

APPENDIX THREE: BRIERLEY HILL PLAN – Issues and Options Report

SUMMARY DOCUMENT

Vision for the Brierley Hill Plan

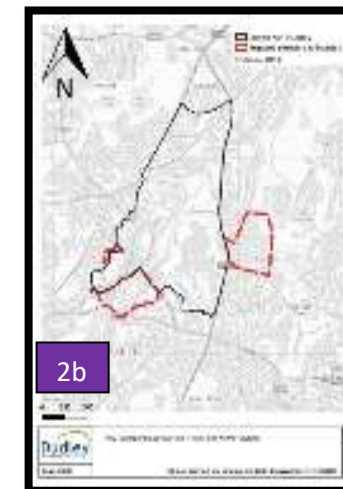
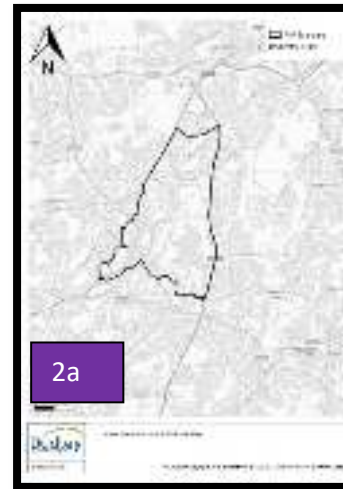
We have set out our vision for Brierley Hill and the surrounding area in 2039 as a place which has the benefit of:

- a strong, resilient, and thriving community with enhanced health and well-being, including having access to more cultural, leisure and community facilities
- being more than a shopping destination, including benefiting from a revitalised night-time economy and family leisure facilities
- having a greater resident population, living in sustainable, well-being enhancing accommodation incorporating energy efficiency measures and making active use of extensive areas of imaginatively landscaped and well-connected public spaces
- being a much greener place, with increased tree cover and more biodiversity including wildlife corridors, which is better linked to the Saltwells and Fens Pool Nature Reserves
- being more accessible, especially by public transport and a network of footpaths and cycleways, with the Midland Metro stops providing focal points within these networks and hubs for new development, with well-designed public open spaces around them
- having a high quality built and natural environment that respects and enhances local character, including important historic buildings, and makes effective use of the canal network as an asset
- being a place of excellence in enterprise, education and training

Q1 – Do you agree with the vision for The Brierley Hill Plan? - is there any other aim you would like to see included?

The plan area boundary

The existing plan boundary as set out within the current Brierley Hill Area Action Plan (AAP) (Option 2a). However, we consider that it does not include some adjoining areas where opportunities for regeneration and/or upgrading have arisen. We think that these areas which the existing plan can be extended into are (Option 2b): a) The Chapel Street Housing Estate; b) The Delph Locks Conservation Area; c) Saltwells Wood; d) Northmoor Industrial Estate



Q2 – Which of the areas in Option 2b do you think should be included within the plan area boundary?

