

Halesowen Area Action Plan

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General Information

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Arabic

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Bengali

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Chinese

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Gujarati

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જો તમને આમાંથી કોઈ સ્વરૂપમાં દસ્તાવેજ જોઈતો હોય, તો કૃપા કરીને આ સરનામે સંપર્ક કરો:

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Punjabi

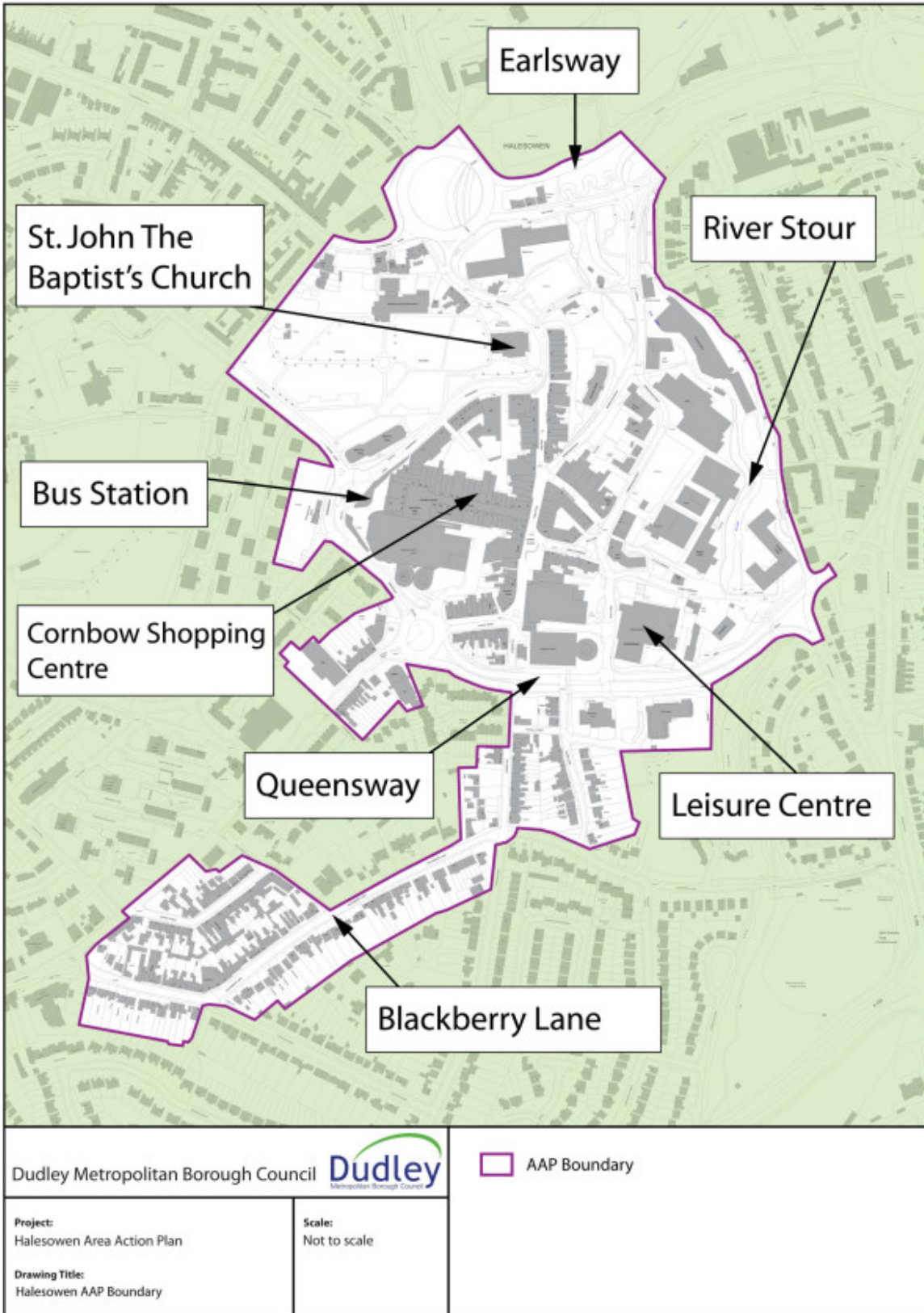
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Urdu

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1 Introduction

- 1.1** Halesowen stands on the border of the Black Country and Birmingham, and is exceptionally convenient for both. Dating from Saxon times, it features everything you would expect in a small to medium sized town whilst retaining the character and feel of the village it once was. The Town Centre is dominated by the parish church of St John the Baptist which dates from 1083. Shoppers enjoy the High Street, Cornbow Shopping Centre and regular Farmers' Market. Cornbow Hall is a delightful venue for Tea Dances and other events. Outside of the Town Centre itself, Halesowen benefits from being near beautiful countryside. The ruins of the 13th century Halesowen Abbey are just outside the town, as is The Leasowes which was laid out by the 18th century poet William Shenstone and was one of the first natural landscaped gardens in Europe.
- 1.2** In recent years, Halesowen has benefited from significant investment. The Town Centre has undergone a £30 million regeneration to redevelop the Cornbow Shopping Centre to include a new Asda supermarket, together with a new multi-storey car park, an expanded state-of-the-art bus station and improvements to the road layout. This work was recognised by the Retail Property Organisation's BCSC's Awards in December 2009 when the town received a commendation.
- 1.3** This Halesowen Area Action Plan (AAP) seeks to preserve and enhance the best of Halesowen's existing character whilst building on recent successes and positively planning for its future. It sets the planning framework for Halesowen Town Centre, guiding future development and investment up to 2026. It provides a vision for the Town Centre, and through its policies and site allocations, sets out how that vision will be delivered.
- 1.4** The Halesowen AAP builds upon and adds a spatial dimension to the Dudley Community Strategy by working towards its vision for stronger communities, for example, by planning for an attractive environment for people to live, work and invest in and improving the vibrancy and attractiveness of Halesowen Town Centre.
- 1.5** Whilst having a local focus, this AAP is integrated with and in conformity with the adopted [Black Country Core Strategy](#) (2011), which together with the AAP forms part of Dudley Council's [Local Development Framework](#). The Core Strategy was prepared by the four Black Country Local Authorities to guide development throughout Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton up to 2026. It identifies Halesowen as a Town Centre which will perform an important role in day to day shopping, leisure, community and cultural activity.



Map 1 Halesowen AAP boundary

2 Issues and Opportunities in Halesowen

- 2.1** Before planning for the future of Halesowen it is first necessary to understand what the area is like now, by looking at the key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges facing the Town Centre.

Strengths

- Compact and well serviced Retail Core (Primary Shopping Area);
- The Town Centre is well served by convenience shopping and no additional floorspace is called for although small proposals up to 650m² net floorspace can be considered appropriate; proposals above this size would need justification ('convenience' goods are day to day purchases such as foodstuffs, drinks and newspapers);
- Pedestrianised areas with good street furniture;
- Well served by public transport and nearby public car parks;
- Recently improved/refreshed highway infrastructure;
- Town has historic/medieval value;
- Good green space provision;
- Proximity of the River Stour;
- The wider area forms a significant part of the biodiversity network in Dudley and the Black Country.

Weaknesses

- Lacks provision for a vibrant evening/night time economy;
- Lacks some character due to 1960s development;
- Poor quality gateway sites, poor legibility in some areas of the Town Centre, poor appearance and condition of larger peripheral buildings, some central buildings also of poor appearance/repair;
- Lack of blue chip comparison goods retailers (e.g. Marks & Spencer, Debenhams etc.);
- Large monolithic buildings at the edges of the Town Centre turn their backs on the public realm and detract from the setting of the town's historic and other assets such as St John the Baptist's Church;
- Queensway carriageway also detracts from the setting of St John the Baptist's Church, and reduces pedestrian connectivity to the town's retail core (Primary Shopping Area);
- Lacks east-west green links between Leasowes Park and the River Stour valley.

Opportunities

- A need for additional comparison shopping floorspace ('comparison' goods are one off purchases such as clothing, electrical items and furniture). Comparison retailing proposals over 500m² gross floorspace will need to demonstrate that they are of an appropriate scale to the function of the centre and would not undermine the vitality and viability of other centres;
- The Core Strategy promotes small office developments totalling no more than 5000m² gross floorspace to 2026 and entertainment, leisure and cultural facilities of an appropriate kind and scale;
- Build in/add to Halesowen Town Centre's character, particularly to reinforce the surviving aspects of it's historic character - make better use of hidden gems, identify 'quarters' according to differing land uses, character and features;
- The Core Strategy supports the need for public realm improvements at Halesowen Town Centre and the wider area to the north and west (Regeneration Corridor 14);
- Enhance the River Stour and access to and along it - including in terms of it demarcating the Town Centre (including using public art to achieve this);
- Opportunity for improving green links/corridors into Halesowen Town Centre (e.g. River Stour Corridor, nearby Leasowes Historic Park);
- There is a surplus of public car parking spaces in the Town Centre which could be reduced to enable new development opportunities to become viable;
- Use upper floors above retail premises for town centre uses;
- The Core Strategy identifies support for residential development 'in and around Halesowen Town Centre';
- Development of opportunity sites for the benefit of the Town Centre as a whole.

Threats

- River Stour flood events and their impact on possible future river-side development or redevelopment.

2.2 These strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats have informed the vision and strategy for future development in Halesowen Town Centre and are discussed further in the following chapters.

3 Spatial Vision and Objectives

- 3.1** The vision for Halesowen Town Centre is a statement of where Dudley Council and its community want to get to and what this Area Action Plan should deliver by 2026. This vision has been informed by an understanding of the issues and opportunities in the Town Centre, consultation responses, the overarching vision for the Black Country and the views of communities as expressed through the Community Strategy.

Vision for Halesowen Town Centre

Halesowen benefits from having a compact and generally well presented and accessible Town Centre providing for local shopping and community activity. A key natural asset of the Town Centre is its position alongside the River Stour corridor. The Town Centre further benefits from a variety of historical features and open spaces. These assets will be maintained and enhanced.

The Town Centre will succeed as a focus for retail activity and a range of other uses including employment, housing, leisure, entertainment, culture and tourism. The Town Centre will continue to be supported by effective and sustainable transport connections, and be accessible for all to visit and make use of its facilities.

Above all, Halesowen will be a place that everyone will want to visit, work and live in and a centre in which people want to invest and do business.

- 3.2** To deliver the vision for Halesowen, clearly defined and measurable objectives are needed. These objectives will guide the implementation of the strategy and the monitoring of its achievements.

Objectives for Halesowen Town Centre

Land Use

- To maintain and build upon Halesowen Town Centre's recognised role in providing for local needs in an accessible and sustainable way by providing appropriate day-to-day shopping facilities and other suitably scaled town centre land uses such as employment, housing, leisure, entertainment, culture and tourism;
- Dudley Council will seek to ensure that Halesowen continues to enjoy the social and economic benefits to be gained from the town's successful and diverse range of education facilities, and will encourage appropriate improvements to town centre facilities and infrastructure in this regard;

Landscape and Public Realm

- To provide, protect and enhance a well connected landscape and public realm setting of streets, routes and public spaces that is attractive, safe, lively and pleasant to use that also reinforces the greening of the town centre;

Nature Conservation

- To capitalise on Halesowen's unique natural assets by protecting, improving access to and enhancing the River Stour, its bank-side habitats and other green open spaces and infrastructure leading to and within the town centre for people and nature;

Historic Environment

- To ensure that the character and quality of Halesowen's historic environment is fully appreciated in terms of its townscape and landscape, individual buildings, plan form and archaeology – and that this is capitalised upon to its best advantage and recognised by the community at large as one of the town's greatest assets;

Transport, Access and Movement

- To improve ease of movement for pedestrians, cyclists, people with disabilities and vehicles in, at the edges of and into the town centre (and in particular Halesowen Bus Station) by enhancing streets, routes and spaces and potentially creating new ones, which will provide an environment that is safe, more direct and better integrated both physically and visually;

Urban Design

- To achieve consistently high quality urban design, architecture and landscape that is sustainable and enhances existing buildings and spaces within Halesowen Town Centre;
- To strengthen local character and distinctiveness by setting an approach that ensures new development respects the context of the Town Centre;
- To enhance the town's natural assets by bringing them into active use for everyone to enjoy;
- To strengthen the town's evening economy by providing more activities which are safe, balanced and socially responsible;
- To improve safety and security through good design and layouts that will assist in deterring crime, anti social behaviour and reduce the fear of crime.

4 Land Use

Objectives

To maintain and build upon Halesowen Town Centre's recognised role in providing for local needs in an accessible and sustainable way by providing appropriate day-to-day shopping facilities and other suitably scaled Town Centre land uses such as employment, housing, leisure, entertainment, culture and tourism.

Dudley Council will seek to ensure that Halesowen continues to enjoy the social and economic benefits to be gained from the town's successful and diverse range of education facilities, and will encourage appropriate improvements to Town Centre facilities and infrastructure in this regard.

The Area Action Plan and Town Centre Boundary

- 4.1 The Halesowen Area Action Plan boundary is centred on Halesowen's compact and well defined shopping area. It extends northwards to include St John the Baptist's Church and grounds, eastwards to include land to both banks of the River Stour, and to the south to include an area of significance to Halesowen Town Centre's nail making past (see the Proposals Map).
- 4.2 The Town Centre boundary includes the primary shopping area and areas of predominantly leisure, business and other main town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area. St John the Baptist's Church (and its immediate grounds) is included within this Town Centre boundary given its importance in terms of faith, community, historicity, culture, tourism and its role as a focal point to the town.

Inside Halesowen's Primary Shopping Area

- 4.3 Halesowen Town Centre caters for the largely day to day shopping needs of its local community and hinterland. Halesowen's Primary Shopping Area (otherwise known as the 'retail core') defines the area in which retail land use and development is concentrated and must remain a focus for providing any additional retail development and for safeguarding that which already exists.
- 4.4 The Core Strategy and its supporting evidence base assumes a requirement for additional comparison shopping floorspace within Halesowen Town Centre over the plan period to 2026. The need for such development should be further justified at the planning application stage.

- 4.5 Such retail development could be as one or two fairly large stores, or as a number of smaller ones, and should be located at the Pool Road Car Park or Trinity Point/High Street Car Park Development Opportunity Sites or elsewhere within the Primary Shopping Area.

Policy 1

Retail Floorspace

Subject to other policies in its Local Development Framework, Dudley Council will give in-principle support to proposals for retail development within Halesowen's Primary Shopping Area on the basis that such proposals are:

- Appropriate to the scale and function of Halesowen Town Centre in recognition of its role in the hierarchy of centres as defined in Core Strategy Policy CEN2 'Hierarchy of Centres'; and
- In accordance with the requirements of Core Strategy Policy CEN4 'Regeneration of Town Centres'.

Development opportunity sites at Pool Road Car Park and Trinity Point/High Street Car Park have been identified within the Primary Shopping Area in support of this.

Any edge of centre proposals would be subject to the further requirements of Core Strategy Policy CEN4 'Regeneration of Town Centres'.

- 4.6 There remains a continued and important need to retain and strengthen the Primary Shopping Area's locally focused retail function. For this to be achieved, it is necessary to limit the amount of non-retail uses (i.e. those other than Use Class A1 Shops) that will be permitted within the Primary Shopping Area.
- 4.7 Frontages can be defined as being the ground floor parts of a building fronting onto the street. Located within the primary shopping area, Primary Frontages are those which include a high proportion of retail uses, with Secondary Frontages being those offering more opportunity for a diversity of uses.

Policy 2

Primary Frontages

Where Primary Frontages are identified within the Primary Shopping Area, Dudley Council will resist proposals that will lead to:

- Bunching of non-retail uses (i.e. uses other than comparison or convenience shopping) - no more than two non-retail uses adjacent to each other will be allowed;
- More than 35% of all units within the Primary Shopping Area being occupied by or with permission for non-retail uses.

- 4.8** Recent land use monitoring carried out by Dudley Council regarding Halesowen Town Centre's Primary Shopping Area (April 2012) identifies that some 35% of units are for other than shopping (Use Class A1 Shops) purposes. This is at the 35% maximum level prescribed in the above Primary Frontages policy and indicates a need for a second layer of policy safeguard for Use Class A1 Shops within the Primary Shopping Area. Whilst protecting shopping land use, this secondary level of safeguard is more flexible in accommodating other town centre land uses.

Policy 3

Secondary Frontages

This policy applies to all frontages within the Primary Shopping Area other than those identified as Primary Frontages on the Proposals Map.

With regard to Secondary Frontages within the Primary Shopping Area, Dudley Council will resist proposals that will lead to:

- Excessive bunching of non-retail uses (i.e. uses other than comparison or convenience shopping) - no more than three non-retail uses adjacent to each other will be allowed;
- More than 50% of all units within the Primary Shopping Area being occupied by or with permission for non-retail uses.

Beyond Halesowen Town Centre's Primary Shopping Area

- 4.9** Beyond Halesowen's Primary Shopping Area, the wider Town Centre must continue its important role as a focus for a range of other town centre uses. Therefore, for areas outside of the primary shopping area, there is a need to encourage uses such as leisure, entertainment, offices, health, culture and tourism in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CEN4 'Regeneration of Town Centres', and be restrictive in terms of allowing A1 shops. Opportunity

should also be taken to improve Halesowen Town Centre's evening and night-time economy whilst being mindful of the need to maintain public safety.

Policy 4

Land Uses outside Halesowen's Primary Shopping Area

Dudley Council will resist development proposals for comparison or convenience shopping (use class A1 Shops) outside the boundary of Halesowen's Primary Shopping Area – these proposals will only be given further consideration if relevant criteria in national planning policy and Dudley Council's local development framework have been satisfied.

Dudley Council will give support in principle to development proposals outside the Primary Shopping Area proposing town centre uses other than shopping (use class A1 Shops) – appropriate town centre land uses being as identified in the most recent national planning policy guidance for town centres.

Proposals that add to or improve Halesowen Town Centre's evening and night-time economy will be encouraged by Dudley Council.

