

Wolverhampton City Council

Bilston Urban Village – High Street Link Supplementary Planning Document



Consultation Statement

Version 3 December 2009

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared as part of the formal adoption process of the High Street Link Development Brief as a Supplementary Planning Document. It sets out both the contributions that have been made in the preparation of the document and some additional views following the Council signing off the document at Cabinet in April 2008.
- 1.2 This statement discusses both the modifications to the draft following the “interim” consultation and prior to reporting back to Cabinet and any additional modifications deemed appropriate following the formal consultation period.
- 1.3 At the meeting of Cabinet on 9th April 2008 authority to approve the amended document was delegated to the Director of Sustainable Communities in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Enterprise “subject to no significant objections being received”.
- 1.4 It is not considered that any of the comments received during the consultation process constitutes a significant objection and therefore the document will be signed off under delegated authority.

2. Bilston Urban Village

- 2.1 Bilston Urban Village is a large (43 hectare) mixed use regeneration proposal which is being promoted by Wolverhampton City Council (WCC) and Advantage West Midlands (AWM), the Regional Development Agency.
- 2.2 An outline planning application was submitted in November 2005 for the scheme including the site which is the subject of this specific proposal. Extensive public consultation has therefore already been undertaken, albeit in the context of the wider proposals.
- 2.3 The High Street link is intended to integrate the new development with the existing Town Centre, ensuring that there is a high quality pedestrian route linking new residential areas and large trip generators (for example, Leisure Centre and proposed Academy) with the retail, markets and commercial centre.
- 2.3 The draft development brief has now been adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document.

3.0 Informal Consultation

3.1 The development brief was drawn up in consultation with a number of Council officers from a variety of disciplines including:

- Conservation:
- Archaeology:
- Transportation:
- Property Services:
- Planning Policy
- Development Control
- Finance
- Sustainability
- Markets Services

3.2 In addition consultation was undertaken with Council Members, mainly but not exclusively, local Ward members from Bilston East.

3.3 Regular meetings of a multi-disciplinary team were held and a number of versions of the document were circulated prior to the report to Cabinet in April 2008. Comments were received as a result of this process from the Council's legal advisers, Martineau and Advantage West Midlands.

3.4 Because the proposal involves the acquisition of properties (potentially by way of compulsory purchase) extensive negotiation has been undertaken with affected property owners about the terms on which acquisitions may be made.

3.5 The following table details the comments and suggestions made by individuals or agencies during the preparation of the draft document.

Black Country Archaeologist	Contributed section 6 of the document on the archaeological implications of the proposal
Sustainability	Made helpful comments on the importance of ensuring that the transition from old to new is handled appropriately and that this should not necessarily occur at the Black Country Route.
Transportation	Confirmed standards of parking required
Development Control and Architects	Commented on the chapter dealing with the form of development

3.6 At its meeting of April 9th 2008 the Council's Cabinet received a report on the Development brief seeking authority to undertake further

consultation with a view to its adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document.

- 3.7 Cabinet approved the draft brief as the basis for further consultation save for the deletion of any reference within the document to a possible second phase of development on Pinfold Street car park. Delegation was given at Cabinet to the Portfolio Holder and Director of Sustainable Communities to sign off the revised document and this was done on the 28th August 2008.
- 3.8 Since the meeting of Cabinet further representations have been made on the brief, in advance of the formal consultation. These will be used to inform the subsequent consultation process or be incorporated in the final version of the development brief which will be adopted.
- 3.9 The following table highlights suggestions which have been made subsequent to the Cabinet report in April 2008.

