
DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET - 14th DECEMBER 2005

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT

BLACK COUNTRY STUDY – INFORMATION REPORT ON THE BLACK COUNTRY STUDY DUDLEY EVENT

Purpose of Report

1. To inform members of the issues that were raised at the event on the 28th November 2005 at the Black Country Living Museum.

Background

2. The Black Country Study is the first phase of the review of the Regional Spatial Strategy. In approving the existing Regional Spatial Strategy in June 2004 the Secretary of State stated that future reviews were necessary and that an early review of certain aspects of the document were necessary. He stated that “A particularly important study is underway for the Black Country to assist in resolving the many inter-connected issues affecting this part of the Region. This will advise on a broad range of issues including regeneration priorities, the strategic role of Town Centres and Merry Hill, urban capacity, identification of employment land, scope for environmental and town centre improvements, and ways of improving access to regeneration sites particularly on the eastern side of the Black Country” (Para 1.32, RSS, 2004). This study is the Black Country Study.
3. In February 2005 the project plan for the Black Country Study was launched by the Regional Assembly in partnership with the Black Country Consortium and the four Black Country Boroughs setting it out as the first phase of the Review of the Regional Spatial Strategy. Since the launch of the project plan a great deal of technical work has been undertaken which your officers have been involved in. It is now time to consult on this work and the Black Country Consortium are consulting on the spatial options for the Black Country. These spatial options are set out in the spatial options consultation document. The document seeks views on a number of set questions. There is a separate item on this agenda which details the Dudley Council response to the consultation.
4. Members will recall on the 13th October 2005 a report was presented to the special meeting of the Cabinet seeking member agreement to use the evidence base and the consultation options document as a basis for consultation. The consultation period runs from the 14th November 2005 to the 6th January 2006. Dudley Council held a consultation event as part of the local consultation, on the 28th November at the Black Country Living Museum for all our partners in the Borough.

5. The event was chaired by Dennis Hodson, Director of Dudley Community Partnership and Cllr David Caunt, the Leader of the Council. The event also involved presentations from the Chief Executive, the Chair of the Dudley Community Partnership Kurshid Ahmed, and included presentations from the Black Country Consortium and Borough Planning Officers. The event was well attended with some 150 delegates attending from a wide range of agencies and organisations.
6. During the event workshops were organised. The workshops were structured around the questions asked in the consultation document, and sought stakeholder views on issues appertaining to Dudley Borough. There was a good discussion in the workshops and these responses have been written up. The representations are attached at Appendix 1 for your information and will be sent to the Black Country Consortium as part of the Consultation process and have, where possible, been incorporated into the Dudley Council response to the consultation. Appendix one is an Officer summary of comments and appendix two is a full write up of the discussions in the workshops.

Finance

7. The Black Country Study is managed centrally by the Black Country Consortium, which is part funded by this Council and the three other Borough's. Dudley Council provides very significant support in terms of professional officer work.

Law

8. The Black Country Study is the first phase of the Review of Regional Planning Guidance for the West Midlands (RPG11) (2004) as advised by the First Secretary of State in RPG 11 (2004). Under Section 38 (3) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that the Development Plan for the Borough consists of Local Development Plan documents and the Regional Spatial Strategy. The Regional Spatial Strategy therefore must be taken account of in the consideration of development proposals in the Borough.

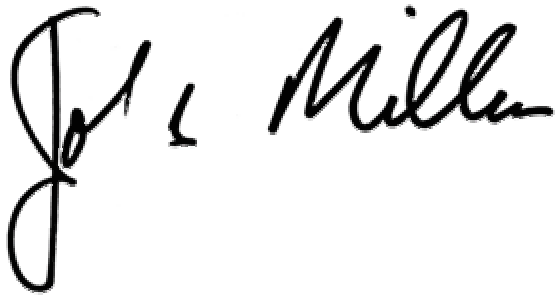
Equality Impact

9. The Black Country Study seeks to create a positive impact to increase regeneration opportunity in the Black Country, to create a better quality of life and create a more prosperous economic base. Moreover, the study seeks to reverse the trends that lead to social exclusion in the Black Country. The consultation methods employed at a sub regional and Borough level will aid in ensuring that the aspirations of all citizens are taken into account in an inclusive manner. The content of this report complies with the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy.

Recommendation

10. It is recommended that:-

- Members note the content of the report.