Proposals for residential land use will also be supported where appropriate and where the proposal does not result in the loss of a town centre land use that is making a valuable contribution to Halesowen.

- 4.10** The wider Halesowen area is seen as a centre of excellence for education with regard to its schools and Halesowen College. Dudley Council share this view and recognise the education sector's benefits to Halesowen in terms of adding to the Town Centre's vitality and viability, providing for local jobs in schools and the college, and preparing local people for future employment.

Policy 5

Education in Halesowen

Existing education facilities in Halesowen Town Centre will be safeguarded where there is a recognised need for them.

Any additionally proposed education facilities will be supported in principle where appropriate within the Town Centre. Within the Primary Shopping Area, this should generally be above the ground floor (and mainly retail) frontages.

Dudley Council will also give in principle support where appropriate to proposals for further facilities and transport infrastructure to meet student need.

- 4.11** The River Stour is a key natural asset of Halesowen that flows in a northerly direction along the eastern edge of the Town Centre. The open character of the riverside environment has been lost, partially as a result of topographical features, but also as a result of relatively modern development which has tended to turn its back on the river. There is thus a need to protect and improve access to the River Stour.

Policy 6

Proposed Development and the River Stour

Development adjacent or in close proximity to the River Stour will be required, where feasible, to enhance the river and its setting, improve public access to and along the river, guard against adding to flood risk, and safeguard and enhance biodiversity. Development should face onto the watercourse where feasible to do so.

- 4.12** Dudley Council has responsibility for the management of surface water, including that which results from built development such as how rain water is managed within a development and how its run-off from the building or site is controlled. The Environment Agency retains responsibility for rivers and most other watercourses, including the River Stour and Illey Brook.
- 4.13** Surface water can be managed in various ways, including the use of sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS), which include natural drainage techniques such as creating ponds, reed beds and swale ditches. Dudley Council's civil engineering service can give advice in terms of the management of surface water.

Policy 7

Surface Water

The design and layout of new development will be required to take into consideration surface water issues, and to mitigate for any problems that may arise such as surface water run off and flooding.

5 Development Opportunity Sites

- 5.1** The Development Opportunity Sites have the potential to better contribute to the vitality, viability and quality of Halesowen Town Centre. Some of the key design considerations for each of these sites are highlighted below but for more guidance please refer to Appendix 1 of this document and the "Halesowen Spatial Framework", available on Dudley Council's website at www.dudley.gov.uk.

Development Opportunity Site 1: Pool Road Car Park

- 5.2** Pool Road Car Park is in need of investment and as a whole, the buildings on this site currently present a negative gateway into the Primary Shopping Area. Redevelopment will improve the quality of the car parking facilities, enhance frontages to Hagley Road and Summer Hill, improve the quality of the built environment and enhance the retail offer of the Town Centre.
- 5.3** Pool Road Car Park should be redeveloped to provide an additional comparison retail unit adjacent to the existing Wilkinsons store. Such a scheme should respect the presence of 1 Summer Hill, a building which has an important role in defining a historic route into the Town Centre and which provides a positive contribution to Halesowen's townscape. Cornbow Hall offers a large function room and other public facilities which are well used by the local community and should be safeguarded.
- 5.4** Pool Road car park, designated long and short stay, services the south side of the town and provides convenient parking for both the Leisure Centre and Cornbow Hall. Evidence demonstrates that there is a surplus of car parking available in the Town Centre, with ample short stay capacity available nearby at both Asda and Birmingham Street. Eroding some of this short stay surplus will enable a positive development to go forward for the overall benefit of the Town Centre. However, the loss of the long stay parking could affect the attractiveness of the town to investors and an element of long stay parking will therefore need to be re-provided within the redevelopment of this site.

Policy 8

Development Opportunity Site 1: Pool Road Car Park

The preferred use is A1 comparison retail development in accordance with Policy 1 'Retail Floorspace'.

Other acceptable uses are A2 financial and professional services, A3 restaurants and cafés, A4 drinking establishments, A5 hot food take-aways, residential, B1 business, D1 non-residential institutions and D2 assembly and leisure uses.

In order to deliver improved retail facilities at ground floor level it is accepted that redevelopment of the Pool Road car park will be necessary. At least 80 long stay spaces should be re-provided, plus the quantum of car parking required for the proposed development in accordance with Dudley Council's 'Parking Standards supplementary planning document - Review'.

Development Opportunity Site 2: Trinity Point and High Street Car Park

- 5.5** This opportunity site is dominated by Trinity Point, a large office block which marks a gateway into the Town Centre. The other structure within this site is the two storey High Street car park which services the northern part of the town. The car park is under used at weekday peak times and is in need of investment. However, the full removal of this facility could affect the economy of the north of the town by reducing the availability of short stay spaces. As such, any redevelopment proposals for this site will be required to retain an element of short stay parking.
- 5.6** Comparison retail development is promoted on this site to enable the Town Centre to expand and provide a retail anchor to the northern end of the High Street, promoting more footfall between the north and south of the centre and enhancing the vitality and viability of the centre as a whole.
- 5.7** The site has important boundary edges on all sides which will need to be appropriately addressed in any redevelopment scheme. To the north is New Road, a key approach road to the Town Centre. To the east, down a steep gradient, is the River Stour and Fingerpost/Rumbow Gardens. To the south is Church Lane and two historically significant timber framed cottages at 10 Church Lane and Whitefriars. The car park abuts Church Lane and is visible within the view along this road between the Church and cottages. To the west of the site is Ivy House, the High Street and the Church of St. John the Baptist. Particular consideration will need to be given to the impact of any scheme on the setting of the Church and other historical buildings. Any development proposals will be required to positively enhance these assets and the river corridor by virtue of design and layout. In utilising this opportunity, a green link should also be provided composed of amenity focused green infrastructure. Any development within this block should establish frontages to New Road and High Street and recognise the relationship to, and impact upon, Rumbow and Church Lane.

Policy 9

Development Opportunity Site 2: Trinity Point and High Street Car Park

The preferred use is A1 comparison retail development in accordance with Policy 1 'Retail Floorspace'.

Other acceptable uses are A2 financial and professional services, A3 restaurants and cafés, A4 drinking establishments, A5 hot food take-aways, residential, B1 business, D1 non-residential institutions and D2 assembly and leisure uses.

Where proposals include the redevelopment of High Street car park, at least 31 short stay car parking spaces should be re-provided, plus the quantum of car parking required for the proposed development in accordance with Dudley Council's 'Parking Standards supplementary planning document - Review'.

Development Opportunity Site 3: Link House and Pioneer House

- 5.8** Link House is a five storey office building with car parking to the rear. Pioneer House fronts the northern end of Birmingham Street car park and houses a variety of uses including a gym. The low level of demand for office accommodation within the Town Centre has resulted in high levels of vacancy on this site, rendering it desirable for redevelopment.
- 5.9** Development proposals should provide a strong frontage to Birmingham Street and Rumbow. An active and attractive frontage onto the River Stour together with an enhanced pedestrian route along it will be required. Development should be set back from the River Stour and have due regard to flood risk.
- 5.10** Steep changes in topography, the route of the river and the existing urban form on this site all mean that access through this central area into the Town Centre from Tenterfields to the east of the River Stour is restricted and difficult. Provision of pedestrian access from the Tenterfields area is encouraged.
- 5.11** On the eastern side of the River Stour sits the Rumbow Works which provides valuable local employment and is expected to continue in its current use. Any redevelopment scheme will need to ensure that it does not adversely affect the operation of this employment use. Should the Rumbow Works site unexpectedly come forward in the future, it could form an appropriate extension to this development opportunity site and provision of a new east-west pedestrian access across the River Stour should be a high priority.

Policy 10

Development Opportunity Site 3: Link House and Pioneer House

The following uses are encouraged:

- C2/C3 residential
- D1 non-residential institutions

- D2 assembly and leisure
- B1 offices
- C1 hotels
- A3 food and drink
- A4 drinking establishments

Development Opportunity Site 4: Little Cornbow

5.12 This under-utilised site is currently dominated by the Zion Christian Centre who have been pro-actively pursuing redevelopment opportunities. Development in this area should provide active and attractive frontages onto areas of public space, and pay regard to existing and potential linkages throughout the site. Cornbow is of particular significance as it is one of the original streets through the town centre and has great potential for improvement as a public space and key link into the town from south east areas.

5.13 There is a major opportunity within this site to provide a strong frontage to Little Cornbow whilst retaining and enhancing the key route between Peckingham Street and Cornbow. Strong frontages should also be established along the riverside, together with an enhanced pedestrian route along it. This opportunity site, together with Site 3 'Link House and Pioneer House', should deliver a minimum of 35 residential units.

Policy 11

Development Opportunity Site 4: Little Cornbow

The following uses are encouraged:

- C2/C3 residential
- D1 non-residential institutions
- D2 assembly and leisure
- B1 offices
- C1 hotels
- A3 food and drink
- A4 drinking establishments

Development Opportunity Site 5: Fountain House

- 5.14** Fountain House is a large office building which sits on the eastern bank of the River Stour. It is largely unoccupied and has suffered from high and growing vacancy levels for some years despite proactive marketing and investment in the property. This site should be put into more productive use through a change of use and/or redevelopment.
- 5.15** Combined with Development Opportunity Site 4 'Little Cornbow' there is an opportunity to significantly improve the quality of the built environment in this area which will enhance the setting of the River Stour and establish a pedestrian route along the riverside, in accordance with Policy 26 'Access and Movement'. The Environment Agency support the banks of the River Stour being restored to a natural condition in this location.

Policy 12

Development Opportunity Site 5: Fountain House

The following uses are encouraged:

- C2/C3 residential
- D1 non-residential institutions
- D2 assembly and leisure
- B1 offices
- C1 hotels
- A3 food and drink
- A4 drinking establishments

6 Landscape and Public Realm

Objective

To provide, protect and enhance a well connected landscape and public realm setting of streets, routes and public spaces that is attractive, safe, lively and pleasant to use that also reinforces the greening of the Town Centre.

Landscape and Public Realm Network

- 6.1** Within the Halesowen AAP boundary, there are few public spaces or connected green spaces, and there is no town park in the Town Centre. Existing green spaces tend to be concealed and poorly connected within a predominately hard urban environment (e.g. New Road and the outer road networks, isolated grass verges, and occasional green spaces such as Rumbow/FingerpostGardens). Existing public spaces include St John the Baptist's churchyard but this is cut off from the pedestrianised areas, and Somers Square within the primary shopping area which provides a good example of new high quality public space.
- 6.2** There is also an under provision of natural and semi-natural green space especially in the north eastern areas of the Town Centre. Creating better access and landscape enhancement to the currently underutilised River Stour corridor will offer an opportunity to begin to address this shortfall, by way of linear green space links, publicly accessible amenity green space and other improvements to the open space network.
- 6.3** Established outdoor play provision is located beyond the Halesowen AAP boundary. Space to create new outdoor play provision within the Halesowen AAP boundary will be limited, and therefore other forms of provision such as the ambition to create a riverside walk that has exercise, educational and leisure purposes with informal and informal nature spaces may bridge that gap in provision.
- 6.4** Dudley Council's Parks and Green Space Strategy (June 2009) confirms that the surrounding urban area is reasonably well served by parks and gardens and green space. The Leasowes Historic Grade I listed Park is located within 1km of the Town Centre and HighfieldsPark is much closer. Huntingtree Park is just beyond and is one of the Healthy Hub Sites identified as part of the DudleyHealthyTown's Initiative. The route from HuntingtreePark to the Town Centre is designated as an active corridor, promoting cycling and walking. Also in close proximity is Coombswood Wedge.

- 6.5** However due to severance created by development, major roads and topography, pedestrian accessibility to these important spaces from the Town Centre is, in some instances, challenging and routes are unclear. The connections between green and open spaces are just as important as the spaces themselves. For people to visit their local green and open spaces, there must be easy and attractive routes for pedestrians, cyclists and people with disabilities. Therefore, where possible, pedestrian access should be improved.
- 6.6** Within Halesowen, many existing routes would benefit from landscape enhancement. Such enhancement will improve and define the open space network and improve the public realm overall. The Landscape and Public Realm Map indicates key streets that are highlighted for enhancement.

Policy 13

Landscape and Public Realm Network

Development should safeguard existing open space provision from loss or harm and provide new spaces to create a hierarchy of inspiring landscape and public realm projects to form a unique selling point for and improve the image of Halesowen Town Centre.

Development proposals should:

1. Consider and provide ways of increasing the amount of on-site amenity green space and publicly accessible natural and semi-natural green space within the Town Centre (in particular at the north-eastern area of the Town Centre). Dudley Council's 'Open Space, Sport and Recreation' Supplementary Planning Document gives further guidance.
2. Provide a hierarchy of external spaces that have clarity of purpose and function, demonstrating an understanding of the need for the retention of existing or creation of new landscape elements and spaces.
3. Provide a range for choice and opportunity for children's play, including for children with disabilities where appropriate.
4. Reflect and enhance the local identity of parks, open spaces and the public realm.
5. Make the most of past heritage by retaining and integrating structures that can become the focus and setting for newly created or re-invigorated landscapes and public realm.
6. Integrate green infrastructure within the building design as an intrinsic part of the scheme's landscape strategy and enhancement of biodiversity. Green infrastructure includes such things as green roof and wall technology, and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS).

7. Be adaptable and flexible to changing social, physical and environmental needs.
8. Provide spaces that help link communities together and reduce severance, seek opportunities for environmental enhancement of the connections, create connections where sections are missing, encourage public use or enhance their value for biodiversity as appropriate.
9. Employ remediation techniques where possible to bring contaminated and lower quality land back into use.

Policy 14

Open Space Network

The following public open spaces, as shown on the Landscape and Public Realm Map, will be protected, enhanced or created as part of development proposals and other initiatives:

1. Queensway south of St. John the Baptist's Church (enhanced space)
2. The River Stour (created and enhanced space) as part of a new bridge connection gateway space
3. Summer Hill (created space)
4. Great Cornbow, Little Cornbow and Bull Ring (enhanced space)
5. Rumbow/Fingerpost Gardens (enhanced)
6. Hagley Road (enhanced space)
7. Birmingham Road (enhanced space)
8. St John the Baptist Church and wider cemetery/graveyard (protected space)
9. White Friars and environs (protected space)

Public Realm

- 6.7 The public realm can be defined as all areas that the public have access to 24 hours a day, such as streets, squares, open spaces and riversides. These components of the public realm form connections into, within and out from Halesowen Town Centre. Currently, the town's streets and spaces present a hard, urban environment where surface materials and some street furniture are worn and in need of updating.
- 6.8 Public open spaces provide a focus for community activity. There are currently few public spaces in the Town Centre, there being the central outdoor space in Hagley Street, Somers Square and Highfields Park, although the latter is somewhat apart from the main flows of people in the Town Centre. Significant

public realm and spaces have become invisible due to poor built form and layout and poor streetscape definition - notably the historic route and original market place known as Great Cornbow, Little Cornbow and Bull Ring.

- 6.9** St. John the Baptist Church and churchyard are together considered to be a Designed Landscape of High Historic Value and form the most significant historic landmark feature in the town. In addition, Little Cornbow, Great Cornbow and Bull Ring form an Area of High Historic Townscape Value. They are considered to be a historically important group of public realm and spaces, originally functioning as a principle route into the town and market place. Currently, these streets and spaces are greatly underutilised and would benefit from greater cohesion and enhancement to strengthen the character of this area.
- 6.10** A high proportion of historically significant streets within the Halesowen AAP boundary have been identified for enhancement, with reference to the Halesowen Spatial Development Framework and the Halesowen Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation studies.
- 6.11** Opportunities for new public spaces will be gained through redevelopment of the opportunity sites. Public spaces may be smaller, high quality spaces and act as relief spaces as part of the existing public realm and/or the riverside improvements.

Policy 15

Public Realm

The quality of streets and open spaces will be improved through development proposals or local initiatives having regard to the following measures:

1. The provision of high quality hard landscape, street furniture, lighting, signage and public art to help create a clear identity for Halesowen Town Centre. Developers are encouraged to prepare strategies to coordinate the choice and location of these features, including their role in linking places.
2. Mature tree planting and other landscape elements to assist the 'greening' and ecological enhancement of the Town Centre.
3. Streets and spaces will be designed so that pedestrians, cyclists, people with disabilities and vehicles can mix safely.
4. Landscape proposals should create a safe, attractive and comfortable external environment for all to enjoy; where the safety and security of people and properties is not compromised.
5. All new development and townscape and landscape enhancements are required to be designed with ease of access for all users as a prime consideration at the outset. Proposals should be in accordance with Dudley Council's Access for All Supplementary Planning Document, and are required

to incorporate an Access Statement that shows how the principles of inclusive design have been integrated.

6. Existing landscape features will be protected where they make a significant contribution to the streetscene.
7. Development in the vicinity of Green Corridors as identified on the Landscape and Public Realm Map will be required to preserve their landscape character.

Landscape Context

- 6.12** Landscape elements such as trees, hedges, banks and boundary walls form an important part of the street scene and can help to integrate new development into its context. The range and type of landscape features add to and form the character of the town's landscape. The environmental success or failure of a development often owes much to the quality of its landscape setting, including the topography and response of a building to level changes.
- 6.13** The quality and value of the existing landscape setting and context of the town is therefore important. Development site proposals need to analyse and understand how their current and future setting affects the overall townscape. Where existing trees are to be retained within a redevelopment scheme, the layout of the built form must accommodate their future growth. Likewise, the landscape elements overall within development sites need to be managed in order to secure their longevity, value and continued presence.
- 6.14** To add to the sense and uniqueness of place, the selection of hard landscape materials and street furniture should be drawn from local references and colours where appropriate and explained within a development's Landscape Strategy Plan.
- 6.15** The Halesowen AAP recognises the role of individual landscape elements, and their unique characteristics that contribute to the wider green infrastructure and landscape setting and how this complex and dynamic relationship is altered and changed by time and interaction with people and activity.