Market traders	Would like the scheme to introduce a real choice of destination for people crossing the Black Country Route as part of the new link.	This point is acknowledged. Through a combination of signage and materials the route to the markets will be of an equal quality to the proposed route to the High Street.
	Concerned over possible safety issues within a re-designed car park layout.	Noted. This is a matter for the detailed design stage.
AWM	Questioned the way in which the brief will be used as approved planning policy, i.e. its relationship to the Local Development Framework	This point has been elaborated on in the revised text.
	The document needs to refer more explicitly to Regional Policy (e.g. Black Country Study/Regional Spatial Strategy)	Agreed. This has been addressed in the revised text.
	The reasons for the proposed retention and refurbishment of no.22 need to be explained more fully.	This has been addressed in the revised text.
	A clearer definition of the type of development required is needed earlier in the document.	This has been addressed in the revised text.
	It would be useful to have a sketch plan included showing aspects of the scheme such as primary frontages, movement lines, important views etc.	Two additional plans have been included in the brief.

	Any new residential development should aim for Code for Sustainable Homes level 4. Commercial accommodation should aim for a BREEAM rating of excellent. This is a requirement if AWM funding is involved in the scheme.	Noted. Will be amended accordingly.
	Appendices should be added listing reports and warranties together with details of ownership and any s106 obligations.	These will be made available to prospective developers.
	Disappointed that there is no reference to possible future phases of development on Pinfold Street Car Park.	Noted.
	Retention of car parking here is inconsistent with some of the policy objectives quoted and is contrary to the approach taken for the new development south of the Black Country route, i.e. Leisure and health centres.	The brief takes a pragmatic approach to the development of the site, taking account of other policy objectives whilst ensuring that the main purpose of the providing the link is met.
	Questions the fact that the boulevard at the High Street end, at a suggested 10-12 metres, is narrower than the 15 metre width by the Leisure Centre.	This is partly driven by the requirement to provide enough depth for two rows of new retail space and to minimise the effect on Pinfold Street car park. However, it is also felt that a reduction in width can be supported by reference to the scale of development which will front onto it.

3.10 In addition, the Council has sought the views of Natural England, English Heritage and the Environment Agency. These organisations have been asked to comment on the Council's view that, because of the size of the site and the nature of the proposals, a strategic environmental assessment is not required. The views on this matter are included below.

Natural England	Natural England make no unequivocal statement on the requirement for a Strategic Environment Assessment. This is because they make reference in their response to “impact on local wildlife site(s) and badgers” though this refers to the wider Urban Village site and not to the specific site which is the subject of this brief.
English Heritage	English Heritage “concur with the Council that the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required.
Environment Agency	The Environment Agency “concur with the view that a full Strategic Environmental Assessment will not be required for this site” They ask that further intrusive ground investigations are carried out in the area marked as a Works on historic maps.

4.0 Formal Consultation

4.1 The formal consultation process began on October 30 and lasted for six weeks until December 11th. A copy of the Public Notice, which appeared in the Express and Star, is included as Appendix 1.

4.2 The formal consultation process was overseen by a group of officers from various disciplines including regeneration, marketing and publicity and community engagement. Working to the agreed consultation plan a variety of meetings, surgeries and public events were organised. The consultation plan is included in this Statement as appendix 2.

4.3 This report gives details of the various meetings and events which took place and records all written comments made. Where these form minutes of meetings these will be found as appendices at the back of the document and will be cross-referenced in the table.

4.4

Event	Date	Comment	Suggested Response
One Voice meeting	November 3 rd	Careful consideration needs to be given to the amount and distribution of parking spaces through out the Town as a result of the displacement of on street parking and that this needs to be undertaken on a town centre wide basis.	Agreed, though such an exercise is outside the scope of the brief.
		The new shop units would provide an ideal location for a Shopmobility scheme in Bilston, given its central location and proximity to the new facilities.	The provision of shopmobility is dependent upon grant funding. The brief would allow for such a use if funding were available.
Heantun Housing Association (New Bilston Board)	November 4th	The scheme as proposed in not ambitious enough to bring about the required level of change in the Town Centre.	The proposed link establishes the principle of pedestrian movement from the Urban Village to the Town Centre and is capable of being delivered with the resources that are available at the present time.
		The design of the buildings shown in the publicity is disappointing and should be of much higher architectural quality.	The design of the buildings is indicative only. We will expect a high quality scheme to be brought forward by a developer when selected.
Bilston Market Traders' surgery	November 6th	This event was operated as a drop in session between 1.00 am and 3.00 pm. Around 30 market traders took advantage of the session (representing just under half of the traders) to inspect the models and	

