



Dudley Town Centre Area Action Plan

Issues and Options Consultation Document

March 2014

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1. General Information

The Dudley AAP Issues and Options report may be downloaded from the Council's website on the following link:

<http://www.dudley.gov.uk/resident/planning/planning-policy/local-development-framework/dudley-aap/>

Hard copies of the draft SPD are available for viewing at all main libraries in the Borough and at reception of the Council offices at the address above and at Dudley Council Plus Reception, 259 Castle Street, Dudley. The document can be made available on request in large copy print, audio cassette, Braille or languages other than English. If you require the document in one of these formats please contact:

This and other Local Development Framework documents are or will be made available on request in large copy print, audio version, Braille or languages other than English. If you require the document in one of these formats please contact:

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Arabic

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التلفون : ٠١٣٨٤ ٨١٤١٣٦ = أيه ميل ldf@dudley.gov.uk

Bengali

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Urdu

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Chinese

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Gujarati

"આ અને અન્ય સ્થાનિક વિકાસ ફેમવર્ક દસ્તાવેજો મોટા નકલ પ્રિન્ટ, ઓડિયો આવૃત્તિ, બ્રેઇલ અથવા અંગ્રેજી સિવાય બીજી કોઈપણ ભાષામાં ઉપલબ્ધ છે અથવા કરવામાં આવશે. જો તમને આમાંથી કોઈપણ સ્વરૂપમાં દસ્તાવેજ જોઈતું હોય તો કૃપા કરી આમને સંપર્ક કરો

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Punjabi

ਅਨੁਰੋਧ ਕਰਨ ਤੇ, ਇਹ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ (ਲਿਖਤ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ) ਅਤੇ ਲੋਕਲ ਡਵੈਲਪਮੈਂਟ ਫਰੇਮਵਰਕ (ਸਥਾਨਕ ਵਿਕਾਸ) ਸੰਬੰਧੀ ਹੋਰ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ, ਅੱਡੀਓ ਕਸੈੱਟ ਤੇ ਰੀਕਾਰਡ ਕੀਤੇ ਹੋਏ, ਬਰੇਲ ਫਾਰਮੈਂਟ ਅਤੇ ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਤੋਂ ਇਲਾਵਾ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੀ ਮਿਲ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ। ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਕੋਈ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਫਾਰਮੈਂਟ (ਬਣਤਰ) ਵਿੱਚ ਲੈਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਤਾਂ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੇਠ ਲਿਖੇ ਪਤੇ ਤੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ: Planning Policy Team, Directorate of Urban Environment, Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council, 4 Ednam Road, Dudley, DY1 1HL ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ: 01384 - 814136 ਈ-ਮੇਲ ਪਤਾ: ldf@dudley.gov.uk

2. Introduction: What is an Area Action Plan?

The role of this Area Action Plan is to set out how Dudley Town Centre will develop and change over the plan period. Once adopted the Dudley Area Action Plan will form part of Dudley Borough's planning Framework and will be a starting point for making decisions on planning applications in the area. It will contain a vision for what we want to achieve in the Town Centre by 2026, and through its policies and site allocations, it will set out how that vision will be delivered. The AAP will include a proposals map to pull together and spatially represent the various issues and themes which together inform the document.

How to use this document

2.1 This AAP Issues and Options consultation document was prepared with expertise from key Council Officers and other Stakeholders and using comments and representations made during a period of 'Frontloading Consultation' undertaken between 23rd September and 18th October 2013.

2.2 This document is intended to provide you with an opportunity to tell us whether you agree with the issues, the vision, proposed policy areas and development opportunity sites. You can also suggest alternative options or other things that you think ought to be considered.

2.3 Throughout this document you will find questions which are attended to get you thinking about how Dudley Town Centre should develop. Your views on these questions, and any other comments you would like to make, would be welcomed during the consultation period from 14th March to 25th April 2014.

2.4 This consultation document is accompanied by a 'Scoping Report and Issues and Options Sustainability' which are also available at the locations quoted above. The Scoping Report provides the background information required for the consideration of sustainability issues. The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Report promotes sustainable development through the integration of environmental, social and economic conditions in the AAP's preparation.

3. The Planning Framework

3.1 The Development Planning Framework for Dudley Town Centre currently consists of the Black Country Core Strategy (adopted 2011), the Saved Dudley Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and the Dudley Town Centre Area Development Framework (ADF), (both adopted in 2005). The UDP set the context for development up to 2011 and the ADF presented a vision, development strategy and illustrative development framework. It is now time to update the Dudley Town Centre policies and proposals, building on the principles and visions contained in the UDP, ADF and the Black Country Core Strategy.

3.2 All documents prepared by the Council must be in general conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) first published by the Department for Communities and Local Government DCLG in April 2012. The NPPF provides a framework within which local people can be involved in planning for their areas in the context of sustainable development.

The Black Country Core Strategy

3.3 The four Black Country Authorities of Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton prepared and adopted the Black Country Core Strategy as the strategic planning document for the Black Country on 3rd February 2011. The Core Strategy identifies an approach founded on Strategic centres and Corridors. Within

Dudley Borough, Brierley Hill has been identified as the new Strategic Town Centre and will be where most retail, office and leisure development will be focussed. It draws together major proposals for the strategic centres and other areas with the overlapping of housing and employment corridors to create an integrated network.

3.4 The Regeneration Corridor boundaries broadly reflect the distribution of large parcels of employment land across the Black Country and the backbone for this network is a system of sustainable transport routes and the extensive canal system. Proposals for the Regeneration Corridors aim to achieve the right balance of jobs and housing by 2026.

3.5 Dudley Town Centre lies within Regeneration Corridor 11a which rises from the Tame Valley over the Rowley Hills at Dudley Town Centre and then follows the Dudley and Stourbridge canal to Brierley Hill town centre. It is intended that by 2026, this corridor will be served by a new rapid transit network which will provide first class access to the rest of the Black Country and to Birmingham.

3.6 The Core Strategy expects that development in this corridor will focus on housing development in and around the rejuvenated market town of Dudley combined with a tourism focus of regional and national repute based on the Black Country Living Museum, Dudley Zoo, Dudley Castle and the geological and heritage assets in

and around Dudley town centre. It is also intended that the corridor will have an excellent green infrastructure through enhanced green spaces and parks as well as increased biodiversity and improved links into such areas as Saltwells Nature Reserve, Fens Pool Special Area of Conservation and Barrow Hill Nature Reserve into the open countryside beyond.

Further Funding Opportunities

3.7 We continue to source funding opportunities through various channels including European Finance and through seeking Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) support for Dudley town centre projects.

4. What has happened through the Dudley ADF



Dudley's new Archive Centre

4.1 The Dudley ADF was adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) in 2005 and presented a vision, development strategy and illustrative development framework plan to help shape Dudley town centre over recent years. The ADF provided a framework to manage, guide and target change and inspire action to drive forward the process of rejuvenating Dudley town centre through consultation and negotiation with key stakeholders, development partners and the community.

4.2 The framework focussed on detailed implementation plans for nine specific opportunity areas and five public realm projects

which when implemented would greatly enhance the street character, design and perception of the town centre. Of these projects, The Market Place is currently underway and progress has commenced on Crown Square.

4.3 The Council's Arms Length Company, New Heritage Regeneration Limited (NHRL), was created in August 2008 and launched in January 2009. The proposal to create a regeneration company was born out of the need to deliver the vision set out in the Area Development Framework for Dudley Town Centre.

4.4 The nine character areas defined in the ADF represented either immediate priority for action areas or where development was anticipated. Whilst the vision remains unaltered for a number of these areas, others have been subject to recent investment and a change of development direction:

Priory Place

4.5 Priory Place bounded by Priory Road and Ednam Road, was initially anticipated for high quality residential development on the expanse of car parking. However, the site is now home to the new Dudley Sixth Form College building with a further two stages of the college immediately behind this, one of which is currently being constructed.

Tower Street

4.6 The opportunity area at Tower Street is centrally located in Dudley town centre and is broadly defined by The Broadway, Castle Street and Coronation Gardens to the north-west. The area is now home to the new Evolve building, the first stage in the new Dudley College development. There has been other smaller-scale developments and enhancement including the refurbishment of Baylie's Hall and Charlton House. There is still a potential requirement for the provision of a multi level car within this area and a regeneration project involving the Green Man Entry is due to begin shortly.



One of the new Dudley College Buildings, Evolve

Priory Street, Stone Street Square and Wolverhampton Street

4.7 This general area is a real asset to the town centre with many buildings of character and a historic feel. The ADF proposed to maintain this focus with an emphasis on refurbishment and reuse of a number of the buildings and the creation of a high quality public realm. This continues to be the vision and much progress has been made in the redevelopment of the Crown Public house, the future re-opening of Carvers Cafe on stone Street Square and the retention of this area as a Cultural Quarter. No significant change is proposed within the AAP, but the importance of conserving the historic fabric of the area is highlighted.



Cavendish Quarter

4.8 The Cavendish Quarter opportunity area is located to the south east of the town centre and adjoins the bypass. It is bounded on the North West by Trindle Road and Hall Street to the south west. There has been little development in this area since the ADF was adopted and the area is dominated by the vacant Cavendish

House building. The area is now subject to two separate planning permissions for a large food store on the site of Cavendish House.

Mill Gate East and West

4.9 The New Mill Gate opportunity area contains the largest single development site in the town centre. It covers a site bounded to the west by Vicar Street, to the north by King Street and to the south by Martin Hill Street and the southern bypass. The area is currently dominated by large areas of surface car parking and Falcon House, is a 1960's office building occupies a key location between Flood Street and New Mill Street. This area is now subject to a planning approval for a large retail store. To the west of New Mill Street is an historic church as well as a number of historic and more modern buildings housing a variety of uses including small businesses and the Territorial Army.

5. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

5.1 Before starting to plan for the future of Dudley it is necessary to understand what the area is like now. We have been gathering evidence about the town centre to identify the issues that the AAP should respond to and the changes that need to take place. Previous meetings, discussions and evidence gathering have helped us produce a SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats).

SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unique heritage assets such as the Castle, Zoo, listed buildings, two churches, medieval street structure and numerous buildings of historical value. • Strong civic pride and community spirit • A diverse range of land uses within the town centre • The public realm within parts of the historic core is strong 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numerous vacant retail units and office buildings • Lack of an evening economy and town-centre living • Poor streetscape in some areas • Lack of integration, connectivity and pedestrian links • Bus station needs refurbishment • Surface car parking on outskirts is underused and there is insufficient parking in the core • Lack of useable green open space
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major development opportunities in the southern part of the town centre • Identified housing sites around the town centre may help night-time economy and potential exists for approximately 500 residential units within the centre • Redevelopment potential along Castle Hill and the Zoo area • Appropriate new development will enhance the public realm and encourage living within the town to help bolster the local economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirement for funding and investment • Viability of sites for redevelopment • Risk of poor quality or poor design, this will detract from the public realm and character of the town centre

6. Spatial Vision and Objectives

The Vision for Dudley Town Centre

6.1 **The vision for Dudley Town Centre is a statement of where we want to get to and what this Area Action Plan should deliver:**

‘Dudley is a historic market town looking to the future. By 2026 it will be a town which serves the needs of its local population and which remains the strong focus for civic life, for town centre living, for local shopping, tourism and heritage, leisure and education.

Question 1

Do you think this vision includes all the relevant points? If not, then what should the vision for Dudley Town Centre be?

This will be achieved by reshaping and reasserting its role within the Borough, drawing on its considerable assets, encouraging investment in opportunities and ensuring that Dudley becomes a place with a richer mix of town centre uses. The environmental quality, green

elements, transport connectivity and accessibility of all the town centre activities and assets will be enhanced.’

