



Stourbridge Area Action Plan

Preferred Options

July 2011

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General Information

This and other Local Development Framework documents are or will be made available on request in large copy print, audio, 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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Chinese

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Gujarati

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Punjabi

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Urdu

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1 Introduction

1.0.1 In April 2008, Dudley Council began work on the emerging Stourbridge Area Action Plan (AAP). The preparation of an AAP for Stourbridge Town Centre and its hinterland has for some time been one of the priorities of local planning policy: it features in the Local Development Scheme (LDS) and its progression to adoption is stated as a key activity in delivering Objective 1 of Priority JP3 of the Council Plan (2013) - *improving the vibrancy and attractiveness of the Borough's town centres*.

1.0.2 Within the adopted Black Country Core Strategy (February 2011), Stourbridge is identified within a network of town centres. As stated in Policy CEN4 of that plan, these centres form a distinctive and valued part of the Black Country's character. The general aim of the Core Strategy is to shape and revitalise these centres to meet the community's needs in the most accessible and sustainable way. The policies of the Stourbridge AAP seek to carry forward and provide a focus for these (sub-regional) strategic planning aims.

1.0.3 The AAP has an end date of 2026 and essentially will guide new investment into Stourbridge Town Centre up to that date, including identifying where new shops and homes will be located, along with the transport infrastructure and new public spaces which are needed to help support that growth and benefit the local community and local environment in general. In summary, the aims of this AAP are to:-

- shape a vision for what the Council and its community want to achieve in Stourbridge;
- co-ordinate and shape transport and public realm proposals in the town centre;
- identify opportunities to deliver new development, growth, regeneration and environmental enhancements;
- allocate sites within the AAP boundary for acceptable uses and provide parameters to help shape development on those sites so that development is of substantial benefit to the local community and the local environment;
- protect areas particularly sensitive to change: e.g. areas of historic interest and nature conservation sensitivity;
- reconnect the town centre to its hinterland, especially by providing measures which reduce the severance effect of the ring road;
- deliver high quality environmental improvements to transform the River Stour and Stourbridge Branch Canal corridor into a greened landscape, uplifting this area for informal recreation and nature conservation;
- improve the environmental quality of the town centre core for the benefit of shoppers, visitors and town centre businesses;
- identify short, medium and long term actions to manage growth and change: e.g. the AAP will consider how the spatial growth of the town centre should be proactively phased and implemented.

1.0.4 Whereas previous versions of the emerging AAP contained a series of (wide ranging) options for the planning of the area, which were assessed and tested through consultation with the community and other stakeholders, the Preferred Options document sets out a preferred vision, along with focused strategies and policies, some of which are site specific (in relation to the Opportunity Sites).

1.0.5 The AAP draft Preferred Options' policies have been shaped by previous rounds of public and other stakeholder engagement associated with the progression of the former stages of the AAP: the initial evidence gathering and the Draft Options stages. This consultation has involved landowners, town centre traders, developers and key interest groups, and included the display of information at libraries and at face-to-face public consultation events in The Ryemarket, where officers were present to respond to any questions and views offered by the community who attended.

1.0.6 The period of consultation on the Preferred Options report is due to begin on Monday, 18th July 2011 and is to run for a period of 6 weeks until 5:00pm on Monday, 22 August 2011. During this time, the document will be able to be viewed at the reception areas at 3 St James's Road Dudley, Mary Stevens Park, Stourbridge and Dudley Council Plus, as well as at all main libraries and on the Council's website. It will also be the subject of other, similar publicity measures to those which were carried out on previous versions.

1.0.7 Full details of the consultation undertaken on the AAP plan can be found in the accompanying Community Statement. This document includes details on the various methods by which the community and other stakeholders were consulted and, in summary, what responses were received. The Community Statement can be viewed by following this link - <http://www.dudley.gov.uk/environment--planning/planning/planning-policy/local-development-framework/st-aap/community-statement>

1.0.8 Also accompanying this AAP is a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) which assesses the policies and proposals of the AAP against 14 Sustainability Objectives including the degree to which those policies and proposals safeguard and improve community health, safety and well being and minimise Stourbridge's contribution to climate change. The SA may be viewed by following this link - <http://www.dudley.gov.uk/environment--planning/planning/planning-policy/local-development-framework/st-aap/sustainability-appraisal>

1.0.9 Following the consultation on the draft Preferred Options Report (July 2011), a 'Publication Stage document' will be prepared based on the responses received and any further evidence which is gathered. It is anticipated that this report will be subject to further public consultation around Spring 2012, prior to the submission of the document to the Planning Inspectorate in Summer 2012. The submitted plan is then likely to be subject to a formal Examination in Public in Autumn 2012, with a potential adoption date for the AAP in Spring 2013.

1.0.10 The summary timetable, comprising earlier stages of the plan making process and the anticipated future timescale, is set out below:-

- **April 2008 - January 2010** - Research, evidence gathering and front loading engagement, including public consultation from 8th April 2008 to 30th June 2008. Formulation of Draft Options Plan.
- **February 2010 – April 2010** - Consultation on Draft Options Plan.
- **April 2010 - April 2011** - Research, evidence gathering and stakeholder engagement and formulation of Preferred Options report, including a feedback session to the issues raised at the Draft Options Plan in October 2010
- **July 2011 - August 2011** - public consultation on the Preferred Options
- **September 2011 - February 2012** - formulation of Publication Stage Document
- **February 2012 - May 2012** - public consultation on the Publication Stage Document
- **May 2012** - submission of AAP to The Planning Inspectorate
- **October 2012** - possible Examination in Public (EIP) on the AAP
- **March 2013** - targeted anticipated adoption date for the AAP.

1.0.11 The Stourbridge AAP draft Preferred Options Report (July 2011) and response forms may be viewed and downloaded free of charge from the Council's Planning website on the following link - <http://www.dudley.gov.uk/environment--planning/planning/planning-policy/local-development-framework/st-aap>

1.12 Set out below is a list of the Preferred Options Policy headings, along with the page numbers in this document where they can be read in full along with explanatory and supporting text.

THE STOURBRIDGE TOWNSCAPE

Policy 1 - PUBLIC REALM - Page

Policy 2 - TOWNSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS - Page

Policy 3 - THE STOURBRIDGE RING ROAD - Page

Policy 4 - PUBLIC OPEN SPACE - Page

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Policy 5 - URBAN HEAT ISLAND - Page

Policy 6 - SUSTAINABLE URBAN DRAINAGE SYSTEMS (SUDs) AND FLOOD RISK - Page

BIODIVERSITY IN STOURBRIDGE

Policy 7 - SITES OF LOCAL IMPORTANCE FOR NATURE CONSERVATION (SLINC) - Page

Policy 8 - NATURE CONSERVATION AND BIODIVERSITY - Page

Policy 9 - BUILDING IN BIODIVERSITY FEATURES WITHIN NEW DEVELOPMENT - Page

THE RIVER STOUR AND STOURBRIDGE BRANCH CANAL

Policy 10 - THE RIVER STOUR - Page

Policy 11 - THE STOURBRIDGE BRANCH CANAL - Page

STOURBRIDGE'S HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Policy 12 - LOCAL CHARACTER AND DISTINCTIVENESS - Page

Policy 13 - AREAS OF HIGH HISTORIC TOWNSCAPE VALUE (AHHTV) - Page

Policy 14 - AREAS OF HIGH HISTORIC LANDSCAPE VALUE (AHHLV) - Page

Policy 15 - ARCHAEOLOGICAL PRIORITY AREAS - Page

ACCESS AND MOVEMENT IN STOURBRIDGE

Policy 16 - ACCESS FOR ALL - Page

Policy 17 - PEDESTRIAN ACCESS - Page

Policy 18 - TOWN CENTRE CORE PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS - Page

Policy 19 - CYCLING - Page

STOURBRIDGE TOWN - VITALITY AND VIABILITY

Policy 20 - THE TOWN CENTRE - Page

Policy 21 - PROTECTED FRONTAGES - Page

Policy 22 - HOT FOOD TAKEAWAYS (A5 USES) - Page

NEW HOMES AND JOBS IN STOURBRIDGE

Policy 23 - HOUSING MIX AND TENURE - Page

Policy 24 - EXTRA CARE HOUSING - Page

Policy 25 - NEW HOUSING NEXT TO EXISTING INDUSTRY - Page

Policy 26 - MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT - Page

STOURBRIDGE WHARF

Policy 27 - STOURBRIDGE WHARF - Page

OPPORTUNITY SITES - Pages to

2 Contexts

2.1 Summary Planning Policy Context

2.2 Historical Context of Stourbridge

2.2.1 The origins of the town of Stourbridge lie in the later medieval period when a small market settlement developed along the road from the bridge over the River Stour to a cross roads with the Bridgnorth to Coventry Road. These roads formed parts of national road routes from Wales to London and Bristol to Chester, creating an important potential centre for local and regional markets. The first reference to a bridge here dates from the mid 13th century, although at this time the settlement of Bedcote, to the west of the town centre, was the main settlement in the area and was itself subordinate to Oldswinford (to the south). The Stafford family held the Manor of Bedcote in the early 15th century and it appears that a more urban settlement developed there during and following their ownership. A chapel was founded on Lower High Street in 1430 by the Haley family and timber frames within several buildings along High Street and Lower High Street have been dated to the 15th century. The manor was granted to the Dean and Chapter of St. George's chapel in 1481 and a market charter, including two annual fairs, was granted in the following year.

2.2.2 Henry VII renewed the town's charter in 1486 and it is believed that a town hall at the junctions of Lower High Street, Coventry Street and Crown Lane had been built by that date. By 1538 Stourbridge contained 10 messuages (houses with gardens), 30 smaller cottages, 30 tofts (vacant plots), 2 dovecotes and 2 mills along with areas of farm, woodland and riverbanks. The 16th century historian Habington wrote that "*Sturbridge is now best known to us by a bridge over the river Sture, whearunto the towne ... extende the itsealfe in a fayre and well inhabited street*". The chapel in Lower High Street was closed in 1547 but was used by Edward VI to endow a new Grammar School in 1552.

2.2.3 By the end of the 16th century it appears that the town's roads had expanded from the central High Street/Lower High Street route to include Crown Lane, Rye Market Street (modern Market Street), Angel Street, Bedcote Lane (modern Birmingham Street) and Church Street, as well as a narrow lane running along the river bank called le Clyff. However, development onto these roads appears to have been limited. The town was notable for the number of inns and alehouses after which several of these streets were named.

2.2.4 During the 17th century development along High Street appears to have intensified, including the building of a large house for the Sparry family (now the Talbot Hotel) and endowment of almshouses. The early decades of this century also saw the development of ironworking and glass working industries, which grew to have a major role on the development of the town. By the mid-17th century religious non-conformity had become entrenched in the town, leading to the construction of a number of dissenting meeting houses in the late 17th and early 18th centuries.

2.2.5 Between 1728 and 1735 the townsfolk built St Thomas's Church, formalising the route of Market Street, stating their independence from Oldswinford Parish. A new vicarage followed on the opposite side of Market Street which was soon joined by town houses. The town's open fields were enclosed during the mid-18th century allowing expansion of the town outwards onto the surrounding farmland. The first turnpike roads were constructed during the mid and later 18th century including the route north from the centre of the town to Wordsley Green, the road from Stourbridge to Bromsgrove (Church Street and Red Hill), the road to Coley Gate at Cradley (Birmingham Street) and the Hagley Road.

2.2.6 The Stourbridge Canal was constructed between 1776 and 1779 to serve the industries developing around the town centre. By 1780 the development of New Road as a genteel boulevard had begun in addition to Court Passage, Scotts Road and Bradley Road (both to the north west of the town centre) and Angel Passage to the east. The town's common land was enclosed in the 1780s. In addition to expansion of the town, the 18th century also saw redevelopment of properties throughout the town, and along Lower High Street in particular. The Foster family built their mansion (now Nos. 7 and 8 Lower High Street) in the 1770s and a new Presbyterian Chapel was constructed on Lower High Street in 1788. The town's swelling population required the construction of numerous places of worship during the early 19th century. This appears to have been focused along New Road and included a Methodist Church built in 1805, a Roman Catholic Church constructed in 1823/24, a Baptist Chapel just to the south at Upper Park Street in 1836 and a New Connexion Chapel at New Road in the same year.

2.2.7 The town's industries saw a major expansion during the early 19th century including the development of John Bradley's Ironworks to either side of the much older 'Royal Forge' and along the southern side of the Stourbridge Canal. Through the partnership of John Bradley and James Foster these works became part of a swathe of ironworking concerns that stretched along the Stour from the east side of the bridge over the River Stour at the Foster and Orme's Town Mill to the Foster and Rastrick Foundry (built in 1820) at Lowndes Road in the west. Other industrial works along the river banks included leather works owned by the Pitman, Turney and Palfrey families. Despite the prosperity of the town some areas of housing were particularly cramped and unpleasant. In the east of the town the area between Coventry Street and Angel Street was considered to be particularly disreputable.

2.2.8 During the mid-Victorian period the town expanded southwards along major routes, field lanes and newly planned streets on former fields to the south and south-west, forming the network of streets referred to as Stourbridge's 'Old Quarter'. A second Anglican Church (St John's) was built in 1860 to serve the town's ballooning population. A County Court was constructed on Hagley Road in the mid 19th century with a County Police Station built in 1885 on New Road replacing an earlier Court house and jail. An impressive red brick town hall was built on Market Street in 1887, providing a new focus for the civic identity of the town. A hospital was endowed through a legacy from John Corbett in 1893.

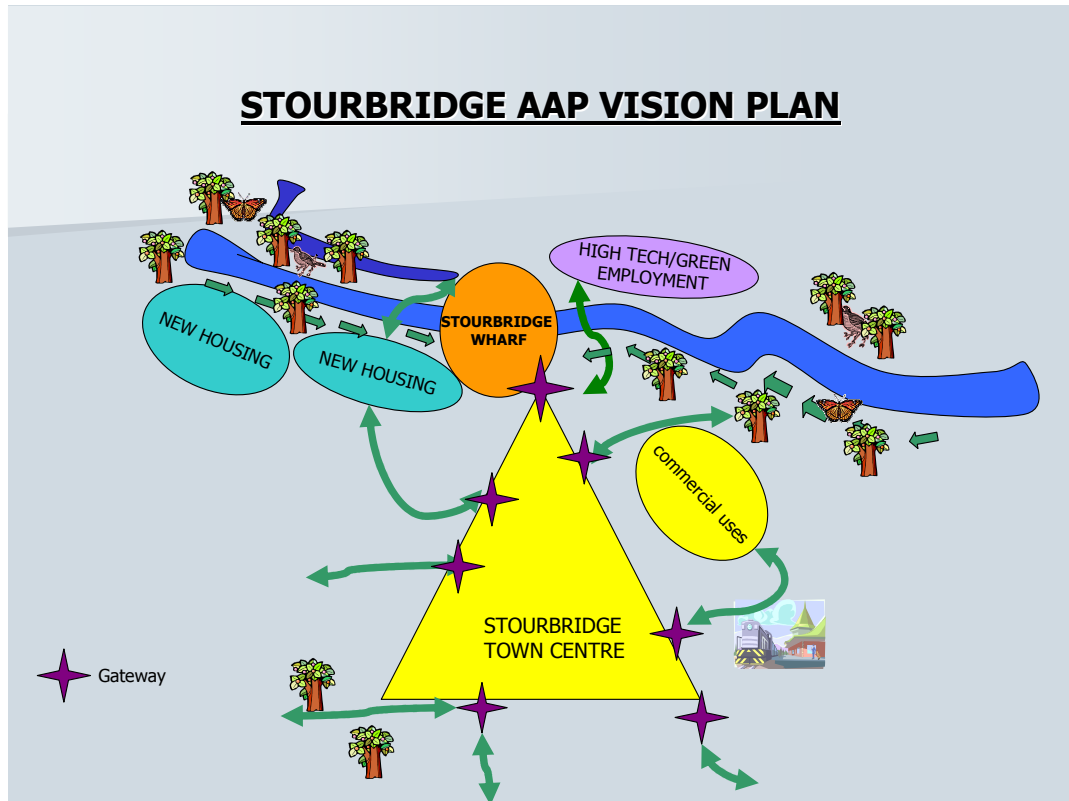
2.2.9 Public baths were opened in 1910 on the site now occupied by the Crystal Leisure Centre. In 1903 the construction of a new Library and School of Art commenced on Hagley Road and a small park was laid out in the same year at Greenfield Avenue. During the period between the two World Wars the Council constructed affordable housing on land to the north west of the town centre around Scotts Road and Beauty Bank Crescent and to the east at Parkfield Road. New housing provision was accompanied by the clearance of poor quality housing around Angel Street in the 1920s. This provided land on which an omnibus depot was developed as well as a new road named after St. John's Church.

2.2.10 In 1968 the construction of a new ring road was commenced to relieve the town's chronic traffic congestion. This involved the demolition of a number of historic streets including Duke Street, Mill Street and The Hemplands. The new highways scheme also introduced a one-way traffic system to the town centre.

2.2.11 The Ryemarket Shopping Centre was opened in the 1970s creating a major new commercial area within the town centre and in 1983 the town's historic market hall was largely demolished to allow the construction of the Crown Centre complex. Both complexes included large multi-storey car parks. Construction of a new leisure centre began in 1989, replacing the town's public baths. In 1994 the town's bus station and railway station were redeveloped. A large new store was opened on High Street by Wilkinson's in 1996. In 2001 the former Congregationalist Meeting House on Lower High Street was demolished due to long term redundancy and dilapidation and the site was subsequently redeveloped.

2.3 Area Action Plan - Context in Dudley

3 Vision



Picture 1

3.1 A Vision for Stourbridge in 2026

3.1.1 The vision for Stourbridge is a statement of where the Council and its community want to get to and what this Area Action Plan (AAP) needs to deliver to realise this vision.

3.1.2 The Preferred Options Vision set out below and as shown on The Vision Plan has been informed by, and framed within, the context of Stourbridge's role as a Town Centre, as defined in the Black Country Core Strategy (BCCS) (adopted February 2011). The vision has also been informed by the Dudley Borough Community Strategy, "Dudley Borough Challenge" (2005 – 2020) and Council Plan (2013), and the views of the local community and other stakeholders along with rigorous evidence gathering.

3.1.3 Dudley Council will continue to work in partnership with the community and other stakeholders and agencies to develop this shared vision and, in particular, enable the delivery of new shopping facilities and housing led regeneration within a

much enhanced environment, with an emphasis on providing green infrastructure improvements and enabling the centre to be better integrated in with, and thereby serve, its hinterland.

Vision for Stourbridge

By 2026, Stourbridge will be a vibrant and inclusive town, retaining a market town character and also embracing arts and creative industries and sustainable urban living. Stourbridge will have a thriving and prosperous town centre offering a wide range of shops and services, including excellent leisure and cultural facilities and a varied and vibrant evening economy. The town centre will also be more accessible to the local community and visitors through improvements to its connectivity and legibility, particularly by creating a network of safe and attractive surface level routes across the ring road for pedestrians and cyclists. A high quality built environment and public realm will have been created which preserves and enhances Stourbridge's unique historic character and local distinctiveness, while also incorporating energy efficiency measures and natural wildlife features. Green infrastructure along the River Stour and Stourbridge Branch Canal networks will have been strengthened and expanded, leading to the rediscovery of the River Stour as a recreational and nature conservation resource for the whole community. More people will live on the edge of the town centre in well designed and sustainable homes which will have addressed a variety of local needs and make the most of the riverside and canalside setting. The tourism and recreational value of the river and canal corridor will also have been sensitively enhanced to provide a good quality attraction for visitors and residents. This will particularly be at Stourbridge Wharf, where that area's canal based heritage and cultural and entertainment potential will have been positively exploited, and where facilities for creative and locally distinctive industry will have been provided.

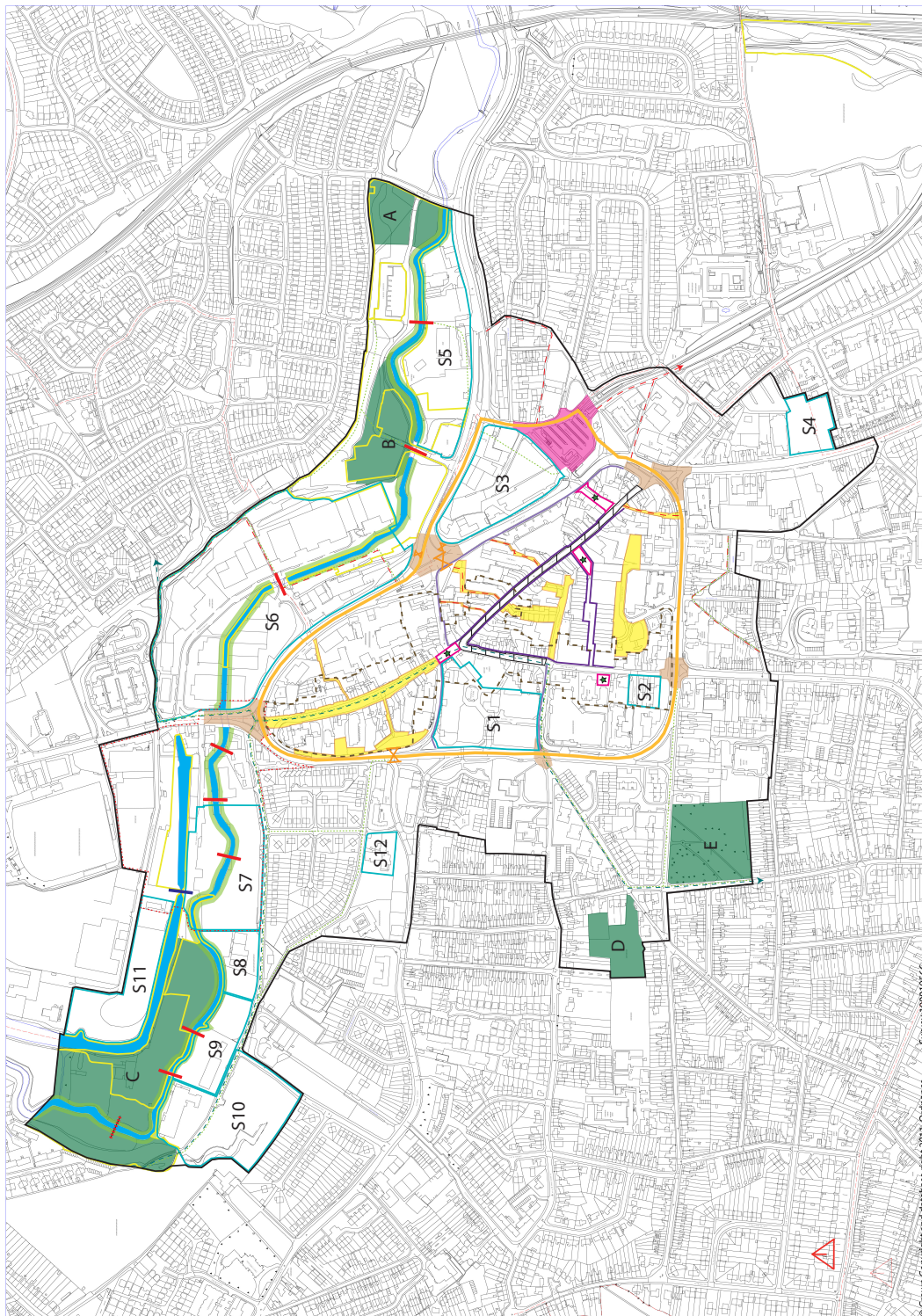
Aims

The 12 Aims set out below shape this vision into key themes. While it is recognised that there is often a degree of overlap between these objectives, particularly in terms of opportunities to provide for greening and linkages, they form the drivers and focus for which the more detailed policies of this plan are built around.