Policy 16

Landscape: survey, analysis and design principles

1. All landscape associated with new development should be considered as an intrinsic part of the overall design concept and should be considered in detail at the outset. For more major developments, applicants will be expected to prepare and submit a landscape strategy with survey and analysis informing a summary of landscape design principles - the

implementation of this strategy being required and secured where appropriate by the use of conditions.

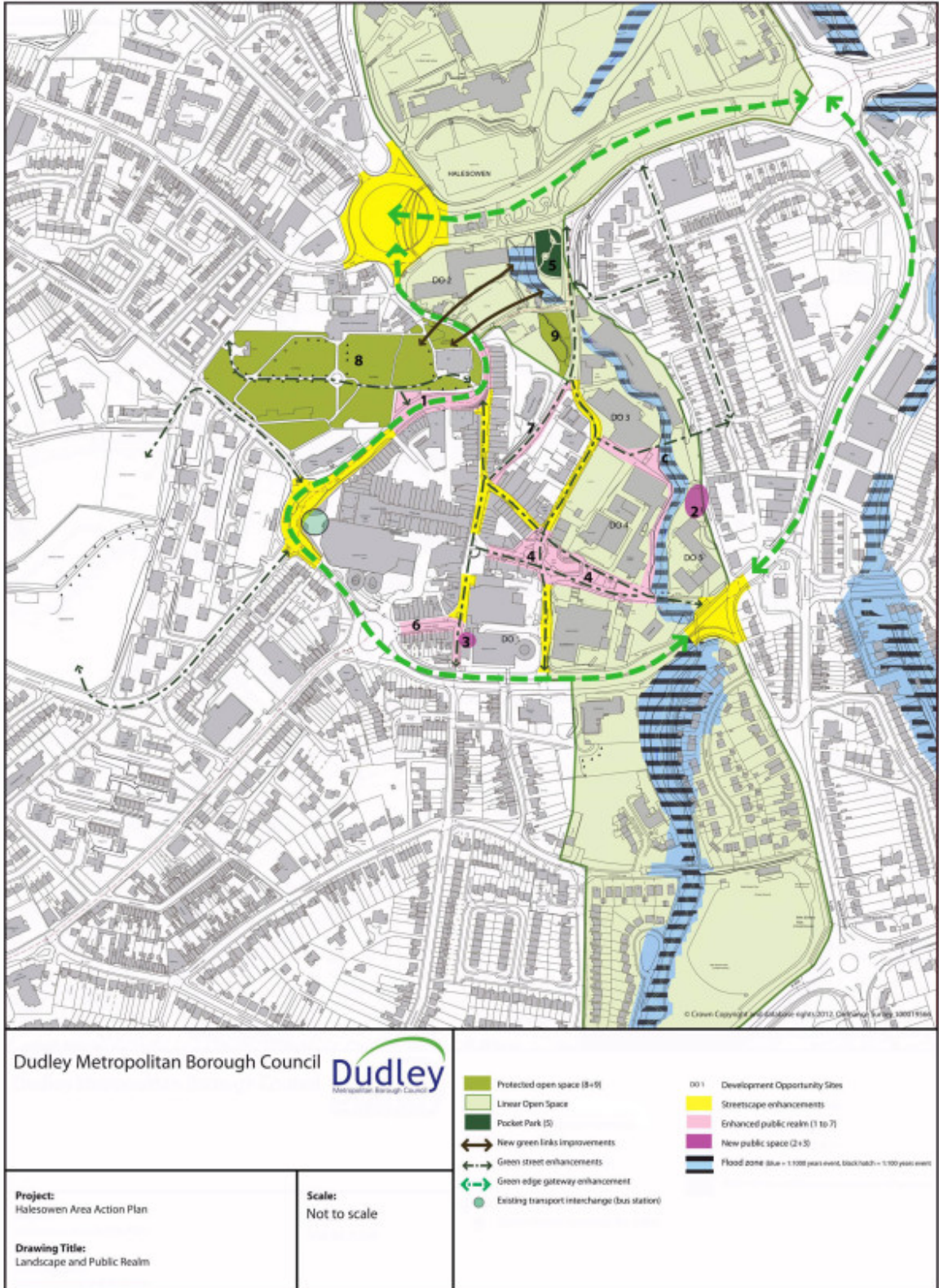
2. Applicants will be expected to provide sufficiently detailed landscape information to enable the scheme to be considered in context. Landscape strategies should ensure that:
 - a. Any trees, existing natural habitats or other features that can be effectively incorporated are retained where appropriate.
 - b. Plant species, surfacing and other materials are appropriate to the site and locality with due regard to water consumption issues and nature conservation.
 - c. Trees and other natural/green elements will be encouraged on the edges of new development to help soften Halesowen.

Further Design Guidance

- 6.16 A forthcoming final Spatial Development Framework, with a detailed 'Halesowen Town Centre Urban Design, Regeneration and Public Realm Design and Implementation Guide' will assist in delivering the changes that are needed.
- 6.17 Landscape design plays an important role in creating a safe environment and developers will be required to demonstrate how proposals address community safety and crime prevention in Design and Access statements. Further supporting detailed advice can be found in Dudley Council's 'Design for Community Safety' supplementary planning guidance. This document should be read in conjunction with the Halesowen (Urban Design) Spatial Development Framework.



Somers Square



Map 2 Landscape and Public Realm

7 Nature Conservation

Objective

To capitalise on Halesowen's unique natural assets by protecting, improving access to and enhancing the River Stour, its bank-side habitats and other green open spaces and infrastructure leading to and within the town centre for people and nature.

- 7.1** Halesowen's character is influenced by the natural and green assets present within and next to it. To the east is The Leasowes, a historic and beautiful landscape created by William Shenstone and slightly further to the east Woodgate Valley Country Park in Birmingham. To the south lies the streams and open countryside of Illey and ancient woodlands of Worcestershire.
- 7.2** Birmingham and the Black Country has been granted the status of Nature Improvement Area by the Government. This complements the Black Country Core Strategy which plans for an environmental transformation to attract and maintain inward investment through policies including CSP3 'Environmental Infrastructure' and ENV1 'Nature Conservation'.
- 7.3** This Halesowen AAP progresses these requirements to retain and augment the assets and distinctiveness of Halesowen. Many of the environmental improvements needed are not possible without development, however this will need to be undertaken in a sympathetic fashion to ensure the environmental aims are fully achieved.

Green Network

- 7.4** Halesowen benefits from a relatively good supply of natural environment which could be capitalised on for the benefit of residents, businesses and wildlife. However, despite the volume of green space present it is recognised that this is often not in an attractive state, inaccessible or is completely hidden from view, especially along the River Stour.
- 7.5** A green swathe is present stretching from the Highfields Park and adjacent open spaces in the west linking to the north of the Town Centre, via St John's Churchyard to the River Stour in the east. The river connects the town to the Illey countryside in the south and also north to Furnace Coppice and further downstream to Stourbridge in the west.
- 7.6** The River Stour is an important major wildlife corridor in the southern part of the Black Country Core Regional Biodiversity Opportunity Area (RBOA) which helps to link the Forest of Feckenham RBOA in Warwickshire with the Cannock Chase and Sutton Park RBOA in Staffordshire and Birmingham.

- 7.7** Connected green space provides increased opportunities for sustainable transport, such as walking and cycling, which can reduce the number of cars entering the Town Centre. This may be especially beneficial where increased foot and cycle access to the bus station should result in a reduction in traffic volume in the wider area.
- 7.8** Wildlife present along the River Stour, such as Water voles and Kingfisher can be harmed by inappropriate disturbance. Indirect pressures can also have a negative impact on wildlife, such as increases in light pollution on Common pipistrelle and Brown long-eared bats, and water pollution from car park run-off reducing fish stocks and therefore numbers of Otters and Kingfishers.
- 7.9** The Halesowen AAP aims to increase the ecological quality and public access present within the Green Network. The balance between amenity and wildlife will need to be determined as is appropriate to the specific location. An example of where wildlife will be given a high priority is along the River Stour through the following works:
- widening the vegetation along the length
 - making the banksides less steep
 - improving the bankside habitats for local species
 - reducing the levels of light pollution
 - opening up vistas of the river to surrounding areas
 - creating an informal style cycle/footpath along the river side
 - reducing flood risk

Policy 17

Green Network

Development will protect and improve the Green Network within the Halesowen AAP boundary. It will create and strengthen pedestrian and bicycle links and significantly enhance and protect the habitats for wildlife within it. Development along the River Stour will be expected to be set back, to provide natural green space at least 10m from the top of both slopes, to enable new public access, essential maintenance and ecological improvements.

Greening the Streets

- 7.10** Over the next 25 years the impacts of climate change will become more apparent. Halesowen will experience hotter, more uncomfortable temperatures in high summer which can seriously affect health (especially of the elderly, the very young and those with certain illnesses) and wellbeing. Increasing the amount of green space and tree cover is proven to reduce these peak

temperatures back towards those found in the wider countryside. Techniques such as green walls and roofs can be used, especially where space is limited on the ground.

- 7.11** Increased storm events can increase the risk of occasional localised flooding. Natural sustainable drainage techniques such as permeable surfaces, increasing cover of vegetation and ponds, help to lower the volume and rate that rainwater enters drains and water courses, minimising the risk of flooding from overloaded drainage systems.
- 7.12** The Halesowen AAP will ensure that land is used in an efficient and multi-functional way which benefits visual amenity, wildlife, reduces urban heat island effect and flooding. New development should deliver this environmental transformation in a manner which is appropriate and proportionate to the scale, kind and location of the works.

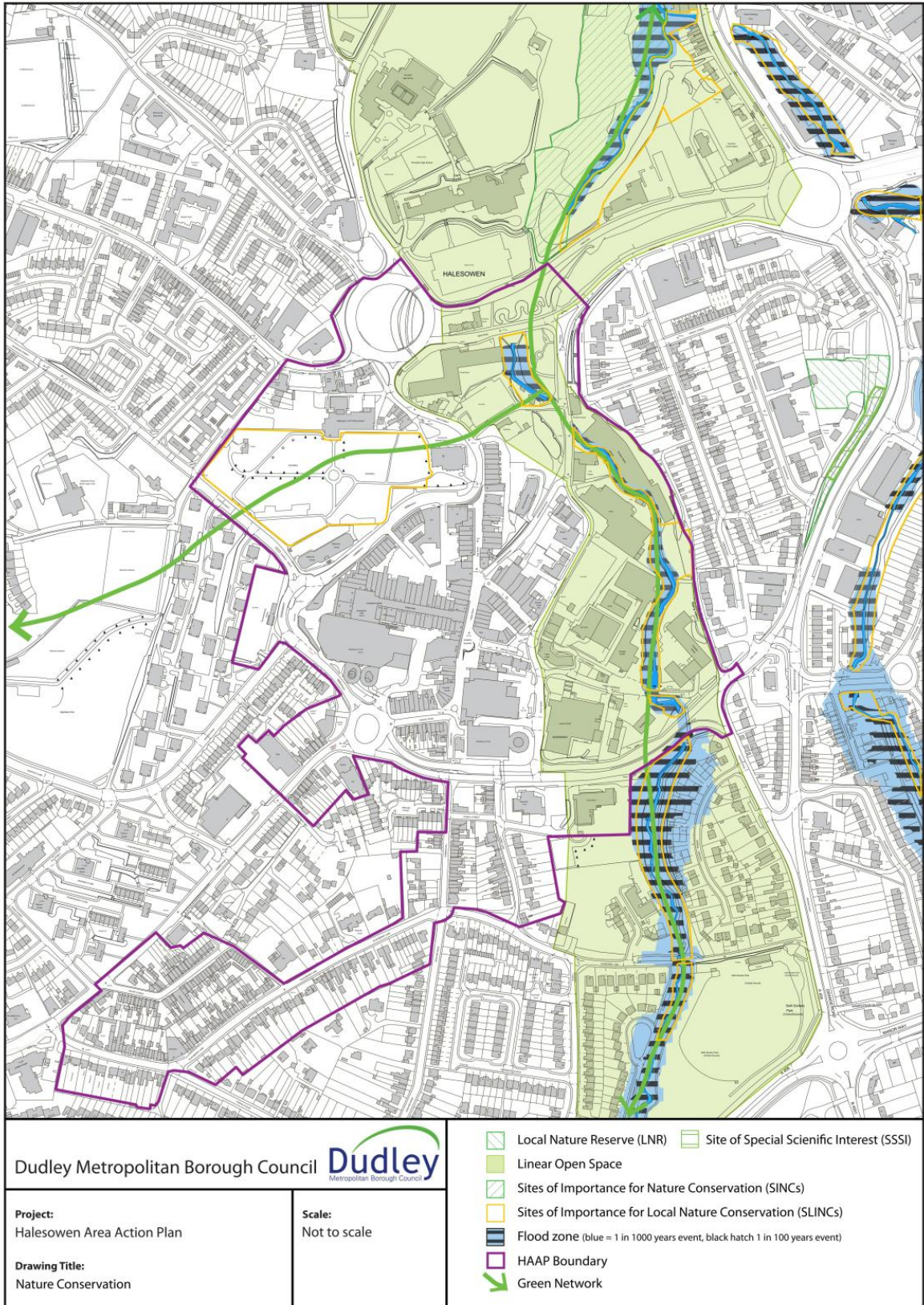
Policy 18

Greening the Streets

Development will be expected to positively contribute to climate proofing Halesowen by increasing tree cover, areas of wildlife friendly vegetation, green roofs and or wetland features to benefit natural sustainable drainage (such as ponds, reed beds and swales) as is appropriate to its scale, kind and location. Development will contribute either directly through on-site works or, where this is not possible, off-site through mechanisms such as proportionate planning obligations.

Protecting Key Nature Conservation Sites and Corridors

- 7.13** Areas of importance for wildlife are protected through Core Strategy Policy ENV1 Nature Conservation and saved Dudley Unitary Development Plan policies SO2 Linear Open Space and SO3 Enhancement of Greenbelt and Linear Open Space. The latter two policies will be superseded by those within the borough's emerging Development Strategy Development Plan Document.



Map 3 Nature Conservation

8 Historic Environment

Objective

To ensure that the character and quality of Halesowen's historic environment is fully appreciated in terms of its townscape and landscape, individual buildings, plan form and archaeology – and that this is capitalised upon to its best advantage and recognised by the community at large as one of the town's greatest assets.

Halesowen Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation study (UHLC)

- 8.1 The "Halesowen Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation" (UHLC) provides the evidence base to inform an understanding of the Town's historic character. This evidence should be used in considering how new development proposals and the enhancement of existing townscapes and landscapes should respect Halesowen's character.
- 8.2 The boundary of the study area is not contiguous with that for the Halesowen (AAP) but spreads wider in order to more fully capture the historic extent of Halesowen town and to include its associated hinterland. The study describes the historical development of Halesowen and identifies fourteen Historic Townscape Character Zones within the Town Centre and beyond (see the Historic Character Zones map). For each Character Zone individual buildings and spaces have been identified which contribute positively or otherwise to local character.
- 8.3 Locally significant areas of high historic townscape and landscape value have been identified alongside individual heritage assets of varying significance, including buildings with potential for inclusion on the Local List and Archaeological Priority Areas. Statutorily designated assets have been reviewed with consideration being given to the potential for future new designations including conservation area designation.
- 8.4 The results of the Halesowen UHLC study will be used by planners, urban designers, developers and others to gain a proper appreciation of the historic character of Halesowen, thus assisting in positive place making and development which respects and reinforces local character and distinctiveness.
- 8.5 Where physical evidence of historic character persists in the form of assets that make a positive contribution to local distinctiveness, such assets should be conserved and wherever possible enhanced. New development should respect and respond to the positive characteristics of the locality such that local distinctiveness is reinforced in a complementary manner. As with Core

Strategy Policy ENV2 'Historic Character and Local Distinctiveness', the aim of these policies in this Halesowen AAP is to maintain the individual identity and character of Halesowen as a whole.

Policy 19

Conservation and Enhancement of Local Character and Distinctiveness in Halesowen

All development proposals should take account of the locally distinctive character of the area in which they are to be sited, including its historic character, and should respect and respond to its positive attributes. Physical assets (buildings, sites or areas together with their settings) whether man made or natural that positively contribute to the local character and distinctiveness of Halesowen's landscape and townscape should be retained and wherever possible enhanced and their settings be respected.

The Halesowen Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation (UHLC) provides baseline data that in conjunction with the information held in Dudley Council's Historic Buildings Sites and Monuments Record must be used for land use appraisals and to inform proposals for development.

New development in Halesowen should be designed so as to reinforce and enhance local distinctiveness and full reference should be made in Design and Access Statements accompanying planning applications to the Halesowen Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation. Design and Access Statements should clearly set out the steps that have been taken to achieve locally responsive outcomes through either traditional or more contemporary design solutions.

In respect of major individual developments or in relation to particularly environmentally sensitive areas, developers may in future themselves be required to commission more detailed "Local Area Character Appraisals" (as defined in the Dudley Historic Environment supplementary planning document, SPD) in order to more fully inform specific land use proposals.

In cases where changes of character or demolition are unavoidable Dudley Council will seek to ensure that provision is made for an appropriate level of archaeological recording to take place prior to the alteration of the features concerned.

Identification of Areas of High Historic Townscape Value

- 8.6** Each Character Zone identified by the Halesowen UHLC was mapped at a large scale in order to specifically identify the contribution made by individual buildings and spaces to the character of the local historic environment. The

buildings were ranked through colour coding into those making a High (red), Medium (orange), Neutral (yellow) or Negative (blue) contribution to local character. This highlighted the existence of certain areas that exhibited a concentration of historic assets that it was felt in combination made a particularly positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. These areas are “Areas of High Historic Townscape Value” (AHHTV) and are shown on the Proposals Map.