The Objectives for Dudley Town Centre

6.2 To deliver the vision for Dudley, clearly defined and measurable objectives are needed. These objectives will guide the preparation and implementation of the strategy and the monitoring of its achievements. The objectives for Dudley Town Centre are listed under the three main themes of:

- Achieving economic prosperity
- Maintaining a high quality built and natural environment
- Developing and ensuring social inclusion

6.3 **Economic Prosperity**

- To define the boundary of the primary shopping area, the shop frontages which should be protected and the wider town centre boundary so that retail and non-retail development can be guided to appropriate locations
- To continue to development Dudley as a tourism and leisure destination within the Black Country and ensure that the Castle Hill Leisure Cluster is integrated into the town centre
- To foster the civic function of the town centre and facilitate long-term economic development through the diversification of the economic base and create job opportunities where possible
- To support and encourage local businesses and enterprises and to welcome and encourage investment within the town centre by building on the success of completed

developments such as the innovative college campus, the refurbishment and renewal of town centre buildings and of the public realm to encourage development

- To encourage and facilitate further residential development within the town centre to help stimulate activity in the town centre both during the day and in the evening
- To create the opportunity for everyone to enjoy a good quality of life and good health which can assist with economic productivity

6.4 **Built and Natural Environment**

- Fully embrace the principles of sustainable development and climate change adaptation and mitigation in order to improve the general state of the environment and the quality of life
- To ensure that the special character and quality of Dudley's historic environment is fully appreciated in terms of its townscape and landscape, buildings, streets, public spaces, plan form and archaeology – and that this is exploited to its best advantage and recognised by the community at large as one of the town's greatest assets
- To achieve consistently high quality design of new development and the enhancement of existing buildings, streets, spaces and landscape within Dudley town centre and beyond.

- To protect and improve access to Dudley's unique landscape and natural assets including the Castle grounds and surrounding areas and beyond to the Wrens Nest LNR
- To support the Growth Agenda by providing the opportunity for people to use alternative transport (such as cycle routes and walkways) which will benefit the environment and people's general health
- To provide a sufficient quantity and quality of green and open space for sport, recreation, and leisure uses and to encourage a strong network of Green Infrastructure
- To help facilitate the recommendations of the Local Flood Management Strategy (under preparation), encourage sustainable drainage where appropriate and consider the use of green roofs in design of development

6.5 **Social Inclusion**

- To encourage social inclusion by improving accessibility to jobs, shopping, education, health, sport and leisure facilities, open space, whilst minimising the need to travel
- Improve the movement of pedestrians and cyclists as part of a multi-modal connectivity and by adopting robust urban design principles, create an attractive and safe environment
- Ensure that a range of types and tenures of new homes is provided to meet the needs of the population by catering for choice and the provision of affordable housing

- To improve the ease of movement to and through the town centre from adjoining areas, and within the centre between points of arrival and major destinations through the integration of a network of well-connected and direct streets, routes and spaces made more easy to navigate.

Question 2. Do you support the AAP objectives? If not, please state what you would like to change and why?



Green Space at Tower Street

7. Proposed Policy Areas

7.1 To help deliver the vision for Dudley Town Centre the AAP will contain land use policies. It is suggested that the AAP includes the following land use/policy areas and approach:

Retail and Shopping

7.2 Since the 1980s the growth in large format stores has challenged many traditional town centres like Dudley as these town centres have little flexibility in their physical form to provide for the increasing size of units now required by modern retailers. The status of Brierley Hill as a strategic centre with a focus for major retail expansion was confirmed in January 2008. Alongside this, Dudley Town Centre was re-designated with a leisure, heritage and tourism role. These factors have had an effect on the way that the centre has developed in recent times and more importantly how it can evolve in the future.

7.3 Retailing in the town is now dominated by independent retailers with a small number of national multiples, many of which are discount orientated. There are two shopping centre anchors in the town, namely the Churchill Shopping Centre and the Trident Centre. As well as the Fountain Arcade shopping mall with smaller retail units between the Market Place and Tower Street. The Plaza Mall Indoor Market is located centrally in the Market Place and sells a wide range of goods. There is a popular permanent market in the middle of the pedestrianised section of the High Street which is

undergoing significant redevelopment and enhancement in 2014. The Market Place operates every day except Sunday and remains a strong feature of the retail offer.

Retail and Shopping Issues

7.4 Dudley Town Centre lacks the physical capacity to accommodate substantial retail growth and the majority of existing units are not large enough to attract mid-range retailers.

7.5 There is now only one food store within the town centre, the small format Asda store at the top of the High Street. In addition there are a range of smaller specialist retailers, many with a long tradition in the town centre. However, there is demand for new shops and there are currently three planning approvals for foodstore developments at Trindle Road and Flood Street. New food store provision in Dudley will act as both a catalyst for further regeneration and anchor the overall shopping function of the town.

7.6 There are two planning consents on broadly similar sites in the Cavendish House area. Both consents would demolish Cavendish House Office Building which has been vacant since the mid 1990's and planning application P12/0581 includes a foodstore, car park and petrol filling station.

7.7 Application P12/1042 incorporates the same site and a wider area of land. The outline scheme includes the development of a foodstore with car parking and a petrol filling station as well as mixed use units to accommodate non-food retail, and potentially a

gym and/or restaurant use. As outline permission all matters except access are reserved for later approval and the layout is not fixed.

7.8 Application P12/1107 relates to land at Flood Street and King Street and involves the demolition of the Falcon House office building. The proposal includes the development of a foodstore with associated car parking and a petrol filling station.

7.9 As part of the planning application process the impact assessment focused on the implications of a 'two store scenario' given the fact that only one scheme can be implemented within the Cavendish House location. There was no clear evidence of any significant adverse impacts on Dudley or other centres within the foodstores catchment area.

7.10 Rather, the development of a new foodstore would significantly enhance the town centre's retail offer, help to retain expenditure, promote wider consumer choice within the Dudley area and create new jobs.

Retail and Shopping Options

7.11 Dudley's focal point of activity is centred on Market Square and the Churchill Parade, with some peripheral activity around the Upper High Street and the Trident Centre. The development of key sites will enable the centre to secure retail-led regeneration of appropriate scale in line with the adopted Black Country Core Strategy.

7.12 It is proposed to focus the new retail floorspace within a tightly defined primary shopping area to achieve a strengthened, compact core shopping area.

7.13 There is a need to accommodate retail development within Dudley Town Centre. The Core Strategy identified a need for 5,000 m² net convenience (food) retail floorspace and 15,000 m² gross comparison (clothes) retail floorspace to serve Dudley town centre. The potential development opportunity sites in this document (refer to section 9) have been identified on the basis of their potential suitability to accommodate retail floorspace.

1. Suggested Policy Areas:

Retail Floorspace within the Primary Shopping Area

The AAP will allocate additional retail floorspace as identified by the Black Country Core Strategy Policy CEN4 within Dudley Town Centre's Primary Shopping areas as follows:

- 15,000 (gross) comparison floorspace to be delivered by 2026
- 5,000 (net)* convenience floorspace to be delivered by 2026.

(*Given the 3 planning consents for foodstores it has been demonstrated that more convenience floorspace could be implemented without having an adverse impact on Dudley or other town centres within a defined catchment area to serve Dudley). If possible put in footnote?

The most appropriate locations for the retail development will be identified by in the proposed Development Opportunity Sites in Section 9 of this document.

Any development exceeding these figures will only be considered favourably if the impact assessments contained in the most recent national guidance are satisfied.

Any edge of centre proposal will only be considered favourably if a sequential test and impact assessment contained in the most recent national guidance are satisfied.

Primary Frontages

The suggested policy will seek to main and enhance the role of Dudley's Primary Shopping Area. Where primary frontages are identified, the policy will resist proposals that will lead to:

- on 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 a certain percentage of all units in the Primary Shopping Area being taken by non-retail uses (proposed limit of 35% as in the Dudley UDP)

Land Uses outside Dudley's Primary Shopping Area

The policy will give support in principle to development proposals outside the Primary Shopping Area proposing town centre uses other than shopping.

The wider town centre will continue to have an important role as a focus for a range of other town centre land uses such as entertainment, leisure and cultural facilities.

Black Country Core Strategy Policy CEN4 supports Dudley town centre to do this providing the development is of an appropriate scale and kind to serve its role and catchment.

Appropriate town centre land uses being as identified in the most recent national guidance for town centres.

Question 3. Do you agree with the suggested policy areas? If not, please state what you would like to change and why.

Housing

7.14 Dudley's future role will be founded upon the town centre's unique tourism and cultural assets and major residential development. Specifically the Black Country Core Strategy Regeneration Corridor 11a refers to great opportunities for residential growth within Dudley which will improve its viability as a strong centre and historic market town.

7.15 There are some shops with residential living opportunities above, and the town centre is capable of offering more of this type of residential development.

7.16 There is a wealth of historic buildings which would lend themselves to conversion to increase the residential choices. Redundant buildings such as the former telephone exchange on Parsons Street and the Old Court House on Priority Street have been converted to residential uses. There are several historic buildings along St James's Road and Ednam Road with planning approval for conversion from Council offices into private residential units.

Housing Issues

7.17 Over the plan period Dudley Town Centre and the wider Area Action Plan boundary will be the focus for residential led regeneration. Increased housing growth in and around Dudley will help enhance its vitality and viability. There is potential for urban living in Dudley to attract a variety of households. Whilst the overall

market demand for apartments has fallen, there are places where such housing will be attractive, particularly within the core of the centre.

7.18 The town centre offers considerable benefits in developing a strong residential market:

- It has a wealth of historic and interesting modern buildings many of which would lend themselves to conversion and which are capable of offering distinctive homes from urban lofts to town houses;
- The centre is compact and walkable, and with an improvement to the range of uses/facilities and scope to attract the leisure, night time economy and cafe culture that tends to emerge in tandem with urban living.
- Dudley is reasonably well connected with key centres of employment including Birmingham, the Waterfront and more locally Castlegate Business Park. Accessibility will be further improved by Strategic Transport Improvements
- There is opportunity for environmental enhancements in many areas of the town and Dudley's unique heritage assets create a very attractive setting for residential development.

7.19 In providing new housing consideration will be given to meeting local needs and the requirement to provide a range of housing types, sizes, tenures and affordability.

2. Suggested Policy Areas:

Delivering Housing Growth in the AAP

- To help create sustainable communities by setting out the number, type, locations and density of future residential development in the AAP area. Refer to the housing sites identified in the table in Section 9
- Within the identified town centre boundary the policy will support proposals for new residential development.
- Living above shops will be supported where opportunities exist to enhance the vitality and viability of the centre.

Question 4. Do you agree with the suggested policy areas? If not, please state what you would like to change and why.

Office and Business

7.20 Dudley has a range of professional services, estate agents and banks within the town centre. There are numerous buildings which have been renovated over the years to become offices and most of the purpose-built office accommodation within the town centre is occupied by the Council. The Council has recently commenced the project of 'Transforming our Workplace' which saw the number of Council offices reduced in the town centre in order to improve and make better use of the buildings retained and deliver more efficient and effective services. In essence this helps to demonstrate the Council's commitment to enhancing civic space. Many smaller independent offices are located on upper floors in buildings in the town.

Office and Business Issues

7.21 It is perceived that the town lacks an adequate supply of good quality purpose built office accommodation and the units that are within the town centre are in need of refurbishment and better access as they are mostly located on upper floors. Recent office and business development at Castlegate, which is located outside the town centre, is of a high quality and has a low vacancy rate.



The Crown Public House, Corner of Wolverhampton Street

Office and Business Options

7.23 As it is recognised that the town centre has limited capacity for large scale office development and that a significant proportion of business is drawn to Castlegate and the Waterfront, attention should be given to providing a better range of modern premises concentrating on smaller floorplans and enhancing existing office

space particularly on upper floors. The Council have already delivered a number of schemes within the town centre which include sensitive and effective redevelopment for small enterprises and businesses. This includes offices above The Crown on the corner of Priory Street, Wolverhampton Street and numerous others along Priory Street.

7.24 Encouraging professional people to live in and near the town centre will also greatly improve the potential for growth in the business sector and a more robust office environment can evolve.

3. Suggested Policy areas:

The suggested policy should:

- focus on enhancing the existing stock of offices especially on upper floors of premises
- creating a more pleasant public realm to encourage businesses to relocate to the town centre
- Encourage and create opportunities for local enterprises and work/live studios

Question 5. Do you agree with the suggested policy areas? If not, please state what you would like to change and why.

Education

7.25 Until recently Dudley college's buildings were distributed over a number of sites across the Borough. There were five college sites, four around Dudley town centre and one in Brierley Hill. The college has undertaken a phased programme of relocation of its facilities to bring them together in Dudley town centre providing a central 'learning quarter' for the town. Alongside the development of the new buildings the college will dispose of its existing campus sites at Castle View, Mons Hill and Wolverhampton Street. The town centre location will ensure that Dudley College's facilities are accessible to people from different parts of the borough thereby making it more attractive to study in Dudley.

7.26 The current expansion of Dudley College is a good asset for the town centre. It's a dynamic land use which can attract large number of students and staff into the town centre boosting the vitality of the town. It also supports a range of adult learning and business development. A strong local student population is a vital source to support local economy and local employment.