- A. To ensure the Plan supports the vision and objectives of our Local Development Framework (LDF), including the Black Country Core Strategy, the Community Strategy for Dudley and The Council Plan, by distilling the general policy steer given by those documents into locally distinctive policies.
- B. To provide, protect and enhance a well connected landscape and public realm setting of streets and other routes and public spaces that is attractive, safe, lively and pleasant to use, and in particular, reinforces the greening of the town centre.
- C. To enable the "rediscovery" of the River Stour by increasing its visibility and returning it to a more natural state, and by providing continuous footpath and cycleway linkages along its length, and between the river and the town centre core.
- D. To protect and enhance the wildlife, biodiversity and geological value of Stourbridge by substantially upgrading the cleanliness and nature conservation value of the watercourses and establishing an ecologically functional, green wildlife corridor along the River Stour and Stourbridge Branch Canal corridor.
- E. To contribute to mitigating the causes and effects of climate change by shaping development and providing opportunities so as to promote sustainable travel choices, improve air quality and minimise the use of non-renewable energy resources.
- F. To reduce the severance effect of the ring road between the town centre core and its hinterland by providing enhanced permeability across the ring road through a series of high profile, safe entrance points and by softening its visual impact.
- G. To protect and enhance the locally distinctive character of Stourbridge with reference to its historic environment and cultural and built heritage, including the historic canalside at Stourbridge Wharf, and where appropriate, to foster this heritage to enhance Stourbridge's role as a visitor destination.
- H. To enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre, by supporting the establishment of a major food retail store, facilitating a vibrant night time economy, supporting the provision of an outdoor market and helping to facilitate improvements which allow for an enhanced shopper experience within an improved townscape, with an emphasis on pedestrian accessibility and permeability.
- I. To provide for ease of movement, particularly for less mobile persons, pedestrians and cyclists within the plan area through the integration of a






















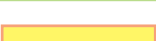

network of well connected and direct pathways and spaces and by helping to promote and facilitate Stourbridge as a "cycle friendly town".

- J. To facilitate and shape housing led regeneration on the Opportunity Sites, focused on the River Stour and Stourbridge Branch Canal Corridor, and to ensure the delivery of a range of types and tenures of new homes to meet the needs of the local community and to retain and attract professional, managerial and entrepreneurial households.
- K. To ensure that existing businesses, which are viable and offer employment opportunities, continue to thrive, and that planned development around them is complementary and not detrimental to their continued viability.
- L. To provide space for new employment opportunities, particularly with regard to the promotion of creative industry and those employment activities which are locally distinctive and/or associated with high/green technologies.



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Map 1 Proposals Map

	Area Action Plan boundary
	Potential surface level crossing
	Public square
	Canal bridge
	River bridge
	Potential river bridge
	Town centre boundary
	Green linkages
	Cycle route
	Conservation areas
	Town centre inset boundary
	Opportunity sites
	Primary frontages
	Secondary frontages
	Public rights of way
	Town centre core improvements
	Transport hub
	Proposed gateway
	Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation
	River Stour and Stourbridge Canal
	Green infrastructure corridor
	Townscape uplift priority
	Public open spaces

Picture 2 Key to Proposals Map

4 Preferred Policies

4.1 Proposals Plan

4.2 The Stourbridge Townscape

4.2.1 It is acknowledged that a townscape with well designed buildings, spaces and linkages is essential to the image and profile of a town, presenting a place that attracts investment and visitors. It should also help provide a space that the community can identify with, appreciate, enjoy and make use of.

4.2.2 The Stourbridge Townscape contains many buildings of historic and architectural quality and interest, as well as attractive views within and out from the town centre core. These assets help shape the character, identity and visual quality of the town, giving it a unique, cherished and valued sense of place within the community. It is essential that new development, particularly infill development, responds to and respects this existing character and context, including the protection, and possible re-emphasising, of significant views, and with the use of appropriate and locally distinctive building materials and landscape design.

4.2.3 Another asset of the townscape is the network of historic streets and passageways, which provide important physical and visual links through the town centre core, helping to demonstrate the town's history as well as enabling pedestrian circulation. However, in some, the narrowness and poor quality of their environment detract from the experience of their use and their historic character. Improvement, via enhancements which are sensitive to and complement their character and function are therefore required

4.2.4 In terms of scale, the buildings in the town centre largely demonstrate a coherent three to four storey built scale, with frontages onto the street and traditional shopfronts. There are exceptions such as The Ryemarket, which has an inward looking form, typical of a 1970s enclosed shopping mall, and Medusa House, a 6 storey office block fronting St. John's Road (part of the ring road). It is important that the local distinctiveness of the town is secured and built upon through new development and enhancements that respect and complement the traditional built form, height, scale and mass, and, where appropriate, detailing, that is represented in the town's historic built form.

4.2.5 The town's character is greatly influenced by its public realm, which, for the most part, would benefit from being upgraded. This is particularly with regard to introducing greenery into this relatively robust urban environment. Intervention would also be beneficial to resolve the competing needs of vehicles and pedestrians moving through the town centre core. This conflict is exacerbated by the narrowness of many footways and on-street parking within the town centre core, together with the volume and movement of traffic, making for a difficult pedestrian environment, which also raises safety concerns.

4.2.6 There are also specific areas within the townscape which are most evidently in need of a visual uplift/"urban healing". These are often streets which predominantly function as service areas or where the townscape is overly urban in character or where there is little activity or interest for those passing through these environments to appreciate or linger in. To an extent, such views can also be levelled at a number of the town's existing squares, which are also in need of an uplift so that they can realise their function as places of congregation, communal interaction and rest, as distinct and special spaces within the pattern of streets and buildings.

4.2.7 Notwithstanding the above, it is evident that the singular greatest design challenge that Stourbridge faces is to improve and raise the profile of the connecting routes into and out of the town centre from the surrounding hinterland across the encircling ring road. While it is acknowledged that the ring road functions relatively effectively in channelling traffic, particularly in terms of maintaining the freeflow of vehicles, the experience of the town is very much formed by its dominance and the effect it has in severing streets and constraining and redirecting pedestrian movement. This results in pedestrians being funnelled into subways, some of which are of poor environmental quality, under this busy multi-lane highway.

4.2.8 The ring road also has had the effect of severing existing development blocks, leading to the exposure of the backs and sides of buildings and also service areas and yards, some of which are enclosed by advertisement hoardings (which serve to further reinforce the visual dominance of the ring road corridor). This gives rise to a fragmented environment, with the only consistency provided by, in the main, the hard edges of the ring road. It is therefore vital that opportunities are taken to improve permeability within the townscape in order to loosen the ring road "collar", particularly with regard to giving spatial preference to pedestrian and cycleway connections across the ring road, greening the fringes of the ring road and also redressing fragmented edges and entrances at the outward face of the town centre core. One of the appropriate measures to achieve this would be to distinguish and celebrate the points at which the townscape interfaces with the crossings across the ring road by establishing a series of visually distinctive Gateways. These would also connect into the wider townscape beyond the town centre core (and then further on into the town's hinterland) and be enhanced not only to function as entrances to the heart of the town but also as congregation points.

4.2.9 Evidence from Dudley Council's adopted Parks and Green Space Strategy (June 2009) (PPG17 Audit) has identified that there is an under-provision of publicly accessible natural and semi-natural green space within the Stourbridge area. This is particularly evident within its town centre itself, which lacks any significant areas of landscaped public open space: its main park (Mary Stevens Park) lies about 1/2 km south of the town centre core and is outside of the plan boundary. Findings from Dudley Council's PPG17 Audit indicate that the Stourbridge Committee Area has the least amount of urban green space provision in comparison to all other committee areas. Evidence from the Audit reveals that large parts of Stourbridge Committee Area have no coverage to both publicly accessible urban green space and accessible natural and semi-natural green space. It is therefore necessary to safeguard and enhance any existing areas of open space within the plan area, including improving

the linkages to, and between, such areas, whilst seeking to create new areas of open space. With regard to potential new areas of open space, it is realised that there are limited opportunities for their creation within the town centre core itself. Indeed, the urban form and its inherent historical attribute preclude such incursions within the core. However, opportunities exist within the plan area, particularly within the River Stour and Stourbridge Branch Canal corridor outside of the town centre.

Policy 1

URBAN DESIGN

A. All new development shall:

i) respect and respond to the existing context of established built form, scale and massing that presents the broad urban townscape of the AAP area, and thus acknowledge locally distinctive plot widths, building heights, building proportion, roofscapes, form, materials and distinctive style and historical relationship of the pattern of building in its enclosure of the streets on which it stands, and take opportunities to introduce new development which complements these existing patterns through a variety of interpretations that are consistent with the principles of good design

ii) provide for, and take opportunities to: enhance, active frontages (fenestration, entrances and visually interesting details) at the interface between public and private spaces, in particular fronting onto public thoroughfares and spaces, especially onto the ring road and including development and works within and onto the River Stour and Stourbridge Branch Canal; reduce the physical and visual impact of vehicles and service areas; enable a clear distinction between public, private and semi-private spaces to be made; reinforce the definition of streets and spaces by creating common building lines and strong landscape edges

iv) safeguard, increase and enhance permeability throughout the plan area with regard to retaining and improving existing pedestrian and cycle routes, and, where appropriate, providing new ones that make access and movement safer, more attractive and visually varied, especially in relation increasing permeability between the town centre core and the areas on the other side of the ring road and connections between the town centre core and The River Stour and Stourbridge Branch Canal corridor.

B. Opportunities shall be taken to provide for a high quality hard and soft landscape, street furniture, lighting, signage, art; provide green infrastructure within the public realm to assist Stourbridge's identity and raise its environmental attraction.

C. Development shall protect, and where opportunities arise, enhance, the following prominent views within the townscape, including those to landmark buildings:-

i) From Worcester Street into Market Street;

ii) Along High Street, in stages from the Hagley Road approach, down to Lower High Street;

- iii) To The Stourbridge Clock and High Street from Lower High Street;
- iv) To Stourbridge Town Hall from Birmingham Street and Lower High Street;
- v) From Churchfields and Penfields into the town centre;
- vi) To St. John's Church from Birmingham Street;
- vii) From Lower High Street towards Holy Trinity Church;
- viii) From High Street and the ring road to the former library at the junction of Hagley Road and Church Street;
- ix) From The Crown Centre to Coventry Street;
- x) From Coventry Street to The Mitre Public House at the corner of Lower High Street and Crown Lane;
- xi) From Crown Land to Coventry Street;
- xii) From Prospect Hill along Union Street
- xiii) To the following Landmark Buildings - a) Stourbridge Town Hall, Market Street; b) St. Thomas's Church, Market Street; c) (the former bank) no. 38 High Street; d) nos. 101/102 High Street (corner of Court Street); e) Public House, no. 96 High Street; f) Former Library and Arts School, corner of Hagley Road and Church Street; g) Methodist Church, New Road; h) The Church of Our Lady and All Saints, New Road; j) St. John's Church, St. John's Road; k) The Town Clock, junction of High Street and Market Street.

Policy 2

TOWNSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS

The townscape within the town centre shall be enhanced to provide a high quality space, particularly for the use of pedestrians and cyclists. Specific measures, which development will be expected to contribute to, shall include

A. The enhancement of the following spaces as town centre "squares" with locally distinctive and bespoke hard and soft landscaping, seating (in association with adjoining uses as appropriate) and lighting, and where appropriate, public art:-

- Ryemarket Square (at the entrance to The Ryemarket from High Street)
- Crown Square (at the junction of High Street, Market Street and Coventry Street)
- Foster Street Square (where the subway emerges onto Foster Street)
- St. Thomas's Square (the churchyard at Market Street)

B. The enhancement of the following streets and paths which are particularly in need of a visual uplift with locally distinctive hard, and especially soft, landscaping

- Stourbridge Town Centre's (historic) alleyways
- Talbot Street
- Victoria Street
- Queen Street
- Lower High Street
- Birmingham Street

Policy 3

STOURBRIDGE RING ROAD

Measures shall be implemented, through development contributions as appropriate, which seek to reduce the visual impact of the ring road, including its dominance as a robustly urban and vehicular dominated space, and its sense of enclosure. Such measures shall reduce the ring road's severing effect in disassociating the town centre from its hinterland, by introducing townscape elements which enhance permeability and positively heighten the experience of entering the town.

Such measures shall include:-

A. Gateways, as identified on the Proposals Plan, shall be formed at the interface between the town centre and the ring road. These spaces shall be enhanced so as to function as entrance points to the town and also meeting points. Each Gateway shall be named so as to be visually distinctive and to provide a sense of place. The Gateways shall be enhanced so as to emphasise their visual distinctiveness by incorporating public art and hard and soft landscaping as appropriate. New development which encroaches into these spaces or otherwise compromises their function will be resisted. Priority will be given to the formation of a Gateway at the northern end of the town (at the junction of Lower High Street, St. John's Road, Bradley Road and High Street). The enhancement of this space shall incorporate measures which emphasise the bridge across the River Stour.

B. Where appropriate within the spaces between buildings and so as not to prejudice highway safety, the edges of the ring road shall be "softened" with soft landscape improvements, especially tree planting.

C. Any development within the ring road corridor shall provide an active frontage onto it. In addition, development comprising the conversion of existing buildings within the ring road corridor will be expected to remedy dead frontages. Furthermore, landscape enhancement measures shall be pursued which enable the assembly of random and visually jumbled spaces to provide a more coherent outward facing edge of the town centre.

D. The use of Enforcement Notices or Discontinuance Notices against the existing advertisement hoardings within the ring road corridor shall be investigated. No new hoardings shall be granted express consent within 30 metres of the edge of the ring road.

E. The existing subways under the ring road shall be enhanced, in particular to provide light, secure and safe environments.

Policy 4

PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

The Public Open Space areas, as shown on the Proposals Plan, shall be safeguarded from any inappropriate development that would prejudice their role, function and setting. This is unless it constitutes such works that would enhance the character or function of the open space or comprise works which would safeguard or enhance a heritage asset.

The following open spaces, as detailed on the Proposals Plan, will be established or enhanced as areas of Public Open Space in consultation with the local community, through development contributions as necessary and subject to the following measures:-

- A. Land off Lickey Road - this existing area of Public Open Space shall be enhanced with an emphasis on improvements to wildlife habitats and for its informal recreational use as part of the green infrastructure network along the River Stour.
- B. Land at Birmingham Street - consideration shall be given to set this area out as Public Open Space to incorporate the following measures -
 - d. The retention of, and formalisation of, a looped access road to the civic amenity site
 - e. Enhancements for the benefit of nature conservation, including habitat creation and the planting of native species, leading to the possible extension of the existing SLINC into this area
 - f. The provision of a footpath link through from Birmingham Street to the existing footpath at the rear of the dwellings fronting Grampian Road
- C. Riverside (Land Between Wyre Road and The Stourbridge Branch Canal) - this area shall be set out as Public Open Space to incorporate the following measures -
 - i) The refurbishment of the Listed Building (Riverside) and its positive re-use
 - ii) The reinstatement of The Dry Dock as a functional and historic feature
 - iii) Enhanced public access, including the formalisation of a River Stour footpath and cycleway and the potential provision of a footbridge across the river within this site
 - iv) Wildlife improvement and habitat creation
 - v) The clearance of invasive species, especially Japanese Knotweed (followed by a period of monitoring to ensure any re-growth is prevented)

Vi) Any works shall safeguard and enhance the character of the Canal Street Conservation Area

- D. Land at Green Street and Brook Street - this overgrown area of open space shall be set out and enhanced as a potential allotment site with appropriate tree planting around its edges.
- E. Greenfield Gardens - the Council will protect Greenfield Gardens Local Park from inappropriate development that would jeopardise its existing future role and function, and setting and, is committed, in consultation with the local community, to improve and upgrade the park to a standard appropriate to its identified functions on more tree planting, particularly along the Greenfield Avenue frontage.

4.3 Sustainable Development

4.3.1 The Area Action Plan (AAP) presents an opportunity to take an approach to the transformation of Stourbridge that will address the causes and consequences of climate change and that will promote more sustainable forms of development.

4.3.2 The approach that this AAP will take to climate change will have to conform to climate change policies arising in national policy and sub-regional policy set out in the adopted Black Country Core Strategy (adopted February 2011). For example, relevant climate change policies in the adopted Black Country Core Strategy (February 2011) which this AAP must conform to are policies ENV3 “Design Quality”, ENV5 “Flood Risk, Sustainable Drainage Systems and Urban Heat Island” and Policy ENV7 “Renewable Energy”.

4.3.3 Protecting existing green space areas within the AAP plan area and creating new areas of green space has a particularly important role to play in helping to tackle localised climate change impacts on a number of fronts. For example, the presence of urban green spaces and vegetated landscaped areas can help to reduce the overheating of urban environments (referred to as the urban heat island effect or urban cooling). This is as typical urban surfaces, such as concrete and asphalt, get much hotter than vegetated green space surfaces during the day, particularly during the hotter summer months. The urban heat island effect is caused by the storage of solar energy in the urban fabric during the day and release of this energy into the atmosphere at night. Preserving and creating pockets of new urban green space and vegetation can help to cool areas naturally. This is as a result of the cooling effect of water as it evaporates into the air from leaves and vegetation through the process called transpiration. The urban heat island effect causes harm to human health and increased demand for air conditioning in buildings (which in turn requires more combustion of fossil fuels to generate more electricity). It also increases ozone formation, a major pollutant in heavily urbanised areas. The most important factor in creating an urban heat island is lack of green space in built up areas.

4.3.4 Green corridors within urban areas, such as the River Stour and Stourbridge Branch Canal, are also critical as they allow for a natural channel for the movement of wildlife species. This is becoming more important as wildlife species are now needing to move to adapt to the changing climate. Green spaces can also reduce flood risk from localised flash flooding caused by intense rainfall by slowing down the rate at which rainfall runs off land into watercourses and sewers. Green spaces within built up areas can absorb and retain more water than hard landscaping.

4.3.5 The policies within the AAP will help to contribute positively towards addressing the above localised climate change impacts. One of the means of achieving this is by encouraging new development within the Opportunity Sites bordering the River Stour and Stourbridge Branch Canal to design and build-in green space sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS). The River Stour and Stourbridge Branch Canal help provide water storage areas to hold water on site and reduce volumes of surface water run-off. The policies of the AAP will also help to assist urban cooling, by encouraging more sustainable modes of travel such as walking and cycling to reduce reliance on car borne travel journeys and thus reduce carbon emissions.

4.3.6 The threat of flooding and the minimisation of flood risk is a key priority for the Council. The north-west tip of the Stourbridge AAP boundary along the River Stour and Stourbridge Branch Canal corridors falls within a Flood Zone 3b (Functional Flood Plain) within the Environment Agency Flood Zone Map. A Black Country Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Level 1 SFRA) (adopted February 2009) has already been undertaken which covers the Dudley Borough and the wider Black Country sub-region. An emerging Dudley Borough draft Level 2 SFRA is currently being prepared as part of the Council's emerging Borough-wide Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) work. These adopted and emerging documents will all be used to help inform policies within the emerging Stourbridge Area Action Plan. All new developments coming forward within identified flood risk areas along the River Stour will be required to provide measures to mitigate against flood risk before development is commenced and implement them before the development is occupied. All development coming forward within identified flood risk areas will have to conform to flood risk policies arising in both national and sub-regional policy. For example, national policy in Planning Policy Statement 25 (PPS25) (2006) "Development and Flood Risk" and sub-regional policy set out in the adopted Black Country Core Strategy (February 2011) - Policy ENV5 "Flood Risk, Sustainable Drainage Systems and Urban Heat Island", as well as local-level guidance set out in the Council's emerging SWMP. Guidance in PPS25 is considered in further detail under the Appendix Section (Planning Policy Context) of the Stourbridge AAP document.

Policy 5

URBAN HEAT ISLAND

Proposals will be expected to help reduce the localised effects of the urban heat island within the AAP boundary, examples of this include:

- Safeguarding existing trees within the plan area, unless such trees are evidenced to be damaged, diseased or dying or contribute little to the public realm - in which case replacement planting shall be sought;
- Encouraging new deciduous tree planting of locally occurring, indigenous, locally distinctive species within the AAP boundary. New tree planting will be particularly promoted within the Opportunity Sites on the edge of the town centre and within the town centre core as part of the living streets, public realm enhancements and gateway features;
- New green space provision within the Opportunity Sites on the edge of the town centre, especially within, and adjoining, the River Stour corridor;
- Encouraging the use of green roofs and green vertical walls within new development, particularly to help bridge gaps in the green network and where such a provision would not prejudice the character and setting of the historic environment, and the viability of the development scheme will not be harmed;
- Prioritising new built development to urban brownfield sites (previously-developed land) opposed to the use greenfield sites;
- Reducing the reliance on and demand for vehicular trips within the plan area, by, in particular, strengthening and improving surface level pedestrian and cycle linkages across the ring road to the town centre core, encouraging more sustainable modes of travel such as walking and cycling and supporting public transport provision;
- Reducing the amount of existing hard surfaces within the plan area, including within the Opportunity Sites.

Policy 6

SUSTAINABLE URBAN DRAINAGE (SUDs) AND FLOOD RISK

New development shall include measures to help promote sustainable urban drainage and reduce flood risk. In particular, new development proposals will be expected to:

- Remove and reduce the amount of hard, impermeable surfaces within the Opportunity Sites within the plan area, particularly those sites alongside the River Stour and StourbridgeBranchCanal;
- Promote water efficiency measures within new development including water saving devices such as greywater and/ or rainwater harvesting and recycling;
- Provide new deciduous tree and shrub planting of locally occurring indigenous or locally distinctive tree species, and soften heavily urbanised parts of the plan area with new natural green space provision;
- Seek to retain areas of existing green space and safeguard existing trees within the plan area, unless such trees are evidenced to be damaged, diseased or dying or contribute little to the public realm - in which case replacement planting shall be sought;
- The provision of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) within existing and proposed development shall be encouraged, with priority given to introducing SUDS which provide beneficial wildlife habitat, outdoor green space recreation and amenity value;
- Engineered and heavily urbanised sections of the River Stour embankments will be softened with new natural green space to help reduce flood risk and promote sustainable urban drainage;
- Surface water drainage for the site should be designed as far as possible as a sustainable drainage system (SuDS) to reduce overall run-off volumes leaving the site, control the rate of flow and improve water quality before it joins any water course or other receiving body.
- The surface water drainage scheme will need to be capable of reducing the downstream flood risk associated with storm events as well as normal rainfall events.
- The surface water drainage system will seek to hold water on the site, ensuring that it is released to surrounding water courses at an equal, or slower rate than was the case prior to development;
- All flood mitigation measures must make allowance for the forecast effects of climate change.

4.4 Biodiversity in Stourbridge (Wildlife and Nature Conservation)

4.4.1 The River Stour and Stourbridge Branch Canal networks form an important natural green space wildlife corridor allowing the movement of wildlife species between habitats through the heavily urbanised area. Wildlife corridors are becoming more important within the urban area as a result of climate change pressures, given that wildlife corridors play a key role in helping to support and protect wildlife populations.

4.4.2 However, due to past urbanisation, the quality and function of the wildlife corridor needs to be sensitively enhanced and restored along the majority of the length of the River Stour and Stourbridge Branch Canal corridor within the AAP area. For example, long stretches of the River Stour corridor within the Mill Race Lane Trading Estate are heavily engineered with impermeable hard-standings immediately alongside the waterside edge, vertical steel shuttering forming river side embankments, and culverted sections of the River Stour. Generally, there is a shortage of soft natural green space along the River Stour embankments within this area. There are also pockets of invasive plant species alongside the River Stour watercourse such as Japanese Knotweed which erode the quality of the wildlife corridor. There is a need to target new wildlife friendly landscaping in areas where there are currently broken linkages to bridge any gaps in the wildlife corridor.

4.4.3 It is not expected that the width of the wildlife corridors along the River Stour and Stourbridge Branch Canal corridors will remain constant through the network. Larger areas will need to be created frequently to provide substantial resting places and breeding habitat. However it is not envisaged that the corridors could function effectively if the width of the corridor is less than 10 metres either side of the water course.

