

Design In Brierley Hill Town Centre Supplementary Planning Document

Draft Consultation Document March 2012



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General Information

This and other Local Development Framework documents are or will be made available on request in large copy print, audio version, Braille or languages other than English. If you require the document in one of these formats please contact:

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Arabic

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Bengali

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Chinese

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Glossary of Terms

Abbreviation	Term	Explanation
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.
PPGs	Planning Policy Guidance Notes	Guidance on general and specific aspects of planning policy issued by Central Government.
PPS	Planning Policy Statement	Statements of national planning policy produced by Government, gradually replacing Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs).
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.
	Evidence Base	The researched, documented, analysed and verified basis for preparing the any LDF document.

Abbreviation	Term	Explanation
	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
	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.

1 Introduction

Background

- 1.1** Dudley Council intends that by 2026, Brierley Hill town centre will be regenerated significantly 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.
- 1.2** Brierley Hill is a town of great significance within the Region as a result of its designation as the new strategic centre for the Borough of Dudley by the Secretary of State in January 2008 and carried forward into the Black Country Core Strategy. 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.
- 1.3** 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 document will establish an Urban Design Framework to help facilitate new development in Brierley Hill by providing detailed guidance on the design of buildings, spaces between buildings, landscape and movement between places.

Status of this Document

- 1.4** 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 draft SPD is the second stage in the preparation of this document and it is essentially a consultation document. It has been informed by the comments and views which were given at the Frontloading Consultation Stage (6th September – 18th October 2010) alongside expertise from key Council Officers and Stakeholders.
- 1.5** The document presents the views of the Council on how urban design should be dealt with in the redevelopment of Brierley Hill town centre. The SPD sets out the key urban design considerations and principles and we would welcome any comments that you may have on this. You may comment on this SPD between 19th March – 30th April 2012 in writing by post, email or via our website address below:

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- 1.6** The draft consultation document Urban Design in Brierley Hill Town Centre SPD may be downloaded from the Council's website;

[http://www.dudley.gov.uk/environment-planning/
planning/planning-policy/local-development-framework/bhill-urb-des/](http://www.dudley.gov.uk/environment-planning/planning/planning-policy/local-development-framework/bhill-urb-des/)

- 1.7** Hard copies are also available for viewing at all main libraries in the Borough and at reception of the Council offices at the address above. All comments received at this stage will be used to inform the final version of the SPD, which will be adopted in October 2012.

How to use this Guidance

- 1.8** This guidance explains in detail the design parameters for each of the Development Opportunity Blocks and Public Realm set out in the Brierley Hill Area Action Plan. This guidance is based around two key themes - New Buildings and Public Realm. Embedded within each, there is a set of design objectives to consider and new development must satisfy the relevant design objectives (see Appendix 2).

Planning Context

Black Country Core Strategy

- 1.9** The Core Strategy 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. The Core Strategy was adopted in February 2011.
- 1.10** Regarding design, the vision within the Core Strategy 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

Black Country 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.

- 1.11 Good design is a key feature running throughout the ten objectives of the core strategy and it is a recurring theme throughout the document.

Brierley Hill Area Action Plan

- 1.12 The Brierley Hill Area Action Plan (AAP) sets the planning framework for the new town centre and it provides the basis on which planning decisions are made within the area. A major element of the AAP is to plan for the better connection and integration of the High Street, Merry Hill and the Waterfront, which are the three main, currently disparate, components of the centre.
- 1.13 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. The ambition of the Council, through the AAP is to deliver an integrated, accessible and vibrant town centre which will be the epitome of modern 'place-shaping'.

Place-shaping

- 1.14 '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.
- 1.15 Urban design is the key to creating sustainable developments and the conditions for a flourishing economic life, for the prudent use of natural resources and for social progress. Quality of urban design will be critical to transforming the quality of life and to bringing new prosperity to Brierley Hill town centre.
- 1.16 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).
- 1.17 The need for an urban design approach for place-making is set out in a number of design policies within the AAP:

Policy 58 – Primary Public Spaces

Policy 59 – Primary Thoroughfares

Policy 60 – Secondary Thoroughfares and Secondary Public Spaces

Policy 61 – Development Blocks: Mass, Enclosure and Building Line

Policy 62 – Active Frontages

- 1.18** The aim of this SPD is therefore to supplement the existing policies on urban design within the AAP and to encourage an integral design approach incorporating nature conservation, the historic environment and transport.

Purpose of this SPD

- 1.19** 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 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 have minimal impact on natural resources thereby improving the quality of the existing built environment.
- 1.20** The document firstly considers Brierley Hill's character and local distinctiveness and the inter-relationship of the various spatial elements. This is essential in order to set out and justify a framework for effective place shaping. A consideration of the key urban design issues in the town centre then informs the formulation of the *Urban Design Principles and Framework* for guiding new development. The two subsequent sections detail the design objectives for new buildings and the new public realm.
- 1.21** It is important to understand the development blocks defined within Brierley Hill, not only by their size, shape and characteristics individually, but how they will evolve and interlink with one another. The AAP sets out the preferred use for each block and the SPD responds to this by stating broadly what we intend to achieve design-wise, with the elements in each block, i.e.: a 'performance specification'.
- 1.22** The key objectives of this SPD are to:
- achieve a fine-grained network of streets and spaces that unite the town centre and establish connections with the surrounding community;
 - develop a hierarchy of public thoroughfares within which the movement of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport is prioritised;
 - encourage perimeter block development creating and reinstating interesting and vibrant street frontages;
 - achieve an intense pattern of development making effective use of previously developed land and achieving a concentration of diverse town centre uses and new homes;

- condense car parking into multi deck forms, freeing land to restructure the urban environment
- retain the best of the past in terms of historic street patterns, buildings and other features of the area's rich history
- create a network of attractive, functional and purposefully designed green infrastructure, with wildlife and recreation in mind;
- integrate and celebrate the canal as a multi-functional space.

2 Urban Design Issues in the Town Centre

Brierley Hill and its Context

- 2.1** The town of Brierley Hill as it stands today 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** A set of Urban Design Principles and the accompanying Framework in Chapter 3 emerged from the analysis of the existing issues that would enable new developments to reunite historical elements and address the urban design issues.

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 with strong links to its industrial and social history.
- Most of the High Street is designated as a Conservation Area (designated in 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 WaterfrontBusinessPark.
- The two canals are major assets with Dudleyno.1 Canal 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 including the canal.
- There is a limited amount of residential development within the town centre to support the vitality and the evening economy.
- The visual and functional quality of the public realm in many locations is very poor and accessible, usable public space is limited.
- 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.

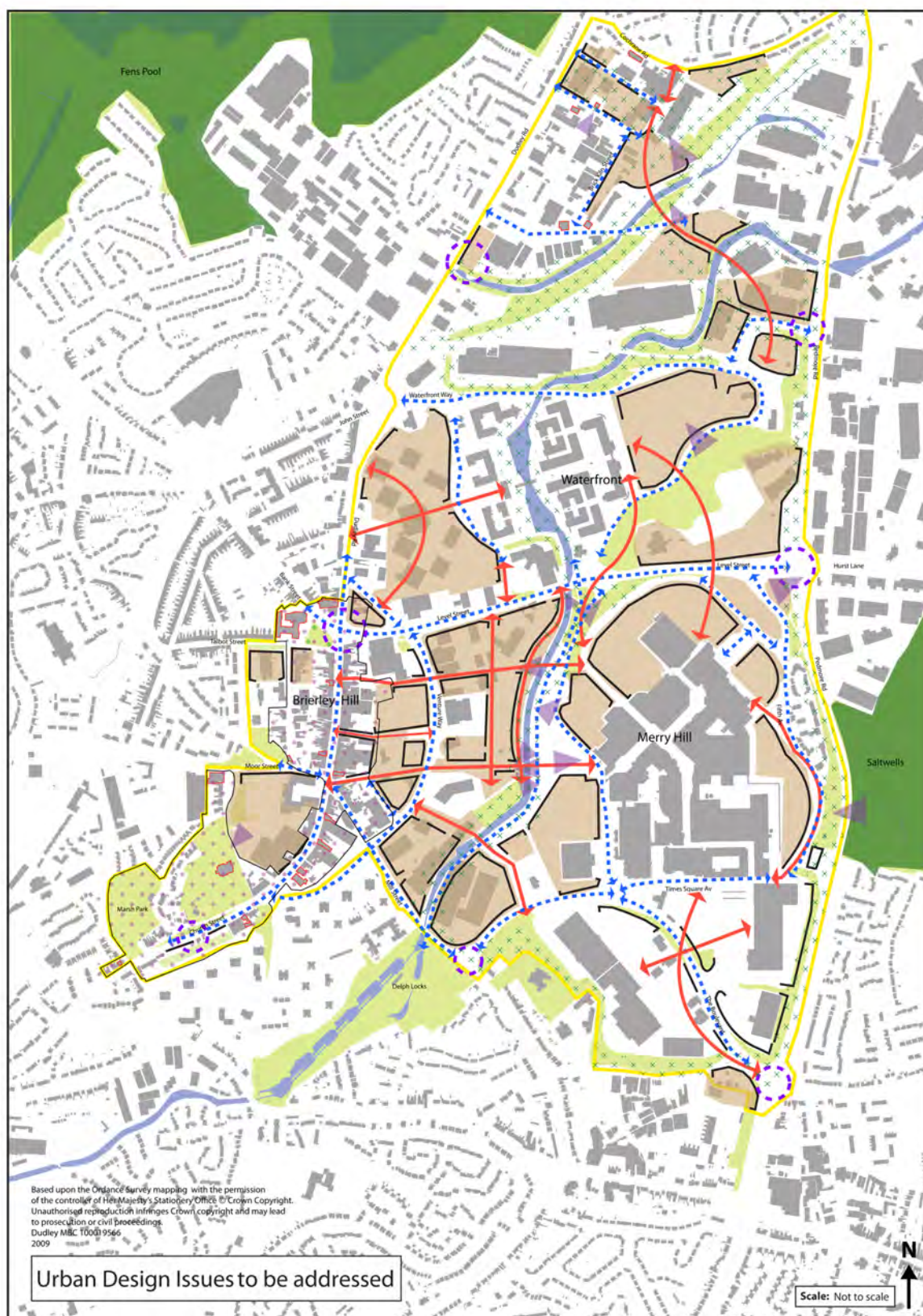


Figure 2.1 Plan showing the Urban Design Issues to be addressed in Brierley Hill

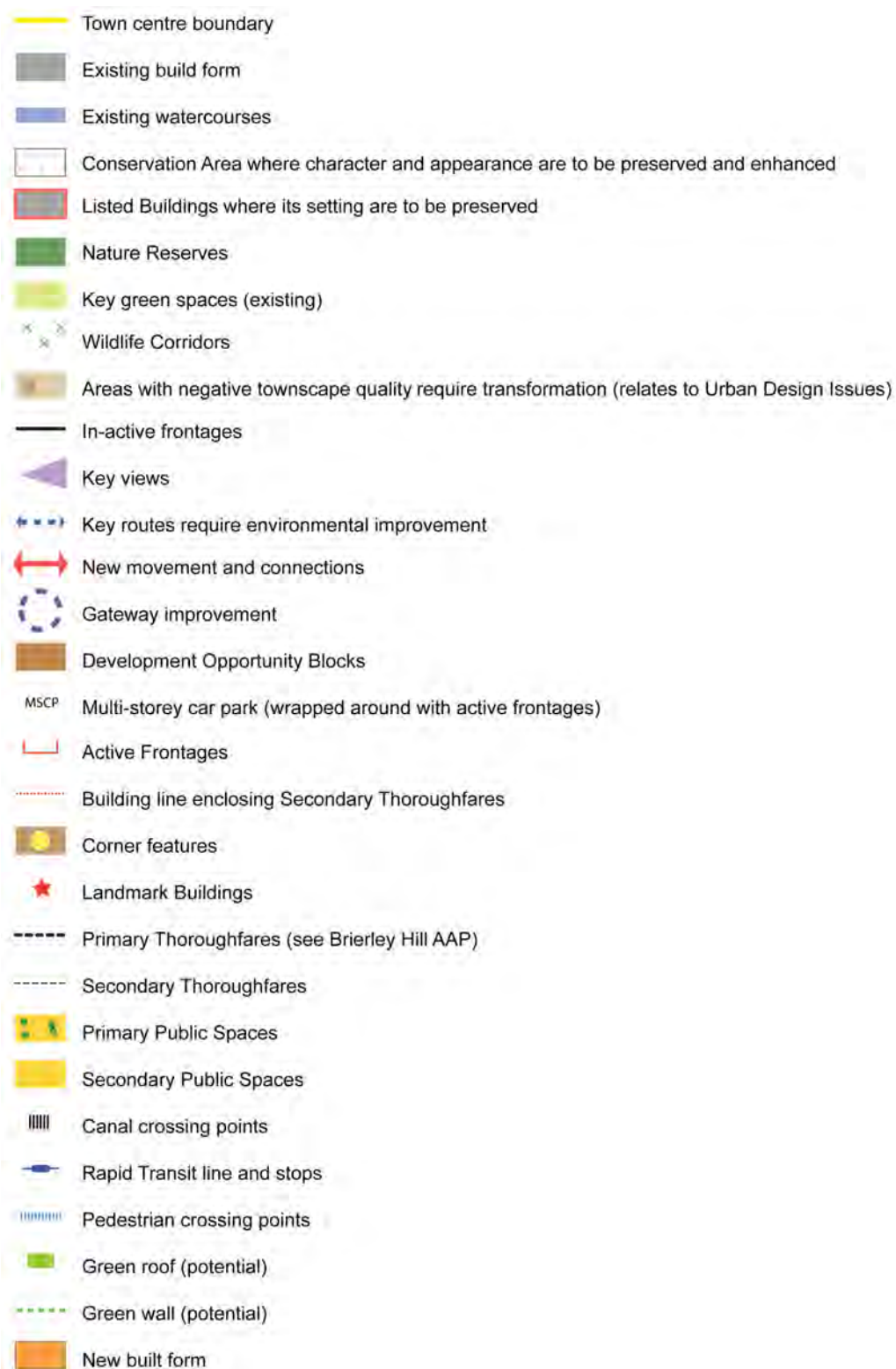


Figure 2.2 Key for all plans

3 The Urban Design Principles and Framework

The Urban Design Principles

3.1 The following Urban Design Principles are designed to deal with the challenges identified in the previous section. Urban design is an objective process dependant on the location and what is trying to be achieved, however there are a set of generally agreed principles amongst designers which set the basis for the following discussion.

