

**PLANNING APPLICATION DESIGN STATEMENT  
for  
BILSTON LEISURE CENTRE, WOLVERHAMPTON**

**DECEMBER 2008**

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## 1.0 Introduction

This planning and design statement is made on behalf of Wolverhampton City Council for the construction of the new Bilston Leisure Centre with associated parking and landscaping on a derelict site in Bilston.

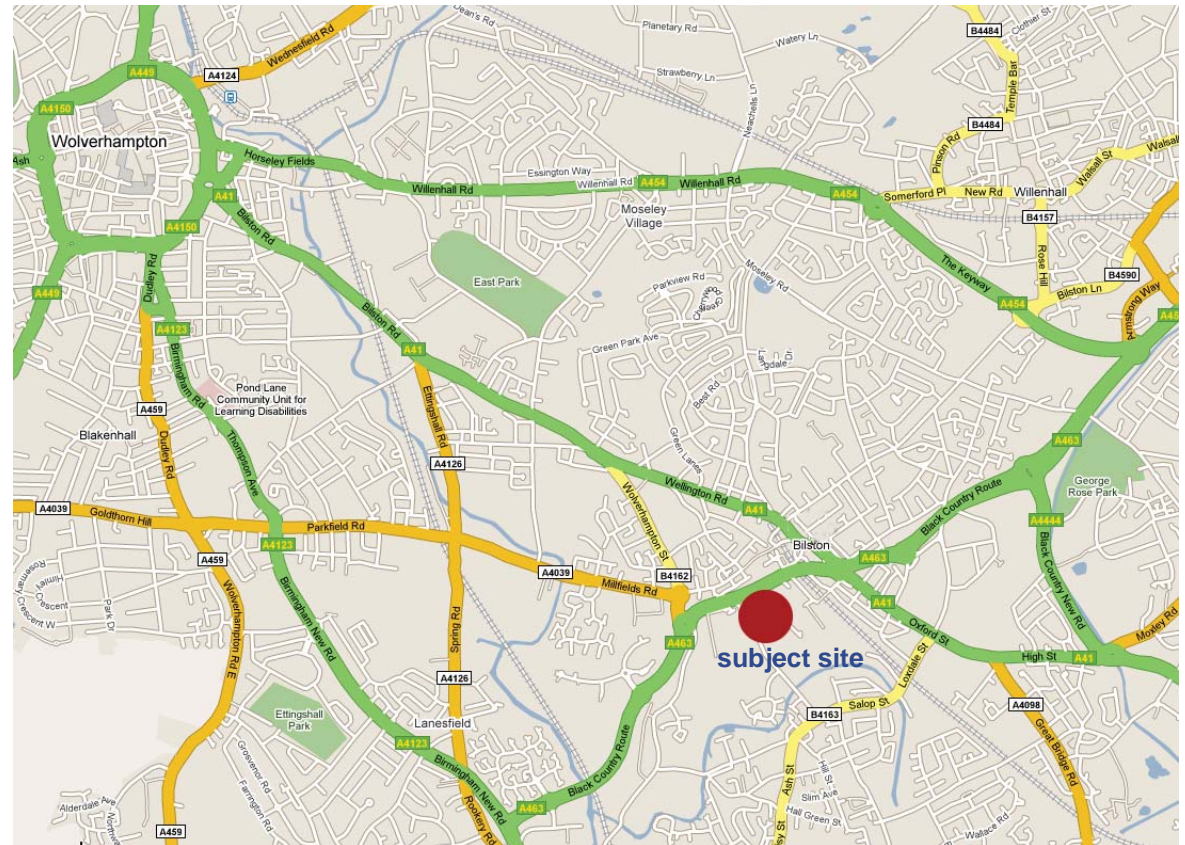
Jacobs are in partnership with Wolverhampton City Council's Architecture Design Team on this project. In July 2001, an Outline Planning Application was submitted by Advantage West Midlands for Bilston Urban Village. It is an area of approximately 40Ha of mixed-use development consisting residential, commercial, leisure and community facilities integrated with wildlife habitats and landscaping.

The application was granted in 2001 and Bilston Urban Village was included in the latest Wolverhampton City Council Unitary Development Plan (UDP).

The leisure centre development is in the first phase (Plot A) of the abovementioned regeneration project and is designed to be a flagship/ landmark building for the overall scheme. The leisure centre is to include two pools, multi-use sports hall, squash courts, dance/aerobics studio, fitness suite, sauna and gym.

The existing leisure centre is located along Prouds Lane on the northern side of Bilston Town Centre. This leisure centre is no longer able to meet the needs of the community athletes' aspirations and demands and is in poor physical condition.

The new Bilston Leisure Centre will replace the existing leisure centre and is designed to meet the changing needs of the community. It will provide social interaction spaces such as a soft play area, children playground and café along with the additional and improved sporting facilities outlined within the brief.



## 2.0 Design Assessment

### 2.1 Contextual analysis

#### 2.1.1 Site Analysis

The site is located to the south of Bilston Town Centre and along the busy Black Country Route (A463). It forms part of a new urban regeneration project initiated by Advantage West Midlands.

Nearby are houses within a cul-de-sac development, and Parkfields High School has playing fields along the western boundary. These buildings are not in a conservation area and are entirely different in character and scale to the large Morrison superstore on the eastern side of the site. There is also an existing sports hall which is part of Parkfields High School.