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List of Background Papers

BLACK COUNTRY STUDY OPTIONS DOCUMENT

APPENDIX ONE

OFFICER ANALYSIS OF COMMENTS IN WORKSHOPS

During the event on the 28th November a series of workshops were held where stakeholders were asked to engage in discussion focused around key questions which related to the Dudley dimension of the Black Country Study. The groups were entitled Centres and Offices, Housing, Employment Land, Environment and Transport. The groups were facilitated by external facilitators and or Dudley Council Officers who have been trained in facilitation skills. Each group was assigned a technical expert to answer any questions within the group. At appendix Two is a direct write up of the workshops. This appendix seeks to tease out the main issues raised in the workshops. The issues raised are the views of a range of stakeholders and partners and where possible these issues have been incorporated into the Dudley Council response to the Black Country Consortium which is a separate item on this agenda.

CENTRES AND OFFICES WORKSHOP

Within the centres and offices workshops five key interrelated questions were asked focused around where the retail floorspace should be located in the next thirty years, whether Brierley Hill should be afforded strategic centre status, and what the benefits of that would be, what Brierley Hill needs to function as a strategic centre, and what should be the role for Dudley town centre?

The points below summarise the key issues arising in the workshop.

- New floorspace in the Black Country should be focused around the Black Country's four centres.
- It is essential the Black Country Boroughs recaptures some of the leaked expenditure which is being spent in other areas outside of the Black Country for some years.
- Brierley Hill and Dudley should be seen as being complementary and not competing against each other as they both have different roles.
- Town centre masterplans are a method of ensuring that the centres receive regeneration to ensure both clarity and flexibility in the process and to ensure delivery of regeneration in all the centres in the Borough.
- The environment needs to be enhanced in the centres to allow the centres to attract quality developments and attract investment.
- Brierley Hill should be afforded strategic centre status as it is recognised that Brierley Hill has the land available (physical capacity) for development.
- Brierley Hill cannot fully recognise its regeneration assets if the centre is not a designated centre as it cannot expand.
- One of the main features required to make the centre more of a town centre is a better integrated public transport system, a parking regime and better pedestrian linkages.

- If Brierley Hill was designated as a strategic centre then it would be able to attract funding, transport, homes, diversity of jobs, leisure and culture and education opportunities which would benefit the community.
- Phasing is required to ensure that harm is not caused to other centres by growth at Brierley Hill.
- A strategy is needed to join up the waterfront, Merry Hill Shopping centre and the Brierley Hill High Street and the importance of the Brierley Hill High Street must be recognised and a focal point is needed to bring different elements of the centre together, for example a town square.
- Dudley Town Centre needs to focus on its role as a civic, cultural and leisure centre, and could learn from Town's like Bridgnorth.
- Residential development is essential in the Town and that the town's historic and heritage role must be built upon also needed greater diversity with a better profile building the opportunities offered by the castle and Zoo, and the need to ensure that the centre remains a focus for the administrative and civic functions of the Borough.
- Local centres have a key role to play.

EMPLOYMENT WORKSHOP

The employment group discussed the issues of providing quality locations for employment land in the Borough and how Dudley can address the fact that the Borough has the lowest average weekly earnings in the Black Country.

The points below summarise the key issues arising in the workshop.

- The Black Country's image and environment is a barrier to both business and in-migration. In particular, transportation problems need to be resolved.
- All the Black Country's employment needs should be met within the Black Country but a proactive approach would be required for land assembly and remediation to provide suitable sites, including more large employment sites.
- Opinion was divided on whether more emphasis and sites should be given for housing growth or protected for employment use. Mixed use development can provide opportunities for employment, training and education and will achieve greater integration at a local level with smaller employment sites in the heart of communities.
- More information is needed on the skills and education gap with concern expressed for particular sections of the community including ethnic minorities and the 16-19 year old age group.
- There is a role for special projects and private sector companies in working with education providers to reduce the skills gap.

- There is a need for greater understanding and consultation with local communities and partnerships.
- The consultation focuses on technological solutions and fails to adequately capitalise on the Black Country's heritage and tourism possibilities.

HOUSING WORKSHOP

There were three main questions posed in the Housing Workshop they were, What should we give priority to in order to meet housing needs and achieve a wider variety of house types and population mix?, what should we look towards for our future housing supply? and, what can be done to attract and retain people living in the Black Country?

The points below summarise the key issues arising in the workshop.