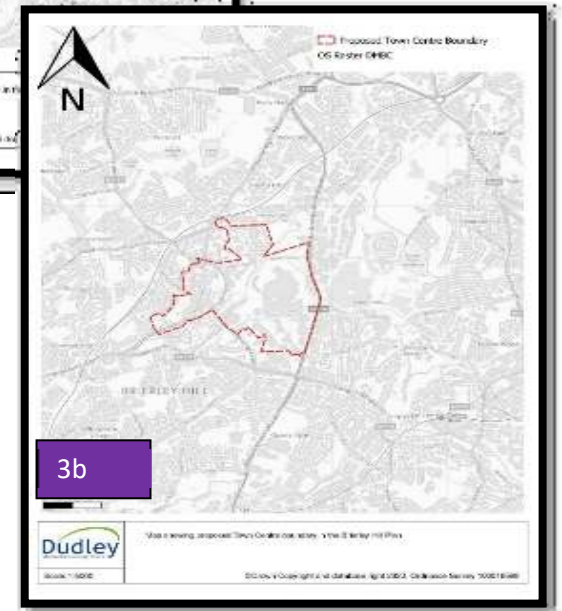
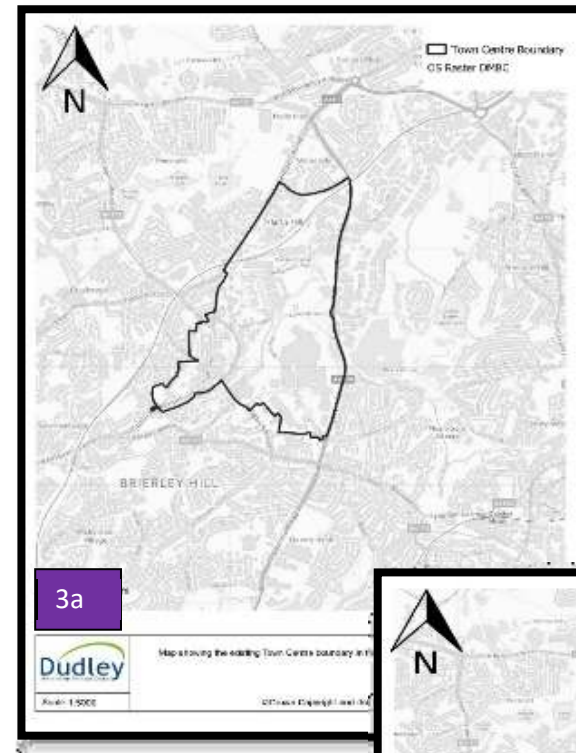
Brierley Hill's Centres

The Town Centre boundary

The Town Centre boundary is important as it defines an area within which town centre uses, such as retail and leisure uses are considered acceptable. Within the existing AAP the Town Centre Boundary is the same as the wider plan area boundary (Option 3a).

However, this has caused some uncertainty both for developers and the Council as to whether a town centre use proposed outside of the main shopping centres is acceptable. We are therefore proposing as an option to redraw the Town Centre Boundary so that it only includes the centres at Brierley Hill High Street and Merry Hill, and the areas of land in-between, as well as The Waterfront (Option 3b).

Q3 – Which option do you prefer for the Town Centre boundary, within which retail and leisure uses should be focused?



Brierley Hill High Street

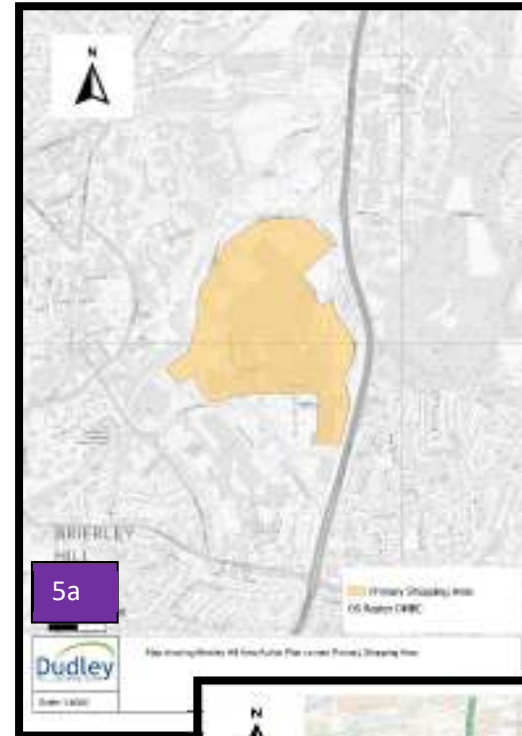
The existing AAP states that no more than half of the units within Brierley Hill High Street and some of the adjoining streets, should be in a non-retail use. This is called a Protected (retail) Frontage. However, due to a national decline in high street shopping and changes to national planning regulations making it simpler to change the use of an existing shop into an alternative use, we consider a more flexible approach is required. We are therefore asking a question as to what types of use, you would like to see within the High Street. This will help inform our policies for the High Street as we progress the plan.