- **Greater connection between places**

3.2 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 the Quarters. Where there is a change in level, an opportunity exists for positively designed and integrated landscape elements such as ramps, steps and bridges that will add distinctive character and quality whilst providing for functional need. In such cases they should be accessible, well designed and well-overlooked by the new development.

3.3 New development should be connected into the existing fabric of the town centre and other attractions on the periphery (including the Dudley Canal, the Brierley Hill High Street, the Waterfront Business Park, Merry Hill Shopping Centre and the peripheral residential areas). This should be achieved by connecting public thoroughfares and spaces to ensure continuity of built frontage so people can walk and cycle directly without obstacle, through and beyond the Quarters; and are encouraged to do so by the quality of the surrounding environment and active uses along the way.

- **A high quality public realm network (public thoroughfares and spaces)**

3.4 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 environment and enable the creation of a meaningful landscape settings which provide and support a high quality environment. Footway widths, carriageway widths and junction arrangements should be designed for both pedestrian and vehicular movement (including cyclists, buses and Rapid Transit).

3.5 Where vehicular routes present a potential obstacle to pedestrian movement, well-designed and uncluttered pedestrian crossing facilities should be incorporated into the street design. Access to the town centre by car is

welcomed but within the heart of the town centre and along public thoroughfares, vehicle speeds should be kept slow 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. The public realm should be well-designed to ensure that people enjoy using it and can walk conveniently, safely and directly to where they need to go without being diverted from natural pedestrian desire lines. The street width should be wide enough to accommodate the predicated pedestrian footfall and provide space for street furniture and trees. 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.

3.7 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, not create unnecessary clutter and be carefully positioned so as not to obstruct the movement of pedestrians (particularly people with disabilities). Achievement of balanced hard and soft landscape treatments across the public realm through landscape design is also essential. A detailed design specification should take account of the advice contained within the Council's Access for All SPD.

3.8 It is also important to recognise the richness which can exist at the private and public realm interface. Private development grows around the public realm, helping to enliven the sequence of spaces and places and a well designed public realm will ensure that legibility exists between the private and public spaces. In order to avoid a piece-meal and potentially fragmented approach to the creation of the new landscape setting and context of the evolving town centre and its new public realm, the landscape design intentions for the characteristics, mood and visual expression within the hard and soft aspects of public realm and infrastructure design need to be well thought out and demonstrated by the developers of each compartment/sub-compartment within the new urban quarters.

- **Integrated public transport**

3.9 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 it is located.

- **Perimeter blocks and active frontages**

- 3.10** The establishment of perimeter block development clearly defining the public realm and private space (rear gardens, car parking and service yards) is essential to ensure continuity of building line and enclosure of space. Blank frontages create monotonous and hostile environments, as do large, featureless surface car parks which should be avoided.

- **Mixed use**

- 3.11** Maximisation of mixed uses within individual buildings, blocks and streets to add vitality to the town centre is encouraged. New development must comply with the principal land uses and ancillary uses allocated in the Brierley Hill AAP. Ancillary uses such as cafés, restaurants, financial and professional services, and small retail units should be located on the ground floor of the building and fronting onto the public realm.

- 3.12** 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.

- **Flexibility**

- 3.13** 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 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.

- **Balanced car parking and servicing solutions**

- 3.14** Surface car parking represents an inefficient use of valuable land within the town centre and does not offer 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.

- 3.15** The provision of perimeter block development offers the opportunity to accommodate car parking and servicing in the courtyard. In the case of high density development, and where viable, underground parking and servicing

should be considered. Wherever possible, the fine-grained grid and network of public realm should offer scope to accommodate some on-street parking for short stay and blue badge parking.

- **Memorable places**

3.16 The inherent choice and variety that a connected network of public realm provides is best enjoyed if it is remembered by users. People often find it easier to remember a place and sense of direction when there is a series of visual references. This includes gateway structures into the town centre, distinctively designed street furniture, landmark features on corners and junctions, focal points in public spaces, intersection of routes, views to key buildings and public spaces.

3.17 A co-ordinated design of signage and lighting along public thoroughfares and within public spaces would greatly enhance the navigation in the town centre.

- **Visual Delight**

3.18 There are many historic buildings which are important to the character of the town centre. The Brierley Hill High Street Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Proposals provide design guidelines for new development within the Conservation Area.

3.19 There is scope for modern buildings to complement this historic character by providing high quality, contemporary additions to the existing built form. The aim is to promote a high quality design philosophy ensuring that new development enriches the architectural stock.

3.20 Ground level changes are a significant feature in the town centre. Particular attention should be paid to creating an articulated roofscape within Development Opportunity Blocks (BR14, BR15D, BR15G, BR16D, C2 – C5, R6, R10, W1, W4 and P4). The design of new buildings and roofscape should add visual interest and should not detract from existing views. Servicing structures such as lift shafts, telecommunications equipment, air conditioning units and ventilation grills should be hidden from public view and carefully integrated into the design of the building.

3.21 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.

- **The benefits of good lighting design**

- 3.22** 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 is promoted to improve the overall experience of the town centre during the hours of darkness.
- 3.23** 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.
- 3.24** 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 specification of the appropriate equipment.

The Urban Design Framework

- 3.25** Urban Design Frameworks set out how planning and design policies and principles should be implemented in an area. The plan on the following page sets out diagrammatically how each of the key principles discussed previously should be applied in Brierley Hill in order to co-ordinate development and ensure that it is deliverable.
- 3.26** The Urban Design Framework for Brierley Hill is intended to be a flexible guideline which sets out the public realm network, urban form and the design parameters in relation to each of the Development Opportunity Blocks. The aim is to create the basis for a dialogue with developers and interested parties, not to set out a rigid structure for what must happen.

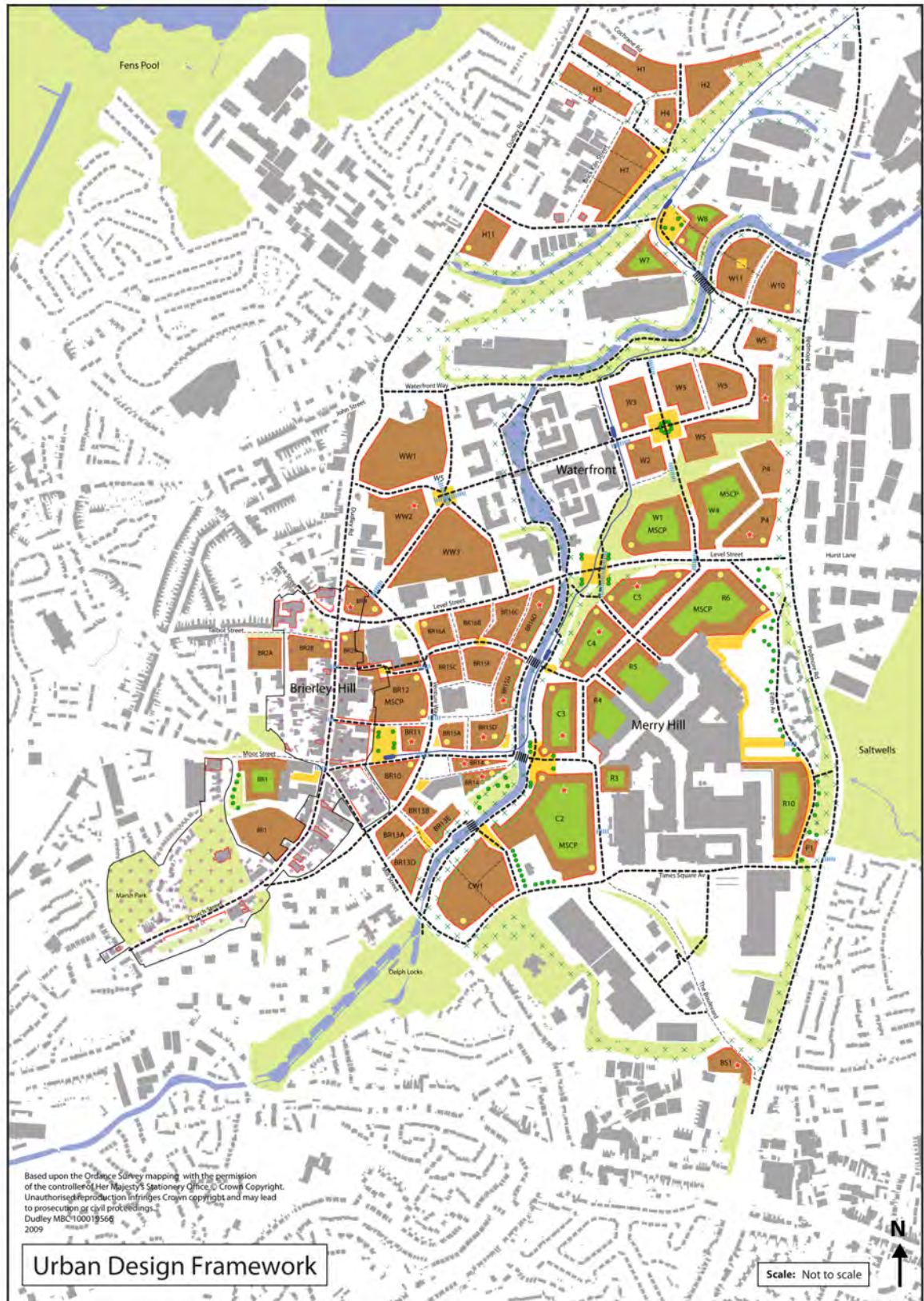


Figure 3.1 Urban Design Framework

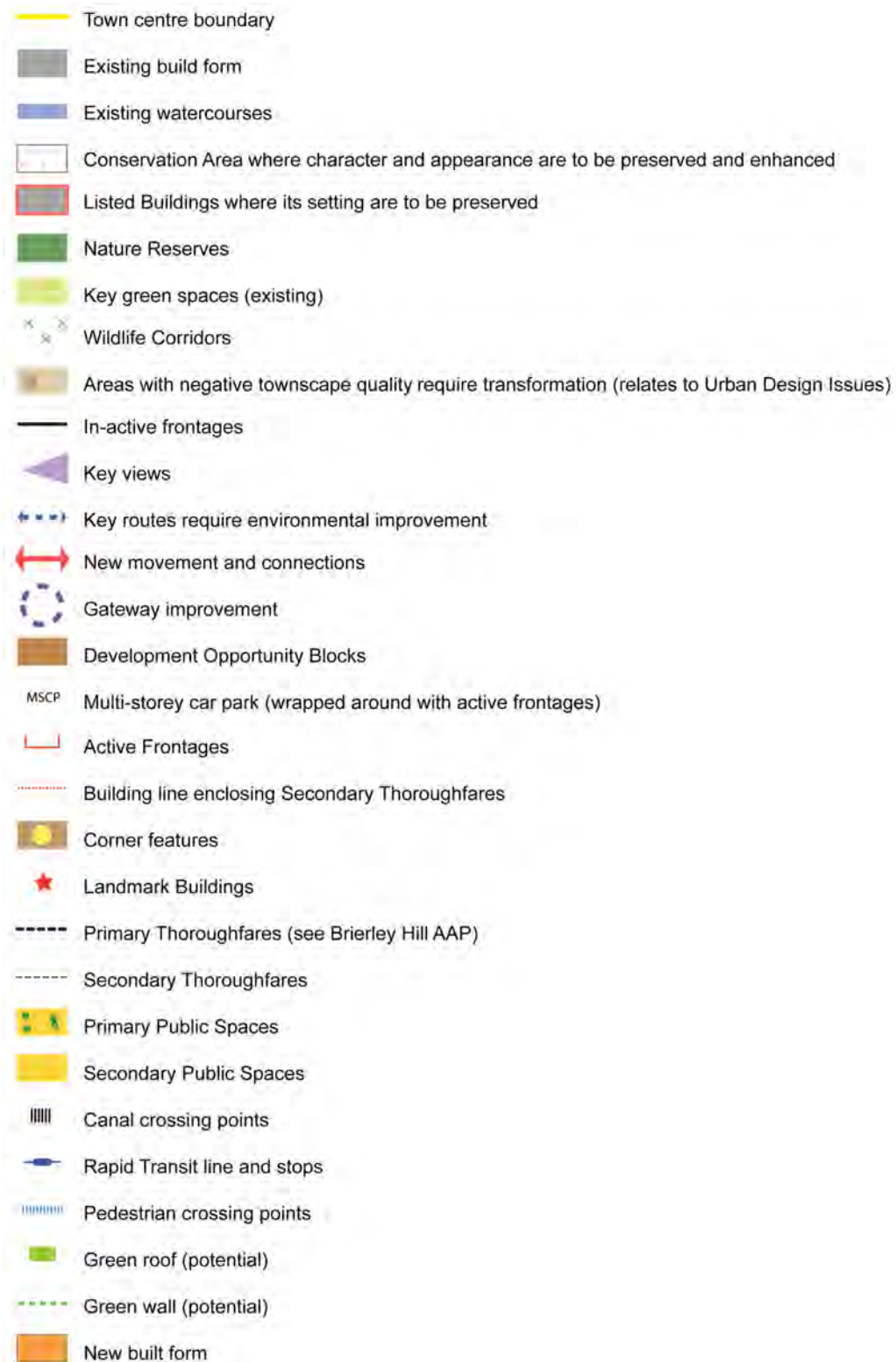


Figure 3.2 Key for all plans

4 Design Objectives for New Buildings

- 4.1** The Urban Design Framework indicates a set of design parameters for each of the Development Opportunity Blocks. This section intends to provide guidance to assist with the early stages of building design by focusing on the design parameters.