		discuss the scheme in more detail. No written comments were made but the overwhelming view was very positive	
Public exhibition High Street/Church Street (comments in italics represent exact written comments made during the consultation events)	November 13 th , 14 th & 15th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>We need new pathways – idea a good one.</i> • <i>New crossing (of the Black Country Route) is dangerous. Walk over bridge would be better.</i> • <i>Good idea! Needs something like this happening.</i> • <i>Need proper cycle route.</i> • <i>About time those buildings came down – about to fall down. Good idea.</i> • <i>Think walkway is a good idea.</i> • <i>Safety issues over crossing (of Black Country Route)</i> • <i>Would like new shops to sell bedding & womens fashion. No betting offices.</i> • <i>Would like fashion stores and kids retail. No betting shops or card shops.</i> • <i>Existing High Street retailer will now consider buying his building as a result of the proposed investment.</i> • <i>Retain and encourage independent shops.</i> 	<p>Noted</p> <p>Noted. The issue of crossing the BCR is something that will need to be given further thought. Noted.</p> <p>The extent to which cycling is incorporated into the design of the boulevard is something which needs careful consideration. Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>See above.</p> <p>Noted. These uses are consistent with the proposals in the brief. See above.</p> <p>Noted and welcomed.</p> <p>Agreed.</p>

		<p>Good idea.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Think it is all right!</i> • <i>Marks and Spencers! Fashion shops with quality clothes. Shoe shop – would be lovely!</i> • <i>Good idea to have some new shops. It will look nice when done.</i> • <i>Like new walkway sounds really good.</i> • <i>Very favourable. Sounds very good.</i> • <i>Looks good!</i> • <i>A good idea (Resident from Sedgemoor Park)</i> • <i>Service Yard blocked by disabled vehicle parking. Needs to be managed. Pinfold St parking – an issue.</i> • <i>Very good idea, for the Pedestrian walkway, ideal for residents on foot and cyclists. Keep less traffic out of town.</i> • <i>I am in favour of any refurb of derelict properties.</i> • <i>I feel this is a great new approach to rebuild Bilston. I hope this will be beneficial to young and older people and can enhance well being for all.</i> • <i>No car park charging.</i> 	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Agreed.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>There are no proposals to charge for car parking.</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Old buildings are an eyesore and need to come down.</i> • <i>Looks really good.</i> 	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p>

		<p><i>Can't wait.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>New retail in the town is what we need.</i> 	Noted.
Bilston East LNP Neighbourhood Safety Group	November 20 th	No objections	
Bilston Pub Watch	November 26th	No objections	
Planning Committee	December 2nd	No comments.	Noted
Traders' Forum	December 4th	No comments on the brief from Traders. Owners of properties directly affected expressed concern about delays in the process.	
Bilston North LNP	December 8th	No comments on the proposals	
Local Business		Would be interested in opening an estate agency with associated offices as part of the link. The permitted uses as currently defined would not allow for this.	The interest is welcomed. Text has been amended to allow this use.

Bilston Urban Village – High Street Link
Consultation Plan 30 October – 11 December 2008

- 'Primary Stakeholders' e.g. owners, traders, residents to be identified by Project Group and targeted accordingly.
- All opportunities in this plan are subject to agreement of the consultation dates
- Key messages to be identified by Bilston Urban Village Communications Group

