

Design In Brierley Hill Town Centre Supplementary Planning Document

Adopted December 2012



Artist's Impression

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General Information

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Arabic

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Chinese

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Gujarati

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Punjabi

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Urdu

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1 Introduction

Purpose and Status of this Document

1.1 The aim of this SPD is to improve the quality of Brierley Hill's urban environment and encourage a high standard of design for new developments occurring under the framework of the Brierley Hill Area Action Plan (AAP). This document will provide advice for developers, public bodies and planners with regard to the design and assessment of urban development in Brierley Hill. The SPD will encourage high quality developments that minimise impact on natural resources thereby improving the quality of the existing built environment.

1.2 The key objectives of this SPD are to:

- Create a distinct sense of place in each urban quarter by offering design solutions which respond to local character and distinctiveness
- Achieve unity and connectivity via a fine-grained network of streets and spaces
- Ensure the movement of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport is prioritised within the development of the thoroughfares
- Encourage perimeter block development which creates and reinstates interesting and vibrant street frontages
- Encourage design that retains the best of the past in terms of historic street patterns, buildings and other features of the area's rich history
- Ensure functional and purposefully designed green infrastructure, with wildlife and recreation in mind
- Incorporate health and well-being in the design approach
- Encourage development that integrates and celebrates the canal as a multi-functional space.

1.3 The Design in Brierley Hill Town Centre Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is a spatial planning document which forms part of the Local Development Framework for Dudley Borough. This adopted version has been informed by the comments and views which were given at both consultation stages (6th September – 18th October 2010 and 19th March – 30th April 2012) alongside expertise from key Council Officers and Stakeholders.

How to Use this Guidance

1.4 The document firstly considers the key urban design issues in the town centre which inform the design principles and objectives. Consideration is given to Brierley Hill's character and local distinctiveness and the inter-relationship of the various spatial elements then help to formulate the Framework plan and design guidance for the twelve urban quarters.

- 1.5** The AAP sets out the preferred use for each development block within these urban quarters and the SPD responds to this by stating broadly what we intend to achieve design-wise with the elements in each area. It is important to understand the urban design issues within Brierley Hill, the objectives for responding to these issues and how the design principles for new buildings, thoroughfares and open spaces will come together to create the public realm network for Brierley Hill.

Planning Context

Black Country Core Strategy

- 1.6** The Core Strategy (adopted February 2011) is a spatial planning document that sets out the vision, objectives and strategy for future development in the Black Country to 2026. It forms the basis of Black Country Authorities' Local Development Frameworks, replacing certain policies in Dudley's Unitary Development Plan (UDP), setting the planning policy context for the preparation of other local development documents and supplementary planning documents. As well as providing the basis for decisions on planning applications, the Core Strategy will also shape regeneration, investment, and growth within the Borough.
- 1.7** Good design is a key feature running throughout the ten objectives of the core strategy and it is a recurring theme throughout the document. The vision for the Black Country consists of three major directions of change, one of which is environmental transformation. This aims to create a step change in the image and environmental quality of the sub-region which will involve delivering high quality, liveable and distinctive places which respect and make the most of the Black Country's natural and built environment.

Brierley Hill Area Action Plan

- 1.8** Dudley Council intends that by 2026, Brierley Hill town centre will be significantly regenerated to provide a thriving and dynamic strategic centre where people will choose to live, work and visit. Brierley Hill's growth will be shaped upon a high quality built and natural environment that looks to enhance local distinctiveness and which will enable the town to function as a strong sub-regional retail and employment centre. The transformation of this urban place into a fully functioning town centre presents many opportunities and new challenges and the way in which the town centre is designed will be crucial to its success.
- 1.9** The planning framework for the transformation of the town is set out in the Brierley Hill Area Action Plan (AAP) which was adopted in August 2011. The AAP sets the basis for the broad principles of good urban design which this Supplementary Planning Document takes forward. The AAP will guide an estimated £1.5 billion worth of investment in the area over the coming years

in the form of new retail, offices, homes, community and leisure uses and a major element of the AAP is to plan for the better connection and integration of the High Street, Merry Hill and the Waterfront.

Place-shaping

- 1.10** 'Place-shaping' is now widely understood to describe the creation of attractive, prosperous and safe communities, places where people want to live, work and visit. A fundamental principle underpinning place-shaping is the idea that every place should have an identity and a function.
- 1.11** Urban design is one of the keys to creating sustainable developments and the conditions for a flourishing economic life, for the prudent use of natural resources and for social progress and well-being. Quality of urban design will be critical to transforming the quality of life and to bringing new prosperity to Brierley Hill town centre.
- 1.12** Urban design includes the way places function as well as how they look and includes activity within the public realm and the movement between places and community safety. *'It involves the design of buildings, groups of buildings, spaces between buildings, landscapes, and the establishment of frameworks that facilitate new development'* (source: *The Dictionary of Urbanism*, Robert Cowan, 2005).

2 Urban Design Issues in the Town Centre

Brierley Hill and its Context

- 2.1** The town of Brierley Hill has a rich industrial heritage which came about from the many extractive and metal-working industries which flourished in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. For many years Brierley Hill High Street has operated as a district town centre providing for the day to day needs of the locality, whilst Merry Hill has been considered as a major regional shopping destination. Within the latter part of the C20th, the High Street experienced much change with the closure two large industries, the main economic drivers in the area, and much of the land between the High Street and the canal was reclaimed for community, educational and retail uses.
- 2.2** Research was undertaken into the historic character and the evolution of place and its significance via the *Brierley Hill Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation Study* in 2007. This document details each character zone within Brierley Hill, including a description of its townscape, architecture and historic character, archaeological potential, the significance of buildings and spaces from a historic conservation point of view. This characterisation identified constraints and opportunities for future development throughout the town centre as well as giving focus to the historic environment via the evaluation of listed buildings, buildings with the potential to be locally listed, the Brierley Hill High Street Conservation Area and Archaeological Priority Areas.
- 2.3** The urban design principles and objectives and subsequent Framework plan emerged from the analysis of the existing issues that would enable new development to reunite historical elements and address the urban design issues set out here.

Key Features of Existing Character and Quality

- A large proportion of Brierley Hill is situated on a hillside with land sloping down to Merry Hill Shopping Centre, making the town centre visually prominent.
- Brierley Hill Town Centre is an important element of the Borough, representing the historic core of one of its earlier industrial and commercial townships.
- Most of the High Street is designated as a Conservation Area (March 2009) which includes a mix of local retailers, an indoor market, food and drink establishments, small commercial uses and a number of national retailers.
- Within the High Street Conservation Area, there is an evident urban settlement pattern with a street network defined by blocks of development. These street patterns created many corner plots where buildings were designed to address the junctions.

- The WaterfrontBusinessPark offers a range of office space, conference facilities and hotel accommodation. The layout of the development creates an active canal frontage and the canal walkway connects directly to the Merry Hill Shopping Centre and the Delph Locks.
- Building heights average around 2 to 3 storeys within the Conservation Area, although taller buildings exist in the area of Merry Hill and the WaterfrontBusiness Park.
- The two canals are major assets with Dudleyno.1Canal running through the centre of the town.
- Two Local Nature Reserves - Fens Pool LNR and Saltwells LNR lie just outside the town centre boundary to the north and east, respectively.

Key Features That Detract from Existing Character and Quality

- The urban form is fragmented along much of the Canal with little building enclosure. The existing building layout creates numerous spots of vacant and derelict land fronting the canal and many of the buildings back onto the canal and public realm which can create concerns for security as well as interrupting visual continuity.
- There is a distinct lack of active streets and canal frontages in many locations throughout the town centre.
- There is a lack of integration and poor quality pedestrian links across much of the town centre and notably between the Merry Hill Shopping Centre and Brierley Hill High Street.
- There is a limited amount of residential development within the town centre to support the vitality of the town and to support the evening economy.
- The visual and functional quality of the public realm in many locations is very poor and there is little accessible, usable public space.
- Although advances have been made in improving gateway sites by the creation of the parallel route, the town centre still suffers in some areas from poorly defined and unattractive gateway and junction sites.
- Whilst the topography of Brierley Hill lends distinction, it also presents a major challenge to achieving connectivity and the future development of buildings and public spaces.



Figure 2.1 Plan showing the urban design issues to be addressed in Brierley Hill



Figure 2.2 Key

3 The Urban Design Principles and Objectives

- 3.1** Urban design is an objective process dependent on location and aspirations, however there are a set of generally agreed principles which are set out in national urban design guidance such as By Design: Urban Design in the Planning System (DETR, 2000) and the Urban Design Compendium (English Partnerships, 2007) which should be applied to all development for Brierley Hill town centre.
- 3.2** These principles set the basis for the design objectives demonstrated in this chapter for what we hope to achieve in Brierley Hill. The idea is to create a pattern of urban spaces and new, inclusive development to fulfil the vision for Brierley Hill illustrated in the AAP. These principles are the essential features of a successful urban environment founded on current best practice and they are applied here to formulate the urban design framework for Brierley Hill town centre. The guidance attributed to each urban quarter in Brierley Hill through the following objectives and framework are further progressions to these fundamental principles.

Secured by Design

- 3.3** All the principles and objectives for Brierley Hill are underlined by the approach of 'Secured by Design'. This is a police initiative to encourage the building industry to adopt crime prevention measures in the design of developments to assist in reducing the opportunity for crime and the fear of crime, creating a safer and more secure environment.
- 3.4** All new development should comply with Policy ENV3 Design Quality within the Core Strategy for the Black Country which states that all development proposals should give '*Consideration of crime prevention measures and Secured by Design principles*'. These 'Secured by Design' principles are integrated approach, environmental quality and sense of ownership, natural surveillance, access and footpaths, open space provision and management, and lighting.

A High Quality Public Realm Network

- 3.5** Public realm is defined as any publicly owned streets, pathways, rights of way, parks, publicly accessible spaces and any public and civic buildings and facilities. The public realm network should be appropriate in scale to the town centre and enable the creation of a high quality, inclusive environment. Footway widths, carriageway widths and junction arrangements should be designed for both pedestrian and vehicular movement. Where vehicular routes present a potential obstacle to pedestrian movement, well-designed and uncluttered pedestrian crossing facilities should be incorporated into the

street design such as those on Venture Way, Brierley Hill. Vehicle speeds should be kept slow in the heart of the town centre by good street design so that pedestrian movement is given priority.

- 3.6** The public realm does not simply provide channels of movement for people and vehicles but it should be well-designed and pleasant to ensure that people can walk conveniently, safely and directly to where they need to go. The street width should be wide enough to accommodate the predicated pedestrian footfall and provide space for street furniture and tree-scape. New surface treatment, street furniture, signage, lighting and artwork have a great deal of impact on the quality and usage of public realm. These elements should be well-designed and durable and should not create unnecessary clutter to obstruct the movement of pedestrians (particularly people with disabilities).
- 3.7** A variety of ground floor activities are encouraged in new development to help enliven the public realm and to provide natural surveillance to assist in creating safer environments. It is also important to recognise the richness which can exist at the private and public realm interface. Private development around the public realm can to enliven the sequence of spaces and places and good design will ensure that legibility exists between the private and public spaces.
- 3.8** In order to avoid a potentially fragmented approach to the creation of the new public realm, the landscape design intentions for the hard and soft aspects of public realm and infrastructure need to be well thought out and demonstrated for new development within the urban quarters.

Perimeter Blocks

- 3.9** The quality of the streetscape and the sense of security can be enhanced by positioning buildings close to the back edge of the pavement to form perimeter block development. The centre of the block can be utilised as a semi-private space with facilities to serve the surrounding building or divided into private space (gardens, parking or service areas).
- 3.10** In order to establish good perimeter block development in an urban setting, the building line should not be set too far back from the streets. Where the whole building is in residential use, a potential conflict may arise between the desire to increase surveillance of public space and the need to preserve privacy for the residents. This can be resolved by creating a step back from the building line by a distance of up to 2m which may allow for a small front garden. Another alternative is raising the ground floor level by maximum 0.5m above the pavement level. In all cases, there will be a need to take account of and comply with Building Regulations.



Figure 3.1 Perimeter Block with private and communal space in the courtyard (Stourbridge Town Centre)



Figure 3.2 Small space created for landscaping between building and pavement (Birmingham Park Central)

- 3.11** Where small gaps occur in the built frontage facing the public realm it should be apparent whether the resulting spaces are intended to be either publicly accessible or private space. Walls, railings, gates and landscaping should be used to close the small gaps in the frontage to maintain continuity.
- 3.12** To accommodate a diverse mix of uses, a balance must be found between creating different building types, ranging from residential units to large retail and leisure outlets and ensuring that a choice of public thoroughfares through the town centre remain.

- 3.13** Well-designed civic, commercial or educational blocks will be welcomed provided that blank rear and side elevations can be integrated into the core of the block away from the public realm. Where larger blocks are considered every effort should be made to incorporate short-cuts through the block for pedestrians and in areas where very intensive pedestrian footfall is anticipated (adjoining the Primary and Secondary Thoroughfares) blocks of less than 75m may be appropriate to maximise the extent of the public realm and increase pedestrian navigation.

Building Height

- 3.14** The historic development of the town centre means that there are a variety of buildings exhibiting different massing and storey heights. These range from domestic scale of two to three storey buildings to larger scale retail, business and industrial premises. A range of storey heights will be appropriate in the town centre with height and massing of buildings giving regard to particular locations (including historic buildings, Conservation Area, canal setting, views and topography). New and redeveloped buildings should be at an appropriate height to create a proper sense of enclosure to the adjoining public realm and achieve sufficient mass to support the intensity of development.
- 3.15** The scale and massing of residential development should be carefully articulated in terms of elevations and roofline to establish a residential character and respond to plot widths. Commercial and office development should be visually distinctive from residential development by way of bolder development forms with a robust scale and massing that responds to the larger floor plates, footprints and plot widths of the buildings. Elevation treatment should avoid a bland and featureless architectural response.

Connectivity

- 3.16** The creation of a fine grained, integrated network of public thoroughfares and spaces across the town centre is essential to ensure ease of movement between and beyond Brierley Hill's 12 Urban Quarters. Where there is a change in level such as between Level Street and Merry Hill, an opportunity exists for integrated landscape elements such as ramps, steps and bridges that will add distinctive character and quality whilst providing a functional need. In such cases they should be accessible, well designed and well-overlooked by the new development.
- 3.17** New development should be connected into the existing fabric of the town centre and other attractions on the periphery. For instance, the High Street, WaterfrontBusinessPark and Merry Hill can be connected via the public thoroughfares to the canal, tow path and surrounding residential areas. This will allow continuity of an active built frontage which individuals can walk and

cycle through directly without obstacle. Health enhancing infrastructure should be encouraged through the promotion of walking and cycling to enable connectivity through the public realm.

- 3.18** The infrastructure associated with access into the town centre by bus and in the future, by Rapid Transit, should be designed as an integral part of the public realm. It should not interrupt or present barriers to pedestrian movement. The quality of materials and finishes should be in keeping with the character of the public realm and the Quarters in which they are located.

Facade and Building Elevations

- 3.19** The character and continuity of the built development that encloses the public thoroughfares and public spaces will be determined by the design of the façade and elevations. The façade and elevation of buildings normally comprises three distinct elements, adding visual interest and creating a strong and legible built form:

- 3.20** **The base of the building** is the interface between ground floor activities occurring within the building and the outside public realm. Positive interaction at ground level between indoor and outdoor activity is achieved by maximising fenestration and avoiding blank façades. It is at this level that people have close visual and physical contact with a building and greatest recognition of intricate detailed design. A higher frequency of entrances creates a busier street which provides a particular contribution to the public realm.

- 3.21** **The middle section of the building** - in buildings of more than two storeys the architectural detailing within this section may be less immediate as a contributor to the street-scene, but the scale, form and pattern of the components making up the middle section will have considerable impact on the overall character of the public realm and sense of enclosure. If the building and its middle section can be viewed from a distance along the public realm, then the architectural detailing on it should be rich and visually interesting. Buildings that front onto the Wildlife Corridor create opportunity to incorporate green walls on the middle section of the elevation.

- 3.22** **The top of the building** should be clearly articulated as the vertical limit of the elevation. If the building and its top can be viewed from a distance along the public realm, then its architectural detailing on the top should again, be rich and visually interesting.