Perimeter Blocks and Building Height

- **Perimeter Blocks**

- 4.2** The quality of the streetscape and the sense of security for those who use and move through it can be enhanced by positioning buildings close to the back edge of the pavement to form perimeter block development. The core 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).
- 4.3** In order to establish an urban character, it is not appropriate to set the building line and frontage far back from the streets. Where the whole building is in residential use, a potential conflict arises between the desire to increase surveillance of public space from buildings close to or abutting the public realm and the need to preserve the privacy of the residents. This can be resolved by a small 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. Access to buildings will be resolved in detail as part of the normal planning application process.
- 4.4** 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. Boundary treatments such as walls, railings, gates and landscaping should be used to close the small gaps in the frontage to maintain continuity.
- 4.5** In a location accommodating a diverse mix of uses, determining the optimum size of development blocks requires a balance to be struck between:
- Maintaining a fine-grained network in order to maximise the choice of public thoroughfares through the town centre.
 - Accommodating different building types, ranging from residential units to large retail and leisure outlets.
- 4.6** 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 the pedestrian, even if they cannot be open to the public for 24 hours a day.
- Regard should be given to the potential for future sub-division of the block if the large footprint buildings were ever to be reduced in size or demolished.

4.7 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. Small plots may be joined to create a larger block but the building elevation must be articulated to express the plot width (see Façade and Building Elevations for further guidance).

- **Building Height**

4.8 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.

4.9 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.



Figure 4.1 Perimeter Block with private and communal space in the courtyard (Stourbridge Town Centre)



Figure 4.2 Small space created for landscaping between building and pavement (Birmingham Park Central)

Facade and Building Elevations

- 4.10** 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 should normally comprise of three distinct elements, adding visual interest and creating a strong and legible built form:
- 4.11** **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.
- 4.12** **The middle section of the building** is the mass of the façade in buildings of more than two storeys in height. 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.
- 4.13** **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.
- 4.14** 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. By breaking this rhythm at corners or at points where it is desirable to mark a change in character, the built environment will be clearly punctuated in locations which are important in an individual's memory of the place. This adds distinction to the street-scene at the junction of routes and helps people to find their way around a place (see Junctions and Corners for further guidance).
- 4.15** 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.

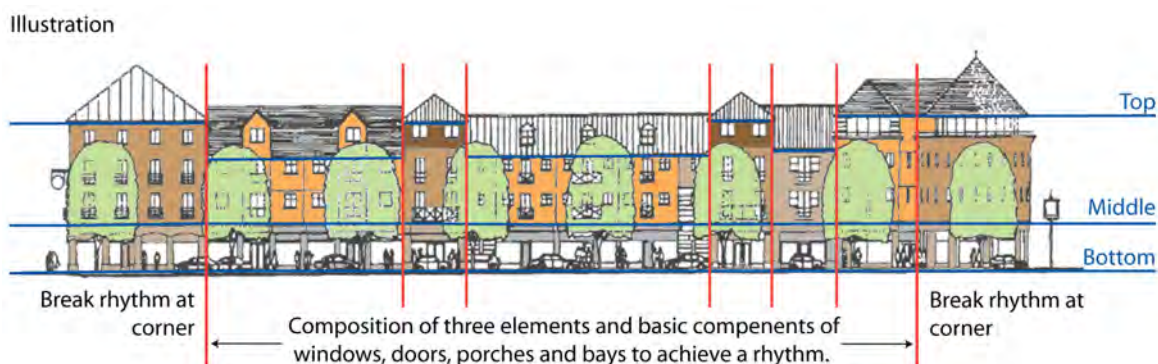


Figure 4.3 Illustration showing ideal building composition to achieve a rhythm



Figure 4.4 Example of a frontage which is made active at ground floor level by its use as a coffee shop. The middle section of the façade is an inactive green wall with the top of the façade recessed above (Bristol City Centre)

Active Frontages

- 4.16** The way a building relates to the public realm makes a strong contribution to people's impression, understanding and enjoyment of a place. A positive impression is established where buildings which front the public realm are well designed.

- 4.17** Making frontages 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. It is therefore critical for new buildings to establish a well defined pattern of frontage development.
- 4.18** In designing active frontages;
- The number of doors and windows should be maximised at street level. The ground floor façade can be enlivened by 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 lit well from inside.
- 4.19** Along Primary Thoroughfares, residential use should be located above the ground floor where appropriate. Ground floor uses should accommodate active uses fronting onto the public realm. However, there may be locations where the predominant land use is likely to involve relatively little interaction across the public/private threshold (such as residential accommodation that may be largely vacated during the day time). In order to maximise visual interest along the public realm, new residential development should provide small front garden between the building line and the street. Alternatively, raise the ground floor level by maximum 0.5m above the pavement level.
- 4.20** 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.

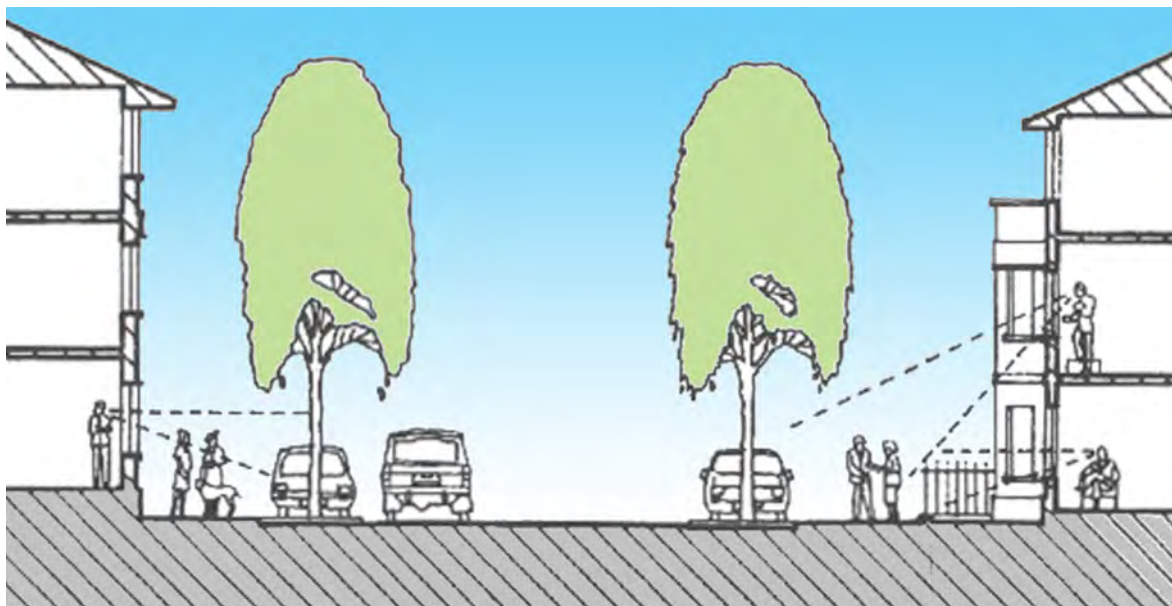


Figure 4.5 New Development should provide natural surveillance to the street



Figure 4.6 Doors and windows fronting the street (Stourbridge Town Centre)



Figure 4.7 Uses and activities that 'spill out' onto the public space (Sheffield City Centre)

Junctions and Corners

4.21 Junctions should punctuate the public realm adding interest and giving visual clues as to the importance of 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 most important intersections. In Brierley Hill these are;

- 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 Primary Thoroughfares intersect.

4.22 The position and design of the corner buildings is an important consideration in reinforcing the prominence of the junction. This can be best achieved 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 but the building must present an active frontage to that space. If the space created is large enough, a central feature can be introduced such as a small public space or a pocket park.

- 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 from one of the converging public thoroughfares.
- Providing high quality and environmentally friendly lighting to highlight the corner of the building.

4.23 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.

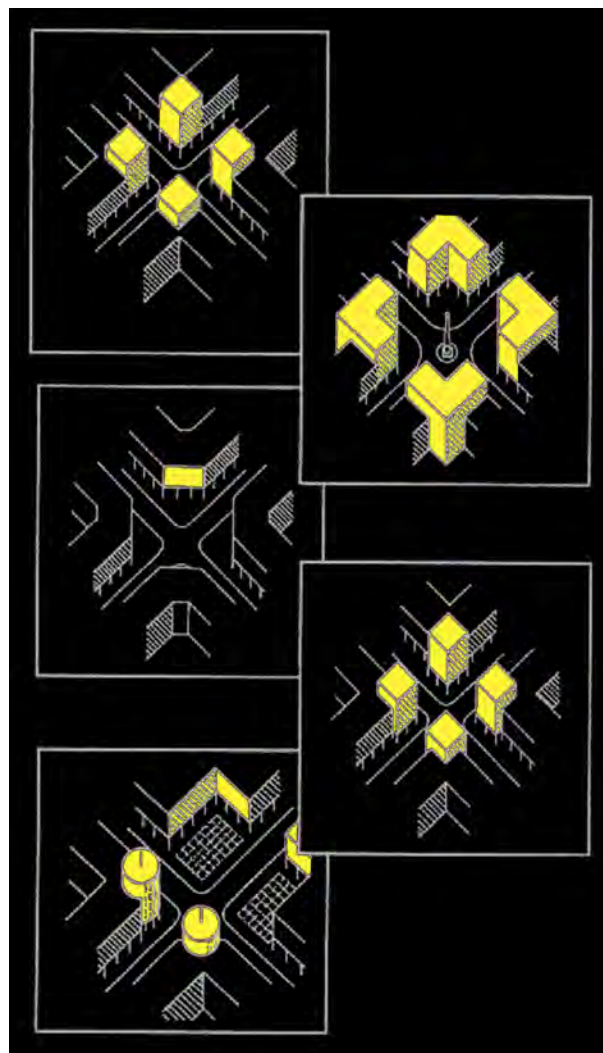


Figure 4.8 Illustration showing corner treatments



Figures 4.9 & 4.10 Taller corner building emphasises the choice of routes and acts as a distinctive visual navigation marker in the streetscene (Birmingham City Centre and Birmingham Park Central respectively)



Topography and Roofscape

- 4.24** The western part of the town lies on an elevated ridge with falling levels to the east towards Merry Hill. This topography presents a special opportunity to create a 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).
- 4.25** The topography also presents a design opportunity in terms of roofscape on the lower lying land, because of the dramatic change in levels where closer range views are afforded from areas of higher elevation (notably from Archill and Lower Brierley Hill) onto the roofscape of buildings located on lower lying land (principally the Merry Hill area). 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) may offer the opportunity to add public art and environmental features such as green roofs⁰ to promote sustainability and support the Wildlife Corridor.
- 4.26** New buildings should respond positively to the existing topography by ensuring direct building frontage onto the slope, ramps and steps.



Figure 4.11 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)

The Black Country Environment Infrastructure Design Guidance sets out detailed guidelines for designing green roofs.



Figure 4.12 Illustration of green roofs used in new housing development (Middlepark Road, Dudley)

Landmark Buildings

- 4.27** 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 material¹.
- 4.28** The careful position of landmark buildings helps to reinforce the importance of a junction, corner, gateway or public space which 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 the 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.

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)



Figure 4.13 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)

Car Parking and Service Areas

4.29 Car Parking

4.30 Accommodating necessary parking and servicing requirements in a functionally and visually acceptable way will be important to the quality of Brierley Hill town centre. 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.
- 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 should allow for a variety of functions such as a communal garden and amenity space. Good quality hard and soft landscape should be used to avoid a wall-to-wall tarmac surface. Detailed parking design should comply with the Council's Parking Standards and Travel Plans SPD.

- 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 4.15 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 4.16 Merry Hill Centre, Brierley Hill

- Underground and under-croft parking should be accommodated wherever viable and appropriate to the existing topography. Where ground floor, under-croft or sub-basement parking is specified it will be critical to retain active frontages to make sure that opportunities for overlooking the street are retained.
- On plot parking and integral garages may be appropriate to some urban housing forms, but only if the visual impact can be minimised and successfully contribute to the quality of public realm.
- 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. Landscape design should form part of all on-street parking from the outset and should use planting, street furniture, changes of surface material and other elements to ensure that the on-street parking does not dominate.