Method	Lead Officer(s)	Date	Details	Cost/Availability	Deadline
Communication and Advertising					
Letters posted to local Members	Simon Lucas Mark Connell	24 October	Outlining the consultation arrangements, key messages and enclosing literature.	N/A	23 October
Letters sent to primary stakeholders e.g. owners, residents and traders followed by personal visits	Simon Lucas Mark Connell	27 October	Letters to explain consultation, key messages, how primary stakeholders are affected. Offer of further visits or group meetings. Enclose literature.	N/A	24 October
Letters to statutory organisations	Simon Lucas Mark Connell	27 October	Detailing consultation, key messages and enclosing literature.	N/A	24 October
Public notice to appear in Express and Star	Simon Lucas, Julie Pietragallo	30 October	This heralds the start of the 6 week consultation period	TBC (dependent on word length)	27 October
Express & Star advert	Bilston Urban Village Comms Group	30 October and 20 November	Gives details about public consultation events, venues, dates, times, how to comment on website, phone number, etc.	Approximate Cost: ¼ page Town edition on Thurs £826	27 October
Press release(s)	Bilston Urban Village Comms Group	Issue 29 October and 19 November	Gives key messages, details about public consultation events, venues, dates, times, how to comment on website, phone number, etc.	N/A	28 October
Websites	Simon Lucas	24 October	Council website and Bilston Urban Village website to be up to date with consultation event details and the development brief document. Need to clarify which website to quote on publicity materials.	N/A	24 October
Emails	All Partners	30 October	Emails to stakeholders including partnerships, groups etc about the consultation events/key messages.	N/A	30 October
Free editorial <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City People staff intranet • One City News • Bilston Forward • Bilston East Newsletter • Metro Business Partnership Newsletter • Traders newsletter 	Bilston Urban Village Communications Group	Daily Published 24 Nov TBC TBC TBC TBC	Editorial containing the key messages about the high street link and the consultation opportunities/contact details/end date etc.	N/A	Daily 30 October TBC TBC TBC
Consultation Materials & Exhibition					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A3, A4, A0 posters to promote events • A5 flyers to promote events • Summary leaflet of development brief, space for comments, contact details • Comments form and comments box for consultation events • Draft Development Brief • Exhibition and Model 	Bilston Urban Village Communications Group Simon Lucas Mark Connell	All to be ready by 20 October for distribution, consultation events and partnership meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantities of materials to be confirmed. • Draft Development Brief made available to usual development brief distribution list including libraries and statutory organisations etc <p>Posters/flyers: Distribution to be identified, including: Central library, Bilston libraries, Bilston Leisure Centre, Bilston Markets office, empty shops in Bilston, public buildings in Bilston, churches, shops.</p> <p><u>Consultation Venues</u> Venues and dates to be confirmed. Ideas include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empty shop in Bilston • Bilston Market stall • Bilston Town Hall • Bilston Craft Centre • St Leonard's Church Hall • Mander/Wulfrun Centre 	SLA	30 September
				TBC	26 September

Method	Lead Officer(s)	Date	Details	Cost/ Availability	Deadline
Face to Face Consultation					
Primary stakeholders including retailers, market traders, property owners, residents	Simon Lucas, Mark Connell	30 October onwards	Personal visits/group meetings on request	N/A	30 October
Schools engagement activities	Bilston Development Project, Simon Lucas, Mark Connell	30 October onwards	To be arranged by the Bilston Development Project	TBC	30 October
Meetings with partners/local groups/target audience.	Mark Connell, Matt Potts Simon Lucas	30 October 26 November 9 November 8 Nov or 8 Dec 2 Dec TBC TBC 13 Nov TBC TBC TBC 13 Nov 5 Nov TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bilston Traders Forum • Bilston Pub Watch • Bilston East LNP • Bilston North LNP • Ettingshall LNP • Bilston East Leisure Sub Group • Bilston East Environmental Sub Group • Bilston Markets Group • Heart of Bilston • Bilston Bradley Action Partnership • Bilston East Neighbourhood Safety Group • Metro Business Partnership Steering Group • Metro Business Partnership Working Group • New Bilston Board Meeting 	N/A	Get on the Agenda for these meetings ASAP