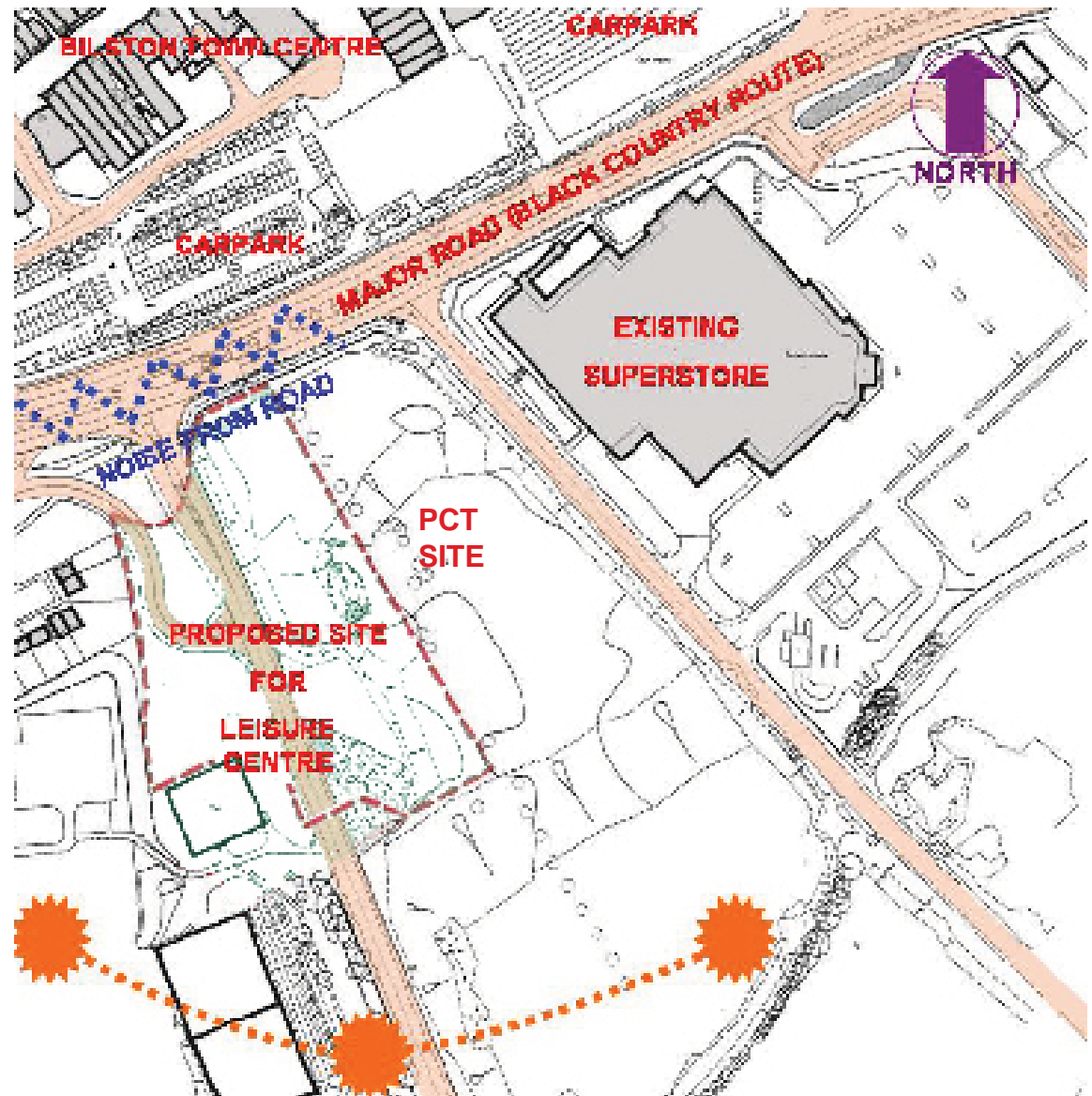
The site is currently derelict and covered with approximately four metres depth of fill from previously demolished buildings. There is also a coal seam and an ore seam under the site that have been previously mined. In addition, there are three other mineshafts and an old well on the site.

Geotechnical engineers have advised that the presence of mineshafts, worked coal seams and associated ground bearing conditions are typical site characters in this area. Advantage West Midlands, whom currently own the site, have had remedial works carried out to resolve any related issues.

#### 2.1.2 Existing movement routes

Bilston Town Centre car park is located to the north side of the subject site with the Black Country Route (A463) separating the two.

An existing pedestrian crossing over the A463 links the new Urban Village Site to the existing Bilston Town Centre. This link will be emphasised and enhanced with the creation of a boulevard from this point of entry into the Village site. The new leisure centre and adjacent proposed Primary Care Trust Development will act as



Existing Site Plan

gateway buildings to this major pedestrian access point.

The site is bound on three sides by roads and on the fourth by playing fields. The Black Country Route is a busy dual carriageway that runs east/west along the site's northern boundary. Bankfield Road, located to the east, separates phase one of Bilston Urban Village development and the adjacent Morrisons supermarket. To the west Prosser Street provides vehicular access to the site for service vehicles.

## **2.2 Social impact**

The new leisure centre brings significant benefits to the local community and is an integral part of the larger urban regeneration scheme for Bilston.

Immediate benefits will be for Bilston High School where it will improve the school's accessibility to sports and leisure facilities. The new Bilston Leisure Centre has specific children gym and other facilities, which will be widely used by the school.

The leisure centre together with the rest of the Urban Village masterplan will assist in improving the supervision and security of playing fields, school and buildings to the immediate surrounding area.

The new leisure centre site will also cater for the wider community by providing a diverse range of sporting and leisure facilities within a secure and attractive environment. Its close proximity to Bilston Town Centre, school facilities and adjacent housing will allow for easy access and opportunity for use by the local population. In addition, users coming from adjacent towns or villages will also benefit because major transport routes are in the vicinity of the new development.

Quality of life for the local community will also improve with the addition of the new leisure centre. Better leisure and sporting amenities will encourage people to become more active and will promote social/communal interaction. Increased activity levels and involvement with sport have been proven to promote wellbeing and healthier lifestyles within the community.

Proposed public transport links connecting the leisure centre to the Metro and the bus station will further improve the existing infrastructure and access to the new facility by the local community. In addition to this, a network of planned pedestrian and cycle routes will be established across Bilston Urban Village to facilitate easy movement. The proposed main boulevard will act as a linking element for all public methods of access, providing a direct and safe route from the Bilston Town Centre, across the Village site and towards Bradley.

A well designed and visually supervised pedestrian route connecting Bilston Town Centre to adjacent housing neighbourhoods will encourage people to cycle or walk instead of using the car. This will reduce dependency on cars, creating a more sustainable community and environment.

### 2.3 Economic Evaluation

The previously derelict site will extend and support trade activities within the adjacent Bilston Town Centre once the leisure centre and associated amenities are complete. New facilities will generate employment opportunities for the local community and improve the infrastructure of the existing town.

The strategically located leisure centre and its role as a gateway building into Bilston Urban Village will attract more users and thus generate good revenue. An integrated café on the ground level of the leisure centre and other social spaces will encourage the community to use these facilities even further.

### 2.4 Relevant Planning Policies

This section addresses all policy requirements, from the national to the local, that are relevant to the Bilston Leisure Centre development.

#### 2.4.1 National

Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG) and Planning Policy Statements (PPS) provide a national guidance framework, which sets out a range of planning principles and objectives relative to a specific



Illustrative Masterplan of Bilston Urban Village.  
(Source: Bilston Urban Village website)

subject. Notes and Statements that have been addressed in the design of this development include:

PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development.

PPS3: Housing.

PPS6: Planning for Town Centres.