Figure 4.17 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 4.18 Park Central, Birmingham

Service Areas

- 4.31** Servicing yards and access points must be unobtrusively accommodated. This can be achieved through carefully designing servicing yards 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. 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 shield the yard from public view.
- 4.32** Where appropriate, part of the footway can be laid on strengthened base to allow occasional lay-by servicing.

5 Design Objectives for the New Public Realm

An Overview of the Public Realm Network

- 5.1** Having established the way in which buildings relate to the public realm in the previous chapter, this chapter now considers the design objectives for the public realm – the public streets and spaces within Brierley Hill town centre. 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. The Brierley Hill AAP and Planning Obligations SPD provide more detail for the implementation of the public realm. The Planning Obligations SPD will be superseded by the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in the near future and any development and implementation of the public realm must give regard to the CIL when adopted.
- 5.2** 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 is the framework within which development is accommodated and it caters for the ease of movement for all modes of transport. The public realm network in Brierley Hill includes the following:
- Primary Thoroughfares
 - Secondary Thoroughfares
 - Primary Public Spaces
 - Secondary Public Spaces

Primary Thoroughfares

- 5.3** The principal function of a Primary Thoroughfare is to make connection with peripheral residential areas outside the town centre and make connections between the Quarters within the town centre. The Primary Thoroughfares provide space for all modes of movement including pedestrians, cyclists, public transport and private vehicles, and it is also 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 along the canal side. They will also require surface materials with 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 and with 24 hour public access.



Figures 5.1 & 5.2 Primary Thoroughfares should use high quality materials and design treatment to emphasize their importance in the connected network of routes through places (Both images Sheffield City Centre)



Secondary Thoroughfares

- 5.4** The Brierley Hill AAP promotes the connection of the Development Opportunity Blocks through a finer grain of Secondary Thoroughfares. These thoroughfares provide a greater choice of routes to connect through the town and help to deliver optimal development block sizes, local access, a broad choice of routes and a spread of people and vehicles through the area. As

with Primary Thoroughfares, these routes need to be 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)

Primary Public Spaces

- 5.5** 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 3.1). 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.



Figure 5.5 Primary Public spaces offer an 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

- 5.6** The Brierley Hill AAP also supports public thoroughfares to be connected with Secondary Public Spaces. 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)

Brierley Hill's Primary and Secondary Thoroughfares

- 5.7** The public thoroughfares are categorised into six thoroughfare types as a basis for detailed design. As shown in the Urban Design Framework (fig 3.1), all thoroughfares and spaces are interconnected to form a network where existing thoroughfares will be improved and new thoroughfares will be created along with relevant Development Opportunity Blocks.
- 5.8** 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 and the guidance therefore shows how to achieve this without undermining the quality of the pedestrian experience.
- 5.9** 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.
- 5.10** 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.
- 5.11** Historic streets within or adjacent to Development Opportunity Blocks include PT4 - High Street and Church Street, PT7 – Cotton 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 Heritage⁰.

5.12 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.

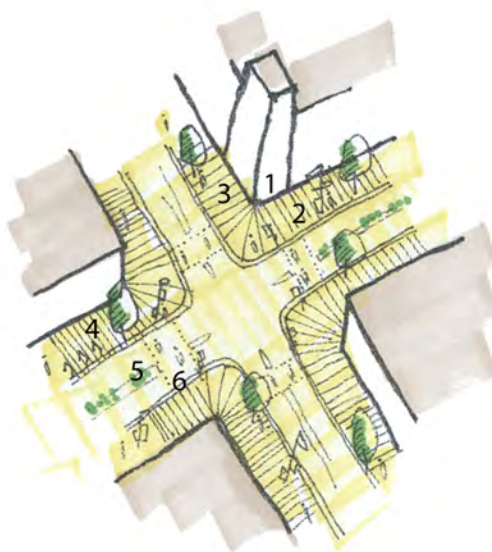
5.13 The Wildlife Corridor incorporates sections of PT1, PT5, PT8, PT9, PT9b, PT16, PT21, PT23, PT28, PT29, PT30 and PT32. These public thoroughfares have dual functions including providing public access and creation / enhancement of the Wildlife Corridor. Ecologically functional habitat space can be 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 swale can maximise habitat creation as well as providing a drainage function).

5.14 Types of Thoroughfares

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:

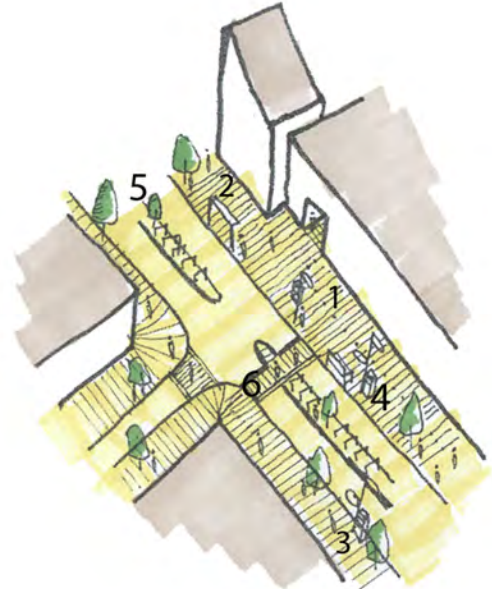
1. New buildings on frontages
2. Street furniture should not block footways
3. Footways should be wide and planted with trees where appropriate
4. Street furniture provided where possible
5. Central reserves used for hard and soft landscaping
6. Provide direct pedestrian crossings



Pedestrian/Vehicle

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

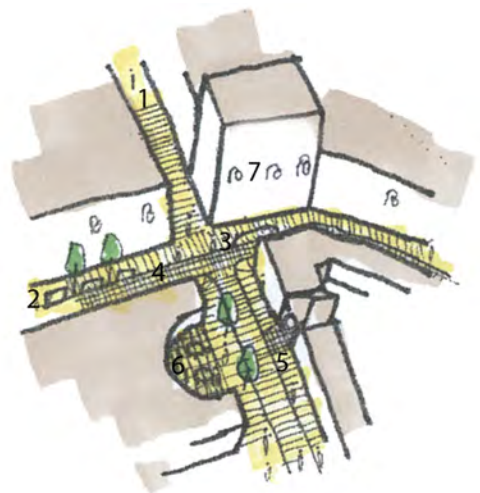
1. New buildings on frontages
2. Street furniture should not block footways
3. Footways should be wide and planted with trees where appropriate
4. Co-ordinate and integrate street furniture
5. Central reserves to be used for cycle parking and tree planting
6. Improved pedestrian access and safety across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



Pedestrian 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:

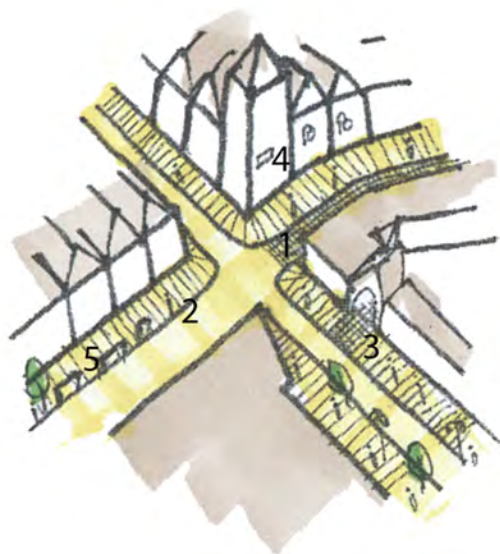
1. Streets paved edge to edge in co-ordinated uniform material
2. Street furniture co-ordinated into groups
3. Footway paving laid on strengthened base to allow vehicle over run
4. Kerbs with carriageway surface in rusticated setts
5. Footway paving to cross minor vehicle crossovers
6. Outdoor cafés not to obstruct pedestrian movement
7. Street lights on buildings to reduce clutter



Historic Streets

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

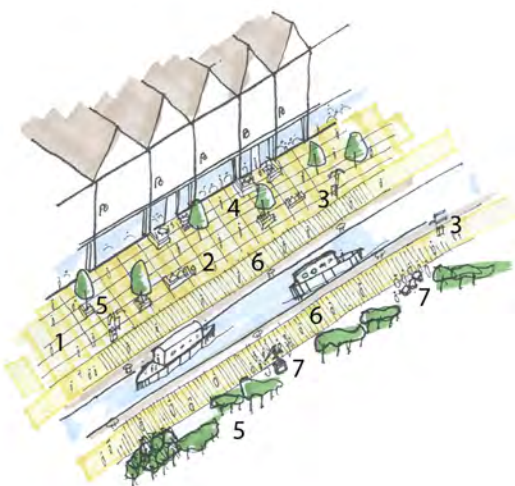
- d. Paved with natural stone and setts
- e. Use of granite kerbs
- f. Historic crossovers to be respected whilst ensuring a smooth level surface for pedestrians
- g. Street lights should be wall mounted especially on narrow streets
- h. Street furniture should not block footways



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.



Wildlife Corridor Types

- 5.14** The Wildlife Corridor, through 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.
- 5.15** 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.
- 5.16** The Wildlife Corridor Network can be split into three broad Character Types:
- Woodland to Grassland
 - Canal and Bankside
 - Pondscape
- 5.17** The locations of these can be seen in Figure 5.4. 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

- 5.18** 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.
- 5.19** Target species⁽¹⁾:
- Badger
 - Bats
 - Black Redstart (will mainly use the railway line)
 - Woodland birds
 - Dingy skipper butterfly
 - Green hairstreak butterfly

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

(Figure 5.4 shows the basic habitat components).

- 5.20** 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.
- 5.21** 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.
- 5.22** 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.
- 5.23** 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.
- 5.24** 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 5.8 Woodland to grassland

Canal and Bankside

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

Target species:

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

Layout and composition

(Figure 5.5 shows the basic habitat components).

5.25 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.

- 5.26** 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.
- 5.27** 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.
- 5.28** 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.

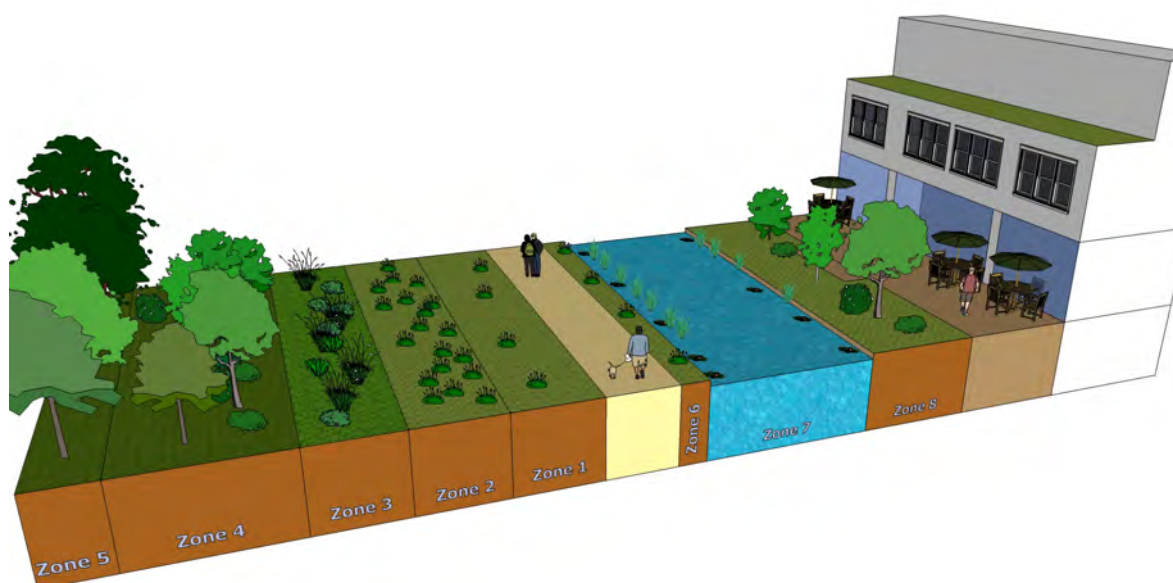


Figure 5.9 Canal and Bankside

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

Figure 5.6 shows the basic habitat components.

5.29 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.

5.30 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

5.31 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)
- 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
- Not flood

5.32 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.