- The provision of quality housing, particularly in design terms as well as aspirational housing is important along with affordability (to ensure that a mix of population is retained).
- A better quality environment is important to meet aspirations (including the retention of green areas and green belt).
- Accessibility and the transport infrastructure needs improving to tackle congestion if the Black Country is to remain attractive to all communities.
- Utilisation of brownfield land for housing is essential but also synchronising this with other land uses.
- There is a need to look at higher density of housing in specific areas.
- Refurbishing existing housing as well as adding additional dwellings which compliment the existing dwellings is important.
- Greater partnership working and co-operation between developers, local communities and the local authority is essential.
- Investment in jobs is essential and we need to ensure that they are the right kind of jobs and it is important to develop a culture of training and working in essential trades.
- Dudley and the Black Country needs a broader selection of quality houses within areas ranger from small starter homes through to aspirational housing.

ENVIRONMENT WORKSHOP

A number of questions were asked in the environment workshop focused around securing a good quality of life in both the Black Country, and Dudley, around the role of landscapes, canals, hills, valleys, geology in Dudley and how the Urban Park concept can be implemented and exploited in Dudley Borough.

The points below summarise the key issues arising in the workshop.

- There is a need to raise awareness of current strengths of the environment.
- Partnership working and involving the community in development is essential.
- Local distinctiveness and high quality design is important.
- Improving the management of open spaces and canal networks is key to the delivery of a better environment in the Black Country.
- There is a need for a network of parks across the Black Country.
- The Black Country offers diversity and this is a key asset.
- The Black Country Geo-park and the importance of geology in the Black Country is an issue that the Black Country Study should consider.
- There needs to be a clear identity for the Black Country and Dudley as much of the identity of the Black Country is historically built around the old settlements, the Black Country was a 'continuous village' history and this could be exploited.
- There is a lot of potential for quality of parks, canals and nature reserves and disused railway lines.
- There needs to be strong interrelationships between the environment and the tourism economy of the Borough.
- With regard to the Urban Park, it was discussed that project champions were required, with more publicity and to be better linked to tourism and heritage and that this should be focused on the Castle and other assets that the Borough has. Although, some delegates felt that the urban park concept was not appropriate in the Black Country.

TRANSPORT

Within the transport workshop three main questions were asked focused around the issues of the areas which were poorly served by public transport within the Black Country and the Borough, the priorities that the Black Country should be looking at in terms of transport links and the need for targeted priorities to be focused in Dudley Borough to ensure accessibility to key sites.

The points below summarise the key issues arising in the workshop.

- The capacity on the Wolverhampton to Coventry main line should be increased to allow better accessibility to the Black Country.
- There is a need to improve accessibility to the west of the Black Country in particular the need to improve priorities to the Pensnett trading estate (the opportunity to rail freight was also discussed).

- There is a need to implement transport schemes rapidly and to learn from other international examples. There was also a discussion on the need for reliability of buses and public transport and a need for community transport).
- There is a need for park and ride schemes with good links to the centres.
- A culture change is needed to ensure lifestyle changes take place with relation to modal shift.

The basis of the discussion in the workshops accords with the Dudley Council response to the Black Country Study and the general themes discussed have been incorporated into the Dudley Council response to the consultation where appropriate.

OPINION GAUGE

During the workshops an opinion gauge was used, where stakeholders and partners were asked their opinion on a number of questions, this is attached as part of appendix two. The following paragraphs set out the main opinions expressed in the opinion gauge.

CENTRES AND OFFICES

Fifteen stakeholders felt that they strongly agreed that we should be looking to locate shopping and leisure facilities within the Black Country, with no delegates considering that we should rely on other areas outside the Black Country to meet our shopping and leisure needs. Thirteen people felt that Brierley Hill should play the role as the Borough's strategic centre and twelve delegates felt that Dudley Town Centre should be a focus for leisure and cultural activity in the Borough.

When asked whether health, education and culture facilities should be spread either in the four strategic centres or spread across the neighbourhood centres there was a general spread of opinion. When asked whether we should be looking to locate office jobs in the four centres or if we should be focusing on other strategic locations again the spread of opinion was across the board.

EMPLOYMENT

On employment issues, when asked whether we should meet all the employment needs of the Black Country within the Black Country or rely on areas outside the Black Country to meet our employment needs, all seven respondents agreed that we should try to meet all our employment needs within the Black Country. When asked whether we should plan for employment sites to be designated for other uses, (eg Housing) or retain new and existing employment sites for employment there was a spread of opinion across the board. When asked whether we should be looking to place more emphasis on providing for population growth and housing needs or place more emphasis on providing for employment needs again, there was a spread of opinion across the board.