- 3.23** The streetscape will be unified by achieving a rhythm in the composition of the three elements of the façade and the basic components of windows, doors, porches and bays from one building to the next. Air conditioning units, ventilation and telecommunication equipments should be hidden from public view and should be carefully located and integrated into the overall structure of the building where possible.



Figure 3.3 Illustration showing ideal building composition to achieve a rhythm

Active Frontages

3.24 Ensuring that frontages are active is vital to increase the sense of security on the street and to add vitality and interest to the public realm. Entirely inactive frontages of more than 10m (e.g. bland elevations with no fenestration) should not front the public realm in any location.

3.25 In designing active frontages;

- The number of doors and windows should be maximised at street level and consideration should be given to the inclusion of bay windows, canopies, arcades and porches. Upper level balconies and roof gardens add further interest at the interface between the public and private realm.
- Commercial activities taking place within a building's ground floor should be visible from the public realm and occupants should be able to benefit from views out.
- Frontages should be detailed to be visually stimulating and well lit from inside.

3.26 Along Primary Thoroughfares, residential use should be located above the ground floor where appropriate. Within Primary Public Spaces and key Primary Thoroughfares (Brierley Place, Merry Hill Place, Round Oak Place, Station Square, PT7, PT8 and PT9) adjacent new development should take the opportunity to 'spill out' their uses and activities (e.g. café and restaurant) onto the adjoining public realm. However, appropriate control must be deployed in line with the Council's Access SPD to ensure that such uses do not present potential hazards for people with physical and visual impairments.

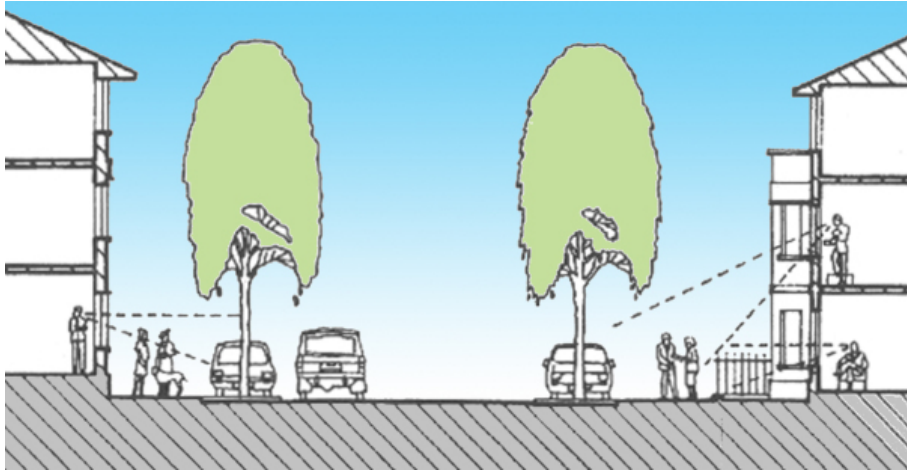


Figure 3.4 New Development should provide natural surveillance to the street



Figure 3.5 Doors and windows fronting the street (Stourbridge Town Centre)



Figure 3.6 Uses and activities that 'spill out' onto the public space (Sheffield City Centre)

Junctions and Corners

- 3.27** Junctions should punctuate the public realm adding interest and importance to the converging public thoroughfares. Careful consideration should be given to the design of all corners but the most celebrated should be those that occur:
- At the main gateways into the town centre of which there are two types; the main junctions on the periphery of the area, and the points where public thoroughfares converge within the Primary Public Spaces; and
 - Where the Primary Thoroughfares intersect.
- 3.28** The prominence of the junction can be reinforced by:
- Locating a slightly taller or distinctive building on the corner.
 - Setting back the corner element from the building line to create an enclosed space such as a pocket park or small public area, but the building must present an active frontage to that space.
 - Setting the building line forward with an arcade at ground floor level, to create a more imposing form of enclosure that is clearly visible when approaching the junction.
 - Providing high quality and environmentally friendly lighting to highlight the corner of the building.
- 3.29** Buildings designed for commercial activities should capitalise on the prominence of corner locations by accommodating their entrance, floor to ceiling display windows and signage on the corner element. Buildings that present a generally inactive frontage (e.g. multi-storey car park, retail warehouse, service yard and bin storage) or have featureless forecourts (e.g. parking area and car sales areas) should not be located on junctions and corners.

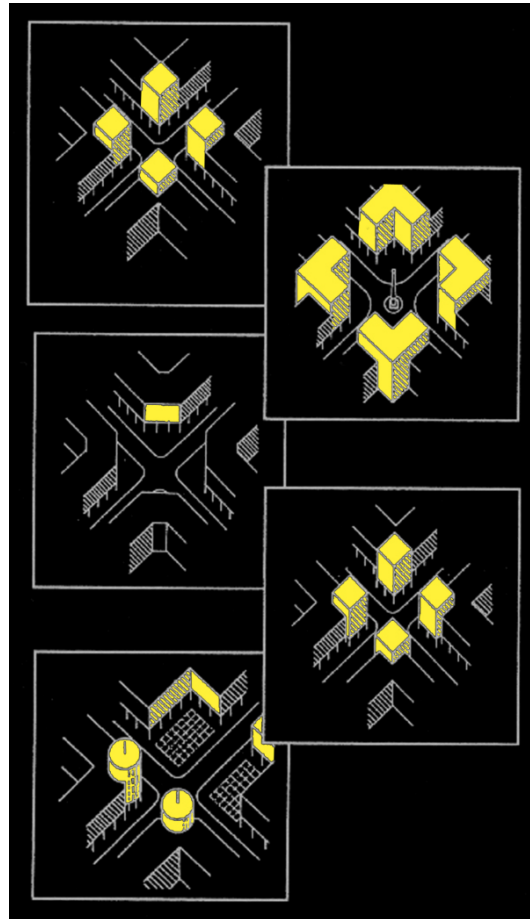


Figure 3.7 Illustration showing corner treatments



Figures 3.8 Taller corner building emphasises the choice of routes and acts as a distinctive visual navigation marker in the streetscene (Birmingham City Centre)

Mixed Use and Flexibility

- 3.30** Maximisation of mixed uses within individual buildings, blocks and streets to add vitality to the town centre is encouraged. Ancillary uses such as cafés, restaurants, financial and professional services, and small retail units should be located on the ground floor of buildings fronting onto the public realm. In designing mixed use environments careful consideration should be given to potential conflicts between activities, particularly in terms of residential amenity. Environmental considerations such as noise, air quality and access to the day light should be considered early in the design process.
- 3.31** The design of buildings and public realm should ensure that there is a degree of flexibility in their use. Adaptable buildings and layout, constructed of durable materials with shallow floor plates (where feasible) which are naturally ventilated and lit, will provide opportunities for changes of use to occur over the longer term and increase flexibility and choice. For example, the use of an office building could be altered to residential without the need for demolition and homes should be able to adapt to the changing needs of a family. Well-designed public spaces should allow for different uses, such as occasional events, festivals and markets, such as the open space at Times Square in the Merry Hill centre.

Topography and Roofscape

- 3.32** The western part of the town lies on an elevated ridge with levels falling to the east towards Merry Hill. This topography presents a special opportunity to create layering of roofscape which would be particularly visible from distant vantage points (for example, the views from Level Street and Pedmore Road looking towards Development Opportunity Blocks BR14, BR15A – G and BR16A - D). The term 'roofscape' simply refers to a scene or view of roofs, especially considered in terms of its aesthetic appeal.
- 3.33** In introducing new development and refurbishing existing buildings, special attention should be paid to making the roofscape an attractive and interesting addition to the townscape. In particular the rooftops of new buildings on the lower lying land (Development Opportunity Blocks C2 – 5, R3 – 6, R10, W1 and W4) which can be viewed close range from Archill and Lower Brierley, may offer the opportunity to add public art and environmental features such as green roofs to promote sustainability and support the Wildlife Corridor.
- 3.34** New buildings should respond positively to the existing topography by ensuring that building frontages are created directly onto any slopes, ramps and steps.



Figure 3.10 Example where a building has been positioned to sit on a slope to work with the topography rather than carve into or across the slope (Birmingham City Centre)



Figure 3.11 Illustration of green roofs used in new housing development (Middlepark Road, Dudley)

Landmark Buildings

3.35 A landmark building is distinguished by its contrast with the prevailing character of other buildings in the vicinity. Landmark buildings can have a particular design feature that makes them different or memorable; for example a prominently designed corner that is higher than the rest of the building, a tower or other decorative feature, or use of a distinctive building material⁽¹⁾.

1 Where tall buildings are proposed (or where alterations are proposed to a tall building), regard should be made to English Heritage and CABE's 'Guidance on Tall Buildings' (July 2007)

- 3.36** The careful position of landmark buildings helps to reinforce the importance of a junction, corner, gateway or public space and also acts as a reference point for navigation. High quality and environmentally friendly lighting may be used to highlight landmark buildings to aid navigation after dark. By taking advantage of the existing topography, landmark buildings can be located to terminate long views. In Brierley Hill landmark qualities will be sought in the building design in Development Opportunity Blocks BR9, BR11, BR14, BR15D, BR15G, BR16D, C2 - 5, P4, WW2, W5 and BS1 (see Figure 3.1). It may be appropriate for new buildings in these locations to become landmarks by way of their design quality rather than their height.



Figure 3.12 The prominence, positioning and difference in built form and style all help make buildings for key sites stand out against their neighbours, aiding their announcement in the street or part of a town (Sheffield City Centre)

Memorable places

- 3.37** People often find it easier to remember a place and sense of direction by way of visual references. This includes gateway structures into the town centre, distinctively designed street furniture, landmark buildings and features on corners and junctions, focal points in public spaces, intersection of routes and views to key buildings and public spaces.
- 3.38** Co-ordinated design of signage and lighting along public thoroughfares and within public spaces enhances navigation in town centres.

Visual Delight

- 3.39** Vision is the dominant sense in how most people experience their environment. The use of high quality building materials in the public realm including paving and bespoke street furniture (seating, bins, bollards, lightings and signage) can become an attraction in its own right as well as adding to the richness of the public realm.
- 3.40** Additionally, there are many historic buildings which are important to the character of the town centre and which add a visual richness. The Brierley Hill High Street Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Proposals provide design guidelines for new development within the Conservation Area. There is scope for modern buildings to complement this historic character by providing high quality, contemporary additions to the existing built form with the aim being to promote a high quality design philosophy ensuring that new development enriches the architectural stock.
- 3.41** A similar principle should be applied to the design of the roofscape so as to add visual interest and enhance existing views. This will be particularly important in Opportunity Blocks BR14, BR15D, BR15G, BR16D, C2 – C5, R6, R10, W1, W4 and P4 where the changes in ground level are significant. Visual richness can also be better achieved by ensuring that servicing structures such as lift shafts, telecommunications equipment, air conditioning units and ventilation grills are hidden from public view and carefully integrated into the design of the building.

Car parking and servicing solutions

- 3.42** New developments are encouraged to limit the impact of the parked vehicle on the character and quality of the public realm. In accommodating car parking the following guidelines should be considered:
- Permanent surface car parks facing onto the public realm should be avoided as they represent a wasteful use of urban land and create in-active frontages. Condensing surface parking into bright, modern, well-designed, multi-storey car parks, positioned behind other uses away from the street frontage, will free land to make way for new development without impacting upon the overall provision of car parking and quality of street scene.
 - Rear parking courtyards can be considered where there are Highway constraints, such as a busy street or waiting prohibitions that are likely to be enforced. If shared rear court parking is used, parked cars should be arranged in small groups to provide space for walkways and landscaping. Rear court parking should preferably be limited to serving no more than six dwellings. The rear court parking should be secured and designed to be an attractive space ensuring that it does not render the rears of adjacent property more vulnerable to crime. In some

instances, electronic security gates with public art features may be appropriate. The rear court can also allow for a variety of functions such as a communal garden and amenity space and a mix of hard and soft landscaping should be used to avoid a wall-to-wall tarmac surface.

- Multi-storey car parks should be 'wrapped' or 'embedded' in occupied building space (flats, office or shops on the ground floor) to create an animated and fenestrated façade facing onto the public realm.



Figure 3.13 Dead frontage activities such as multi-storey car parking can be disguised by the use of single aspect development such as flats, office space or shops to wrap and hide their bulk and provide activity to the street or public view (Five Ways, Birmingham City Centre)



Figure 3.14 Merry Hill Centre, Brierley Hill

Wherever possible, the public realm should offer scope to accommodate some on-street parking for short stay and blue badge parking.

- Underground and under-croft parking should be accommodated wherever viable and appropriate to the existing topography.
- Well-designed on-street parking will be permitted in the public thoroughfares with lower traffic volume, particularly in Secondary Thoroughfares and predominantly residential areas. On-street parking must be integrated into the overall street-scene in a subtle way with the use of planting, street furniture, changes of surface material and other elements.



Figure 3.15 The provision of modest elements such as lay-by service areas can be enhanced and distinguished by use of contrasting and high quality paving material (Sheffield City Centre)



Figure 3.16 Park Central, Birmingham

Service Areas

- 3.43** Servicing yards and access points should be accommodated within the centre of development blocks or underground in order that they are hidden from public view. Access points should be discretely located where there is minimum conflict with key pedestrian routes and the vehicle access point should incorporate a pedestrian footway crossover on the same level as the footpath. When not in use, service yards should be gated to provide a continuous frontage within the street-scene and to be more aesthetically pleasing.
- 3.44** Where appropriate, part of the footway may be laid on a strengthened base to allow occasional lay-by servicing.

Good lighting design

- 3.45** Lighting schemes should aim to use light creatively to provide a town centre with a pleasing night time image which feels comfortable, exciting and above all safe. The principle of lighting buildings and public realm helps improve the overall experience of the town centre during the hours of darkness. Good lighting design should provide a balance between the visual presentation of the town centre at night, night-time economy, safety and the necessary protection of the wildlife corridors.
- 3.46** Lighting schemes should be designed to minimise energy use, light pollution, glare and sky glow. All forms of light pollution can be overcome by the careful selection and use of the appropriate equipment.

4 The Urban Design Framework

- 4.1** Urban Design Frameworks set out how planning and design principles and objectives should be implemented in an area. The Urban Design Framework for Brierley Hill is intended to be a flexible guideline to create the basis for dialogue with developers and interested parties, not to set out a rigid structure for what must happen.
- 4.2** In order to understand the basis for the framework, it is also necessary to consider how the public realm network, urban form and thoroughfares will interact to enable coordinated development (Chapter 5). The Framework Plan is essentially the end product of understanding these interactions and it is provided in diagrammatic format in Figure 4.1. The Framework Plan is then broken down to provide more direct guidance for each of the twelve urban quarters in Chapter 6.

