Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

West Bromwich Town Centre Masterplan

"The Future of West Bromwich: A transformational Town Centre Masterplan"



***"A proud, vibrant market town** with facilities and amenities for everyone"*

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Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

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Councillor Maria Crompton - Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council Deputy Leader:

"West Bromwich Town Centre Masterplan provides a vision for growth and prosperity for the town for the next 20 years. The vision seeks to create a vibrant, rich and busy town centre with a mix of new uses with supporting residential communities in the town. We want a town where people can live, stay and enjoy their environment and a place they can be proud to call home. This is the start of an ambitious plan for the future regeneration and transformational change for the town. The Masterplan will be at the centre of the town's growth for the future and signals a positive statement to attract ongoing and future investment funds from a range of stakeholders and partners."



Jude Thompson - Chair of Sandwell Towns Fund Superboard and President of the Black Country Chamber of Commerce:

"The Masterplan will present a significant opportunity to deliver transformational change to West Bromwich given the unprecedented environment we are now in. The long term vision will provide business confidence which together with the Council's partners present significant investment opportunities for the town and which will enable it to grow and be sustainable for the future. The Masterplan provides the right environment for business and commerce to come together to help drive forward the ambitious plan for West Bromwich and in doing so reinforcing its position as the strategic premier town centre for the borough of Sandwell. This is the start of an exciting journey."



Chris Hinson - Chair of West Bromwich Town Deal Local Board (Sandwell Business Ambassador):

"The Masterplan will present a significant opportunity to breathe life back into the Town Centre and create a safe welcoming environment with a modern mix of housing, retail and employment opportunities. The Plan will encourage, support and improve the existing business offering for the town and will capitalise on the existing Town Deal Funding. The proposals will promote more quality and diverse uses in the town together with a residential element which will help to support new environments and communities, and enhance the existing green spaces and infrastructure. The town is blessed with great transport modes which makes it an ideal hub to live, work and socialise in."



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Introduction

1

"An exciting
place to live"

THE HUB

BUS INTERCHANGE

MARKET SQUARE

DARTMOUTH PARK

Introduction
Introduction & Brief

Sandwell Council is looking to deliver transformational change to West Bromwich Town Centre and create a place that people can be proud to call their home. Where people come to live, work and play and a place that is capable of capitalising on the significant opportunities that will be available in the West Midlands.

West Bromwich has undergone a significant transformation over the last 10 years to see that it maintains its position in the Black Country as one of the four strategic centres and a renewed ability to serve the needs of local people, the wider population and the business community.

The role of our town centres are changing across the country. The retail sector, which has long dominated town centres, has undergone decline with changing consumer patterns, increased online shopping, and high rents resulting in closures. This has only been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. At the same time towns across the country are responding to community needs for more homes in well connected locations, more jobs close to homes, a diversity of jobs in new and emerging sectors, more liveable, high quality places, a greater focus on health and wellbeing and improved connections to nature. Our towns must respond to these changes or face being left behind.

The key development proposals are set out in a hierarchy of planning policy documents, with site specific policies and proposals within the West Bromwich Area Action Plan (WBAAP, adopted December 2012). Although still broadly relevant, the pace and extent of change in the town since 2012 has meant that in some instances the WBAAP no longer reflects the current market conditions, direction of new development or how the town can capitalise on new opportunities and investment.

The WBAAP expires in 2026 and is now dated. The Black Country Core Strategy (BCCS) is also under review and will become the Black Country Plan (BCP), which is proposed for adoption during 2024. To 'bridge' this policy gap the Council requires an updated policy position to provide guidance and context to decisions affecting West Bromwich town centre; therefore an 'Interim Planning Statement' (IPS) is being produced to help capitalise on new opportunities and the potential additional investment now available to meet the Councils key objectives.

West Bromwich is also facing unique opportunities. The Town has recently been allocated significant Town Deal funding from the Government to support its transformation. In order to ensure this money has a lasting impact, rather than piecemeal projects, a coherent single vision and strategy is required for the town. This ambitious masterplan aims to deliver that vision and present a plan for the future of West Bromwich that will transform how people live, work and visit the town.

A Masterplan is required to demonstrate where key development schemes can be delivered to provide leverage to secure investment and realise opportunities for the town now and for the future. This work, together with the IPS will give the Council an up-to-date policy framework within which strategic decisions on land use, investment and other forms of development can be taken and subsequently delivered.