PPS9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation.

PPG13: Transport.

PPG15: Planning and the Historic Environment.

PPG16: Archaeology and Planning.

PPG17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation.

#### 2.4.2 Regional

This development has been designed in accordance with:

West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS11) - containing regional and strategic planning policies until 2021.

Urban Renaissance:

Urban regeneration zones (policy PA2), local regeneration areas (policy UR2), region's city, town and district centres (policies UR3 and PA11), public transport (policy T5) and housing, education, health, leisure and crime reduction (policy UR4)

Prosperity for All:

Regeneration zones (policy PA2) and town and city centres (policy PA11)

Quality of the Environment:

Social and economic regeneration (Policy QE1), built environment



Aerial view of Phase 1 (Plot A) development.  
(Source: Bilston Urban Village – Plot A Development Brief)

(policy QE3), landscapes (policies QE1 and QE6), urban greenspace and public spaces (policy QE4), restoring degraded land (policy QE2), biodiversity (policy QE7), renewable energy (policy EN1) and energy conservation (policy EN2).

**Transport and Accessibility:**

Reducing the need to travel (policy T2), walking and cycling (policy T3), promoting travel awareness (policy T4), public transport (policy T5), car parking (policy T7), car travel and demand management (policy T8).

**2.4.3 Local**

The masterplan for Bilston Urban Village has been designed in accordance with the policies outlined within the Wolverhampton Unitary Development Plan (UDP) June 2006, which is a statutory document containing the Council's planning policies for the use and development of land and buildings in Wolverhampton. Specifically, the proposed design addresses policies:

S1: Strategic Regeneration Areas.

D1: Design Quality.

D10: Community Safety.

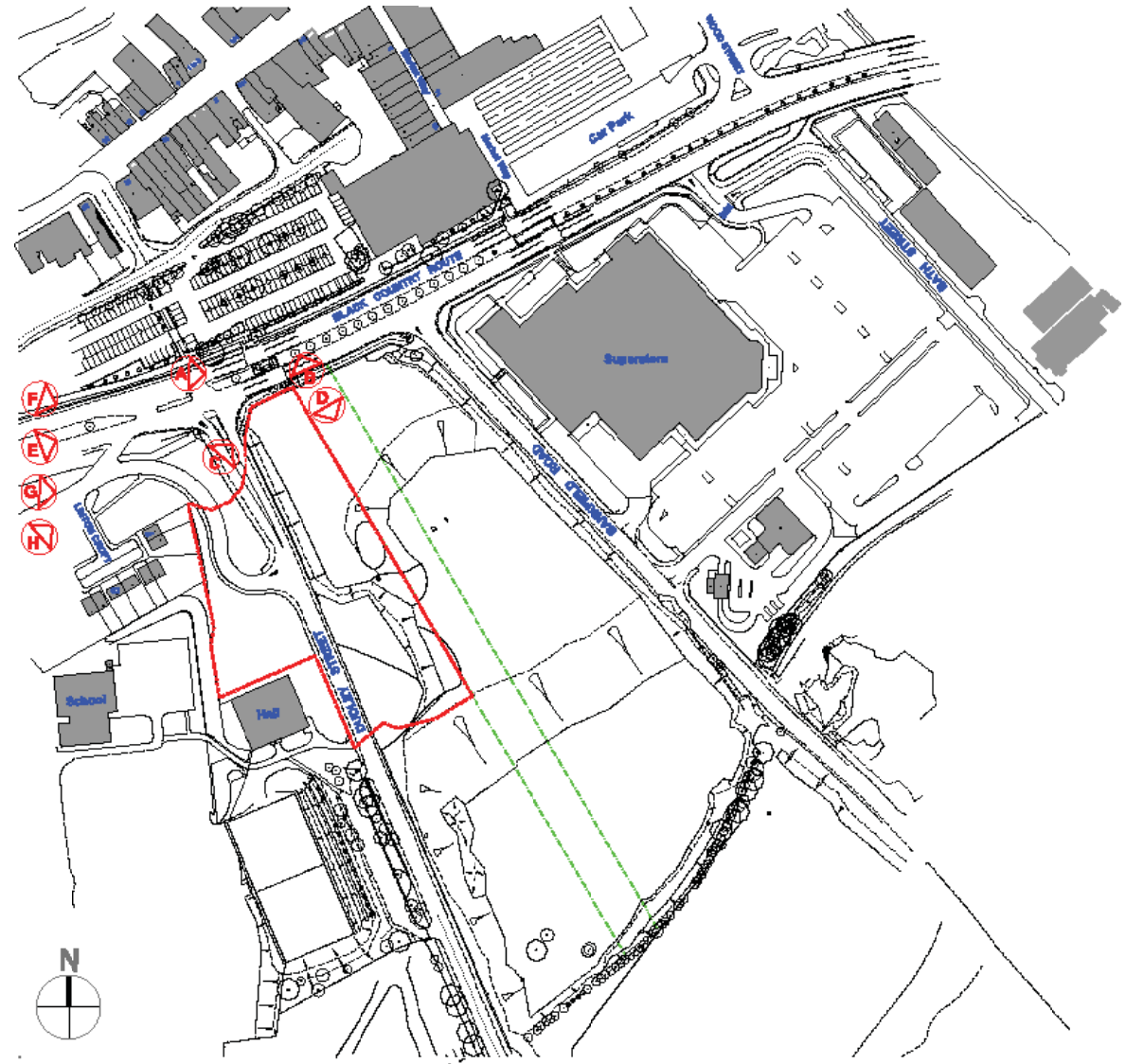
D11: Access for People with Disabilities.

EP13: Waste and Development.

EP16: Energy Conservation.

R1: Local Standard for Open Space, Sport & Recreation Facilities.

AM1: Access and Mobility.



Key plan to indicate photograph views

**3.0 The Proposal**

### 3.1 Brief

This proposal has been designed in accordance with the WCC's detailed briefs for both the Plot A masterplan in general, and for the leisure centre building specifically. A copy of 'Bilston Urban Village – Plot A Development Brief' is attached in Appendix B.

### 3.2 Design Aims

The design objectives from the above brief include:

'1. Adopt an holistic responsive approach: The masterplan seeks to make the optimum use of the site, acknowledging identified external environmental constraints and seizing design opportunities.'

'2. Promote Sustainable Development: Bilston Urban Village will be designed throughout to meet the latest recognised targets for overall sustainability, seeking to achieve exemplar status. It will serve as a flagship project for the West Midlands.'