Education Issues and Options

7.27 Further stages of expansion are planned for the college and this will only help to strengthen the local economy and the public image of the town centre.

4. Suggested Policy areas:

- Existing education establishments will be safeguarded
- Further extensions to the College will be supported and encouraged where they are consistent with other planning policies
- Further facilities may require an expansion of transport infrastructure especially bus services and this will be supported and encouraged where appropriate.

Question 6. Do you agree with the suggested policy areas? If not, please state what you would like to change and why.



Rear of the Evolve College Building

Leisure and Tourism

7.28 The Dudley Castle, together with Dudley Zoo, the Black Country Living Museum and the Canal Trust, Dudley Museum and Art Gallery, ensure a wide range of leisure and tourist attractions within and around the town. The castle, the limestone promontory on which it sits, the paleontological interest and the rich industrial heritage have provided the foundation of unique tourism attractions in the immediate vicinity of the town centre. The Wrens Nest, Seven Sisters, the castle and nearby Black Country Living Museum have ensured that the town's profile as a tourist destination is enhanced.

Leisure and Tourism Issues and Options

7.29 Although the castle provides a stunning backdrop for all that goes on in the town, stronger physical links are needed into the town centre to encourage linked trips to the centre from the major tourist and leisure attractions.

7.30 There is potential for the town centre to function as a 'hub' for tourist attractions in the near vicinity and across the Black Country. The creation of a facility that provides information, orientation and showcases what the area has to offer to visitors would meet this need. Ideally the facility would be within a building or space that is in an attraction in its own right and can be marketed as the 'front door' to the Black Country.

Evening Economy

7.31 Within the town centre, beyond the castle, tourism and leisure provision is limited, particularly in terms of the range of evening economy activities (restaurants, cafes, bars, clubs and entertainment venues) and health and fitness provision. New development of this type would be encouraged in the town centre. Market appraisal suggests that there is limited scope for new large scale leisure/evening economy uses (such as a cinema or bowling alley) to underpin redevelopment within the town centre but there is recognition that smaller scale activities are an important component of the mixed use - urban living experience and should be brought forward with or in tandem with retail and residential led schemes.

5. Suggested Policy Areas:

- Physical linkage between the town centre and the Castle Hill Development Opportunity site should be maximised.
- As the castle mound provides the single most important statement about the history and character of the town, the design of any new development must not detract or compromise its qualities in any way.
- The range of uses at the zoo/castle should be complementary to those that already exist within the core of the town centre and should not undermine or draw trade from local business.
- Opportunities to enhance the evening time economy should be maximised.

Question 7. Do you agree with the suggested policy areas? If not, please state what you would like to change and why.



Inhedge Gardens, Dudley Town Centre

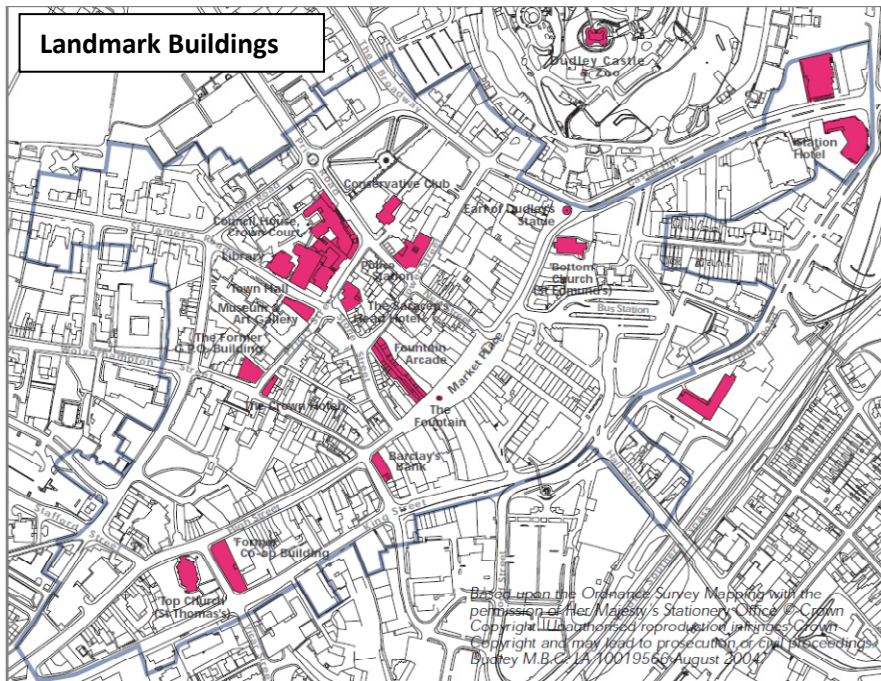
Historic Environment

7.32 Dudley town centre is home to an 11th century castle, the famous Dudley Zoological Gardens, the internationally renowned Black Country Living Museum and some of the country's finest geological history. The long history of development in Dudley has left an impressive and diverse legacy of buildings and the area north of King Street still shows the medieval town plan in the pattern of streets and entries. This fine grained network of routes and blocks was effectively extended north and west over later periods and remains as a coherent gridded plan which has enduring qualities as a compact and permeable urban environment.

7.33 The castle, along with the two churches at either end of the High Street, the town hall, museum and library are all important landmarks which help people to navigate and identify a particular location. These landmark buildings are shown on the following map.

7.34 There are two designated Conservation Areas - the Dudley Town Centre Conservation Area and the Castle Hill Conservation Area. The Conservation Areas define the special significance of this historic market town and proposals for future conservation and enhancement within these areas are paramount.

Landmark Buildings

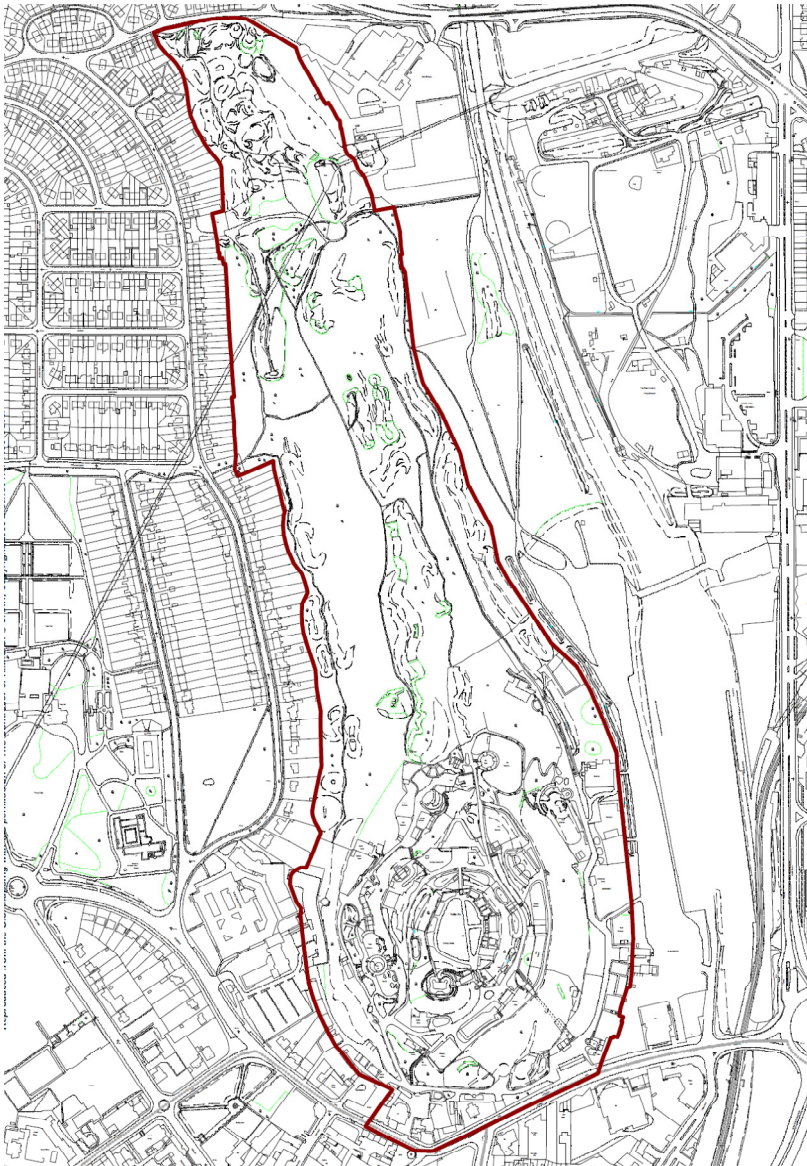


Dudley Town Centre Conservation Area



Dudley Castle Aerial view

Castle Hill Conservation Area



6. Suggested Policy Area – Conservation Areas

- To safeguard and enhance the Conservation Areas.
- Conservation area policies will assist in ensuring that schemes of redevelopment are sensitively designed and of a high quality.
- New development should reintroduce or reinforce locally characteristic townscape in such a way that preserves or enhances the established historic character of the town centre.
- The same concerns for quality and local distinctiveness will hold true in relation to the consideration of all applications for planning permission that propose changes to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Question 8. Do you agree with the suggested policy areas? If not, please state what you would like to change and why.

Identification and Protection of Heritage Assets

7.35 The historic environment is one the town centre's greatest asset. Sensitive intervention to restore, repair and enhance the historic fabric of the town centre and replicate its quantities is of key importance and will be a central thread running through this AAP.

7.36 It is essential that this AAP integrates the historic attributes of the town centre with the areas and activities which attract the greatest number of people to the town centre and to use the historic elements as an enticement to draw visitors in. The most attractive environment in terms of the network of streets, public spaces and good quality buildings are in and around the Market Place and north of King Street towards the Castle and Zoo.

7.37 The quality of the streetscape and public spaces could in many areas be enhanced to emphasize the quality of the buildings and in the southern areas new development could fully integrate with and replicate the attractive characteristics of the 'old town' restoring the urban structure which once existed in Dudley. The pattern of medieval 'entries' (e.g., Long Man Entry between King Street and High Street and Green Man Entry between Castle Street and Tower Street) that connect through development blocks in the medieval parts of the town centre should be retained to increase pedestrian connectivity and maintain the historic character of the town centre area. Regeneration plans are underway for 2014 to enhance and promote Green Man Entry as part of market place scheme.

Question 9. Do you feel that the approach of protecting and utilising Dudley Town Centre's unique range of Historic Assets is appropriate?

Areas of High Historic Townscape Value

7.38 We will be undertaking a Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) for Dudley Town Centre. An HLC provides key background information and an Evidence Base for planning policies by identifying both positive and negative existing townscape and landscape elements and opportunities for future enhancement. The HLC includes specific detail about local character and distinctiveness, those individual historic assets contributing to it and the relative significance of those assets in relation to the historic environment as a whole. It is possible to define Areas of High Historic Townscape Value where the historic landscape characterisation has identified significant concentrations of buildings, structures and spaces that make a positive contribution to character and distinctiveness.

7.39 The long period over which Dudley Town Centre has developed has resulted in a great diversity of building styles and scales, all of which contribute to define the 'special interest' of the Dudley Town Centre Conservation area. The buildings range in date from 18th century to the present day; they vary widely in style. Located throughout the Dudley Town Centre Conservation Area there are a number of statutorily listed and locally listed buildings. There are also a wealth of non-listed historic buildings that also positively contribute to the character and appearance of the town.

Listed Buildings

7.40 The earliest surviving buildings are religious structures of the early 18th century. Many were constructed as the town broke out of its medieval constraints and as such they tend to appear on the north and western edge of the then townscape: Wolverhampton Street, Priory Street, Stone Street and Tower Street. These buildings are all generally statutorily listed, such as the Grade II 7 Priory Street, built in 1703 in the Queen Anne Style (SMR 840) or Finch House in Wolverhampton Street which is another good example of the Queen Anne style, Grade II* listed and built in red brick with a prominent central bay and pediment with oval windows and baroque mural tablet, dated 1707.

Locally Listed Buildings

7.41 There are some excellent examples of locally listed buildings scattered through the conservation area such as 69 High Street (SMR 4914). Located next door is 68 High Street (now the Little Barrel Public House), SMR 7509 which is constructed within the confines of a medieval burgage plot and possesses an oriel window.

7.42 The town has a major asset in the form of the Fountain Arcade built in 1925 with its glass roof and decorative entrances off both thoroughfares. It was built on the site of a disused malthouse and was designed by the architect George Coslett. With just about 140 such arcades left in the country, the Fountain Arcade

(especially if restored back to its 'as-built' state) provides Dudley with a feature of both local and arguably national importance.