4.4.4 Policies within the AAP will have a positive role to play in helping to sensitively enhance and repair severed and fragmented parts of the wildlife corridor within the plan area and in reducing the impact of physical barriers which restrict movement of wildlife species along it. The provision of new natural green space bank side softening alongside the River Stour and Stourbridge Branch Canal corridors will be given a high priority. New development within the Opportunity Sites also presents a major opportunity to build-in and positively enhance biodiversity features alongside the River Stour and Stourbridge Branch Canal corridors. This approach is supported by clear national planning guidance set out in paragraph 14 of Planning Policy Statement 9 (PPS9) (2005) "Biodiversity and Geological Conservation", paragraph 16 (indent seven) of PPS3 (2010) "Housing" and by policies ENV1 "Nature Conservation" and CSP3 "Environmental Infrastructure" in the adopted Black Country Core Strategy (February 2011).

Policy 7

SITE OF LOCAL IMPORTANCE FOR NATURE CONSERVATION (SLINC).

Sites within Stourbridge form part of the Black Country network of Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation. These are identified on the Proposals Map. The Council will seek to maintain and where possible enhance the quality, amount and distribution of the key habitat types and features within this sub-regional network.

Development within areas identified as part of the Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation network will be required to protect areas of high ecological value in the design and layout of the proposal and provide appropriate mitigation for the loss of other areas of nature conservation value. Measures to protect the integrity of corridor and linear features will be required within the layout and design of proposals. Where such measures are not included, there will be a presumption against the granting of planning permission.

Where development is permitted, in order to ensure the protection and enhancement of the Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation network the use of conditions and planning obligations will be considered.

Where practicable the Council will seek to encourage management of these sites for the benefit of the nature conservation resource.

This policy will also apply to additional Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation identified over the Plan period.

Policy 8

NATURE CONSERVATION

The Council will seek to protect, and where appropriate, enhance the natural environment. Measures shall include:

- The protection of the biodiversity value of the AAP area wildlife habitat;
- Improve the function and connectivity of the wildlife corridors through sensitive enhancement, repair and restoration. New build development will be expected to positively contribute to this corridor network;
- All new tree and shrub species planting within the AAP area will incorporate locally-occurring native and/ or locally Stourbridge distinctive species, with a particular emphasis on supporting biodiversity. A list of acceptable tree and shrub species can be found in the Appendix section of the AAP document;
- Invasive plant species, such as Japanese Knotweed shall be removed.

Policy 9

DEVELOPMENT AND BIODIVERSITY

The Council will expect new development to incorporate beneficial nature conservation features. The Council will expect the following types of on-site nature conservation and biodiversity improvements, appropriate to Stourbridge, to be accommodated within development proposals:

- Areas of natural wildlife friendly planting;
- Green roofs and walls;
- Mixed native hedges and trees;
- Where appropriate, the introduction of wetland habitats such as wildlife friendly small ponds and wetland swales especially in connection with new on-site Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS).

Smaller secondary features such as bird and bat boxes will be considered as is relevant to the individual development site. The types of nest box types the Council would particularly support to help support declining bird species and advice on suitable shrub and tree species can be found in the Appendix section of the AAP document.

4.5 The River Stour and the Stourbridge Branch Canal

4.5.1 The main existing green infrastructure (green open space) within the AAP is located on the northern edge of Stourbridge Town Centre, along the River Stour and Stourbridge Branch Canal corridors. This area provides an important green corridor (or "green lung") which is significant as both a connecting wildlife corridor (allowing the movement of wildlife species between habitats) and also as an outdoor recreational resource serving the local community. Results from the Spring 2010 public consultation stage completed as part for the AAP 'Options' Report (February 2010) indicate that there is support from the public for introducing sensitive green space environmental transformation improvements along the River Stour and Stourbridge Branch Canal corridors, with support for introducing both nature conservation and outdoor recreation enhancements within this area.

4.5.2 Parts of the River Stour and Stourbridge Branch Canal corridors currently suffer from a poor quality environment. For example, parts of the River Stour are culverted under some industrial development, and parts of the watercourse embankments are heavily urbanised with hard impermeable and over-engineered surfaces, with a shortage of soft green space alongside the river embankments. This significantly reduces the River Stour's outdoor recreation value and creates severed and broken linkages and restricts its function as a wildlife corridor. The River Stour is often referred to the "lost River Stour" as this area currently remains hidden and severed from the town centre due to urban encroachment alongside its embankments, poor quality public access along its embankments and the severance effect caused by the ring road. Its prominence and profile needs to be raised within the town centre.

4.5.3 As already stated findings from Dudley Council's adopted Parks and Green Space Strategy (PPG17 Audit) (adopted June 2009) indicate that the Stourbridge Committee Area has the least amount of urban green space provision in comparison to all other committee areas. Evidence from the Audit reveals that large parts of Stourbridge Committee Area have no coverage to both publicly accessible urban green space and accessible natural and semi-natural green space.

4.5.4 New developments within the Opportunity Sites will be expected to improve pedestrian and cycle links along the River Stour and Stourbridge Branch Canal as well as strengthening links from these watercourses to the town centre. This will promote convenient and safe pedestrian access to the town centre core and help to raise the profile and prominence of the river and canal as a natural green space outdoor recreation resource, and important green space asset to the town centre.

4.5.5 Development proposals fronting onto the edge of the River Stour and Stourbridge Branch Canal should provide an active frontage onto the waterway and other routes to give access to the canal/ River Stour and address public realm. This will also ensure that the Canal/ River Stour area is well overlooked with good levels of natural surveillance to improve personal safety and encourage outdoor recreation.

4.5.6 Care must be taken with such frontage development to ensure that it does not harm the wildlife corridor function through, for example, increasing light pollution.

4.5.7 Policies within the AAP will help to improve the environmental quality of the River Stour and Stourbridge Branch Canal corridors by enhancing this area's outdoor recreational and nature conservation value through sensitive enhancement and restoration. The AAP policies will also help to raise the profile of the River Stour and Stourbridge Branch Canal within the AAP area and use these important green space assets as a driver to support regeneration growth within the adjacent town centre.

4.5.8 The canal corridor lies within a designated Conservation Area. This places a statutory responsibility on the Council to preserve and enhance the character of this conservation area. All proposals (including new green space provision proposals) coming forward along the Stourbridge Branch Canal will therefore be expected to remain sensitive to preserving and enhancing the historical character and setting of the Conservation Area and will need to be in accordance with the Stourbridge Branch Canal Conservation Area Character Appraisal (CACA) and the Conservation Area Policy of the Stourbridge AAP. Proposals which could prejudice views into or out of the Stourbridge Branch Canal Conservation Area will be resisted.

Policy 10

THE RIVER STOUR

The Council, through development, will undertake to restore and improve (any restoration and improvement works would need to remain sensitive to the sites nature conservation value) the natural river channel and bankside habitat of the River Stour and support its clean up and upgrading along with the upgrading and enhancement of the river banks with a particular focus on uplifting the nature conservation value of the area and providing for informal recreation. This will enable the 'rediscovery' of the River Stour both by the community and visitors to the area.

Proposals for enhancing the River Stour shall include:

- The introduction and maintenance of a natural green space corridor either side of the river channel. This green space corridor shall be a minimum of at least 10 metres wide from each bank top and be landscaped so as to provide a natural setting for the river and improve the wildlife value of the area;
- The creation of a safe, attractive and accessible public footpath and cycleway - this shall be continuous along the length of the river utilising river and highway crossing points as appropriate, and link to the town centre;
- A requirement that development restores the open watercourse of the River Stour where a culverted water course exists on site;
- The removal of invasive plant species, such as Japanese Knotweed, along the length of the River Stour, and the restoration of affected areas back to beneficial wildlife habitat;
- Restoration of a “natural” river profile through channel dredging, de-culverting and bankside softening, and the addition of features such as meanders, riffles and pools along its length, as appropriate;
- The introduction of new signage and interpretation material along the River Stour corridor to assist pedestrians and cyclists;
- The potential for the restoration of the river bridges as necessary as key components in improving accessibility through the plan area.

Policy 11

STOURBRIDGE BRANCH CANAL

Proposals for enhancing the section of the Stourbridge Branch Canal and its environs shall include:

- The improvement and upgrading of the existing canal towpath to improve access for pedestrians, cyclists, boaters and anglers, including enhancements to identify and aid linkages between the canal and the river and the canalside and the town centre;
- Where appropriate the provision of new seating along the canal towpath;
- The introduction and maintenance of a natural green space corridor either side of the Canal channel. This green space corridor shall be a minimum of at least 10 metres wide from each canal bank top and be landscaped so as to provide a natural setting for the river and improve the wildlife value of the area. It should remain sensitive to the character and historical landscape setting of the historic conservation area;
- Pedestrian and cycle provision within new development bordering the canal, which will be fully integrated with the existing and/ or proposed public footpath and cycle networks;
- New signage and interpretation material along the Canal corridor to assist pedestrians, cyclists, tourists and boaters;
- The conservation and enhancement of areas of value for nature conservation along the Stourbridge Branch Canal and the creation of new natural green space where appropriate within the canal wildlife environment;
- The provision of new and improved boating facilities including the implementation of new visitor moorings and the potential expansion of the canal basin;
- The maintenance of the Canal as a navigable waterway and the restoration of the Canal where appropriate;
- Proposals coming forward along the Stourbridge Branch Canal will be expected to remain sensitive to preserving and enhancing the historical character and setting of the Conservation Area and will need to be in accordance with the Stourbridge Branch Canal Conservation Area Character Appraisal (CACA) and the Conservation Area Policy of the Stourbridge AAP. Proposals which could prejudice views into or out of the Stourbridge Branch Canal Conservation Area will be resisted.

4.6 Stourbridge's Historic Environment

4.6.1 Stourbridge has a distinctive market town character and a historic built environment that is of a generally high quality, however, within that context there are also areas of lesser status that would benefit from overall enhancement including through sensitive redevelopment. Accordingly, from the start of the plan making process it was recognised that the relationship between new development and locally distinctive townscapes and landscapes including individual heritage assets and archaeological remains needed careful management.

4.6.2 In preparing the AAP, the Council has, therefore, been very aware that in promoting new development and the enhancement of existing townscapes and landscapes through good urban design there is also a need for the Town's historic character to be properly understood and appreciated and for its' conservation to be taken fully into account.

4.6.3 Such an approach is in complete accordance with the adopted Black Country Core Strategy Policy ENV2: Historic Character and Local Distinctiveness. The Core Strategy notes at paragraph 6.10 that both nationally and in the Black Country itself considerable progress has already been made towards achieving a fuller analysis and understanding of local character and distinctiveness through using Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) techniques. Undertaking HLC in any given area allows a proper definition of local distinctiveness to be arrived whilst identifying the whole range of Heritage assets contributing to overall historic character, providing also an assessment of their relative significance.

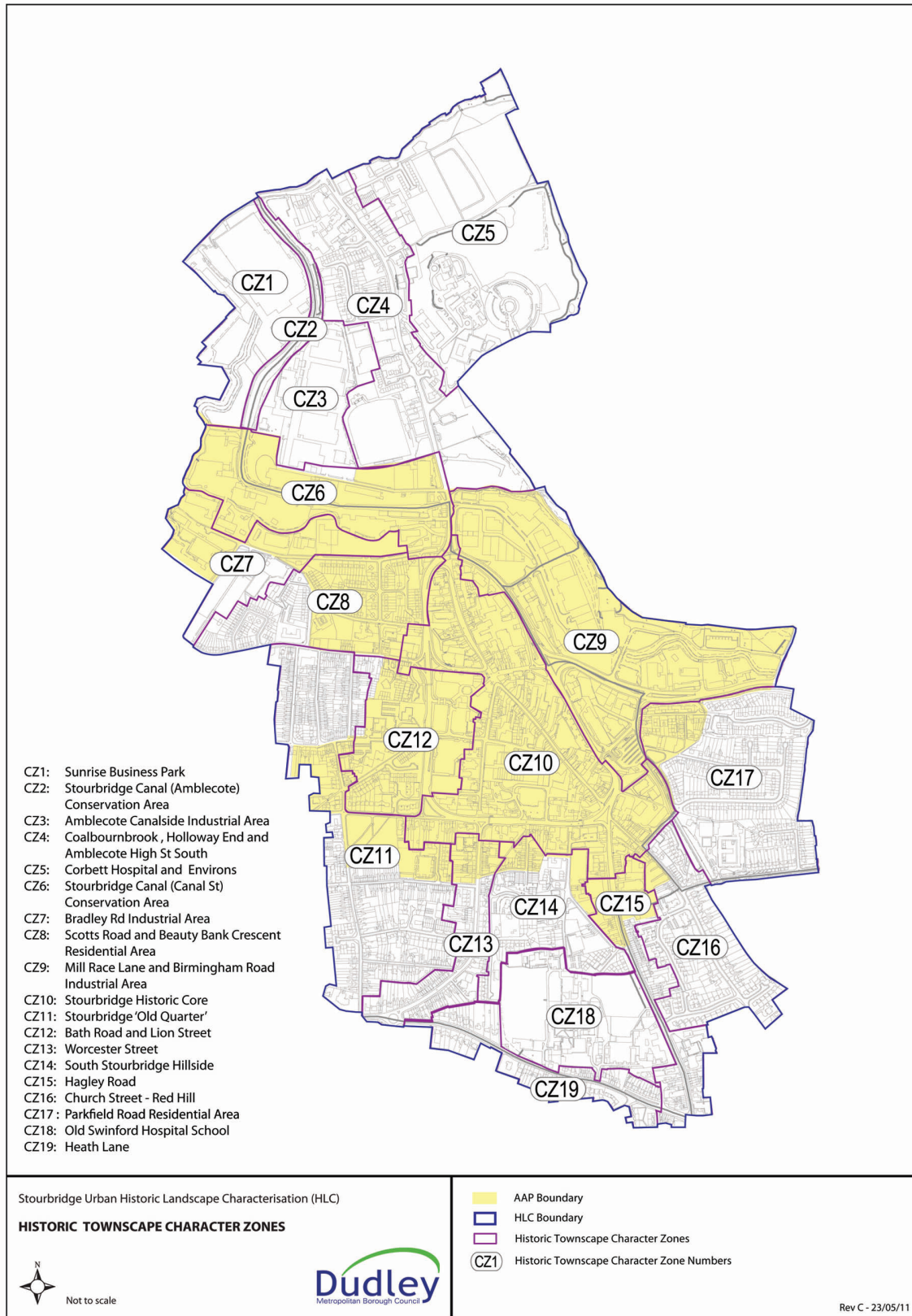
4.6.4 It was, however, acknowledged at the Issues and Options stage of the Area Action Plan that no such detailed analysis of the historic environment of Stourbridge was then available, nor was there anything like comprehensive information about the location and relative significance of individual "Heritage Assets" contributing to the town's historic character. It was suggested that it would not be possible to effectively conserve or manage Stourbridge's historic environment including through Area Action Plan Policies without a much better level of knowledge being achieved.

4.6.5 The consultation feedback to the "Issues and Options" document supported the undertaking of detailed Historic Landscape Characterisation to address the situation through defining locally distinctive character areas and significant heritage assets, including areas of high archaeological potential in order to assist in protecting overall character.

4.6.6 During 2010, the Historic Environment Team accordingly undertook survey and analysis work leading to the production of a "Stourbridge Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation" (SUHLC) study that now constitutes the principal historic environment evidence base for the Stourbridge Area Action Plan. **(HYPERLINK)**

4.6.7 The boundary of the study area is not contiguous with that for the AAP but spreads wider in order to more fully capture the historic extent of Stourbridge town and to include its associated hinterland. The study describes the historical

development of Stourbridge and identifies nineteen Historic Townscape Character Zones within the Town Centre and beyond as shown on **Figure 1**. For each Character Zone large scale mapping was then undertaken that identifies individual buildings and spaces which contribute positively or otherwise to local character.



Picture 3

4.6.8 Within this process, as envisaged in the Black Country Core Strategy, it has proved possible to identify locally significant areas of high historic townscape and landscape value and a wide range of individual heritage assets of varying degrees of significance including buildings with potential for inclusion on the Local List and archaeological priority areas. A review of statutorily designated assets including conservation areas has also been a part of the process with consideration being given to both possible boundary revisions and the potential for future new designations.

(Full details of buildings felt to have the potential to meet statutory list criteria and those which meet the criteria for the Council's Local List can be found in Appendix 2, parts 1 & 3 of the Stourbridge UHLC evidence base via the following LINK).

4.6.9 The results of the Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation (UHLC) can be used by strategic planners, urban designers, intending developers and others to gain a proper appreciation of the historic character of Stourbridge thus assisting in positive place making and the promotion of a sense of place and helping to foster responsive design. It will also convey a high degree of certainty for developers and assist in guiding and facilitating new development through alerting individual developers at an early stage to historic environment constraints and opportunities that may affect proposed development sites.

4.6.10 Developers will thereby be in a position to, in a timely fashion, develop design proposals that respect and reinforce local distinctiveness. Equally, it will enable them to properly assess the impact of new development upon any affected heritage assets and their setting and avoid harm. In this way, as is required by both the Black Country Core Strategy and Planning Policy Statement 5 "Planning for the Historic Environment" (PPS 5) the content of Design and Access Statements required in support of planning applications can be properly informed.

4.6.11 In this context Dudley Council believes that where physical evidence of local historic character persists in the form of assets that make a positive contribution to local distinctiveness such assets should be conserved and wherever possible enhanced. New development should respect and respond to the positive characteristics of the locality such that local distinctiveness is reinforced in a complementary manner. As with adopted Black Country Core Strategy (February 2011) Policy ENV2 "Historic Character and Local Distinctiveness" , the overarching aim of Historic Environment Policies in the Stourbridge Area Action Plan is, therefore, to assist in maintaining the individual identity and character of Stourbridge as a whole rather than focusing solely on locally or nationally designated assets.

Policy 12

CONSERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF LOCAL CHARACTER AND DISTINCTIVENESS IN STOURBRIDGE

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

The Stourbridge Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation has mapped out for each identified character zone various buildings and spaces and assigned a degree of significance to them based upon the contribution they make to the overall character of the historic environment. This includes Locally Listed Buildings that are felt to make a particularly special contribution to local character. The UHLC document, therefore, provides baseline data that in conjunction with the information held in the Council's Historic Buildings Sites and Monuments Record must be used for land use appraisals and to inform proposals for development.

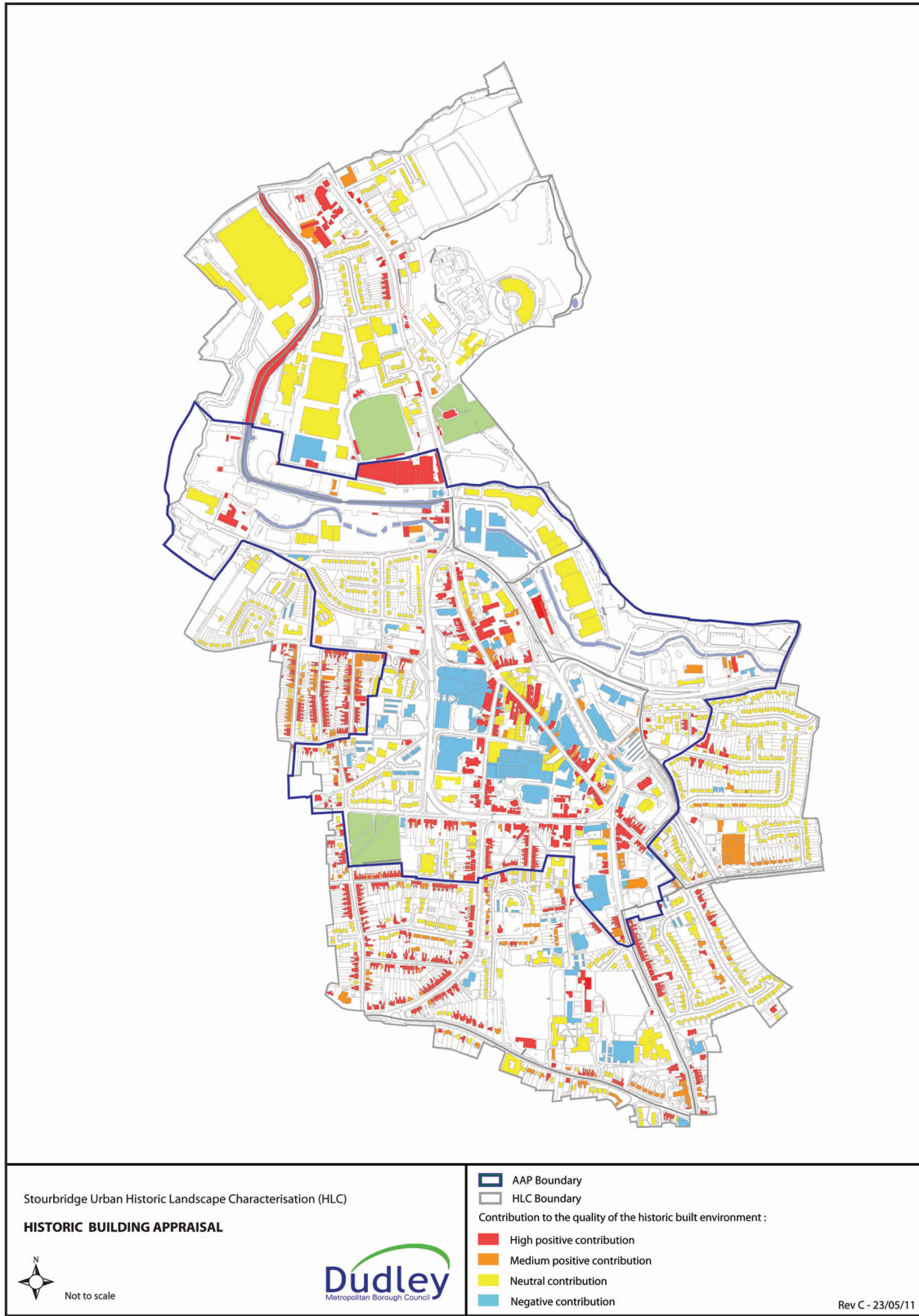
New development in Stourbridge should be designed so as to reinforce and enhance local distinctiveness and full reference should be made in Design and Access Statements accompanying planning applications to the Stourbridge Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation. Design and Access Statements should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

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

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

4.6.12 As noted above each Character Zone identified by the Stourbridge UHLC was mapped at a large scale in order to specifically identify the contribution made by individual buildings and spaces to the character of the local historic environment. The buildings were ranked through colour coding into those making a High (red), Medium (orange), Neutral (yellow) or Negative (blue) contribution to local character.

Figure 2 illustrates the combined results when the buildings identified for each Character Zone were mapped at a lesser scale and combined to give a picture across the whole of the study area.