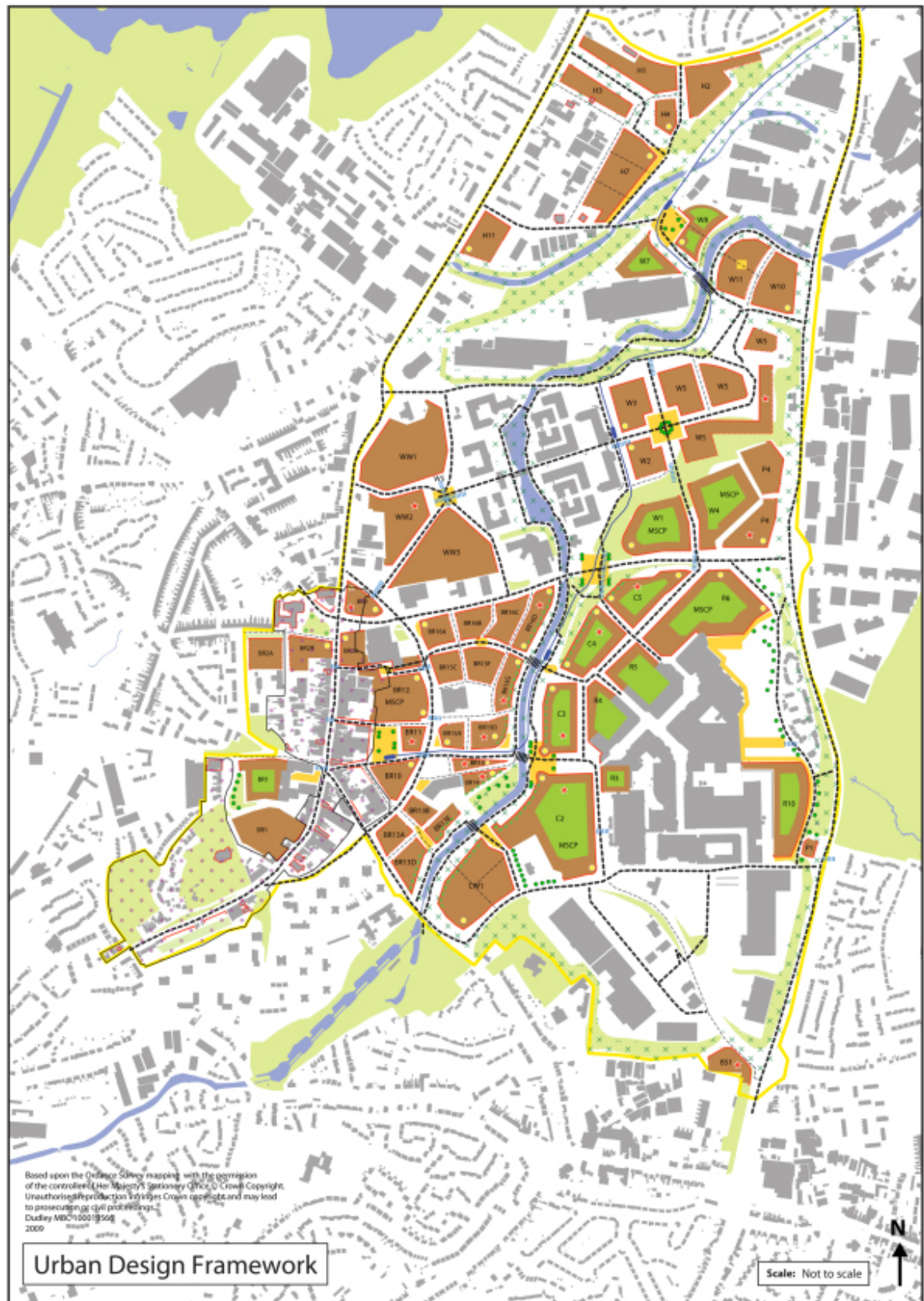


Figure 4.1 The Urban Design Framework for Brierley Hill



Figure 4.2 Key

5 The Public Realm Network

- 5.1** It is the network of publicly accessible routes (including highways, avenues, streets, towpaths and footpaths) and associated public spaces that, in combination, make up the public realm of the town centre. The public realm network in Brierley Hill includes primary and secondary thoroughfares and primary and secondary public spaces. (Developers may be expected to deliver or contribute to part of the public realm network if the public realm falls within, or adjacent to, a Development Opportunity Site. For more information, consideration should be given to the AAP and Planning Obligations SPD / Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)).

Primary Thoroughfares

- 5.2** The principal function of a Primary Thoroughfare is to make connection between the Quarters within the town centre and beyond to the peripheral areas. The Primary Thoroughfares provide space for pedestrians, cyclists, public transport and private vehicles, and it is necessary for them to be appropriately surfaced and carry underground services. However, in some cases, they may only accommodate pedestrians and cyclists, such as those routes along the canal side in Brierley Hill. They will also require elements of street furniture, planting, lighting, signage and other interventions which may include public art and on-street parking or delivery space. Primary Thoroughfares should offer a high quality external environment for the public with 24 hour public access. It should be noted that any use of flush kerbs should incorporate careful delineation of surfaces to ensure pedestrians, particularly people with visual impairments are safe.



Figure 5.1 Primary Thoroughfares should use high quality materials and design treatment to emphasise their importance in the connected network of routes through places (Sheffield City Centre)



Picture 5.2 Sheffield City Centre

Secondary Thoroughfares

- 5.3** The Brierley Hill AAP promotes the connection of the development blocks through a finer grain of Secondary Thoroughfares which will deliver optimal development block sizes, local access, a broader choice of routes and a spread of people and vehicles through the area. As with Primary Thoroughfares, these routes need to be properly surfaced and carry underground services and can accommodate street furniture, planting, lighting, signs, on-street parking and delivery space.



Figure 5.3 Secondary thoroughfares can have high pedestrian flows and restricted vehicular access. The use of high quality and co-ordinated material and street furniture can improve the quality of the streetscape. (Custard Factory, Digbeth, Birmingham)



Figure 5.4 (Sheffield City Centre)

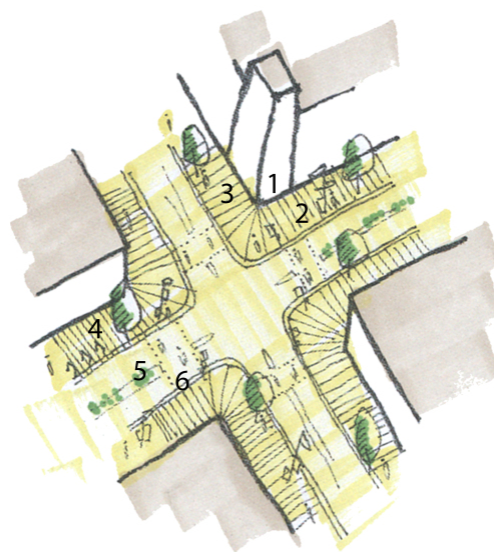
Types of Thoroughfares in Brierley Hill

5.4 The public thoroughfares are categorised into six types as a basis for detailed design. As shown in the Framework Plan (fig 4.1), all thoroughfares and spaces are interconnected to form a public realm network where existing thoroughfares will be improved and new thoroughfares will be created.

Vehicle Dominant

These thoroughfares are major transport arteries that run on the edge of town centres where high volumes of traffic can flow without undermining the quality of the pedestrian experience. Characteristics:

1. New buildings on frontages
2. Street furniture should not block footways
3. Footways should be wide and planted with trees where appropriate
4. Street furniture provided where possible
5. Central reserves used for hard and soft landscaping
6. Provide direct pedestrian crossings

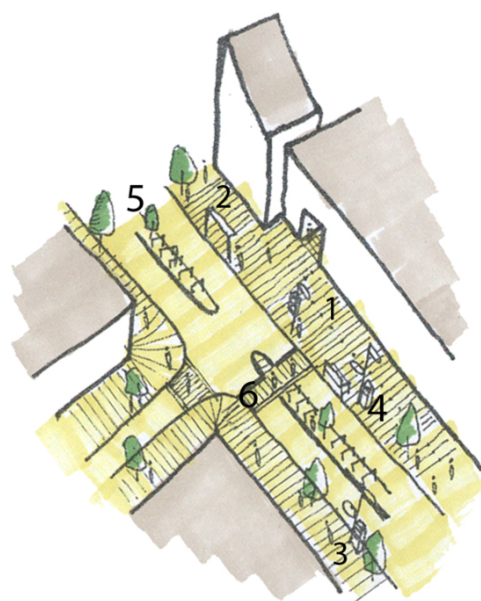


Within Brierley Hill vehicle dominant thoroughfares are PT1, PT2, PT4 – south and north section, PT5 and PT6. These thoroughfares inevitably need to accommodate high volumes of traffic without undermining the quality of the pedestrian experience.

Pedestrian/Vehicle

These thoroughfares have moderate pedestrian and vehicle flows within the town centre. Pedestrians and vehicles have equal status. Characteristics:

1. New buildings on frontages
2. Street furniture should not block footways
3. Footways should be wide and planted with trees where appropriate
4. Co-ordinate and integrate street furniture
5. Central reserves to be used for cycle parking and tree planting
6. Improved pedestrian access and safety across main streets and side streets with plateaux crossings

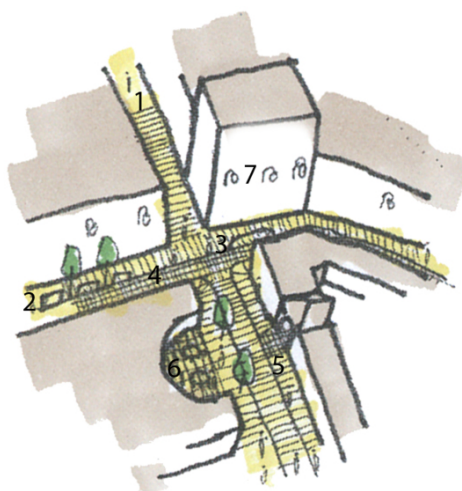


Pedestrian/vehicle thoroughfares are PT3, PT4 – High Street, PT7, PT11, PT17, PT19, PT20, PT23, PT24, PT25, PT26, PT27, PT28, PT29, PT30 and PT31. Within the town centre the intention is that most thoroughfares will carry vehicles and pedestrians with the objective of creating a lively and safe environment for users. They should be provided with generous pavements and tree planting, raised kerbs and carriageways. In particular, on PT7, PT8, PT23 and PT24 the tramway should be laid with appropriate paved material to allow pedestrians to move freely across the street.

Pedestrian Dominant

These thoroughfares have high pedestrian flows and restricted vehicle access and are in the heart of the town centre. Pedestrians and cyclists dominate. Characteristics:

1. Streets paved edge to edge in co-ordinated uniform material
2. Street furniture co-ordinated into groups
3. Footway paving laid on strengthened base to allow vehicle over run



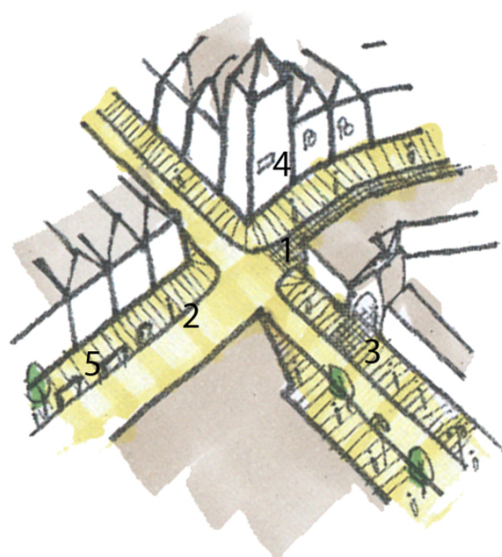
4. Kerbs with carriageway surface in rusticated setts
5. Footway paving to cross minor vehicle crossovers
6. Outdoor cafés not to obstruct pedestrian movement
7. Street lights on buildings to reduce clutter

Pedestrian dominant thoroughfares are PT10, PT12, PT13, PT14, PT16, PT18, PT19, PT21 – Waterfront, PT22, PT32, PT33 and all Secondary Thoroughfares. Within the core of the town centre, pedestrians will have priority, however many of the thoroughfares will need to carry some light traffic, service vehicles and possibly on-street parking. In these thoroughfares, design solutions will be required which achieve the greatest continuity of level that is possible to assist pedestrian ease of movement. These thoroughfares should be paved with appropriate material that can stand the movement of heavy goods vehicles.

Historic Streets

These are old streets and are traditionally fronted by historic buildings. Characteristics:

1. Paved with natural stone and setts
2. Use of granite kerbs
3. Historic crossovers to be respected whilst ensuring a smooth level surface for pedestrians
4. Street lights should be wall mounted especially on narrow streets
5. Street furniture should not block footways



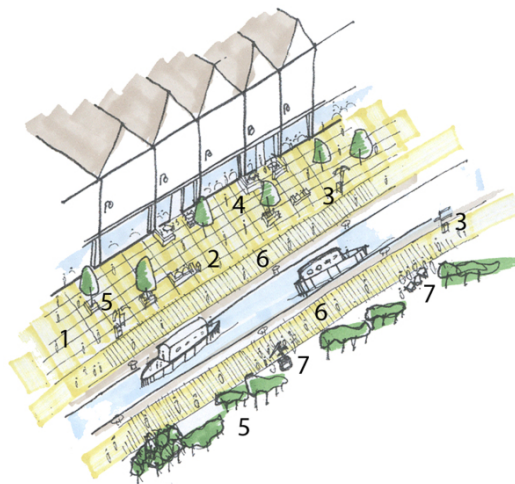
Historic streets within or adjacent to Development Opportunity Blocks include PT4 - High Street and Church Street, PT7 – Cottage Street, Little Cottage Street, PT3, PT12 – Pearson Street, PT28, Vine Street, PT29 – Charter Street and Brick Kiln Street. Traditionally, historic streets are characterised by strong building lines and building frontages. Wherever possible this character should be reinstated and natural paving materials and street furniture used which is sympathetic to the setting. In addition, the design of these historic streets should give full regard to '*Streets for All*' published by English Heritage⁽¹⁾.

1 <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/advice/advice-by-topic/planning-and-transport/streets-for-all/>

Canal Walkways

These are public walkways parallel to the existing canal and provide 24 hour access to everyone. They should be parallel to buildings offering active frontages. Characteristics:

1. Paved with high quality and co-ordinated materials
2. Street furniture should not block walkways
3. Street furniture should be co-ordinated and integrated
4. Walkway should be wide to encourage social gathering
5. Trees and soft landscaping should be included where possible
6. Historic towpaths should be retained and refurbished
7. Space should be allocated for public art.



Canal walkways include PT8, PT9, PT9b, PT21 and PT28. The canals offer the opportunity to create walkways for pedestrians, cyclists and incorporate biodiversity measures to complement the Wildlife Corridor.

Thoroughfares with Ecological Considerations

5.5 The Wildlife Corridor incorporates sections of PT1, PT5, PT8, PT9, PT9b, PT16, PT21, PT23, PT28, PT29, PT30 and PT32. These public thoroughfares have dual functions including providing public access and creation / enhancement of the Wildlife Corridor. Ecologically functional habitat space can be incorporated into these public thoroughfares through appropriate landscaping, planting and positive responses to the existing biodiversity conditions. These public thoroughfares should be designed so that they help deliver ecological services such as air conditioning, pollution control and flood prevention (well managed SUDS and swales can maximise habitat creation as well as providing a drainage function).

Primary and Secondary Public Spaces

- 5.6** The Brierley Hill AAP requires that five Primary Public Spaces be created: Brierley Place, Merry Hill Place, Level Street Square, Round Oak Place and Station Square (Figure 4.1) with the exception of Level Street Square which may not be required. These public spaces will provide pedestrian and public transport access and movement and a large platform to accommodate street furniture and planting for public enjoyment and functional use. The design guidelines for the 5 primary public spaces is set out in chapter 6 in relation to the Urban Quarter within which they are located.



Figure 5.5 Primary Public spaces offer and opportunity to provide a focus of attractive spaces that can offer delight, excitement and flexibility through their design for many activities to take place throughout the year (Peace Gardens, Sheffield City Centre)

Secondary Public Spaces

- 5.7** The intersections of public thoroughfares offer opportunity for creating Secondary Public Spaces and these are highlighted on the Framework Plan and individual Urban Quarter plans. The size and scale of these Secondary Public Spaces will be much smaller than the Primary Public Spaces, but located in convenient locations for people to gather, relax and enjoy.



Figure 5.6 Secondary Public Spaces will be smaller in scale than primary spaces but still act as points where people and streets meet and provide opportunities where a rich mix of activity can take place (Custard Factory, Digbeth, Birmingham)



Figure 5.7 (Sheffield City Centre)

5.8 Whilst some locations for secondary public spaces have been suggested, it is conceivable that other locations may be appropriate. However, any additional locations proposed by developers should be explained in supporting information with planning applications. The exact function and size of these spaces will be influenced by the adjacent new buildings and ground floor uses, but developers are encouraged to consider the integration of small

square and pocket parks, in order to provide an attractive and usable public realm network. However, the design of all Secondary Public Spaces should comply with the following guidelines:

- Incorporate co-ordinated street furniture, hard and soft landscaping.
- The minimum function of any Secondary Public Space should include browsing, seating, pausing and socialising.
- Have active built edges that front the space and be well overlooked.
- Lighting should form part of the design from the outset to ensure the space is safe to use after dark.

Key components in the public realm

- 5.9** There are many examples of functional street furniture such as highway elements (direction signs, signals and lighting), amenity elements (seats and bins), and elements such as telephone kiosks which can add to the functionality and aesthetics of the public realm. Many of these can be incorporated within permitted development rights and for some elements there is a degree of choice in terms of location and design such as seats, whilst for others such as traffic signals, there are fixed location and design criteria. The design guidelines for locating and designing components in the public realm are as follows:

Minimum pavement width and avoidance of street clutter

- 5.10** All public thoroughfares and public spaces should incorporate appropriate and co-ordinated paving and street furniture. The most successful streets and public spaces have only essential street furniture which makes a positive contribution to the appearance, activity and function of the public realm. The sharing of structural elements is preferable e.g. street light columns can also carry traffic signals, litter bins, direction signs and banners and in some instances elements could be fixed to new buildings fronting the public realm.
- 5.11** Careful consideration should be given to appropriate siting, the character of the public realm, space for people to move (particularly wheelchair users or people who are visually impaired), sightlines, important views, hard and soft landscaping and the avoidance of street clutter.