The following parameters were identified and applied at the early stage of design development for the scheme:

- a. Prominent gateway building.
- b. Advantage West Midlands previous design.
- c. Project requirements – please refer to development brief.
- d. Efficient and compact building to minimise staffing costs.
- e. Secure and robust building.
- f. Easily maintained building.
- g. Build in flexibility where practicable.
- h. Focal point to embrace sport.



View A: View taken opposite of site/ Black Country Route.  
Please refer to Plan on page 9.



View B: Market carpark with Bilston Town Centre in the background.  
Please refer to Plan on page 9.



View C: View taken from Dudley Street entrance.  
Please refer to Plan on page 9.

i. Interaction with adjacent school.

### 3.3 Room Matrix

At an early stage of the design a diagram of the room matrix, which indicates all the spaces required in the brief, was developed. As part of the design process, these spaces were combined with the layouts that were previously used to establish the project cost.

The Room Matrix (B2094800\_BIL\_D\_02\_Rev\_02) is attached as Appendix C at the end of this report.

### 3.4 Design Proposal

The leisure centre is very prominently located on the Black Country Route and acts as a landmark building on the new boulevard linking Bilston Town Centre with Bilston Urban Village redevelopment. A well-designed urban space is intended at the beginning of the boulevard with the proposed Primary Care Trust development on the opposite side of the leisure centre.

Bilston Leisure Centre is designed as a two-storey building with mezzanine and basement levels to minimize overall footprint and ground remediation measures necessary on the site.

The triangular shape of the building makes the most of the site's prominent position to 'show-case' the new leisure centre and fulfil the brief's requirements for a landmark building in this gateway position. Height and scale are balanced to reflect the vision for the overall development and to contain the required facilities within. The leisure centre and the opposite proposed health care building will create a sense of enclosure to the main boulevard and provide a sense of community with social facilities on the ground floor. The building invites exploration and interaction from passersby, as well as providing a safe and comfortable environment for its occupants. Views from the Black Country Route, the new boulevard and the playing fields are created into and out of the leisure centre through strategically placed openings and glazing.



View D: View of Bilston Urban Village including Plot A. Please refer to Plan on page 9.



View E: View from footbridge on Black Country Route. Please refer to Plan on page 9.

This development, together with that of the rest of the Bilston Urban Village, will create a sustainable environment where work, live and play activities are in close proximity to each other: the leisure centre itself has been planned to reflect this quality, with a variety of sporting and leisure activities and spaces being incorporated into the single building envelope.

The planning also encourages internal/external interaction, both visually - 'show-casing' the various sports facilities within - and physically - with the provision of the cafe and outdoor seating area alongside the new pedestrian boulevard. Access to the centres' cafe is possible both from within the building and directly from the associated new carpark: this stimulates social interaction and independence of the cafe business 'after hours'. It also provides a safe route to the leisure centre at night time.

The building is designed to appear inviting and welcoming on all three faces and to have a strong visual presence. Profiled aluminium cladding punctured by frameless external windows and a generous, polycarbonate-panelled entryway will combine to provide a distinctive landmark building with an approachable quality. The strong entrance façade and atrium will be shaded by an aluminium brise soleil and covered by ETFE roof to impart a diffused translucent feel to the internal spaces.

The accommodation in this triangular shaped floor plan has the following three main components:

**a. The sports accommodation**

This space is pure, functional and wraps around two sides of the triangle. The main pool and studio pool, with associated changing village, single sex wet changing rooms and disabled persons changing facilities, are located at ground floor level, while the large sports hall, gymnasium and ball courts are found on the mezzanine and first floor levels. External windows around the perimeter of the building 'showcase' all the sports activities and allow the building to



View F: View from footbridge on Black Country Route. Please refer to Plan on page 9.



View G: View from footbridge on Black Country Route. Please refer to Plan on page 9.



View H: View from cycle path adjacent to school. Please refer to Plan on page 9.

be approachable and transparent.

The studio pool with a moveable floor for flexibility of uses, is a discrete space that is naturally lit with translucent external glazing. A seating area is provided adjacent to this pool for the use of carers and parents of those using the pool. Moveable folding screens are provided to create a private and non-overlooked space (when required) to encourage people of all religions and culture to use the pool facilities.

Additional accommodations include the soft play area and the café, dry change areas and lockers, with associated toilet facilities. The café is designed to be clearly visible from the boulevard and the atrium to encourage use and to act as a social interaction space.

Finishes are nominated in strict accordance with the relevant codes and standards and with the client’s brief for a durable, maintainable and attractive final product. Those in the sports and leisure zones are low-key and functional, whereas the Health and Fitness Suite finishes and detail are distinctly different and more expressive to emphasise the ‘club’ feel of the space and benefit of paid membership.

**b. The atrium**

The atrium is the heart of the building, linking and highlighting the wide variety of sports facilities on offer. It is an internal extension of the external piazza and acts as an intermediate zone, filtering people from outside to inside and vice versa.

The use of transparent polycarbonate panel and glazing as significant components of the external facade creates a feel of openness to the atrium while the extensive brise soleil provides flexible shade and glare control. The atrium roof is translucent ETFE and controls the amount of light entering the internal space, while being detailed to allow for natural ventilation of the main atrium area.

At night the glass walls and atrium roof will combine to generate a facade that is animating and engaging, illuminated with light to



Masterplan of Plot A  
(Source: Bilston Urban Village – Plot A Development Brief)

emphasis the heart of Bilston Leisure Centre.

The finishes and detailing of the atrium will be vibrant and enduring. This is a space to dwell, mingle and meet where social activities may spill out into adjacent spaces: the finishes will be detailed to invite attention and exploration, contributing to and encouraging interaction of the leisure centre with passersby.

**c. The entrance tower**

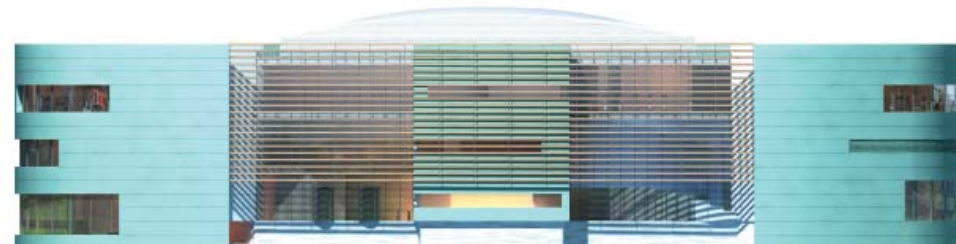
A central tower located on the boulevard facade of the proposed new building acts as a visual cue to the main entry point of the centre and provides strong articulation to this primary facade. Combined with the brise soleil, the tower focusses the eye and draws the passerby in towards the main entry point. Functionally, the tower accommodates the management offices, reception and associated support spaces to strategic advantage within the main atrium space, facilitating this area’s function as the hub of the entire building.