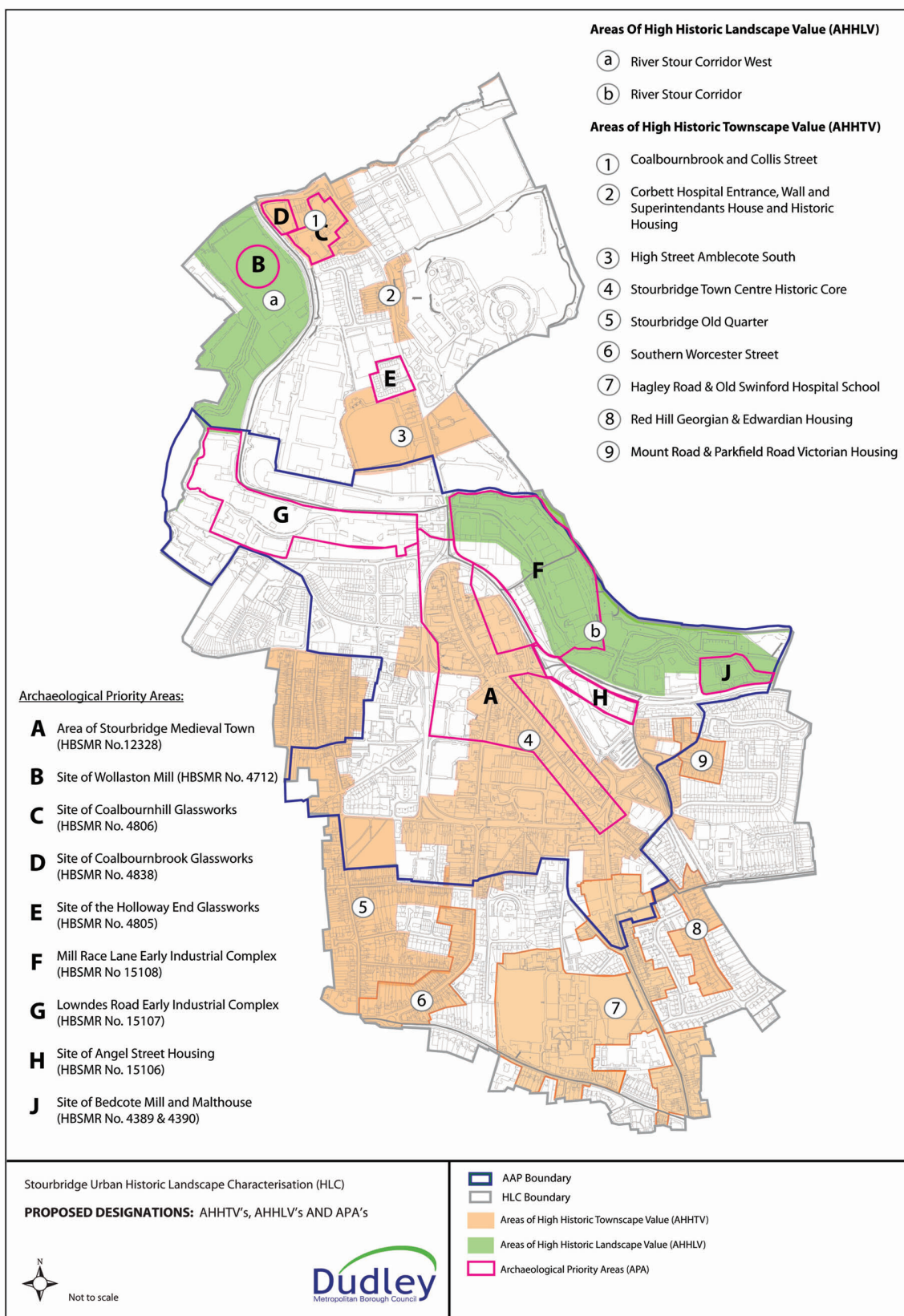
Picture 4

4.6.13 As can be seen from Figure 2 that exercise highlighted the existence of certain areas that, although not necessarily formally designated as conservation areas, nevertheless exhibited a concentration of historic assets that it was felt in combination made a particularly positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. These areas were tested against a range of criteria including:

- ***Contribution of historic buildings to a ‘sense of place’***
- ***Street plan and form***
- ***Completeness***
- ***Views and setting***
- ***Representation and historic interest***

4.6.14 Those areas that met the necessary criteria were thereby considered to be “Areas of High Historic Townscape Value” (AHHTV) and they are as shown on **Figure 3**.

(Full details and a description of each AHHTV can be found in Appendix 2, part 5, of the Stourbridge UHLC evidence base via the following LINK).



Picture 5

Policy 13

AREAS OF HIGH HISTORIC TOWNSCAPE VALUE (AHHTV)

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

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

4.6.15 The Council have identified Landscape Heritage Areas in the past that are incorporated within the Adopted Unitary Development Plan and that were protected by UDP Policies HE2 and HE3. Those policies have now been deleted causing the Council to review that historic landscape designation. Considering the results of ongoing historic characterisation work across the Borough and specifically in Stourbridge it is now felt appropriate to re-identify existing Landscape Heritage Areas and other areas that meet a set of defined criteria as Areas of High Historic Landscape Value (AHHLV).

4.6.16 This is in order to better demonstrate that it is the importance of the elements of the historic environment to the character and distinctiveness of these areas that is recognised by this designation. Whereas the designation of AHHTV recognises the contribution to local character and distinctiveness of the structures within built-up areas, which might be complemented by features of the wider landscape, the value of AHHLV is considered to reside primarily in the quality of the wider landscape, such as areas of open space, woodland, watercourses, hedgerows and archaeological features and their historic, communal, ecological and aesthetic values. The following criteria have been used to identify Areas of High Historic Landscape Value:

- Representation of Cultural Heritage
- Representation of Natural Heritage

- Preservation
- Amenity

4.6.17 In the case of Stourbridge the two areas identified both relate to the very strong linear open space provided by the course of the River Stour, which in the western half of the Action Plan area is paralleled by the Stourbridge Canal corridor. Both components have great historic significance in relation to the exploitation of water power, the location of industry and the associated transport of raw materials and finished products and they fully merit protection.

(Full details and a description of each AHHLV can be found in Appendix 2, part 6, of the Stourbridge UHLC evidence base via the following LINK).

Policy 14

AREAS OF HIGH HISTORIC LANDSCAPE VALUE (AHHLV)

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

4.6.18 The Borough contains a number of sites of archaeological remains identified as important at the national level that have therefore been formally designated as Scheduled Ancient Monuments. However, there are other sites throughout the Borough including in Stourbridge recorded in the Council's Historic Environment Record that have also been identified as having a high potential for the survival of archaeological remains of regional or national importance but have yet to be designated. The Council will consider the preservation of such archaeological remains when assessing applications for new development, as well as identifying opportunities to make greater use of the archaeological resource in sustaining the area's character and distinctiveness.

4.6.19 Stourbridge appears to have developed an urban form at a relatively late point, probably in the early 15th century and then developed rapidly as a centre for the local wool trade before becoming highly significant in the glass and iron industries in the early 17th century and beyond. Throughout, the River Stour has been of huge importance as a source of water power and numerous mills including for corn grinding, fulling of textiles, tanning, iron forging and slitting were sited on the riverside.

4.6.20 In order to recognise the potential importance of such archaeologically sensitive areas it is proposed to formally identify them as “Archaeological Priority Areas”, as shown on Figure 3. Other areas of high archaeological potential may also be identified over the life of this Area Action Plan which will be subject to the same policy.

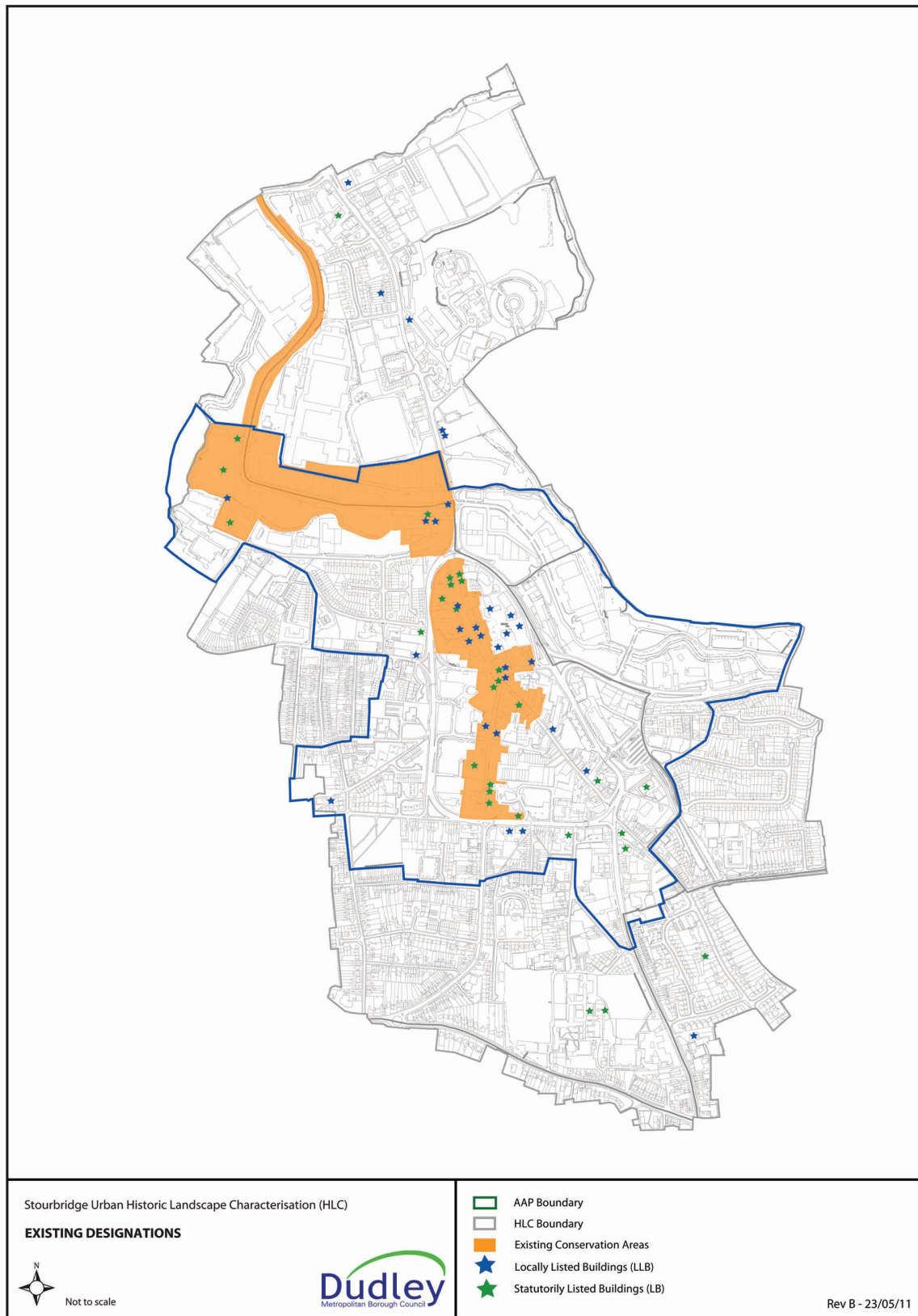
(Full details and a description of each APA can be found in Appendix 2, part 4, of the Stourbridge UHLC evidence base via the following LINK).

Policy 15

ARCHAEOLOGICAL PRIORITY AREAS

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

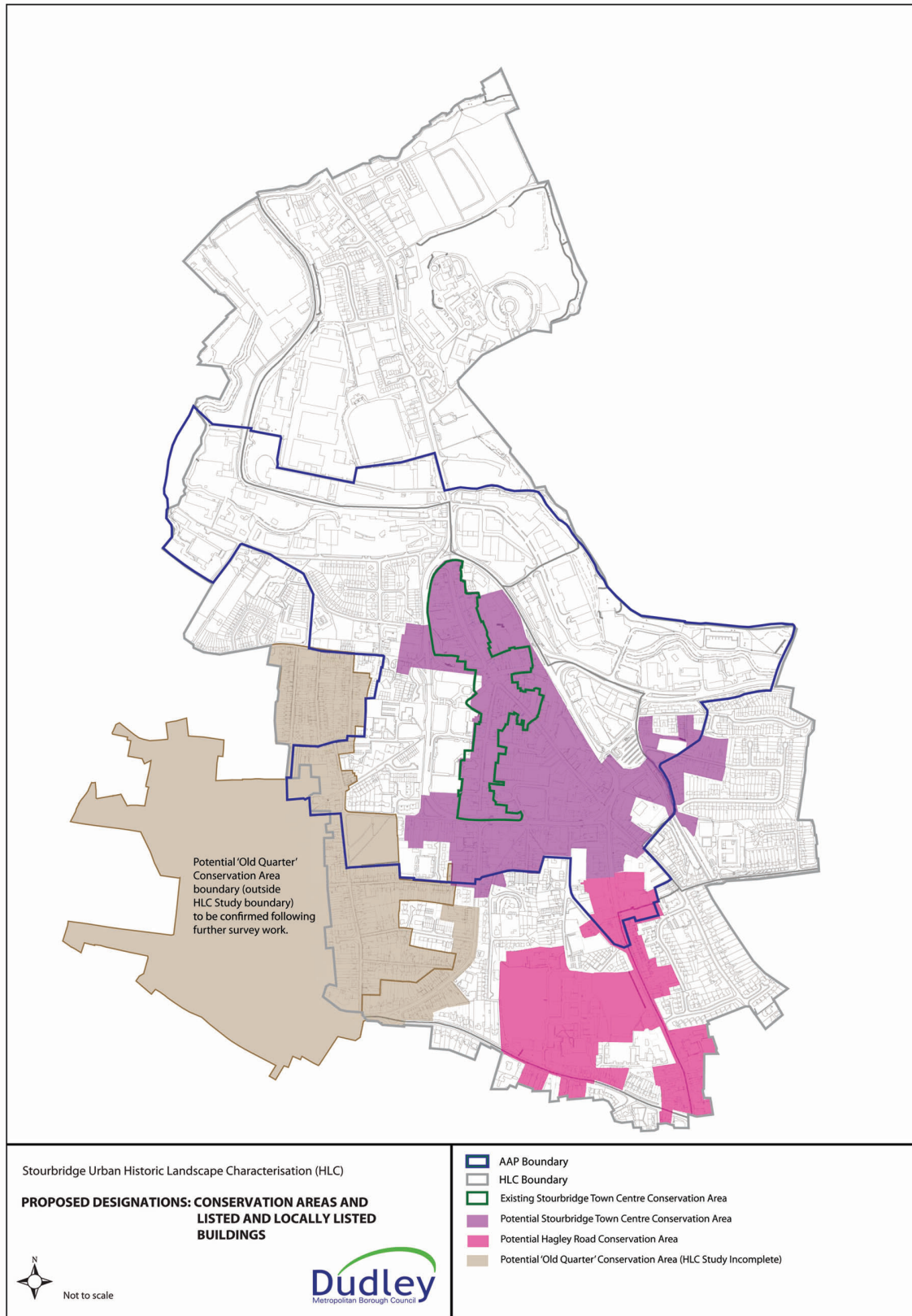
- expect developers as part of any planning application to provide adequate information to allow the full and proper consideration of the impact of the proposed development on archaeological remains through desk top archaeological appraisal and as the Council deems appropriate subsequent physical site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



Picture 6

4.6.21 On analysis it is also felt that the Hagley Road & Old Swinford Hospital AHHTV has considerable potential that warrants the carrying out of a detailed Conservation Area Character Appraisal there also.

(Further details of the review can be found in Appendix 2, part 2, of the Stourbridge UHLC evidence base via the following LINK).



Picture 7

4.7 Access and Movement in Stourbridge

4.7.1 In order to ensure that Stourbridge is an inclusive environment to the whole community, it is necessary to require that development and any improvements to the public realm take into account the needs of less mobile, infirm and visually impaired persons. This is particularly with regard to providing level access to facilities, demarcating footways and avoiding street clutter.

4.7.2 The current environment within the plan area presents a relatively robustly urban environment in which vehicles are arguably over dominant. This is particularly evident at the ring road, which has a severing effect between the town centre and the hinterland, both visually and physically, particularly in relation to it stemming the flow of pedestrians and cycle access across this multi-lane highway.

4.7.3 Pedestrian access across the ring road is currently gained via 6 no. subways and 2 no. surface level crossings. In terms of highway safety, the subways provide safe and easy access between the town centre and its hinterland, particularly for wheelchair users. However, these subways, which include a main passage from the town centre to the public transport hub, are not popular and often present poor quality environments - in some cases, these passageways can be subject to vandalism, including graffiti, and engender the perception of personal safety concerns.

4.7.4 It is therefore necessary to consider the need for additional surface level crossings provided across the ring road so as to enable greater permeability within the environment in general, lessen the visual and physical impact of vehicular traffic and provide direct links between the Opportunity Sites and the town centre. At the same time, it is recognised that the subways are likely to have to remain, some as the primary or only means of accessing the town from the adjoining areas, others as alternative routes to surface level crossings, providing easier and safer access for the less mobile in particular (e.g. those on motorised scooters). However, most of these subways need to be upgraded to particularly make them more inviting and safer environments.

4.7.5 The results from public engagement with the local community and businesses on the issues and options stage (completed Spring 2010) of the plan was mixed with regard to the option of the pedestrianisation of High Street and Market Street (in part). There was in particular opposition from some of the local traders, some of whom were concerned with the loss of on-street parking (outside their premises) which would result if this option were to be implemented. At the same time it is acknowledged that the current environment within the town centre, particularly for pedestrians/shoppers is often dangerous: as a result of the narrow width of the footways, pedestrians often have to step out into the carriageway, particularly to circumnavigate around buggies and scooters. Public realm improvements are therefore required here. These improvements would, while retaining space for some

on-street parking and the passage of vehicles, including emergency service vehicles, give a much greater priority to pedestrians within a greener and high quality designed space.

4.7.6 It is considered that a town centre market is not only of benefit to the vitality of the town, but also local farmers from the hinterland. It is therefore appropriate that this plan makes provisions for the accommodation of the physical measures necessary to enable this use and other events to take place within the town centre core.

4.7.7 Policy TRAN4 of the adopted Black Country Core Strategy (BCCS) (February 2011) seeks to ensure that the Black Country has a comprehensive cycle network, especially to encourage a sustainable form of travel, with positive health benefits. Also, a national cycle route (Sustrans Route 54 from Stourport to Derby) passes through the plan area. This route is identified on the Proposals Plan: it enters the plan area along the link between Church Avenue and High Street Amblecote and then passes through the town centre at Lower High Street, before continuing on via Market Street, Bell Street, Lion Street and Heath Street. In addition, the Council is seeking to promote cycle links to nearby parks, including the Healthy Hub at Mary Stevens Park (in effect an outdoor gym.), as part of its strategy to promote healthy living within the Borough. Policies are therefore set out which aim to facilitate and sign these routes and also to enhance the environment of the corridors which they run through.

4.7.8 While there are already a number of cycle stands within the town centre, including outside The Crystal Leisure Centre, it is considered there is scope to provide more, particularly in Lower High Street, alongside Sustrans Route 54 and in the vicinity of King Edward V1 College. Thus not only enabling an increased opportunity for a sustainable means of accessing the college, but potentially allowing cyclists using the national cycle route to stop off to avail themselves to the facilities offered by the town and also providing a facility for residents cycling into the town from the proposed residential development in the river and canal corridor to the north of the town centre.

4.7.9 The existing Stourbridge Town Train Station and the new bus station which is currently being redeveloped with a new 'state of the art' designed facility (both bordering the south-east edge of the ring road) provide a very important public transport interchange serving Stourbridge Town Centre and the wider surrounding urban area. Given their critical importance to the town centre, these public transport interchange facilities will be protected and retained within the Stourbridge AAP during the plan period.

4.7.10 Guidance in Dudley Council's latest adopted Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) will apply to new development proposals coming forward within the AAP Plan area.

Policy 16

ACCESS FOR ALL

All new development and townscape and landscape enhancements within the plan area shall seek to incorporate measures for the ease of access for disabled, infirm and partially sighted persons. This is particularly to ensure unhindered movement for all within Stourbridge Town Centre and also along the Stourbridge Branch Canal and River Stour corridor pathways. It is also to enable disabled, infirm and partially sighted persons to have ease of access to, and avail themselves of, the facilities provided within the town centre. This is unless such measures would conflict with the heritage assets within the plan area or would prevent works which would provide substantial benefits to the wider local community from being realised.

Policy 17

PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

A. All useful, safe and appropriate pedestrian routes, especially the network of Public Rights of Way, as shown on the Proposals Plans, shall be retained and, where feasible, improved.

B. New pedestrian links shall be created, as identified on the Proposals Plan and within the Opportunity Sites, particular to link the Opportunity Sites with the town centre, to link in with Gateways identified in Policy 3, and to link in with the proposed Stourbridge Branch Canal and River Stour pathways. Where such a link cannot be achieved, as an alternative, existing streets shall be used as a link and enhanced as part of a green infrastructure network.

C. New surface level crossings across the Stourbridge Ring Road, suitable for both cyclists and pedestrians, have potential to be provided in the future in the locations shown on the Proposals Plan (see Map 1 Proposals Map): at a) the Eastern Quadrant of the ring road at the junction of the ring road with Birmingham Street and b) the North-West Quadrant of the ring road, in association with the development of Opportunity Site 1.

D. These new crossing points have the potential to be linked in with a network of existing and proposed pathways and where they meet the interface with the ring road be enhanced as Gateways, in accordance with Policy 3 of the AAP.

Policy 18

TOWN CENTRE CORE PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS

That part of the town centre, comprising High Street and part of Market Street, as shown on the Proposals Plan, shall be investigated for the potential to deliver public realm improvements, giving more priority to pedestrian movement, yet still retaining on-street parking in bays within an enhanced streetscape. These public realm improvements shall potentially be implemented so as to deliver the following general measures:-

- A. The provision of bespoke designed surfacing and footway widening along the length of the zone to seamlessly run into the Public Squares identified in Policy 2A
- B. The provision of greener thoroughfares including the planting of native or locally distinct trees, potentially within build outs, and hanging baskets
- C. The accommodation of vehicular parking in bays, including disabled parking bays, and allowance made for the passage of vehicles, including buses, emergency service vehicles and taxis
- D. The accommodation of, and works to facilitate, the holding of markets and events within the town centre core.

Policy 19

CYCLING

The following spatial planning measures shall be implemented, through enabling development and other delivery mechanisms as necessary, in order to promote Stourbridge as a "cycle- friendly" town:-

A. Secure cycle parking shall be provided within the Opportunity Sites and other development sites within the plan area.

B. Further cycle stands shall be provided within Stourbridge Town Centre, particularly in Lower High Street in association with King Edwards VI College.

C. The national cycle route (Sustrans Route 54) shall be signposted and marked out and its corridor enhanced as it passes through the plan area

D. Other cycle routes within the plan area, as shown on the Proposals Plan, specifically:-

i) along the River Stour and Stourbridge Branch Canal and routes which link into that network

ii) routes which link in with Sustrans Route 54

iii) routes which access Mary Stevens Park (especially The Healthy Hub in that park) and Wollaston Park

shall be signposted and marked out and the environment which these routes pass through, enhanced.

4.8 Stourbridge Town - Vitality and Viability

4.8.1 The Stourbridge Town Centre boundary, as previously defined on the UDP Inset Plan (2005) for Stourbridge, contains the area within the ring road and also encompasses the area of land between the ring road (St. John's Street) and Birmingham Street, identified as Angel Passage (Opportunity Site S3). This boundary is carried forward within this AAP: while there are other policies within this plan which seek to reduce the physical and visual impact of the ring road, it serves to define the town centre, and the incorporation of the Angel Passage Site within the plan boundary, enables it to be developed for town centre uses (acceptable uses specified in Planning Policy Statement 4 [PPS4 - Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth - 2009]). These town centre uses identified in PPS4, which subject to the safeguarding of shopping uses and restrictions on hot food take-aways (refer to the other policies within this section), are only appropriate to being accommodated within the town

centre comprise the following: retail; leisure and entertainment facilities; the more intensive (indoor) sport and recreation uses; offices; arts, culture and tourism development.

4.8.2 The Black Country Core Strategy sets out appropriate thresholds for additional convenience and comparison retail floorspace and office floorspace allowable within each of the town centres during the plan period, unless it can be demonstrated through evidence on need, impact and physical linkages that a higher floorspace total would be appropriate (Policy CEN4). The totals are set out below in Policy 19. These totals include the convenience and comparison retail floorspace totals which the Council has recently approved for the redevelopment of Opportunity Site S1 (The Crown Centre).

4.8.3 The Crystal Leisure Centre and Stourbridge Town Hall are significant cultural and leisure uses for the local community located within the town centre. It is considered important for the vitality of the town, that such facilities are retained, and should suitable opportunities arise, expanded to maintain and enhance their role as community assets. This is particularly given the potential increase in demand for the town's cultural and leisure facilities as a result of the planned increase in the catchment population from the planned housing to the north of the town.