HOUSING

With regard to housing nine stakeholders felt that we should be encouraging a mix of housing densities at neighbourhood level, with 6 feeling that they should encourage a mix across the Black Country as a whole.

ENVIRONMENT

When asked whether the environment should be the first issue addressed in transforming the Black Country or if it should be jointly addressed with other issues in transforming the Black Country, there were fourteen votes which either agreed or strongly agreed that it should be the first issue, with 5 voting for a joint approach. Sixteen people felt that the policies relating to centres, employment and housing should contribute to environmental improvements and objectives with only one agreeing that they shouldn't. Nine stakeholders voted that we should be setting higher than national environmental targets of sustainable management through the Black Country Study, with none stating that we should only meet national targets.

TRANSPORT

In the transport group, stakeholders were asked to vote what they thought was important, less important and not important. Three people felt that improvements to aid walking was important, along with three people feeling that improved rail services and new or improved roads were important along with 3 stakeholders feeling that park and ride was important, two people felt that extending metro beyond existing proposals was important, with one person considering that improvements to aid bus services was important, along with one person feeling that demand management was important. One person felt that improvements to aid cycling was less important.

The views expressed in the opinion gauge have been incorporated into the Dudley Council response to the Black Country Study where appropriate.

APPENDIX TWO

WRITE UP OF DISCUSSION IN WORKSHOPS

Centres and Offices Discussion

QUESTION	Discussion
<p>1. Evidence demonstrates that there is a significant amount of extra retail floorspace required in the next 30 years to accommodate the extra expenditure from Borough residents. Do you feel that this floorspace should be focused in the Borough's centres?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agree the floorspace should be focused in Borough's Centres.• Group would like to see Merry Hill extended West to Brierley Hill• possibly with affordable housing and develop Brierley Hill as a village centre.• Also need to see Local centres developing for local needs• Plan documents and policy – be specific on floorspace etc but offer flexibility of choice.• Need clarity and flexibility in plans.• Need also to think about roads and access.• How do we encourage private investment, it needs to be workable.• Move away from fixed use zone plans.• Working on a masterplan for Stourbridge looks at flexible packages.• Consider cross border relationships between Telford etc. Black Country plus group working on this.• A491 bottle neck plus a lot of future developments.• Leakage a key issue.• Need to reverse leakage.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take out poor retail units in Dudley. • Improve environment in town centres (some improvement already). • Need short term priorities and long term direction. • Council offices should remain in Dudley. • Brierley Hill and Dudley Complementary (Brierley Hill planned centre and Dudley offices/ different offer). • Must retain high spenders • <u>Range</u> of housing offer, e.g. town houses, apartments • Planning framework required. • Scheme needs to meet market flexibility. • Need Balance – Resi v Service • Good management of regeneration and planning process needed • Community – convince to stay locally – education, starter business • Good at retaining – need to improve inward investment – image.
<p>2. Evidence suggests that Merry Hill/ Brierley Hill centre acts as a strategic centre. Do you feel that the area should be afforded strategic centre status?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, Brierley Hill should be a strategic centre. • Improve western side of Brierley Hill. • Merge Brierley Hill/ Merry Hill. • Brierley Hill High Street is very busy and its viability should be protected. • Area suffers because it was an Enterprise Zone and seen as out of town – policy clarification needed.

- If it does not have a designation cannot put forward ideas for it's regeneration.
- Road to Merry Hill from west very poor – Level Street cross roads.
- Brierley Hill – low car ownership – public transport important.
- Range of uses - Economically important shops/ offices/ leisure.
- Does not feel yet as a strategic centre, i.e you need to go to different parts for different things, i.e. retail, offices, leisure.
- Need a parking regime.
- Improve integration between Brierley Hill and Merry Hill and its functions and accessibility from Merry Hill and Brierley Hill made easier.
- To encourage integration Brierley Hill and Merry Hill need positive guidance to private sector investment. Need clarity at a local level.
- Canal network links Dudley and Merry Hill this can be exploited.
- There is a lot of history and it needs to be seen as more than a retail development.
- Main thing needed is transport.
- Brierley Hill must be a strategic centre – it is the only area with land availability.
- Can deliver retail mix
- Metro and transport vital for the centre.
- Articulate specialist strengths for Dudley and other key towns