Policy 20

Areas of High Historic Townscape Value (AHHTV)

Areas of High Historic Townscape Value (AHHTV) are recognised in the Halesowen Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation (UHLC) as defining discrete areas of townscape of acknowledged importance. Where new development is proposed in an AHHTV every effort must be made to ensure it consolidates or enhances the existing positive characteristics of the locality including the public realm. Not only should existing townscape in these areas be conserved and enhanced but the opportunity should be taken to create complementary good quality townscape through extension, new build or redevelopment. Views into, out of and within the AHHTV must be respected.

Design and Access Statements accompanying planning applications in AHHTV's must be prepared with full reference to the Halesowen UHLC and must clearly evidence how the proposal has taken account of its detailed findings in order to produce a locally responsive high quality design that, wherever appropriate, also conserves and where possible enhances significant historic assets together with their settings. Proposals that fail to respond adequately to their townscape context or that would prejudice views into, out of or within AHHTV's will not be permitted.

Identification of Areas of High Historic Landscape Value

- 8.7** Areas of High Historic Landscape Value (AHHLV) recognise the contribution of the wider landscape to local character and distinctiveness. The value of AHHLV is considered to reside primarily in the quality of the landscape, such as areas of open space, woodland, watercourses, hedgerows and archaeological features and their historic, communal, ecological and aesthetic values.
- 8.8** In Halesowen, the area identified relates to the course of the River Stour as it flows through the town including the very strong linear wooded open space provided in the Furnace Coppice area (Character Zone 3 in the Halesowen UHLC). This area contains the steep sided gorge through which the River Stour runs to the north of Halesowen Town Centre.

Policy 21

Areas of High Historic Landscape Value (AHHLV)

Within Areas of High Historic Landscape Value, Dudley Council will resist any development or other works taking place which would be detrimental to the character, quality and historic integrity of the landscape. Dudley Council will seek to protect and enhance views into, from or within Areas of High Historic Landscape Value. Approval will not be given where such views would be unduly interrupted or harmed, or where the opportunity to enhance such a view would be lost.

Identification of Designed Landscapes of High Historic Value

- 8.9** Some areas retain landscape features that are the product of a formal design process with the intention of producing both a functional and aesthetically pleasing landscape. Such areas include parks, gardens and cemeteries such as the formally landscaped grounds of the cemetery associated with St John the Baptist Parish Church. To ensure that the contribution of these areas to local character and distinctiveness is recognised, the most historically significant of these have been identified as Designed Landscapes of High Historic Value.

Policy 22

Designed Landscapes of High Historic Value (DLHHV)

Designed Landscapes of High Historic Value will be preserved and wherever possible enhanced and Dudley Council will resist any development or other works taking place which would be detrimental to the setting, character, quality and historic integrity of the landscape including detailed design features and individual historic components whether man made or natural.

Identification of Archaeological Priority Areas

- 8.10** There are sites throughout Dudley Borough including in Halesowen recorded in Dudley Council's Historic Buildings Sites and Monuments Record that have been identified as having high potential for the survival of archaeological remains of regional or national importance but that have yet to be designated. Dudley Council will consider the preservation of all such archaeological remains when assessing applications for new development, as well as identifying opportunities to make greater use of the archaeological resource in sustaining the area's character and distinctiveness.

- 8.11** The potential importance of such archaeologically sensitive areas is recognised through the 'Archaeological Priority Areas' (APA) as shown on the Proposals Map. Other areas of high archaeological potential may also be identified over the life of the Halesowen AAP which will be subject to the same policy.
- 8.12** In Halesowen it is considered that the whole “footprint” of the medieval planned town should be considered to be an APA as should the location of the Cornbow Mill and the Cornbow Bridge itself. The early pre-Norman history of Halesowen and the historical development of both the bridge and mill complex are poorly recorded in documentary sources and as such, archaeological remains are likely to be the best source to illuminate the town's early history and the development of these at least regionally important individual Heritage Assets.

Policy 23

Archaeological Priority Areas (APA)

Archaeological Priority Areas have been identified in the Halesowen Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation and in respect of these and any other areas of potential archaeological significance that may be identified and included in the Dudley Council Historic Buildings Sites and Monuments Record through the life of the plan, Dudley Council will:

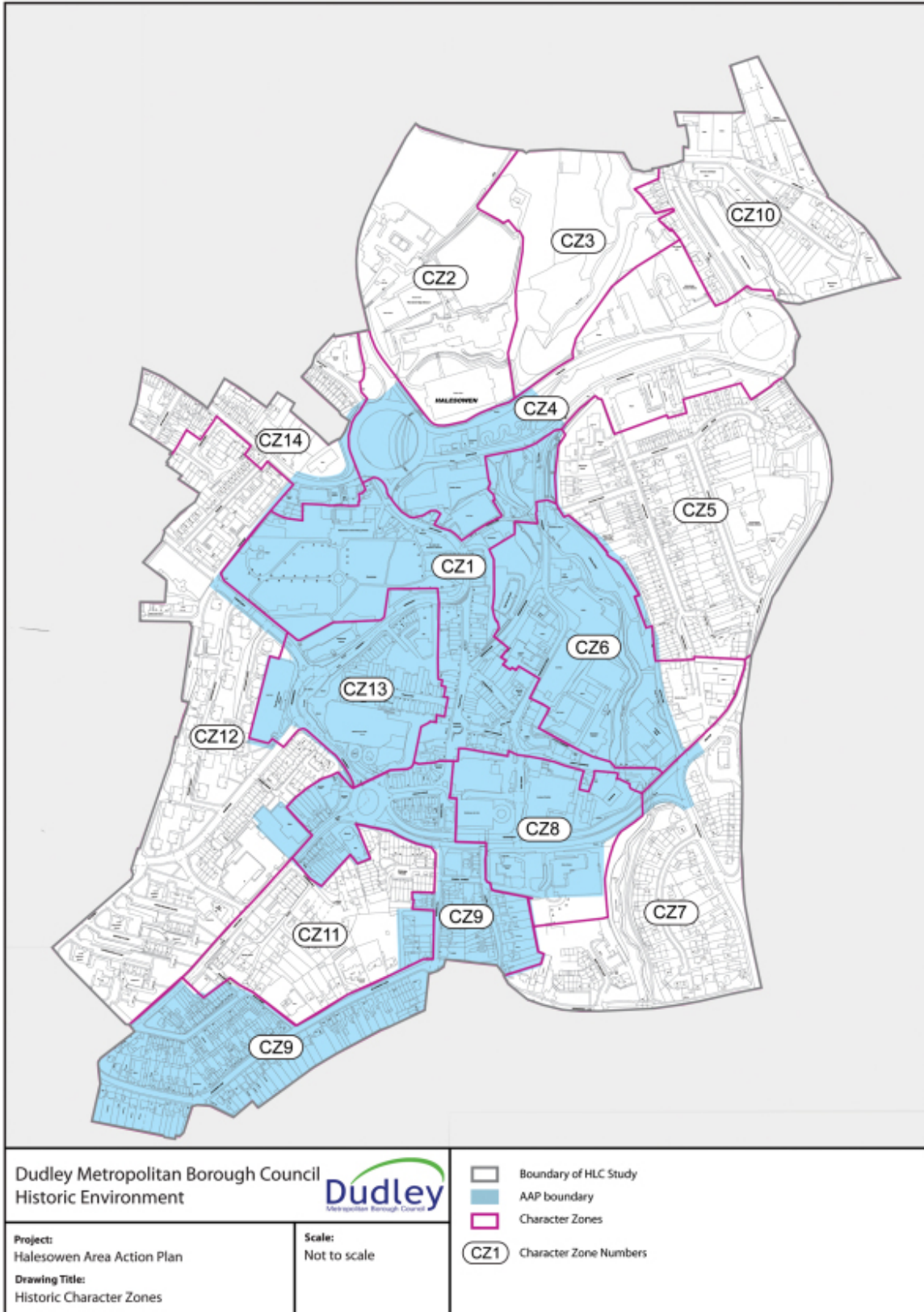
- Expect developers as part of any planning application to provide adequate information to allow the full and proper consideration of the impact of the proposed development on archaeological remains through desk top archaeological appraisal and as Dudley Council deems appropriate subsequent physical site evaluation/building recording.
- Resist development that would have a damaging impact upon significant archaeological remains and where potentially negative impacts have been identified expect developers to devise and put forward for agreement suitable measures designed to mitigate such impact in order to preserve buildings, structures or buried deposits in situ.
- Where preservation in situ would be unreasonable seek to ensure that provision is made for an appropriate level of archaeological investigation and recording of any building, structure or buried deposit of interest prior to the commencement of development, site clearance or infrastructure works and for appropriate publication of the results.

Assessment of the potential for Conservation Area designation

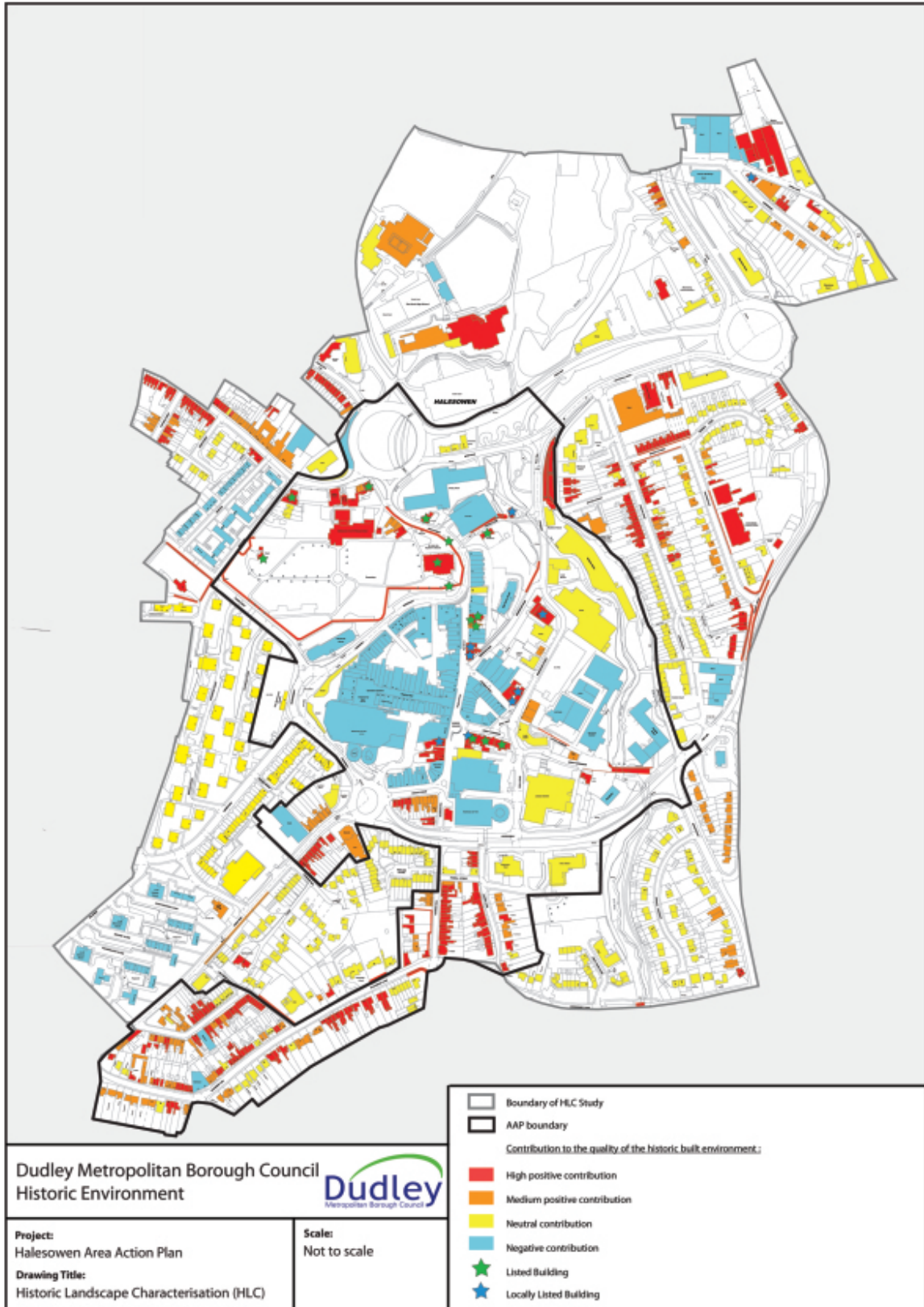
- 8.13** As part of Halesowen's Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation the potential for new conservation area designations was assessed and it was notable that there are delightful historic enclaves, such as the area around the Parish Church, Ivy House and Whitefriars whilst the High Street, anchored by the Lyttleton Arms, still feels historic. However, because of the nature of the modern redevelopment of the historic core of Halesowen there is a greater tendency for Heritage Assets to be “pepper potted” across the townscape rather than agglomerated in such a way as to make them susceptible to conservation area designation.
- 8.14** On analysis, it was therefore felt that formal conservation area designation could not currently be justified. Nevertheless, it is considered that existing statutory controls over listed buildings allied with the Core Strategy and this Halesowen Area Action Plan will in themselves allow Dudley Council to confer a high degree of protection to both individual Heritage Assets and local distinctiveness more generally.



