
Meeting of the Cabinet – 29 October 2014

Joint Report of the Director of the Urban Environment & Director of Corporate Resources

Dudley Town Centre Regeneration

Purpose of Report

1. To update Cabinet on regeneration activity in and around Dudley Town Centre
2. To seek Cabinet approval for the inclusion of the proposed improvements to Coronation Gardens in the Capital Programme

Background

3. The Dudley Area Development Framework (ADF) was adopted as supplementary planning guidance by the Council in 2005. Its vision is to achieve comprehensive redevelopment of nine opportunity areas together with public and civic spaces which will act as a catalyst for the transformation of the town centre. Implementation of the ADF is expected to bring significant benefits to the town centre arising from improvements to public and civic spaces and infrastructure, new development, jobs and increased resident population in the town
4. Work is now progressing on the preparation of the Area Action Plan (AAP) for Dudley Town Centre which will update the ADF and bring the policies and proposals in the plan within the development framework for the Borough. This plan will complete the suite of documents for the Borough's Town Centres. The AAP furthers the objectives of the ADF and seeks to gain investor and developer confidence in the Town by creating a greater degree of planning certainty about the regeneration proposals in the Town.
5. Since the adoption of the ADF the following have taken place

[a] Establishment of New Heritage Regeneration Ltd

6. The Arms Length regeneration company, New Heritage Regeneration Ltd (NHRL), was launched on 30 January 2009 and aims to work at arms length to, but on behalf of, the Council and its public sector partners to provide a broad range of expertise in programme management and design, public and private finance, valuation, cost, commercial and legal advice, and funding. It seeks, through close working with the Council, to achieve major regeneration via the complementary skills of the private and public sectors.

[b] Public sector investment

7. A successful programme of land acquisitions in the Town Centre and at the Castle Hill site has been underway since 2007, initially funded by £5.9m of investment from the former Regional Development Agency, Advantage West Midlands. This investment has acted to reduce development risk by bringing land within the control of the Council, and secured an income stream from rental income to support the running costs of NHRL.
8. £2.6m has been secured for the Dudley Town Centre Townscape Heritage Initiative from the following sources;
 - The Council
 - Heritage Lottery Fund
 - Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Growth Points initiative
 - English Heritage's Partnerships in Conservation Areas programme
9. Funds totalling £7.6m have been secured under the European Regional Development Fund's Sustainable Urban Development programme, and in addition, support has been given by the Council and NHRL to successful funding bids totalling £3m submitted by Dudley Zoo and the Dudley Canal Trust to the Heritage Lottery Fund, European Regional Development Fund and the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership's Growing Places fund

[c] Dudley Town Team (formerly Dudley Town Centre Partnership)

10. The Dudley Town Team has met on a regular basis over the last 5 years. Its membership includes Elected Members and representatives from business, the community and other key stakeholders. The Team will continue to play a key role in allowing effective consultation and engagement with stakeholders as details emerge on individual projects within the ADF

[d] Development activity

Dudley College

11. The Council and NHRL have worked closely with Dudley College to support the major redevelopment of its property in the town centre. The 'Evolve' Further Education Centre and the Sixth Form College opened in September 2012. Work commenced on site in July 2013 on the 'Advance' Engineering Centre and completion is due in October 2014.

Dudley Town Centre Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI)

12. The THI is a Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) grant giving programme to assist the repair and regeneration of the historic environment within conservation areas in towns and cities. The Council has been successful in securing £2.6m of external funding and is contributing £150,000 from its own funds. The project has been a success, with 11 projects completed and 3 more projects underway, at a total cost of £4.1m. Given the success of the current THI, a Phase 2 bid was submitted to the HLF in August 2014 seeking development funding toward a subsequent bid for £1.1m of HLF funding and for which a decision is expected in January 2015.