	<p>(Halesowen and Stourbridge).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies must be implemented for other town centres – complementary. • Make Brierley Hill work for the Borough e.g. metro. • Transport issues vital (priority) - metro - motorway links – Pensnett Route. • Sandwell/ Dudley interchange for metro (Dudley Port) • Western route positive implications for Dudley
<p>3. What would be the benefits/ implications of this?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If Brierley Hill/ Merry Hill designated as a centre it would attract funding. • Need to phase in integration so as not to harm other centres. • Need to encourage development – must have a plan in place to show what we intend to do, need to give the private sector confidence. • Quick wins from a strategic Brierley Hill perspective. • Jobs for local young people. • More skills/ training needed for locals. • Benefits would be in the shape of Transport, Homes, Diversity of jobs, Leisure and culture & Education. • Recognise need to deliver to local people. • Strategy needs to join up High Street, Waterfront and Merry Hill
<p>4. What do you feel the area needs to fulfil its strategic centre status?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better rail and road links, metro passenger rail station. • More positive image

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involving local communities/ night and day economy. • Improve pedestrian linkages • No focal point to bring different elements together, i.e. a square. • Need to link opportunities in the east to areas of need in the west. • No direct transport links – opportunities represented by Midland Metro (need serious investment in transport infrastructure to create an alternative to the car. • Housing – need more choice to prevent people moving out when they earn more. • Community Services missing. Need this to be a town centre. • Respective roles of public and private need clarity– who leads what? • Need to deliver our own agenda • Can we streamline? Multiplicity of agencies.
<p>5. Dudley's role has changed over the last decade. What do you feel should be the role for Dudley Town Centre?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centre development and regeneration from Dudley High Street Top Church to Wolverhampton Street needs addressing. • Civic, cultural, leisure centre – needs to be like Bridgnorth • Residential development is essential • Historically important town- need to build on this image • Entrance into Dudley from Brierley Hill very poor- needs addressing.

- Many big stores moved out because Merry Hill developed. Dudley will never have big shops because there is not the space to develop.
- Concern about the High Street and need for regeneration.
- Heritage funding is going to improve the buildings.
- Visually the High Street is good, economically it is poor.
- Civic, cultural quality needs to be exploited.
- Local shopping offer good – needs to continue
- More diversity needed
- Households and housing needed in the centre.
- Civic centre is good quality.
- Join up local heritage, tourism, cultural/ leisure and theatre.
- College and students. Link economy and university
- Better profile for Dudley needed.
- Opportunities - Castle (nothing else in the area to compete), Museum, Canals and Market.
- Should be a strategic centre in terms of leisure. Canals represent a particular opportunity.
- Need to attract visitors in the town centre after they have visited attractions – lever people through attraction.
- Housing – need improved choices in housing for people to make the best

	<p>of opportunities for employment in Birmingham and Merry Hill.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council needs to be more proactive in its vision shrinking retail role in Dudley. • Need improved accommodation for visitors • Need sustainable transport to achieve the above. • Heritage role needs to be exploited – <u>Market Town</u> • Administrative centre role of the centre is key • Homes are essential • Architecture of the centre needs to be exploited fully as it is a key asset.
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Priorities

<p>What do we need to champion for Dudley? What is important for Dudley Borough?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Let Brierley Hill and Merry Hill be formally recognised as a centre. 2. Deliver integration that will enable local communities to benefit from the investment at Brierley Hill Merry Hill. 3. Making the most of opportunities in Dudley Town Centre that already exist. 4. Transport – Metro 5. Education 6. Population retention 7. Complementary development 8. Developers and investors need certainty 9. Transport Infrastructure – need railway line to London. Not just metro – also rail. 10. Image – everyone being an
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	ambassador. Perception and certainty.
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Role of Smaller Centres

QUESTIONS:	ANSWERS
What role should the smaller centres play?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping a sustainable Black Country – help prevent excessive transport and therefore congestion by providing viable centres for local purchasers. • Halesowen – integrated well into the Black Country vision or more part of/ influenced by Birmingham? • Should an investigation of local centres be a separate part of the Black Country Study?

