At the heart of the West Midlands and boasting a rich industrial past, Sandwell is now looking forward to building the future.

We have much to offer investors and developers:
• Our location on the strategic highway network (with five major motorway junctions) and close proximity to Birmingham;
• A population of over 300,000 with a mix of skills; and
• A strong track record of business success.

Given our role in the industrial revolution of the 1800s and our history since, we in Sandwell have vast experience of dealing with major change. From Watt and Boulton to the industries of today, we have taken on challenges and proved that we can thrive.

We are already benefiting from major investment.

In our principal town of West Bromwich, for example, over £500 million-worth of development has either taken place or is under way. Neighbouring Smethwick is relishing the prospect of a new £370 million hospital, along with new homes.

We believe, though, there is still room for growth in all sectors to make sure we create a good environment in which to invest, live and work.

We are ready to work in partnership with developers, helping them throughout the process of transforming sites into profitable enterprises. That’s why we’ve set up Development Ready.

We look forward to Building Sandwell together.

Councillor Darren Cooper
Leader of Sandwell Council
WHAT IS DEVELOPMENT READY?

Development Ready is a new approach to supporting development in Sandwell that will seek to proactively market sites to developers and investors to progress regeneration throughout the Borough.

Each site to be promoted will have a Development Prospectus outlining the potential development requirements.

The aim is to provide clarity and confidence to potential developers. In addition to this, the Team will attempt to overcome any issues or problems with the sites. This will offer developers the certainty that the site is suitable for development.
WHAT WILL DEVELOPMENT READY ACHIEVE?

There are a number of aims to Development Ready:

• To regularise and improve the quality of service provided in order to support the private sector to bring forward development opportunities in the borough.

• To proactively encourage development through the identification and promotion of opportunity sites whether they are private or publicly owned.

• To provide certainty and confidence in SMBC’s planning processes.

• To improve engagement with developers and investors.

• To initiate new and forward thinking ways of working.

• To achieve the regeneration of sites within the borough, increasing investment and assisting in the provision of good quality developments.

• To work towards supporting the outputs of Sandwell’s Scorecard of Great People, Great Place, Great Prospects and Great Performance.
THE DEVELOPMENT READY APPROACH

The Development Ready approach is more than just one team, it is a combination of regeneration specialists working together to make things happen.

Although led by the Spatial Policy and Development Division, experienced staff from Property, Highways, Legal and Economy and Skills Services will all contribute to delivering a better quality Sandwell. Development Ready is a three pronged approach;

- A Developer Forum dedicated web-site where all development opportunities can be found in one place. Those who register with the site will automatically receive emails advising them of new sites that are available for development, along with any other changes in planning or property information.

- The establishment of a Development Ready Charter to give confidence in the level of service developers will receive from the Council and the Local Planning Authority. This charter can be found later in this document.

- The identification of opportunity development sites, both public and privately owned.

- A Development Prospectus will be produced for each site setting out the design aspirations, indicative layout, policy issues and other related information in guiding the future development.

- The potential to use Council resources to acquire land where combining sites will support wider regeneration objectives.

- The use of available Council resources or grants to undertake Site Investigations or other works that will make sites more viable and attractive to developers.

- The use of Council contacts and databases to jointly market private sites to developers.

The Development Ready Team will proactively promote Sandwell as a place to invest through:
The key to Development Ready is the dedicated professional support developers will be able access without charge. From the development of initial concept ideas, a dedicated Development Ready Officer will be on hand to facilitate and advise their client through issues such as detailed urban design, highways advice, liaison with external agencies, and consultation with the public - always with the goal of Building Sandwell.

Assistance will also be provided in marketing of private sites within the Borough following negotiations with private landowners and agreement to a marketing strategy.
The **Pre-Application Development Group** will support developers to realise the potential of sites through the:

- Creation of a multi-disciplinary Development Team to guide development and de-risk schemes on sites of strategic importance.

- Agree the initial principles of development in line with current planning policy to allow design to commence.

- Provide further engagement to discuss more detailed design and access issues prior to the submission of a planning application.

This will be a virtual team, specifically created to progress the development of sites following the identification of a prospective Developer.