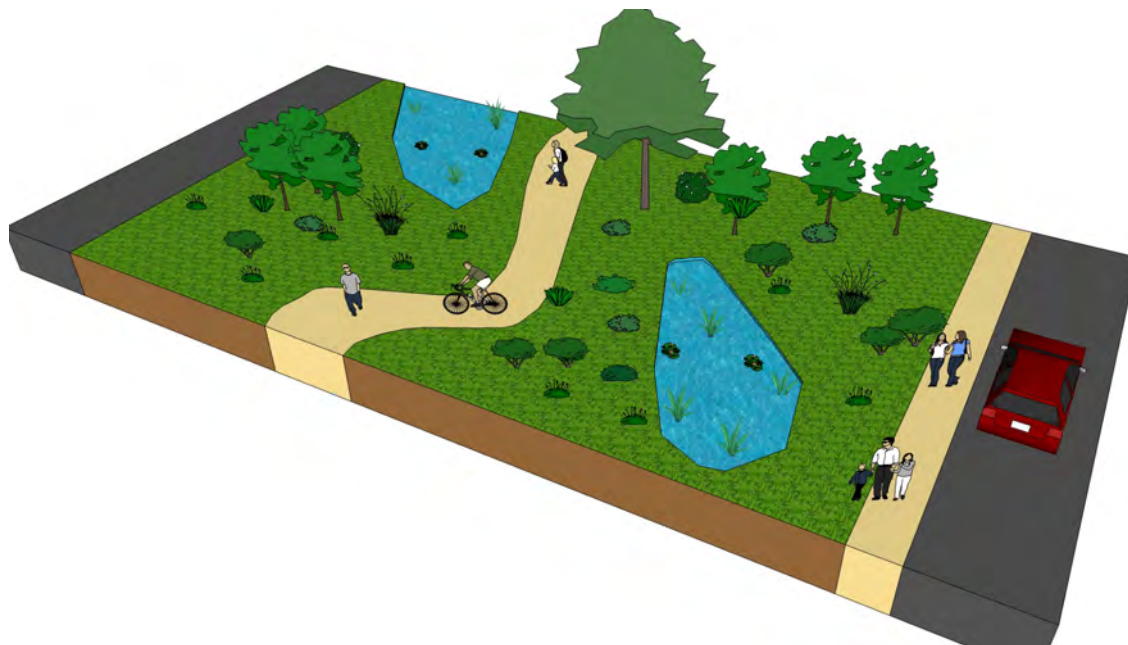


Figure 5.10 Pondscape

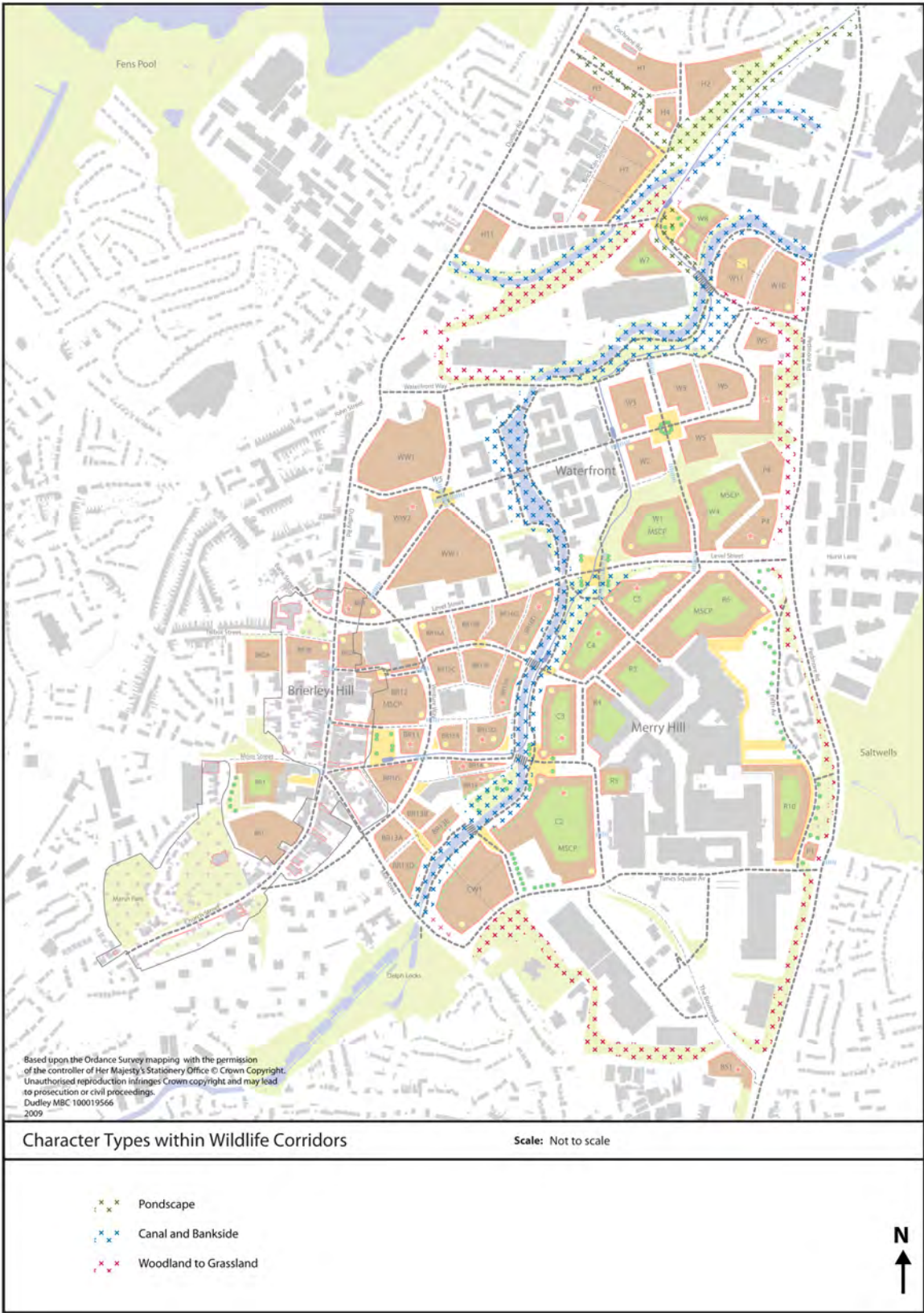


Figure 5.11 Character Types within Wildlife Corridors

Brierley Hill's Primary and Secondary Public Spaces

- 5.33** These are spaces which occur at the intersections of thoroughfares and offer a unique opportunity to create high quality areas for public enjoyment. The Brierley Hill AAP sets out the basic design requirements for the Primary Public Spaces. This guidance is intended to provide a next level of detail for each Primary and Secondary Public Space and will help to inform the preparation of detailed designs for these spaces.
- 5.34** The Brierley Hill AAP requires that in the five Primary Public Spaces (refer to fig 3.1) priority will be given to the convenience, enjoyment and safety of pedestrians and public transport access. The public spaces should be designed to:
- Display a strong degree of containment with building elevations appropriately scaled to the width of the space they seek to enclose;
 - Be fronted by active ground floor uses with direct entrances to the building from the public space;
 - Display co-ordinated and high quality elements which may include paving, street furniture, lighting, signs, cycle racks and street trees;
 - Consider the need for appropriate distributions of soft and hard landscape that reflects the functions of the space;
 - Ensure accessibility for all; and
 - Include the opportunity for public art within the space – particularly where it can perform a functional purpose in the form of seating, bollards, paving and lighting across the space.
- 5.35** The character and detailed design of each of the Primary Public Spaces will be determined by their functions, neighbouring uses, site constraints and how they will accommodate pedestrian, public transport or private vehicular movement. The first step of design of each Primary Public Space is described below and followed by illustrative drawings to show how the guidance may be applied.

Brierley Place

- 5.36** This new public space is to be located to the east of Brierley Hill High Street at the intersection between PT7 and the existing PT11 Venture Way, incorporating the proposed terminus for a Rapid Transit route. Brierley Place is intended as a key component and symbol of the integration of Merry Hill and Brierley Hill associated with PT7 and it should comply with the following guidelines:

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

- The space should be defined by adjacent Development Opportunity Blocks and the improved rear side of the High Street, connected by PT7, PT11 and PT33.

- The Rapid Transit should be a free-standing structure adjoining the space, its architecture should be light and transparent. The tramway design must minimise its impact on the character of the space and the continuity of all public thoroughfares.

- The layout of the space should facilitate the free movement of pedestrians through the space and incorporate clear directional signage, with emphasis facilitating pedestrian movement between the High Street and Merry Hill.

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

- The space should incorporate high quality paving, street furniture and hard and soft landscape. It also has the potential for the integration of water as a feature in the street design.

- Provide a setting for entrances to adjacent Development Opportunity Blocks.

- The central space should be designed so that it could accommodate seasonal events.

- **New linkage to High Street and ensure active outdoor environment.**

- Provide a well-designed and safe pedestrian connection to the High Street via PT7 and PT33.

- Provide a setting for a new rear entrance to the potential Market Hall extension. The owners of the Market Hall are encouraged to extend the building so that in addition to its front entrance onto the High Street, it has a prominent rear entrance overlooking Brierley Place. Thus the Market Hall will provide a covered link to the High Street and market traders will benefit from increased footfall. There is also opportunity to have occasional outdoor market stalls within Brierley Place subject to licensing approval.

- The adjacent new buildings are encouraged to have cafés and restaurants on the ground floor and there is opportunity to have sit-out areas subject to license approval from the Council.



Figure 5.12 Edges and Uses

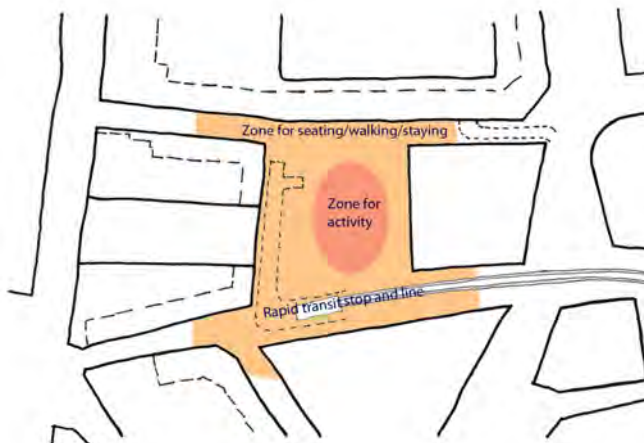
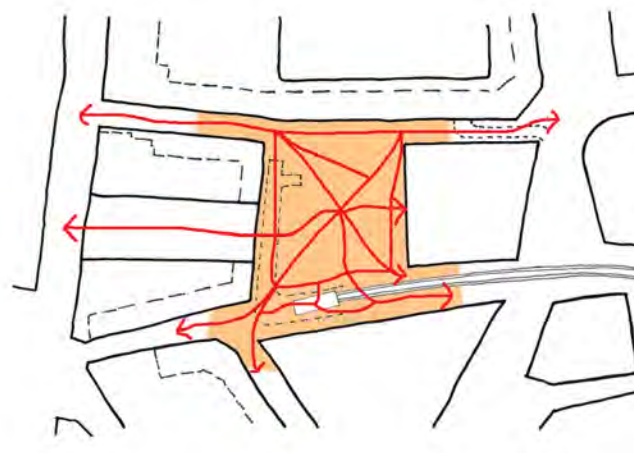


Figure 5.13 Activity and functions



Picture 5.14 Movement and Links

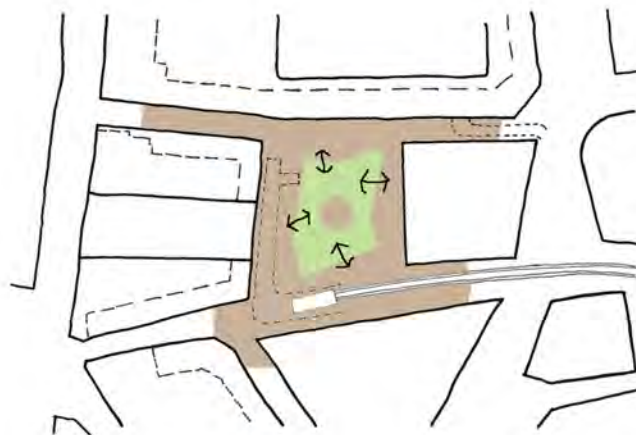


Figure 5.15 Hard and Soft Landscaping



Figure 5.16 Urban Design Concept Sketch for Brierley Place



Figure 5.17 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)

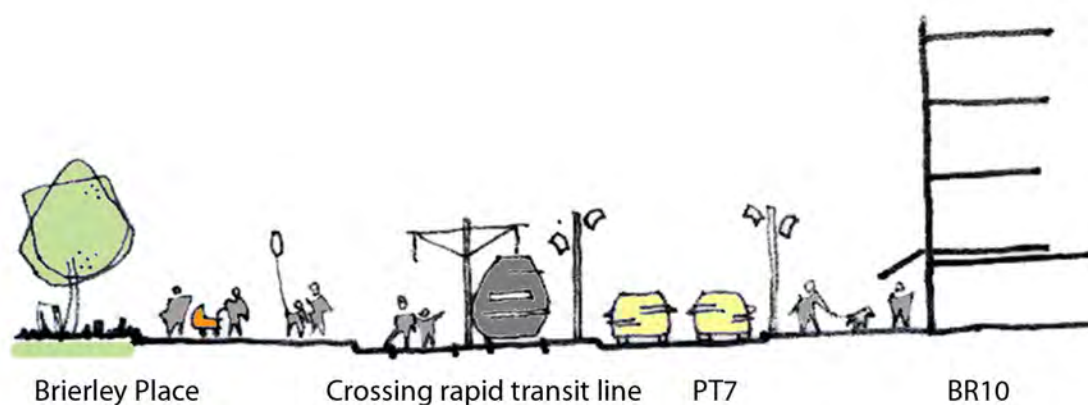


Figure 5.18 Cross Section Brierley Place (PT7 - BR10)



Figure 5.19 Cross Section Brierley Place, Indoor and Outdoor Market (BR11)

Merry Hill Place

5.37 This new public space is to be located to the eastern end of PT7 at the intersection between PT8 and PT9 and the proposed new bridge across the Canal. Merry Hill Place is intended as a major urban space with a canal-side setting and the design of the space should complement the Wildlife Corridor along the Dudley Canal.

5.38 Developers are strongly encouraged to focus more on uses that attract people throughout the day such as restaurants, cafés and leisure uses in the new buildings adjoining the space facing the east of the canal.