Castle Hill & Zoo

13. The opportunity is being taken to ensure that, under the coordination of NHRL and with the strategic engagement of Dudley Zoo, the Black Country Living Museum and the Dudley Canal Trust, ambitious proposals for the site are effectively integrated with town centre development.
14. Funding of £5m has been secured from the European Regional Development Fund's Sustainable Urban Development programme. In addition, support has been given by the Council and NHRL to successful funding bids totalling £3m submitted by Dudley Zoo and the Dudley Canal Trust to the Heritage Lottery Fund, European Regional Development Fund and the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership's Growing Places fund
15. The Council has taken the opportunity to carry out acquisitions of strategic sites to support the delivery of this project, and in late 2010 secured the purchase of the former Gala Bingo and Royal Brierley sites. The change in location from the Black Country Living Museum car park to the Royal Brierley site has secured a saving of approximately £1m to the Council and provided early and complementary development activity at the Castle Hill site
16. Work is progressing well on site with the first element of the work, the new £5.9m Dudley Archive centre, complete in October 2013. The access from Tipton Road to the site is complete as is the iconic Zoo Chair Lift and the refurbished premises providing new offices for the Zoological Gardens. The secondary access road and first and second phases of the car park infrastructure completed in March and July 2014. The contract for the Visitor Arrival hub building has been let with completion due in March 2015 and tenders are currently being invited for the recreational route which includes access into the Dudley Canal Trust and a separate access to the Black Country Living Museum to serve the new schools reception building, due to commence Jan 2015.

Foodstore developments

- 17.3 planning applications have been approved for major foodstores in the Town Centre; 2 on the Cavendish House site and surrounding land and the third on the Falcon House site adjacent to King Street. Each of the 3 proposals includes significant tracts of Council land, and Compulsory Purchase Powers are likely to be required for each. Negotiations are currently underway with developers and operators to assist in the identification of the preferred proposal

Residential developments

18. One of the key principles of the ADF was to increase the population living in and around the Town Centre. Although the delivery of this has been adversely affected by the economic downturn, over 250 new homes are currently being built on the former Wolverhampton University campus site and on the former Gasworks site at Constitution Hill. Development of the former site has been possible as a direct result of Dudley College vacating this site as part of their Town Centre redevelopment strategy

[f] Proposed Tower Street car park

19. An early aspiration in the ADF development programme was the provision of a multideck car park associated with a foodstore in the Tower Street Opportunity Area. A car park in this location is proposed given its convenient location for the Town Centre and to provide car park capacity to mitigate for the loss of car parking elsewhere to development. The Council is proceeding with the development of a multideck pay and display car park in this location, for which a planning application will be submitted in the near future

Public Realm developments

20. A key element of the ADF is the enhancement of the town's public realm; its streets, squares, parks and gardens. Work is underway on the preparation of proposals for enhancements that will support safe, accessible and attractive public spaces. The first of these to be brought forward is the Market Place project, £6m improvements to the Market Place and Castle Street which includes revised layout of market stalls; restoration of the fountain, demolition of the existing toilet block and replacement with improved toilet provision; repositioning of the Duncan Edwards statue; new street furniture, refurbishment of the floorscape with highly durable and natural materials.
21. New Heritage Regeneration is leading on the coordination of this project in close liaison with the Council.
22. ERDF funding for the works has been secured and the first phase of the main construction works, along Castle Street, was completed in August 2014. The second phase based around the Market Place itself commenced in June 2014 and is due to complete in May 2015
23. Given the inability of other projects in the Black Country to meet their expenditure targets, the Local Management Committee of the West Midlands ERDF Programme sent out a call for new projects in June 2014 and as a result the opportunity has arisen to extend the Dudley Market Place project to Coronation Gardens and create a direct link between the town and Dudley College and the Gardens.
24. The purpose of these enhancements is not only to enhance the town's environment but to also improve the visitor experience by connecting the town more strongly with the Gardens and the Dudley College's £28m Town Centre campus development.
25. The proposed refurbishments to Coronation Gardens include the introduction of ramps to make the paths more accessible, a new student/events area including a stage, lighting and seating for outdoor performances; new and improved paving, lighting and furniture, the reinstatement and bringing back into use of the historic Apollo fountain in a similar way to the fountain in the Market Place, and enhancements to paving from Green Man Entry to the Broadway corner of Coronation Gardens in order to help connect this part of the town with the Market Place.