4.8.4 Another means of improving the vitality and viability of the town, particularly in increasing the amount of activity and surveillance within its centre and also increasing the number of residents who can avail themselves to the town's facilities, is to promote the re-use of the upper floors of businesses within the town centre for active uses, specifically to residential or business (office) uses. Indeed, visual evidence suggests that there are numerous buildings, especially within the Town Centre Conservation Area, which have vacant upper floors that have the potential to be converted into residential accommodation. The re-use of upper floors for a residential use in particular can be encouraged through flexibility shown in the application of relevant planning guidance as it relates to such issues as car parking provision and the level of amenity which may be afforded to future occupiers.

4.8.5 It is recognised that shutters on business premises within town centres, particularly the steel roller box type, have the effect of deadening frontages, prevent window shopping and present an unwelcoming and sterile environment, particularly outside of business hours. However, it is realised that such an issue can be more properly and effectively addressed (from a borough-wide perspective) through the provisions of the emerging Shopfronts Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): this emerging draft SPD is included within the Local Development Scheme (LDS) and is currently being progressed. Notwithstanding this, a further means of maintaining and enhancing vitality is to support the use of vacant shop units as a canvas for public art, potentially in association with local colleges: this issue is considered appropriate to be addressed by this AAP.

4.8.6 The Primary Frontages, shown on the Proposals Plan and Town Centre Inset Plan, carry forward the extent and related policy which refers to Protected Frontages within the UDP (2005). The Primary Frontages cover premises in the heart of the

town centre and seek to maintain this area as a focus for shopping activity and, thereby, sustain the primary function of the centre (to provide a wide range of convenience and comparison shopping goods [A1 Retail Use] for the local community) and thus its viability and vitality. With regard to the minimum percentage of units to be retained within an A1 Use within the Primary Frontages zone, this has been set at 65%, reflecting the percentage stated within the UDP. The latest Stourbridge Town Centre Review (April 2010) evidenced the percentage of units within an A1 Use, factoring in the lawful use of the vacant units (which represent 11% of the units within this zone), at 73%. This indicates a relatively thriving town, exceeding the target percentage of A1 Uses within this zone. While there is an argument to set this percentage even higher (e.g. 70%), it is considered that this may be difficult to achieve and sustain, and potentially result in a higher proportion of vacant units as a result of such a relatively high percentage not providing a degree of flexibility which would allow the town to adapt to changing retail trends and competition from nearby centres, notably Merry Hill.

4.8.7 In a similar vein, the boundary of the Retail Core Area has been carried forward from the UDP (2005). Within this plan it is termed the Secondary Frontages Zone. This area covers the Primary Frontages Zone and the adjoining areas which are also a focus for shopping (e.g. The Crown Centre, containing Opportunity Site S1). In order to maintain the level of vitality and viability of the town, it is considered there is justification to maintain a minimum proportion of A1 Uses within this zone. This has been set at 55%, similar to that evidenced in the latest Town Centre Review (53%).

4.8.8 Hot food take-aways (A5 Uses) were a particular area of concern from some of the respondents to the Spring 2010 community engagement on the draft options for the Area Action Plan. Indeed, it is recognised that where high concentrations of this use occur within a centre, this can pose a threat to that centre's vitality and viability, including often presenting blank frontages during daytime trading hours. They also have other impacts on amenity - e.g. anti-social behaviour, litter, noise and fumes. A5 Uses are also associated with unhealthy eating, contrary to the national drive and council commitment to tackle obesity trends (Tackling Obesity: A Framework for Action in Dudley [2005]). Policy 19 of this plan specifically seeks to control this use, particularly for proposals to establish A5 uses outside of the Primary and Secondary Frontages, but within the town centre boundary.

4.8.9 During the Spring 2010 consultation stage, concern was also raised about the number of public houses (A4 Uses) and night time venues within the town centre, particularly the anti-social behaviour they engender. However, it is recognised that such uses have a positive effect in terms of helping to sustain a viable nighttime economy, particularly for the benefit of the student population, and such uses are not considered to have the same negative impact on vitality on the town centre or as significant impacts on amenity as A5 Uses. This plan therefore singles out A5 Uses for particular restrictions and controls, and not A4 Uses.

Policy 20

THE TOWN CENTRE

A. The amount of additional retail and office floorspace (gross) which will be allowable within the town centre within the plan period, unless any floorspace in excess of this can be demonstrated to meet the exception criteria set out in Black Country Core Strategy CEN4, and subject to a review in 2018, are:-

- Office (B1a Use) floorspace = 5,000 square metres
- Convenience retail floorspace = 3,900 square metres
- Comparison retail floorspace = 6,800 square metres

B. The extension of the Crystal Leisure Centre and Stourbridge Town Hall will be supported, along with their role as town centre community and leisure facilities.

C. The re-use of the upper floors of premises within the town centre, particularly for residential purposes or business/office uses, will be encouraged through flexibility in the application of guidance and standards relating to amenity and parking provision.

D. Public Art, especially in the form of visual displays, will be encouraged to be used as a means of creating a sense of vibrancy to vacant shopfronts within the town centre.

Policy 21

PROTECTED FRONTAGES

Within the Primary Frontages and Secondary Frontages, identified on the Proposals Plan, proposals for the changes of use of planning units from an A1 Retail Use (as defined in the Town and Country Planning [Use Classes] Order 2005, or superseding orders) to an alternative use, or new development for a non A1 Use will only be approved where:-

- The number of planning units occupied by non A1 Uses does not exceed 45%, and in the case of units within the Primary Frontages, 35%
- There would be no bunching of non A1 Uses - i.e. no more than two non A1 Uses adjacent to each other will be permitted

Policy 22

HOT FOOD TAKEAWAYS (A5 USES)

Hot food take-aways (A5 Uses) will only be permitted within the town centre, where there is no conflict with other policies within this plan, in particular, the Primary Frontages and Secondary Frontages Policies, and where:-

1. There would be no adverse impact on amenity, highway safety (including parking) and the character of the surrounding environment
2. There would be no bunching of A5 Uses - i.e. no more than two A5 Uses adjacent to each other will be permitted
3. The resulting A5 Unit, including any associated ventilation and extraction equipment and/or flue, would not be visually dominant within the townscape

4.9 New Homes and Jobs in Stourbridge

4.9.1 In line with national planning guidance set out in Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3) (2006) "Housing", within the plan area, priority will be to focus new housing development to urban brownfield land sites (previously-developed land) opposed to the use of green field sites. The majority of new housing development will be concentrated within, and focused towards existing industrial areas (employment land) on the northern edge of Stourbridge Town Centre in line with the adopted Black Country Core Strategy (February 2011) Regeneration Corridor 11b (Brierley Hill - Stourbridge) which supports housing-led regeneration growth in this area. Mixed-use development will be promoted within the Mill Race Lane Trading Estate, which will consist of some employment retention and some new housing redevelopment. Again, this approach to redevelopment is in accordance with adopted Black Country Core Strategy (February 2011) Regeneration Corridor 11b and policies HOU2 (Housing Density, Type and Accessibility), HOU3 (Delivering Affordable Housing) and Policy DEL2 (Managing the Balance between Employment land and Housing) of that Plan. Policy HOU2 seeks a 25% on-site affordable housing contribution on sites of 15 dwellings or more.

4.9.2 It is important to encourage high quality, modern, future growth sector businesses to the plan area (such as green energy companies) in order to help support local job creation opportunities. These types of companies will be particularly encouraged within the Mill Race Lane Trading Estate area.

4.9.3 Housing need will be informed by the most up-to-date evidence base provided by housing needs studies and the Council's emerging Local Investment Plan (LIP). Current evidence suggests that key affordable housing needs within the plan area are for family accommodation (3 and 4 bedroom family housing) and elderly persons

supported housing. In line with the adopted Black Country Core Strategy (February 2011) there is also a need for more family homes for managerial, entrepreneurial and professional households. These types of housing provision will be encouraged within the plan area. Many town centre sites are constrained in size and often have multiple ownerships. There is limited opportunity therefore to provide significant numbers of new housing development within the town centre, particularly larger family homes which is a key housing need. However, living above shops within the town centre core will be supported where opportunities exist to help stimulate the vitality and viability of the town centre. As stated above, main opportunities for delivering the majority of new housing growth will be within existing industrial areas on the northern edge of the town centre.

4.9.4 New housing-led regeneration growth within these Opportunity Sites will need to remain sensitive to the River Stour/ StourbridgeBranchCanal corridor and contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of this wildlife corridor. New housing development coming forward adjacent to the StourbridgeBranchCanal would need to remain sensitive to the designated Conservation area.

Policy 23

HOUSING MIX AND TENURE

The Council will expect the mix and range of housing types, tenures and sizes to reflect the needs of the community and to secure a mixed and balanced community in line with PPS3 (2006) guidance.

The Opportunity Sites would be particularly appropriate for a higher concentration of family homes for managerial, entrepreneurial and professional households.

Policy 24

EXTRA CARE HOUSING

A site for new Extra Care Housing will be provided within the plan area. The form and type of the extra care facility will be dictated by the evidence contained within the Council's Local Investment Plan (LIP) as it relates to the needs and demands for this area.

Policy 25

NEW HOUSING NEAR TO INDUSTRY

Where new housing development is proposed near to existing industry (employment uses) that has the potential to inhibit or prejudice the continued future ongoing business viability of that use by virtue of e.g. noise, dust, smell, heavy goods vehicles movements disturbance, the housing development will be expected to incorporate, or contribute towards, measures to help mitigate any adverse impacts which may arise from the nearby industrial premises and which may affect future residential amenity. For example, the introduction of mitigation measures to reduce noise disturbance from the operation of industrial premises. Each residential proposal in close proximity to existing industry, and any on-site/off-site proposed mitigation works measures, will be carefully assessed on their own unique set of circumstances and individual planning merits. Planning permission will not be granted to redevelop a site for new housing near to existing industry where the new housing proposal is likely to inhibit or prejudice the continued business operations of any nearby industrial occupier.

New housing development proposals near to existing industry within the plan area will only be permitted where:

- The new housing development would not adversely affect the continued viability and operation of the existing employment use, and suitable mitigation measures can be built into into the residential proposal to address such concerns as necessary;
- The industrial site is no longer viable and required either for employment use, including relocation of businesses displaced from sites released to other uses, or for other employment-generating uses.

Policy 26

MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT

Mixed use development will be encouraged within the plan area. Of particular importance, will be mixed use development which:

- Help to support local job creation opportunities and creative industries locally-distinctive to Stourbridge, such as glass making, visual arts and crafts based activities and music/ performance arts;
- Mixed use schemes which help stimulate the vitality and viability of the town centre core and help attract inward investment. Such schemes shall make provision for active ground floor frontages;
- Promote green technology industries within the plan area such as companies specialising in renewable energy technologies.

Policy 27

PROMOTE LIVE/ WORK DEVELOPMENT (OR INTERCHANGE HOUSING/ BUSINESS USE ACCOMMODATION)

This will be supported particularly where:

- The location ensures a satisfactory residential environment;
- The non-residential element would not harm the amenities of the residential element within the scheme, or the residential amenities of the surrounding area; and,
- There is adequate amenity space and an appropriate level of car parking.

4.10 Stourbridge Wharf

4.10.1 The results from previous stages of community engagement reveal that there was overwhelming support for the inclusion of this area within the AAP, with it being described as an historic community asset, contributing to the distinctive character of Stourbridge and having a multi-functional role for the benefit of the Stourbridge community and visitors. Indeed, this area is considered worthy of special focus for spatial planning policies as part of this plan to the extent that it is given consideration in detail within the context of an Inset Plan and associated policy.

4.10.2 The reason for attaching a high profile to this area within the plan is particularly as a result of its location as a "linchpin area" between Stourbridge Town Centre and the planned housing led regeneration areas within the River Stour and Stourbridge Branch Canal corridor. It is also alongside a main Gateway to Stourbridge Town Centre and is at the southern end of The Glass Quarter. Within this context, the regeneration and upgrading of this area would be key in enabling the occupiers of the planned new dwellings to access the town by walking or cycling through an enhanced environment with increased permeability, and also being able to avail themselves of the facilities on offer in this area.

4.10.3 Another justification for highlighting this area is that it is currently an area in need upgrading: there are currently a number of vacant buildings and derelict and untidy spaces. It is also an area with generally poor permeability: footpath linkages into this area from the residential areas to the south are particularly few in number, poorly signed and not easily distinguishable; the canal bridge is currently closed off; there is robust security fencing along the canal bank. Furthermore, while the canal and the area to the north of it is designated as a Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINC). It is therefore considered necessary that any proposed development or works retain that vegetation which has nature conservation value and that opportunities are realised to enhance this value through development proposals or landscaping associated with extensions to the towpath and canal basin.

4.10.4 The area is significantly also a Conservation Area (The Canal Street Conservation Area), containing a Grade II Listed Building (The Bonded Warehouse) and 4 no. Locally Listed Buildings within an historic canalside setting. An opportunity exists to draw on this heritage, including promoting and enabling canal based activities and uses and tourism, and to reinforce this character with an appropriate and sensitive policy steer.

4.10.5 There is an acknowledged demand in the area for space for locally distinctive industry, particularly "creative industry" (encompassing such activities connected with the arts - e.g. artists', recording and dance studios). It is considered that there is an opportunity for this area, particularly through the re-use of vacant premises there, to provide spaces for such uses.

4.10.6 The area currently serves as a cultural and entertainment place, with the Bonded Warehouse hosting events, often spilling out into the surrounding canalside environment, and (small scale) concerts. There is an opportunity through this plan to build on and complement these activities. One of the means of achieving this is through the re-invigoration, and perhaps reorientation of the public house (The Moorings Tavern - currently boarded up and vacant) and Chinese take-away (The White Rose) fronting the High Street, and so form a "cultural hub", offering an alternative (night time) venue to the Town Centre, perhaps attracting a more mature/family orientated clientele, with an emphasis on making the most of the canalside environment and its historic setting.

4.10.7 Falling within Regeneration Corridor 11b, as designated in the adopted Black Country Core Strategy (BCCS) (February 2011), there is also a general policy steer towards housing led regeneration, particularly along the canal network and close to existing centres. While the proposed development of the Rolling Mills Site (Opportunity Site S7) will help to realise this, it is acknowledged that other sites within the Stourbridge Wharf area could also be designated for a residential use to take forward and focus the vision and policies of the BCCS.

4.10.8 Two such existing industrial sites are identified on the Inset Plan for proposed redevelopment for residential purposes. It is critical that should these sites be progressed for development, that the viability of nearby existing industrial/employment uses are not prejudiced by the potential establishment of a substantial number of new houses in this area, and that the continued presence and viability of such employment uses are supported. (This issue is articulated in full within Policy 26.)

4.10.9 Notwithstanding this, it is envisaged that the form and design of residential development on these sites would reflect this canal and river setting, have measures in place to mitigate against flooding, while enhancing, the character of the conservation area, the setting of heritage assets and the area's nature conservation value. One of the means of achieving an appropriate form of development would be through the development of live-work units on these sites (as referred to in Policy 27D of the AAP).

Policy 28

STOURBRIDGE WHARF

The Stourbridge Wharf area, the boundaries of which are set out on the Inset Plan, shall be promoted as a focus for creative/cultural industry and visitor economy related businesses, with complementary entertainment and leisure uses, sensitive to, and promoting this area's unique heritage, and sensitive to existing and proposed residential uses. The Inset Plan also provides more detailed proposals as to how this vision can be realised.

Acceptable uses are:-

A. Canal based uses and activities, including the provision of additional visitor moorings and boater's facilities and canal themed industry with ancillary retail

B. Creative/cultural industry and visitor economy related businesses, specifically uses connected with the arts, including studios and performance spaces

C. Entertainment uses, specifically assembly and leisure uses (D2), Public House/Inn (A4) and Restaurant (A3) Uses

D. Residential uses, which shall be designed to reflect, and relate to the canal and river setting, along with being sensitive to existing industry, heritage assets and the nature conservation value of the area, with the provision of Live-Work units particularly encouraged in this location.

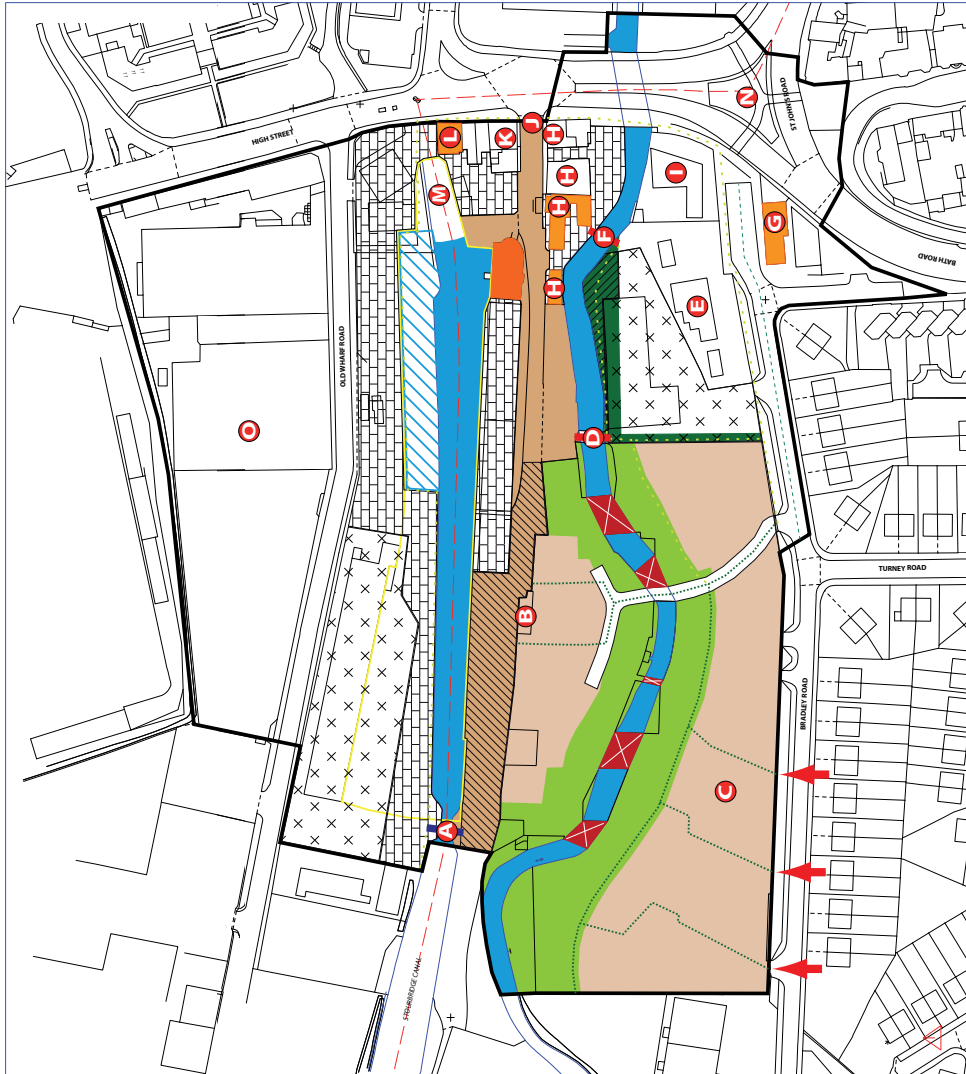
The environment of this area shall be enhanced and upgraded, through enabling development, development contributions and other delivery mechanisms as appropriate, with a particular focus on the following measures being implemented:-

i) Investigate the potential for the canal basin to be expanded

ii) The provision of additional vehicular parking areas, sitting out areas and events space(s)

iii) Improvements to be sensitive to heritage assets and be embedded within green infrastructure, which enhances existing wildlife habitats and uses locally distinct flora and includes the removal of invasive plant species, overly-robust security measures and external storage areas

iv) The provision of pathways and cycleways along the Stourbridge Branch Canal and River Stour, and to the Town Centre, via the Gateway and Bradley Street, and to Old Wharf Road, via a re-opened canal bridge (Narrows Bridge).



Map 2 Stourbridge Wharf Inset Plan

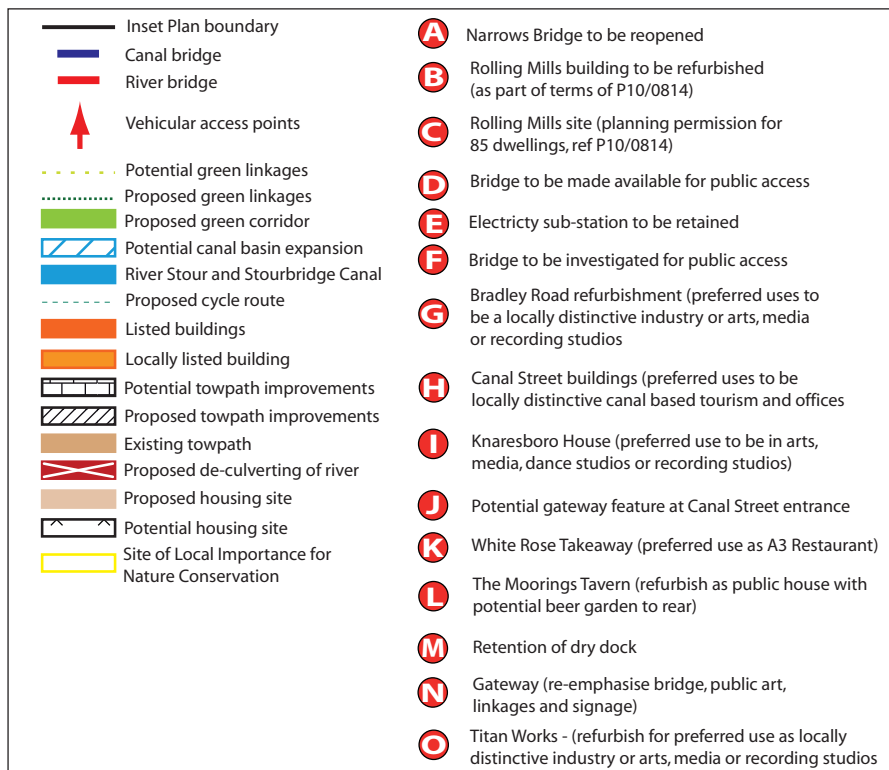


Figure 1 Key to Inset Map

5 Key Areas of Change

5.1 Opportunity Sites

5.1.1 The following Opportunity Sites represent relatively large vacant sites or sites with underused or vacant buildings on, or sites which have been the subject of a formal planning approach or decision, within the plan area. They include sites where planning permission has recently been granted, but where development has yet to commence. The reason for this is to ensure that a planning framework exists to enable and guide the appropriate development of these sites under different development scenarios.

5.1.2 The majority of the Opportunity Sites lie within the River Stour and Stourbridge Branch Canal corridor and are designated as housing sites so as to carry through and shape the development proposals of The Black Country Core Strategy Regeneration Corridor 11 b, which this area forms part.

5.1.3 It is considered that the redevelopment of these sites would not only serve to help regenerate the local environment, but have positive spin-off effects for the whole plan area, potentially including helping to reinvigorate the vitality and viability of the town centre, as well as delivering a vastly improved environment, with a focus on realising the recreational and nature conservation potential of the river and canal.

5.1.4 Acceptable uses are set out for each of the Opportunity Sites, together with development parameters. Proposals which are not for one of the identified acceptable uses shall be normally resisted unless such a proposal can be demonstrated to be of substantial benefit to the local environment and community and be compliant with strategic planning policy, in particular the policies of the Black Country Core Strategy.

5.1.5 The Council will also expect the development parameters, set out below for individual Opportunity Sites, to be reflected in the form and layout of development proposals for the site in question, along with any other relevant measures contained within the AAP: for instance proposed development within the River Stour corridor accommodating the measures contained within Policy 10.

