

**Halesowen Area Committee 12<sup>th</sup> March 2007**

**Report of the Director of the Urban Environment**

**Shell Corner Local Centre Regeneration Plan**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To inform the Area Committee about the progress of the Shell Corner Local Centre Regeneration Plan.

**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. Due to the urgency in starting the regeneration process, the decision was made to produce Regeneration Plans for each centre instead of a statutory planning document (i.e. Area Action Plan or Supplementary Planning Document) as part of the Local Development Framework. This approach was taken on the basis that a formal planning document would require a more extensive time period in which to be developed and adopted.

7. In terms of regenerating Shell Corner local centre, the Council, together with urban design assistance from Colin Buchanan consultants has been developing a regeneration plan. As part of this process, the Council, during spring 2007, 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.
8. This consultation together with researching relevant reports, strategies and data was used to develop regeneration options for the local centre. Consultation on the potential regeneration options for the local centre has taken place through workshops held with Council Officers, Ward Members and Stakeholders and a community consultation event which took place on 15<sup>th</sup> of January 2008 at Olive Hill Primary School. Advertisement for the community consultation event was in the form of posters, press release in local newspapers and a leaflet drop to residents by the Shell Corner Partnership. The event was attended by over 90 local residents and businesses and their views will be accounted for when working up the final regeneration plan for Shell Corner. The Issues the regeneration plan will aim to address include traffic congestion problems, lack of car parking, poor physical environment, high number of shop vacancies and lack of investment within the local centre.
9. The Draft Shell Corner Local Centre Regeneration Plan is expected to be produced in Summer 2008 and will be available for consultation over a two week period. It will be accessible through the Council's website and a copy will be held in Long Lane Library.

### **Finance**

10. Work in developing the Shell Corner Regeneration Plan will be funded by existing budgets held within the Economic Regeneration division.

### **Law**

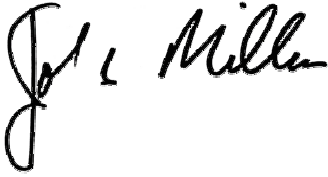
11. Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 enables the Council to do anything which it considers likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social and environmental well being of its area.
12. It is intended that the Shell Corner Regeneration Plan will be a Development Control Guidance Note and will go forward for approval at the earliest opportunity.

### **Equality Impact**

13. This work has been conducted in full accordance with the Council's 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 Shell Corner Regeneration Plan will seek to regenerate the local centre for adults, children and young people alike, hence promoting equal opportunities for all.

## **Recommendation**

14. That the Area Committee supports notes the progress made in relation to developing the Shell Corner Hill Local Centre Regeneration Plan.



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**J. Millar**  
**Director of the Urban Environment**

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## **List of Background Papers**

1. Centres and Retail – District and Local Centres Review February 2006