5.39 There is scope for the landscape to be modern in character, responding to the nearby Merry Hill extension. Although there would be a predominance of hard landscape features to the east side, there is also scope for street trees to be incorporated to give a strong visual impact and to soften this space. There is also opportunity to create an ecological landscape feature to the west of this space, to support the Wildlife Corridor along the Canal.

5.40 The design of the Merry Hill Place should comply with the following guidelines:

- **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 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 adjoining the space into the overall landscape design.

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

- Merry Hill Place should provide space to accommodate seasonal events.

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

- Support the Wildlife Corridor by introducing an ecological landscape feature which has the potential to include a Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS).

- Introduce 'wet' and soft landscaping parallel to the canal for example, marginal habitat, waterside planting or a small wetland area.

- **Accommodate a new pedestrian bridge across the canal that should be a distinctive landmark feature. There is an opportunity here to create a 'green' bridge to complement the Wildlife Corridor.**

- The structure and massing of the bridge should be light and preferably be a suspended bridge and incorporate subtle lighting that does not adversely affect the Wildlife Corridor.

- 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. A bridge that is ramped from the east to an upper platform on the west would reduce the number of steps and ramps to be negotiated between Merry Hill and Brierley Hill.

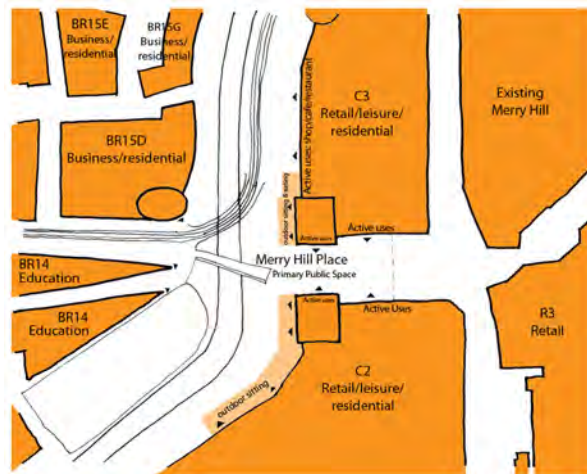


Figure 5.20 Edges and Uses

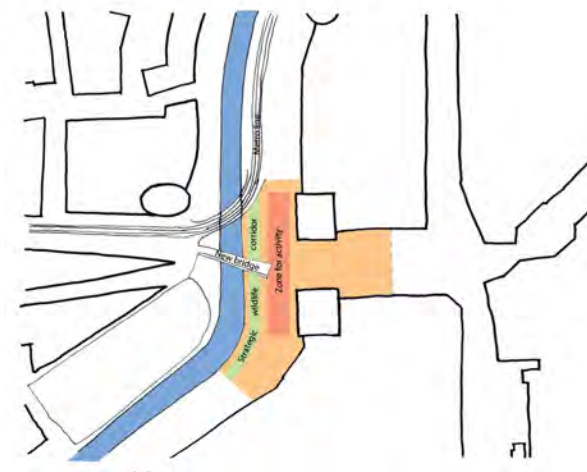


Figure 5.21 Activity and Functions



Figure 5.22 Movement and Links



Figure 5.23 Hard and Soft Landscape



Figure 5.24 Urban Design Concept Sketch for Merry Hill Place

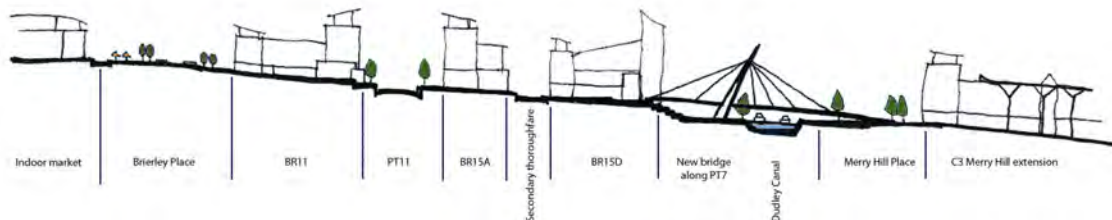


Figure 5.25 Cross Section from Indoor Market to Merry Hill Extension

Level Street Square

- 5.41** This new public space 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.
- 5.42** Commercial uses will predominate and enclose the space. As before, developers are encouraged to focus active frontages (restaurants and cafés) at the ground floor level of new development.
- 5.43** The design of the Level Street Square should comply with the following guidelines:
 - **Provide a memorable space of orientation in the centre of Brierley Hill at the interface between different quarters and the intersection between the previously identified 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 for pedestrians and public transport - particularly from PT6, PT13 and PT24.

- The tramway for the potential rapid transit should be delineated through the detailing of the surface materials and pedestrians should be permitted to move freely across the space.

- **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 fronting the space and along the thoroughfares, with minimal need to negotiate steps and inclines.

- The space should provide a setting for a major entrance to the proposed Merry Hill extension which should be a prominent corner feature adjoining the southern edge of the space.

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



Figure 5.26 Edges and Uses



Figure 5.27 Activity and Functions



Figure 5.28 Movement and Links



Figure 5.29 Hard and Soft Landscaping



Figure 5.30 Urban Design Concept Sketch of Level Street Square

Round Oak Place

- 5.44** This new public space is to be located to the east of the existing WaterfrontBusinessPark, where PT21, PT22 and PT14 from the intended Merry Hill extension converge, incorporating a proposed Rapid Transit stop to the west.
- 5.45** Office uses are likely to predominate and 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. Developers are encouraged to focus on uses that attract people throughout the day and have active frontages.
- 5.46** While the space might incorporate a square with soft landscape elements, it should be designed as an extended, elongated section of thoroughfare which connects to WaterfrontBusinessPark, Merry Hill extension and Station Square. 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 on a linear south-west/north-east alignment with nodes at either end, associated with the Rapid Transit stop and gateway to the existing Waterfront and convergence of thoroughfares.

- The Rapid Transit stop should be a free-standing structure. The architecture should be light and transparent to minimise its impact on the character of the space and adjoining buildings as it will be located off-centre to Round Oak Place. Special attention is needed to direct pedestrian movement from the Rapid Transit stop to Round Oak Place.

- The layout should incorporate clear directional signage to other Quarters, with emphasis on facilitating pedestrian movement through the central spine of the Waterfront.

- **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 and should function as an attractive area in which integrate elements of soft landscaping into the predominantly hard landscape setting. It should offer an inviting environment to sit and observe the adjoining thoroughfares and activities.

- Provide a continuous central spine of open space through the existing Waterfront framing the long view to the north-east and reinforcing the strong geometric urban form.



Figure 5.31 Edges and Uses

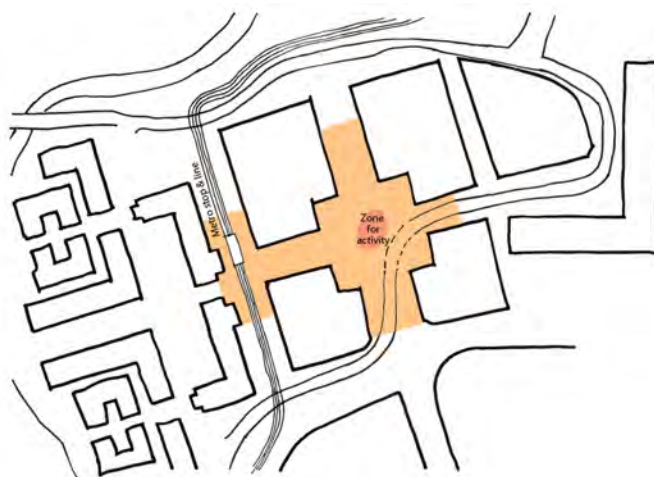


Figure 5.32 Activity and Functions

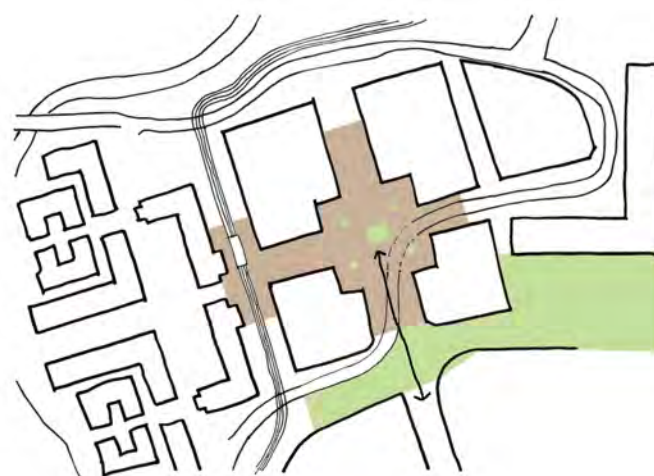


Figure 5.33 Hard and Soft Landscaping

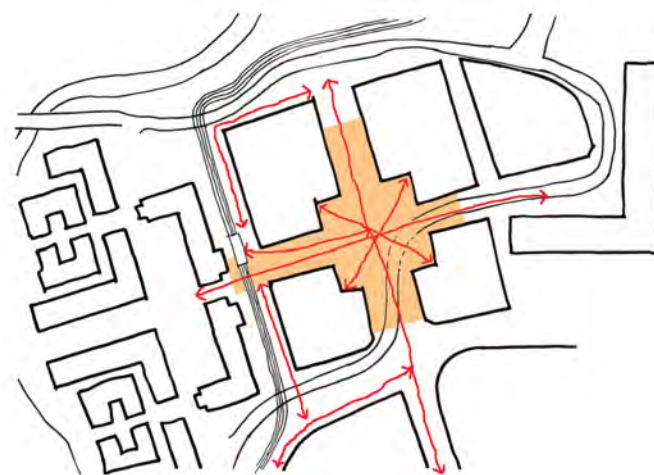


Figure 5.34 Movement and Links



Figure 5.35 Urban Design Concept for Round Oak Place



Figure 5.36 3D Model for Round Oak Place

Station Square

5.47 This new public space is to be located adjacent to the Rapid Transit stop in the Harts Hill Quarter, where PT28 and PT23 converge.

5.48 Station Square is intended to be an important arrival space for the Rapid Transit and the space will also form an important connection from Harts Hill to the Waterfront and Merry Hill. The Development Opportunity Blocks in Harts Hill will allow better integration with other Quarters via PT4 and PT23, together creating substantial green spaces to support the Wildlife Corridor.

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

- **Provide a reception and orientation space for people arriving in Harts Hill by Rapid Transit, private vehicles and by foot.**

- The space should be well-lit and offer direct connection with PT23 and PT28 (Canal Street).

- The existing pedestrian connection from the space underneath the heavy rail line and Rapid Transit line should be improved and well-lit. Development Opportunity Blocks H7 and W8 should provide adequate natural surveillance to overlook PT28. PT28 should be improved to a good public realm standard as this is the only public thoroughfare connection to the north.

- New development fronting onto the public space should have active frontages and the space should provide a setting for entrances to new development.

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



Figure 5.37 Edges and Uses



Figure 5.38 Activity and Functions



Figure 5.39 Movement and Links



Figure 5.40 Hard and Soft Landscaping



Figure 5.41 Urban Design Concept Sketch for Station Square

Secondary Public Spaces

5.50 The intersections of public thoroughfares offer opportunity for creating Secondary Public Spaces. Some of the locations which might provide an appropriate opportunity for a Secondary Public Space are highlighted in the Urban Design Framework. The list of locations is comprehensive but not exhaustive and 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.

5.51 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.

- **The function and size of Secondary Public Spaces will be smaller than those Primary Public Spaces. 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

- 5.52** 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 are installed under permitted development rights. For some elements there is a degree of choice in terms of location and design such as seats, for others such as traffic signals there are fixed location and design criteria.
- 5.53** The design guidelines for locating and designing components in the public realm are as follows:
- ***Minimum pavement width and street clutter***
- 5.54** All public thoroughfares and public spaces should incorporate appropriate and co-ordinated paving and street furniture. However, the collection of these components should avoid street clutter and provide a balanced soft and hard landscape that reflects pedestrian desire lines, footfall and vehicle movement.
- 5.55** The most successful streets and public spaces have only the essential street furniture which makes a positive contribution to the appearance, activity and function of the public realm.
- 5.56** 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 and avoiding clutter. Coordinated street furniture in terms of style and sharing structural elements is also preferable e.g. street light columns can also carry traffic signals, litter bins, direction signs and banners. In some instances elements could be fixed to new buildings fronting the public realm.