OPPORTUNITY SITE S1 - CROWN LANE

ACCEPTABLE USES

RETAIL (A1)

RESTAURANT (A3)

FINANCE/PROFESSIONAL OFFICE USE (A2)

DEVELOPMENT PARAMETERS

- Development shall provide new active frontages to Bath Road, Crown Lane, Bell Street and Market Street wherever possible to increase activity and assist good supervision of the public realm
- Provide a scale and mass of development onto the ring road frontage that offers variety and visual interest
- The design of any proposed development shall contain measures to ensure that the development is not self contained by providing permeability and ready pedestrian linkages to the rest of the town and to the Gateway and by enabling activity to spill out of the Crown Centre into the surrounding townscape
- Development shall provide measures to assist pedestrian movement from across the ring road to the site
- Development shall incorporate landmark elements onto the redeveloped Crown Square
- Service areas shall be screened or not overly visible within the public realm
- Opportunities shall be taken to enhance connecting views through Coventry Street to Crown Square and through to the main entrance of the development, and approaching views to the development, including by, potentially, the incorporation of public art at entrance points and on building facades
- A green landscape fringe shall be provided onto the ring road
- Development shall not prejudice the character and integrity of the Listed Building on the corner of Market Street and New Street or other Heritage Assets within the vicinity of the site
- The existing Public Art installation within The Crown Centre shall be re-instated within the development or within the surrounding townscape



Map 3 Crown Lane

OPPORTUNITY SITE S2 - MARKET STREET

ACCEPTABLE USES

RETAIL (A1)

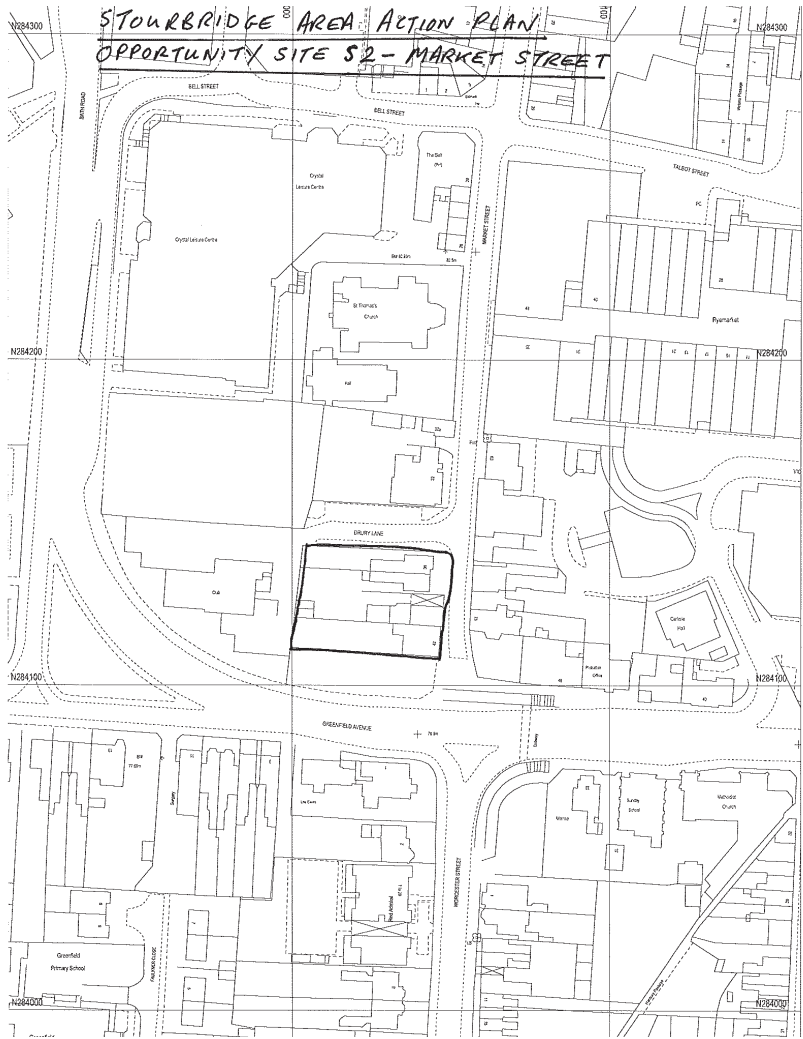
RESTAURANT (A3)

FINANCE/PROFESSIONAL OFFICE USE (A2)

RESIDENTIAL (C3)

DEVELOPMENT PARAMETERS

- The existing buildings on the site shall be retained and refurbished
- Active frontages shall be provided onto Drury Lane and Market Street, including the sensitive remodelling of the buildings' forecourt areas
- The mature landscaping on the site, including the trees which will form the backdrop to the Gateway and the large tree to the rear of the site, shall be retained



Map 4 Market Street

OPPORTUNITY SITE S3 - ANGEL PASSAGE

ACCEPTABLE USES

(COMPARISON) RETAIL (A1)

RESTAURANT (A3)

ASSEMBLY AND LEISURE (D2)

DISPLAY OF MOTOR VEHICLES (SUI-GENERIS)

OFFICE (B1[a])

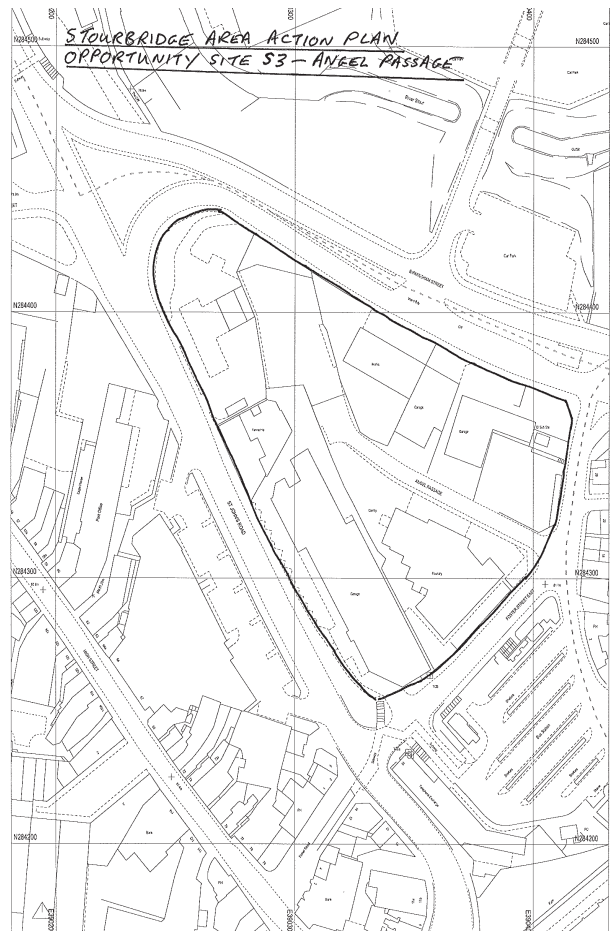
HOTEL (C1)

EXTRA CARE FACILITY (C2)

RESIDENTIAL (C3)

DEVELOPMENT PARAMETERS

- Development to be outward facing on all public edges with active frontages onto the ring road and onto Birmingham Street and the public transport hub
- The layout shall incorporate pedestrian and cycle routes particularly to a) the public transport hub, b) the subway under the ring road and c) the Birmingham Street crossing and Gateway
- The built form, scale and mass of development shall respond positively to the change in levels across the site, with a preference to stepping development up from Birmingham Street to the ring road to create interest in the built form
- Development shall respond to the long frontages to the ring road and Birmingham Street to provide visual interest within these frontages and at the leading corner points of the site
- As a preference, development shall be in the form of perimeter block development containing internal parking and servicing areas
- Where opportunities arise, development shall incorporate a varied roofscape, particularly where individual units are large in size
- The development shall enable the provision of a surface level crossing across Birmingham Street and a Gateway at its interface
- Where opportunities arise, landmark quality elements to the built form shall be provided at the proposed Gateway in the northern part of the site, and around the junction of Foster Street and Birmingham Street
- The inclusion of landscaping, including the provision of a green fringe onto Birmingham Street and the ring road.



Map 5 Angel Passage

OPPORTUNITY SITE S4 - HAGLEY ROAD

ACCEPTABLE USES

EXTRA CARE FACILITY (C2)

HEALTH FACILITY (D1)

RESIDENTIAL (C3)

DEVELOPMENT PARAMETERS

- An active frontage shall be provided onto Hagley Road
- The existing mature trees at the rear of the site shall be safeguarded and incorporated into the layout (unless they are assessed as not being of value and/or healthy)
- A pedestrian link shall be provided through to the car park at the rear of the site in Church Street



Map 6 Hagley Road

OPPORTUNITY SITE S5 - COX HIRE, BIRMINGHAM STREET

ACCEPTABLE USES

EXTRA CARE FACILITY (C2)

RESIDENTIAL (C3)

DEVELOPMENT PARAMETERS

- Development shall incorporate riverside improvements, including the potential reopening of the bridge across the River Stour as part of an enhanced green infrastructure network
- The existing Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINC) shall be retained and sensitively incorporated into the development, enhanced and potentially extended as part of any development proposals
- The layout shall incorporate pedestrian and cycleway paths along the river bank and also through the site, linking Birmingham Street to the River Stour.



Map 7 Birmingham Street

OPPORTUNITY SITE S6 - MILL RACE LANE

ACCEPTABLE USES

RESIDENTIAL (C3)

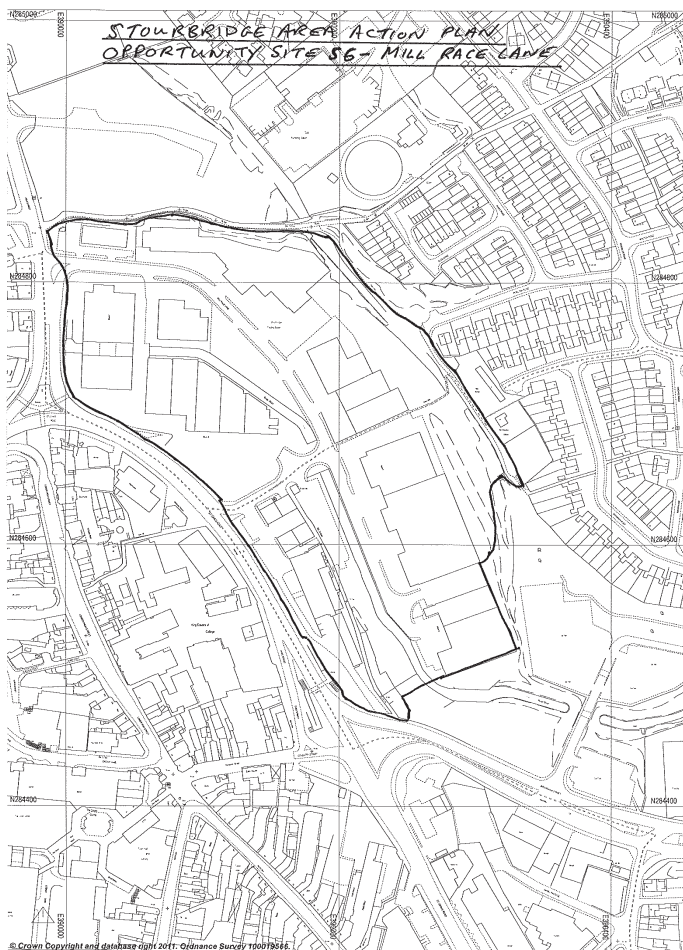
INDUSTRY (B1b and c, B8)

OFFICE (B1a)

HOTEL (C1)

DEVELOPMENT PARAMETERS

- Development proposals shall provide measures to enable the River Stour to be de-culverted, the banks softened and positive nature conservation enhancements introduced, along with a footpath and cycleway along the river bank
- Active frontages shall be provided onto the ring road and River Stour
- Development shall be articulated to provide natural surveillance over the open space corridor at the rear of the site (at the rear of the dwellings fronting Grampian Road and Porlock Road)
- Wherever possible the development should work with the landform to encourage a variety of built form within the site, with the potential for development to step down the hillside to the river
- The scale and mass of development shall work to emphasise key views through the site, particularly sight lines to help move through and out of the site - to the town and open spaces at its edges, and the canal area
- Opportunity should be taken to ensure that all development that is located at main access points into the site has a gateway presence
- Development shall enable the provision of a surface level crossing across the ring road and a Gateway at its interface with the site
- Development shall include the provision of pedestrian and cycle pathways through to the Gateway and linking up with the footpath at the rear of the dwellings in Grampian Road and Porlock Road, and the existing footpath in the south west part of the site
- A green landscape fringe shall be provided onto the ring road and around the Gateway.



Map 8 Mill Race Lane

OPPORTUNITY SITE S7 - ROLLING MILLS

ACCEPTABLE USES

RESIDENTIAL (C3)

DEVELOPMENT PARAMETERS

- The existing former office building shall be safeguarded and refurbished
- Active frontages shall be provided onto the River Stour and Stourbridge Branch Canal
- Towpath improvements shall be provided within the area between the site and the Stourbridge Branch Canal
- The River Stour shall be de-culverted as part of any development proposals, the bridge made good, the banks softened and positive nature conservation measures introduced, along with a footpath and cycleway along the river bank
- A pedestrian and cycleway link from Bradley Road to the riverbank shall be provided.



Map 9 Rolling Mills Site

OPPORTUNITY SITE S8 - BRADLEY ROAD

ACCEPTABLE USES

RESIDENTIAL (C3)

DEVELOPMENT PARAMETERS

- The River Stour shall be de-culverted, the banks softened and positive nature conservation measures introduced, along with a footpath and cycleway along the river bank
- A pedestrian and cycleway path shall be provided to link up with the bridges across the River Stour in Site S8 and S10
- Active frontages shall be provided onto the River Stour and onto Bradley Road
- A separate and treed cycle lane across the highway frontage shall be provided



Map 10 Bradley Road

OPPORTUNITY SITE S9 - FOSTER AND RASTRICK SITE

ACCEPTABLE USES

HEALTH FACILITY (D1)

RESIDENTIAL (C3)

DEVELOPMENT PARAMETERS

- The Listed Building on the site shall be safeguarded and refurbished
- The banks of the the River Stour shall be softened, the bridge made good and positive nature conservation measures introduced, along with a footpath and cycleway along the river bank
- Active frontages shall be provided onto the River Stour and Bradley Road



Map 11 Foster and Rastick

OPPORTUNITY SITE S10 - LOWNDES ROAD

ACCEPTABLE USES

RESIDENTIAL (C3)

DEVELOPMENT PARAMETERS

- The banks of the River Stour shall be softened, the bridge made good and positive nature conservation measures to be introduced, along with a footpath and cycleway along the river bank
- Active frontages shall be provided onto the River Stour, Bradley Road and Lowndes Road
- The existing footpath and cycleway from Bradley Road to Wollaston Park shall be widened and greened
- The open space on the plateau in the southern part of the site shall be safeguarded and enhanced
- The geological and nature conservation value of the rock exposure in the southern part of the site shall be assessed, with a view to safeguarding it and making it a feature within the development



Map 12 Lowndes Road

OPPORTUNITY SITE S11 - OLD WHARF ROAD

ACCEPTABLE USES

RESIDENTIAL (C3)

INDUSTRY (B1 b and c)

DEVELOPMENT PARAMETERS

- The mature vegetation to the Stourbridge Branch Canal shall be retained, where this is assessed as having value
- Active frontages onto the Stourbridge Branch Canal shall be provided
- A footpath and cycleway shall be provided along the canal edge to link to the canal bridge at Stourbridge Wharf
- Development shall safeguard and enhance the character of the Canal Street Conservation Area
- A substantial (green) buffer area shall be provided within the layout to ensure the protection of the amenity of future occupiers from the existing industrial uses to the north of the site



Map 13 Old Wharf Road

OPPORTUNITY SITE S12 - SCOTTS ROAD

ACCEPTABLE USES

RESIDENTIAL (C3)

EXTRA CARE FACILITY (C2)

OFFICE (B1a)

DEVELOPMENT PARAMETERS

- Vehicular and pedestrian access shall be provided off Scotts Road
- Trees along the western boundary shall be retained and additional planting provided along the School Street frontage



Map 14 Scotts Road

6 Delivery Framework

Implementation and Delivery

6.0.1 Guiding regeneration within Stourbridge Town Centre requires a co-ordinated and consistent effort. Substantial investment will be required from the private and public sectors. There is a history of partnership working in Stourbridge and the implementation process is expected to continue to be driven forward and co-ordinated through partnership working between the Council, landowners, developers, representatives of the local residents and business communities, service providers and other key organisations who have a stake in the future of Stourbridge.

6.0.2 The Council with its partners are already geared up for delivery. The recently approved Crown Centre scheme for a new food superstore with other shops and office space will help to facilitate future regeneration within the heart of the town and will be a driver and catalyst to help support the future vitality and viability of the town centre. The Council also works closely with local Stourbridge traders as part of the traders meetings to help bring together key stakeholders to help identify positive regeneration improvements needed for the town. The recently resurrected farmers market will also help to encourage more shoppers and visitors to the town centre.

6.0.3 There are a number of exciting regeneration improvements planned for the town as part of the AAP, ranging from major new housing-led regeneration growth on the northern edge of the town centre core, environmental transformation improvements along the River Stour and Stourbridge Branch Canal corridors, Stourbridge Wharf regeneration proposals, through to Town Centre core public realm enhancements proposed for the town centre core.

6.0.4 To drive regeneration forward in future years the policies of the AAP will be implemented by numerous mechanisms. It is expected that these may change and evolve over time. Indeed, delivery of the AAP proposals will demand a multi-faceted approach and the commitment of a wide range of different organisations. The Council has a pivotal role to play in the process, in particular through:

- Development management as the Local Planning Authority;
- Ensuring the implementation of the required infrastructure;
- Providing advice at feasibility/ design stage;
- As a landowner and development partner;
- Utilising land assembly powers;
- Working closely with town centre retailers, other businesses and landowners;
- Facilitating and targeting both public and private sector investment; and
- Promoting investment opportunities.

Planning Obligations

6.0.5 It is acknowledged that a significant amount of infrastructure is needed and the scale of costs for providing this may be considerable. Although development could occur in a piecemeal fashion, the degree to which infrastructure requirements

can be met on an incremental, site-by-site basis is limited. The planned green space environmental enhancements along the River Stour and Stourbridge Branch Canal corridors, improved surface level pedestrian and cycle connections across parts of the ring road and Town Centre core public realm enhancements within the town centre core will only be effective when completed in advance or in tandem with related development. It would be unreasonable for a single block of development to carry the cost of providing the whole of that item of infrastructure when many other subsequent blocks of development would benefit equally from its provision. Thus a comprehensive approach to development is required to ensure the delivery of wide scale infrastructure requirements on an equitable basis.

6.0.6 The Council may collect contributions from more than one development which are then 'pooled' to address the cumulative impact of a number of developments. Pooled contributions may be particularly important and effective in meeting the need for improved public realm enhancements within the town centre core, enhanced open space along the River Stour and Stourbridge Branch Canal, and for helping deliver new surface level pedestrian and cycle linkages across parts of the ring road to the town centre core.

6.0.7 Where there is a functional or geographical link, development elsewhere in the Borough outside of the Stourbridge AAP boundary will also be expected to contribute to the costs of town centre infrastructure and services. These contributions will be secured through the Council's latest Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), prepared as part of the Local Development Framework (LDF).

6.0.8 If there is clear evidence that the viability of a scheme is compromised such that it cannot go ahead, the Council will take account of this in assessing the level of obligations that individual schemes are to meet. Developers will be required to produce satisfactory evidence in cases of alleged non-viability, and meet the costs of independent verification.

6.0.9 The following list of proposed works and measures focus on some of the key regeneration challenges and issues needed to help improve the town centre and sites on the edge within the plan area. This suggested list is not a fully exhaustive or complete list and the suggested enhancements are not presented in priority order.

Enhancement type:	Planning Obligation theme:	Potential funding source/ delivery mechanism:
Town Centre core public realm improvements.	Public realm/ Transport	Planning Obligations/ European Union (EU) LIFE programme fund/ European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) / Neighbourhood Renewal Fund?/ English Heritage funding/ Single Regeneration

Enhancement type:	Planning Obligation theme:	Potential funding source/ delivery mechanism:
		Budget (SRB) 'Challenge Fund'/ Heritage Lottery Funds (HLF) 'Townscape Heritage Initiative' and other HLF funding/ Landfill Tax Credit Scheme/
Gateway improvements	Public realm	HLF 'Townscape Heritage Initiative' and other HLF funding/ ERDF funding/ Planning Obligations/ English Heritage funding/ Landfill Tax Credit Scheme/
Cycleways – especially Sustrans Link 54 (incl. route definition corridor enhancements and signage)	Public realm/ Transport	Planning Obligations/ Sustrans/ Healthy Hub/ Local Transport Plan (LTP)/ European Funding/ Primary care Trust (PCT) funding linked to health agenda/ ERDF funding/ Local Sustainable Transport Fun
River Stour corridor enhancement (incl. softening of banks, wildlife habitat creation and walkways).	Open space/ nature conservation	Planning Obligations/ Natural England grants/ European Union (EU) LIFE programme fund/ Primary Care Trust (PCT) funding linked to health agenda/ Safer Neighbourhoods funding linked to providing safer routes for communities/ ERDF funding/ Access to Nature grant scheme funded by Big Lottery Fund (BLF)/ Big Lottery Fund's "Community Spaces" environmental programme/ flood risk management grants from the Environment Agency (EA)/ Water Framework Directive (WFD) Defra funding/ SITA nature fund/ Woodlands Trust Funding for tree planting initiatives/ Local Sustainable Transport Fund/ The Big Tree Plant initiative - Forestry Commission and Defra funding/ Landfill Tax Credit Scheme/ volunteering opportunities through Central Government's new

Enhancement type:	Planning Obligation theme:	Potential funding source/ delivery mechanism:
		'Muck In4Life' (2011) initiative and involvement of other local volunteer organisations such as nature conservation groups such as British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) & Groundwork/ volunteer support through the Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust/ River Care Group volunteering organisation/ Keep Britain Tidy's 'Waterside Care Programme' led by a partnership of the Environment Agency, Severn Trent and British Waterways/The Landfill Communities Fund (LCF)/
StourbridgeBranchCanal corridor enhancement.	Open space/ historic environment/ nature conservation	Planning Obligations/ English Heritage funding/ Natural England grants/ British Waterways grants/ European LIFE Plus fund/ PCT funding linked to health agenda/ ERDF funding/ Safer Neighbourhoods funding/ Access to Nature grant scheme funded by Big Lottery Fund (BLF)/ SITA nature fund/ English Heritage funding/ Landfill Tax Credit Scheme/ Heritage Lottery Funds (HLF) 'Townscape Heritage Initiative' and other HLF funding/ local volunteering opportunities similar to those suggested under River Stour corridor above/ Keep Britain Tidy's 'Waterside Care Programme'/The Landfill Communities Fund (LCF)/ volunteer support through the Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust/
StourbridgeWharf	Public realm/ conservation	Planning Obligations/ English Heritage grants/ Lottery grants funding/ British Waterways grants/ Regional Arts Lottery Programme funding/ Heritage Lottery Funds (HLF) 'Townscape Heritage Initiative' and other HLF funding/ ERDF

Enhancement type:	Planning Obligation theme:	Potential funding source/ delivery mechanism:
		funding/ Landfill Tax Credit Scheme/ charitable trust grants such as The Architectural Heritage Fund/ SRB 'Challenge Fund'
New surface level pedestrian crossings across parts of Stourbridge Ring Road	Transport / Public realm	Sustrans/ Local Transport Plan funding? / Primary Care Trust (PCT) funding linked to health agenda/ Safer Neighbourhoods funding linked to providing safer routes for communities/ Local Sustainable Transport Fund (cycle lanes issues)
Subway and alleyway enhancements.	Public realm	ERDF funding/ Planning Obligations/ English Heritage Grants
Signage improvements (inc. Interpretation panels)	Transport / Public realm/ historic environment	Planning Obligations/ English Heritage grants/ Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF)/ ERDF funding/ Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) 'Challenge Fund'
Town centre public squares enhancement. A. Ryemarket B. Crown C. Foster Street	Public realm.	Planning Obligations/ ERDF/ Heritage Lottery Funds (HLF) 'Townscape Heritage Initiative' and other HLF funding/ English Heritage funding/ SRB 'Challenge Fund'/ Landfill Tax Credit Scheme/ ERDF funding/
New deciduous tree planting including alongside Stourbridge Ring Road	Public realm/ open space	Planning Obligations/ Nature Conservation external grants/ Natural England grants/ local volunteer organisations such as British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) & Groundwork/ ERDF funding/ European LIFE Plus fund/ Growth Point Fund to enhance green infrastructure/ Access to Nature grant scheme funded by Big Lottery Fund (BLF)/ Big Lottery Fund's "Community Spaces" environmental programme/ Forestry Commission English Woodland Grant Scheme/ Woodlands Trust Funding for tree

Enhancement type:	Planning Obligation theme:	Potential funding source/ delivery mechanism:
		planting initiatives/The Big Tree Plant initiative - Forestry Commission and Defra funding/ Landfill Tax Credit Scheme/ volunteering opportunities through Central Government's new 'Muck In4Life' (2011) initiative and involvement of other local volunteer organisations such as nature conservation groups such as BTCV & Groundwork/The Landfill Communities Fund (LCF)/volunteer support through the Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust/
Establishment and enhancement of public open space	Open space	Planning Obligations/ European LIFE Plus fund/ Natural England grants/ Access to Nature grant scheme funded by Big Lottery Fund (BLF)/ Big Lottery Fund's "Community Spaces" environmental programme/ Landfill Tax Credit Scheme/ voluntary and community groups involvement/ The Landfill Communities Fund (LCF)/
Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) scheme(s) in River Stour valley.	Open space/ nature conservation	Planning Conditions or Planning Obligations/ European Union (EU) LIFE programme fund/ SITA nature fund/ SITA Community / Fund/ BiFFA Award flag ship project/ Esmee Fairburn grant/ Natural England grants/ Tudor Trust fund/ Four Acre Trust fund/ flood risk management grants from the Environment Agency (EA)/ Defra funding/ Water Framework Directive (WFD) Defra funding/ Landfill Tax Credit Scheme/ voluntary and community groups involvement/
Urban Heat Island (urban cooling) amelioration	Open space/ Public realm/ nature conservation	Planning Obligations /European Climate Change Funding? European LIFE Plus fund/ Natural England grants/ Big Lottery Fund's "Community Spaces"

Enhancement type:	Planning Obligation theme:	Potential funding source/ delivery mechanism:
		environmental programme/ Woodlands Trust Funding for tree planting initiatives/ The Big Tree Plant initiative - Forestry Commission and Defra funding/ Landfill Tax Credit Scheme/ volunteer organisations as suggested above/
Nature conservation and biodiversity features such as bat boxes and bird hole nest boxes	Nature conservation/ open space	Planning Obligations/ Natural England grants/ Nature Conservation local volunteer organisations such as BTCV & Groundwork / ERDF funding/ Access to Nature grant scheme funded by Big Lottery Fund (BLF)/volunteering opportunities through Central Government's new 'Muck In4Life' (2011) initiative and involvement of other local volunteer organisations such as nature conservation groups such as BTCV, Groundwork, other local nature conservation groups/ The Landfill Communities Fund (LCF)/ volunteer support through the Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust/

Table 1

7 Monitoring and Review

7.0.1 The success of this AAP can be judged by the degree to which the policies and proposals contained therein deliver the 12 Aims set out in the chapter titled "A vision for Stourbridge 2026 and Aims", and, in general, provide the framework to enable a significant environmental uplift and enliven and sustain an increasingly prosperous and cared for town.