Employment and population Discussion

QUESTION:	Discussion
What issues are there regarding providing quality locations for future employment land (refer to the choices available)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need for better understanding and marketing of key attributes. • Land should be used for employment creation - mixed use development will provide opportunity for training, education, and employment. • There is a need to change land use – industrial and service sectors. • Community safety is a key factor towards attracting people into work. • The first stage is the vision – then work backwards to create the best use of land. • The skills are here – we need to concentrate on the transfer of skills. • Is the term “Black Country” a

	<p>barrier to inward investment and migration?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lack of large employment sites – hence a requirement for land assembly and compulsory purchase orders. • Concern was expressed as to the Local Authority approach towards remediation of brownfield, derelict and contaminated land - an active and strategic approach was called for whereby the L.A. leads on proactively promoting remediation funding or assistance. • Make better use of the land to encourage integration at a local level (smaller employment sites in the heart of communities). • Transportation problems need to be resolved. • The needs of communities should be considered.
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<p>How can Dudley begin to lead the way on addressing the fact that the Borough has the lowest average weekly earnings rate in the Black Country – what can we do?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More information is needed on the distribution of skills gaps and education gaps. • Need information on where do people go to work outside of the Borough? • Need to understand that there are low wages for people who work in the Black Country, not just people who live here. • Issue with qualifications of 16-19 year old age group.
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- There is a need to match skills to jobs.
- There is a need to engage more private sector companies to work with education providers.
- people do not understand why people outside the Borough want to move here.- Image is key
- Concern expressed in terms of some ethnic minority groups and other groups who are underperforming.
- A requirement for special projects to help reduce the education gap.
- A need to understand local communities and address their issues.
- Improve housing and environment conditions.
- A need was expressed for bonding, trust and consultation across the Black Country Study area, with closer connections in order that success is achieved – community involvement and understanding, ownership, start with people, partnerships (the latter including with SME's, PLC's, local and central Government)
- A 30 year Vision – where do young people fit in, what are their aspirations?
- There is a perception that communities are 'done to' rather than 'done with'.
- Too much reliance on

	technological solutions – what about heritage, creativity, ‘sharing the pot’?
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Transport Discussion

QUESTIONS:	Discussion
<p>Are there areas within the Borough that you feel are poorly served by transport, what are the consequences of this and how can it be improved?</p> <p>Accessibility in to the region is important to ensure economic competitiveness. What are the priorities that the Black Country Study should be looking at in terms of links to the national rail networks, improved coach services, new/improved roads, new/improved links to airports?</p> <p>Where do you think targeted priorities should be focused in Dudley Borough, to ensure accessibility to key employment sites, ensure accessibility by a range of travel modes to centres and areas of high activity and ensure that areas of housing are linked to areas of employment?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shear volume of traffic on Coventry to Wolverhampton - twin tracked boost rail network 30 yr horizon 4 tracking. • Kingswinford difficult to get to Black Country lack of links Pensnett trading estate • Dudley accessibility and Congestion • Freight rail at Pensnett put traffic on high street goods in /out without congestion struggling to find capacity on supporting highway • Disused railways lines electrify rail system maximise rail track • Dudley - identify important routes & maximise there use. • Need to get things working quickly, long lead in time for some schemes. • Need 21st century public transport network 30^h in OECD ranking • Toronto buses link to trams to trains – seamless works very well reliable. Investigation needed of international schemes • Access to Merry Hill - buses stop at 21.00 bus service to get people home to /from work. • Seek to enable delivery of

seamless network to less accessible areas

- Buses - regular - reliability - run at right time - bus lanes priority improve feeder lane to M5 improve information on when next bus where coming PTA visual display would use if a clear advantage in time - red routes give worthwhile advantage also assists other road users
- M4 bus lane speeded up car journeys by consistent speeds- opportunity to consider similar scheme.
- Dial a ride smaller buses to local areas to serve communities
- Important to get access from West try and cut delays on scheme planning.
- Take toll off M6 toll? - discourages freight - Improve rail network.
- Dudley Southern Bypass doesn't go anywhere. Need to consider linkages.
- Location of new business - green belt development is not appropriate.
- Metro out to Halesowen – it would help if went to Hagley take traffic off local roads
- Park and ride strategic locations and cheap with good links to centres -reliable user friendly.
- It would require Culture change - get people to change lifestyle habits – know where buses go – clear buses

	<p>encouraging user information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cycle strategy in place traffic congestion security. • Accesibility to Brierley/Pensnett as employment improved access and Russells Hall.
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TRANSPORT : THREE THINGS TO CHAMPION FOR THE BOROUGH

- Seamless public transport and reconcile access to outer environs of Dudley
- Clear major bottlenecks by junction improvement associated red routes
- Improved electrified railways and 4 tracking Coventry to Wolverhampton