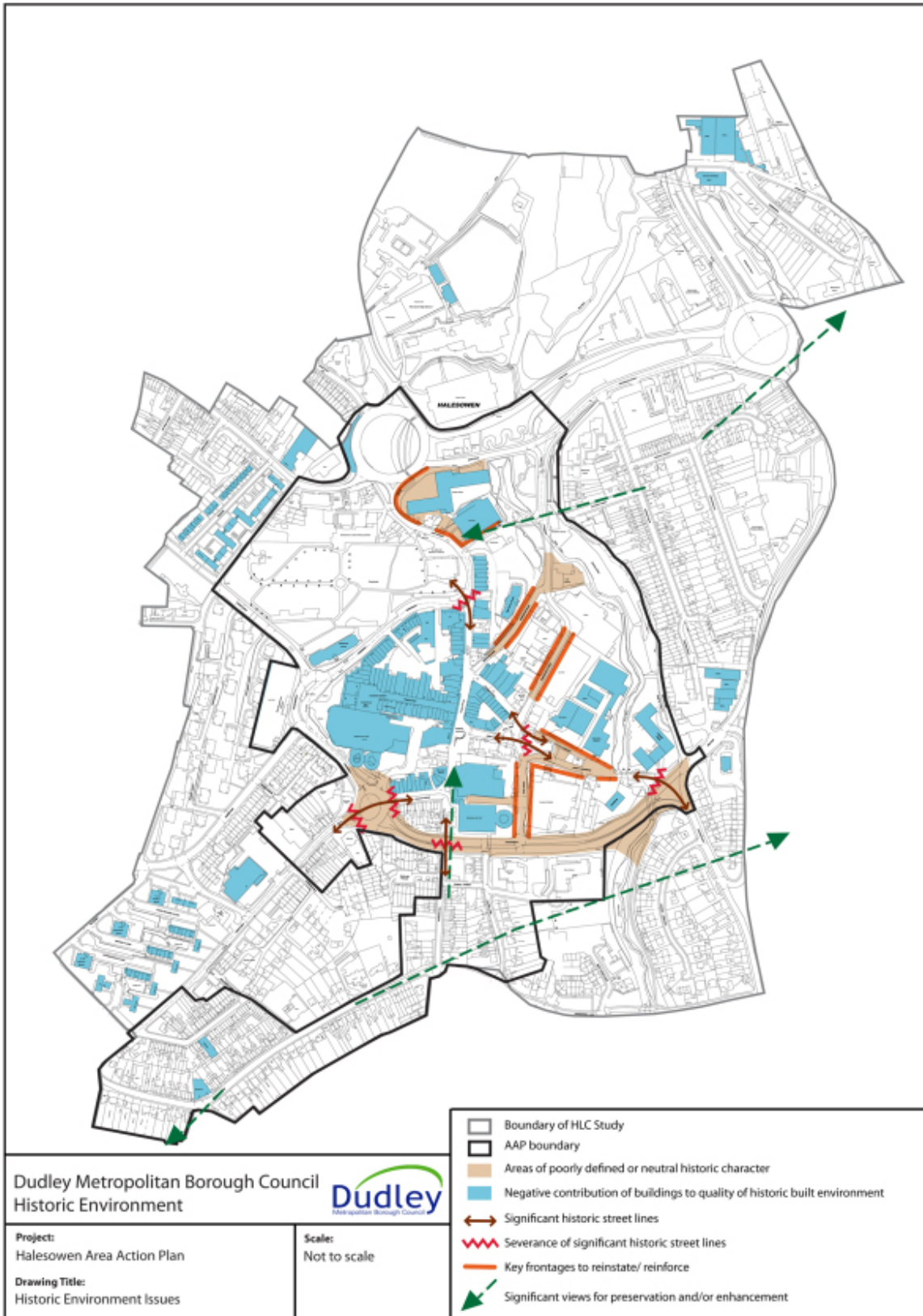
St. John's Church, Halesowen



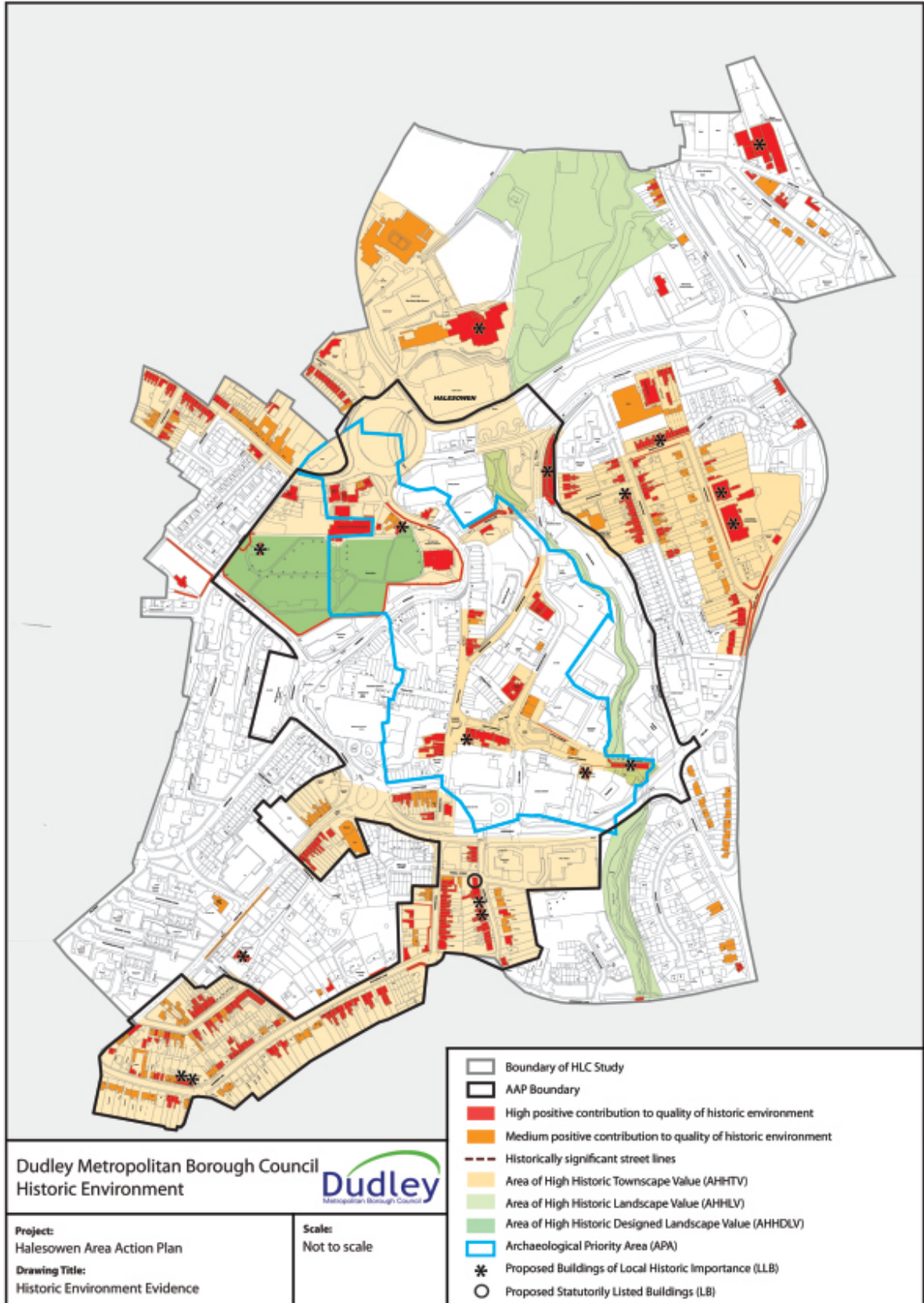
Map 4 Historic Character Zones



Map 5 Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC)



Map 6 Historic Environment Issues



Map 7 Historic Environment Evidence

9 Transport, Access and Movement

Objective

To improve ease of movement for pedestrians, cyclists, people with disabilities and vehicles in, at the edges of and into the Town Centre (and in particular Halesowen Bus Station) by enhancing streets, routes and spaces and potentially creating new ones, which will provide an environment that is safe, more direct and better integrated both physically and visually.

The Highway Network

- 9.1** Dudley Council will continue to develop and manage the highway network to improve access to the Town Centre whilst at the same time discouraging the inappropriate use of roads within the AAP boundary for through traffic, and therefore building upon the highway enabling works already delivered in High Street and Queensway that have provided improved access to the redeveloped Bus Station and the Cornbow Centre.

Policy 24

Managing and Developing the Highway Network in the Town Centre

Dudley Council will continue to maintain and improve access in and around the Town Centre and safeguard the existing highway network as appropriate.

Public Transport

- 9.2** Work to provide bus lanes, bus shelters and a new expanded bus station with associated alterations to the Queensway road layout has been completed. The Halesowen AAP will continue to support an effective and sustainable public transport network that will allow people to make smarter choices and therefore contribute to reducing congestion in and around the Town Centre.

Policy 25

Public Transport

Dudley Council will continue to work with its partners (West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority (Centro), and Bus Operators) to safeguard existing public transport provision as appropriate and give in principle support to any future proposed appropriate improvements to the public transport network in and around Halesowen Town Centre.

Access and Movement

- 9.3** Within the Town Centre, routes are direct and well connected despite some routes having a poor streetscape. The Town Centre also benefits from having a number of pedestrianised areas which enable people to walk and cycle more conveniently and quickly.
- 9.4** However, accessing the central area on foot or by cycle from the immediate surroundings is much less legible or direct. The River Stour and busy roads such as the A458 and A459 act as barriers to movement, in particular to the south and east of the town. Crossing points at key junctions and subways are indirect, reduce the perception of safety and impede pedestrian and cyclist movement into the town. In some locations pedestrian routes are completely separated from other modes of movement, are poorly overlooked, vandalised, and have blind spots. Poor linkages have been identified where vehicle dominant roads create severance on pedestrian desire lines (see Map 8).
- 9.5** A key ambition is to create a more positive built form edge along the Queensway so that pedestrians feel safer as part of the visible, active street environment. Development of Opportunity Site 1 Pool Road Car Park is considered an ideal chance to make positive changes to improving pedestrian movement into and around the Town Centre in this location.
- 9.6** Further assessment, and in particular of the Laurel Lane subway, will be required to establish levels of use and options for improvement. Dudley Council's 'Halesowen Urban Design, Regeneration and Public Realm Implementation Guide' will provide further detail.

Policy 26

Access and Movement

1. All development should retain and improve all useful, safe and appropriate vehicular and pedestrian routes and provide new ones that make access and movement easier, safer, more attractive and visually varied through and within built up areas.

2. Development should ensure that:

a) Streets link up and layouts are designed to encourage safer walking, cycling, use by people with disabilities, and access to public transport;

b) Direct, convenient and safe access is provided for pedestrians, cyclists and people with disabilities;

c) In new areas of residential development, new streets should be designed to prioritise pedestrians, cyclists and people with disabilities;

d) All development and townscape and landscape enhancements should seek to incorporate measures for the ease of access of everybody. This is particularly to ensure unhindered movement for everyone to and within Halesowen Town Centre and also along the River Stour corridor pathways. It is also to enable people with disabilities, the elderly and the infirm to have ease of access to, and avail themselves of, the facilities provided within the Town Centre. Proposals should be in accordance with Dudley Council's Access for All Supplementary Planning Document, and are required to incorporate an Access Statement that shows how the principles of inclusive design have been integrated;

e) In some instances a proposal may have substantial benefits to the wider local community but may not be able to achieve full accessibility due to heritage assets status, and therefore a considered pragmatic approach may be adopted;

f) A riverside walk should be delivered along the River Stour from Great Cornbow to Rumbow. The implementation of this route may be in phases as and when redevelopment opportunities occur.

3. In addition to this and where development comes forward, carriageway and river crossing points will be improved in the locations listed below that will help to improve pedestrian access and movement. Dudley Council will require that proposed development schemes contribute towards the delivery of these improvements where appropriate:

a) Birmingham Street north of Great Cornbow/Bull Ring;

b) Rumbow between Church Lane and Siviter Street;

- c) Linkage between Birmingham Street and Cobham Road/Centre Lane across the River Stour;
- d) Queensway/Summer Hill crossing point and ramped access and Laurel Lane/Pool Road connections to be improved in conjunction with the redevelopment of Pool Road Car Park opportunity site;
- e) Queensway/Grange Road junction to improve access to the southern stretch of the River Stour.

Walking and Cycling

- 9.7** Various types of severance are experienced across the Town Centre and this has resulted in physical, visual or perceived barriers to the movement of pedestrians, cyclists and people with disabilities. Perceived barriers often reduce the perception of safety and thereby inhibit movement and access to and within the Town Centre.
- 9.8** Core Strategy Policy TRAN4 'Priorities for the Development of the Transport Network' seeks to ensure that the Black Country has a comprehensive walking and cycle network, especially to encourage sustainable forms of travel, with positive health benefits. In addition, Dudley Council is seeking to promote linkages to nearby parks and open spaces, including the Healthy Hub at HuntingtreePark and the River Stour.

Policy 27

Walking & Cycling

The Council will safeguard existing walking and cycle facilities and give in principle support to any proposed walking and cycling infrastructure including cycle parking in and around Halesowen Town Centre.

Development should:

- Reduce dominance of traffic and increase pedestrian priority in key areas around the town.
- Help to increase the provision of convenient, secure parking for cycles
- Ensure good surveillance of cycle parking areas
- Improve the environment for pedestrians, people with disabilities and cyclists which may include traffic calming, shared surface, lower speed zones and better crossing facilities.

Car Parking

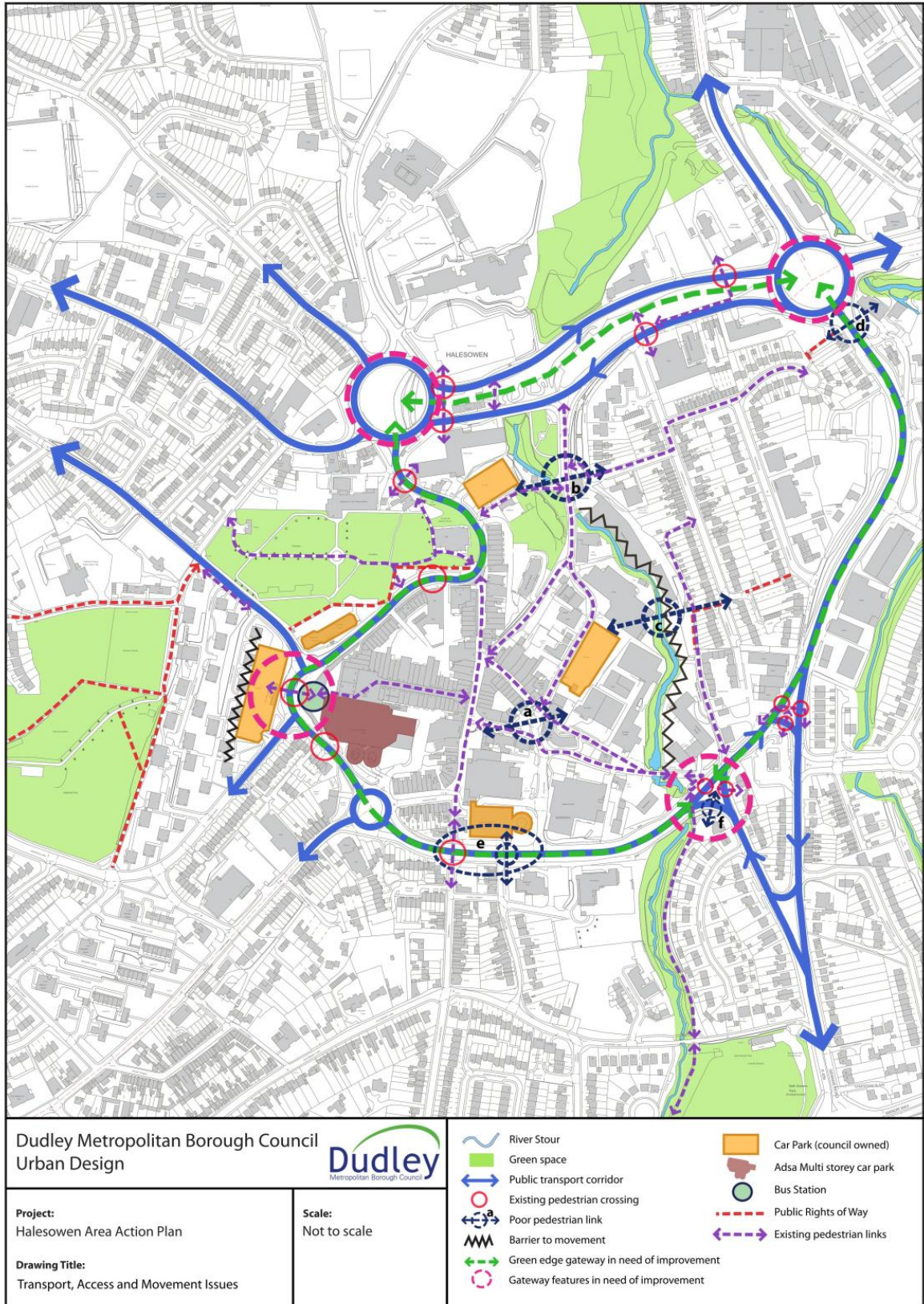
- 9.9** Halesowen has a number of public car parks located around the Town Centre and, in strategic terms, it is considered that provision for cars is adequately catered for in all parts of the town. Informed by evidence including surveys of the public parking provision carried out between 2009 and 2011, Dudley Council have identified in the order of 380 surplus spaces in and around the Town Centre.
- 9.10** Where development is being proposed, Core Strategy Policy CEN8 requires that the application of maximum parking standards will be consistent with national planning policy. The Government's National Planning Policy Framework provides general guidance on the setting of local parking standards. Dudley Council have developed a 'Parking Standards supplementary planning document - Review' which sets out detailed guidance on the way that Dudley Council expects parking and travel plan policies to be applied to new development, and in particular seeks a reduction in parking standards for areas with good sustainable transport accessibility.
- 9.11** Additional retail redevelopment will be focused towards development opportunity sites identified for Pool Road car park and Trinity Point/High Street car park. A quantum of the existing public car parking spaces at these sites will be retained within any proposed redevelopment scheme, together with additional car parking provision as required by the 'Parking Standards supplementary planning document - Review'.

Policy 28

Car Parking

The Council will continue to provide and safeguard the required quantity of public car parking spaces of the right type in convenient, safe, secure and suitable locations where appropriate and feasible to do so.

Dudley Council's latest adopted 'Parking Standards supplementary planning document - Review' applies to all new development proposals coming forward within the Halesowen AAP area.



Map 8 Transport, Access and Movement

10 Urban Design

Objectives

To achieve consistently high quality urban design, architecture and landscape that is sustainable and enhances existing buildings and spaces within Halesowen Town Centre.

To strengthen local character and distinctiveness by setting an approach that ensures new development respects the context of the Town Centre.

To enhance the town's natural assets by bringing them into active use for everyone to enjoy.

To strengthen the town's evening economy by providing more activities which are safe, balanced and socially responsible.

To improve safety and security through good design and layouts that will assist in deterring crime, anti social behaviour and reduce the fear of crime.

Design Quality

- 10.1** Halesowen Town Centre displays many good qualities such as its form and to some extent, its integration with neighbouring residential areas. As with most towns in the Black Country and around Birmingham, Halesowen has many hidden 'gems' including its network of footpaths and the River Stour. However, the character, image and appearance of Halesowen Town Centre is beginning to deteriorate. The quality of some buildings and spaces are dated and are in need of repair to help raise the overall quality of the town. While much of the urban fabric remains intact, providing well-defined urban spaces and activity, the edges of the Town Centre are fragmented with large monolithic buildings that turn their backs onto the public realm.
- 10.2** Parts of the Town Centre have been improved to raise the quality of the area, and there are some listed buildings that are recognised for their historical or architectural importance. The Halesowen AAP seeks to protect those areas which are valued and provide design guidelines for new development.

Policy 29

Design Quality

Development should:

- Be of the highest standards of architecture, landscape and urban design;
- Include a level of detail which gives the building visual interest for views both near and far;
- Have active ground floors that provide overlooking “eyes on the street” and increased social interaction;
- Have clear distinctions between public and private space;
- Reinforce the definition of streets and spaces by creating common building lines and strong landscape edges;
- Seek to promote well designed lighting schemes that create a more comfortable and attractive environment which increases surveillance at night and helps to reduce crime, fear of crime and anti social behaviour;
- Reduce the physical and visual impact of vehicles and service areas by providing a mix of parking solutions such as on-street, within a building's curtilage, and rear parking courts. Other parking solutions such as underground and above development should also be considered;
- Have a scale and massing which respects its locality;
- Contribute to gateways and landmarks, identified on the Views, Vistas and Landmarks Plan as appropriate, by reinforcing the identity and character of the routes and spaces they serve;
- Be designed in such a way as to be adaptable for a range of future uses.

Sustainable Urban Development

10.3 The purpose of planning is to help achieve sustainable development. In Halesowen Town Centre, this is achieved through:

- Protecting the finer grain of the historic sections, such as that provided by High Street and Hagley Street. This fine grain has stood the test of time because it is more durable, flexible and can adapt to changes in economic markets, consumer needs and lifestyles. New buildings need to be as adaptable and enduring as some of Halesowen’s past examples.
- The retail offer ranges from high street chains to smaller independent shops, helping the economy of the town. Providing variety and adaptability in uses and built form is essential to maintain the town for generations to come. Industrial and office premises are scattered across the centre offering a further degree of local employment.
- Good access to the local and wider public transport network helps people to be less reliant on private transport and supports the ambition to encourage an increase where appropriate in Town Centre living.
- A range of community and leisure services, nearby parks and open spaces offer recreational opportunities and supports the local population. The existing green network needs to be enhanced and managed so that the river corridor and other open spaces are made more accessible and usable for all and enhance biodiversity.

- 10.4** Development has a large impact on issues such as global warming, resource depletion and pollution, therefore new development proposals should promote sustainable living through the design, construction, use and management of buildings, open spaces and supporting infrastructure, with the principle aim of showcasing best practise in all forms of sustainable development.