Non-Listed Buildings

7.43 In addition to the statutorily listed and locally listed buildings there are a number of non-listed buildings which positively contribute to the 'special character' of the Conservation Area by offering considerable interest through a wide variation in detailing.

Archaeological Priority Areas

7.44 Dudley Town Centre's rich past means that below ground there is a wealth of archaeological remains. In the town centre we will consider the preservation of archaeological remains to sustain the areas character and distinctiveness.

Townscape Heritage Initiative

7.45 The Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) is a grant giving programme funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). Its objective is to support schemes that aim to regenerate historic environments in urban areas. Through THI schemes, grant is offered to help communities regenerate these areas by encouraging partnerships to carry out repairs and other works to historic properties to improve the quality of life for all those who live, work and visit

there. The THI programme funds various works which will have a positive impact on the conservation and regeneration of historic areas including:

- Structural and external repair of historic buildings
- Authentic restoration of architectural features to historic buildings
- Works of repair and conversion to bring back into use vacant or underused historic floorspace
- Also part of the eligible THI projects are activities designed to widen knowledge, understanding and awareness of the heritage

7.46 The overarching objective is to increase the economic activity in the town's commercial core by using the historic environment as a positive resource to safeguard and create employment opportunities while improving the quality of life for the local community and visitors. The THI scheme covers the whole of the Dudley Town Centre Conservation Area.

7.47 The current THI programme has been in operation since 2008. It has seen the delivery of a number of schemes that have led to a demonstrable improvement in the quality of the Town Centre Conservation Area. To date, £3million in funding has been secured for the Dudley Town Centre Townscape Heritage Initiative and resources have been secured to support delivery via other funding schemes. A number of projects have now been completed, including The Crown Public House in Wolverhampton Street, Baylie's Hall in Tower Street, 168 High Street, 22 Stone Street, with

several more underway or in the pipeline. The funding is now fully committed with the final projects to be offered and completed by June 2014.



Wolverhampton Street, Dudley

Transport, Access and Movement

7.48 Ease of movement with an attractive, people friendly environment is essential if the vision for Dudley Town Centre is to be achieved. The town centre must continue to provide the necessary supporting services and infrastructure, including public transport facilities, walking and cycling infrastructure and publicly available car parks.



Dudley at centre of Strategic Highway Network

The Highway Network

7.49 The existing street pattern established over many years contains an extensive series of primary and secondary thoroughfares, integrating the key activities of the town centre. In terms of vehicular movement, the Dudley Southern Bypass and the A4123 Birmingham New Road are the major strategic routes that provide access to the Town centre from the south and the east. A number of peripheral roads serve through traffic to/from the north and northwest of the Town, including Wellington Road, Stafford Street, Wolverhampton Street, The Parade, The Broadway and Castle Hill.

7.50 Dudley Council will continue to manage and develop 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. The introduction of a 20mph zone covering the retail core of the Town Centre would assist in discouraging through traffic whilst at the same time providing the opportunity to create an improved and safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists.

7.51 Dudley sits at the heart of the Black Country as the figure above shows. Improving capacity and access to the motorway network from the important tourism, commercial, industrial and employment areas in Dudley via the strategic highway network corridor to the M5/M6 motorway junctions is vital to help increase investment and regeneration in and around Dudley Town Centre.

Maintaining and improving the efficiency of the local network will benefit commuters, visitors and public transport users by reducing congestion and providing more reliable journey times into and out of Dudley.

Public Transport

7.52 Dudley is a significant centre in the Black Country for a range of shopping, leisure, tourism and employment opportunities but further growth requires improvements to public transport interchange and facilities. Improved facilities in Dudley Town Centre will positively impact on the efficiency and attractiveness of public transport services in Dudley and the wider area.

7.53 Bus travel into the Town Centre is extensive and currently the only mode of public transport for shoppers, workers and visitors. The existing bus station is one of the busiest in the West Midlands, with 19 stands conveniently located adjoining the primary shopping area alongside Fisher Street. The current facilities at Dudley Bus Station were implemented in 1987 and as such are now tired and substandard by modern standards. The bus station is in need of renovation/redevelopment to improve the customer experience, improve operational efficiency, and provide a high quality, modern gateway into Dudley Town Centre. (Refer to Development Opportunity 7: Bus Station Redevelopment – Fisher Street)

7.54 Centro, the Integrated Transport Authority for the West Midlands are considering options for the improvement of the Bus Station. The key aim of the scheme is to create a high quality,

attractive, fit-for-purpose gateway facility of the same class as other new bus facilities in the Borough such as those at Stourbridge. Dudley Bus Station as a scheme would help fulfil many of these objectives and improve bus connectivity throughout Dudley and the wider Black Country. This scheme is one of a package of measures which has been submitted to The Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership Strategic Transport Board.

7.55 The Midland Metro would have a key role in enhancing the accessibility for people travelling to and from Dudley Town Centre. In Dudley borough, the proposed Metro line provides a link from Castle Hill up into the Town Centre, adjacent to the bus station. The route then continues at street level along King Street and down Flood Street, and then continues west towards Brierley Hill. Dudley MBC would be working in partnership with Centro to deliver such proposals.

7.56 Currently Dudley Town Centre has no direct access to rail with Dudley Port Station being approximately 2 miles away. However, the existing freight line track infrastructure provides the opportunity to introduce a potential shuttle service from Dudley Town Centre, at the Castle Hill site, to Dudley Port and possibly on to Wednesbury, whereby rail access to Birmingham and the wider national rail network would be made possible directly from the town centre.

Question 10. Where do you think that new infrastructure is needed within the town centre?

Pedestrian movement

7.57 Good pedestrian access both into and within the town centre is vital to support sustainable growth in Dudley town centre. Improved accessibility for pedestrians, people with disabilities and public transport users will be particularly important. Furthermore, complimentary traffic management measures, including improved pedestrian crossing facilities along primary thoroughfares would be incorporated into the 20mph zone scheme. Any infrastructure measures would be carefully designed to cater for the needs of disabled users including the visually impaired. Improved pedestrian signage is also considered important to support and encourage pedestrian movement between key destinations within and around the Town Centre.

Cycling

7.58 Dudley Town Centre sits alongside the Sustrans National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 54, which links to Brierley Hill and Stourbridge to the southwest and NCN Route 81 to the northeast. NCN 81 links to both Coseley and Wolverhampton to the north and Birmingham to the south. In the Dudley central area the route of NCN54 is not currently well established, and it is therefore proposed to consider the most suitable route that will both clearly define the route of the NCN and also provide good access directly into the Town Centre. In addition the development of a network of arterial cycle routes linking into the surrounding residential catchment areas and other local destinations will be important to

support the promotion of sustainable travel choices whilst also supporting healthy lifestyles.

7.59 Related to this, there is a need to provide complementary facilities for cyclists, such as secure parking areas with cycle stands, particularly adjoining interchange facilities and other key destinations within the Town Centre. The introduction of a 20mph zone and improved signage as discussed earlier would also support and encourage cycle trips to and within the Town Centre.

Question 11. Do you support 20mph zone in the retail core?

Car Parking

7.60 Town centres are considered the most sustainable locations for mixed use development taking advantage of good quality and available alternative modes of sustainable transport and the synergy between multiple activities taking place in close proximity (linked trips).

Car Parking Policy

7.61 Building on the wider transport policies for the borough and West Midlands as defined in the Black Country Joint Core Strategy and as promoted through the West Midlands Local Transport Plan our policy is to "ensure the availability of both long and short stay

parking to support the vitality and regeneration of the town centre". However, this is caveated by the wider policy requirements to encourage the use of sustainable transport wherever practicable.

Car Parking Strategy

7.62 The quantum of town centre parking should reflect demand taking account of linked activities within the centre with a reserve no greater than 15% to address peak activities. The most recent publicly available car park occupancy surveys (Sept 2013) indicate there is a current total reserve capacity of 45% with 745 spaces available out of a total of 1658 spaces provided.

7.63 Dudley sees very diverse traffic movements that need to be catered for by both short and long stay car parking. As the dynamic of the car parking changes with the development of the Town Centre, the demand for short stay and long stay parking will vary accordingly. However there is a need to provide adequate short and long stay parking capacity along with a sufficient reserve capacity as defined earlier to cater for future demand during the peak employment and shopping periods. This will need to be monitored and addressed over time.

7.64 New developments will have to demonstrate the need or otherwise for additional parking facilities. Wherever possible parking should be conveniently located in order to reduce town centre traffic movements and facilitate access to the classified

highway network. Servicing and operational requirements are dealt with in existing supplementary guidance.

7. Suggested Policy areas:

- To facilitate better access to the town centre
- Encourage app public transport improvements to the existing network in and around Dudley Town Centre
- Safeguarding the proposed Metro Line or alternatives
- Maintaining and improving the efficient operation of the highway network
- Promoting a sustainable approach to car parking and safeguarding the required quantity of public car parks in convenient and suitable locations
- Improving the environment for pedestrians and cyclists

Question 12. How do you think that the barriers to movement and parking issues within the town centre should be best addressed? Do you agree with the above suggested policy areas?

Urban Design

Objective

The fundamental urban design objective is to proactively manage change by promoting high quality sustainable buildings and architecture in the design of new development and the enhancement of existing buildings and spaces with Dudley town centre. An enhanced public realm will benefit the town centre making it a safer, more pleasant environment .

Design Quality

7.65 A high quality environment with well designed buildings and spaces is essential for the well-being of residents and visitors to Dudley town centre. Good design relates to the layout and function of the different parts of the town centre as well as their detailed appearance.

7.66 Parts of the town centre have enhanced the design quality of the area, such as the new College buildings and the completed THI projects. The town continues to require enhancement in terms of appearance and local distinctiveness. It is therefore important that the Dudley Area Action Plan provides a robust framework for the design of future development, protecting those buildings and spaces which warrant it and providing guidelines for change in those areas where this is encouraged. This could address issues

such as the shape of streets, the height and massing of buildings, protection of particular views, enhancement of the public realm, and the appearance of new buildings.

Question 13. What factors do you think are important in achieving good design in Dudley town centre?

8. Suggested Policy Area – Design Quality

Development should:

- Be of high quality sustainable design
- Ensure buildings and spaces are visually interesting and reinforce the identity and character of the locality
- Reduce the physical and visual impact of vehicles and service areas
- Have a scale and massing which respects local distinctiveness
- Have interactive and appealing ground floor uses and clear distinctions between public and private space.
- Ensure that design incorporates issues regarding safety and security including potential for reducing anti-social behaviour through natural surveillance
- Reinforce the definition of streets and spaces

Question 14. Do you support the above suggested policy areas? Is there anything else you feel should be included?

Transport, Movement and Parking

7.67 Parking and movement in the centre is essential to achieving a positive and viable town centre.

9. Suggested Policy Area – Access and Movement

All development should endeavour to retain and improve all useful, safe and appropriate vehicular and pedestrian routes and provide new ones that make access and movement easier, safer and more attractive.

Development should also:

- Ensure that streets generally link up and layout is designed to encourage safer walking, cycling and access to public transport
- Direct and convenient access should be provided and natural desire lines created
- Traffic calming measures should be incorporated to ensure congestion and traffic speeds are addressed in the town centre

Question 15. Do you support the above suggested policy areas? Is there anything else you feel should be included?

Layout of Streets and Buildings

7.68 The streets and public spaces of the town centre, as well as the built form that defines and contains them comprise the ‘public realm’. The whole of the town centre should have fine grained, interconnected pattern of streets and open spaces defined by building frontages. New streets should be planned as a natural extension of the existing network central and north of the town centre.

7.69 The layout of the streets and public spaces in the north-west and central of the town centre should be maintained and a similar approach should be adopted to the provision of new street network to the south of the town centre.

7.70 The pattern of the medieval ‘entries or passages’ that connect through development blocks in the medieval parts of the town centre should be protected and improved to increase pedestrian connectivity but also maintain the historic character of the town centre. Where new development or infill development is proposed, opportunities for improvement and overlooking to the historic passages should be considered.

7.71 The network of streets should be appropriate in scale and design to the town centre environment. This means generous pavements, minimum carriageway widths and compact junction arrangements appropriate for both vehicular and pedestrian movement. Streets should be designed to ensure that people can walk easily and conveniently to where they need to be without

being diverted from natural desire lines and minimising the need to cross busy roads.

