centres”
- Policy EE5 “Tourism”
- Policy LR1 “Open Space”
- Policy DD10 “Nature Conservation and Development”
- Policy DD11 “Water Courses”
- Policy EE1 “Key Industrial Areas and Development Sites”
- Policy LR2 “Access to Public Open Space”
- Policy LR6 “Protection of Sport and Recreational Facilities”
- Policy DD7 “Planning Obligations”
- Policy DD8 “Provision of Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities”
- Policy SO2 “Linear Open Space”
- Policy NC1 “Biodiversity”

## **Dudley Council Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)**

The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out the Council’s standards and approach to involving stakeholders and the community in the preparation and review of the Council’s emerging Local Development Framework (LDF) and respective Local Development Documents (LDDs) and their involvement in the decisions on planning applications. The Government requires the new planning system (introduced by the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act) to be:

- Transparent and open.
- One that will be easily understood and accessible to all including traditionally hard to reach groups.
- Has the support of the community and stakeholders with opportunities for participation clearly identified.

These are key factors that should influence the Council’s Stourbridge Area Action Plan document and subsequent plans and policies relating to town centre regeneration. This is further enforced in the Statement of Community Involvement as it specifies that the local community and organisations should be fully and effectively involved in document preparation.

## **Dudley Council emerging Development Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD)**

The emerging Development Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) is being prepared as part of the Council’s Local Development Framework (LDF) and, once approved, will identify sites for development (over the next 15 years) within the Dudley Borough and will inform the Council’s Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). For example, the

Development Strategy DPD will identify areas of land suitable for new housing and industrial development. It will also consider green infrastructure and identify areas of sensitive urban green space which require continued protection from development pressures. Such as sensitive urban parks, important recreational green space areas and important nature conservation sites.

The Development Strategy DPD will carry the same level of weight as a material planning consideration for Development Control purposes as the Stourbridge Area Action Plan (AAP) document. The Stourbridge AAP document will help support and inform the work of this emerging Development Strategy DPD, as it will help provide the required credible, robust and up-to-date evidence base on which to base decisions on future land use within the Stourbridge AAP boundary area. For example, identify parcels of land which may be suitable for redevelopment for new uses such as new housing, and identify areas of green infrastructure which require continued protection from development.

## **Dudley Council adopted Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)**

There are a number of Council adopted Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and other planning documents which will help support the work of the AAP. These are listed below.

- Glass Quarter Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (adopted December 2009)
- Historic Environment SPD (adopted September 2006)
- Planning Obligations SPD (adopted March 2009)
- Nature Conservation SPD (adopted September 2006)
- Open Space, Sport and Recreation Provision SPD (adopted June 2007)
- Affordable Housing SPD (adopted June 2006)
- New Housing Development SPD (adopted 2007)
- Parking Standards SPD (adopted 2007)

## **Dudley Council's Parks and Green Space Strategy (PPG17 Audit) (adopted June 2009)**

This document assesses the existing quantity (e.g. how much green space is currently found in the Dudley Borough), the current quality, public accessibility level and distribution of the borough's parks and green spaces. It covers all publicly-owned open space (e.g. Council owned land) and privately owned green space within the Dudley Borough, which are accessible to the general public, and which are of 0.2 hectares (2,000 square metres) and above in land parcel size.

The adopted Parks and Green Space Strategy will help support the work of the Stourbridge AAP document as the Parks and Green Space Strategy provides up-to-date evidence on the supply and coverage of green space across the Dudley Borough and identifies parts of the urban area where there are particular shortages in certain types of green space (e.g. Parks and Gardens, natural and semi-natural green space, outdoor sports green space, etc). The Parks and Green Space Strategy and the SPD documents referred to above can be viewed on the Council's planning web site by referring to: [www.dudley.gov.uk/planning](http://www.dudley.gov.uk/planning) then click onto 'Local Development Framework'.