Policy 30

Sustainable Urban Design

Development should:

1. Re-use existing buildings wherever possible, contributing to environmental quality;
2. Use environmentally friendly materials, including the re-use of salvaged and renewable materials;
3. Consider orientation, positioning, external and internal design of buildings, use of existing and new landscape, maximise the use of natural heat and light, and make use of active and passive solar gain technologies;
4. Contribute to local biodiversity, minimise the use of non-renewable energy resources, and encourage renewable energy technologies within the development;
5. Encourage rain water harvesting and grey water recycling to minimise water usage, ideally on a plot by plot basis, within an overall Sustainable Urban Drainage Scheme (SUDS);
6. Provide for an appropriate mix of uses within buildings to ensure longevity, adaptability, and possible future extension.
7. Provide a mix of building types, and tenures;
8. Incorporate appropriate provision for recycling, storage and collection of waste materials and composting;
9. Encourage green roof construction methods both for new build and retrofitting proposals;
10. Be designed to minimise reliance on the private car and encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport (but not prejudicing the appropriate provision of disabled persons parking close to the Town Centre's services and facilities). Supporting Travel Plans should be provided where appropriate.
11. Adopt low emission strategies wherever practical to mitigate climate change and air quality impacts. Examples include low emission delivery vehicles for commercial development or incentives to encourage uptake of cycling or use of low emission vehicles through provision of electric charging bays.

Urban Character and Appearance

- 10.5** Halesowen Town Centre currently includes a range of more or less defined areas of dominant character which have been broadly defined using such criteria as age, land use, urban form, grain, building type, architectural influences, landmarks, streetscape and landscape. Defining the urban character has been based on evidence from the Halesowen Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation and the Halesowen (Urban Design) Spatial Framework studies. These sets of information will guide future development proposals, ensuring that the historic environment and urban design issues are fully considered.
- 10.6** Table 1 and the Urban Character Areas map illustrate the area's identity as it is now and how it could be in the future, whether an area needs protection, enhancement, or if necessary strengthening.

Character Area		Description	Aim
1	A458 Earls Way, A459 Bromsgrove Road, Queensway	Principle highway that defines the edge of the wider town centre and would benefit from landscape improvements that enhances the approach to the town	To strengthen the landscape character that improves the gateway status and defines the edges of the town centre
2	Churchyard	Probably the most distinctive area in the town. The area is home to St. John the Baptist Church which is the strategic landmark feature for the town and the wider area. The churchyard is a significant landscape feature and a green asset.	To further enhance the setting of this area and to integrate it more with the High Street
3	High Street/ Hagley Street	Principle pedestrianised retail area with a mix of historic and contemporary built form, a place of vitality during the day	To enhance shopping facilities for the town by extending in both directions of the High Street from the north up to the southern gateway by Summer Hill / Hagley Road
4	New Road/	This area has a key role to play in further strengthening the sense of arrival to the town and	New built form will need to announce the entrance to the town whilst respecting the views

Character Area		Description	Aim
	Church Lane	improving views to St. John the Baptist's Church	and setting of the church and other statutory and locally listed buildings and structures in the vicinity. Maintaining and enhancing the character of this area will help to extend the townscape value of High Street
5	Fingerpost Gardens	A significant formal landscape green space in character which defines the north eastern edge of the town centre	To maintain its character and strengthen its links to the emerging open space network proposals
6	Tenterfields	A significant area in character comprising early 20 th century residential accommodation located east of the town. Somewhat cut off from the town by the River Stour	To maintain the character as a good quality sustainable residential area that supports the town centre's diversity. To establish a connection across the River Stour that increases access to the town
7	Rumbow	An area of mixed quality of built form comprising mostly commercial/employment uses. The area functions as a transitional area providing good links to the town centre; however the quality of the streetscene is poor	To strengthen the links to the town centre by improving street enclosure through new development and good quality landscaping. Maintain employment uses to complement adjacent character areas and provide greater diversity
8	River Stour	Mostly commercial area with a mix of offices, leisure and assembly and industrial uses such as the Zion Christian Centre and Rumbow works	To encourage new development that will assist in reuniting the river to the town centre as a natural and leisure asset
9	Great & Little Cornbow, Bull Ring	Historic route into the town from the east, and approach to the town's historic market place	To strengthen the area in terms of public realm improvements and stronger street frontage to give a greater sense of place
10	Pool Road	Dominant uses includes the leisure centre and access to the	To strengthen the area as a cultural/leisure area through

Character Area		Description	Aim
		Cornbow Hall. Therefore new development opportunities in this area should strengthen/support the cultural and leisure theme	redevelopment opportunities and public realm improvements
11	Cornbow and Bus Station	Enclosed mall type shopping area circa 1960's, was recently part-redeveloped along with an improved public transport interchange	To strengthen the character of the area through public realm enhancements

Table 1 The Vision for the Urban Character Areas (Map 10)

Policy 31

Urban Character and Appearance

1. All development should include elements of local distinctiveness in terms of street pattern, siting of the building in relation to the street, scale, massing, plot widths, building shapes, architectural style, materials and colour;

2. The choice of which locally distinctive elements are incorporated into the design of a development, and the degree to which they are incorporated, depends upon the location of the proposal, and the function the building serves in the townscape as described by other Policies in this Plan:

- a) In the High Street/Hagley Street Character Area, developments will incorporate a high degree of locally distinctive elements;
- b) Outside of this area, developments have the option of using a smaller choice and degree of locally distinctive elements provided that the overall character of the Town Centre is not prejudiced.

3. Developments can incorporate elements not described as 'locally distinctive' or be of a more contemporary style provided that the overall design of the development does not harm the achievement of a locally distinctive Town Centre.

Layout and Form

- 10.7** Streets which are well overlooked and have activity in them throughout the day and evening benefit from the presence and surveillance of residents and visitors, which can be demonstrated along the High Street. Making frontages

active adds interest, life and vitality to the public realm. Where this is not always possible, new buildings can be animated in other ways to encourage active edges.

- 10.8** The redevelopment of the town during the 1960s began to erode the original historic core and street pattern leaving large undefined areas where monolithic structures now exist, particularly on the edges of the Town Centre. These buildings can lack visual interest, with inactive frontages and edges resulting in poorly overlooked spaces.

Policy 32

Layout and Form

1. All development should seek to ensure that issues of safety and security are an intrinsic consideration in the detailed design and layout of buildings and the spaces around, helping to deter crime and reduce the fear of crime and anti social behaviour in Halesowen's Town Centre.

2. All new development will be required to achieve the following:

- a) Paths and open spaces should be well overlooked by buildings, whilst maintaining privacy for residents;
- b) A clear distinction between public, private and semi-private spaces;
- c) The provision and maintenance of adequate lighting and where necessary installation of CCTV as part of an integrated approach to crime prevention;
- d) The avoidance of dark or secluded areas;
- e) Integration into the existing pattern of pedestrian and vehicular movement;
- f) Streets and public spaces should be defined and enclosed by buildings with active frontages, structures and landscaping; and
- g) Developers will be required to demonstrate how proposals address community safety and crime prevention in Design and Access statements.

Further detailed advice can be found in Dudley Council's 'Design for Community Safety' Supplementary Planning Guidance. This document should be read in conjunction with the Halesowen (Urban Design) Spatial Development Framework.

Mixed Use

- 10.9** Vital places develop where there is interaction between users of different facilities, buildings and cafés serving business uses, residents supporting local shops and people accessing leisure facilities. Such integration also ensures the use of areas extends over day and night which creates safer environments.

- 10.10** Within the Town Centre, uses could be more mixed. An example is 'living above the shops' such as can currently be found in Hagley Road. The re-use of vacant upper floors in a Town Centre location is one way of helping a town to become a living place 24 hours a day. Other approaches such as flexible design solutions that allow for expansion and changes of use enable places to remain vital. Halesowen would also benefit from improving its night time economy and increasing appropriate leisure/evening uses that would attract people of varied backgrounds. Encouraging appropriate mixed use solutions will give people greater purpose to live, work and visit Halesowen Town Centre throughout the day, evening and night-time.
- 10.11** First and foremost, natural surveillance and the presence of people in well designed public places will always be the best way to encourage visitors to the town at night and a good form of crime deterrent. Other measures such as CCTV should be part of an integrated approach to reducing crime along with other design measures specified in this AAP's policies. Maintaining a good public transport service (which is one of Halesowen's strengths), good street lighting and secure parking facilities are essential elements to supporting the objective of creating a more mixed use 24/7 vibrant environment.

Policy 33

Mixed Use

Development should:

- Encourage appropriate levels of living above the shop in order to bring existing buildings back into positive use and to improve the town's vitality in the evenings;
- Increase the range of activities and venues that will provide a more diverse experience in the town;
- Improve lighting to make the town more attractive and safer at night;
- Create a safe, accessible, inclusive and innovative evening and night time economy which is safe, balanced and socially responsible;
- Integrate land uses to avoid unsustainable zoning of development;
- Ensure that mixed use schemes minimise potential conflicts between different users, including in terms of noise, amenity and servicing;
- Where possible break up the bulk of larger development land uses by wrapping smaller units around key frontages - thereby ensuring good active frontages;
- Develop a good relationship between open spaces, streets and built form.

Views, Vistas and Landmarks

- 10.12** Views and landmarks within Halesowen help people find their way around the Town Centre and create a variety and interest to the townscape that reinforces its sense of place and gives local identity. Unfortunately, out of scale, poorly designed or sited buildings and structures within particular sight-lines around the town have had a detrimental impact on the quality of the view and amenity it offers to local people and visitors.
- 10.13** Map 11 'Views, Vistas and Landmarks' illustrates an urban design appraisal of views, vistas, features and gateways both at the local and strategic level that positively or negatively contribute to the legibility of the town. Historically significant features such as LM1 (strategic landmark – St John the Baptist Church) and local views LV1 and LV4 are included.
- 10.14** The English Heritage guidance documents 'The setting of Heritage Assets' and 'Seeing the History in View' set out advice and a methodology for assessing and preparing proposals for new development that may have an impact on historic buildings, sites, areas and landscapes. These documents should be read in conjunction with the Halesowen Urban Design Spatial Development Framework and Halesowen Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation.

Policy 34

Views, Vistas and Landmarks

1. All development and any proposed alterations to existing buildings should not have an adverse impact on the identified important views, vistas and landmarks. Where the opportunity arises, development will be expected to protect and enhance local and important historic views, vistas, landmarks and gateways into and out of the town.
2. New development should respect the height, mass and visibility of existing Halesowen landmarks. Such landmarks should not be overpowered by new development, and their setting should be improved.
3. New development should emphasise key points of arrival (gateways) that may include distinctive corner features and built form edges that reinforce principle nodes, routes and spaces.
4. Development should have regard to and respect the following important views, vistas and landmarks:

Panoramic Views in/out Halesowen

PV1 – From Hagley Road to St. John the Baptist's Church

- PV2 – From Bundle Hill to Queensway/Bromsgrove Road
- PV3 – From Townsend Roundabout to St. John the Baptist's Church
- PV4 – From Earls Way to St. John the Baptist's Church

Strategic View

- SV1 – From Highfields Park to St. John the Baptist's Church
- SV2 – From Stourbridge Road to St. John the Baptist's Church
- SV3 – From Furnace Lane to St. John the Baptist's Church

Local View

- LV1 – Summer Hill to High Street
- LV2 – Rumbow to St. John the Baptist's Church
- LV3 – Bull Ring to St. John the Baptist's Church
- LV4 – Cobham Road to St. John the Baptist's Church

Vista

- V1 - Laurel Lane to Queensway
- V2 - Cornbow Bridge to Little Cornbow
- V3 - White Friars to St John the Baptist's Church

Landmark

- LM1 - St. John the Baptist's Church

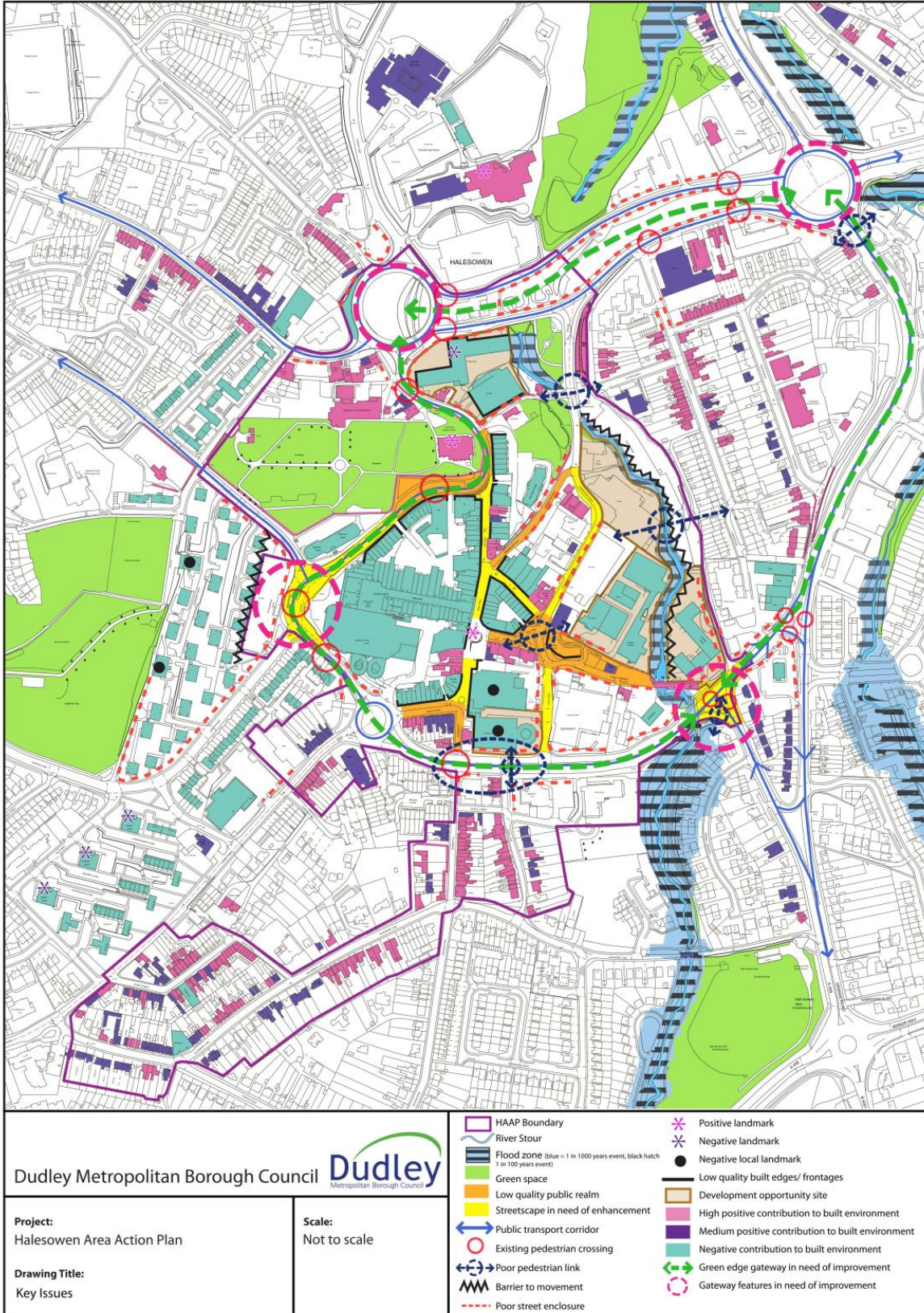
5. Where new development is likely to have an impact on an identified view or landmark, accurate visual representation of changes to the view will be required. Careful consideration will need to be paid to building materials and finishes, skylines and silhouettes.

6. LV1 and LV4 are historically significant views within an Area of High Historic Landscape Value requiring their protection and enhancement.

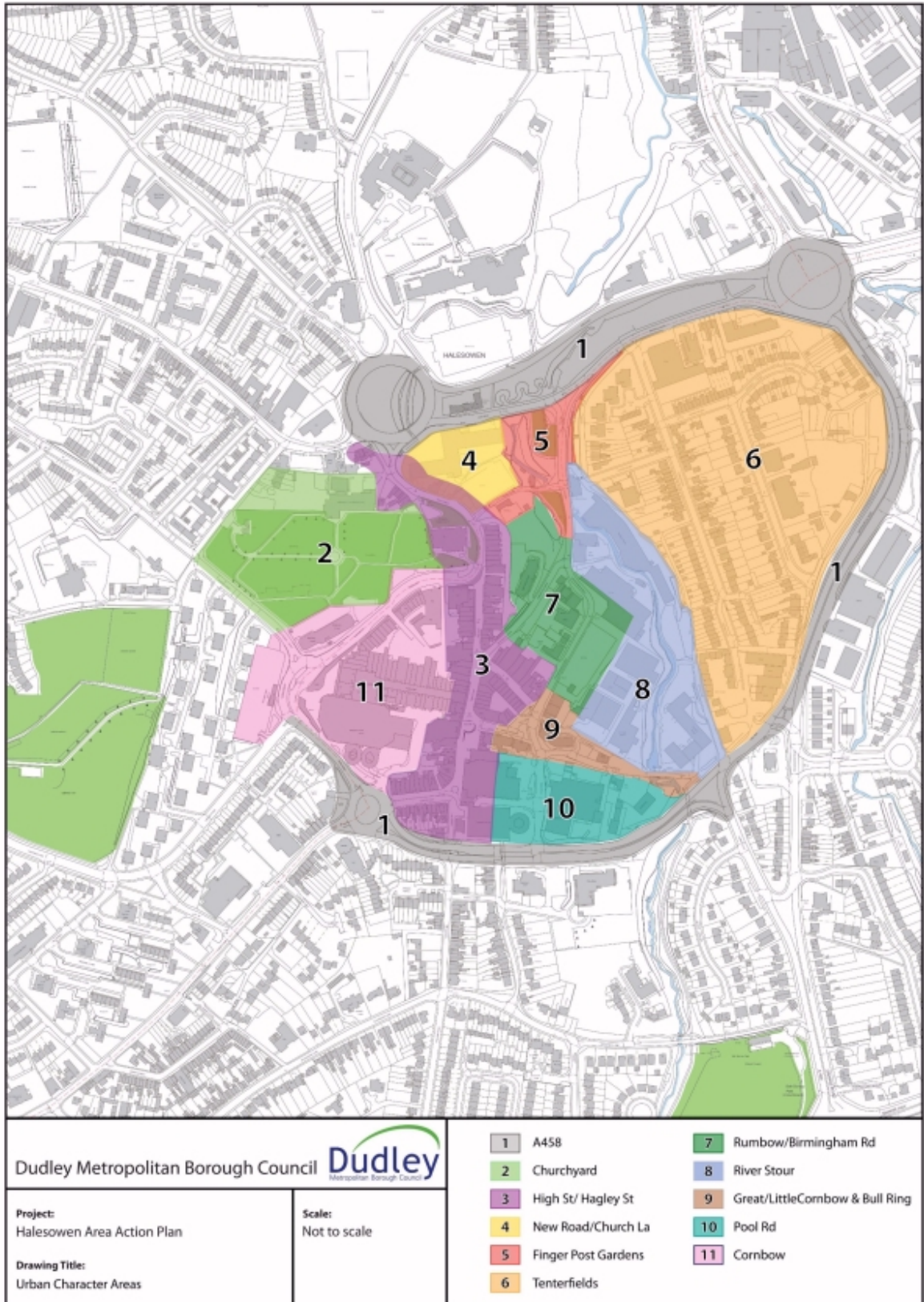
Building Heights, Scale and Massing

- New development must integrate well with its surrounding context especially in areas or adjacent to buildings with high townscape value;
- New development should offer variations in roofscape that respects important changes to local, panoramic and strategic views;
- Larger development facades should seek to reduce its scale and massing by subdividing into smaller elements.