Layout of Buildings

7.72 The relationship between buildings and the public realm is the critical factor in creating a town centre which is well defined, interesting, varied and a safe environment. Buildings should be positioned close to the edge of the development blocks with 'private' space (such as courtyards and service yards) located discretely behind the buildings in the centre of the block. Streets and public spaces will then be enclosed by the facades of the buildings.

7.73 Blank frontages can create a monotonous and hostile environment, as do large, featureless surface car parks. Large surface car parks represent an inefficient use of valuable land in the town centre. Condensing surface parking into modern, safe and clean multi-storey car parks, positioned behind other uses away from the street frontage, will free land to make way for new development without impacting upon the overall provision car parking and will be encouraged in the plan.

Existing Urban Structure and Built Form

Urban Structure

7.74 Urban structure is the framework of routes and spaces that connect locally and more widely, and the way development, routes and open spaces relate to one another. The medieval part of the

town layout is fairly well preserved in the core area and many tourist attractions are based on its historic assets. The medieval town layout is centred on the Market Place, with a strong connection to the Castle and the buildings were contained along the street that connects to Top and Bottom Church, namely the Historic Central Spine.

7.75 The medieval layout combined with the latter street patterns and urbanisation gives us the current urban structure of Dudley town centre.

Built form

7.75 Built form is the presence of buildings and structure in an area. A group of buildings and structures with specific layout, scale and appearance can create a unique sense of place and identify. Dudley town centre has a prominent skyline and roofscape, accentuated by the topography and defined by bold built form such as the church spires of top and bottom churches and the clock tower on the town hall. The castle provides a unique backdrop and outlook from many viewpoints around the town centre. These features are important landmarks which help people to navigate or identify with a particular location.

7.76 However, the current built form backing onto some parts of the town is very weak and with servicing area facing the street. There is also a lack of prominent built form to address the gateways of the town centre, arrival points and visiting attractions.

7.77 The built form in the central and northern area of the town centre is particularly strong, but it is weak and fragmented in the southern and north-east areas of the town centre as the built form does not address the street. New development should restore the urban structure and create active built form to address the street.

10. Suggested Policy Area – Layout and Urban Structure

All new development will be required to achieve the following:

- Address issues of safety and security in the detailed design and layout of buildings
- Barriers and severance should be minimised and interconnectedness should be maximised Building should give regard to the views and vistas and respect the distinctiveness of the locality where they are built

Question 17. Do you support the above suggested policy areas? Is there anything else you feel should be included?

Building Height and Massing

7.78 Generally, most of the buildings in the centre are between three and four storeys within the historic core with some taller buildings scattered around the town centre. Buildings above four storeys can be found along Castle Hill, Trindle Road and King Street. Most of these also have larger footprints compared to those buildings in the historic core. Taller buildings include the two historic churches and some of the post 1960s office buildings.

Existing Continuity and Enclosure

7.79 Continuity is the creation of building frontages to define public spaces (such as streets and roads) and private space (such as servicing areas). Enclosure is the creation of a sense of defined space by means of surrounding buildings or boundary treatments.

7.80 A common building line creates continuity of frontages and provides definition and enclosure to the public realm. It can also help ensure new development is properly integrated into an existing street. Minimising the set-back distances will increase the ability of a building to interact with the public realm. Where buildings are permitted to step back from the building line, care needs to be taken to ensure resulting spaces are useable and attractive.

7.81 Continuity and enclosure is very strong within the historic core and northern part of the town centre, although there are some infill or gap sites within some of the street frontages. By

contrast, there are many larger gap sites and weak continuity and enclosure of building frontages in the southern and eastern part of the town centre. In particular, there is a lack of building frontages in King Street, Tower Street, Trindle Road, Flood Street and Tipton Road.

7.82 There are a number of key gateways into the town centre and these should be the focus for improvement and enhancement to provide a sense of arrival in the historic town.

11. Suggested Policy Areas:

- All development and any proposed alterations to existing buildings should not have an adverse impact on the designated local views and landmarks
- Where appropriate gateways sites should incorporate taller, landmark buildings if possible
- Development should respect the need to deliver continuity and enclosure

Question 18. Do you support the above suggested policy areas? Is there anything else you feel should be included?



Rooftop View across Inhedge, Dudley Town Centre

Landscape, Green Infrastructure & Nature Conservation

7.83 Though predominantly an urban Borough with large areas of residential development, a key feature of the Borough is the extensive network of open space which brings natural habitats and rural landscapes into the heart of the built up area and gives people opportunities for contact with nature. The AAP recognises the role of individual green areas, open space and landscape elements, and their unique characteristics that contribute to the wider green infrastructure and landscape setting. Within Dudley, this is important because it is:

- An essential part of our natural resources and a key element towards modifying the effects of climate change;
- Providing the setting for important historical buildings linking past, present and future.
- An environment for a range of plants and animals
- A resource that provides an attractive amenity for community and cultural events, linking people with their town centre and produces an enhanced quality of life, supporting tourism and return visits; and
- A valuable recreation and learning resource bringing opportunities to improve the well-being of residents and inspiration and confidence for visitors and business.
- A resource that provides an attractive amenity for community and cultural events, linking people with their town centre.

Landscape

7.84 Landscape features 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 environmental success or failure of a development often owes much to the quality of its landscape setting. Where existing trees are to be retained within a redevelopment scheme, the layout of the built form should be required to accommodate their future growth.

7.85 The setting of private development, both historic and long existing as well as empty plots and buildings abandoned and awaiting new roles also have their part to play in creating a new confident future for the town centre through their landscape and external environment. The way in which new developments can therefore play their part to play in ensuring the quality and success of the town centre needs to be understood and hard and soft landscape included in development and regeneration proposals.

7.86 Of key importance within the town centre is the Castle Hill Special Landscape Heritage Area. Dudley Castle Hill and Priory Ruins area unique and important combination of historical, geological, ecological, landscape and tourist value including the zoo. A suggested policy within the AAP should provide clear guidance to promote the development of the area for a tourist destination

whilst ensuring the protection and enhancement of the very special and diverse components of Castle Hill.

12. Suggested Policy – Landscape

- 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. A landscape strategy will be a requirement for all appropriate forms of development, secured where appropriate by the use of conditions.
- Landscape Strategies should ensure that:
 - a. Any trees, existing natural habitats including recognised important species (for example, butterflies) or other features that can be effectively incorporated are retained.
 - 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 the environment of Dudley
- All proposals should respect and enhance the Castle Hill woodland and its nature conservation value.

Question 19. Do you support the above suggested policy? Are there any parts that you would disagree with? Is there anything else you think should be included?

Parks and Open Space

7.87 Well designed parks, open spaces and squares provide a focus for people to meet and enjoy and play a role in a healthy lifestyle, as well as a catalyst around which housing, shops and businesses can benefit. They can also bring a unique selling point, enhancing the image of a place. The amount, distribution and access to existing play and Local Park provision for amenity and well-being is informed by the Dudley MBC Parks Strategy.

7.88 Dudley town centre is already well served by local and community parks which include Priory Park (within the boundary), Dudley Town Park (Scotts Green) and Buffery Park (both outside the boundary). Coronation Gardens which sits opposite the Council House and adjacent to the new college building, remains the only town park within the current town centre boundary and Inhedge Gardens to the west of the town centre facing the Magistrates Court is an informal green open space. There are currently regeneration plans at the concept design stage for Inhedge Gardens, to enhance the area and make it much more user-friendly. The potential redevelopment of the Opportunity Sites give opportunity for a new ‘squares’ or other type of space to be provided.

7.89 Outdoor play is central to an enjoyable childhood and research tells us that play helps combat childhood obesity, aids children’s mental and emotional responsiveness, promotes their

resilience and supports learning. An environment which is attractive and safe for children to play is also an attractive, safe place for the whole community.

7.90 There is a need to safeguard from loss or harm, existing open space provision and to provide new and missing spaces to create a hierarchy of inspiring landscape and public realm projects to provide a unique selling point and image for Dudley Town Centre.

Geopark

7.91 In the Black Country our landscapes, nature reserves, open air visitor attractions, historic buildings, museum collections and the history of development and settlement are a direct consequence of the geology beneath our feet. Abundant raw materials made way for the area to flourish in experimental science and technology that founded many aspects of the industrial revolution and transformed the world during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. With this in mind, the Black Country Authorities submitted a bid in 2013 to become a European and Global Geopark and celebrate the sub-regions geological and cultural journey with the rest of the world.

7.92 A Geopark is an area or territory with outstanding geological heritage and where there is considerable effort to conserve it and increase the public understanding and enjoyment of it. This is an exciting opportunity for us promote to the world the Black.

7.93 Country's geological and cultural heritage and to show how the minerals on our doorstep helped shape the industrial revolution and the world. As a Geopark we would gain international recognition and it will put us in a strong position to attract investment in the future but also help us shout about the Black Country as a tourism destination. The Geopark will protect and encourage the management of existing geodiversity resources and create new features and opportunities with partners. It will increase public awareness and appreciation of the Black Country's geodiversity heritage, stimulating geotourism. The Geopark will maximise the opportunities to contribute to all levels of education and life-long learning.

Formal Sport and Recreation Provision

7.94 Provision of sports and recreational opportunities play a major part in the health and well being of residents. Existing provision should be protected and new needs and opportunities provided via development which is integrated within green infrastructural links between the town centre and surrounding communities. Formal indoor public leisure provision is available via Dudley Leisure Centre, located just outside the AAP study area. The facilities date from the 1970's and the question of refurbishment within the current site/or location within a development opportunity site within the AAP study area could be considered.

Question 20. Do you agree that existing sports and recreation provision should be protected and where possible new facilities provided where needed?

Public Realm

7.95 The AAP needs to encourage and provide a valuable multifunctional landscape that addresses the overall good perception and enjoyment of the public realm of the town.

7.96 Within Dudley, the Market Place forms a key central focus and major area of public realm, which is currently undergoing significant renewal. This will provide a high quality public realm fitting for an important historic town that wishes to celebrate and share its historic past, with a confidence for new investment in the future and for local people and visitors to enjoy.

7.97 New and significant development projects, such the new campus buildings of Dudley College have provided quality public realm demonstrating that the landscape and public realm setting is a key aspect to the overall perception and confidence of new and regenerated built form. The quality and of the public realm encountered, along with signage and legibility for visitors to understand and enjoy, is an important part in the role of the Town Centre. Additionally, awareness of the need to provide sustainable drainage measures within new developments, by way of temporary

areas of water, rain gardens within multifunctional landscape is a key part of ensuring Dudley town centre becomes the quality place that the Black Country Core Strategy envisages.

13. Suggested Policy – Public Realm

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

- The provision of high quality hard landscaping, street furniture, lighting, signage and art to help create a clear identity for the Town Centre. Strategies could be prepared to coordinate the choice and location of these features.
- Mature tree planting and other landscaping will assist the ‘greening’ of the Town Centre and provide multifunctional green links to areas of nature conservation significance.
- Streets and spaces will be designed so that pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles can mix safely with priority given to pedestrians where possible.

Question 21. Do you support the above suggested policy? Are there any parts that you would disagree with? Is there anything else you think should be included?

Green Infrastructure

7.98 Green infrastructure performs a variety of functions including the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity as well as providing space for informal and formal recreation. Retention, improvement and management of green infrastructure across the Borough is a priority as these green spaces are under continual pressure from development.

7.99 Green connections via the important mature street trees of Priory Rd, Ednam Rd , St James Rd and Broadway add high to the higher quality views and perception of these long established landscape character areas within the townscape.

7.100 Some of the green links between historic areas of the town to the east and south east and also north west of the town, lack green corridor connections, A challenge therefore for the AAP is to encourage and provide a valuable multifunctional landscape that addresses this as well as the overall good perception and enjoyment of the public realm of the town. The opportunity of the buildings to include green roofs and walls as well as soft landscape to their private /public realm /gardens etc needs to be considered within the AAP proposals.

Nature Conservation

7.101 Designated nature conservation sites are a key element of nature conservation strategy from local right up to international

levels. Areas of land are designated for the habitats, species and/or geological features that they support. Wildlife does not thrive in isolation and many species need to be able to move to feed and breed. These sites are often also important for the opportunities that they give for local people to come into contact with wildlife and earth heritage and for their educational potential. Biodiversity is an important component of environmental quality and good environmental quality is a clear determinant of a good quality of life.