Figure 5.42 Careful choice and combination of paving materials act to provide accessible public routes which are hard wearing and attractive links through a place (Bristol City Centre)



Figure 5.43 Street furniture should provide necessary benefits to users of the space and be simple and co-ordinated (Coventry City Centre)



Figure 5.44 Street Clutter obstructs views along the street and can cause obstructions for pedestrians



Figure 5.45 Combining signs and locating street furniture in a defined zone creates a calmer, more accessible environment

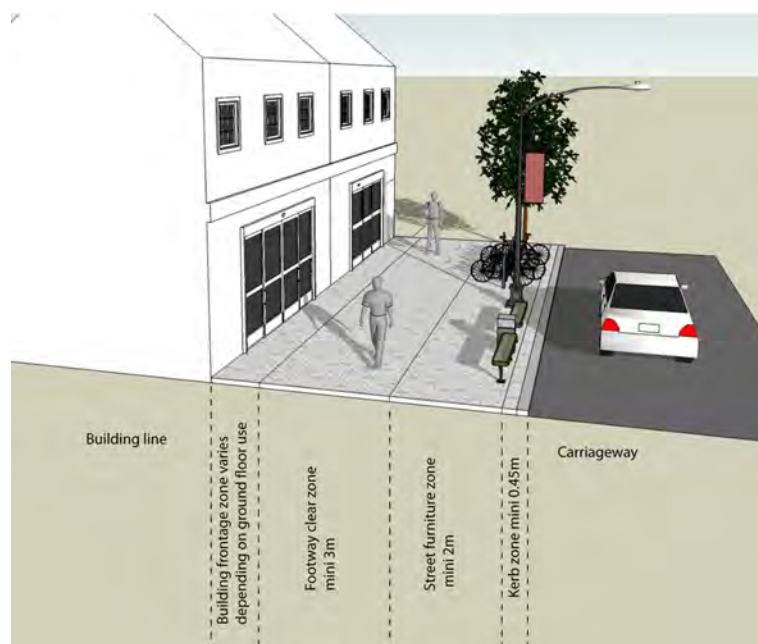


Figure 5.46 Primary Thoroughfare, Street View

- ***Street trees and soft landscaping***

- 5.57** Soft landscaping and trees in the town centre can bring aesthetic, environmental and economic benefits. Planting can help to create and maintain an attractive environment as well as enhance visual amenity. It may be used to create focal points, delineate routes and screen traffic. Planting trees can also provide food, refuge and habitats for wildlife.
- 5.58** 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 make the urban environment more pleasant and comfortable by providing shade, reducing glare, acting as windbreaks and reducing the impact of traffic-generated noise.
- 5.59** Developers are encouraged to retain existing trees according to tree surveys and provision of new trees in public thoroughfares and public spaces wherever possible. In such circumstances 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 with a single species using trees of uniform size at the time of planting. Within the Wildlife Corridors, specifying native species may enhance biodiversity.



Figure 5.47 Soft Landscaping and Trees in an Urban Area (Bristol City Centre)

- ***Street cafés***

5.60 Outdoor cafés enhance the quality of the pedestrian experience, and can reinforce a vibrant sense of place especially if the activities spill onto the public thoroughfares and public space. Street cafés typically are located within the building frontage zone and they must not encroach the clear footway zone. Tables, chairs and all furnishings must be specifically manufactured for outdoor commercial use. Enclosures, parasols, heaters, tables and chairs should visually complement each other and the space that they are located in.



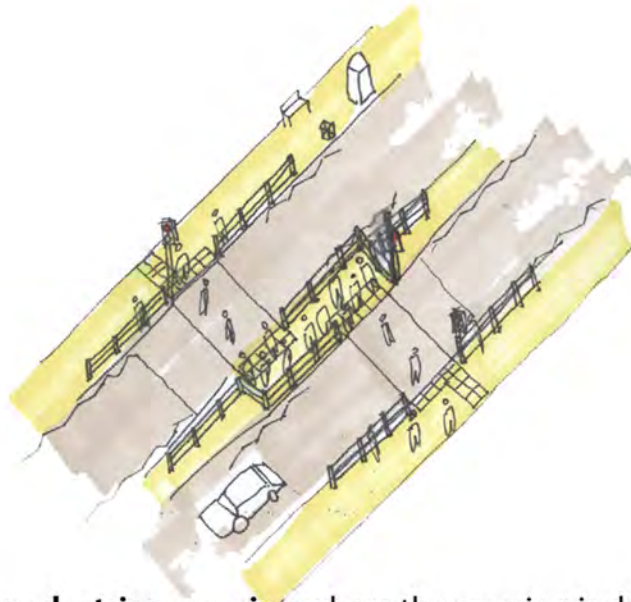
Figure 5.48 Street Cafes add activity and animation to places (Bristol City Centre)

- ***Easing pedestrian movement along and between building frontages***

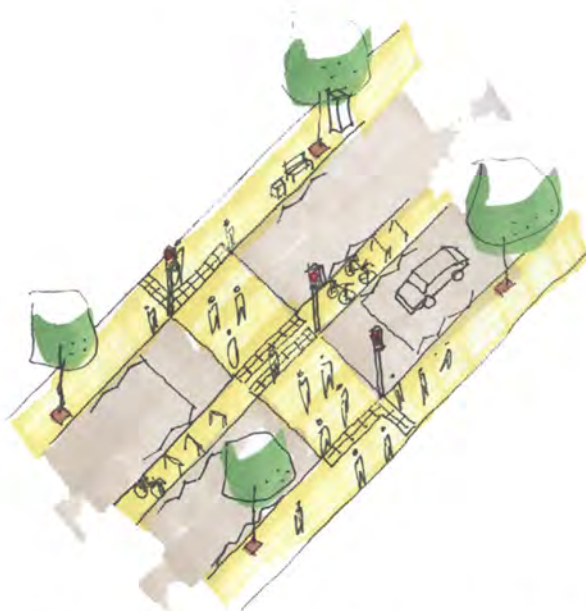
5.61 Pedestrian cross-overs can be introduced where side roads meet the public thoroughfares to make it easier for people to walk along the street by creating a sense of seamless surface materials as opposed to continually being confronted by traffic from side roads. The barrier effect of existing wide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



**Figure 5.49 Pedestrian Cross Over
(Birmingham City Centre)**



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 5.50 Types of pedestrian crossings

9 Appendices

Appendix 1 Evidence Base

- Brierley Hill Area Action Plan, 2011.
- Black Country Environment Infrastructure Design Guidelines, 2010.
- The Brierley Hill Town Centre Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Proposals, March 2009.
- Brierley Hill Development Framework and Land Use, David Lock Associates, February 2008
- Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation for Brierley Hill, November 2007.
- Brierley Hill Physical Regeneration Implementation Strategy, August 2006.
- Centro Midland Metro, Street Design Guide, Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Extension, August 2005.
- Brierley Hill Planning and Design Guidance Draft, January 2003.
- Brierley Hill Area Development Framework, Supplementary Planning Guidance, David Lock Associates, July 1999.
- Merry Hill: Facing the future, Joint Urban Design Study, Interim Report, David Lock Associates, May 1996.
- Merry Hill: Facing the future, Joint Urban Design Study, Initial Scoping Report, David Lock Associates, November 1995.

Appendix 2

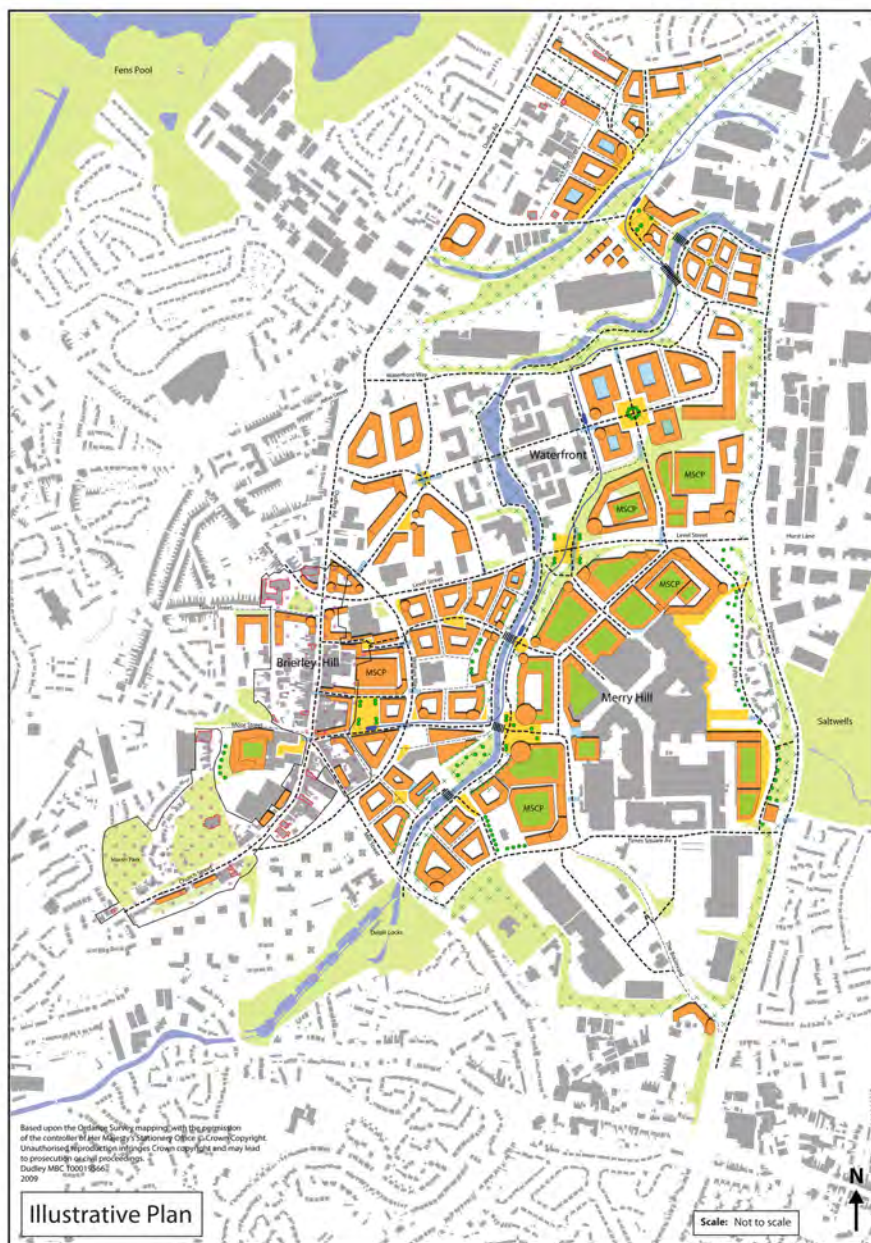
The matrix below is provided to assist the identification of design requirements for each of the Development Opportunity Blocks and Public Realm:

Development Opportunity Blocks (see Brierley Hill AAP)	Urban Design Framework	Design Objectives for New Buildings	Design Objectives for Public Realm
BR1	3.2	4.1 – 4.3, 4.5, 4.7	5.1 – 5.4
BR2A	3.2	4.1 – 4.3, 4.7	5.1, 5.2, 5.4
BR2B	3.2	4.1 – 4.4, 4.7	5.1, 5.2, 5.4
BR9	3.2	4.1 – 4.4, 4.6 – 4.7	5.1, 5.2, 5.4
BR20	3.2	4.1 – 4.4, 4.7	5.1, 5.2, 5.4
BR12	3.2	4.1 – 4.4, 4.7	5.1 – 5.4
BR13C	3.2	4.1 – 4.4, 4.7	5.1 – 5.4
BR10	3.2	4.1 – 4.4, 4.7	5.1, 5.2, 5.4
BR11	3.2	4.1 – 4.3, 4.6, 4.7	5.1 – 5.4
BR15A	3.2	4.1 – 4.5, 4.7	5.1 – 5.4
BR15C & BR15E	3.2	4.1 – 4.3, 4.5, 4.7	5.1, 5.2, 5.4
BR15F	3.2	4.1 – 4.3, 4.5, 4.7	5.1 – 5.4
BR16A	3.2	4.1 – 4.5, 4.7	5.1 – 5.4
BR16B & BR16C	3.2	4.1 – 4.3, 4.5, 4.7	5.1 – 5.4
BR14	3.2	4.1 – 4.7	5.1, 5.2, 5.4
BR15D	3.2	4.1 – 4.7	5.1 – 5.4
BR15G & BR16D	3.2	4.1 – 4.7	5.1, 5.2, 5.4
C2, C3, C4 & C5	3.2	4.1 – 4.7	5.1 – 5.4
R3, R4 & R5	3.2	4.1 – 4.3, 4.5, 4.7	5.1 – 5.2, 5.4
R6	3.2	4.1 – 4.5, 4.7	5.1 – 5.4
R10	3.2	4.1 – 4.3, 4.5, 4.7	5.1 – 5.4
P1	3.2	4.1 – 4.3, 4.7	5.1, 5.2, 5.4
P4	3.2	4.1 – 4.4, 4.6, 4.7	5.1, 5.2, 5.4
BR13A & BR13B	3.2	4.1 – 4.3, 4.7	5.1 – 5.4
BR13D & BR13E	3.2	4.1 – 4.3, 4.7	5.1 – 5.4
CW1	3.2	4.1 – 4.4, 4.7	5.1 – 5.4
BS1	3.2	4.1 – 4.3, 4.6, 4.7	5.1, 5.2, 5.4
W1	3.2	4.1 – 4.5, 4.7	5.1 – 5.4
W2 & W3	3.2	4.1 – 4.4, 4.7	5.1 – 5.4
W4	3.2	4.1 – 4.3, 4.5, 4.7	5.1, 5.2, 5.4
W5	3.2	4.1 – 4.3, 4.6, 4.7	5.1, 5.2, 5.4
WW1 & WW3	3.2	4.1 – 4.3, 4.7	5.1 – 5.4
WW2	3.2	4.1 – 4.3, 4.6, 4.7	5.1 – 5.4
W7	3.2	4.1 – 4.3, 4.5, 4.7	5.1 – 5.4
W8	3.2	4.1 – 4.5, 4.7	5.1 – 5.4
W11	3.2	4.1 – 4.3, 4.7	5.1 – 5.4
W10	3.2	4.1 – 4.5, 4.7	5.1, 5.2, 5.4
H11	3.2	4.1 – 4.4, 4.7	5.1, 5.2, 5.4
H1, H2 & H3	3.2	4.1 – 4.3, 4.7	5.1, 5.2, 5.4
H4 & H7	3.2	4.1 – 4.4, 4.7	5.1 – 5.4

Public Realm Network	Urban Design Framework	Design Objectives for Public Realm
Primary Thoroughfares PT1 – PT33 (see Brierley Hill AAP)	3.2	5.1, 5.2, 5.4
Secondary Thoroughfares	3.2	5.1, 5.2, 5.4
Primary Public Spaces:	3.2	5.1, 5.3, 5.4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Brierley Place (BP) ▪ Merry Hill Place (MHP) ▪ Level Street Square (LSS) ▪ Round Oak Place (ROP) ▪ Station Square (SS) 		
Secondary Public Spaces	3.2	5.1, 5.3, 5.4

Appendix 4 Illustrative Plan

The illustrative plan indicates how best to lay out building blocks and public realm and knit them with the existing structure of the town centre. It provides a basis within which designers will later develop detail design for buildings and public realm.