Q4 – What types of use would you like to see more of within Brierley Hill High Street, for example, shops, houses, offices, public houses?

The Merry Hill Centre

The Merry Hill Centre also contains a designated retail area, called a Primary Shopping Area (PSA) within the existing AAP. This is an area where retail development is to be concentrated and includes The Merry Hill Centre mall as well as the car parks and service areas immediately adjoining it, the existing cinema and plateau behind it, as well as most of the units fronting Times Square Avenue (Option 5a). We consider there is an alternative option to review the PSA to exclude the existing cinema site, but to include the existing retail units on Station Drive, as this is an established part of the centre providing a location for larger scale retail uses (Option 5b).

Q5 – Which option do you prefer for the Primary Shopping Area at the Merry Hill centre, within which retail uses should be focused?



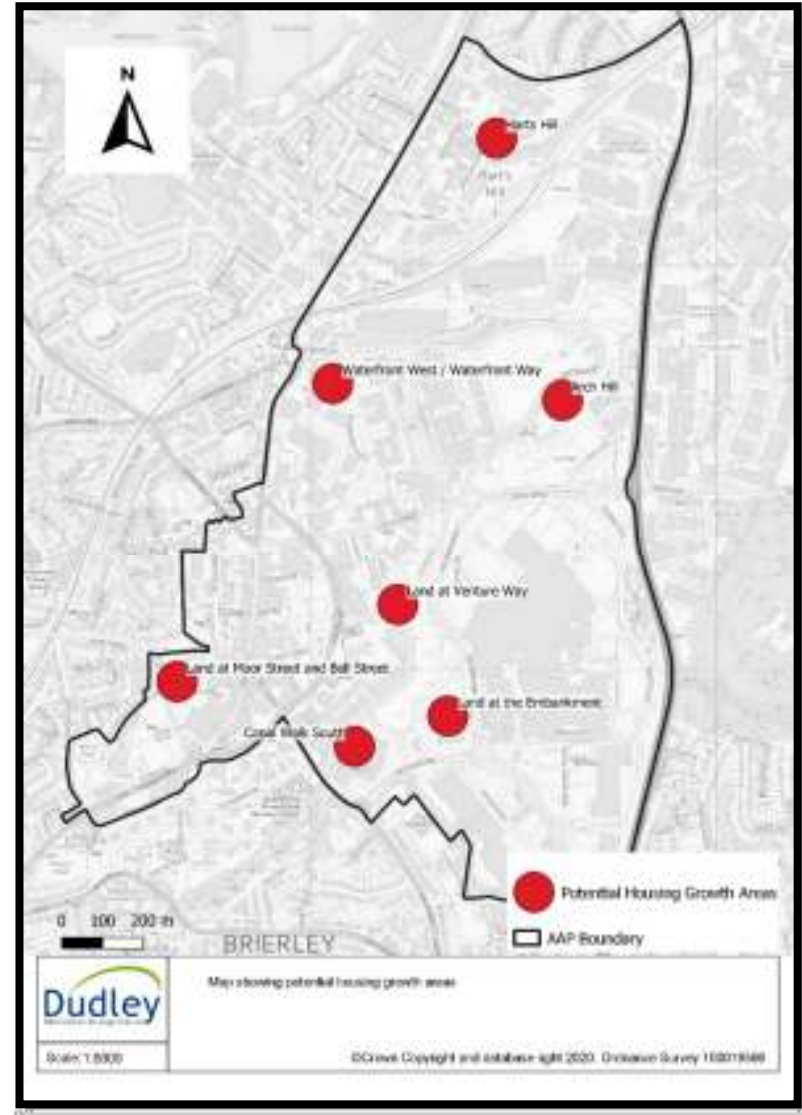
New Housing Development within Brierley Hill

