

Halesowen Area Committee 14th March 2007

Report of the Director of the Urban Environment

Cradley (Windmill Hill/Colley Gate) Regeneration Plan

Purpose of Report

1. To inform the Halesowen Area Committee of the progress made in the production of the Cradley Regeneration Plan and to seek their views on the proposed improvement options that will be presented at the meeting.

Background

2. One of the Borough's greatest assets is its network of diverse town and local centres, which have evolved from the villages and settlements which formed the Black Country and each has its own distinctive character and range of attractions. Each centre has had to respond to dramatic change over the last 20 years, including far reaching changes in people's lifestyles and new and evolving patterns of shopping, accessibility and investment. Combined with the development and expansion of Merry Hill, this has resulted in the decline of some of the traditional centres.
3. The adopted Unitary Development Plan (UDP) identifies a hierarchy of 20 centres in the Borough. These are subject to the policies in the Centres and Retail chapter which are designed to overcome these problems and secure the long term regeneration and development of all the Borough's centres.
4. The Council has for some time identified the four town centres at Dudley, Halesowen Stourbridge and the centre at Brierley Hill High Street as being a priority for action and investment.
5. Growth resources were secured by the Directorate of the Urban Environment in 2005/06 to address the remaining 16 local and district centres. Following a review and analysis of the district and local centres in February 2006 the centres identified for the most concentrated intervention were Shell Corner, Cradley/Windmill Hill, Pensnett, Lye and Quarry Bank.
6. Therefore in terms of regenerating Cradley/Windmill Hill local centre, the Council has recently appointed Colin Buchanan planning consultants to assist in developing the Cradley (Colley Gate/Windmill Hill) Regeneration Plan.

7. During February and March this year, the consultants have been researching the issues in Cradley (Colley Gate/Windmill Hill) and as part of this process have consulted with voluntary and community groups, organisations, stakeholders, statutory organisations, faith groups, local residents and traders, Ward Members and Council Officers about the issues and opportunities in the local centre. This consultation together with researching relevant reports, strategies and data will be used to develop regeneration options for the area which will be consulted on and a preferred option will form the Regeneration Plan for Cradley/Windmill Hill Local Centre.
8. At this meeting, Colin Buchanan consultants will be presenting a report to the Area Committee on potential regeneration options for the Cradley local centre. A regeneration option may relate to potential redevelopment of selected sites, mechanisms to improve air quality as discussed elsewhere on the agenda, proposals to reduce traffic congestion and environmental improvements.

Finance

13. The costs of the consultants working on the Cradley Regeneration Plan are funded by existing budgets held within the Economic Regeneration division

Law

14. Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 enables the Council to do anything which it considers likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social and environmental well being of its area.

Equality Impact

15. This work has been conducted in full accordance with the Councils equality and diversity policies and should in no way have any prejudicial impact on different racial groups, disabled people, both genders and/or other relevant groups. The Cradley Regeneration Plan will seek to regenerate the local centre for adults, children and young people alike, hence promoting equal opportunities for all.

Recommendation

16. To seek the views of the Halesowen Area Committee on the options presented at the meeting.

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for J. Millar

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