

STOURBRIDGE AREA COMMITTEE – 20 MARCH 2006

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT

STOURBRIDGE TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN (AREA ACTION PLAN)

Purpose

1. To advise the Committee on the preparation and progress of the Stourbridge Town Centre Masterplan that will form part of a future Area Action Plan (AAP) for Stourbridge Town Centre as set out in the Local Development Scheme (LDS).

Background

2. Members will be aware that preparation of the Dudley Town Centre Masterplan has been completed and was adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance (under the old planning system) in December 2005. Work is commencing on the Brierley Hill Masterplan (AAP) now, and will be followed by the Halesowen Masterplan (AAP) commencing late 2008, as set out in the LDS.
3. The development of Stourbridge Masterplan (AAP) is being implemented in accordance with the LDS timetable and requirements of the new planning system which is set out in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
4. The revised planning implementation process and timescale for the Stourbridge Area Action Plan, as set out in Paragraph 3 is as follows:

Jan 05 – Dec 05	Consider issues and options for study site
Jan 06 – Aug 06	Develop options, sustainability appraisal and draft Statement of Community Involvement
Sept 06	Report to Stourbridge Area Committee
October 06	Public Consultation on options
Dec 06 – Mar 07	Review comments from public consultation and produce preferred options

Mar 07	Report to Stourbridge Area Committee
June 07 – Aug 07	Consultation on Development Plan Document and Statement of Community Involvement Submit documents to Secretary of State
Sept 07	Report to Stourbridge Area Committee
Jan 08 – March 08	Pre-examination meeting with Inspector
April 08 – June 08	Examination held by Secretary of State
By Dec 08	Adoption of Area Action Plan (subject to progress on review of Regional Spatial Strategy (Black Country Study) and project management

This timetable is subject to change under the annual monitoring process as set out in the LDS.

5. The study area is shown on Appendix A to this report, and includes the Town Centre and the adjacent land to the north.
6. David Lock Associates were appointed consultants in January 2005 for the Stourbridge Area Action Plan and commenced the project by undertaking an “Issues and Options” study that included:-
 1. a planning policy framework to enable the determination of a land use framework
 2. an economic ‘health check’ and examination of the condition and potential improvement for investment in the town
 3. re-appraisal of the two conservation areas within the study area as an opportunity to drive imaginative conservation-led regeneration where appropriate
 4. an assessment of the provision of car parking required and an analysis of road junction capacity issues, particularly with regard to the effects on the A491
 5. the provision of a new integrated transport hub
 6. opportunities to ‘calm’ the ring road and provide better transport connection to the town centre
 7. opportunities to realign the ring road
 8. the provision of attractive calmed traffic movements of pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles throughout the town centre, taking account of access and servicing needs
 9. improvements to the quality of the town centre’s streets to provide benefits to both motorists and pedestrians

10. improvements to the edges of the town that face the ring road in order to create sense of arrival and welcome to the town
11. maximising the opportunities provided by the river Stour and Stourbridge canal
12. an implementation strategy to assist with the delivery of the above objectives and identification of funding, a Sustainability Appraisal and an assessment of the extent to which the plan will achieve social, environmental and economic objectives, in order to ensure sustainable development.

7. The process commenced with gathering baseline information for the “Options and Issues” appraisal through a series of 14 meetings that were held with key stakeholders and developers by David Lock Associates, to establish each group’s aspirations for the town or their own relevant site(s). These structured consultation meetings were held over a three week period from 14 June to 8 July 2005 and are listed in Appendix B.
8. The first draft “Issues and Options” study was received from the consultants in December 2005 and officers are now identifying options that can be presented for public consultation. Physical, economic and conservation appraisals will be undertaken to establish the sustainability of each preferred option to be presented for the public consultation process during October/November 2006.
9. A tailored Statement of Community Involvement will also be prepared for the public consultation process that reflects the local involvement and impact of the Area Action Plan.

Finance

10. The cost of preparing the Stourbridge Town Centre Area Action Plan will be met from existing revenue budgets.

Law

11. Local Development Documents are prepared under the requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 enables the Council to do anything which it considers is likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental wellbeing of any part of the Borough.

Equality Impact

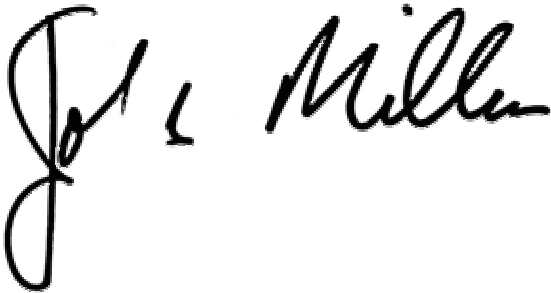
12. The proposals in this report accord with the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy.

The options that will be identified for public consultation will have consideration for children and young people, particularly with regard for leisure and facilities.

Recommendation

13. That the contents of this report be noted and that the Committee support the work of officers in the continuing development of the Stourbridge Town Centre Area Action Plan and the Cabinet Members respectively.

That further reports be submitted on the Stourbridge Town Centre Area Action Plan in due course.