Housing Discussion

QUESTION:	Discussion
<p>What should we give priority to in order to meet housing needs and achieve a wider variety of house types and population mix?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility - Service sectors. • Knowledge workers – what housing is required. <u>Too much emphasis on densities.</u> • High density not needed in some places. • Do not forget the people living in Dudley. Need to ensure affordable housing from Section 106 Agreements secured. • Consultation paramount particularly in regeneration areas. • Ensure the environment created matches aspirations. • Market based approach – Need to pay attention to bottom rung of ladder. • Crossing Dudley very difficult – Transport infrastructure. Need to respond on all counts – stagger working starts. <u>Home working</u>

	<p><u>working</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High density must be linked with public transport infrastructure. • Mixed use schemes – Employment/ Residential. What are we doing for the generation who will be householders in 30 years time? • Quality Housing needed • Affordable Housing needed • Retain “Greenfield” and Green Belt areas • Environment – Key in attracting and retaining. • Tied to transport (congestion) infrastructure including metro and mainline rail introduction. • Funding and investment – financial incentives. Central Government and Private Sector. • Tackle Congestion – disincentive to locate here. • Increased number of facilities for all communities. • Right type (work together) of social environment. Total environment. • Not just look at Housing Needs but Housing aspirations. • Imaginative design “Choice , character, properties”
<p>What should we look towards for our future housing supply?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care needed when considering employment land options as redevelopment opportunity for

	<p>housing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Belts. Land swap brownfield for green belt, an element of opportunistic development. • Avoid them and us between developers and local residents in developments – Need to Resolve Inconsistency. Need a Developer Forum • Wider implications of decisions need to be considered • Scale of demolition • Land key issue – How much land does the Council own? • Partnership working with Private Sector essential. • Brownfield utilisation, including canalside consideration Local Authority. Self build? Central government subsidy investment. • Housing synchronised with other issues. Mixed developments including Affordable Housing. • Refurbish existing and add new-build to compliment.
<p>What can be done to attract and maintain people living in the Black Country?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparison with Manchester. High technology – knowledge based. • Niche market – for manufacturing- exploit this. • Investment in jobs – Range of jobs including manufacturing. • Encourage culture of working / training.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage inward investment – training incentives in essential trades. • Selection of houses within area. • Providing natural steps from starter units up.
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Environment Discussion

QUESTION:	Discussion
<p>Securing a good quality of life in the Black Country is a key aim of the study. Where do you feel that Dudley can contribute to this ?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to raise awareness of current strengths. • Partnership working – Business/Voluntary Organisations/ Charities is essential • Involving communities/community development. • Careful balance required in developments. • Local ownership and pride is key. • Leadership is key – converting strategy to local action and implementation. • Local distinctiveness very important. • High quality design – buildings and spaces – that acknowledges local distinctiveness are essential. • Improved quality of housing in all parts of borough – give people a choice. • Improved transport links, especially public transport.

- Improve management of open spaces and secure ongoing revenue funding.
- Enhancement of canal network required.
- Encourage a diverse skills/job mix.
- Cleaner environment.
- Network of parks – need a better network.
- Preservation and enhancement of built heritage/museums.
- Change perception of “Black Country” to outsiders.
- Appropriate facilities – Greenspaces, Heritage – for local people, sporting facilities.
- Appropriate facilities for young people, e.g. Stourbridge skate park.
- Police consultation involvement.
- Could Council have Heritage lead member/champion?.
- “Black Country” – is name correct ?
- What is needed is an image/vision to go with the name
- The Black Country can offer DIVERSITY –
- Heritage:- Wrens Nest, Glass, Canals, Castle, Topography.
- Location:- you can choose a variety of places of different