Areas for major new housing development

As stated within the draft Black Country Plan, the Black Country has a need for approximately 5,000 new homes to be built each year, up to 2039. As Brierley Hill is a main centre within the urban area and contains existing and proposed public transport links, as well as a number of vacant, brownfield sites that are potentially suitable for new housing development, it is expected to have a major role in providing new dwellings, potentially at high densities. The draft Black Country Plan therefore states that around 3,000 new homes need to be built within Brierley Hill. In order to deliver that amount of new housing, the following broad areas for new housing development have been identified within the plan area:-

- a) Harts Hill
- b) Archill, north of Level Street
- c) Land at The Embankment
- d) Land East of Venture Way and at Daniel's Wharf
- e) Waterfront West/Waterfront Way
- f) Canal Walk South
- g) Land at Moor Street and Bell St

Q6 – Do you consider that new housing development should be prioritised within these broad locations? – are there any other locations suitable for major new housing development within the plan area?



Supported Living Scheme

Evidence points to a lack of provision for older residents who may want to remain within or move closer to the facilities that Brierley Hill has to offer. A supported living scheme could enable residents to live independently whilst having the benefit of being within a small community and having access to readily available support when needed. We therefore consider that there is an option to provide such a facility within the plan area.

Q7 – Do you consider that there should be a supported living scheme within the Brierley Hill plan area, within which elderly residents could live independently but with access to care when needed?

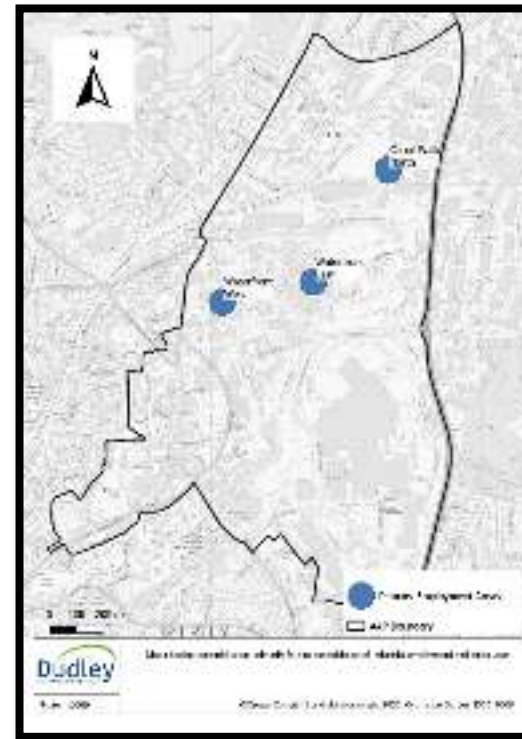
The Chapel Street Housing Estate

The existing housing at the Chapel Street Estate is considered in need of improvement. While there are currently questions about if, how or when any regeneration activity might take place on this estate, we consider that, as an option, the potential regeneration of this area needs to be addressed within the plan.

Q8 – Do you consider that the Chapel Street Housing Estate should be identified within the plan for regeneration as a housing site?

Industry and Offices within Brierley Hill

We consider there is a need to retain areas for industrial and office employment uses within the plan area. We have therefore identified the following proposed broad locations for such uses: a) Waterfront West; b) Waterfront East; c) Canal Walk North



Q9 – Do you consider that these broad locations should be retained mainly for industrial and office uses?