7.102 In addition to the parks and open spaces in and around Dudley Town Centre, Castle Hill is classified as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) and the eastern boundary of the current town centre is a linear protected open space. The Wrens nest Local Nature Reserve lies just to the north west of Castle Hill and it is imperative that opportunities for links are created into and out of this LNR.

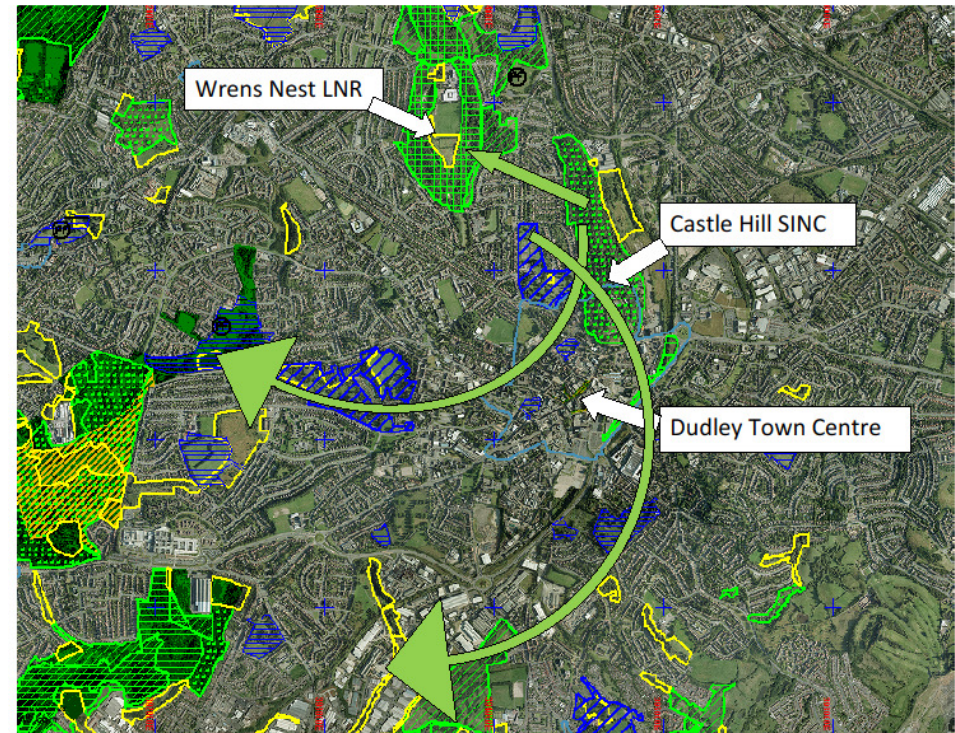
7.103 Surveys have shown that the Wrens Nest National Nature Reserve and Castle Hill Site of Importance for Nature Conservation support bat hibernation roosts of some significance at the national level and therefore any proposed development in this vicinity requires special scrutiny. This means ensuring location and layout of development. Landscaping and lighting are designed to avoid undue impacts on both feeding habitat and corridors of movement.

Green Infrastructure and Nature Conservation Issues

7.104 This AAP will look to progress these nature conservation requirements through policies which are relevant to retain and augment the green assets and bio diverse distinctiveness of Dudley. 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 aims are achieved.

7.105 The emerging Development Strategy DPD proposes a Green network across the whole Borough. This recognises the need to provide connectivity within the Green Network where this is absent and there is severance, particularly through the layout of proposed development. Where the Green Network runs through the existing built environment, alternative means of ensuring connectivity should be considered such as green roofs and walls, street trees and the creation of boulevards. Maintaining the green Network will help to protect the wildlife network which aims to connect up all the locally and strategically important green areas which sustain the biodiversity of the Borough and its surrounds, enabling species to migrate or colonise new areas.

7.106 The map overlaid shows the important green areas within and around Dudley town centre. The blue hatched areas depict parks and the yellow and green areas show designated nature conservation sites. The green arrows show where links need to be made to enable better connection of the green areas.



Dudley's Green Areas and necessary green links

14. Suggested Policy Areas:

- Green infrastructure and in particular, the green Network should provide for multi-functional uses i.e. wildlife, recreational and cultural experience, as well as delivering ecological services such as flood protection and microclimate control. It should also operate at all spatial scales from urban centres through to open countryside.
- All development proposals falling within or adjacent to the Green Network and/or a designated nature conservation site, will be required to give full consideration to the effects of the development on biodiversity and conservation.
- All development proposals except householder applications, falling within or adjoining the Green Network, shall have a design and layout which would complement and enhance the intended functions of the network
- Where green infrastructure, biodiversity or nature conservation is adversely affected by development, mitigation will be required.

Question 22. Do you support the above suggested policy? Are there any parts that you would disagree with? Is there anything else you think should be included?



View to the Castle showing green elements in the town centre

8. Area Action Plan Boundaries

Area Action Plan Boundary

8.1 The AAP has to define the area to which it relates. There is justification for having a wider AAP boundary to include some of the significant areas which lie outside the town centre. The intention would be to include Dudley Castle and zoo with surrounding areas of green space up to Kate's Hill in the north; The Black Country Living Museum on the western side of the Tipton Road; the Dudley Canal just to the north of the museum; the older Dudley College building, and; Priory Hall and Priory Park to the west of the Castle. It is important that these areas to the north are connected physically to the town centre as they are key features of Dudley's heritage and leisure role.

Town Centre Boundary

8.2 The town centre boundary includes the primary shopping area and areas of predominantly leisure, business and others main town centre uses. Dudley town centre boundary incorporates many important civic buildings, local and regional landmarks such as the two churches at each end of the High Street, the two locally recognised statues (Duncan Edwards and The Earl of Dudley), public open space at Priory Gardens and Stone Street Square. The boundary also includes the four main gateways to the town centre which are in need of sensitive enhancement.

8.3 The town centre boundary (blue line) on the map (Appendix 1) changes from that presented in the UDP by the inclusion of a small triangular section in the southwest along Steppingstone Street, Pitfield Row and Greystone Street. This section currently contains a small range of Locally Listed buildings associated with the vacant Pub, The Gypsy's Tent and two car parks. The new boundary also proposes to extend along Wolverhampton Street to include a section of the town which contains a number of retail units and is in need of enhancement.

Question 23. Do you agree with the proposed Dudley AAP Boundary and Town Centre Boundary? Are there any areas which you feel should be added or removed?

Primary Shopping Area

8.4 The Primary shopping area represents the central area of retail activity in a centre and they are identifiable by larger pedestrian flows and the presence of national retailers and complementary town centre uses. The primary shopping area designation aims to consolidate an adequate provision of retail facilities in the centre in order to maintain vitality and viability with high levels of shops. The map above shows the proposed primary shopping area boundary (marked in purple) for the AAP. This boundary has been extended from the adopted UDP boundary to include a section of retail units along Castle Street to the north and

in the south and east, to include the scope of the existing retail planning consents. There is anticipated retail development expected within these areas for town centre uses in the near future which justifies their inclusion within the primary shopping area.

Question 24. Do you agree with the proposed Primary Shopping Area?

Protected Frontages

8.5 Due to the recent decline in retail outlets within many town centres across the country, there remains a continued and important need to retain and protect certain areas for A1 retail use (in planning terms A1 is the classification used for shops). For this reason 'Protected Frontages' are identified where A1 uses are intended to be the predominant use and it is necessary to limit the amount of non-retail uses.

8.6 The Protected Frontages are showed marked in red on the following map. There are no proposed changes to these frontages from those defined within the Unitary Development Plan.

Question 25. Do you agree with the proposed protected frontages or should they be extended or reduced?



Dudley High Street Market Area

9. Town Centre Quarters, Development Opportunity Sites and Investment Opportunity Areas

Town Centre Quarters

9.1 The Area Action Plan is looking to create a town centre with a vibrant mix of activities including retail, residential, education, offices, civic functions and leisure and tourism to be used by people throughout the day and evening.

9.2 One way of enhancing the overall character of the town centre and strengthening the range and mix of uses on offer is through identifying a number of Town Centre Quarters. These are:

- Shopping Quarter – the primary shopping area which will be the focus for continued retail presence and some appropriate scaled retail growth
- Cultural Quarter – The area covering the museum, library, St James’s Road and the concert hall and Stone Street Events space where there is a clustering of cultural facilities
- Learning Quarter – The concentration of the new iconic college and learning campus.
- Tourism & Leisure Quarter – Focussed around the Castle hill featuring the Zoo, the Castle, the Black Country Living Museum, Dudley Living canals and the Archive Centre acting as a focus for the tourism and leisure activity in the town centre.

Potential Development Opportunity Sites

9.3 In addition to identifying Town Centre Quarters we have identified potential Development Opportunity Sites (Appendix 1) where major development and regeneration should be focused. The majority of these sites were identified in the saved Dudley UDP as allocations but there is renewed market interest and in some instances they have recent planning permission. The development opportunities and their potential future uses are not set in stone. Their inclusion in this report does not mean that it will appear in the final Dudley Area Action Plan. At this stage the options are just that; possibilities to be explored. They are here for you to comment on, and we hope that you will take the opportunity to do so.

9.4 The sites are being investigated for their suitability, availability and viability for development. Through this consultation process we are seeking evidence as to whether these sites are realistically likely to become available for redevelopment between now and 2026, and whether there are constraints on them.

Potential Development Opportunity Site 1: King Street / Flood Street

This is a large underused area which contains business premises/offices, surface level car parks and has considerable redevelopment potential. The site is within the proposed primary shopping area and includes the approved foodstore (P12/1107) which would be sited on the most northern end of the site fronting King Street and Flood Street. The land provides a major opportunity

for integration of new development into the primary shopping area and with public transport facilities. The site is adjacent to the Dudley Bypass and the proposed Midland Metro will pass along Flood Street.

Development could come forward on this site with a mix of retail uses. For example, comparison retail units could be created alongside the approved foodstore with the associated car parking and petrol filling station. The comparison shopping is more likely to take the form of larger units. Other town centre uses which would be appropriate would include residential development, with potentially apartments above ground floor retail uses.

It is important that new development provides a strong retail frontage on King Street into the primary shopping area with pedestrian routes that connect the main shopping anchors through the market and the Churchill Shopping Centre. The key to delivering the integration will be highway and public realm improvements from the site to the High Street.

Design parameters may include:

- Strong Retail Frontage to King Street;
- High Quality two/three storey elevations to King Street;
- Clear, direct and convenient pedestrian connections to the rest of the town centre;
- Safeguarding the Midland Metro route and possible Metro stop provision; and
- Comprehensive traffic management

Question 26. Do you think that this opportunity site is appropriate for the proposed land uses? If not, what alternatives would you suggest? Do you have any other comments to make on the potential development opportunity site?

Potential Development Opportunity Site 2: Trindle Road / Hall Street

This opportunity site is located to the south east of the town centre and adjoins the Southern Bypass. It is bounded on the north west by Trindle Road and Hall Street to the south west. The Churchill Shopping Centre is located to the west and the bus station to the north. The area is dominated by the vacant Cavendish House office building and a series of rundown buildings.

The site is within the proposed primary shopping area and includes the approved foodstore consents on broadly similar sites in the Cavendish House area (P12/0581 and P12/1042.) Both propose the demolition and clearance of Cavendish House with a foodstore situated to the southern end of the site, located parallel to Hall Street. P12/1042 covers a larger area and has outline planning consent for a mixed-use redevelopment.

Development could come forward on this site with a mix of town centre uses. As well as the two approvals for a foodstore with associated car parking and petrol filling station there is outline permission for a mix of uses including non food retail, a large

format restaurant or leisure use and small-scale office development.

Design parameters may include:

- Frontages to Hall Street and the Trindle Road / King Street junction should be continuous and provide full integration with the primary shopping area;
- The retention of existing units along Hall Street, and their alteration, conversion and where necessary part replacement;
- High quality two/three storey elevations to King Street;
- Clear, direct and convenient pedestrian connections to the rest of the town centre; and
- Transport interchange, including provision for the metro link and connectivity with the bus station.

Question 27. Do you think that this opportunity site is appropriate for the proposed land uses? If not, what alternatives would you suggest? Do you have any other comments to make on the potential development opportunity site?