Figure 5.8 Careful choice and combination of paving materials act to provide accessible public routes which are hard wearing and attractive links through the public realm (Bristol City Centre)



Figure 5.9 Street furniture should provide necessary benefits to users of the space and be simple and co-ordinated (Coventry City Centre)



Figure 5.10 Street Clutter obscures views along the street and can cause obstructions for pedestrians



Figure 5.11 Combining signs and locating street furniture in a defined zone creates a calmer, more accessible environment

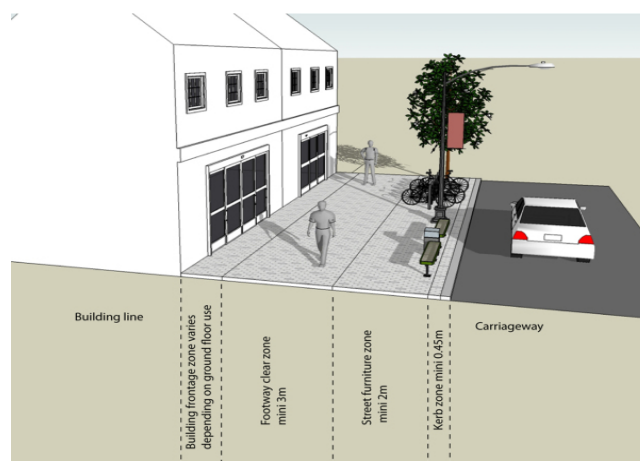


Figure 5.12a Primary Thoroughfare, Street View

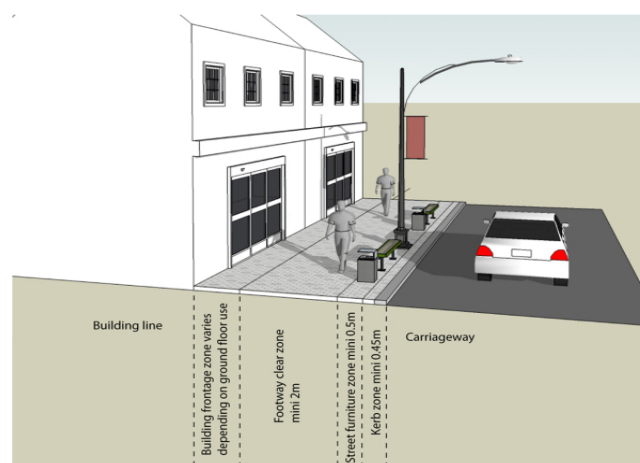


Figure 12b Secondary Thoroughfare, Street View

Street trees and soft landscaping

- 5.12** Soft landscaping and trees in the town centre can bring aesthetic, environmental and economic benefits. Planting may be used to create focal points, delineate routes and screen traffic and can also provide food, refuge and habitats for wildlife. Trees, in particular, help to create a sense of place and provide a more human scale by reducing the apparent size of the surrounding space and buildings. Trees also make the urban environment more pleasant and comfortable by providing shade, reducing glare, acting as windbreaks and reducing the impact of traffic-generated noise.
- 5.13** Developers are encouraged to retain existing trees according to tree surveys and plan for the provision of new trees in public thoroughfares and public spaces wherever possible. The incorporation of street trees must be considered at the design stage of the development to ensure there is adequate rooting area to avoid future nuisance and that street trees are co-ordinated with the overall streetscape. Street tree planting should take into account overhanging branches, traffic safety, underground and overhead services. Lines and avenues should generally be planted in order to create design continuity using trees of a single species and uniform size at the time of planting. Within the Wildlife Corridors, specifying native species may enhance biodiversity.



Figure 5.13 Soft Landscaping and Trees in an Urban Area (Bristol City Centre)

Street cafés

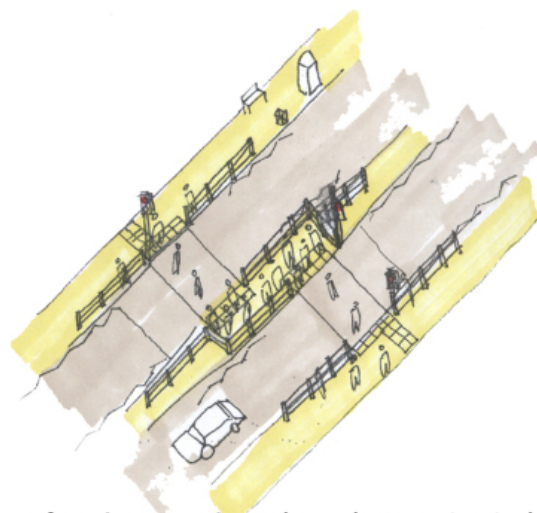
- 5.14** Outdoor cafés enhance the quality of the pedestrian experience, and can reinforce a vibrant sense of place. Street cafés are typically located within the building frontage zone but they must not encroach the clear footway zone, nor present obstacles for people with physical or visual impairments, such as the 'A' board in Figure 5.14 which Dudley Council prohibits the use of. Enclosures, parasols, heaters, tables and chairs should visually complement each other and the space that they are located in.



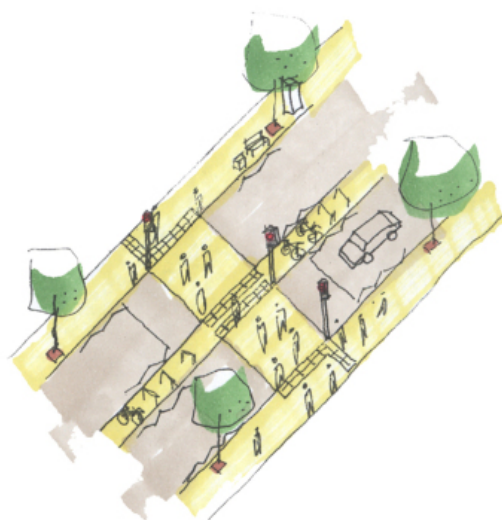
Figure 5.14 Street Cafes add activity and animation to places

Easing pedestrian movement along and between building frontages

- 5.15** Pedestrian cross-overs can be introduced where side roads meet the public thoroughfares to make it easier for people to walk along the street by creating a sense of seamless surface materials as opposed to continually being confronted by traffic from side roads. The barrier effect of existing wide carriageways where they occur between building frontages can be reduced by providing more crossing points that cross the road directly as opposed to via midpoint crossing islands.



Standard pedestrian crossing where the crossing is designed so that pedestrians can only cross one half of the carriageway at a time, and have to wait in a penned-in island in the middle of the road.



New pedestrian crossing designed to create a better pedestrian experience, with a direct route across the road and no barriers, reducing the feeling of being trapped.

Figure 5.15 Types of pedestrian crossings

The Wildlife Corridor

- 5.16** The Wildlife Corridor (AAP policy 66), aims to facilitate the creation of a new and improved ecological network, to allow species to move between Fens Pool Special Area of Conservation and Saltwells Local Nature Reserve. This will occur through onsite improvement works and compensation from the loss of other areas of existing wildlife value within the area.
- 5.17** It is unlikely that the Wildlife Corridor will function if it is less than 12-15m wide, or if there are not significantly wider bays of suitable habitat frequently along its length. Due to the lack of quantity resulting from the narrow widths envisaged in many places, the quality of the corridor for wildlife movement must be high to compensate for this. Therefore breaks in the Wildlife Corridor must be minimised and connectivity increased as much as possible.
- 5.18** The Wildlife Corridor Network can be split into three broad Character Types:
- Woodland to Grassland
 - Canal and Bankside
 - Pondscape
- 5.19** The locations of these can be seen in Figure 5.19. Each of these broad Character Types is based on its relative position within the ecological network and the needs of target species. The design guidance below aims to maximise the function of these pieces of land for wildlife movement in such small widths.

Woodland to grassland

- 5.20** This provides the main backbone of the network. Generally it links the location where Saltwells runs adjacent to the AAP boundary south to the canal at the Delph Locks and north along the railway line.
- 5.21** Target species⁽²⁾:
- Badger
 - Bats
 - Black Redstart (will mainly use the railway line)
 - Woodland birds
 - Dingy skipper butterfly
 - Green hairstreak butterfly

2 Target species refers to those species which are important to have in these locations and which must be protected and considered in the design of development.

Layout and composition

- 5.22** Zone 1 is open sparse, wildflower-rich grassland. It should aim to benefit grassland invertebrates such as the Dingy skipper and Green hairstreak butterflies through establishing and retaining bare earth and the flower Birds-foot trefoil. It is anticipated that this can be colourful through the use of ruderal flowers such as Common poppy and vetches. Poor soil (or dilution of rich soils) will help this habitat develop. If possible shading should be avoided. Minimum width 2m.
- 5.23** Zone 2 is meadow style grassland. Again wildflower-rich (such as Yellow rattle, Cowslip, Yarrow and Bird's-foot trefoil) but managed by annual meadow cuts in late summer. This will provide a nectar rich area for insects. Minimum width 2m.
- 5.24** Zone 3 is tussock grassland. Strong grasses and wildflower species, (such as knapweeds, Ox-eye daisy and Teasel) which are cut in small sections every two to four years. This will provide nectar and shelter for insects and seeds for birds. Minimum width 2m.
- 5.25** Zone 4 is characterised by dense native climbers (such as Dog rose and Honeysuckle), shrubs (for example Elder, Gorse and Hawthorn) and small trees (such as Rowan and Holly). These should create a thick low canopy. It will need periodic coppicing (approximately every eight to fifteen years) to prevent it developing into stands of mature trees. Flowering and berry bearing species would be preferred to aid food supply for animals. Bats, Badgers and woodland birds will use this to move along. Minimum width 3m.
- 5.26** Zone 5 is an area of large native trees (such as Ash and oak). Many woodland flowers, including Bluebell can be established once the canopy develops and light levels reduce. Bats, Badgers and woodland birds will use this to move along. Minimum width 3m (if trunk is on the edge).



Figure 5.16 Woodland to grassland

Canal and Bankside

This follows the Dudley Number 1 and the PensnetCanals, including their banksides.

Target species:

- Badger
- Bats
- Otter
- Water vole
- Black Redstart
- Kingfisher
- Woodland birds
- Dingy skipper butterfly
- Green hairstreak butterfly

Layout and composition

5.27 Zones 1 to 5 are the same as the Woodland to Grassland character type. Zone 6 is similar to Zone 2 and 3 in that it is wildflower grassland which is cut infrequently (between once every two to four years depending on location). This should be done on a rotation so that small lengths are cut each autumn, but neighbouring strips remain long. This will provide nectar and shelter for insects, seeds for birds and grazing areas for Water vole. Its width is determined by the location of the towpath. However where towpath realignment takes place a width of 0.5-3m should be achieved to facilitate Water vole survival.

- 5.28** Zone 7 is the canal itself. It is the unique, continuous and therefore most important feature of this character type. Improving the quality of this, and the adjoining zones, are therefore arguably the top priority in this Character Type. Submerged aquatic vegetation and emergent plants (e.g. Yellow iris) should be encouraged along the sides, whilst the centre of the channel remains open for boat traffic. Banks should be altered where they are hard (metal or stone/concrete) to create “natural” soil and vegetated banks. Where this is not possible solutions such as coir rolls must be used to allow vegetation bridges to be created for Water vole and other species. Bats, Otter and Kingfisher should all benefit from these improvements. In more secluded area artificial Otter holts and Kingfisher nesting banks should be considered.
- 5.29** Zone 8 is designed to be a natural buffer between the canal and more intensive uses such as retail and residential spaces. It is expected to contain wildflower grasslands similar to that of Zone 6 and small native trees such as Rowan and Silver birch. It is expected that this will vary in width significantly from c3m to large bays. This will usually relate to building lines and the wider functions of these spaces, such as communal gardens and café frontages.
- 5.30** Zone 9 is the built environment. Features such as wildlife roofs can be beneficial for species including Black redstart and, where light pollution is minimal, bat boxes within buildings can be valuable.

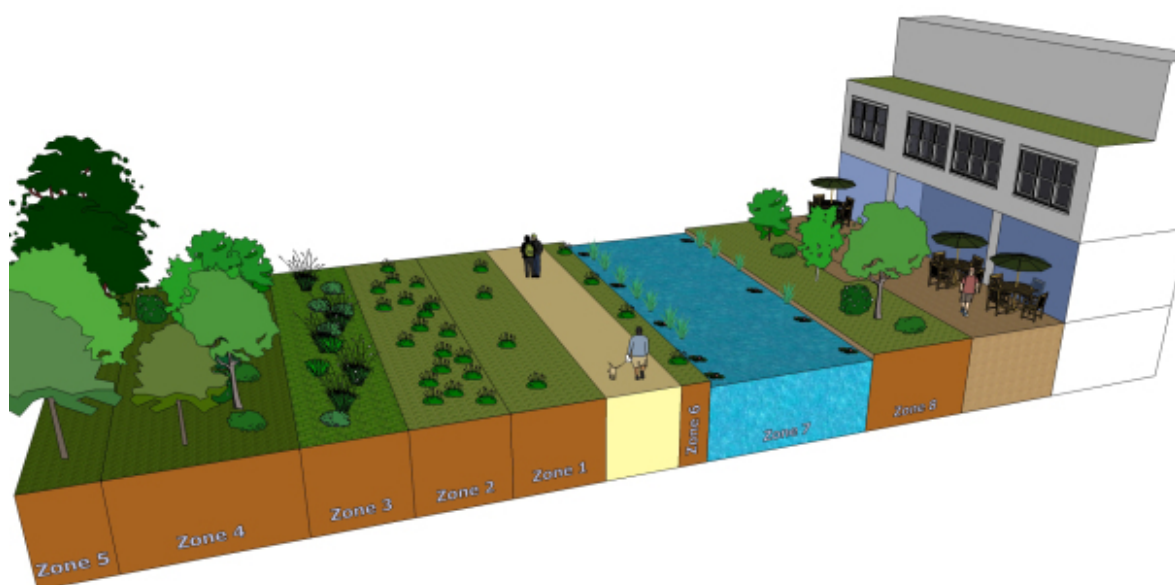


Figure 5.17 Canal and Bankside

Pondscape

This is mainly in the northern Harts Hill area. It aims to link Fens Pool with the Pensnett and Dudley Number 1 canals for less mobile species, especially Great crested newts.

Target species:

- Badger
- Bats
- Woodland birds
- Great crested newt
- Dingy skipper butterfly
- Green hairstreak butterfly

Layout and composition

5.31 It is more important to deliver periodic variation of habitat types along the length of this character type, than its width. The basic habitat components are Zones 1 to 5, however rather than linear they should be more “patchy” in layout, such as planting islands of large trees surrounded by smaller trees and scrub grading down into grassland. In addition to this wetland features, especially wildlife ponds (suitable for Great crested newts) and amphibian hibernacula (hibernation sites) should be created. These ponds should be “connected to each other through the terrestrial habitats outlined above.

5.32 The wildlife ponds should be:

- Frequent along the length of the corridor in this area (maximum 200m apart)
- Either naturally water tight or if needed lined with puddled clay
- Relatively unshaded
- Free of fish
- Approximately 100m² in size
- Have shallow sloping profiles
- Contain submergent vegetation for newt egg laying (such as a Common starwort) and emergent (such as Yellow iris and Flowering rush)
- Connected to areas of shrubs and woodland by long grass

5.33 Amphibian hibernacula (hibernation sites) should be:

- Either be above ground (c1m high) where the soil holds water or can be in pits where soil drains freely (c0.5m deep by c1m wide) to avoid flooding
- Made from untreated wood (e.g. logs), rocks and/or bricks (without cement or concrete) with loose topsoil mixed into it

- Covered in topsoil or turf with entrances exposed around its circumference
- Located in wooded areas and connected by long vegetation to ponds

5.34 Severance effects through the corridor, such as roads must be minimised both through avoidance and mitigation. Mitigation can be achieved through techniques such as using ecoducts, kerbs which are permeable to amphibians and not using gully pots but rather directing water into swales as sustainable drainage tools.