New Buildings

The plan is an expression of the Urban Design Framework from in this document. It is not intended to form a rigid blueprint for new development but represent one potential development scenario accommodating the policy requirements of the Brierley AAP and the Urban Design Principles of the Urban Design Framework.

In urban design terms, the key challenge will be to reconfigure a new urban form and knit it into the existing urban fabric of the town centre. Together with the old and new urban form they will create a coherent, high quality environment to shop, live and work.

The plan illustrates the built form and building layout for the future development of the town centre and is based on the following:

- The retention and enhancement of those historic buildings and frontages that contribute to the character and appearance of the town centre.
- The potential to develop public and private spaces that are clearly distinguished by their adjacent building layout.
- The collection of built form which defines a coherent urban environment of linked public thoroughfares and public spaces that enhance and reinforce the permeability, connectivity and activity of the town centre.
- Building edges that have a high degree of transparency and activity at ground level where they front onto the public thoroughfares.
- Each new building incorporating a variety of residential and commercial access points located at regular intervals in order to help animate and activate the street at ground level.
- In order to avoid dead frontages, car parking should provide in courtyard, basements or 'wrapped' within buildings. Well-designed on-street parking is encouraged in the less trafficked thoroughfares, particular in Secondary Thoroughfares and predominantly residential areas.
- Entrances to car parks should incorporate pedestrian cross-over points to minimise the impact to the quality of the public realm.
- Servicing should take place in the courtyard or basement.
- Building heights should vary across the town centre in response to the topography, scale of nearby existing buildings, views, street width and the orientation of streets and spaces.
- New buildings will be expected to be sensitive to the character and quality of the heritage environment of the town centre.
- Visually prominent locations were identified in the Urban Design Framework. It may be appropriate for buildings in these locations to become landmarks by reason of their design quality rather than their height.

New Public Realm

In urban design terms, the key challenge will be to enhance the ease of movement within the town centre and provide greater connections to peripheral areas. Together with the old and new public realm they will establish an integrated network of high quality and accessible public routes into and through the town centre.

In response, the plan proposes the preferred approach to the public realm network. The network comprises Primary and Secondary Public Spaces to provide stage for activity, Primary and Secondary Thoroughfares to provide connections and ease of movement.

Appendix 5

Visions for the Urban Quarters

Twelve distinct urban quarters makes 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 which will create an interlinked the town centre.

Vision for Brierley Hill High Street

As the community focus of 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.



Existing Public Realm on Brierley Hill High Street – cluttered with un-coordinated street furniture and guard railing



New - 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)



Vision for Lower Brierley

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 centre and improved public transport access.



Existing public realm in Lower Brierley (Cottage Street, Brierley Hill)



Example of how the new public realm could look and function (Park Central, Birmingham)



Vision for Canal Walk Central

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 onto the canal will make this a place for relaxing and socialising.



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)

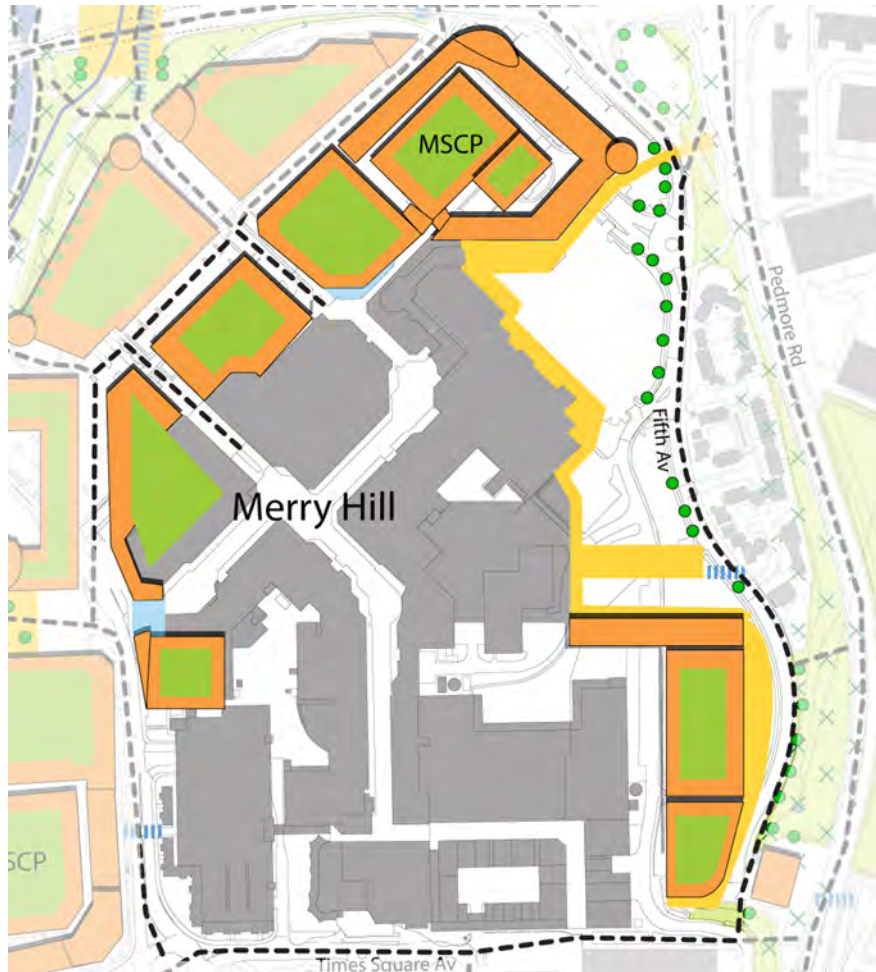


New - Active frontage edges to water space encourage a vibrant, linked-up environment which people can walk through or pause to take part in activities at the edge of the space (Brindley Place, Birmingham)



Vision for Merry Hill

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 enhance the public realm, create a better interface with the town centre and a more satisfying experience for visitors.



Existing – The current layout sets the malls and units substantially within an open edge of car parking (view from Embankment, Merry Hill)



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



Vision for Pedmore Road

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.



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



High quality public realm with a balance of hared and soft landscape improves the pedestrian environment as a place to move through and the visual presentation of the and the town edge to passers by (Sheffield City Centre)



Vision for Canal Walk South

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.



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



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 City Centre)



Vision for Boulevard South

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.



Existing - As with other areas of Merry Hill, the set-back of development across 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.)

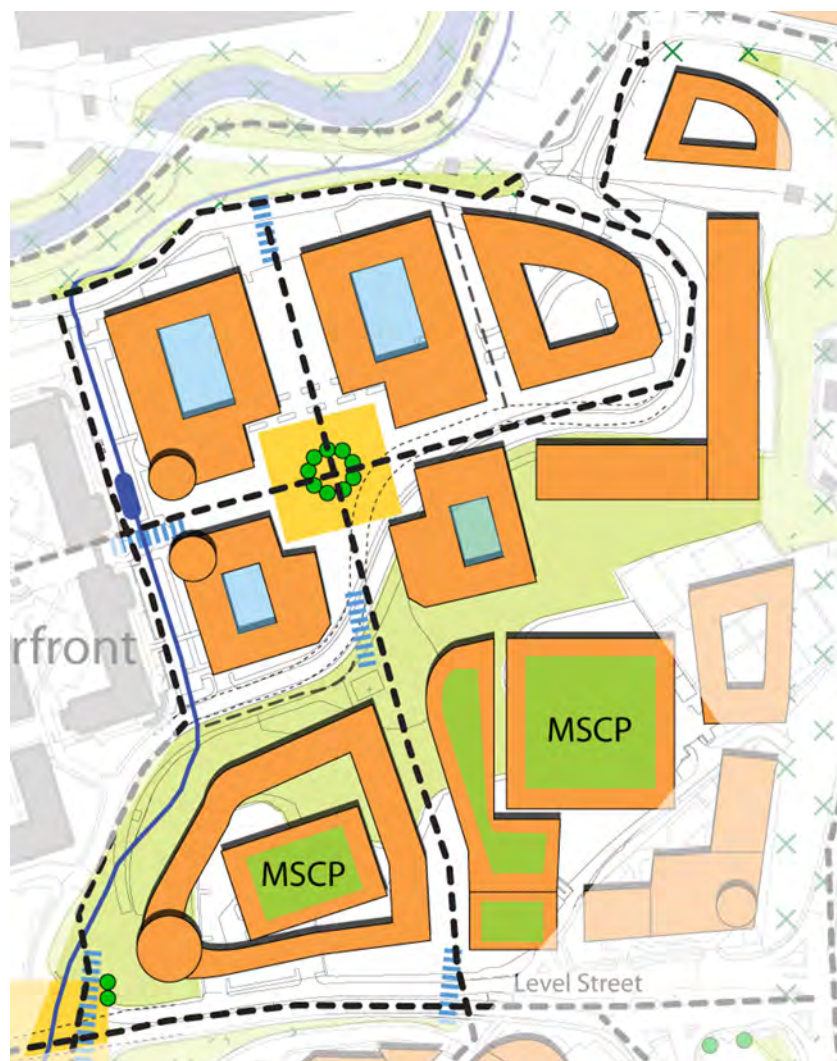


New development should front onto the Boulevard with high quality public realm that caters for vehicles as well as pedestrians (Brindley Place, Birmingham city centre)



Vision for Archill

The expanded Waterfront office complex will provide employment opportunities in an attractive environment benefiting from easy access to public transport and other facilities which will enhance the quality of life.



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)



Example of how the new public realm could look and function' – replace with: Appropriate built form that presents active uses enclosing a high quality public realm (Brindley Place, Birmingham City Centre)



Vision for Waterfront West Business Park

The existing 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.



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

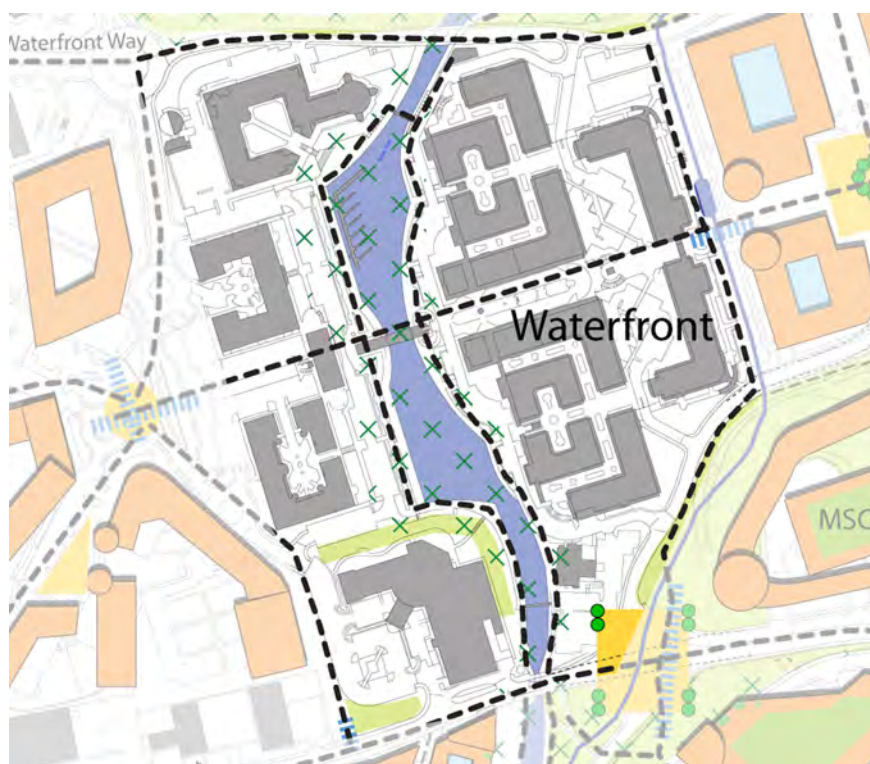


Use of complimentary materials and contrasting textures to accommodate easier, connected movement in an attractive public realm (Sheffield City Centre)



Vision for the Waterfront

This established and successful area of office development with bars and restaurants fronting the canal will continue to be home and 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.





Existing public realm at the Waterfront – no new development proposed



Vision for Canal Walk North

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.



Bleak, large scale industrial warehouse site is allocated for new development*. Photo: View northwards through The Gateway to industrial development.



Potential to provide new development that takes advantage of its canalside setting (Canal Walk, Birmingham)



Vision for Harts Hill

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.



Existing public realm in Harts Hill



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)