Potential Development Opportunity Site 3: Birdcage Walk Area

This opportunity area is located to the east of Market Place focused on the site of Dudley bus station. To the south is the former Co-Operative Food supermarket and Farmfoods frozen food on the corner of Fisher Street and Birmingham Street. Currently the Co-op

foodstore is on the open market to purchase. Adjacent to the vacant foodstore and located on the outside of the Churchhill Shopping Centre is Birdcage Walk which has 14 small ground floor retail units with first floor ancillary accommodation. Currently a number of the units are vacant and is an unfriendly environment for pedestrians.

Additional retail floorspace could come forward by the possible creation of a covered arcade, and redesign of existing frontages. The former co-op unit could be incorporated in a renewal scheme with the convenience retail provision relocated and the building demolished. This will provide a new frontage to Birdcage Walk.

The site is within the primary shopping area and is identified in the Saved Dudley Unitary Development Plan as a 'Priority Retail Renewal Area.' Retail, office and or residential units should be the predominant land use for new development. Any scheme should provide an enhanced and improved retail frontage with safer pedestrian access between the High Street/Market Place and the redeveloped Bus Station.

Design parameters may include:

- The reconfiguration of Birdcage Walk, Birmingham Street and Fisher Street frontages including the redesign of the existing retail units with additional floorspace;
- As a key corner site at the Birmingham Street junction should be re-enforced though built form;
- Pedestrian accessibility will be improved through opening up Birdcage Walk; and

- Bus and the metro should be co-ordinated with the overall streetscape design.

Question 28. Do you think that this opportunity site is appropriate for the proposed land uses? If not, what alternatives would you suggest? Do you have any other comments to make on the potential development opportunity site?

Potential Development Opportunity Site 4: Tower Street

This opportunity site is centrally located in Dudley town centre to the north of the Market Place and is focused on Tower Street. To the west of the site on the opposite side of Tower Street is the new Dudley College Evolve building. A partial or comprehensive redevelopment is considered appropriate, focused on the underused land fronting Tower Street. The area comprises a mix of vacant sites, currently used for surface car parking.

The site is within the proposed primary shopping area and retail, residential and office uses would be appropriate. Any scheme should provide an enhanced and improved retail frontage on Tower Street and a principal component will be a multi level car park accessible from Tower Street.

Design parameters may include:

- Strong, well defined frontage development should be provided along Tower Street;

- Predominantly four storey development carefully designed to complement the historic character of the town centre
- Local landmarks including Baylie’s Hall adjacent the site should be retained with enhanced settings; and
- Accessibility and pedestrian routes will be improved through enhancements to the public realm.

9.5 The redevelopment of the above sites will enhance the proposed primary shopping area in terms of providing uplift to the towns retail offer, thereby boosting the vitality and viability of Dudley.

Question 29. Do you think that this opportunity site is appropriate for the proposed land uses? If not, what alternatives would you suggest? Do you have any other comments to make on the potential development opportunity site?

Potential Development Opportunity Site 5: Trident Centre/Upper High Street

This is an area containing ‘secondary shopping,’ offices and Inhedge Gardens. Within the whole area, there will be a strong preference for new uses, including residential and leisure to replace peripheral shops. The Council considers that the re-use or redevelopment of the Trident Centre is a major priority. A partial or comprehensive

redevelopment of the site would be encouraged providing the existing viable retail operators are relocated within the primary shopping area? Inhedge Gardens is currently an underused greenspace and pedestrian link into the primary shopping area which will be protected and enhanced through public realm improvements.

Design parameters may include:

- Respect for street block layout, with active frontages on to street and routes, including Inhedge Gardens;
- Retention and enhancement of Inhedge Gardens, and surrounding listed/locally listed buildings;
- Mixed 2/3 storey development fronting on to the streets, with potential for taller buildings at the junction of Stafford Street/High Street; and
- Respect for the setting and views of Top Church.

Question 30. Do you think that this opportunity site is appropriate for the proposed land uses? If not, what alternatives would you suggest? Do you have any other comments to make on the potential development opportunity site?

Potential Development Opportunity Site 6: Upper High Street/King Street

This opportunity site is located outside the primary shopping area on Upper High Street/King Street with Union Street to the north and bounded to the west by Vicar Street. High Street property between Vicar Street and St John's House is of mixed appearance and varied condition and is a secondary shopping location within the town centre. The pedestrian environment needs to be improved and there is an abundance of blank frontages, rear service yards and inactive uses.

The Council will promote regeneration of this area through a mixture of retail and commercial uses along King Street at ground or first floor with office or apartments above.

Design Parameters may include:

- Infill development and environmental improvements
- The creation of an active King Street frontage
- Clear, direct and convenient pedestrian connections to the High Street and Market Place
- Enhancement of Rutland Passage for pedestrian accessibility

Question 31. Do you think that this opportunity site is appropriate for the proposed land uses? If not, what alternatives would you suggest? Do you have any other comments to make on the potential development opportunity site?

Potential Development Opportunity Site 7: Upper High Street/Top Church

This opportunity site is located outside of the retail core and focused on the junction of High Street and King Street to the west of St Thomas's Church (Top Church). There is a rundown block of property (part retail/part commercial) on High Street and there is a motor repair centre and car showroom on King Street. Some of the buildings on High Street are vacant and several units are listed or locally listed.

A broad mix of uses would be encouraged with a mix of commercial uses and retail uses at ground floor level with residential above. A mix of retention and refurbishment of existing buildings together with selective redevelopment opportunities will be explored.

Design parameters may include:

- High quality strong frontage development along King Street and High Street
- Retention of listed/locally listed buildings
- Inclusion of a strong focal point to assist gateway enhancement at the road junction

Question 32. Do you think that this opportunity site is appropriate for the proposed land uses? If not, what alternatives would you suggest? Do you have any other comments to make on the potential development opportunity site?

Investment Opportunity Areas

9.6 The Investment Opportunity Areas are key sites within the town centre which are established areas where the plan will focus and continue to deliver the aspirations around the existing land uses (see Appendix 1).

Potential Investment Opportunity Area A: Castle Hill and Tipton Road

9.7 This investment opportunity area lies to the east of Dudley town centre and the hill itself comprises Dudley Zoo and the Castle with a woodland area situated immediately to the north extending towards the Birmingham New Road. To the east of the Hill extending towards Tipton Road predominantly comprises land formerly used as a rail freight terminal.

9.8 The south-eastern part of the site comprises buildings fronting onto Castle Hill including the former Gala Bingo and JB's night club, now a martial arts centre and conference venue. Immediately to the north of these buildings is an area of land currently used as the zoo's car park. To the north-east lies the Dudley Canal Trust, the Black Country Living Museum, the Royal Brierley Experience and the Dudley Archives building.

9.9 Planning permission has been granted for a mixed use development (P12/1598), comprising an area of car parking, a new visitor entrance to the Zoological Gardens and a visitor hub building. The outline planning application (P04/0091) for the

redevelopment for major visitors attractions has now lapsed but the principle of the uses has been established to help support and develop the existing tourist facilities within the area.

9.10 Within the site there are major key assets including the Grade 1 Listed Dudley Castle, with the Castle and surrounds being scheduled as an Ancient Monument and a Landscape Heritage Area. Castle Hill itself is designated as a non-statutory Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), largely due to the geological significance of the hill and is designated as a conservation area with individual buildings recorded as Heritage Assets.

Question 33. Do you think that this investment opportunity area is appropriate? Do you have any other comments to make on this site?

Potential Investment Opportunity Area B: Bus Station Redevelopment – Fisher Street

9.11 Dudley Bus Station is located on Fisher Street in Dudley Town Centre. The current facilities were implemented in 1987 and are now in need of modernising. Providing a well connected modern bus station /interchange facility within the existing footprint to serve the town is vital and will be fundamental in facilitating wider regeneration. The scheme will provide a central hub in Dudley, linking existing and new housing areas with

employment, retail, leisure and education destinations to other Strategic Centres in the Black Country, as well as Birmingham City Centre.

The objectives of the bus station redevelopment scheme will aim:

- To create a safer environment for bus operators and passengers to minimise passenger and vehicle conflict;
- To provide sufficient overall operational capacity, including room for growth
- To provide sufficient designated layover areas for vehicles to wait safely that do not cause conflict to the operation of the bus station;
- To upgrade shelter infrastructure, cycle provision, refurbished public and staff toilets, upgraded main staff building; and
- To safeguard and improve bus access to the station.

9.12 Outline planning permission has been granted for access improvements into the bus station. The West Midlands Local Transport Plan (WMLTP) highlights the importance of Dudley Town Centre and the benefits achieved through redevelopment of the bus station. Dudley Bus Station as a scheme would improve connectivity throughout Dudley and the Black Country.

Question 34. Do you support the above investment opportunity site? Do you have any other comments to make on the potential redevelopment of the bus station?

Potential Housing Opportunities

9.13 Over the plan period Dudley Town Centre and the wider Area Action Plan boundary will be the focus for residential led regeneration. Increased housing growth in and around Dudley will help enhance its vitality and viability.

9.14 Whilst the overall market demand for apartments has fallen in recent times, there are locations where such housing will be attractive, particularly within the core of the centre. There is a need to achieve a mix of dwelling types, sizes and tenures. Housing should address local needs, for example, for single person households, the elderly and those unable to compete on the open market. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) done in 2014 has identified potential sites for housing development, these are:

Inside the Town Centre

Potential Opportunity Sites	Potential Yield
Opportunity Site 1: King Street Flood Street mixed use	80
Opportunity Site 4: Tower Street mixed use	40
Opportunity Site 5: Trident Centre/Upper High Street mixed use	60
Opportunity Site 7: Upper High Street / Top Church	20

Other Potential Sites

Potential Housing Sites	Potential Yield
Ednam House, Ednam Road residential conversion (Council offices)	16
St James Road/Ednam Road conversion and new build (Council offices)	83
Appleyard Site, Wolverhampton Street	30
Total	329

9.15 This number may vary depending on the precise density, dwelling mix and size but presumes that apartments will be constructed together with town houses.

Potential for Employment Opportunities

9.16 There are no Regional Employment Land Sites (RELS), designated employment areas nor employment opportunities within the proposed Dudley Town Centre Area Action Plan Boundary. However, there are 2 RELS sites and proposed potential Strategic High Quality Employment Areas at CG/Thomas Dudley and Ionic Business Park, Castlegate, Dudley.

9.17 Within the wider Black Country Core Strategy Regeneration Corridor 11a 'Dudley Town Centre-Brierley Hill,' the strategy will focus on continuous improvements to the quality of the employment offer by providing quality new sites and premises for high technology and modern manufacturing businesses. These will be allocated through the Development Strategy DPD.

9.18 To ensure the strategy is robust we will be gathering evidence to ensure that the sites and infrastructure are able to be developed and are financially viable. Investment will be required, primarily from the private sector into the Proposed Development Opportunity Sites. However, public sector investment can play an important role complementary role by enhancing the public realm and making the Town Centre more attractive for investment.

9.19 The adopted Area Action Plan will contain a monitoring framework which will measure the delivery of the proposals against specified time-scales and will assess the effectiveness of the policies against specified targets. The monitoring framework will be developed as the AAP progresses.

Question 35. Do you have any suggestions on the monitoring indicators that should be included in the AAP?