7.0.2 Clearly, these policies and proposals will only be effective, meaningful and sustainable with the support of the local community: it is considered that this document, along with the supporting documents, can demonstrate how positive and expansive community engagement has been a critical input in the future place shaping of Stourbridge.

7.0.3 These policies and proposals also need to be deliverable, hence the need for the AAP to demonstrate the means and mechanisms for their implementation. Monitoring will play a critical part in identifying and requirement for a review of the Stourbridge Area Action Plan as a result of national, sub-regional or local circumstances. It will also enable early action to be taken to overcome any barriers to delivery of the Plan's objectives and/ or proposals and policies. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local planning authorities to produce an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) every year and this will be the main mechanism for assessing the progress being made towards delivering the targets and objectives set out in the Area Action Plan. Further detail concerning the approach to monitoring will be included in later stages of the AAP document, notably the later Publication Stage AAP document .

7.0.4 Recognising the status of the AAP as a Preferred Options document, the Aims and the policies and proposals of the AAP which are proposed to give effect to, and deliver them are set out in the table below:-

	AIM - SUMMARY	RELEVANT POLICIES
1	Compliance with other plans and guidance	<i>This is a common thread which helps to shape and inform all the policies and proposals of the AAP</i>
2	Well connected landscape and public realm setting and attractive public spaces, including the greening of the town centre	<i>Policy 1 - Public Realm Policy 2 - Townscape Improvements Policy 3 - Stourbridge Ring Road</i>

		<p><i>Policy 4 - Public Open Space</i></p> <p><i>Policy 5 - Urban Heat Island</i></p> <p><i>Policy 6 - Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems and Flood Risk</i></p> <p><i>Policy 7 - Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation</i></p> <p><i>Policy 8 - Nature Conservation</i></p> <p><i>Policy 9 - Development and Biodiversity</i></p> <p><i>Policy 10 - The River Stour</i></p> <p><i>Policy 11 - The Stourbridge Branch Canal</i></p> <p><i>Policy 12 - Historic Townscape and Landscapes</i></p> <p><i>Policy 13 - Access for all</i></p> <p><i>Policy 14 - Pedestrian access</i></p> <p><i>Policy 15 - Living Streets Zone</i></p> <p><i>Policy 16 - Cycling</i></p> <p><i>Policy 23 - Stourbridge Wharf Opportunity Sites</i></p>
<p>3</p>	<p>Rediscovery of the River Stour, by returning it to a more natural state and by providing footpath and cycleway linkages along the riverbank</p>	<p><i>Policy 6 - Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems and Flood Risk</i></p> <p><i>Policy 7 - Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation</i></p>

		<p><i>Policy 8 - Nature Conservation</i></p> <p><i>Policy 9 - Development and Biodiversity</i></p> <p><i>Policy 10 - The River Stour</i></p> <p><i>Policy 13 - Access for all</i></p> <p><i>Policy 14 - Pedestrian access</i></p> <p><i>Policy 16 - Cycling</i></p> <p><i>Policy 23 - Stourbridge Wharf Opportunity Sites</i></p>
4	Protect and enhance wildlife and uplifting biodiversity particularly with reference to the river and canal	<p><i>Policy 4 - Public Open Space</i></p> <p><i>Policy 5 - Urban Heat Island</i></p> <p><i>Policy 6 - Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems and Flood Risk</i></p> <p><i>Policy 7 - Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation</i></p> <p><i>Policy 8 - Nature Conservation</i></p> <p><i>Policy 9 - Development and Biodiversity</i></p> <p><i>Policy 10 - The River Stour</i></p> <p><i>Policy 11 - The Stourbridge Branch Canal</i></p> <p><i>Policy 23 - Stourbridge Wharf Opportunity Sites</i></p>

5	Mitigate the causes and effects of climate change, by promoting sustainable development, improving air quality and minimising the use of non-renewable energy sources	<p><i>Policy 3 - Stourbridge Ring Road</i></p> <p><i>Policy 4 - Public Open Space</i></p> <p><i>Policy 5 - Urban Heat Island</i></p> <p><i>Policy 6 - Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems and Flood Risk</i></p> <p><i>Policy 7 - Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation</i></p> <p><i>Policy 8 - Nature Conservation</i></p> <p><i>Policy 9 - Development and Biodiversity</i></p> <p><i>Policy 10 - The River Stour</i></p> <p><i>Policy 13 - Access for all</i></p> <p><i>Policy 14 - Pedestrian access</i></p> <p><i>Policy 15 - Living Streets Zone</i></p> <p><i>Policy 16 - Cycling</i></p> <p><i>Policy 23 - Stourbridge Wharf Opportunity Sites</i></p>
6	Reduce the severance effect of the ring road, by providing enhanced permeability	<p><i>Policy 1 - Public Realm</i></p> <p><i>Policy 2 - Townscape Improvements</i></p> <p><i>Policy 3 - Stourbridge Ring Road</i></p> <p><i>Policy 4 - Public Open Space</i></p> <p><i>Policy 5 - Urban Heat Island</i></p>

		<p><i>Policy 13 - Access for all</i></p> <p><i>Policy 14 - Pedestrian access</i></p> <p><i>Policy 15 - Living Streets Zone</i></p> <p><i>Policy 16 - Cycling</i></p> <p><i>Policy 17 - Town Centre</i></p> <p><i>Opportunity Sites</i></p>
7	Protect and enhance the locally distinctive character of Stourbridge with particular reference to preserving and enhancing its historic environment	<p><i>Policy 1 - Public Realm</i></p> <p><i>Policy 2 - Townscape Improvements</i></p> <p><i>Policy 3 - Stourbridge Ring Road</i></p> <p><i>Policy 4 - Public Open Space</i></p> <p><i>Policy 10 - The River Stour</i></p> <p><i>Policy 11 - The Stourbridge Branch Canal</i></p> <p><i>Policy 12 - Historic Townscape and Landscapes</i></p> <p><i>Policy 15 - Living Streets Zone</i></p> <p><i>Policy 17 - Town Centre</i></p> <p><i>Policy 23 - Stourbridge Wharf</i></p> <p><i>Opportunity Sites</i></p>
8	Enhance the vitality and viability of the town, with an emphasis on pedestrian accessibility	<p><i>Policy 1 - Public Realm</i></p> <p><i>Policy 2 - Townscape Improvements</i></p>

		<p><i>Policy 3 - Stourbridge Ring Road</i></p> <p><i>Policy 4 - Public Open Space</i></p> <p><i>Policy 5 - Urban Heat Island</i></p> <p><i>Policy 12 - Historic Townscape and Landscapes</i></p> <p><i>Policy 13 - Access for all</i></p> <p><i>Policy 14 - Pedestrian access</i></p> <p><i>Policy 15 - Living Streets Zone</i></p> <p><i>Policy 16 - Cycling</i></p> <p><i>Policy 17 - Town Centre</i></p> <p><i>Policy 18 - Protected Frontages</i></p> <p><i>Policy 19 - Hot Food Takeaways (A5 Uses)</i></p> <p><i>Policy 22 - Mixed Use Floorspace</i></p> <p><i>Opportunity Sites</i></p>
<p>9</p>	<p>Provide for ease of movement, particularly for less mobile persons, and enable Stourbridge to become a cycle friendly town</p>	<p><i>Policy 1 - Public Realm</i></p> <p><i>Policy 2 - Townscape Improvements</i></p> <p><i>Policy 3 - Stourbridge Ring Road</i></p> <p><i>Policy 4 - Public Open Space</i></p> <p><i>Policy 5 - Urban Heat Island</i></p> <p><i>Policy 10 - The River Stour</i></p>

		<p><i>Policy 11 - The Stourbridge Branch Canal</i></p> <p><i>Policy 13 - Access for all</i></p> <p><i>Policy 14 - Pedestrian access</i></p> <p><i>Policy 15 - Living Streets Zone</i></p> <p><i>Policy 16 - Cycling</i></p> <p><i>Policy 17 - Town Centre</i></p> <p>Policy 23 - Stourbridge Wharf Opportunity Sites</p>
10	To facilitate and shape housing led regeneration within the Opportunity Sites	<p><i>Policy 4 - Public Open Space</i></p> <p><i>Policy 5 - Urban Heat Island</i></p> <p><i>Policy 6 - Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems and Flood Risk</i></p> <p><i>Policy 7 - Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation</i></p> <p><i>Policy 8 - Nature Conservation</i></p> <p><i>Policy 9 - Development and Biodiversity</i></p> <p><i>Policy 10 - The River Stour</i></p> <p><i>Policy 11 - The Stourbridge Branch Canal</i></p> <p><i>Policy 13 - Access for all</i></p> <p><i>Policy 14 - Pedestrian access</i></p> <p><i>Policy 16 - Cycling</i></p>

		<p><i>Policy 20 - Extra Care Housing</i></p> <p><i>Policy 21 - New housing next to industry</i></p> <p><i>Policy 22 - Mixed Use Floorspace</i></p> <p><i>Policy 23 - Stourbridge Wharf Opportunity Sites</i></p>
<p>11</p>	<p>To ensure existing, viable businesses continue to thrive</p>	<p><i>Policy 9 - Development and Biodiversity</i></p> <p><i>Policy 10 - The River Stour</i></p> <p><i>Policy 11 - The Stourbridge Branch Canal</i></p> <p><i>Policy 13 - Access for all</i></p> <p><i>Policy 14 - Pedestrian access</i></p> <p><i>Policy 16 - Cycling</i></p> <p><i>Policy 17 - Town Centre</i></p> <p><i>Policy 18 - Protected Frontages</i></p> <p><i>Policy 19 - Hot Food Takeaways (A5 Uses)</i></p> <p><i>Policy 21 - New housing next to industry</i></p> <p><i>Policy 22 - Mixed Use Floorspace</i></p> <p><i>Policy 23 - Stourbridge Wharf Opportunity Sites</i></p>

12	To provide space for new employment opportunities, particularly for locally distinctive industry or high tech./green industry	<p><i>Policy 4 - Public Open Space</i></p> <p><i>Policy 6 - Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems and Flood Risk</i></p> <p><i>Policy 7 - Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation</i></p> <p><i>Policy 8 - Nature Conservation</i></p> <p><i>Policy 9 - Development and Biodiversity</i></p> <p><i>Policy 10 - The River Stour</i></p> <p><i>Policy 11 - The Stourbridge Branch Canal</i></p> <p><i>Policy 13 - Access for all</i></p> <p><i>Policy 14 - Pedestrian access</i></p> <p><i>Policy 16 - Cycling</i></p> <p><i>Policy 17 - Town Centre</i></p> <p><i>Policy 18 - Protected Frontages</i></p> <p><i>Policy 21 - New housing next to industry</i></p> <p><i>Policy 22 - Mixed Use Floorspace</i></p> <p><i>Policy 23 - Stourbridge Wharf Opportunity Sites</i></p>
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OBJECTIVES - DELIVERY

Appendix 1 On-site Biodiversity Enhancements

On-site nature conservation and biodiversity features which will be particularly encouraged inside the Stourbridge AAP boundary as part of new development proposals

Introduction

1.1 The provision of nest boxes and other artificial nesting aids within new development proposals can be of significant benefit in helping to support and increase biodiversity levels within the urban area and can significantly improve the sustainability of development. Many species of birds and bats are declining in numbers throughout Britain, and one of the key factors affecting their survival is the lack of suitable sites where they can successfully nest, roost, hibernate and rear their young.

1.2 National planning guidance set out in paragraph 14 of Planning Policy Statement 9 (PPS9) (2005) "Biodiversity and Geological Conservation" and paragraph 16 (indent seven) of PPS3 (2010) "Housing" requires local authorities to encourage developers to maximise the opportunities for enhancing biodiversity in new developments. This policy approach is reflected in local-level guidance set out in Dudley Council's adopted Nature Conservation Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (September 2006) and in adopted Black Country Core Strategy (February 2011) Policy ENV1 "Nature Conservation".

1.3 It is important to note that nest boxes need to be incorporated as part of a wider package of on-site nature conservation enhancements. The first on-site enhancement priority needed is new and improved wildlife friendly landscaping (feeding habitat creation). Inclusion of nest boxes and other artificial nesting aids has a vital role to play in helping strengthen wildlife habitats given that natural nesting sites are becoming increasingly scarce and that modern new buildings often have limited spaces for bats and nesting birds.

1.4 There are a variety of different features that can be installed within a new urban development for biodiversity. Such features can be either relatively small scale and simple to include such as nest boxes for birds, or larger scale features such as green roofs and wildlife friendly landscaping.

1.5 There are a number of different types of bird nest boxes available depending upon the location of the development and the types of birds that would be appropriate to be encouraged to the site. Furthermore, a range of specially designed bricks are available that can be incorporated into the structure itself, providing suitable nesting habitat for species such as swifts. These features can be incorporated into a development in a relatively inconspicuous manner. In a similar way, bat boxes and bat bricks can be provided within new developments, providing roosting habitat for these species. Several bird species including House Sparrows, Starlings, Barn Owls, Swallows, House Martins and Swifts regularly use buildings in which to nest. (The last three species are almost completely dependent on built structures for nests).

1.6 There is a distinct advantage in placing bespoke roosts and nest-sites on a building because it ensures that they are located in areas where they are least likely to pose problems in the management and operation of the building. Furthermore, when the building requires refurbishment modification or demolition the features can more easily be replaced or relocated as required. The Council would be looking for permanent, long life, high quality nest box solutions (such as wood-concrete products) and nest box solutions that can be incorporated into the external facing walls of new buildings. Products with a short life span would not be supported.

1.7 In accordance with Stourbridge AAP Policies 8 – ‘Nature conservation and biodiversity including wildlife corridor enhancement’ and Policy 9 – ‘Building-in beneficial biodiversity features within new development (including new housing)’, within the Stourbridge AAP Plan area, on-site biodiversity features will be particularly encouraged within the Opportunity Sites bordering the River Stour and Stourbridge Branch Canal corridors on the northern edge of the town centre to help strengthen this important wildlife corridor and also within Public Open Space areas. Where possible, opportunities for new biodiversity features will also be pursued within the town centre core, e.g. within an existing building which is being refurbished within the town centre.

1.8 Main wildlife species relevant for on-site biodiversity features within the Stourbridge AAP area are:-

- House Sparrow
- Swift
- Blue Tits
- Great Tits
- Coal Tit
- Starling
- Nuthatch
- Redstart
- Dipper
- Kingfisher
- House Martin
- Sand Martin
- Tawny Owl
- Kestrel
- Peregrine Falcon
- Bat species

Types of nest box solutions required:-

House Sparrow Terrace nest box

1.9 Although once common, House Sparrows are now a declining bird species across the United Kingdom and provision of artificial nest sites can be of significant benefit. This species typically nest in the eaves and this can be encouraged by the

creation of appropriate sized holes. Depending on the design of the eaves, the aim should be to create a small hole to allow access for nesting birds but to prevent them being able to access to the roof void. House sparrows require a minimum gap of 32mm to allow access.

1.10 The Council would support high quality, wood-concrete House Sparrow Terrace nest boxes as these offer a more robust, permanent and longer-lasting solution. These nest boxes can be located on north-facing walls of new housing, commercial development and industrial buildings such as factories at a minimum of 3 metres or more above ground level. This type of nest box should not be included on garden fencing. This type of nest box is suitable for House and Tree Sparrows, and in some instances other birds which use nest boxes such as Tits, Redstarts and Spotted Flycatchers.

Swift nest box

1.11 UK wide, numbers of Swifts halved between 1994 and 2007 and one of the reasons is a lack of nest sites (source: London Swifts, 2011). Modern buildings present limited nesting opportunities for swifts so artificial nest sites have become increasingly important.

1.12 The Council will support two types of swift nest boxes within the plan area: either Swift Nest Bricks which are incorporated into the external facing brickwork as part of a new build (and also a refurbished building) or Swift Boxes which can be attached to the external facades of buildings under the eaves or in high walls.

House Martin

1.13 House Martins traditionally build their own nest out of mud under the eaves but can also be encouraged to do so by the provision of artificial nests which sit beneath the eaves. Artificial House Martin nest box solutions can be attached to external building facades with or without overhanging eaves. The Council would support high quality wood-concrete nest box solutions.

Great Tit, Blue Tit, Coal Tit, Redstart and Nuthatch wood-concrete hole nest box

1.14 Two main solutions will be supported: either nest brick products that can be incorporated into external facing brickwork of new buildings or wood-concrete nest box solutions which can be attached to external walls, mature trees or included within private residential garden space. The Council would support wood-concrete nest box solutions as these offer a more robust, permanent, and longer-lasting solution.

Dipper and Pied Wagtail nest box

1.15 This type of nest box can be bolted to the underside of bridges over the watercourse or attached to vertical walls which are directly adjacent to natural, moving water. It can be used, for example, when streams and rivers are being restored to their natural state and would be particularly suitable as a type of biodiversity feature which could be included along the River Stour watercourse within the plan area.

Kingfisher and Sand Martin Nest Tunnel

1.16 Where feasible, the inclusion of an artificial embankment (for Kingfisher/ Sand Martin), especially within a small section of the River Stour corridor will be considered. The Kingfisher and Sand Martin Nest Tunnel would be a suitable product.

Kestrel and Peregrine Falcon Nest Box

1.17 Unfortunately, as a result of building renovation and/or the construction of new buildings with their relatively smooth facades and roofs, it is becoming increasingly difficult for Peregrines and Kestrels to find suitably sheltered spaces in which to nest. The installation of artificial nesting aids has proved very useful in this respect. Opportunities for inclusion of nest boxes for birds of prey species such as Kestrel or Peregrine Falcon will therefore be pursued on large tall buildings within the plan area: e.g. within potential new build development on The Angel Passage Site (Opportunity Site 3) or as part of refurbishment works to an existing tall building within or on the edge of the town centre core. Opportunities for Kestrel boxes could also be pursued within pockets of mature deciduous woodland located within Greenfield Gardens Local Park or along the River Stour corridor.

Bat boxes

1.18 There are 17 species of bat found in England, of which 14 are regularly found in buildings. Of these seven are almost entirely dependent on buildings for summer roosts - including the Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle, Brown Long eared, Serotine, Lesser Horseshoe, Greater Horseshoe and Natterers Bat.

1.19 Nowadays there is a pressing need to renovate buildings in order to comply with energy conservation regulations. This results in the closure of crevices and accesses within building structures. Also, new buildings that are being built, are so effectively sealed that bats (and nesting birds such as house sparrows and swifts) can no longer find any suitable accommodation. There is a concern that future housing stock will hold no potential for bat roosts for several species. Artificial roost sites designed within or attached to the external walls of modern new buildings are therefore becoming increasingly important. Roost sites for bats can easily be incorporated into new buildings and requirements for bats should be included in the architect's brief.

1.20 A range of solutions will be supported: either bat brick products that can be incorporated into external facing brickwork of new buildings, specially designed roof tiles, or wood-concrete bat box solutions which can be attached to external walls of

buildings or mature trees. The Council would support high quality wood-concrete bat box solutions as these offer a more robust, permanent and longer-lasting solution and require little maintenance.

Other biodiversity features

1.21 Features to encourage Otters (such as artificial Otter holts) and Water Vole will also be encouraged particularly along the River Stour and Stourbridge Branch Canal corridors.

Further background supporting information:

RSPB guidance on siting of nest boxes:

<http://www.rspb.org.uk/advice/helpingbirds/nestboxes/smallbirds/siting.aspx>

BTO Nestbox Guide (2004)

<http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/nrs/publications/bto-nestbox-guide>

Bat Conservation Trust:

<http://www.bats.org.uk/>

Living with Bats - Bat Conservation Trust

Dudley Council's adopted Nature Conservation Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (adopted September 2006)

<http://www.dudley.gov.uk/environment--planning/planning/planning-policy/local-development-framework/naturecons-spd>

Sample Development Control Planning Conditions for Bird and Bat Provision

No development shall commence until details of:-

a) nest boxes, or other features which can accommodate nesting birds, particularly designed for use by the following species –

b) bat boxes, which are particularly designed for the use of the following species –

have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority (LPA). The nest boxes/features and/or bat boxes shall be installed in accordance with the approved details prior to the development first being brought into use or to an alternative timescale to have been previously agreed in writing by the LPA

Reason: To ensure that bird and bat species are protected and their habitat enhanced, in accordance with Policy ENV1 "Nature Conservation" of the adopted Black Country Core Strategy (February 2011), and Policy 9 "Development and Biodiversity" of the Stourbridge Area Action Plan.