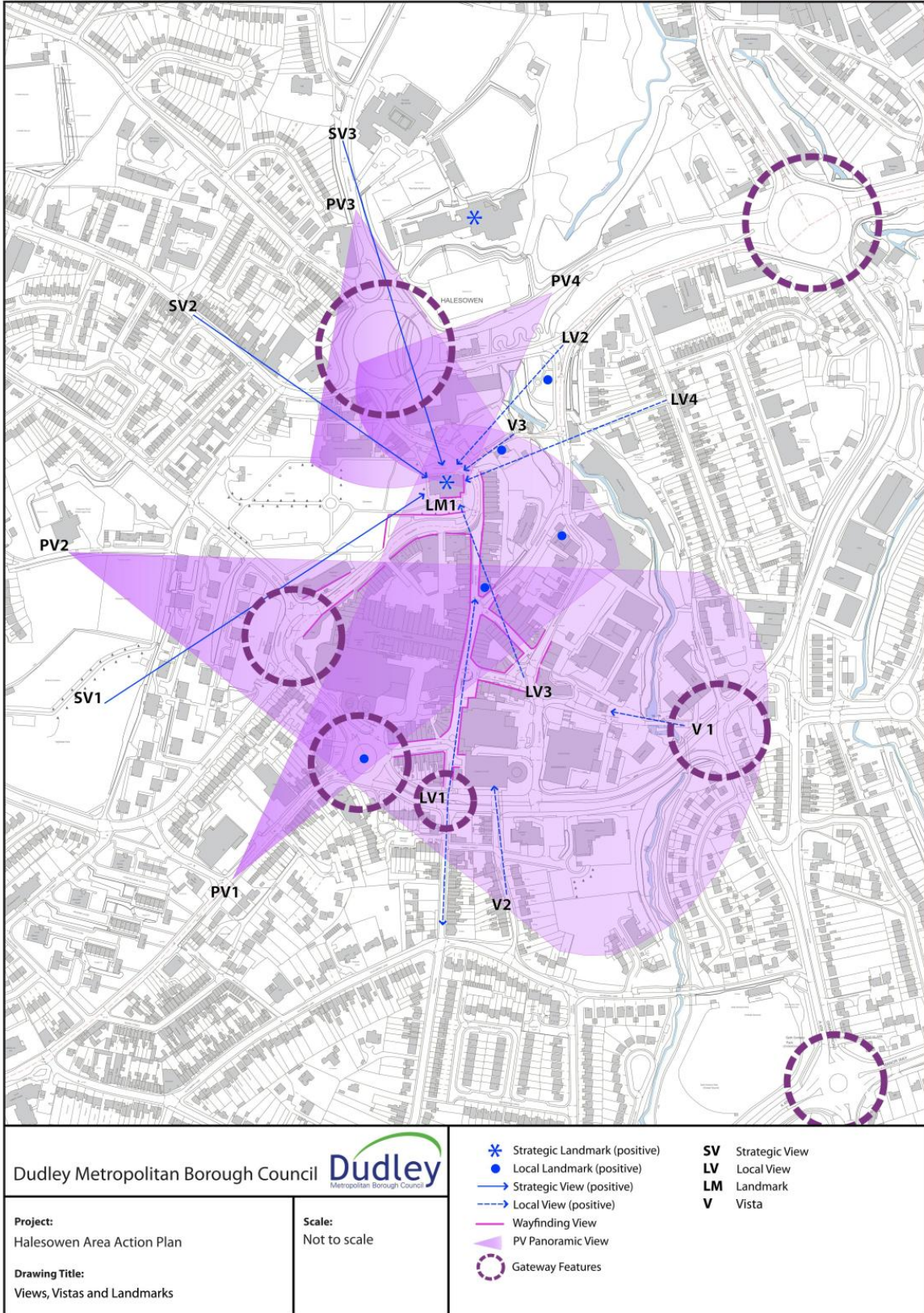
10.15 A more detailed Halesowen Urban Design Regeneration and Public Realm Implementation Guide will be forthcoming to advise on delivering the changes needed for Halesowen.



Map 9 Key Issues



Map 10 Urban Character Areas



Map 11 Views, Vistas and Landmarks

11 Delivery

- 11.1** The policies set out in this Halesowen Area Action Plan will be implemented by numerous mechanisms. It is expected that these will necessarily change and evolve over time. Indeed, delivery of these proposals will in many cases demand a multi-faceted approach and the commitment of a wide range of different organisations.
- 11.2** Investment will be required, primarily from the private sector into the identified Development Opportunity Sites. An Implementation Framework for the Development Opportunity Sites is available at Appendix 2. However, public sector investment can play an important complementary role, for example by enhancing the public realm and making the Town Centre more attractive to investors.

Planning Obligations / Community Infrastructure Levy

- 11.3** Dudley Council will seek contributions from developers and landowners to fund the infrastructure, services and public facilities that are needed to cope with the additional demands brought on by new development and mitigate any harmful effects, in accordance with Dudley Council's adopted policies, in particular Core Strategy Policy DEL1.

Monitoring

- 11.4** Regular monitoring will enable Dudley Council to measure delivery of the proposals and assess the effectiveness of the policies against specified targets. The results from this monitoring will be presented in Dudley's Authority's Monitoring Report, available at www.dudley.gov.uk.

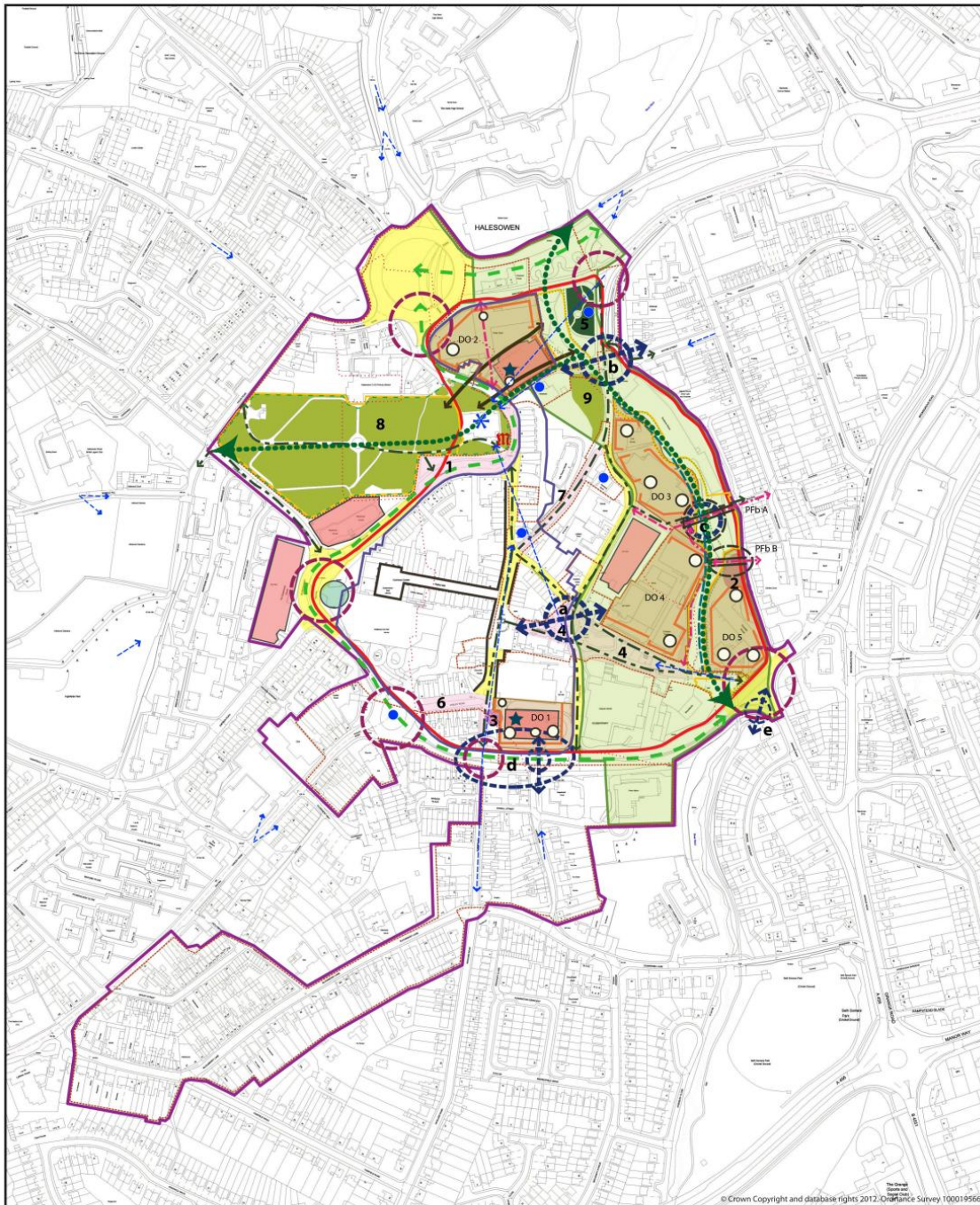
Policy / Objective	Indicator	Target	Delivery Agency
Land Use			
Policy 1 'Retail Floorspace'	Amount of new comparison retail floorspace provided in the Primary Shopping Area	In accordance with the Core Strategy	Developers/ Landowners/ Dudley Council
Policy 1 'Retail Floorspace'	Amount of new convenience retail floorspace provided in the Primary Shopping Area	In accordance with the Core Strategy	Developers/ Landowners/ Dudley Council

Policy / Objective	Indicator	Target	Delivery Agency
Policy 2 'Primary Frontages'	Proportion of units in the Primary Frontage occupied by uses other than Use Class A1 Shops	Less than 35%	Developers/ Landowners/ Dudley Council
Policy 2 'Primary Frontages'	Bunching of units used for other than Use Class A1 Shops in the Primary Frontage	No instances where there are more than two non-retail uses adjacent to each other	Developers/ Landowners/ Dudley Council
Policy 3 'Secondary Frontages'	Proportion of units in the Secondary Frontage occupied by uses other than Use Class A1 Shops	Less than 50%	Developers/ Landowners/ Dudley Council
Policy 3 'Secondary Frontages'	Bunching of units used for other than Use Class A1 Shops in the Primary Shopping Area ('bunching' being 3 or more adjacent units in Primary Frontages, 4 or more adjacent units in Secondary Frontages)	No instances where there are more than three non-retail units adjacent to each other	Developers/ Landowners/ Dudley Council
Policy 4 'Land Uses outside Halesowen's Primary Shopping Area'	Amount of new retail floorspace (Use Class A1 Shops) granted planning permission in the Town Centre but outside the Primary Shopping Area	0m ²	Dudley Council
Development Opportunity Sites			
Chapter 5 'Development Opportunity Sites'	Quantity and type of development granted planning permission at each development opportunity site	In accordance with the Implementation Framework	Developers/ Landowners/ Dudley Council
Landscape and Public Realm			
Chapter 6 'Landscape'	The number of planning applications granted permission contrary to the	0	Dudley Council

Policy / Objective	Indicator	Target	Delivery Agency
and Public Realm'	recommendation of the Landscape Officer		
Nature Conservation			
Policy 17 'Green Network'	Proportion of planning approvals within the Halesowen AAP's Green Network and Linear Open Space which deliver environmental improvements.	100%	Developers/ Landowners/ Dudley Council
Chapter 7 'Nature Conservation'	Reduction in SLINC area permitted through planning approvals which is not fully mitigated and/or compensated for.	No reduction.	Dudley Council
Historic Environment			
Chapter 8 'Historic Environment'	The number of planning applications granted permission contrary to the recommendation of the Historic Environment Officer	0	Dudley Council
Transport, Access and Movement			
Policy 28 'Car Parking'	Appropriate level of parking provided by new development within the Halesowen AAP boundary in accordance with Dudley Council's 'Parking Standards supplementary planning document - Review'.	100% compliance	Developers/ Landowners/ Dudley Council
Urban Design			
Chapter 10 'Urban Design'	The number of planning applications granted permission contrary to the recommendation of the Urban Design Officer	0	Dudley Council





Table 2 Monitoring Framework

12 Proposals Map



Halesowen Area Action Plan Proposals Map

Halesowen Area Action Plan Proposals Map - Key

-  AAP Boundary
-  Town Centre Boundary
-  Primary Shopping Area (Policy 1 - Retail Floorspace)
-  Primary frontage (Policy 2)
-  Development Opportunity Sites (Policies 8 to 12)
-  Location for anchor retail opportunity (Policy 8 - Pool Road Car Park; Policy 9 Trinity Point/High Street Car Park)
-  New green links improvements (Policy 13 - Landscape and Public Realm Network; Policy 15 - Public Realm)
-  Green street enhancements (Policy 13; Policy 15)
-  Green edge gateway enhancement (Policy 13; Policy 15)
-  Streetscape enhancements (Policy 13; Policy 15)
-  Protected open space (8+9) (Policy 14 - Open Space Network)
-  Pocket Park (5) (Policy 14)
-  New gateway (Policy 14)
-  New public space (2+3) (Policy 14)
-  Enhanced public realm (1, 4, 6 & 7) (Policy 14)
-  Green Network (Policy 17)
-  Area of High Historic Townscape Value (Policy 20)
-  Area of High Historic Landscape Value (Policy 21)
-  Area of High Historic Designed Landscape Value (Policy 22)
-  Archaeological Priority Area (Policy 23)
-  Existing transport interchange (bus station) (Policy 25 - Public Transport)
-  Riverside Walk - indicative (Policy 26 - Access and Movement)
-  New and improved pedestrian links (Policy 26)
-  New pedestrian / cyclist connection(s) (Policy 26)
-  Potential new footbridge / crossing point (PFb A or PFb B) (Policy 26)
-  Existing public car park (Policy 28 - Car Parking)
-  New landmark /built form accents opportunity (Policy 29 - Design Quality)
-  New Development Active Frontages (Policy 29 - Design Quality; Policy 32 - Layout and Form)
-  Gateway features / gateways to be enhanced (Policy 34 - Views, Vistas and Landmarks)
-  Views & Vistas (see Urban Design chapter - *Views Vistas and Landmarks* map) (Policy 34)
-  Strategic Landmark (positive) (Policy 34)
-  Local Landmark (positive) (Policy 34)
-  Linear Open Space (Dudley Unitary Development Plan Policy SO2 refers)
-  Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (Black Country Core Strategy Policy ENV1 Nature Conservation Refers)
-  Scheduled Ancient Monument - (St John the Baptist - Churchyard Cross)
(Black Country Core Strategy Policy ENV2 Historic Character and Local Distinctiveness refers)

Appendix 1 Urban Design Considerations on the Opportunity Sites

These sites present the opportunity for development and for improvement in other ways, for example, the enhancement of streets and spaces to provide a better quality environment for residents and visitors alike; improving the setting of heritage assets and respecting key views and gateways into and out of the town.

This section should be read in conjunction with the Halesowen Spatial Development Framework and the Halesowen Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation available at www.dudley.gov.uk. It is anticipated that further advice on the urban design issues and recommendations for these sites will be provided in a forthcoming 'Halesowen Urban Design Regeneration and Public Realm Implementation Guide'.

For all sites, the palette of materials for key areas and transition areas/streets needs to have a formalised approach that is consistent with the local character and distinctiveness, and all materials should be durable and maintainable.

Development Opportunity Site 1: Pool Road Car Park

Access and movement:

- Development proposals could opt to retain the connection from Hagley Street to Pool Road for pedestrians and cyclists. The route could be made for all modes. An alternative could be to close off access from Hagley Road to Pool Road to provide more developable land and create a more secure development form.
- New development should overlook public thoroughfares. Key streets are High Street, Queensway and Pool Road.
- Access, car parking and servicing for this site should continue to be provided from Pool Road. There is the potential to have a shared servicing area for new and existing development.
- Service yards should be located inside the perimeter block and suitably screened with active frontages and good quality landscaping to reduce the negative impact on the street and make these areas more secure.
- Development should seek to improve accessibility and connectivity at Queensway/Summer Hill and Laurel Lane/Pool Road. Improvements will need to be made to the existing crossing facility and ramped access at the junction of the Queensway; and Summer Hill, an important historic route and pedestrian gateway, should be reconfigured to ensure ease of movement for pedestrians of all abilities and create better sense of arrival.
- Improvements to on street parking could be made to Hagley Road in the form of echelon parking. Pool Road could offer a small amount of on street parking by reclaiming some of the road but still maintaining a sufficient width of carriageway.