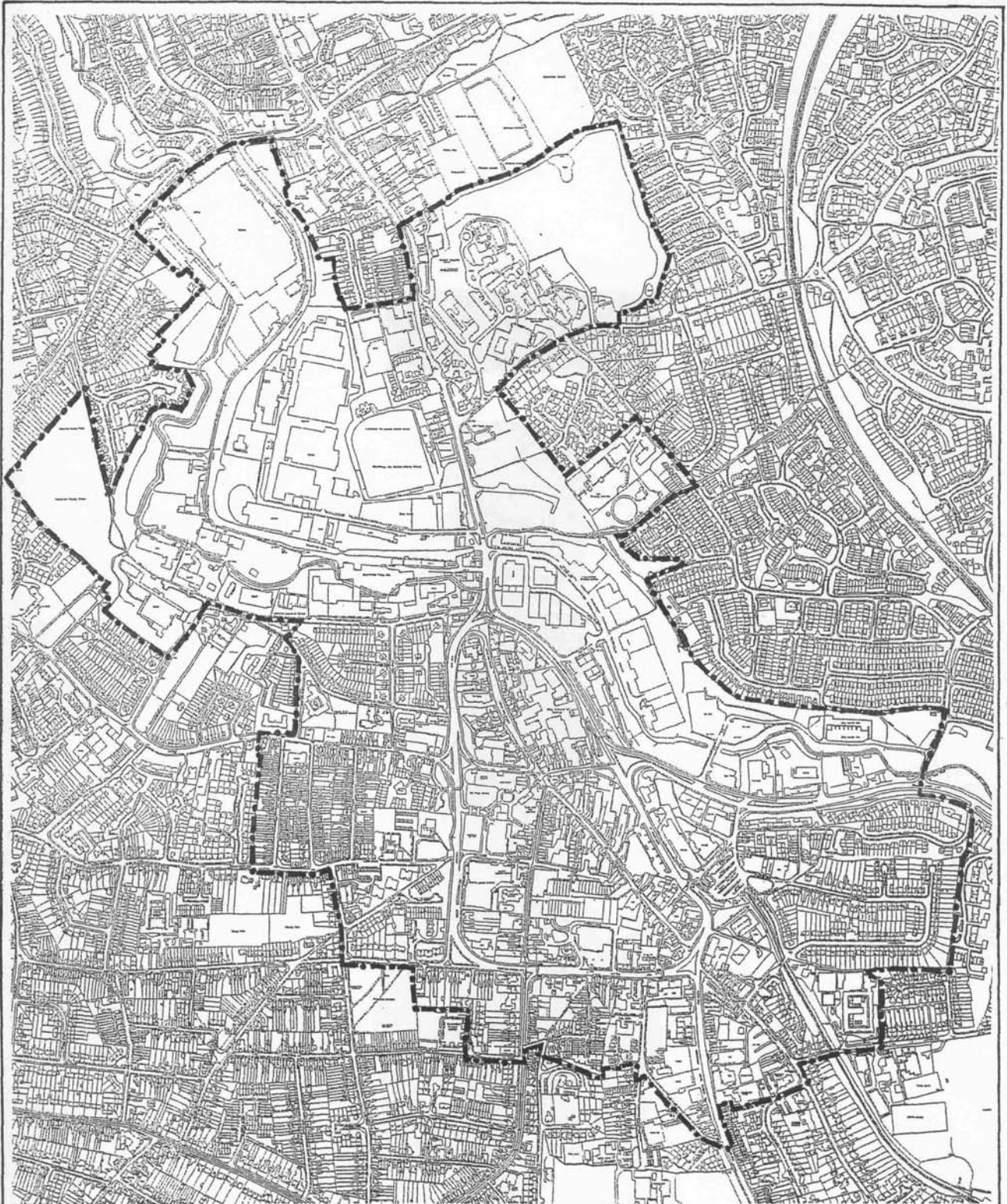


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List of Background Papers

1. Consultants Brief – Stourbridge Town Centre Area Action Plan
2. Revised Dudley Unitary Development Plan
3. Planning Policy Statement 12 – Local Development Frameworks
4. Dudley MBC Local Development Scheme July 2005



Title: Town Development Framework: Area of Scope

Location: Stourbridge

Scale: NTS

Prepared by: LJT



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Appendix “B”

Consultation / Information Gathering Workshop Schedule – Stourbridge Area Action Plan

Workshop No.	Group	Date	Duration	Time Start	Time End	Group Code
1	London & Cambridge Properties	14 June 2005	2 hours	11.00 Hrs	13.00 Hrs	A
2	Policy, commercial opportunities and Property	14 June 2005	4 hours	13.00 Hrs	15.00 Hrs	C
3	SAC + Cabinet + Corporate Board	14 June 2005	2 hours	15.30 Hrs	17.30 Hrs	B
4	Revelan Group	20 June 2005	2 hours	10.00 Hrs	12.00 Hrs	A
5	Centro	20 June 2005	2 hours	13.00 Hrs	15.00 Hrs	A
6	British Waterways	28 June 2005	2 hours	10.00 Hrs	12.00 Hrs	A
7	Developers Forum	28 June 2005	3 hours	13.00 Hrs	16.00 Hrs	A
8	Black Country Chamber and Stourbridge Chamber	28 June 2005	2 hours	18.00 Hrs	20.00 Hrs	D
9	TESCO	4 July 2005	2 hours	10.00 Hrs	12.00 Hrs	A
10	Access, Movement and Transport	4 July 2005	4 hours	13.00 Hrs	17.00 Hrs	C
11	SCAN and Churches Together	5 July 2005	2 hours	10.00 Hrs	12.00 Hrs	D
12	Urban Design, landscape and conservation	5 July 2005	4 hours	13.00 Hrs	17.00 Hrs	C
13	SAC + Cabinet + Corporate Board	5 July 2005	2 hours	17.30 Hrs	19.30 Hrs	B
14	Spare	8 July 2005	2 hours	10.00 Hrs	12.00 Hrs	
15	Activity, events, management and culture	8 July 2005	4 hours	13.00 Hrs	17.00 Hrs	C

Groups

A Developer Groups
 B Stourbridge Area Committee + Cabinet
 C Officer Groups
 D

Community Groups