Figure 5.18 Pondscape



Figure 5.19 Detail of Wildlife Friendly Road Drainage

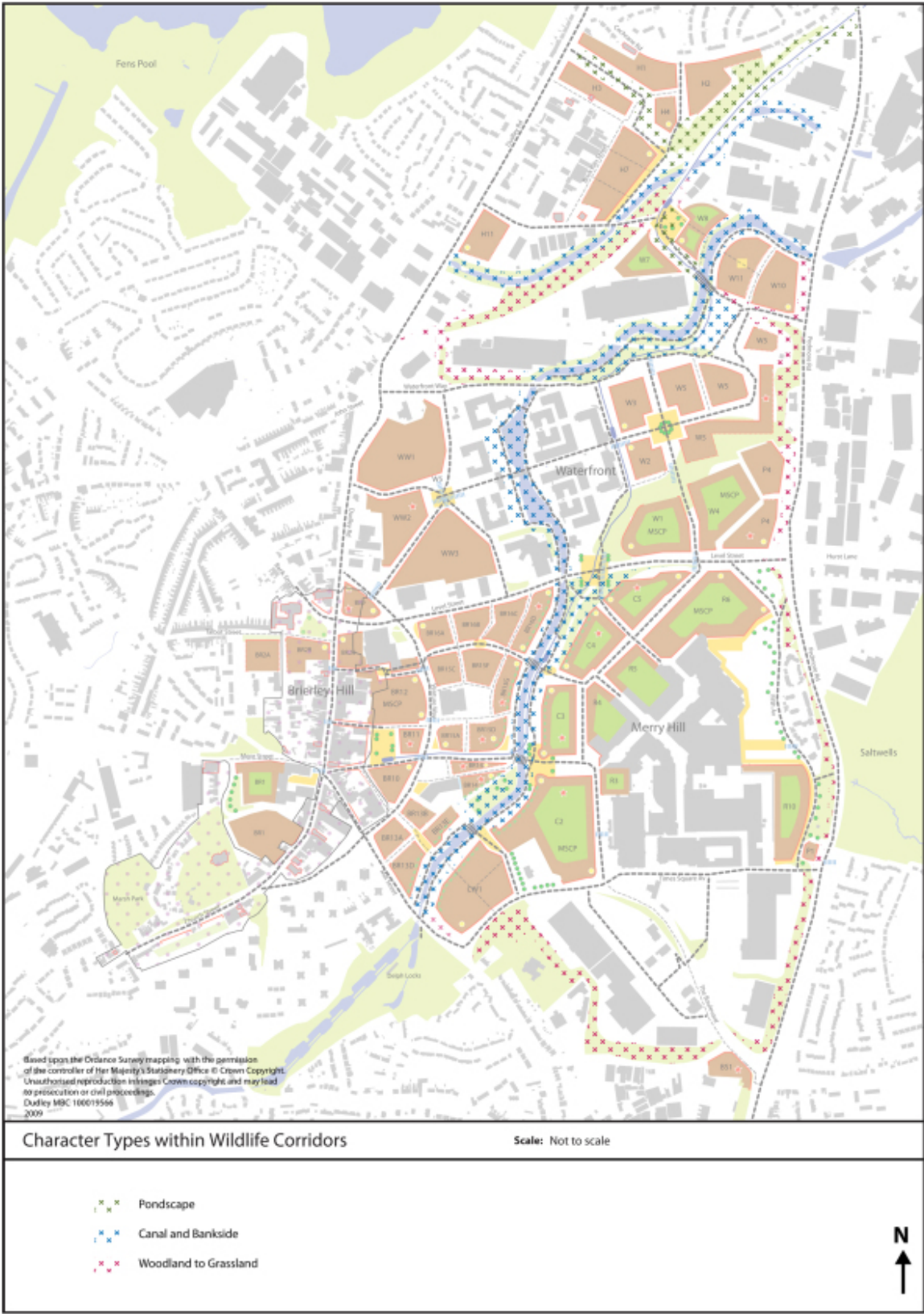


Figure 5.20 Character Types within Wildlife Corridors

6 Design Guidance for the Twelve Urban Quarters

- 6.1** Twelve distinct Urban Quarters make up the strategic centre, within which there are both Established Areas and also Development Opportunity Blocks. The Development Opportunity Blocks are formed around a framework of public thoroughfares, public spaces, the canal and transport routes in order to create an interlinked town centre.

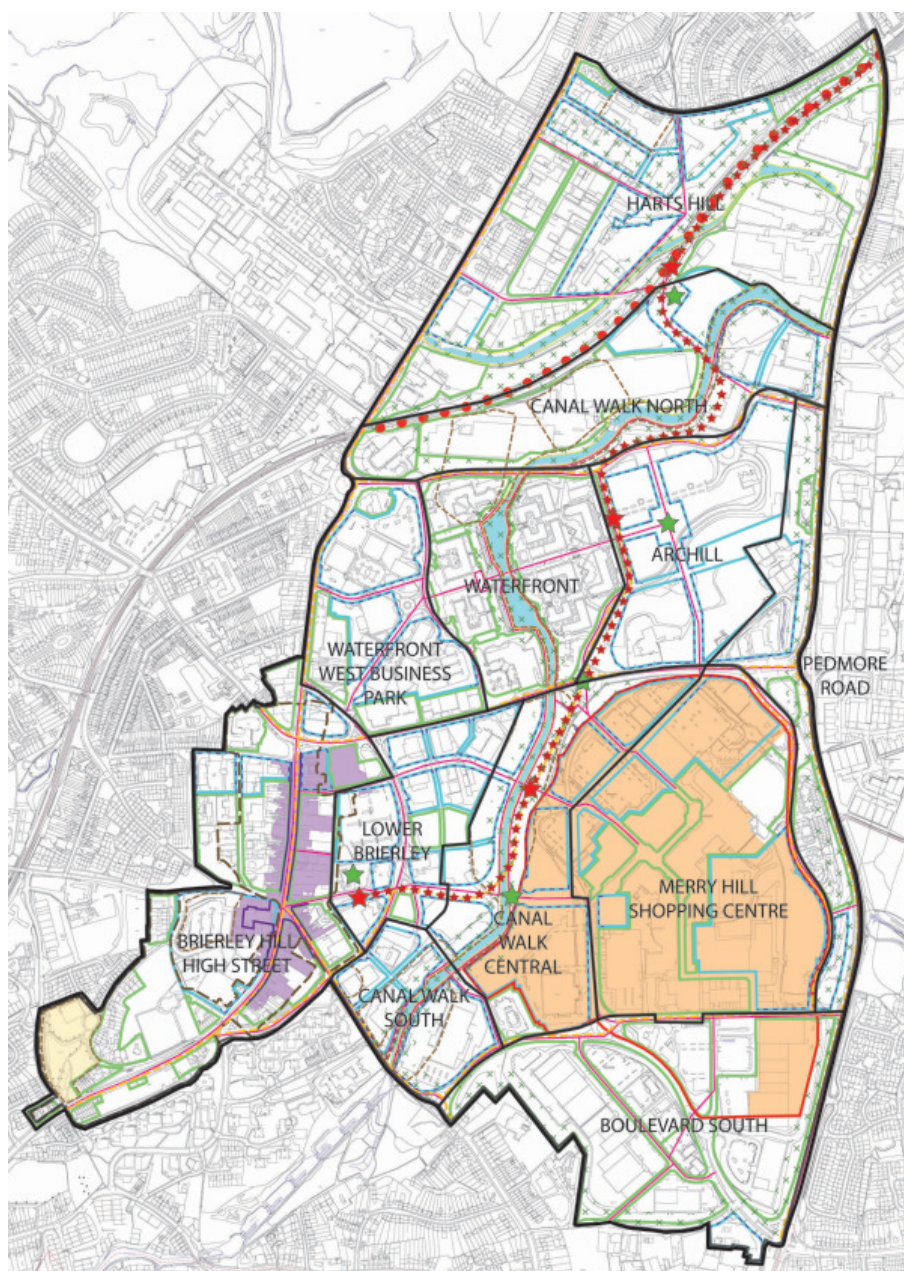


Figure 6.1 Brierley Hill's Urban Quarters

- 6.2** As discussed in Chapter 3, there are a number of urban design principles which are generic to achieving well designed development for the whole town centre such as ensuring a high quality public realm. However, each of the urban quarters have specific objectives which stem from these principles to create the overall urban design framework. This chapter demonstrates the flexible design parameters for the urban quarters and highlights the key considerations for each.

Brierley Hill High Street

- 6.3** As the community focus for the town centre, the High Street's local shopping and community function will be retained and strengthened through new retail development, improvements to the townscape and better linkages with the wider town centre.

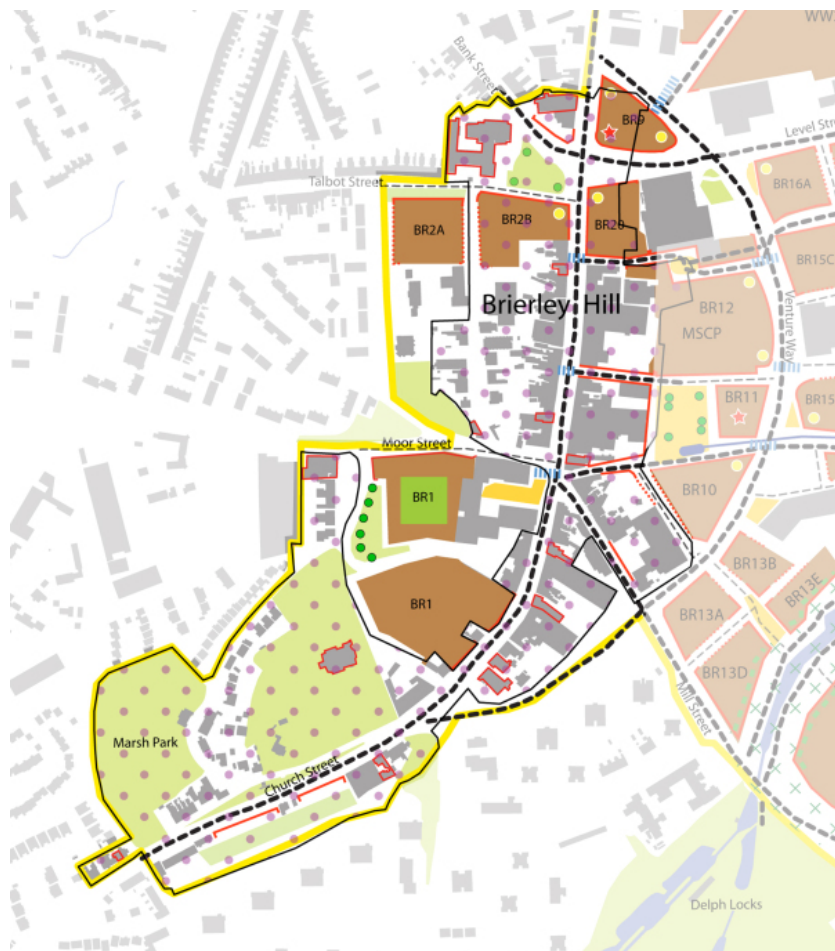


Figure 6.2 Brierley Hill High Street Urban Quarter

The design parameters for this urban quarter are:

Key Principles	<p>Landmark buildings and memorable places is a key principle here as there are 17 Locally Listed buildings in and around the High Street as well as two Archaeological Priority Areas. The whole High Street is also a Conservation Area so design of facade and building elevations will also be important. Active frontages along the length of the High Street will be a vital component of new development, such as at the Moor Centre, as will encouraging mixed use and flexibility of buildings and spaces. Church Street which leads into the High Street from the southern end provides a gateway to the town centre and therefore perimeter block development will be not only be important in this area, but also within Development Blocks BR1 (moor Centre) and BR2A, BR2B, BR20 and BR9 at the northern gateway. Good lighting design should be utilised to help stimulate the evening appearance of the High Street and to ensure that Secured by Design measures are incorporated.</p>
Thoroughfares	<p>PT4 is the High Street and there are six junctions where it meets PT11, PT3, PT7, PT33, PT12 and PT6. As such, the good design principles associated with junctions and corners will apply, particularly at the northern entrance to the town. The thoroughfares branching off the High Street create the necessary connectivity into Lower Brierley, the canal area and across to Merry Hill. The intersection between PT4 and PT6 at the top of the High Street is an important gateway into the Local Shopping Area and consideration must be given to creating importance here via good perimeter block and junction development in the aforementioned Development Blocks.</p>
Public Spaces	<p>Although the High Street Urban Quarter will not incorporate one of the identified five primary public spaces, it will play host to a number of secondary public spaces, most notably to the front of the Moor Centre. Marsh Park lies within this Urban Quarter and it is important that connectivity and access to this green asset is maximised. There is scope to create more aesthetically pleasing secondary urban spaces also at the northern gateway to the High Street to enhance visual delight and richness.</p>
Other considerations	<p>The Wildlife Corridor does not run through the High Street, however the public spaces, green areas and thoroughfares provide an opportunity for habitat creation within the centre and where appropriate developments can include green roofs and walls.</p>



Figure 6.3 Existing public realm on Brierley Hill High Street - cluttered with un-coordinated street furniture and guard railing



Figure 6.4 changes in paving design and continuous pedestrian connection help improve pedestrian movement whilst retaining features that announce change as the route crosses a vehicular entrance (Wolverhampton City Centre)

Lower Brierley

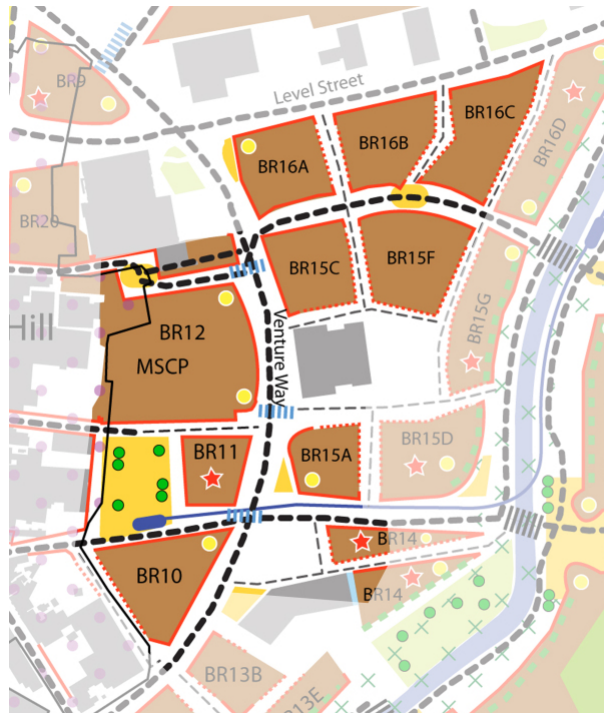


Figure 6.5 Lower Brierley Urban Quarter

- 6.4** Lower Brierley will be transformed through substantial redevelopment for a mix of uses with a strong emphasis on civic and community services. A diverse range of new homes will benefit from a new public realm, excellent connections to other areas in the town and improved public transport access. Lower Brierley will be home to one of the proposed five new Primary Public Spaces, Brierley Place.

Brierley Place



Figure 6.6 Urban Design Concept Sketch for Brierley Place

6.5 This new public space is to be located at the intersection of PT7 and PT11 (Venture Way), incorporating the proposed terminus for a Rapid Transit route. Brierley Place is key to the integration of Merry Hill and Brierley Hill and it should :

- **Accommodate the Rapid Transit terminus and provide a reception and orientation space for people arriving in Brierley Hill**

The Rapid Transit structure should be a free-standing, light and transparent. The tramway design must minimise its impact on the character of the space and the continuity of all public thoroughfares. The space should be defined by the adjacent Development Opportunity Blocks and the improved rear side of the High Street buildings.

- **Serve as an attractive and functional public space**

The space should incorporate high quality paving, street furniture and coordinated hard and soft landscaping and there is potential for the creation of a water feature in the street design. The central space should facilitate free movement of pedestrians and provide a pleasant setting, possibly with cafes and restaurants on the ground floors in the adjacent buildings. There is scope for the space to be used flexibly with the potential to accommodate seasonal events.