In addition, the tower’s central position makes it ideal for providing unobtrusive, natural surveillance of the entrance, approach to the building, and all the major internal circulation routes. The main pool is also clearly visible from the reception desk enabling additional help to be summoned easily should it be required.

The main reception desk will have a wide frontage that can be progressively closed as the activity reduces at the end of the day. The design of the desk is being developed with the Leisure Centre Management Team to balance the need for approachability and security for staff.

At the mezzanine level the central location of the tower imparts flexibility to meeting/ function rooms located within; it also provides structural logic to the open-plan areas at first floor level.

The Health & Fitness Suite at first floor level utilises the central tower area for running, rowing, cycling, and weight equipment - all ‘show-cased’ and visible from the atrium and circulation spaces. The central, open-plan format displays all the available facilities while providing



East Elevation



West Elevation



South Elevation

excellent visibility to those using this area.

### 3.5 Parking and External Access Details

The approach road from the Black Country Route into Prosser Street has been modified to facilitate access to the existing residential development, adjacent school and the leisure centre for deliveries only.

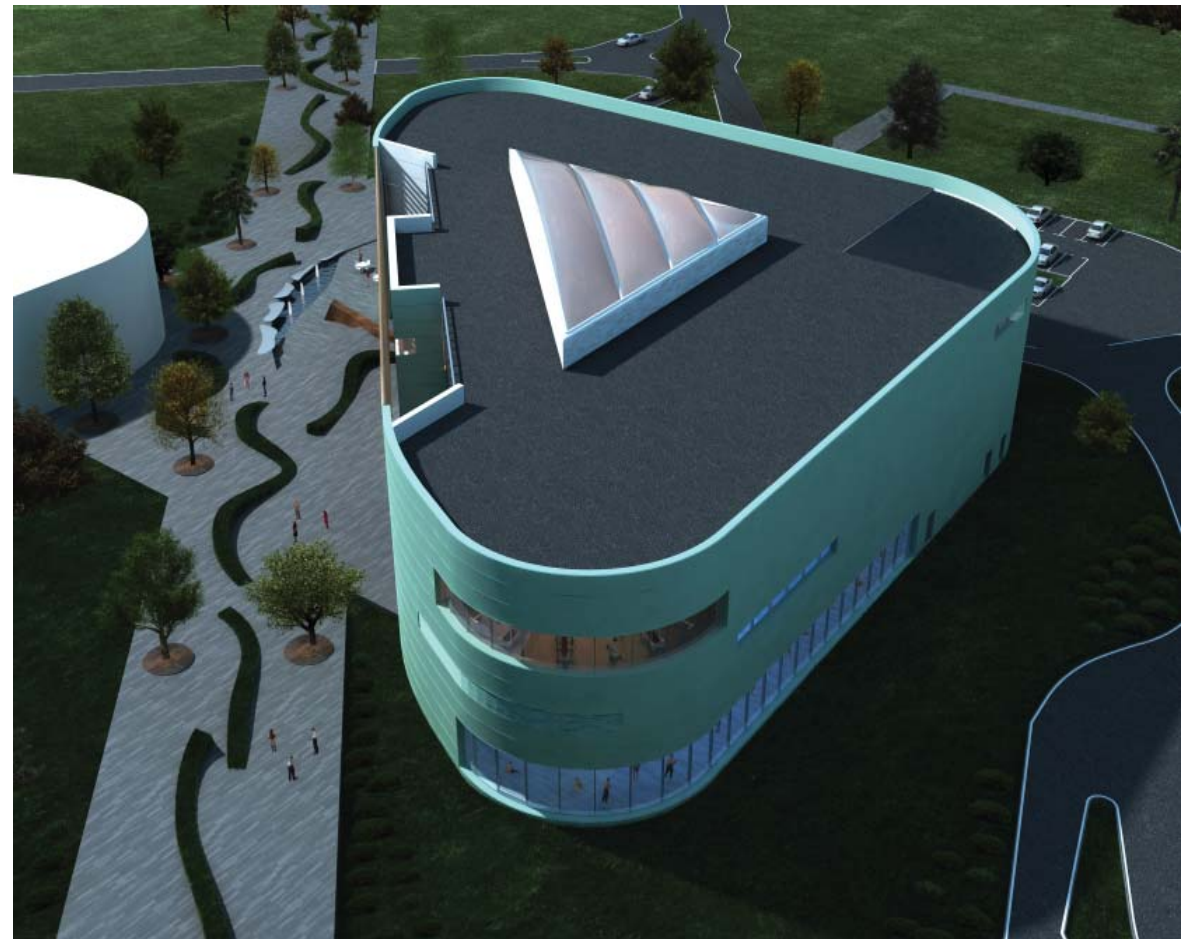
The approaches to the building have been carefully considered to allow pedestrians take precedence over all other modes of transport both for safety reasons and to discourage the use of cars for sustainability reasons. Pedestrian approaches from the nearby bus station, tram stop and the town centre lead to the boulevard and directly to the Leisure Centre entrance.

A new car park is provided to the south of the centre: this has been designed in accordance with the relevant codes and standards and taking into account feedback from the council's own highways department. Vehicular access to and from this car park is via the new road to the south of the Leisure Centre Building.

Pedestrian traffic from the new car park will move via the designated footpaths and raised table crossings to access the leisure centre. A new mini-bus set down area will be provided adjacent to the carpark and within easy reach of the leisure centre; a coach set-down lay-by will be created adjacent to the new access road to the carpark and within easy pedestrian reach of the boulevard and leisure centre. Ample provision has been made for disabled persons and family parking within the new carpark area.

Bicycle access will be using existing dedicated cycle routes linking into the boulevard. Well-lit and visually accessible cycle parking racks are positioned close to the leisure centre's entrance for straightforward access into the building.

Students from the adjacent high school will access the leisure centre through a managed safe route. Vehicle speed and movements are



Aerial view of building looking southwards. Boulevard shown as indicative only (design by others).

controlled by physical methods to reduce speed to the minimum and to make drivers more attentive.

### 3.6 Accessibility

All internal and external spaces are aimed to be fully accessible to allow everyone to use the facilities regardless of their physical capability. The building is designed to have level access at all entrances and accessibility has been considered carefully throughout the overall design.