The Team will include members from a range of disciplines including Planning, Urban Design, Highways, and Legal and others depending upon the complexity of the individual site.

Once the principles of development have been established the Developer will be encouraged to submit more detailed plans and attend further pre-application meetings to ensure that all the Council’s aspirations for development have been met and are in conformity with the Development Prospectus for the site.

The **Urban Design Panel** will be an advisory panel to ensure schemes are of an appropriate standard to obtain planning permission.

- Review strategically important proposals prior to submission.

- Provide an alternative advisory role to MADE and facilitate design review if necessary.

- Ensure development in Sandwell is of an appropriate quality in line with the requirements of Sandwell’s Development Plan.

The Development Prospectus for each site will include criteria for development that meets the urban design aspirations for the Borough. This may be reflected in either written or graphical form, but usually it will contain both.

This will provide guidance to the Developer when designing their scheme. However, it will also be possible to engage in more detailed discussions with a panel specifically set up to look at the design and layout issues of a scheme and to establish a way forward which would enable plans to be submitted for approval which meet Sandwell’s quality aspirations.
THE DEVELOPMENT READY CHARTER

WE WILL

• Develop good relationships with the private sector through considering their requirements and working with them to deliver their projects.

• Work to deliver good quality developments which continue to enhance the Sandwell offer and create sustainable development in the Borough that supports economic growth and better quality environments.

• Provide a comprehensive Development Team approach to ensure that all issues have been resolved prior to submission of an application – ensuring a smooth transition through the Development Management process.

• Work closer with other services to ensure a seamless process through all elements of property and planning, legal and design.

• Ensure developers have sufficient support through the development process to resolve issues at an early stage.

• Aim to explore ideas and options for new development proposals with investors that contribute to our shared goals.

• Consider marketing and viability issues when preparing Development Prospectus on potential development sites to ensure that proposals are deliverable.

• Be approachable and responsive to our client’s needs.
DEVELOPMENT READY TEAM PROFILES

Hayley Insley
I have been working in the planning and regeneration field since 1989, and have a wealth of experience including planning policy, planning regeneration, and project management.

More recently I have been the lead officer for the West Bromwich and Smethwick Area Action Plans, and have been involved in the planning of the new Grove Lane Hospital, as well as several major housing regeneration projects in West Bromwich and Smethwick.

As the lead officer for the Development Ready Team, I intend to drive the delivery of development in Sandwell, identifying development opportunities, working to overcome the unique difficulties facing development in Sandwell, and deliver the Councils scorecard priorities to create a better Sandwell.

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Hayley_insley@sandwell.gov.uk

Chris Sharp
I have over 8 years experience working within the field of planning and regeneration. I have extensive project management skills and have managed major regeneration schemes across Sandwell. I also have experience in grant funding and working in partnership with developers to access funding opportunities.

I value community consultation and consider it to be one of the key components to delivering successful projects.

I have specialist knowledge of the Compulsory Purchase Order process to enable the efficient assembly of land intended for future development.

0121 569 4890
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Valdheer Rajania
I have worked in the regeneration field for 9 years and have extensive experience in providing planning and development advice to help guide developers and sites through the development process.

I have skills in masterplanning development sites and understanding development constraints. I can also provide specialist urban design advice and solutions on complex sites within the Borough.

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Jenna Wallis
Having worked within regeneration since 2008 I have worked on a wide variety of development projects to deliver real benefits for the Black Country. The main focus of my work throughout this time has been the West Bromwich regeneration programme where I have supported all partners to achieve their outcomes.

Being a member of the Development Ready team enables me to apply this experience to the continuing regeneration of Sandwell as a whole, by proactively working to identify development opportunities and supporting our clients.

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Mark Watkins
I have been involved in planning and regeneration for the last 17 years.

Commencing my career in Dudley, I assisted with inward investment and company relocations. A move followed to Black Country Investment where my main roles were to assist developers to bring development sites forward and work on inward investment projects. In my current position with Sandwell Planning Department my main areas of work are working in Strategic Planning Policy and producing area based planning documents.

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DevelopmentReadyTeam

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