- **Provide new linkages to the High Street and Merry Hill**

The square should incorporate clear signage particularly to the High Street and Merry Hill. It may also provide a setting for a new rear entrance to any potential Market Hall extension. Thus the Market Hall could provide a covered link to the High Street and market traders would benefit from increased footfall.



Figure 6.7 The use of water, focal views, informal seating and larger elements such as planting and proportionately scaled buildings, help to frame the space making it attractive and enlivening (Peace Gardens, Sheffield City Centre)

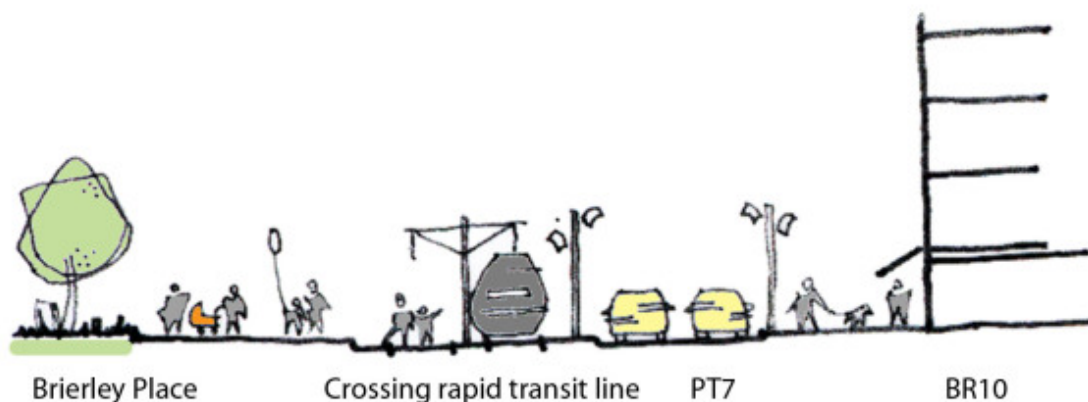


Figure 6.8 Cross Section Brierley Place (PT7 - BR10)



Figure 6.9 Cross Section Brierley Place, Indoor and Outdoor Market (BR11)

- 6.6** There are further sketches in Appendix 2 for the five Primary Public Spaces setting out more detail on the edges and uses, activity and functions, movement and links and hard and soft landscaping.

The design parameters for this urban quarter are:

Key Principles	<p>There are two identified Landmark Buildings in Lower Brierley along with the recently completed LIFT healthcentre and the new college which add to the principle of memorable places and visual delight which should be maintained. This is an area which has already seen significant change and the potential for further change will focus on connectivity through the quarter to the canal and Merry Hill and the public realm improvements associated with Brierley Place, extensions to the market hall and reconfiguration of the surface car parks into multi-storey parking in Block BR12. Perimeter block development on this block should be single aspect which 'wraps' the car park. Thus the good design principles relating to car parking and service areas will be imperative.</p>
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Thoroughfares	The main proposed thoroughfares in Lower Brierley are PT7, Central Avenue and PT12 linking the High Street across the canal into Merry Hill. PT11 also runs north-south through this quarter and meets PT6, Level Street at the northwest corner. Junction and corner principles should be given good consideration, particularly on the points noted in the quarter plan above. PT11 shows a good example of incorporating tree planting to improve the aesthetics of the public realm and pedestrian crossings to improve connectivity .
Public Spaces	Active frontages will be an important feature of the new public square, as will any new facade and building elevations in order to encourage a good 'sense of place'. There is scope for secondary public spaces to be created as development progresses and all public spaces should allow for mixed use and flexibility .
Other considerations	Again, the Wildlife Corridor does not lie within this urban quarter but there are a number of open spaces which provide opportunity for habitat creation. The design principles for topography and roofscape will be applicable in this quarter given that it is lower lying land and can be viewed from vantage points on Level Street. Green roofs may therefore be an appropriate design response and would help to enhance local distinctiveness and biodiversity.



Figure 6.10 Existing Public Realm in Lower Brierley (Cottage Street)



Figure 6.11 Example of how Brierley Place could look and function with appropriate built form that presents active uses and a high quality public realm (Brindley Place, Birmingham)

Canal Walk Central



Figure 6.12 Canal Walk Central Urban Quarter

- 6.7** Exciting new development fronting the canal will consolidate the heart of the town centre and create a high quality environment which makes movement between the High Street, Merry Hill and the Waterfront an enjoyable experience for pedestrians and cyclists. Cafes and other uses fronting the canal will make this a place for relaxing and socialising.
- 6.8** Canal Walk Central will also be home to one of the Primary public spaces proposed in the AAP, Merry Hill Place which will be located to the east of the canal between development blocks C2 and C3. Depending on the internal public transport measures to be delivered, another public space may be appropriate on Level Street at the intersection with the canal, Level Street Square.

Merry Hill Place



Figure 6.13 Urban Design Concept Sketch for Merry Hill Place

- 6.9** This new public space is to be located at the intersection between PT8 and PT9 and will include the proposed new landmark bridge across the Canal. The landscape should be modern in character, responding to the nearby Merry Hill extension. The predominance of hard landscape features should be softened via tree planting and it should:
- **Be designed to provide an arrival point and orientation space for pedestrians moving between Merry Hill, Brierley Hill and along the canal**

The space should be large enough to accommodate the main corridors of pedestrian movement and encourage people to congregate and linger, but not be so large as to appear bleak and overbearing outside peak hours of activity. The public space should also provide an attractive view from the new bridge platform to the building elevations of C3 and C2. Vehicle access should not be permitted except for emergency vehicles and if necessary, time controlled servicing of buildings.

- **Serve as a multi-functional public space**

Merry Hill Place is intended to be a vibrant urban space attracting people throughout the day with cafes, restaurants and leisure uses in a pleasant canal-side setting and should be designed to accommodate seasonal events.

- **Support the Wildlife Corridor along the canal**

An ecological landscape feature such as a green bridge could be introduced to compliment the Wildlife Corridor and it may include a Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS). Green areas and soft landscaping must be incorporated parallel to the canal to maintain the required width of the Wildlife Corridor and this could include marginal habitat, waterside planting or a small wetland area.

- **Accommodate a new pedestrian bridge across the canal**

It is preferable to have a suspended bridge with subtle lighting to create a landmark feature. The bridge should be wide enough to provide direct movement to and from PT7 for pedestrians, cyclists and be high enough to allow canal boats to pass underneath.

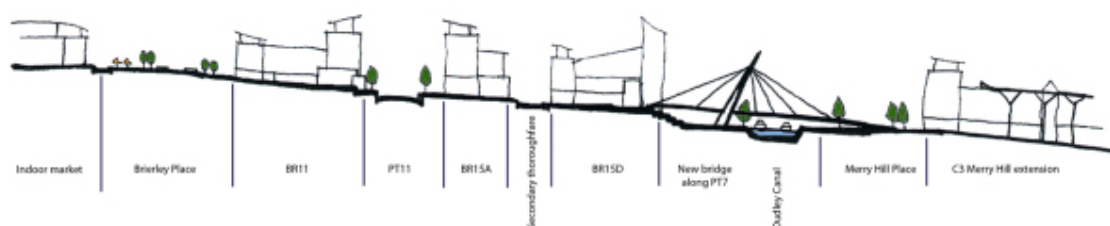


Figure 6.14 Cross Section from Indoor Market to Merry Hill Extension

Level Street Square



Figure 6.15 Urban Design Concept Sketch of Level Street Square

6.10 Level Street Square is a possibility and not a requirement but if found to be necessary, it is to be located at the intersection of PT24 from the Waterfront, PT6 along Level Street and PT13 from the Merry Hill extension, where there is presently a significant change in levels. The space will act as the central point on the vehicle and bus movement routes.

6.11 Commercial uses will predominate and enclose the space and as with most of the public squares, active frontages (restaurants and cafés) should be focused at the ground floor level of new development. The design of the Level Street Square should:

- **Provide a memorable space of orientation in the centre of Brierley Hill at the interface between different quarters and the intersection between a number of primary thoroughfares**

The space should be large enough to accommodate the main corridors of movement and the design should give priority to and allow for the direct movement of pedestrians and public transport. The tramway for the potential rapid transit should be delineated through the detailing of the surface materials.

- **Accommodate means for pedestrians to easily negotiate the change in levels between Merry Hill and the Waterfront.**

The design of the space should allow for safe, direct pedestrian movement between buildings and along the thoroughfares, with the use of steps and ramps where appropriate.

- **Be designed to support the Wildlife Corridor along the canal**

6.12 There are further sketches in Appendix 2 for the five Primary Public Spaces setting out more detail on the edges and uses, activity and functions, movement and links and hard and soft landscaping.

The design parameters for this urban quarter are:

Key Principles	This urban quarter is significant in a number of ways due to its central location and of key importance will be ensuring connectivity and a high quality public realm . Topography is a challenge to be considered within the redevelopment of this urban quarter due to the level change and the canal to be crossed. Roofscape will be important, particularly in blocks C2 and C3 as they will be overlooked by the proposed new bridge and from Level Street. There is potential for a number of landmark buildings within the redevelopment of this quarter, plus the landmark bridge and as such perimeter block development and building height will be important principles in all the Development Blocks.
Thoroughfares	There are numerous proposed thoroughfares running through this quarter with PT8 and PT9 running adjacent to the canal, PT7 and PT12 running across the canal from the High Street into Merry Hill, PT10 to the south and Level Street (PT6) to the north and junction and corner development will be important. The interaction of the thoroughfares with the proposed public spaces and the canal and wildlife corridor will all be important considerations.
Public Spaces	Active frontages are always of key importance within public spaces and will be vital in these two public spaces to add visual delight and richness and ensure a high quality public realm is achieved. There is also provision for a secondary public space where PT12 crosses the canal adjacent to the metro stop. Good lighting design will be important for new buildings in this quarter especially the landmark buildings, bridges and public spaces.
Other considerations	The Historic Landscape Characterisation Study recognises no buildings currently providing a positive contribution to the landscape or historic character, but the land either side of the canal has opportunity to do this. The Wildlife Corridor is of key importance in this quarter given that PT8 and PT9 are ecological

routes and there is an opportunity to create an ecological landscape feature to the west of Merry Hill Place, to support the Wildlife Corridor along the Canal. Additionally this quarter contains an **Archaeological Priority Area** which must be given consideration in future redevelopment.



Figure 6.16 Existing - water courses can provide isolated and unwelcoming places where activity is limited and where opportunity to use the water as a feature is lost (Dudley Canal, Brierley Hill)



Figure 6.17 New - active frontages to water space encourage a vibrant, linked-up environment which people can walk through or pause to take part in activities at the edge of the space (Brindley Place, Birmingham)

Merry Hill



Figure 6.18 Merry Hill Urban Quarter

Merry Hill will expand its sub-regionally important shopping role with new development around the centre on previously under-utilised land providing new retail, leisure and homes which will enhance the public realm, create a better interface with the town centre and a more satisfying experience for visitors.

The design parameters for this urban quarter are:

Key Principles	The key design principles here will be associated with connectivity and integrating Merry Hill with its surroundings. The surface car parks will be reconfigured into multi-storey car parks and the featureless mall exteriors will be extended and made more appealing so facade and building elevations will be important. Again, public realm improvements will be a key principle as with all quarters in Brierley Hill. Visual delight can be enhanced by thoughtful hard and soft landscaping including the use of green walls on the exterior of the mall buildings.
Thoroughfares	A number of primary thoroughfares will connect Merry Hill to neighbouring urban quarters - PT7 and PT12 from the High Street, PT13 from Level Street Square, PT14 from Round Oak Place to the north, PT16 from Pedmore Road on the east and

	the proposed bus route PT20, PT19 connects Boulevard South and PT17 into Merry Hill. The design principles associated with junctions and corners will need to be applied here and car parking and servicing considerations will be important.
Public Spaces	There are no proposed new public squares in Merry Hill but public realm improvements will be imperative within the design of any new development, particularly on the eastern side of the centre which is currently bland and featureless. However, there are currently a number of smaller areas located at the exterior and between some of the malls such as on Times Square Avenue which will serve as secondary public squares or meeting spaces.
Other considerations	There is scope to incorporate green roofs in considering the topography and roofscape of Merry Hill, as it is on the lowest lying land and can be viewed from numerous elevated points.



Figure 6.19 Existing - the current layout sets the malls and units substantially within large areas of surface car parking (view from Embankment, Merry Hill)



Figure 6.20 New - Infilling the open edges with development will enhance the town centre quality by providing active edges and an improved and welcoming public realm to face onto surrounding routes (Bristol City Centre)

Pedmore Road

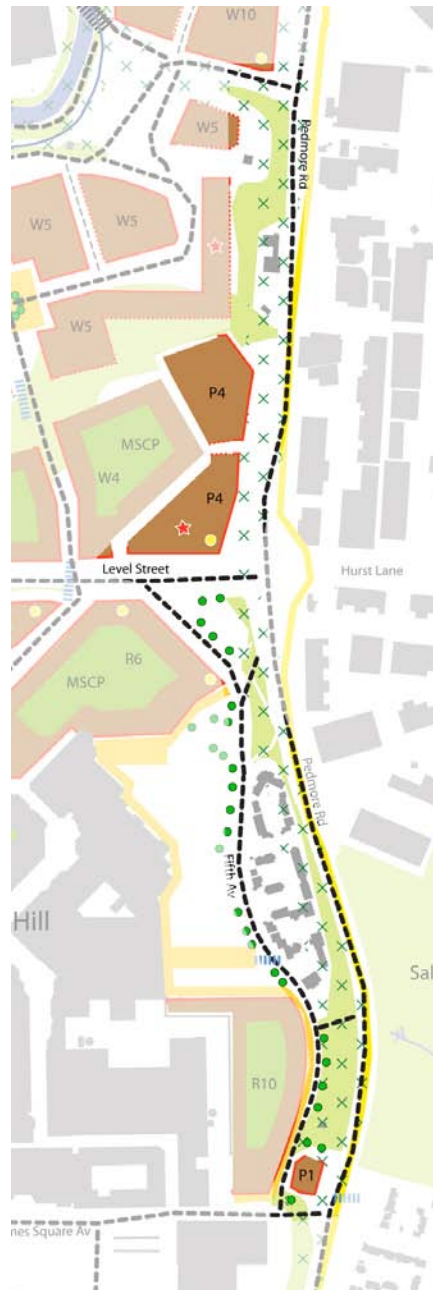


Figure 6.21 Pedmore Road Urban Quarter

- 6.13** The Pedmore Road is an important strategic route accommodating north/south vehicular movement through the Borough and will connect to Merry Hill via PT16. Visitors approaching Brierley Hill town centre from the Pedmore Road will have a positive first impression from the attractive new development which maximises the opportunity to make better use of land whilst accounting for the challenging topography.
- 6.14** The design parameters for this urban quarter are:

Key Principles	To achieve the public realm improvements in this quarter will require special attention to be paid to the ecological and 'green' features, as the Pedmore Road (PT11) is an important Wildlife Corridor running from the north into Saltwells LNR in the southeast. The visual delight in this area will be provided by green swathes on the left hand side of Pedmore Road and much soft landscaping around the current and proposed development. There is potential for a landmark building to be created in Block P4 such as a hotel, as this junction is in a prominent position - junction and corner principles should be applied here.
Thoroughfares	PT11 presents a barrier to pedestrians and wildlife and so connectivity will be achieved by incorporating pedestrian crossings which may double up as wildlife crossings such as a green bridge.
Public Spaces	This urban quarter will not play host to any of the proposed primary or secondary public spaces. However, there may be scope to provide some multi-functional open areas within the green swathes of the wildlife corridor, particularly to the south end of this quarter.
Other considerations	There are no recognised buildings or areas within this quarter which provide a high contribution towards the landscape. However, there is opportunity for some, particularly in Block R10 to the south and to the rear of the housing development.



Figure 6.22 Existing public realm on Pedmore Road provides a bleak visual streetscape to the eastern edge of Brierley Hill



Figure 6.23 High quality public realm with a balance of hard and soft landscape improves the pedestrian environment and the visual presentation of the town edge to passer by (Sheffield City Centre)

Canal Walk South



Figure 6.24 Canal Walk South Urban Quarter

- 6.15** Aspirational homes and employment opportunities will maximise the environmental advantages of this area adjacent to the canal and at the head of the Delph Locks Conservation Area making it a desirable place to live and work.