Please refer to Appendix D for the Access Statement.

### 3.7 Landscape

An integrated landscape strategy has been developed for the overall site, including carparking provisions and the external cafe area. This has been prepared by Wolverhampton CC's own landscape architects and a copy is attached as Appendix E - Proposed External Works Plans.

### 3.8 Sustainability and 'BREEAM' requirement

At present the building achieves a BREEAM rating in the mid to high 'very good' level, however design work is ongoing to hopefully achieve the client's expressed requirement of a BREEAM rating of 'excellent'.

Natural daylight and ventilation to all three levels is possible via the atrium area and a CHP boiler will augment this when necessary.

Ground level landscaping is designed in accordance with the ecology report (Appendix H) to ensure maximum ecological benefit to the site.

See Appendix R for a copy of the renewables report for the proposal.

### 3.9 Health and Safety

Health and Safety in the design and use of the building has been



Current view of the site from footbridge above Black Country Route



Visualisation image showing the new Bilston Leisure Centre from footbridge above Black Country Route

considered from the outset using Jacobs' highly developed assessment methods and will continue to be monitored and updated throughout the entire design period.

#### 4.0 Archaeological Assessment and Evaluation

A desk-based assessment and walkover survey has been commissioned by Wolverhampton City Council for Bilston Urban Village and a copy of this is attached as Appendix F.

An extract from the Non-Technical Summary of the Environmental Statement reads thus: (Source: Bilston Urban Village website - <http://www.bilstonurbanvillage.co.uk>)

*“7.1 The assessment highlighted the importance both historically and archaeologically of the area surrounding the historic core of Bilston, from the early industrial sites of the medieval period through to the massive expansion and development of the iron and coal industries during the post medieval period.*

*7.2 Due to substantial 'made ground' across much of the proposed development site, the development proposals will not significantly affect archaeological deposits. The assessment highlighted less 'made ground' close to the canal at the site of the Capponfield furnaces and recommended that an archaeological watching brief will be required in this area on intrusive works.*

*7.3 The limiting of any further archaeological investigation to monitoring during construction activity is indicative of the absence of any significant impacts on archaeology resulting from the proposals.”*

#### 5.0 Land Contamination Report

Ground remediation and site enabling works have been undertaken on the site. These works were carried out by Wrekin Construction and supervised by Waterman Civils on behalf of Advantage West Midlands under Planning Application number 05/1894 dated 02/11/05.

It is understood that the works are to provide a remediated site to



Current view of the site from footpath along Black Country Route



Visualisation image showing the new Bilston Leisure Centre from footpath along Black Country Route

WCC approval suitable for the proposed end-use. A Completion Report is to be produced by Wrekin Construction and Waterman Civils on completion of the remediation works to fulfil Planning Application Number 05/1894 conditions.

## 6.0 Flood Risk Assessment

The Waterman Civils Desk Study Report for the site (ref 32161 dated April 2005, copy attached as Appendix G) states that the site is not within an Environment Agency designated Flood Risk Zone.

The use of on-site drainage, e.g. soakways, will not be used at the site due to unsuitable ground conditions, in particular deep made ground of low permeability that may undergo inundation settlement. Therefore, surface water run-off from the site will go into the Severn Trent storm drainage network via an attenuation system designed by Waterman Civils and installed during the enabling works.

## 7.0 Ecological Assessment

An Environmental Statement containing an Ecology and Nature Conservation chapter (Chapter 6) was prepared by Entec in 2005 for the Bilston Urban Village development. This chapter drew on the results of a number of ecological surveys undertaken during 2004 and 2005.

In addition, Faulkes Perry Culley & Rech in association with Waterman Burrow Crocker have developed a series of strategy documents for the Bilston Urban Village development (2005), including one for Nature Conservation, which drew on information from the Environmental Statement.

The Environmental Statement indicated, amongst other things, that:

- a. Badger, bats, birds, (including a number of red and amber listed species) and invertebrates (including nationally scarce species) were known to use the Plot A site, including in some cases, for breeding.
- b. The loss of the ephemeral/short perennial vegetation and semi improved grassland within Plot A represents a moderate and permanent impact on habitat for invertebrates.

In April 2008 Jacobs undertook a further ecological assessment of the Plot A site. This assessment concluded that since land clearance, the habitats within Plot A are now of low ecological value.

Jacobs Sustainability and Ecology Teams are currently considering a range of possible ecological enhancement measures that could be included in the design of the new leisure centre, including:

- a. Bird and bat boxes
- b. Ground level features (e.g. trees, ponds, use of wildflower grass mix)

The work being undertaken is focused on the recreation of habitat types which have been lost as a result of this development. To achieve maximum benefit it will be important to tie in the enhancements on the leisure centre site with those on the wider development.

Please refer to Appendix H for the report extracted from the Environmental Statement. (Source: Bilston Urban Village website - <http://www.bilstonurbanvillage.co.uk>).

A copy of the Sustainability & Ecology Report for the site is attached as Appendix Q.

## 8.0 Air Quality Assessment

A preliminary study of the site and the proposal has resulted in the following initial assessment:

*'...the centre will not be a significant generator of vehicle movements... even when the movement of these are at its highest they will typically be outside of peak times and therefore not lead to any associated congestion problems. Air quality in the area will continue to be dominated by traffic emissions from the dual carriageway in the locality and the leisure centre will not have any particular impact upon this.'*

## 9.0 Sustainable Communities Checklist

The West Midlands Sustainability Checklist ([www.checklistwestmidlands.co.uk](http://www.checklistwestmidlands.co.uk)) is being used alongside the BREEAM assessment criteria for the

project and the Plot A Development Brief (2006) to inform the consideration of sustainability for Bilston Leisure Centre.

The design team undertook a preliminary assessment of how the Bilston Leisure Centre development performs against the checklist questions in May 2008 (see Table 1).

Where the level of performance against a particular question was still to be determined, it was assumed that the development would meet the 'Minimum' requirements specified, which for the majority of questions correspond to the local planning authority minimum standard. Where checklist questions were felt not to apply to the Bilston Leisure Centre development, the question was registered as not applicable, as instructed in the checklist. A number of the checklist questions are most appropriately answered in the context of the wider Bilston Urban Village (BUV) development. Where information was available ([www.bilstonurbanvillage.co.uk](http://www.bilstonurbanvillage.co.uk)), the questions were answered with the BUV development in mind.

The Bilston Leisure Centre currently scores within the range 55% to 73% for each of the sustainability themes. These scores correspond to a 'Good' rating.