Leisure and Community Spaces within Brierley Hill

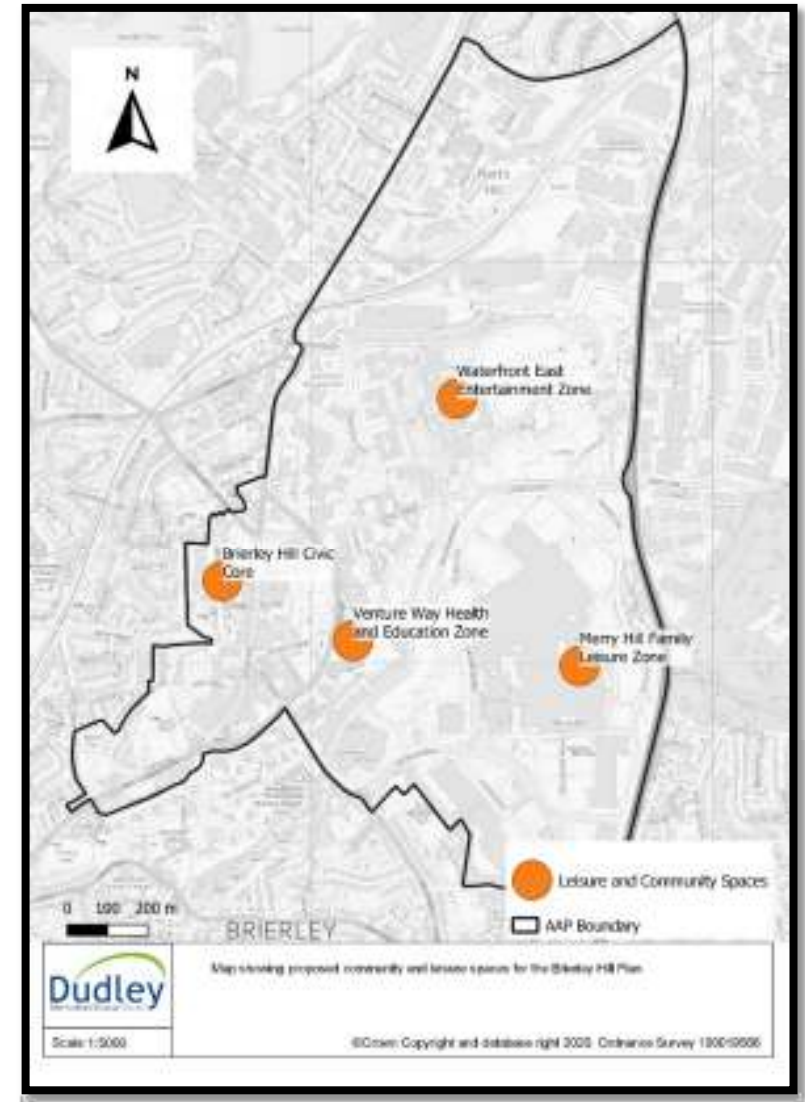
To help benefit the health and wellbeing of residents of Brierley Hill, as well as strengthening the community ties in the area, we are presenting the option of increasing the number of leisure and community facilities that are available within the area.

We have identified 4 main zones which could potentially become the focus of increased and enhanced community and leisure provision.

These areas are:-

- a) Brierley Hill Civic Core Zone
- b) Merry Hill Family Leisure Zone
- c) The Waterfront East Entertainment Zone, and
- d) The Venture Way Health and Education Zone

Q10 – Do you consider that these areas should be identified in the plan mainly for community, leisure, entertainment, and food and drink uses?



Transport and Energy infrastructure

Brierley Hill Midland Metro stop

We consider it important to improve the function, setting and attractiveness of the proposed Midland Metro stops, especially the stop at Cottage Street. We consider that there is the opportunity here to provide a well-designed and high-quality landscaped area around this stop, potentially including a public events' space, as well as linking this area directly through to the High Street via pedestrian and cycle friendly routes.

Q11 – Do you consider that we should give particular focus within the plan to the proposed Midland Metro stop at Cottage Street, to provide a high-quality landscaped area there, which is well linked in with the High Street?