Key Principles	There is a steep incline to be overcome between the canal and the Lower Brierley area and topography and roofscape will have to be considered for any new development. Again within this quarter, there is a heavy focus on supporting and enhancing the Wildlife Corridor along the canal and round the south of Block CW1 to connect to the Delph Locks Conservation Area. Aspirations to achieve a high quality public realm and visual delight can be realised in the land adjacent to the canal along the wildlife corridor and in the secondary public spaces, particularly at the space to the front of the recently completed college building. This building contributes positively to the public realm and this should be continued in the facade and building elevations of new development. Junction and corner design principles should be considered for the south corner of block CW1. Perimeter block development will be an important attribute for all the development blocks in this quarter.
Thoroughfares	PT8 and PT9 are the ecological thoroughfares running adjacent to the canal and PT2 along the south boundary to this quarter is the current Mill Street. There are a number of proposed secondary thoroughfares between the development blocks and connectivity will be important in terms of crossing the canal.
Public Spaces	This quarter is quite densely developed although there is scope for about three secondary public spaces, one before the canal crossing, one between blocks BR13D and BR13E and one to the front of the new college building.
Other considerations	This quarter contains an Archaeological Priority Area and should also be treated sensitively due to its location at the head of the Delph Locks Conservation Area.



Figure 6.25 Current uses have a limited functional relationship with the canal (View northwards along the canal from Mill Street, Brierley Hill)



Figure 6.26 New - the introduction of new forms of development with doors and windows out onto public space at the edge of the canal enliven the route, increasing the attractiveness of the canal as a feature within a much improved overall place (Brindley Place, Birmingham)

Boulevard South

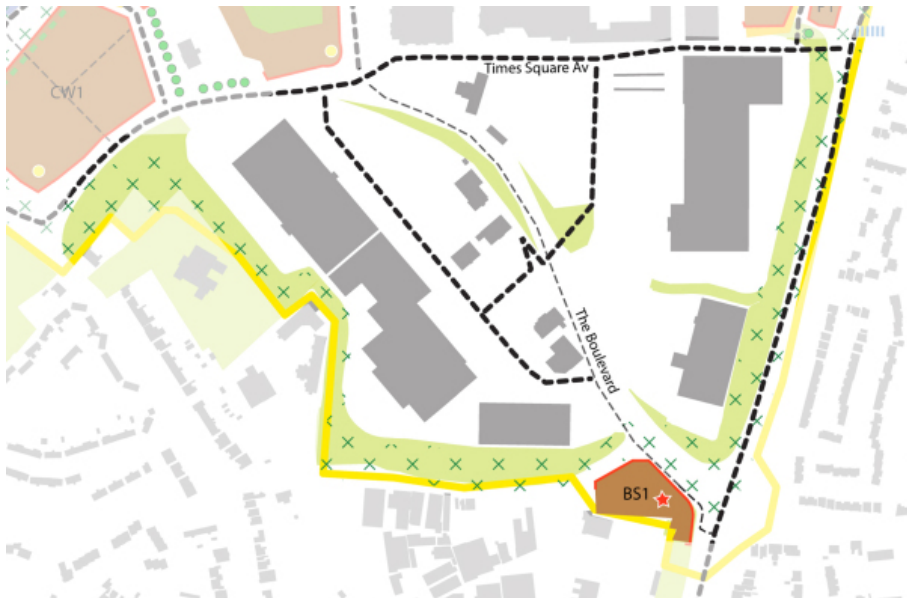


Figure 6.27 Boulevard South Urban Quarter

- 6.16** New development at this major gateway into the town centre will set the tone for high quality townscape while the remainder of this urban quarter will continue in its current role in serving the retail needs of the community. The design parameters for this urban quarter are:

Key Principles	This established area is comprised of retail warehousing, a number of free standing restaurants, surface level parking and Merry Hill bus station. The area is not expected to change significantly over the AAP plan period except for public realm improvements and enhancement of the wildlife corridor area and the possible creation of a hotel in Block BS1.
Thoroughfares	There won't be much change to the existing thoroughfares in this urban quarter although some connectivity will be achieved by an extension from PT18 to link with the existing PT31 and the opening up of PT32 to also link Two Woods Lane to PT31.
Public Spaces	There may be some scope to incorporate a small element of secondary open space along the wildlife corridors on the southern and eastern sides of this block.
Other considerations	The buildings and land within this quarter currently provides no positive contribution to the landscape and public realm although the creation of a hotel could be a landmark building and create a memorable place at this gateway to the town.



Figure 6.28 Existing - As with other areas of Merry Hill, the set back of development across the current open spaces used for parking lack a presence of arrival for the town centre from important external access routes such as Boulevard South (View northwards to the Merry Hill centre from Boulevard, Brierley Hill)



Figure 6.29 New development should front onto the Boulevard with high quality public realm that caters for vehicles as well as pedestrians (Park Central, Birmingham)

Archill

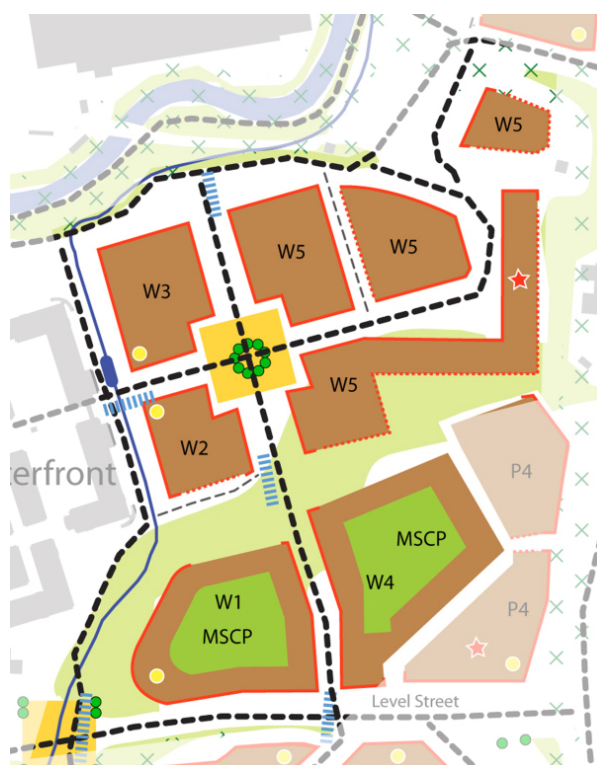


Figure 6.30 Archill Urban Quarter

- 6.17** This area largely consists of surface level car parking to serve the adjacent Waterfront office complex. The intention is to expand the Waterfront Office Complex and consolidate the surface level car parking into multi deck integrated car parking. The rapid transit route and stop are proposed to the east of the office complex and to facilitate good public transport access, it is also proposed to re-route bus services through here and have interchange facilities with a new public square, Round Oak Place.

Round Oak Place



Figure 6.31 Urban Design Concept for Round Oak Place

- 6.18** This new public space is to be located where PT21, PT22 and PT14 from the intended Merry Hill extension converge, incorporating a proposed Rapid Transit stop to the west. Whilst office uses are likely to predominate, two hectares of proposed residential development is allocated with the Development Opportunity Block W5. The public space should therefore provide a focus for a concentration of secondary commercial uses at ground level to support both business and residential development.

- 6.19** The design of Round Oak Place should comply with the following guidelines:

- **Connect to the Waterfront Rapid Transit Stop with a linear route**

The route should be designed as an extended, elongated section of thoroughfare which connects to WaterfrontBusinessPark, Merry Hill extension, Station Square and Rapid Transit stop. The Rapid Transit stop should be a free-standing, light and transparent structure to minimise its impact on the character of the space and adjoining buildings. Special attention is needed to direct pedestrian movement from the Rapid Transit stop to Round Oak Place and beyond.

- **The space should function as a small 'pocket' park for use by residents and office workers.**

The space provides an opportunity to incorporate soft landscaping into the predominantly hard landscape setting. It should offer an inviting environment to sit and observe the adjoining thoroughfares and the long view to the north-east.



Figure 6.32 3D Model for Round Oak Place

The design parameters for this urban quarter are:

Key Principles	Redevelopment in this quarter will be heavily focused on the public realm improvements and creation of a memorable place associated with the public square and rapid transit stop. There is scope to provide a landmark building in Block W5 and junction and corner, building height and perimeter block development will be necessary on the surrounding buildings to give importance to the rapid transit stop and public square. Good design will also be required for the multi-deck car parking and service areas
Thoroughfares	The new proposed thoroughfares in this quarter, PT14, PT21 and PT22 will be key to achieving connectivity from the core town centre into the northern quarters and vice versa. These thoroughfares should incorporate soft landscaping features and tree planting to add to the public realm improvements .
Public Spaces	Active frontages will be imperative for the public square as will the inclusion of mixed use and flexible space and buildings to ensure a high quality public realm is achieved. Good lighting design will be important for new buildings in this quarter especially the landmark buildings to add to the visual delight and richness . The lower southwest corner of Archill will be where Level Street Square is located as it straddles and connects 4 urban quarters.
Other considerations	The Historic Landscape Characterisation Study (HLC) only identified one building providing a medium contribution to the landscape which is to the front of Club 79 on Level Street and

	<p>therefore this should be given consideration in any future development. However, the HLCS also identified that most of the land within Archill has potential for contribution to the landscape especially if the surface car parks are reconfigured into multi-deck parking.</p>
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Figure 6.33 Existing public realm in Archill is provided by a large area of surface car parking which lacks visual interest and uses land inefficiently (East elevation of the Waterfront Office Complex, Brierley Hill)



Figure 6.34 Appropriate built form that presents active uses enclosing a high quality public realm (Brindley Place, Birmingham)

Waterfront West Business Park

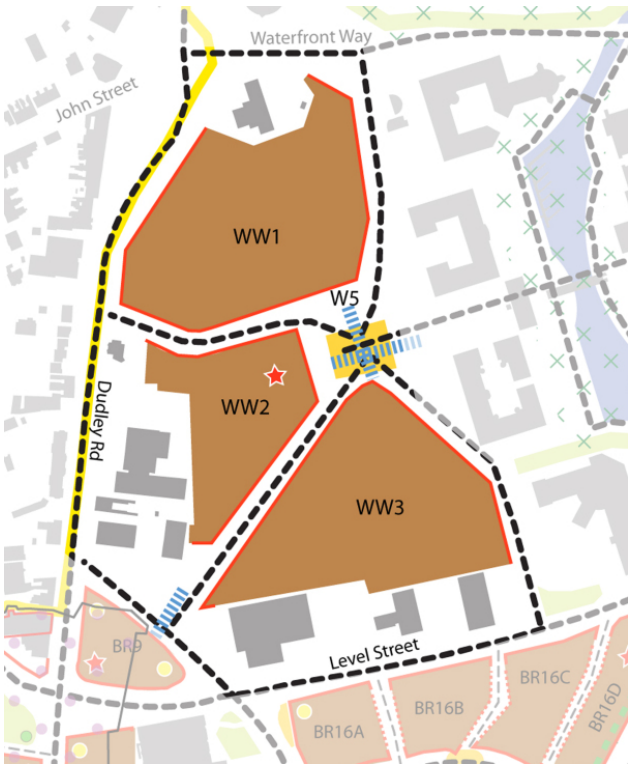


Figure 6.35 Waterfront West Urban Quarter

6.20 This urban quarter is comprised of low rise buildings of relatively modest construction and short build life. The intention is that the business park will be intensified over time to provide further opportunities for high quality office accommodation comparable to that found in the main Waterfront development providing attractive opportunities for inward investment and for the labour market.

The design parameters for this urban quarter are:

Key Principles	As with all the urban quarters, creating a high quality public realm is of key importance in Brierley Hill. To replicate the main waterfront development, the design of the facade and building elevations will be important. Car parking and service areas should be reconfigured into multi-deck parking or secluded from public view to compliment the public realm.
Thoroughfares	Three new thoroughfares are proposed - PT25, PT26 and PT27 to provide better connectivity within this quarter and beyond.
Public Spaces	There is scope to provide a secondary public space at the intersection between the thoroughfares and development blocks.

	As with all public spaces, this will improve the public realm and visual delight.
Other considerations	There are no buildings or land uses which contribute positively to the public realm or landscape but through redevelopment of this quarter there is scope to enhance the design and public realm. There is also scope to provide a landmark building in block WW2 to aid the view from the public space and create a memorable place.



Figure 6.36 The Existing public realm in Waterfront West provides an uninviting pedestrian environment to connect through (Waterfront West, Brierley Hill)



Figure 6.37 Use of complimentary materials and contrasting textures to accommodate easier, connected movement in an attractive public realm (Sheffield City Centre)

Waterfront

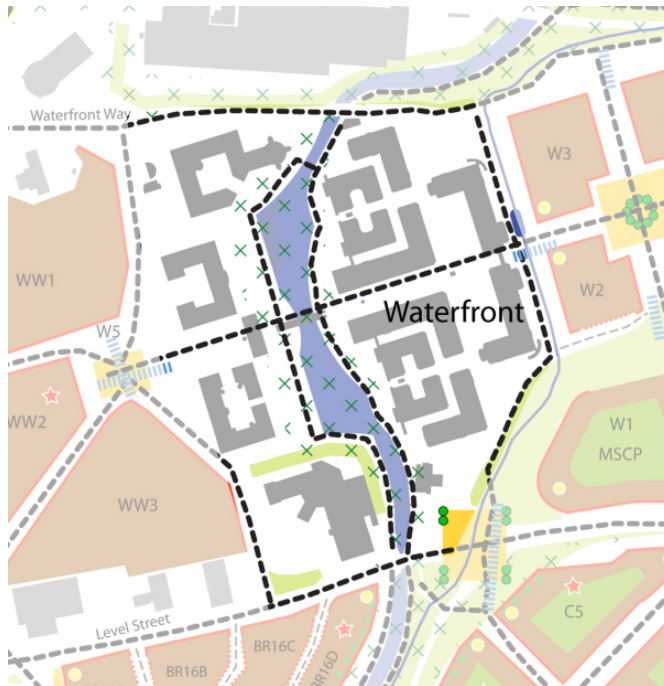


Figure 6.38 Waterfront Urban Quarter

- 6.21** This established and successful area of office development with bars and restaurants fronting the canal will continue to be home to a number of national companies and provide employment opportunities for local people. The public realm in this urban quarter currently functions well and is only in need of maintenance.



Figure 6.39 Existing public realm at the Waterfront - no new development proposed

Canal Walk North



Figure 6.40 Canal Walk North Urban Quarter

- 6.22** This quarter has a number of key features including the canal and Wildlife Corridor, the railway line, an archaeological priority area, the Round Oak rail terminal and a newly created link road, PT5. This urban quarter will also be home to the remaining proposed primary public square, Station Square. Redevelopment of redundant industrial land will provide expansion space for the town centre and deliver new homes and offices, improve the local environment and cater for public transport links which will improve the connectivity of Brierley Hill town centre with other centres in the Black Country.

Station Square



Figure 6.41 Urban Design Concept Sketch for Station Square

6.23 Station Square is to be located adjacent to the Rapid Transit stop proposed for the Harts Hill Quarter, where PT28 and PT23 converge. This primary public space will be an important arrival point for the Rapid Transit and it will also form an important connection from Harts Hill to the Waterfront and Merry Hill.

6.24 The design of Station Square should comply with the following guidelines:

- **Provide a reception and orientation space for people arriving into this area by Rapid Transit, private vehicles and by foot.**

The space should offer direct connection with PT23 and PT28 and the existing pedestrian connection from underneath the heavy rail line and Rapid Transit line should be enhanced and well-lit to incorporate a 'Secured by Design' approach. Development Opportunity Blocks H7 and W8 should provide adequate natural surveillance to overlook PT28. New development fronting onto the public space should have active frontages and the space should provide a setting for entrances to new development.

This primary public space will be an important arrival point for the Rapid Transit and it will also form an important connection from Harts Hill to the Waterfront and Merry Hill.

- **Be designed to support the Wildlife Corridor**

The wildlife corridor runs through this quarter along the canal and is important as a green link between Harts Hill and Pedmore Road.