## 10.0 Regeneration Statement

The design for the proposed Leisure Centre site has been developed in accordance with the principles identified in the Bilston Town Centre Regeneration Strategy Final Report of November 2001.

## 11.0 Crime Report

This is the first building on the Urban Village so no security/vandalism issues have been proven. However, statistics from the nearby leisure centre at Bentley Bridge show significant problems have occurred and been registered with West Midlands Police. These are shown in Appendix J.

The Bilston Leisure Centre design therefore incorporates a number of elements to counteract the anticipated problems, including good visibility internally and externally, lighting etc. Roller shutters and grilles are not likely

to be required.

## 12.0 Safer Places Statement

The design of the leisure centre reflects 'Secure by Design' elements to ensure public safety as one of the main priorities. This includes staff working within the building and also the general public using the adjacent and associated social spaces such as the main boulevard and the cafe.

The following factors demonstrate how the leisure centre corresponds to some of the safety and security issues.

1. External – Pedestrian and cycle routes are sited for maximum visibility. Good lighting to the paths and streets will allow them to be safe to use at all times. Low level planting along the paths and streets allows clear views of the surroundings and deters anti-social activities. Active frontages to streets, boulevard and car park allows maximum security throughout the day.
2. Internal – Centrally located reception allows maximum surveillance throughout the building. Large internal glazing located along corridors allows transparency and safety. Clear visual sight lines are provided horizontally and vertically across internal spaces. Carefully designed open-plan changing villages and other public amenities permit supervision without intimidating personal privacy. Clearly identifiable (visual and physical) public, private and transition zones creates a straightforward and accessible building for everyone.

Table 1: West Midlands Sustainability Checklist - Preliminary assessment results (May 2008)

Sustainability theme	Number of questions	Assumed level of performance			
		Best	Good	Minimum	N/A
Climate change	11	4	4	2	1
Community	3	0	2	0	1
Maps making	20	4	5	8	3
Transport	11	3	3	2	3
Ecology	4	0	3	1	0
Resources	10	1	3	4	2
Business	7	1	2	1	3
Buildings	1	0	1	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>13</b>

The design has incorporated the necessary strategies as outlined in the Crime Prevention Strategy for Bilston Urban Village. The strategy is attached in Appendix K. (Source: Bilston Urban Village website - <http://www.bilstonurbanvillage.co.uk>)

### 13.0 Statement of Community Involvement

The following groups, organisations and authorities are being involved in various on-going discussions and meetings. Their comments and concerns are taken into consideration and this process has been an important part of the design process to ensure a well-designed leisure centre that meets the demands of the local community and relevant users.

#### 13.1 Wolverhampton City Council

Fortnightly design meetings are held between the client and the rest of the design team. Monthly workshops are also held to focus on specific elements of the design process.

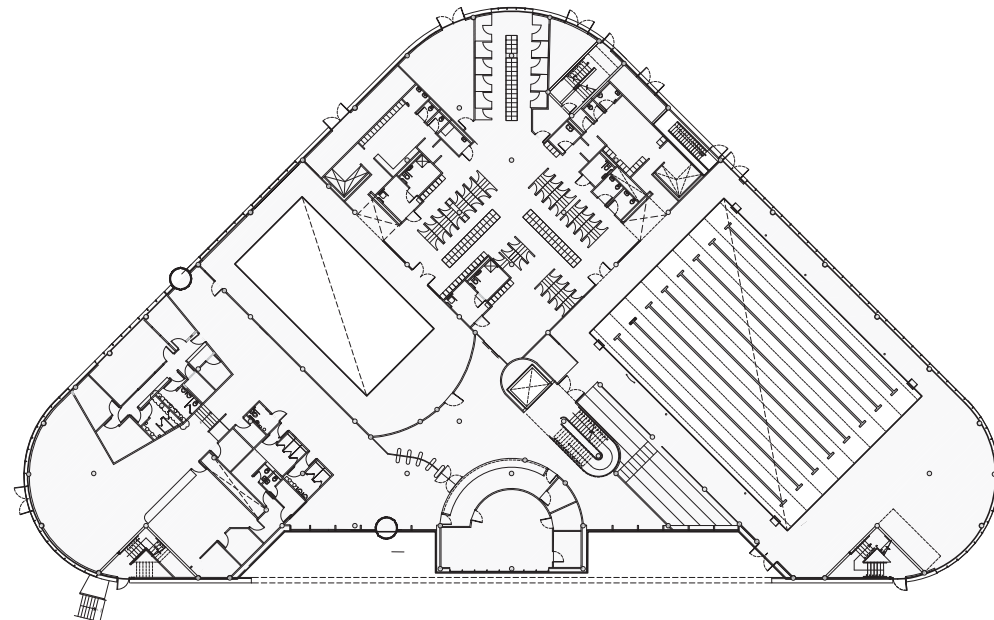
#### 13.2 Wolverhampton City Council: Sports Centre Operators

Separate meetings are also held with the client's Building Managers. Their comments have been evaluated and, where appropriate, incorporated into the current scheme.

#### 13.3 Advantage West Midlands

Consultation with the site owner, Advantage West Midlands, has taken place (& is ongoing) in a series of co-ordination meetings dating back to June 2005. The Development Brief (jointly prepared by Wolverhampton City Council, Advantage West Midlands, Waterman Burrow Crocker and Faulkes, Perry, Culley and Rech) issued in June 2005 (revision B) and subsequent revisions has informed the design throughout. The latest issue of this document is revision D, dated August 2006.

In addition, the Bilston Urban Village Management Structure has been set up to ensure effective dialogue between all the parties involved in the various elements of the work on the Urban Village including the



Ground floor plan of Bilston Leisure Centre

leisure centre, the Liftco (Primary Care Trust) building, the Academy and the link to Bilston High Street. Advantage West Midlands are represented at all levels of this management structure. A copy of the structure is shown as part of Appendix L.

### 13.4 Disability Advisory Group for Leisure Activities (DAGLA)

The client has requested that a presentation be made to the above group at the detailed design stage. An internal accessibility report has been prepared and the design has been revised accordingly.

### 13.5 Sport England

The scheme has been presented to Sport England and their remarks incorporated into the current proposal. Revised drawings and relevant information have been issued to keep Sport England up-to-date with the design process.

### 13.6 Planning Department

Meetings have been held with the local Planning Officer. His comments and observations have been addressed in the present scheme.

Further meetings have been held with WCC's Highway Department, Planners and Building Control to discuss various related issues including car park, road access and emergency escape routes from the building.

Copies of correspondence with the local community carried out during various design stages are attached in Appendix M.