Appendix 2 Tree and Shrub Species in New Landscaping

Suitable tree and shrub species which will be encouraged within new landscaping schemes coming forward within the Stourbridge AAP boundary

Introduction

2.1 In order to help encourage nature conservation and biodiversity, and support and promote local distinctiveness within the local environment it is important that native and local heritage varieties of tree and shrub species are used within landscaping schemes. These will be required either as part of development proposals, the formation of new areas of open space or the upgrading of existing areas.

2.2 National planning guidance set out in paragraph 14 of Planning Policy Statement 9 (PPS9) (2005) "Biodiversity and Geological Conservation" and paragraph 16 (indent seven) of PPS3 (2010) "Housing" expects developers to maximise opportunities for enhancing biodiversity in new development proposals. This policy approach is reflected in local-level guidance set out in Dudley Council's adopted Nature Conservation Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (adopted September 2006) and in adopted Black Country Core Strategy (February 2011) Policy ENV1 "Nature Conservation".

2.3 Stourbridge was in in the old vice country of Worcestershire, but also close to the borders of both Staffordshire and Shropshire. Being an old market town, it will also have had strong trade links to nearby Warwickshire. Planting of relevant species and varieties can help promote distinctiveness of areas and gateways, such as Dog Rose connecting to Brierley Hill, Worcester Black Pear in the south west, Shropshire Prune in the west and Tettenhall Dick Pear in the north west. Therefore this plan aims to promote local heritage fruit varieties to proactively support not only a greening of the urban area and healthy living but also a visual link back to its historic role as a market town.

2.4 In accordance with Stourbridge AAP Policies 8 – 'Nature conservation and biodiversity including wildlife corridor enhancement' and Policy 9 – 'Building-in beneficial biodiversity features within new development (including new housing)', the following native or locally distinctive tree and shrub species will be particularly supported and encouraged within the AAP area:

Deciduous tree species:

- Alder, Common (*Alnus glutinosa*)
- Apple, Crab (*Malus sylvestris*)
- Ash , Common (*Fraxinus excelsior*)
- Birch, Silver (*Betula pendula*)
- Cherry, Wild (*Prunus avium*)
- Oak, English (*Quercus robur*)
- Oak, Sessile (*Quercus petraea*)
- Poplar, Wild Black (*Populus nigra* subsp. *betulifolia*)

- Rowan/ Mountain Ash (*Sorbus aucuparia*)
- Willow, Crack (*Salix fragilis*)
- Willow, Goat/ Pussy Willow/ Sallow (*Salix caprea*)
- Willow, Osier (*Salix viminalis*)
- Willow, White (*Salix alba*)
- Yew (*Taxus baccata*)

Shrub species:

- Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*)
- Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*)
- Elder (*Sambucus nigra*)
- Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*)
- Guelder rose (*Viburnum opulus*)
- Hawthorn, Common (*Crataegus monogyna*)
- Hazel (*Corylus avellana*)
- Holly, Common (*Ilex aquifolium*)

Climbers:

- Rose, Dog (*Rosa canina*)
- Honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*)
- Ivy (*Hedera helix*)

Heritage fruit trees

2.5 The following fruit tree species will be supported provided that ground conditions or other local circumstances do not dictate otherwise. These are local to the wider area and help to promote local distinctiveness as well as being beneficial for bird and insect species.

Staffordshire

Tettenhall Dick Pear

Worcester

Dessert Apples

Gladstone

Hope Cottage Seedling

King Charles' Pearmain

King Coffee

Madresfield Court

May Queen

Pitmaston Nonpareil / Pitmaston Russet Nonpareil

Pitmaston Pineapple

Rushock Pearmain / King Charles Pearmain

Sandlin Duchess

Worcester Pearmain

Cooking Apples

Betty Geeson

Dick's Favourite

Edward VII

Dual Purpose Apples

Chatley Kernel

Newland Sack

Other Apples

Whiting Pippin.

Plums

Evesham Wonder

Pershore Yellow Egg

Purple Pershore

Pershore Emblem

Pears

Black Worcester

Pitmaston Duchess

Perry Pears

Judge Amphlett

Rock

Shropshire

Dessert Apples

Brookes

Moss's Seedling

Onibury Pippin

Dual Purpose Apples

Shropshire Pippin

Other Apples

Bringewood Pippin

Lady's Fingers

Prince's Pippin

Springrove Codlin

Plums

Shropshire Prune.

Warwickshire

Dessert Apples

Wyken Pippin

Other Apples

Shakespeare

Plums

Warwickshire Drooper

Tree, Shrub and Climber species suitable for inclusion within new-build domestic residential garden curtilages

2.6 Within new-build domestic residential garden boundaries the following tree, shrub and climber species will be particularly supported primarily to help support bird and insect species. These tree/ shrub/ climber species are suitable for confined spaces associated with small residential gardens and the majority of the species listed below are recommended by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB).

Deciduous tree species

- Birch, Silver (*Betula pendula*)
- Cherry, Wild (*Prunus avium*)
- Rowan/ Mountain Ash (*Sorbus aucuparia*)
- Apple, Crab (*Malus sylvestris*)

Shrub species

- Hawthorn, Common (*Crataegus monogyna*)
- Hazel (*Corylus avellana*)
- Holly, Common (*Ilex aquifolium*)
- Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*)
- Buddleia globosa (non invasive variety)
- Cornelian cherry (*Cornus mas*)
- Cotoneaster (*C. Franchetii*)
- Firethorn (*Pyracantha mohave*)

Climbers

- Rose, Dog (*Rosa canina*)
- Rose (*Rosa spp*)
- Honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*)

Further information:

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)

<http://www.rspb.org.uk/wildlife/wildlifegarden/plants.aspx>

Woodland Trust – British Tree Guide

<http://www.british-trees.com/treeguide/>

Orchard Network

<http://www.orchardnetwork.org.uk/content/orchard-heritage-gazetteer>

Dudley Council's Nature Conservation Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (adopted September 2006)

SPD Appendix 4: List of Principal Native Trees, Shrubs and Climbers in keeping with the Local Character of Dudley.

<http://www.dudley.gov.uk/environment--planning/planning/planning-policy/local-development-framework/naturecons-spd>

Footnote: The types of tree species coming forward within public realm enhancements within the town centre core and within other parts of the AAP plan area would need to be assessed by Council Tree and Arboricultural officers.

Appendix 3 Glossary

Adoption

The final confirmation of a plan as a statutory document by the local planning authority.

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.

Amenity Green Space

Small grassed areas typically within housing estates. Amenity green space provides opportunities for informal recreational activities close to home or work such as exercising dogs and walking. Amenity green space also enhances the visual appearance of residential areas and other parts of the urban environment.

Area Action Plan

Used to provide the planning framework for areas where significant change or conservation is needed.

Archaeological Priority Areas

These are areas that are recognised as having particularly high potential for the survival of important archaeological remains.

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.

Backland

Land which is behind existing development with no, or very limited, road frontage. Usually applied to describe land previously or currently in use as rear gardens to existing residential properties.

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 part.

Biomass

Biomass is the biodegradable fraction of products, waste and residues from agriculture (including plant and animal substances), forestry and related industries, as well as the biodegradable fraction of industrial and municipal waste.

Brownfield habitat

Previously developed land, even that which considered derelict, which has developed rich wildlife.

Brownfield Site

Land which has been previously developed, excluding mineral workings or other temporary uses.

Change of Use

More correctly referred to as a 'material change of use'. A change in the use of land or buildings that is of significance for planning purposes, often requiring planning permission.

Code for Sustainable Homes

Developed to enable a step change in sustainable building practice. It is intended as a single national standard to guide industry in the design and construction of sustainable homes. There are six levels of the Code, with level 6 equating to a "zero carbon" homes. At each level there are minimum energy efficiency/ carbon emissions and water efficiency standards.

Combined Heat and Power (CHP)

The combined production of heat (usually in the form of steam) and power (usually in the form of electricity). A plant that produces both heat and electricity is called combined heat and power plant.

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.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), due to be introduced by the Government in 2010, together with modifications to the role and extent of planning obligations will provide opportunities for Local Authorities to generate contributions for local and sub-regional infrastructure through a levy on a wide range of developments. This set

within the context of an effective infrastructure planning and delivery regime may provide opportunities to provide a range of infrastructure currently beyond the scope of planning obligations.

Comparison Shopping

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

Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO)

An order allowing land and rights over land to be compulsorily acquired in the public interest.

Conditions

Stipulations attached to a planning permission to limit or direct the manner in which a development is carried out.

Conservation Area

An area designated under Section 69 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, by the local planning authority, as an area where it is desirable to preserve or enhance the character of its special architectural or historic interest.

Convenience shopping

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

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 (LDF) that forms part of the statutory development plan (i.e The Black Country Joint Core Strategy (JCS), Area Action Plans (AAPs), proposals map and site allocations).

Economic Well-being

Planning obligations can be used to achieve economic well-being by negotiating training and employment within the development or supply chain for construction stages and to deliver services that support unemployed into work. The funding gained from large developments will link local people with training and employment arising as a result of the development.

Edge-of-centre

For retail purposes, a location that is well connected to and within easy walking (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 proposed pedestrian route which provides safe and convenient access to the centre.

Employment land

Land containing employment land uses such as industrial factories, warehousing and offices, business uses, storage and distribution uses.

Energy from Waste (EfW)

The process of recovering energy from waste using various technologies such as burning the waste to generate heat and electricity in a combined heat and power station. Other technologies include “gasification” (one of the newer technologies that is increasingly being used for waste disposal. It is a thermo-chemical process in which biomass is heated, in an oxygen deficient atmosphere to produce a low-energy gas containing hydrogen, carbon monoxide and methane. The gas can then be used as a fuel in a turbine or combustion engine to generate electricity) and “pyrolysis” (another emerging technology, sharing many of the characteristics of gasification. With gasification partial oxidation of the waste occurs, whilst with pyrolysis the objective is to heat the waste in the complete absence of oxygen).

Extra Care Housing

Specialist housing for older people where care services are provided or facilitated. Extra Care Housing should be able to provide most residents, if they so desire, with a home for the remainder of their life, regardless of changes in their care needs. Services are provided in a purpose built, housing environment with care and support delivered to meet the individual residents needs. This type of housing provides 24 hour support, meals, domestic help, leisure and recreation facilities and a genuinely safe environment for residents.

Flood plain

A flat area bordering a river off high risk of flooding/ liable to flooding.

Formal recreation green space

Areas of green space containing formal areas for outdoor sport such as playing fields, outdoor sports grounds used by clubs and areas containing marked out sports pitches (including outdoor football pitches, rugby pitches, bowling greens, tennis courts, cricket pitches, etc). Also includes outdoor sports facilities such as astro-turf (synthetic turf sports pitches) and macadam surfaced outdoor tennis courts.

Geodiversity

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

Geothermal

Geothermal energy is the heat of the Earth, which can be tapped into to produce electricity in power plants, and to use its warm water for industry, agriculture, bathing and cleansing.

Green field site

An area not previously used for built development or which has returned to greenfield status over time.

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. Green infrastructure 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 to open countryside.

Green Space

Green space is any vegetated land or water within or adjoining an urban area. This includes green corridors, rivers and canals, urban woodlands, grassed areas and areas of natural and semi-natural greenspace of value for nature conservation. Also includes Parks, playing fields, children's play areas, cemeteries, allotments and countryside located on the urban fringe which people can access from their home. Green space performs multiple functions including visual amenity and enhancing the character and attractiveness of the urban area, for improving people's physical and mental health and well-being, providing places for outdoor sport, recreation and children's play. It also provides areas for informal recreation such as walking and exercising dogs, and areas of value for nature conservation and biodiversity. It also provides beneficial climate change mitigation effects such as assisting urban cooling in heavily urbanised areas, helps reduce flood risk by providing sustainable drainage, and supports biodiversity levels by providing corridors for wildlife.

Grey Water Recycling Systems

Systems that store and reuse water from sinks, baths and showers for flushing non potable uses, generally toilet flushing.

Green technology companies

Companies which specialise in producing products or parts for the green energy industry sector. This can include the manufacture of parts for example for wind turbines and solar panels. This is a relatively young industry with large growth potential. A key objective of this sector is to develop products which help conserve the natural environment and resources, and to curb the negative impacts of human involvement. Sustainable development is the core of environmental technologies.

Habitat

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

Historic Buildings and the Sites and Monuments Record

A comprehensive database linked to geographic Information System for the management of the Historic Environment.

Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC)

An analytical tool that can aid the better understanding and appreciation of historic character and local distinctiveness of the landscape. It can be carried out strategically at a broad level of detail (Black Country HLC and Dudley Borough Landscape and Townscape Character Study) and can also be focused at a more detailed and localised level, such as the Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) that will be completed for the Stourbridge Area Action Plan.

Informal recreation green space

Areas of outdoor green space used in an informal way by people for walking, generally relaxing, exercise, informal children's play, exercising dogs, studying nature conservation.

Infrastructure

Permanent resources serving society's needs, including roads, sewers, schools, hospitals, railways, communication networks etc.

Intermediate housing

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

Adopted Black Country Core Strategy (February 2011)

Sets out the vision and strategy for future development in the Black Country. This document contains a set of key policies which set out the spatial planning strategy for the area.

Leisure and Recreation Facilities

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

Leisure Parks

Leisure parks often feature a mix of leisure facilities, such as a multi-screen cinema, indoor bowling centres, night club, restaurants, and fast-food outlets, with car parking.

Lifetime Homes Standards

Lifetime homes can be adapted so if the home occupier develops a future disability or physical impairment their home can be readily adapted (e.g. inclusion of stair lifts etc) so they are not forced to leave their home as a result of a worsening disability.

Listed Building

Building or other structure of special architectural or historic interest included on a statutory list and assigned a grade (I, II* or II).

Live/ Work Units

Live/Work space is defined as property that is specifically designed for dual use, combining both residential and employment space.

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 (LDF) documents will be produced, in what order and by when. Also contains details of monitoring and review.

Market housing

Private housing for rent or for sale, where the price is set in the open market.

Mixed Comparison Shopping

Comparison retailing is the provision of items not obtained on a frequent basis (see comparison shopping in Glossary). Mixed comparison retailing includes retail units selling a mixed range of comparison goods including bulky goods, clothing, footwear, household and recreational goods.

Mixed use development

Development comprising two or more uses as part of the same development scheme. This could apply at a variety of scales from individual buildings, to a street, to a new neighbourhood or urban extension. Mixed use development can help to reduce the need to travel, which is more sustainable.

Natural and semi-natural green space

Areas which offer beneficial habitats for nature conservation and biodiversity. Can include urban woodlands, river and canal corridors, and sites designated for their nature conservation value.

Night time Economy

Term used to describe areas containing bars, restaurants, night clubs which attract visitors to a town centre during the evenings which all helps to support a vibrant night time economy and generate a revenue stream for the town centre.

Opportunity Sites

Sites where major development or redevelopment is appropriate. These can be vacant or underused or for other reasons available for redevelopment.

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.

Parks and Greenspace Strategy

A document used to assess the existing quantity (e.g. how much green space is currently found in the Borough), the current quality, public accessibility level and distribution of the borough's parks and green spaces.

Park and Ride (P & R)

A system where private motorists are encouraged to leave their car at an out of centre public car park and travel the rest of the way to their destination by public transport.

Planning Condition

Requirement attached to a planning permission. It may control how the development is carried out, or the way it is used in the future. It may require further information to be provided to the Planning Authority before or during the construction.

Planning Gain

Facilities or infrastructure secured by way of a planning obligation as part of a planning approval and usually provided at the developers expense. For example, affordable housing, community facilities or mitigation measures.

Planning Obligation

A binding legal agreement requiring a developer or landowner to provide or contribute towards facilities, infrastructure or other measures, in order for planning permission to be granted. Planning Obligations are normally secured under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 - see Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

Previously- developed land (often referred to as brownfield land)

Previously-developed land is that which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. It 'excludes' land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time (to the extent that it can reasonably be considered as part of the natural surroundings).

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).

Primary Frontage

Primary frontages are likely to include proportion of retail uses.

Public Art

Publicly sited works of art, which make an important contribution to the character and visual quality of the area and are accessible to the public.

Public Realm

Streets and spaces between buildings are often referred to as the public realm.

Public Right of Way

A public right of way is a route over which the public has a right to pass and re-pass. Public rights of way are more commonly known as either: footpath (for use on foot only); Bridleway (for use by horses, pedal cycle or on foot). Public footpaths are not to be confused with highway footpaths, which are pavements to the side of the road. Public right of ways are legally recorded on the Definitive Map, Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

Rainwater Harvesting

The capture of rainwater from buildings to help meet onsite requirements, whether for external use such as irrigation or internal use such as toilet flushing or washing.

Renewable Energy

Renewable energy covers those energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment – from the wind, the fall of water, the movement of oceans, from the sun (solar power) and biomass (Biomass – see glossary).

Retail Parks

An agglomerate of at least 3 retail warehouses.

Retail Warehouses

Large stores specialising in the sale of goods (such as carpets, furniture and electrical goods), DIY items and other ranges of goods, catering mainly for car-borne customers.

Secondary Frontage

Secondary frontages provide greater opportunities for a diversity of uses.

Section 106

Section 106 – see Planning Obligation and also Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Social Housing

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

Social Energy Technologies

These include the technologies that make use of the sun's heat to generate power. These include various technologies such as "passive solar energy" (energy provided by a simple architectural design to capture and store the sun's heat. Very simple examples include a garden greenhouse, or a south-facing window in a dwelling),

“solar water heating collectors” (these panels absorb the energy from the sun and transfer it to heat water) and “photovoltaic or solar electric panels” (these panels transform the solar radiation directly into electricity).

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 the 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.

Streetscape

The overall character, design quality, and particular physical elements which are formed by a combination of building facades, signage, paving, street furniture (seats, bins, cycle racks, etc), lighting and trees and other plantings as well as other elements along a street. The quality of these elements and the degree to which they compliment each other determine the quality of the streetscape.

Supermarkets

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

Superstores

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

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

A type of Local Development Document that supplements and elaborates on policies and proposals in Development Plan Documents.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

A tool for assessing the impact of policies and proposals to ensure that they reflect sustainable development objectives, including environmental, social and economic factors. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, requires local planning authorities to undertake a sustainability appraisal for Area Action Plan documents.

Sustainable Development

Environmentally responsible development, commonly defined as “development which meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

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, green space and wetland features to capture rainwater and slowly release it into the ground.

Swale

A natural depression or a shallow ditch to temporarily convey, store (i.e. take extra water volume in storm conditions) or filter run-off/ surface water. Swales can act as linear soakaways (the surface water may seep into the natural ground). The swale is generally lined with grass so it can be used to improve run-off quality by filtering suspended sediment and heavy metals within the surface drainage system.

Town Centre

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

Town Centre Management

Partnership of local organisations, businesses and individuals to promote the common good of a town by developing, managing, promoting and improving facilities, the useful resources, the economy and the environment of a town centre.

Townscape

The appearance and character of buildings and all other features of an urban area taken together as a whole.

Transport Assessment (TA)

The assessment [or consideration] of the potential transport impacts of a proposed development, with an agreed plan to reduce or mitigate any adverse consequences and where appropriate establish how more sustainable modes of travel can be increased.

Urban Heat island effect – role of urban green space in urban cooling

The presence of urban green spaces, vegetated landscaped areas, urban woodland and trees can help to reduce the overheating of urban environments (often referred to as the urban heat island effect). Typical urban surfaces such as concrete and asphalt get much hotter than vegetated green space surfaces during the day, particularly during the hotter drier summer months. The urban heat island effect is caused by the storage of solar energy in the urban fabric during the day and the release of this energy into the atmosphere at night. Preserving and creating pockets of new urban green space and vegetation can help to cool areas naturally. This is caused by the cooling effect of water as it evaporates into the air from leaves and vegetation through the process called transpiration. The urban heat island effect causes increased demand for air conditioning in buildings which in turn requires more combustion of fossil fuels to generate more electricity, as well as being directly related to increased ozone formation, a major pollutant in our cities. The most important factor in creating an urban heat island is a lack of green space in built up areas.

Unitary Development Plan (UDP)

An old-style development plan prepared by a Metropolitan District or Borough and some Unitary Local Authorities, which contains policies equivalent to those in both a structure plan and local plan. These plans will continue to operate for a time after the commencement of the new development plan system, by virtue of specific transitional provisions.

Urban Park

A project that aims to transform the Black Country environment to increase the quality of life within the area. As part of this, “beacons” will show off some of the most distinctive parts of the Black Country to residents and visitors. “Corridors” will create green links throughout the Black Country for wildlife and walking and we will celebrate our distinct character and heritage.

Urban Regeneration

The reuse or redevelopment of decaying or run-down parts of older urban areas to bring them new life and economic vitality.

Urban Renaissance

Optimising the advantages of urban life as part of a sustainable approach to land use, compact, intensive development allowing economic diversity, viable services and environmental responsibility.

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

A Local Development Document that may cover a range of issues, thematic or site specific, and provides further detail of policies and proposals in a ‘parent’ Development Plan Document (see Policy Context within the Appendix section of this document).

Wildlife Corridor

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

Wildlife Roofs

The term to describe roofs with naturalistic plantings or self-established vegetation which can provide a habitat for biodiversity. Often referred to as Green Roofs.

Wildlife Walls

The term to describe exterior walls with naturalistic plantings or self-established vegetation which can provide a habitat for biodiversity. Often referred to as Greening vertical habitats.

Appendix 4 Urban Design Code

Appendix 5 Historic Environment Information

5.1 Criteria used for the identification of areas that should be protected as Conservation Areas are set nationally through the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990 and detailed in English Heritage Guidance. The Act places a statutory duty upon local planning authorities to review their areas from time to time and to identify those parts of their areas that have special architectural or historic interest the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance and to designate them. In order to qualify for designation an area should be identifiable as possessing a special level of significance (i.e. more than ordinary) for either its historic or architectural value or both. It must also contain features that can either be protected or enhanced through the use of the powers provided within the Act or through the preparation of management proposals as described within the Act.

5.2 Having identified an area with potential for designation this then needs to be fully tested and justified through the undertaking of a Conservation Area Character Appraisal. This is effectively a particularly specialised form of characterisation that specifically sets out to analyse and define the special architectural or historic interest of areas that may warrant Conservation Area designation, leading where appropriate to the formulation of Management Proposals for the better preservation or enhancement of their character or appearance. The Appraisal findings are initially published in a draft form and widely consulted upon locally so as to ensure that people's opinions can be fully taken into account before the Council makes any final decision.

5.3 The evidence contained in the Stourbridge Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation is very relevant to this process and the study was accordingly used as a vehicle through which a review of conservation areas could be undertaken. Of obvious relevance in this context was the fact that the UHLC had been able to identify Areas of High Historic Townscape Value, some of which it was considered could either now or in the future have the potential to be of sufficient special interest so as to warrant formal designation.

5.4 Three existing Conservation Areas (as shown on Figure 4) were reviewed through the SUHLC two of which, Stourbridge Branch Canal (Canal Street) and Stourbridge Branch Canal (Amblecote) had been the subject of detailed Conservation Area Character Appraisals with Management Proposals as recently as 2007. On review the designation boundaries were found to be still sound and the management proposals were considered to remain relevant and so they can with confidence be simply carried forward.

5.5 The third existing area to be reviewed was the High Street, Stourbridge, Conservation Area that was first designated in 1975. In this respect it is notable that the Stourbridge Historic Core AHHTV in fact encompasses and extends considerably beyond the existing High Street designation boundaries. Since 1975 perceptions as to the value that should be afforded to the historic environment have changed quite

radically and given the findings of the UHLC study the carrying out now of a Conservation Area Character Appraisal to cover the whole of the Historic Core AHHTV is considered to be highly justified.

Appendix 6 Historic Environment Information

Appendix 7 Historic Environment Information

Appendix 8 Historic Environment Information

Appendix 9 Historic Environment Information

Appendix 10 Historic Environment Information

Appendix 11 Historic Environment Information

Appendix 12 Historic Environment Information

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Appendix 14 Historic Environment Information

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Appendix 18 Historic Environment Information