The design parameters for this urban quarter are:

Key Principles	Again, the creation of a high quality public realm will be imperative in the design of development in this urban quarter. This is a key location for connectivity of the north of the town centre into the core area and to link the green elements of the town. There is potential for green roofs to be incorporated in blocks W8 and W7 adjacent to the public square to add to the visual delight and richness . The design of junctions and corners will be important especially on the corner where PT5 meets the Pedmore Road and adjacent to Station Square. Perimeter block development , facade and building elevations will also be important to give a sense of place and enhance the public realm and also to add importance to the area.
Thoroughfares	The railway line creates a distinct barrier to connectivity and the current pedestrian access is unsuitable for vehicles and unwelcoming for pedestrians. The newly completed PT5 which links the Pedmore Road to Waterfront Way helps with

	connectivity which will be further enhanced PT8 along the canal and PT23 which will incorporate a new vehicle/cycle/pedestrian bridge over the canal.
Public Spaces	Station Square should be designed to incorporate an element of mixed use and flexibility where possible and the buildings should all have active frontages . There is also potential for a secondary public space in the centre of the development in Block W11 and other open elements can be created along the canalside providing they do not conflict with the intended function of the wildlife corridor.
Other considerations	The HLC has identified two buildings in Blocks W11 and W12 which give a medium contribution to the landscape and these should be given consideration in any redevelopment proposals as they will be somewhat important for creating memorable places and high quality public realm . The bridge crossing the canal has also been identified as providing a medium contribution. The canal and Wildlife Corridor are important features within this block in terms of improving the public realm and wildlife linkages. An archaeological priority area has been designated in recognition of the former Round Oak Iron Works and this has to be considered in the design of any future redevelopment.



Figure 6.42 Bleak, large scale industrial warehouses are allocated for new development (View northwards through The Gateway, Brierley Hill)



Figure 6.43 There is potential to provide new development that takes advantage of its canalside setting (Canal Walk, Birmingham)

Harts Hill



Figure 6.44 Harts Hill Urban Quarter

- 6.25** Over the long term, the redevelopment of former industrial land will provide new homes and offices enabling investment to be channelled into the area for the benefit of both new and existing occupiers and allow for the realisation of the wildlife corridor linking Saltwells Local Nature Reserve to Fens Pool Special Area of Conservation benefiting both people and wildlife.

- 6.26** This urban quarter will be home to the Rapid Transit stop and Station Square will straddle the south boundary. The Harts Hill Masterplan (October 2010) and the Phase Two Strategy (January 2012) illustrates how the indicative development blocks can be developed and designed to incorporate increased housing and offices, retain the number of thriving businesses currently in operation, enhance the environmental aspects and green infrastructure along the wildlife corridor and, maintain the buildings of historic value. The design parameters for this urban quarter are:

Key Principles	Harts Hill is currently home to numerous derelict and dilapidated buildings and a very poor quality public realm. The intention for the redevelopment of this quarter is therefore to create new homes and offices in a significantly enhanced high quality public realm . Active frontages will be required on those buildings fronting onto the new thoroughfares, canal and green open spaces. Perimeter block development will be important especially on the entrances to the urban quarter, especially in blocks H11, H1 and H2, and junctions and corners should be considered to bring a sense of importance to certain places and spaces. Topography and roofscape is important in Harts Hill as there are some substantial changes in levels, especially between Cochrane Road and Vine Street, along the embankment of the Dudley No.1 canal and on either side of the railway line. There would be scope for incorporating green roofs to aid with both environmental improvements and visual delight and richness .
Thoroughfares	A hierarchy of primary and secondary thoroughfares will be established and PT28 and PT30 will provide connectivity to neighbouring residential areas to the east and north. The design of all streets in Harts Hill will give priority to pedestrian and cycle access and promote a safe and attractive environment.
Public Spaces	The rapid transit stop and associated Station Square will help incorporate Harts Hill into Canal Walk North and provide connectivity and a high quality public realm . This will be supported by secondary public spaces which will link together areas of nature conservation and provide memorable places and visual delight.
Other considerations	The design of this urban quarter requires a strong green infrastructure approach as it is a key location for connectivity of the two Local Nature Reserves. The HLC identified six buildings which provide a high contribution to the historic landscape and numerous others which provide a medium contribution.

	Therefore, the design of all new development in this quarter will have to give consideration to the character of these buildings in creating a high quality public realm .
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Figure 6.45 Existing poor quality public realm in Harts Hill



Figure 6.46 High Quality housing development arranged around well designed green spaces provides a setting for the new development and an opportunity to link development sites together (New Hall, Harlow)



Figure 6. A 3D Massing Model to showing indicative development layout and built form

7 Appendices

Appendix One Glossary of Terms

Abbreviation	Term	Explanation
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework	The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It provides a framework within which local people and their accountable councils can produce their own distinctive local and neighbourhood plans, which reflect the needs and priorities of their communities.
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document	SPDs form part of the LDF for the area. They may cover a range of issues, both thematic and site specific, which may expand policy or provide further detail to policies in a DPD. SPDs will not be subject to independent examination and will not form part of the Development Plan.
LDD	Local Development Document	An individual component or document of the LDF
LDF	Local Development Scheme	A document explaining a local planning authority's work programme for producing elements of the Local Development Framework.
DPD	Development Plan Document	A type of LDD which sets out the planning policy framework for an area or for a particular planning topic and which carries significant weight in the development control process. DPDs are spatial planning documents which are subject to independent examinations.
CABE	Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment	CABE champions the creation of great buildings and public spaces. It is a non-departmental public body set up by the Government in 1999. Through public campaigns and support to professionals, CABE encourages the development of well designed homes, streets, parks, offices, schools, hospitals and other public buildings.

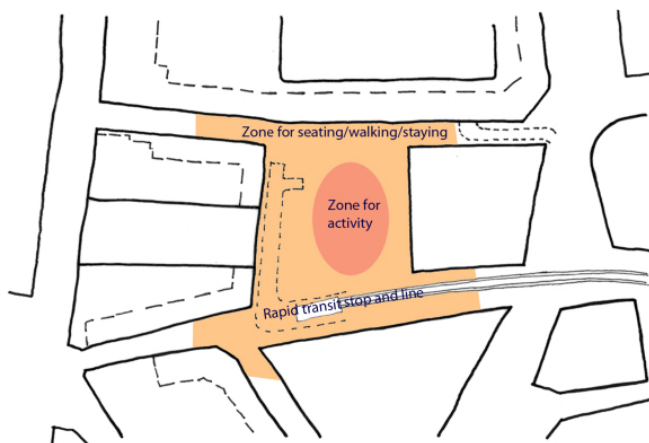
Abbreviation	Term	Explanation
	Evidence Base	The researched, documented, analysed and verified basis for preparing the any LDF document.
	Sustainable Development	Development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
	SUDS	Surface water drainage methods that take account of quantity, quality and amenity issues are collectively referred to as Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS). These systems are more sustainable than conventional drainage methods and treat drainage at its source using natural processes.
	Biodiversity	The variety of life on earth encompassing the whole range of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish, insects, and other invertebrates, plants, fungi and micro-organisms.
	Conservation areas	Designated by Planning Authorities and described in Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as “areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”. The boundaries of all designated conservation areas in the district are shown on the Proposals Map.
	Density	The number of houses to be accommodated on a given area of land
	Topography	The detailed mapping of the relief features or surface configuration of an area.
	Infrastructure	All the ancillary works and services which are necessary to support human activities, including roads, sewers, schools, hospitals, etc.
	Sense of place	Creating somewhere that is recognisably distinct but simultaneously strengthens local identity.

Appendix Two Additional Sketches for Brierley Hill's Primary Public Squares

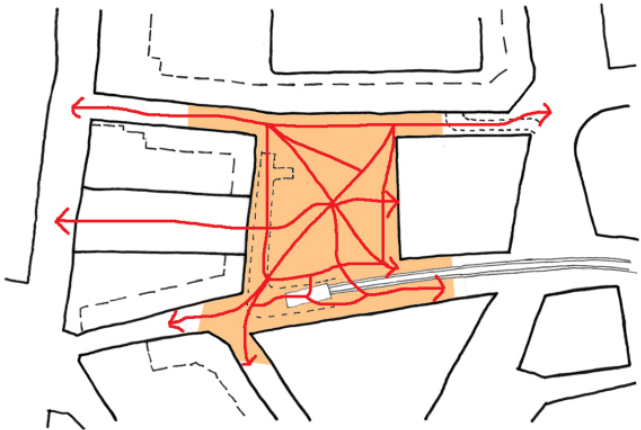
Brierley Place



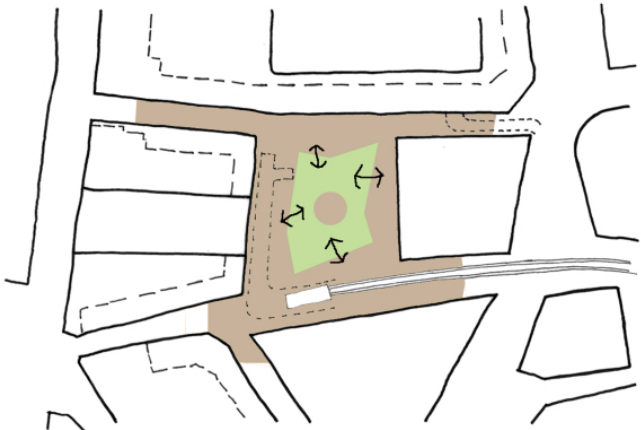
Edges and Uses



Activity and functions

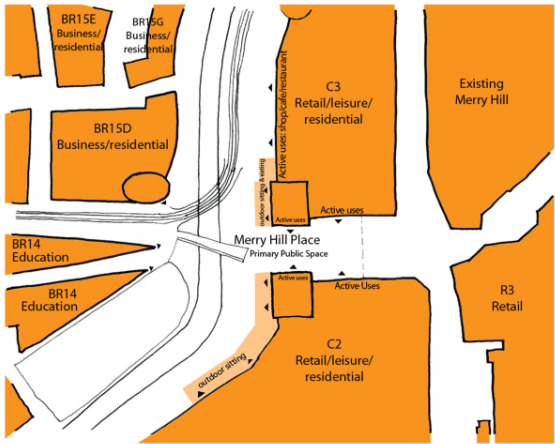


Movement and Links

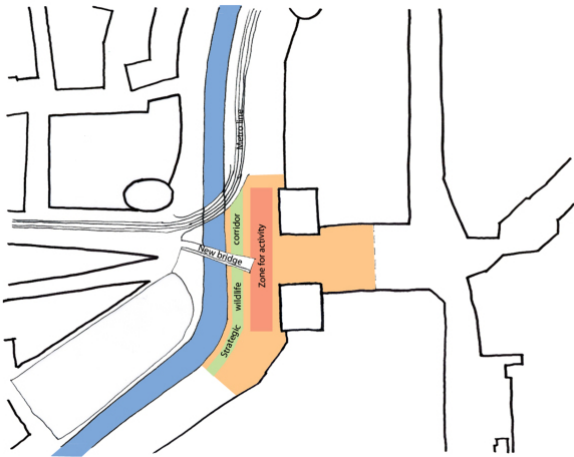


Hard and Soft Landscaping

Merry Hill Place



Edges and Uses



Activity and Functions



Movement and Links



Hard and Soft Landscape

Level Street Square



Edges and Uses



Activity and Functions

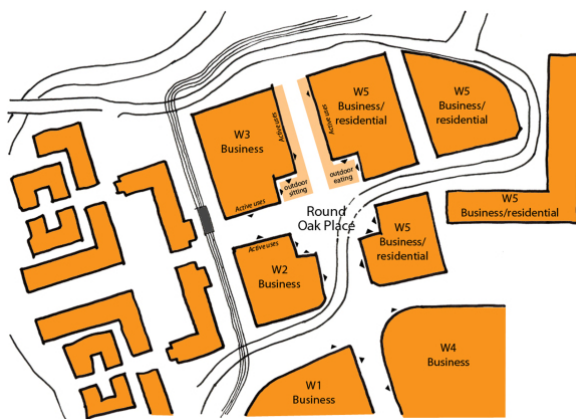


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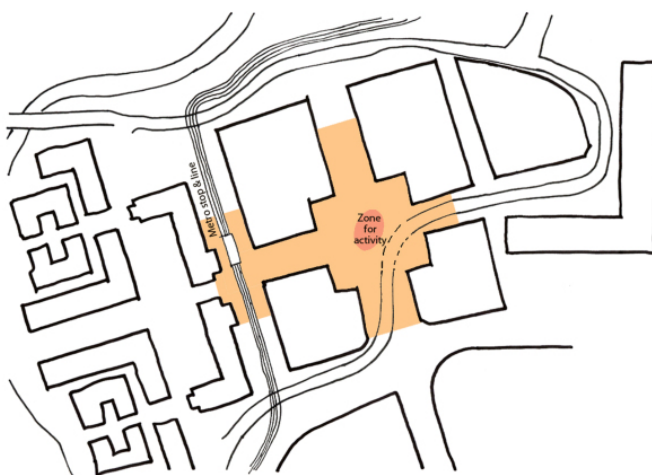


Hard and Soft Landscaping

Round Oak Place



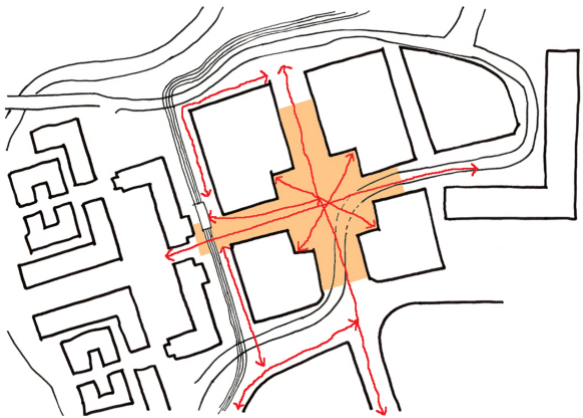
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Activity and Functions



Hard and Soft Landscaping

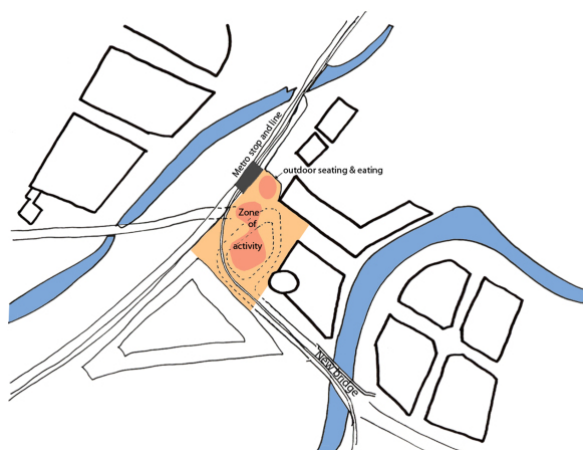


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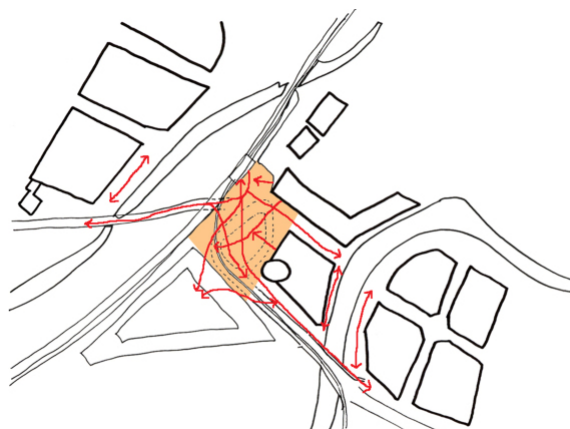
Station Square



Edges and Uses



Activity and Functions



Movement and Links



Hard and Soft Landscaping

Appendix 3

Key for Key Issues Plan and Framework Plan

	Town centre boundary
	Existing build form
	Existing watercourses
	Conservation Area where character and appearance are to be preserved and enhanced
	Listed Buildings
	Nature Reserves
	Key green spaces (existing)
	Wildlife Corridors
	Areas with negative townscape quality requiring transformation
	In-active frontages
	Key views
	Key routes require environmental improvement
	New movement and connections
	Gateway improvement
	Development Opportunity Blocks
	Multi-storey car park (wrapped around with active frontages)
	Active Frontages
	Building line enclosing Secondary Thoroughfares
	Corner features
	Landmark Buildings
	Primary Thoroughfares (see Brierley Hill AAP)
	Secondary Thoroughfares
	Primary Public Spaces
	Secondary Public Spaces
	Canal crossing points
	Rapid Transit line and stops
	Pedestrian crossing points
	Green roof (potential)
	Green wall (potential)
	New built form