

**WARDS: ALL**

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 17**

**DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CENTRAL DUDLEY AREA COMMITTEE**

**14<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2005**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT**

**ENGLISH PARTNERSHIPS – NATIONAL BROWNFIELD LAND STRATEGY  
PILOT PROJECT**

**1.0 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To advise Members on the inclusion of Dudley in a Pilot Project undertaken by English Partnerships on behalf of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) to produce a National Brownfield Land Strategy
- 1.2 To invite suggestions from Members on suitable sites in the vicinity of Dudley Town Centre for inclusion in the Pilot Project

**2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Brownfield Land may be defined as previously developed land which is or has been occupied by a permanent structure and associated infrastructure
- 2.2 English Partnerships, the national regeneration agency charged with supporting high quality sustainable growth in England, published the document Towards a National Brownfield Strategy in November 2003. This strategy is the most comprehensive study ever undertaken to assess the state of England's brownfield land supply
- 2.3 The study highlighted that there is a huge potential to 'recycle' brownfield land to meet government housing growth targets, while reducing the pressure to develop on our countryside

- 2.4 One of the most important findings is that as much as a third of the 66,000 ha of brownfield land identified could be readily available for development – contributing significantly to government targets of developing 60 per cent of housing on brownfield land.
- 2.5 On 22 February 2005 English Partnerships and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) launched the setting up of 14 pilot brownfield projects as part of the next stage of creating the National Brownfield Strategy
- 2.6 The 14 pilot areas are Easington, Barrow-in-Furness, Manchester, Sheffield, Mansfield, Dudley, Milton Keynes, Ipswich, Tower Hamlets, Barking & Dagenham, Bristol and Kerrier (Cornwall). As a result of the programme it is hoped that at least one 'difficult' site in each area will be developed either for commercial or recreational use, with funding being acquired through private-sector investment.
- 2.7 A short-list of long and medium-term derelict sites will be identified in each area and practical studies undertaken to assess the barriers to reclaiming land. In each case it is proposed that work will be led by a "local brownfield partnership" that will include representatives from English Partnerships, the local authority, Regional Development Agencies, development industry, local business and community groups.
- 2.8 Dudley has a long and successful track record in reclaiming brownfield land for industrial, residential and recreational use. Despite this success, which it is fair to say has transformed the landscape of the borough, a number of 'difficult' sites have remained untreated but which offer the potential to contribute to the Council's regeneration agenda.
- 2.9 Brownfield sites remain unreclaimed for a variety of reasons. They may be too expensive to reclaim (on the basis of contamination, ground conditions or poor access). They may have, through natural regeneration, developed high ecological and environmental value, or they may be in multiple ownership or have owners who have no interest in their development. It should also be accepted that some sites may never be capable of viable reclamation. In addition, new brownfield sites may become available for re-use at any time.

- 2.10 On the basis of the Council's wealth of experience in developing brownfield land and the presence of 'difficult' sites which have eluded reclamation to date, the inclusion of Dudley in the Pilot study is to be welcomed. Whereas there is no guarantee of any external funding to help deliver reclamation projects, there is the opportunity to tackle obstacles to reclamation via the partnership approach referred to in paragraph 2.7
- 2.11 Officers met with representatives from English Partnerships on the 10<sup>th</sup> May 2005 and suggested that Dudley Town Centre and its immediate environment be the focus of the pilot as a result of the opportunities set out in the recently completed Area Development Framework, the positive response from the community to that document, and the variety of types of brownfield land available. A plan illustrating the area in question is shown in Appendix A to this report. Following this meeting, officers have drawn up an initial shortlist of 5 sites which may be considered by English Partnerships, and these are listed in Appendix B to this report.
- 2.12 The Pilot project will include public consultation on the proposals, and will seek nominations from the community on sites which may be considered. This consultation exercise is currently at an early stage and an update will be provided to the Committee when this report is presented
- 2.13 English Partnerships expect to complete the Pilot Projects in early 2006

### **3.0 PROPOSAL**

- 3.1 That the contents of this report be noted and that the Committee support the officers' ongoing work to support the Pilot Project under the English Partnerships – National Brownfield Land Strategy Pilot Project
- 3.2 That Members make suggestions as to suitable sites in the vicinity of Dudley Town Centre for inclusion in the Pilot Project
- 3.3 That future reports on this initiative be presented to the Committee

### **4.0 FINANCE**

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications at this stage.

**5.0      LAW**

5.1      The Council's planning powers are contained in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

5.2      The Council may do anything to promote the Environmental, Social and Economic wellbeing of its area under section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000

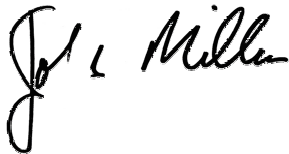
5.3      The Council may do anything which is incidental to conducive to or which facilitates the discharge of its functions under section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972

**6.0      EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

6.1      The proposals take into account the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy

**7.0      RECOMMENDATION**

7.1      That the proposals set out in paragraph 3.1 of this report be approved



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**Director of the Urban Environment - John B. Millar**

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# CENTRAL DUDLEY AREA COMMITTEE – 14<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2005

## BROWNFIELD LAND PILOT PROJECT

### APPENDIX B

Initial shortlist of sites for inclusion

#### 1. Hall Street/Porter Street

- Major opportunity site in UDP.
- Dominated by Cavendish House.
- Derelict and semi derelict properties on Hall Street.
- Major gateway to town
- Mixed used proposals in UDP

#### 2. British Gas/Transco site

- 2 sites in reality.
- Former depot and offices now in low level use
- Vacant land and buildings to the south (part DMBC owned)
- Difficult ground conditions can be expected
- Local Employment Area in UDP

#### 3. High Street/King Street

- SW gateway to town.
- Rundown properties of mixed tenure
- Mixed use allocation in UDP

#### 4. Grazebrook Park and allotments

- Small Local Park and adjacent allotment area alongside By Pass
- Known ground condition problems
- Park protected in UDP

#### 5. Lister Road/New Road

- Contaminated site with stability problems
- Redevelopment hampered by the cost of remediation
- Planning permission for employment uses unable to be implemented
- Council owns land fronting Lister Road
- Key Industrial Area in UDP