Layout and Urban Form

- New active frontages to Pool Road, Queensway, and Hagley Street/Hagley Road should be provided wherever possible.
- Built form frontages should be well integrated with public realm improvements, the street edge and adjacent existing building lines to ensure continuity and quality of the street scene.
- Landmark features (architectural accents & distinctive corner treatment) should be provided at the corners of the site and at gateways (Hagley Street/Hagley Road, Pool Road/Queensway). An architectural feature/accent should also terminate the view from Laurel Lane.
- Larger units should be accommodated within a perimeter block with exposed facades having public frontages and active edges, with other development forms wrapping around this perimeter block where possible.
- Architectural design detailing of any larger development facades should be subdivided to create the appearance of smaller built elements to reduce the scale and massing. This will ensure the development respects the historical context of the town.
- The redevelopment of the Pool Road Car Park should offer the opportunity to improve access and the sense of arrival to the Cornbow Hall from Hagley Road. The entrance should provide an attractive architectural access that terminates the vista along Hagley Road.

Scale and massing

- Scale and massing of new development along Hagley Road/Summer Hill, Queensway and Pool Road should offer variety and visual interest by creating a variation in roofscape and built frontage that responds to the need to provide landmark quality development in key locations.
- New development should respect and integrate well with the context and should respond to existing buildings along Bull Ring, Summer Hill and Hagley Street that have high townscape value (buildings are up to 3 storeys high).
- Upper levels of a development should recede so that it is not visually intrusive to local and strategic views. New development needs to ensure the following views are not compromised - local view LV1 and panoramic view PV2.

Character and Appearance

- Development should seek to preserve and enhance established frontages.
- Treatment of building line, proportions, scale and architectural treatment will be a strong consideration as this opportunity site borders development of high townscape value.
- The design of any scheme will need to consider the retention of 1 Summer Hill. Positive design solutions will be needed to address this key piece of townscape whilst balancing modern day requirements for retail frontages.

Landscape and Public Realm

- Level changes between Summer Hill / Hagley Road and Pool Road must be carefully thought out to ensure activity can spill out at grade.
- Any extensive redevelopment should explore creating a new public space as a focus for the new development and a new entrance to the Cornbow Hall. Such a space should reinforce the southern pedestrian gateway and create a place for positive social interaction.
- All streets bordering the site are indicated for public realm enhancement that may include the provision of appropriate street furniture, bins and lighting.
- Hagley Road short stay parking could be redesigned to create wider pavements (allows extension of street market and other festivals). Improved/alternative parking arrangements should be considered such as an echelon parking arrangement to increase the number of parking spaces. There is potential for this street to adopt the shared space concept.
- Street tree planting should be provided to enhance the streetscene. Semi mature tree planting should be provided to Queensway to create a boulevard style environment.
- It is important to enhance Pool Road as this street will form the approach to the public realm improvements in the Great/Little Cornbow/Bull Ring area.

Development Opportunity Site 2: Trinity Point and High Street Car Park

Access and movement

- The existing access to the site from High Street and off New Road should be maintained for servicing and parking.
- Should a comprehensive development scheme be promoted that includes redevelopment of High Street Car Park then a combination of underground and multi deck parking wrapped with single aspect development would be encouraged. Service yards should be located inside the perimeter block. This will ensure that active ground floor frontages to key bordering streets can be created (Church Lane, High Street and New Road).
- The potential to open up a route from New Road to High Street and create a new vista framing the church and a new connection into the town should be explored.
- Pavement widths need to be sufficient to accommodate pedestrian flows and allow the opportunity for activity to spill onto the public realm.

Layout and Urban form

- The site could accommodate a range of development types. Larger built forms must have public frontage and an active edge that is wrapped by other development to minimise its impact on existing built forms.
- Development should present strong ground floor active frontages to existing and any new public realm. Boundary edges to be improved are High Street, Church

Lane and New Road (topographical challenges along Church Lane should be noted).

- New development located along the eastern boundary should seek to minimise overlooking onto and affecting the setting of 10 Church Lane.

Scale and Massing

- Architectural design detailing of larger development facades should be subdivided to create the appearance of smaller built elements to reduce its scale and massing.
- New development should provide landmark features (architectural accents & distinctive corner treatment) at the corners of the site and at gateways. This site forms part of the northern gateway into the town therefore a landmark feature should not obscure views to the Church. Key locations include the corner of High Street/Church Lane.
- Appropriate storey heights will be determined by their proximity and impact on the setting of the heritage assets, views, vistas and gateways. Therefore storey heights will vary across the opportunity site (critical protected local and panoramic views LV2 & LV3, PV3 & PV4 – please see the Views, Vistas and Landmarks map).
- Development needs to integrate well in terms of scale and massing with the existing grade II listed two storey building (Ivy House) within the opportunity site boundary and the two storey White Friars buildings in Church Lane which are statutory listed.
- Variation of the roofscape of new development in this location is essential to ensure views to the church are not impeded but are greatly improved.

Character and Appearance

- Development types such as residential and smaller scale retail would be better suited in some parts of this site, especially given the desire to extend the retail function of the High Street. However the site is significant enough to accommodate a larger development. Any 'big box' development should be accommodated within the perimeter block and design and detail must seek to break up it's massing and scale.
- New development anywhere on this site must respect the setting of all statutory listed and locally listed buildings on and close to this opportunity site (e.g. St. John Baptist's Church, White Friars, Ivy House and 10 Church Lane).
- New development must respect existing building lines and create good street enclosure that enhances the overall character of the area.
- In particular, the historic boundary retaining wall along Church Lane must be retained. New development should step away in order to preserve and frame the view up to the Church.

Landscape and Appearance

- Greening of the High Street and Queensway at this location to create a green edge gateway is a key objective of the Halesowen Area Action Plan. Queensway could be tree planted to create a boulevard style street that will help to define the edges of the town.
- This opportunity site borders the principle northern gateway where public realm enhancements should be made to the traffic island and the highway approach to the Town Centre.
- Potential new routes should be clear connecting links that are visually attractive, combining hard and soft treatments as a part of the developed whole.
- Tree planting and soft landscape features should be introduced to support wildlife corridors and links to other spaces within the Town Centre. Landscape improvements along Church Lane and the potential new route through the site will aid migration and foraging activity across St. John the Baptist's Church Yard to HighfieldsPark from the River Stour corridor.

Development Opportunity Site 3: Link House and Pioneer House

Access and movement

- Access to these sites is difficult due to the nature of the topography. Access to Link House will most likely be in the same position due to the size and constraints of the site. Pioneer House currently has an access point to the rear of the site with a mix of frontage and rear parking. However potential changes in the layout could provide alternative access to the rear of the site and maybe a combination of the two.
- A key ambition is to improve east - west connections by providing pedestrian and cyclist connection from Birmingham Street over the River Stour to the Tenterfields residential area. Opening up access to and along the river will provide an opportunity to create public spaces in this location. New development proposals should contribute to achieving this objective by accommodating new public access connections.
- Any new development proposal needs to contribute to creating a publicly accessible riverside walk.

Layout and urban form

- Development should continue to provide active frontages to Rumbow, Birmingham Street, the River Stour, public spaces and the new connection to Tenterfields area. This will increase activity and assist good supervision of the public realm. Topography is more challenging but slab levels should be staggered to ensure active ground floors and that entrances alight directly onto the street.
- Any redevelopment of Pioneer House needs to make better use of the changes in levels and create development frontage to Birmingham Street and the River Stour.
- Undercroft parking that greatly reduces the active frontage will not be acceptable.

Scale and Massing

- Any redevelopment of the Link House site should seek to fit in with its surroundings. Currently development is five storeys, however surrounding structures are three storeys high so new development needs to keep within this range.
- New development should offer variation in roofscape which responds to the need to respect local and panoramic views (see the Views, Vistas and Landmarks map - Panoramic view PV1).
- Pioneer House sits on the highest part of the site therefore storey heights of built form should be up to three storeys.
- New development should provide landmark features (architectural accents & distinctive corner treatment) at the corners of the site, junctions and views. Key locations include the bend of Birmingham Street, junction of Birmingham Street/Birmingham Road and corner location adjacent to the new bridge connection and any new public space.

Landscape and Appearance

- The potential new route from the Tenterfields area to Birmingham Street should be clear and visually attractive through an integrated landscape strategy which combines hard and soft treatments as part of the developed whole.
- Tree planting and soft landscape features in existing streets, new connections and facades of buildings will help to support and improve wildlife corridors.
- Future public spaces should visually link other green spaces on the other side of the River. Tree planting should provide a sufficient amount of shade, reinforcing routes and framing key views. New landscaping needs to provide a soft transitional edge to the River Stour. Public art should be provided at entrance points and gateways to enhance the character and identity of routes and public spaces.

Development Opportunity Site 4: Little Cornbow

Access and movement

- Servicing and parking must be provided inside the perimeter block to ensure frontages are not parking dominated. Some frontage parking may be acceptable but it must be balanced out by a high quality landscape scheme.
- Extensive redevelopment may provide an opportunity to increase permeability across the area and to the River.
- Redevelopment should provide the opportunity for a new route along the River Stour from Great Cornbow to the proposed new river crossing bridge that increases the permeability of this location.
- Pavement widths must be sufficient to accommodate pedestrian flows and allow the opportunity for activity to spill onto the public realm.
- Pedestrian crossing points should be improved between Little Cornbow and Peckingham Street and the Bull Ring.

Layout and Urban form

- New development should provide a stronger building line with active edges to the new connection from the Tenterfields area to Birmingham Street, Little Cornbow and the River Stour.
- Larger development forms or any expansion of existing built form will need to be accommodated within a perimeter block with other development forms wrapping around it.
- New development fronting Little Cornbow should seek to enhance and enclose the origin of the space as a medieval market place from the bridge up to Bull Ring.

Scale and Massing

- Architectural design detailing of larger development facades should be subdivided to create the appearance of smaller built elements to reduce the scale and massing.
- Landmark features (architectural accents & distinctive corner treatment) should be provided at the corners of the site and at gateways. This site forms part of the eastern gateway into the town therefore a landmark feature should reinforce this historic route into the town. Heights of new landmark features should not obscure views to St John the Baptist's Church. The built form should reinforce enclosure of the street to enhance local view LV7 and what was once the market place (see Landmarks, Views and Vistas map).
- New development should keep within an acceptable height range, providing variation in the roofscape and at key locations three storeys high maximum will help to protect and improve views to the Church (critical protected local and panoramic view LV7).
- Development needs to integrate well in terms of scale and massing with the existing two storey buildings within and adjacent to the opportunity site boundary.

Character and Appearance

- The site is very sensitive as it is located within key historically significant areas (Little Cornbow, Great Cornbow and close to the Bull Ring) and therefore: any 'big box' development should be accommodated within the perimeter block and design and detail must seek to break up its massing and scale; new development must respect existing building lines and create good street enclosure; and responding to the River Stour will provide opportunities to develop an identity for this area where built form can work harmoniously with the natural environment and new landscaping can unlock the nature conservation potential.

Landscape and Appearance

- New tree planting should be used to reinforce the route to the town from the eastern gateway along Great Cornbow and Little Cornbow.

- Potential new routes should be clear and visually attractive connecting links, delivered through an integrated landscape strategy which combines hard and soft treatments as a part of the developed whole.
- Increased tree planting and soft landscape features will support the wildlife corridors and help to create links to other spaces within the Town Centre.
- Public art should be provided at entrance points to enhance the area's identity e.g. at the Great Cornbow/Queensway gateway and at the Bull Ring. Smaller pedestrian gateway features from Little Cornbow to Peckingham Street will assist navigation of the town.

Development Opportunity Site 5: Fountain House

Access and Movement

- The site has two vehicular access points, one from Great Cornbow and the other off Centre Lane. Maintaining these two admittance points will offer flexibility and permeability for all modes of movement and optimise the opportunity to create better access to the riverside and the Town Centre.
- Parking and servicing arrangements should be contained on site within the perimeter block to reduce their impact on the setting of the riverside.
- Any new development proposal needs to offer a strip of land along the river to achieve a key ambition to create a publicly accessible riverside walk.
- The route along the River Stour, Great Cornbow and Centre Lane will require development to provide good levels of active and passive surveillance.
- The opportunity site is set in a dip and ground level is approximately one to two storeys lower than that of surrounding streets. Therefore undercroft parking is acceptable but design solutions must not reduce the active frontage onto public thoroughfares.
- The pedestrian route from Great/Little Cornbow to Queensway and Bromsgrove Road should be improved to respond to desire lines.
- The junction of Queensway and Grange Road should be improved to create more pedestrian friendly crossing facilities within the gateway location, in particular to reduce barriers to movement and improve access to the southern stretch of the River Stour and the green belt.

Layout and Urban form

- Perimeter block development could be achieved on this site e.g. with smaller scale development such as residential. Alternatively the development form must be dual aspect.
- New development should provide better enclosure of the street with stronger building lines with active edges to provide active and passive surveillance of Centre Lane, Great Cornbow, the River and Queensway.

- Site ground level is lower than street level on two sides; even so development must ensure active frontages are well integrated with the public realm.
- The existing perimeter wall from the corner of Queensway down Centre Lane would be better reduced in height or replaced so that inter-visibility between the building and the street is optimised.

Scale and Massing

- The current built form consists of five storeys with a maximum of seven storeys. Future redevelopment should seek to reduce the impact of such storey heights so that it fits in better with its surroundings.
- Monolithic development form is not acceptable therefore new development should offer variation in roofscape which responds to the need to respect local and panoramic views (Local View LV7 and Panoramic View PV2).
- This site forms part of the south eastern gateway into the town, therefore new development should provide high quality landmark features (architectural accents & distinctive corner treatment) at the corners of the site, junctions and views that will aid visual interest and legibility. Key locations on this site include the corner of Centre Lane and Vine Lane/Queensway, and the corner of Great Cornbow and Centre Lane.
- Architectural design detailing of larger development facades should be subdivided to create the appearance of smaller built elements to reduce the scale and massing.
- Public art should feature at the heart of the gateway to provide a sense of legibility and to announce the approach to the south eastern edge of the Town Centre.

Character and Appearance

- The site is very sensitive in terms of its proximity to the Cornbow Bridge, therefore new development needs to pull back to allow space, improve the setting around the bridge and improve views.
- New development should create better enclosure of the street along Queensway, Centre Lane and Great Cornbow.
- Historic built form references in this location are less prominent, therefore new built form should look to enhance the character of the River Stour and surrounding streets.
- Historically, this site was and still is a significant gateway site. The built form had landmark quality close to the back of the pavement of what is now the junction of Queensway and Centre Lane. This design approach is still relevant today.
- This site will contribute significantly to developing the River Stour character area. It is an ideal location to create contemporary development that uses sustainable design solutions. It should be a feature development demonstrating green roof and green wall construction, grey water recycling, use of sustainable materials etc.

Landscape and Appearance

- The site borders the River Stour and has the advantage of being at grade with the river compared to the Zion Christian Centre on the opposite bank. A publicly accessible riverside walk linking to the future bridge link and the wider movement network should be created, ideally extending up to Rumbow as and when redevelopment opportunities come forward. Potentially the riverside walk will add to the already established 'Shenstone Way' countryside walk and provide a much needed leisure health route.
- The riverside edge should be less formal and be designed to provide improved wildlife habitats along the river.
- Mature shrubs and trees may need to be retained (subject to tree surveys to ascertain their condition and value), balanced against securing active and passive surveillance along Centre Lane. The retention of specimen trees may impact on future form and layout of this site.
- New development will not be permitted to encroach into the tree canopies, which may prevent the desired built form street enclosure.



Halesowen Bus Station

Appendix 2 Implementation Framework

Project	Lead Authority	Land Assembly	Deliverability	Funding	Timescale	Viability	Risk
Site 1: Pool Road Car Park	Private developer led with active engagement from Dudley Council related to its landholdings	The car park is owned and managed by Dudley Council. The freehold of the adjacent properties is owned by Dudley Council but leased to the private sector.	This is the most attractive location for the market for new retail development. At present there is no identified developer for the site but this is considered a consequence of the current economic climate and this position will change over time.	Private sector funded	2016-2026	Viability is dependant on releasing some surplus public parking capacity to enable redevelopment of the car park to accommodate retail development at least on the ground floor (with some car parking re-provided within the scheme).	Low-medium risk. Suitable retail tenant needs to be secured and viability dependant on loss of some parking.
Site 2: Trinity Point High Street Car Park	Private developer led with active engagement from Dudley Council	Trinity Point is privately owned and the adjacent High Street Car Park is owned and	A prospective developer has supported this site's allocation indicating that it is a viable and deliverable redevelopment	Private sector funded	2016-2026	Viability is dependant on a suitable land use & occupier being secured and potentially on the release of some	Medium risk as current landowner has not supported or objected to the Halesowen AAP and thus

Project	Lead Authority	Land Assembly	Deliverability	Funding	Timescale	Viability	Risk
	related to its landholdings	managed by Dudley Council.	opportunity subject to co-operation from the current landowner of Trinity Point.			surplus public parking capacity.	their intentions are unclear.
Site 3: Link House & Pioneer House	Private developer led	Privately owned site	The site owners have confirmed their willingness to secure a change of use or redevelopment scheme. Identified as a development opportunity in Dudley's Adopted 2005 Unitary Development Plan (UDP).	Private sector funded	2013-2021	Current low demand for offices means that a higher value end use can be secured with timing dependant on the economic climate.	Low risk but dependant on national economic climate making redevelopment schemes viable.
Site 4: Little Cornbow	Private developer led	Privately owned site	Site owners actively support the allocation and are pursuing development opportunities. Identified as a development opportunity in Dudley's Adopted 2005 Unitary	Private sector funded	2013-2021	Higher value land uses can be secured so current issues with viability relate to national economic climate.	Low risk as site owners are actively investigating development opportunities.

Project	Lead Authority	Land Assembly	Deliverability	Funding	Timescale	Viability	Risk
Site 5: Fountain House	Private developer led	Privately owned site	Site owners actively support the allocation and are pursuing development opportunities.	Private sector funded	2013-2021	Higher value land uses can be secured so current concerns with viability relate to the national economic climate.	Low risk as site owners are actively supportive of securing an alternative use of the site.

Table 3 Delivery Plan - Development Opportunity Sites