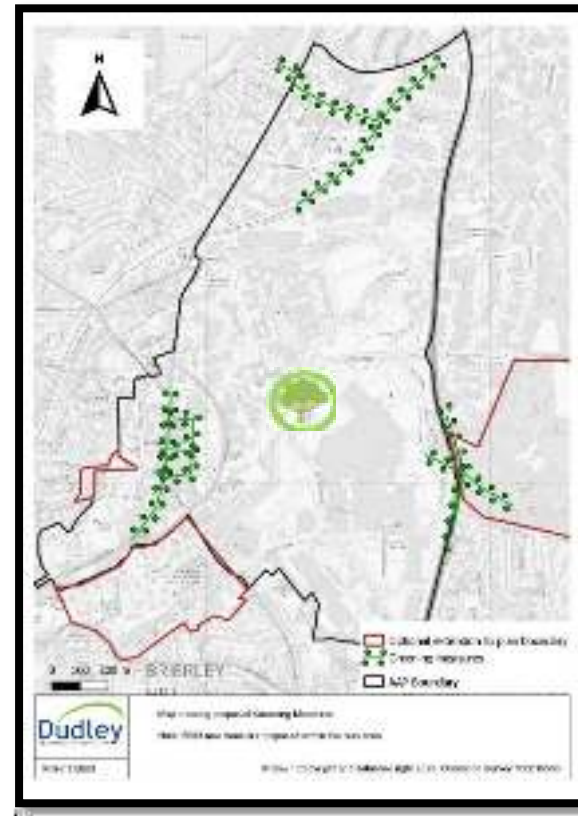
Renewable Energy

In order to help tackle Climate Change, we consider it appropriate, as an option, to include a potential new policy on the issue of renewable energy. This policy could focus not only on the installation of electric vehicle charging points and solar panels within existing and proposed development, but also potentially allocate a site for a large renewable energy installation within the plan area.

Q12 – Do you consider that sites for Renewable Energy installations, such as solar panels and/or alternative renewable energy sources, should be identified within the plan area? – if so can you suggest any locations that may be suitable?

The Greening of Brierley Hill

There is a lack of green spaces and parks within the centre. We are therefore proposing a number of greening measures, which we think will enable Brierley Hill to be a more attractive place, as well as improving residents' health and well-being. These options, as shown on the map below, are: a) the planting of 5000 new trees within the plan area; b) a new entrance to Saltwells Wood and more tree planting along Pedmore Road; c) the greening of Brierley Hill High Street; d) a green corridor to Fens Pool



Q13 – Do you consider that these measures and projects should be included within the plan to help Brierley Hill become a greener place? – are there any other locations within the plan area which you think would benefit from being greened up?

The Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

The purpose of a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is to assess the social, environmental and economic effects of a local plan, in order to deliver sustainable forms of development: sustainable development is broadly defined as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. We have produced a first stage SA, which assesses the issues and options set out within this stage of the Brierley Hill Plan – please see our website for the SA report - <https://www.dudley.gov.uk/residents/planning/planning-policy/dudley-local-plan/brierley-hill-area-action-plan/> - and as part of this consultation, we are seeking your views on it.

Q14 – Have you any comments to make on the contents of the Sustainability Appraisal?

Additional Comments

In summary, we have presented planning options which we consider will:-

- significantly increase the number of people living in and around Brierley Hill
- enable Brierley Hill to become a greener place
- renew and regenerate Brierley Hill with new high-quality development which accords with good urban design principles, while also respecting local distinctiveness and character, and with imaginatively designed public spaces
- accommodate and fully realise the opportunities presented by the Midland Metro and Heritage Action Zone and Future High Streets projects
- ensure the delivery of sustainable forms of development including measures to help tackle and mitigate for climate change
- help diversify Brierley Hill High Street and The Merry Hill Centre to make them more than shopping destinations, and as part of this objective,
- strengthen the centre’s role as a place for the community, and for leisure activities

Q15 – Do you have any further comments on the contents of this report or planning issues in general within Brierley Hill which you think that this plan should address?