## 14.0 Travel Plan

The Travel Plan identifies measures which will promote sustainable travel by reducing reliance on single-occupancy car travel, for instance use of public transport and car-sharing. Long-term monitoring procedures will be identified so that promotional efforts remain in place and utilise developing information technology.

A copy of the travel plan for the site is attached as Appendix S.

## 15.0 Transport Assessment

Below is an extract from the Transport Assessment conclusions. Please refer to Appendix O for a full copy of the report.

*"10.1 The results of the VISSIM modelling suggest that although the local road network currently copes with peak-hour traffic without excessive queuing and delays, it is running close to capacity and even an increase of a few percent will cause queues at junctions to tail back and cause gridlock. In the worst test scenario, that for 2018 with background traffic growth and addition of the full Bilston Urban Village development traffic, the network was loaded with 19% more traffic than present and this simply could not be handled.*

*10.2 The impact of the Leisure Centre alone is relatively small. Tests 'with and without' for both 2010 and 2018 show it to have relatively little impact. As a contributor to the overall traffic increase, it would be appropriate for an associated contribution to remedial measures to be made as a part of any planning permission.*

*10.3 As part of the original Bilston Urban Village Transport Assessment, in 2005, it was recommended that traffic signals be added to the Coseley Road roundabout as a means of increasing capacity. The VISSIM tests show that the section of the Black Country Route between Coseley Road and Oxford St. is heavily-congested with slow-moving traffic in either direction, and increasing capacity at Coseley Road might ease westbound flows, but would not relieve conditions eastbound and could potentially worsen them.*

*It is also obvious that Oxford St. Island will require some enhancement of capacity to complement works at Coseley Road. Whereas there is some scope to increase capacity at the latter, it would be extremely difficult to come up with a scheme to increase capacity at Oxford St. The alternative would be to seek measures to reduce public transport delay through bus lanes/priorities at these junctions.*

*10.4 Given that the network is already near or at capacity, an alternative would be to invest in alternative methods of travel to cater for the underlying increase in demand. However, it is difficult to see how a relatively small generator such as the Leisure Centre could fund significant public transport*

or walk/cycle facilities. Its Travel plan will ensure that its impact in terms of further car movements is minimised.

10.5 It is concluded that a pro-rata contribution to the Coseley Road Island signalisation would be an appropriate contribution by the Leisure Centre scheme.”

## 16.0 Lighting Scheme (including Light Pollution Assessment)

The lighting scheme for the development will take into account the need to minimise and avoid where possible light pollution. Details of the external lighting scheme and assessment are being prepared for the detailed design stage.

## 17.0 Flues and Vent Extract Details

There will be a number of flues and vent extracts at roof level: numbers and locations will be decided at the detailed design stage. The intention is to conceal these mechanical elements wherever practicable so they are not visible from ground level.

## 18.0 Financial Appraisal (“Percent for Art”)

It is proposed to procure the services of a facilitator to carry out community engagement workshops with the local children in the community through the adjacent school. It is intended that the engagement will promote community involvement with the development and provide graphical or 3 dimensional outputs, which will form an integral part of the building structure.

In this way the funding for expenditure on art will help to generate community engagement which will aid with the integration of the new facilities into the community. Likewise, this method of community involvement will result in artworks that express what the facility means to the community and that impart a sense of ownership to users of the facility.

## 19.0 Impact Assessment (Retail)

This development complements adjacent Bilston Town Centre and forms the gateway to the new Bilston Urban Village development. The following extract is taken from the Environmental Statement for Plot A: (Source: Bilston Urban

Village website - <http://www.bilstonurbanvillage.co.uk>)

“4.2.14 A sequential test was carried out to assist the Council in determining the revised outline application by assessing the leisure component of the scheme in the context of the key considerations set out in Planning Policy Statement 6 (planning for town centres).

2.15 PPS6 requires locations for proposed leisure uses to be assessed sequential:

- first locations in existing centres;
- then edge of centre locations
- then out of centre sites

Bilston Urban Village can be described as “edge of centre” as defined in Annexe A of PPS6, being within 300 metres of the Bilston town centre boundary.

### 4.2.16 Key Considerations

Need (need is already established - the proposed leisure centre does not represent a new facility - refer to level of usage of existing centre and its catchment area)

Scale (the scale is appropriate to the position of Bilston in the town centre hierarchy- upper limit can be set by condition)

Sequential test (having assessed suitable sites or buildings for conversion, there are no alternative sites in Bilston town centre; Bilston Urban Village is an edge of centre location well-connected to the centre and is the next preferred location therefore meeting the sequential test)

Impacts (this is a replacement facility - no adverse impact on any existing leisure uses in Bilston)

Accessibility (gateway improvements, proposed metro stop, enhanced public transport)

Other factors (physical regeneration, economic growth, social inclusion)

4.2.17 *Conclusion - The site is suitable, viable and available. The proposed leisure use in that location is fully in accordance with the Government's key objectives in PPS6 (planning for growth and development of existing centres; promoting and enhancing existing centres) and the relevant policies of the draft UDP (accessible by a choice of means of transport and compatible with nearby uses). "*

## 20.0 Planning Obligations

A range of work is being carried out under the direction of Advantage West Midlands before the site comes into the ownership of Wolverhampton City Council. This includes:

- a. Closing off of Dudley Street to the west of the site.
- b. Diversion of existing services in Dudley Street.
- c. Construction of new access road and vehicle roundabout to the south of Plot A.

The boulevard which will give pedestrian access to the new leisure centre is not included in this application. This will be constructed under a separate arrangement as part of the fabric of the urban village and will eventually extend to Bilston town centre in the north and to the urban village in the south. Until the boulevard is completed a temporary pedestrian access will be provided from the Black Country route to the front of the new leisure centre building.

## 21.0 Appendices

Appendix A	Drawings
Appendix B	Bilston Urban Village – Plot A Development Brief
Appendix C	Room Matrix
Appendix D	Access Statement
Appendix E	Proposed External Works Plan
Appendix F	Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment
Appendix G	Desk Study for Extended Plot A Bilston Urban Village
Appendix H	Ecology and Nature Conservation
Appendix I	High Street Link Strategy
Appendix J	Crime Incident Statement

Appendix K	Crime Prevention Strategy
Appendix L	BUV Management Structure
Appendix M	Correspondences with Local Community
Appendix N	Public Transport Strategy
Appendix O	Transport Assessment
Appendix P	Climate Change Adaptation Report
Appendix Q	Sustainability Report
Appendix R	Renewables Report
Appendix S	Travel Plan