	<p>character.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health:- new hospitals. • Transportation:- what is solution ? • Local Strategy Partnership involvement is key . • Retail- Masterplans key to securing good quality Town Centres • Availability of sites:- but need to be environmentally friendly. • Sustainability should be key. • Parks & Green Spaces. Problems of vandalism.
<p>What role should the landscape, (e.g. the canals, hills, valleys, geology etc.) take in defining the areas for development in Dudley & the Black Country. Give specific examples.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black Country Geo-Park – • Major impact and effect of geology. • Improve local environment & Visitor economy. • Wildlife associated with industrial history. • Identity is key. • Defines settlements – “continuous villages”. • Parks improvements “friends”. • Raise Local Awareness of Local Assets. • Huge Potential for development of parks, canals, nature reserves and disused railway lines. • Linkage of open spaces, including public transport links.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism enhancement is key. • Engaging local communities – educating what is special about the area. • Bringing in more tourists – joined-up tourism strategy implementation, linking attractions, e.g. getting people to visit everywhere in area. • Increased investment in environment, e.g. Sedgley Beacon. • Investment in Green assets. • Role of landscape:- Selling point – Unique! To get people here ! • Heritage built into landscape. • Not communicating ? Could be better “packaged”, should we connect ? e.g. Glass Quarter. Do we have enough accommodation ? e.g. hotels, a caravan park ? each centre should have a basic minimum. * 19 million visitors to DMBC last year ! get them to:- see more, spend more, stay overnight, better restaurants. • Not enough night-life ! • Take more advantage of canals stronger development plans. Be more critical.
<p>The Urban park concept is based on one of corridors and beacons and communities. How do you feel that this can be implemented and exploited in Dudley ?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoidance of combining transport and green corridors. • Project champions “political figures” • Public figures as champions. • More publicity needed.

- Tourism strategies/heritage.
- Awareness of outlying issues. E.g. Halfpenny Green Airport. Western Orbital Motorway.
- Overall landscape – living landscape.
- Clusters (beacons)
- Corridors – canals, public transport routes.
- Distinctive - design, communities of interest.
- Drop “Urban Park” concept.- Introduce design guidelines to preserve heritage.
- Blending of car-parking into the environment.
- Avoid or reduce areas of conflicting uses.
- Improve maintenance Public Open Space corridors.
- Heighten profile of local beacons, e.g. Castle and Merry Hill.
- Concept of beacons needs to be clarified.
- Corridors - Beacons - Communities – how can they be exploited ?
- How is private development managed?
- We are winning safety awards – but are we opening up connections enough ?
- Cycleways - v. imp. Need private sector help for this.
- Beacon at Burnt Tree Island

	and other key locations – community involvement crucial.

Strategic Centres/ Offices

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	On the fence	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Question
Shopping Locate shopping and leisure facilities within the Black Country	15					Rely on areas outside the Black Country to meet our shopping and leisure needs
Brierley Hill/Merry Hill Brierley Hill/ Merry Hill should play the role as the Borough's strategic centre	13				12	Dudley Town Centre should be a focus for civic, leisure and cultural activity in the Borough
Focus in and around centres Locate culture, health and quality education facilities in and around town centres, in particular the four strategic centres	1	6	1	4	5	Spread culture, health and quality education facilities widely across neighbourhoods and centres
Offices Locate office jobs mostly in the four centres	4	5	1	4	2	Spread office jobs between the four strategic centres and other locations

Employment Land/ Population

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	On the fence	Agree	Strongly Agree	Question
Meeting future employment needs Try and meet <i>all</i> the employment needs of the Black Country <i>within</i> the Black Country		7				Rely on areas outside the Black Country to meet employment needs
Existing and new development Allow sites to be designated for other uses (e.g. housing, open space or other non-employment use)		4	2	3		Keep existing and new development/opportunity sites for employment use
Population Growth Place more emphasis on providing for population growth and housing needs		3	2	4		Place more emphasis on providing for employment needs and requirement

Environment

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	On the fence	Agree	Strongly Agree	Question
Prioritising investment in the landscape & built environment The urban environment should be the first issue to be addressed in transforming the Black country	8	6	1	1	4	The urban environment and landscape should be jointly addressed in transforming the Black Country
Linking Policies Ensure policies relating to centres, employment land, housing and transport contribute to environmental improvements and objectives in the Black Country	10	6	1	1		Policies relating to centres, employment land, housing and transport need not contribute to environmental improvements and objectives in the Black country
Sustainable Development Set higher than national environmental targets (e.g. for sustainable design, water management, water and air quality) through Black Country policies	5	4	1	4		Meet national environmental targets through black country policies.

Housing

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	On the fence	Agree	Strongly Agree	Question
Mix of housing types and densities Encourage a mix at every neighbourhood level	4	7	3	4	2	Encourage a mix across the Black Country as a whole

Transport

Travelling within the Black County	Important	Less Important	Not Important
Improvements to aid walking	3		
Improvements to aid cycling		1	
Improvements to aid bus services	1		
Extending metro beyond existing proposals	2		
Improved rail services	3		
New or improved roads	3		
Demand management	1		
Park and Ride	3		

***Number denotes amount of delegates choosing option.**