Finance

26. Regeneration activity already approved within Dudley Town Centre, and as set out in this report, constitutes a major investment which has enabled the Council to lever in significant sums of external funding to support its own investment in these projects

27. The estimated cost and proposed funding for the Coronation Gardens project is as follows

Estimated project cost	£1,298,000
Funded by	
ERDF	£717,000
Dudley ADF capital receipts	£581,000

28. Approaches are currently being made to organisations who may be willing to sponsor elements of the proposals, but the funding profile above assumes that these are not forthcoming. In addition, the Council has received £141,000 of Section 106 receipts for Open Space improvements from developments in the vicinity of Dudley Town Centre, which may be available for this project subject to consultations with Ward Members.

29. In the event of sponsorship approaches being successful and subject to consultation on the use of Section 106 receipts with Ward Members, it is proposed that detailed amendments to the funding profile are made under existing delegations granted to the Director of the Urban Environment and Cabinet Member for Regeneration

Law

30. Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 enables the Council to do anything that is calculated to facilitate or is conducive or incidental to this discharge of its various functions.

31. Pursuant to Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 the Council has the general power of competence to do anything that individuals may do.

Equality Impact

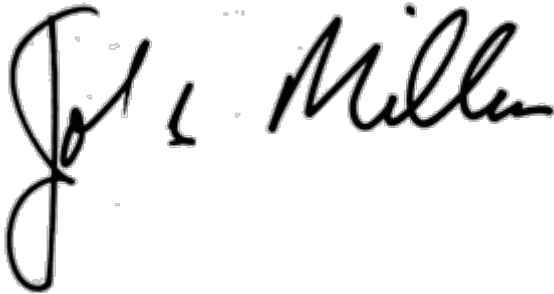
32. Delivery of the Dudley regeneration programme would bring significant benefits to Dudley town centre. It would have a major positive effect on all users of the town centre including residents, visitors, businesses, investors and developers. Benefits would be achieved for people of all ages, including children and young people,

33. All work undertaken in connection with delivery of the Dudley Town centre regeneration programme will be carried out in accordance with the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy.

Recommendations

34. It is recommended that:

- Cabinet note the regeneration activity underway in and around Dudley Town Centre
- Cabinet recommend the Council approve and include the proposed improvements to Coronation Gardens in the Capital Programme



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List of Background Papers

‘Developer Selection Protocol’, Dudley MBC Standing Orders

Cabinet Report (16 March 2011) ‘Dudley Town Centre Regeneration’, Joint report of the Directors of the Urban Environment & Corporate Resources

Cabinet Report (17 June 2009) ‘Delivering the Masterplan for Dudley Town Centre’, Joint report of the Directors of the Urban Environment, Law and Property and Finance

Cabinet Report (11 June 2008) 'Delivering of regeneration in the Borough: a proposed arms length company', Report of the Director of the Urban Environment

Cabinet Report (31 October 2007) 'Delivering the Masterplan for Dudley Town Centre', Report of the Director of the Urban Environment

Cabinet Report (13 June 2007) 'Delivering the Masterplan for Dudley Town Centre', Report of the Director of the Urban Environment

Cabinet Report (13 December 2006) 'Dudley Area Development Framework: Cavendish Quarter Compulsory Purchase Powers', Joint Report of the Directors of the Urban Environment and Law and Property

Cabinet Report (15 March 2006) 'Appointment of Consultants in Connection with Dudley Town Centre Area Development Framework', Joint Report of the Directors of the Urban Environment, Law and Property and Finance

Cabinet Report (8 February 2006) 'Dudley Area Development Framework: Cavendish Quarter Compulsory Purchase Powers', Joint Report of the Directors of the Urban Environment and Law and Property

'Dudley Area Development Framework' (December 2005) Dudley MBC

Cabinet Report (21 September 2005) 'Dudley Area Development Framework: Compulsory Purchase Powers', Joint Report of the Directors of the Urban Environment and Law and Property

Executive verbal report (17 December 2003) 'Establishment of the Dudley Town Centre Partnership', Director of the Urban Environment.