15. Suggested Policy areas:

The suggested policy should:

- focus on enhancing the existing stock of offices especially on upper floors of premises
- creating a more pleasant public realm to encourage businesses to relocate to the town centre
- Encourage and create opportunities for local enterprises and work/live studios

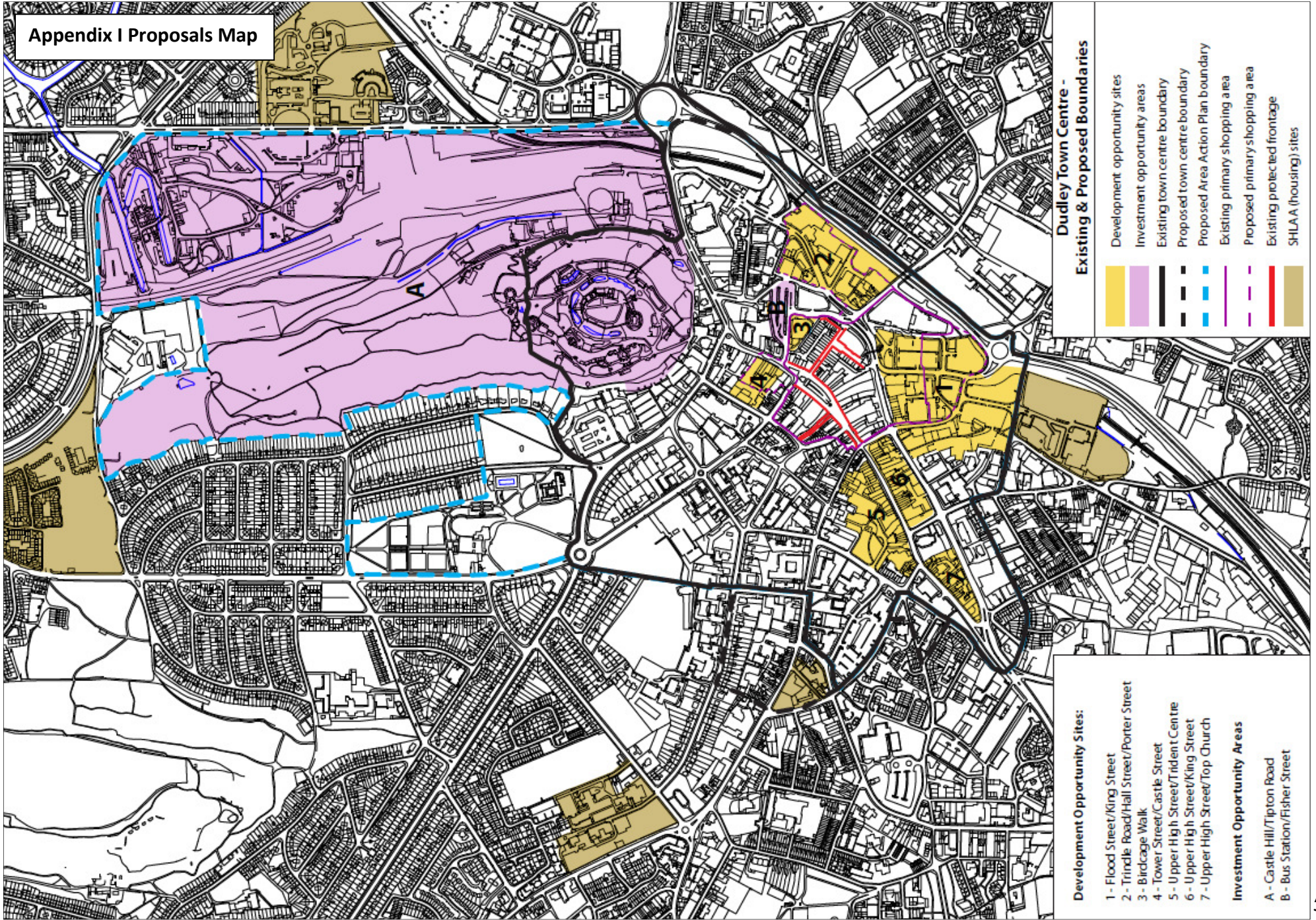
Question 36. Do you agree with these suggested Policy Areas? If not, what alternatives would you suggest?

11. What Happens Next?

11.1 The responses received to the consultation will be used to prepare the Dudley AAP 'Preferred Options' Consultation Document which is due to be prepared in December 2014. Your views are really important and will influence the production of the Dudley AAP and what Dudley Town Centre will look like.

Public Consultation of Draft AAP (Options)	March – April 2014
Public Consultation (Preferred Options)	December 2014
Publication	June 2015
Submission	September 2015
Pre-Examination Meeting	December 2015
Examination	February 2016
Adoption	June 2016
Implementation and Monitoring	June 2016 onwards

Appendix I Proposals Map



Appendix 2. Glossary

Affordable Housing: housing designed to meet the needs of households whose incomes are not sufficient to allow them to purchase decent and appropriate housing for their needs. Affordable housing comprises both social housing and intermediate housing.

Anchor Store: An anchor store is one of the larger stores in a shopping mall, usually a department store or a major retail chain, chosen for its ability to draw shoppers to the shopping centre in which it is located.

Area Action Plan (AAP): A Development Plan Document that sets a planning framework for a specific area of significant change or conservation.

Aspirational housing: Housing which will attract Social class A/B households and entrepreneurial households into the area which will create a more mixed, balanced population. Social groups A/B are generally taken to mean those in professional and managerial employment.

Biodiversity: The whole variety of life on earth. It includes all species of plants and animals, their genetic variation and the ecosystems of which they are a part.

Black Country Core Strategy: Sets out the vision and strategy for future development in the Black Country. This document has been prepared by Dudley Council, Sandwell Council, Walsall Council and Wolverhampton City Council and contains a set of key policies which set out the spatial planning strategy for the area.

Building for Life: Building for Life is a scheme led by CABE and the Home Builders Federation and is supported by the Government as the standard for the design quality of new homes. Twenty

questions cover: character; roads, parking and pedestrianisation, design and construction and environment and community. A scheme that meets 14 of the 20 questions is eligible to apply for a silver standard and schemes that meet 16 or more will be considered for a gold standard.

Climate proof: Climate proofing is a term for identifying risks to a development project, or any other specified natural or human asset, as a consequence of climate variability and change, and ensuring that those risks are reduced to acceptable levels through long-lasting and environmentally sound, economically viable, and socially acceptable changes.

Code for Sustainable Homes: The Code for Sustainable Homes has been developed to measure the sustainability of a home against design categories, rating the 'whole house' as a complete package. The design categories include: energy / co2, water, materials, surface water run off, waste, pollution, health and well being, management and ecology. The code uses a sustainability rating system indicated by stars from one to six stars. It is closely linked to Building Regulations and is intended that the Code will signal the future direction of Building Regulations in relation to carbon emissions from, and energy use in homes.

Comparison Shopping: Comparison retailing is the provision of items not obtained on a frequent basis. These include clothing, footwear, household and recreational goods.

Community Facilities: Education, health and social facilities such as schools, libraries, health centres, hospitals, community/day centres, churches, post offices, public houses and local shops. Essential facilities are those which residents require access to on a daily or weekly basis.

Convenience shopping: Convenience retailing is the provision of everyday essential items, including food, drinks, newspapers/magazines and confectionery.

Cultural facilities: Any building or structure used for programs or activities involving the arts or other endeavours that encourage refinement or development of the mind.

Density: The term density is used to describe the scale of development on a site and in terms of housing it describes the existing or proposed number of dwellings per hectare.

Development Plan Document (DPD): Any part of the Local Development Framework that forms part of the statutory development plan (i.e. Core Strategy, Area Action Plans, proposals map and site allocations)

Edge-of-centre: For retail purposes, a location that is well connected to and within easy walking distance (i.e. up to 300 metres) of the primary shopping area. For all other main town centre uses, this is likely to be within 300 metres of a town centre boundary. In determining whether a site falls within the definition of edge-of-centre, account should be taken of local circumstances. For example, local topography will affect pedestrians' perceptions of easy walking distance from the centre. Other considerations include barriers, such as crossing major roads and car parks, the attractiveness and perceived safety of the route and the strength of attraction and size of the town centre. A site will not be well connected to a centre where it is physically separated from it by a barrier such as a major road, railway line or river and there is no existing or proposed pedestrian route which provides safe and convenient access to the centre.

Geodiversity: The variety of rocks, fossils, minerals, landforms and soil along with the natural processes that shape the landscape.

Green Infrastructure: The sub-regional network of protected sites, nature reserves, greenspaces and greenway linkages. The linkages include river corridors and flood plains, migration routes and features of the landscape which are important as wildlife corridors.

Habitat: The natural surroundings in which an animal or plant usually lives.

Intermediate housing: Housing at prices and rents above those of social rent, but below market price or rents. This can include shared equity schemes, such as HomeBuy, other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent.

Leisure and Recreation Facilities: Cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, night-clubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, swimming pools, indoor sports halls and leisure centres, indoor bowling centres, indoor tennis courts, ice rinks, and bingo halls.

Lifetime Homes: A Lifetime Home incorporates 16 design features that together create a flexible blue print for accessible and adaptable housing. The Lifetime Homes concept increases choice, independence and longevity of tenure, vital to individual and community well being.

Local Development Document (LDD): Sets out planning policy for a specific topic or geographic area.

Local Development Framework (LDF): Collective name for all the policies and documents that make up the planning framework for the district.

Local Development Scheme (LDS): States what Local Development Framework documents will be produced, in what order and by when. Also contains details of monitoring and review.

Out-of-centre: A location which is not in or on the edge of a centre not necessarily outside the urban area.

Out-of-town: An out-of-centre development outside the existing urban area.

Primary Shopping Area: Defined area where retail development is concentrated (generally comprising the primary and those secondary frontages which are next to and closely related to the primary shopping frontage).

Protected frontage: Protected frontages are protected for retail uses to be the predominant use.

Rapid Transit: Rapid Transit is an urban public transport service that operates at high levels of customer performance, especially with regard to travel times and passenger carrying capacity. It usually operates on specific fixed tracks or with separated and exclusive rights of way, according to established schedules along designated routes or lines with specific stops (although Bus Rapid Transit and trams sometimes operate in mixed traffic). Rapid Transit includes: Heavy Rail Transit systems (“Metro” and “Commuter Rail”), Light Rail Transit (LRT) and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) systems.

Secured by Design: Secured by Design is a police initiative to encourage the building industry to adopt crime prevention measures in the design of developments to assist in reducing the opportunity for crime and fear of crime, creating a safer and more secure environment.

Social housing: Rented housing owned and managed by local authorities and registered social landlords, where guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime.

Spatial Planning: Goes beyond traditional land use planning to bring together wider community strategies and initiatives which influence the nature of places and how they function. This means addressing issues such as health, employment, community cohesion, crime and social exclusion.

Stakeholders: People who have an interest in the activities and achievements of Dudley Council, including residents, local communities of interest, partners, employees, customers, shareholders, suppliers, opinion leaders, regulators and “hard to reach” groups.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA): Assessment of potential policies and proposals on the environment, including proposed mitigation measures

Supermarkets: Self-service stores selling mainly food with a trading floorspace less than 2,500 sq metres, often with car parking.

Superstores: Self-service stores selling mainly food, or food and non-food goods, usually with more than 2,500 sq metres trading floorspace, with supporting car parking.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA): Assesses the impacts of policies and proposals on economic, social and environmental aspects, to reflect sustainable development principles.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS): A design philosophy that uses a range of techniques to manage surface water as close to the source as possible. It can use permeable surfaces and wetland features to capture rainwater and slowly release it into the ground.

Town Centre: Defined area, including the primary shopping area and areas of predominantly leisure, business and other main town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area.

Wildlife Corridor: Areas, usually linear, which enable wildlife to move between one wildlife site and another.

Use Class Order: The following classes of use are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 and its subsequent amendments.

A1 Shops - Shops, retail warehouses, hairdressers, undertakers, travel and ticket agencies, post offices, pet shops, sandwich bars,

showrooms, domestic hire shops, dry cleaners and funeral directors.

A2 Financial and professional services - Banks, building societies, estate and employment agencies, professional and financial services and betting offices.

A3 Restaurants and cafés - For the sale of food and drink for consumption on the premises - restaurants, snack bars and cafes.

A4 Drinking establishments - Public houses, wine bars or other drinking establishments (but not night clubs).

A5 Hot food takeaways - For the sale of hot food for consumption off the premises.

B1 Business - Offices, research and development, light industry appropriate in a residential area.

B2 General industrial

B3-B7 Special Industrial Groups - See 'Use Classes Schedule'.

B8 Storage or distribution - This class includes open air storage.

C1 Hotels - Hotels, boarding and guest houses where no significant element of care is provided.

C2 Residential institutions - Residential care homes, hospitals, nursing homes, boarding schools, residential colleges and training centres.

C2A Secure Residential Institution - Use for a provision of secure residential accommodation, including use as a prison, young offenders institution, detention centre, secure training centre, custody centre, short term holding centre, secure hospital, secure local authority accommodation or use as a military barracks.

C3 Dwelling houses - Family houses, or houses occupied by up to six residents living together as a single household, including a household where care is provided for residents.

D1 Non-residential institutions - Clinics, health centres, crèches, day nurseries, day centres, schools, art galleries, museums,

libraries, halls, places of worship, church halls, law court. Non residential education and training centres.

D2 Assembly and leisure - Cinemas, music and concert halls, bingo and dance halls (but not night clubs), swimming baths, skating rinks, gymnasiums or sports arenas (except for motor sports, or where firearms are used).

Sui Generis - Theatres, houses in multiple paying occupation, hostels providing no significant element of care, scrap yards. Petrol filling stations and shops selling and/or displaying motor vehicles. Retail warehouse clubs, nightclubs, launderettes, taxi businesses, amusement centres. Casinos.