The Masterplan will provide inspiration to enable the delivery of new homes and jobs in the context of a high quality mixed use environment which will provide the basis for a thriving and resilient town whilst being able to respond to the effects of Covid-19. Sandwell Council's (SMBC) vision is for all of its towns to be thriving and optimistic places, with resilient communities.

These towns are where we call home and are proud to belong to - where we choose to bring up our families, feeling safe and cared for, enjoying good health, rewarding work, feeling connected and valued in our neighbourhoods and communities, confident in the future, and benefiting fully from a revitalised West Midlands.

The masterplan is expected to embrace the Councils 2030 vision, and objectives and support the drive of Sandwell's Inclusive Economy Deal.

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Introduction
Policy and Strategy

Strategic Alignment

West Bromwich is one of the main strategic centres in the Black Country. The issues facing the town are common across many Town Centres in the UK. Overcoming the challenges and unlocking the major opportunities facing West Bromwich are key principles of Government strategy at the national, regional and local level. Supporting places like West Bromwich to transition is currently at the heart of the Governments policies nationally. Planning for growth in West Bromwich aligns strategically with the following national, regional and local policies:

- Levelling Up – The Governments ambition is to reduce inequality across the Union and invest in 'left-behind' areas that perform poorly in terms of employment, skills, health and pay. The Government has pledged £4 bn of funding for these locations

- Transforming Cities – The Government recognizes that towns and cities hold the key to economic growth. The current GVA gap between our towns and cities is significant, bridging this gap, and creating places that can support diverse and sustainable economies is a key strategy for the national economy. Sandwell has been successful in securing £25 million of Town Deal funding to support the redevelopment of West Bromwich, including key projects such as urban greening, green links and retail diversification. The Masterplan aims to build on these initiatives and the wider aims of the towns fund to create suitable communities in town centres

- Green Industrial Revolution and Net Zero Carbon economy – The Government has a significant, legally binding, commitment to reduce carbon emissions. To deliver on this commitment there is a need for our economic centres to be more sustainable and alter the way people travel. The masterplan will create opportunities to deliver highly sustainable buildings, with modern low carbon technology and increase public transport use, therefore reducing vehicle use

- 'Midlands Engine' economic alliance – A public and private partnership imitative which aims to bridge the gap between the performance of the Midlands and the rest of the country. The ambition is to increase GVA and improve transport, skills, unlock housing and support economic growth

- West Midlands Combined Authority Strategic Economic Plan – The SEP aiming to increase jobs, business start-ups, increasing GDV. The strategy will focus on delivering the right housing in the right location and improving Urban centres and the role they play in the economy

- Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership – focusing on creative and digital industries, the impact of HS2 and connectivity benefits; skills for growth; housing delivery; and improvements to health and wellbeing outcomes

Planning Policy

The following National and Local Design guidelines have been considered in the formulation of the masterplan concept:

- National Design Guide
- Building for Life
- Black Country Garden City Principles
- SMBC's Residential Design Guide SPD
- Big Plans for a Great Place
- Vision 2030
- West Bromwich AAP, 2012
- WMCA and Sandwell MBC Draft DIP
- West Bromwich Town Investment Plan

Further details are available in Appendix A

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Introduction

Where is West Bromwich?

Location & Profile Overview

Sandwell is a metropolitan borough in the Black Country made up of six towns: Oldbury, Rowley Regis, Smethwick, Tipton, Wednesbury and West Bromwich.

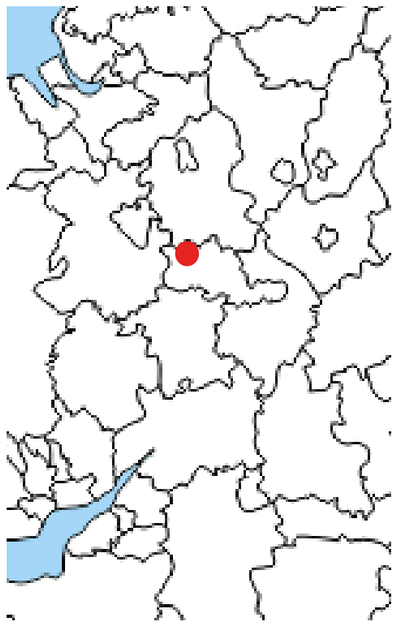
West Bromwich is the largest town by population size and by area, giving it the lowest population density. It includes the main commercial and retail centre of Sandwell.

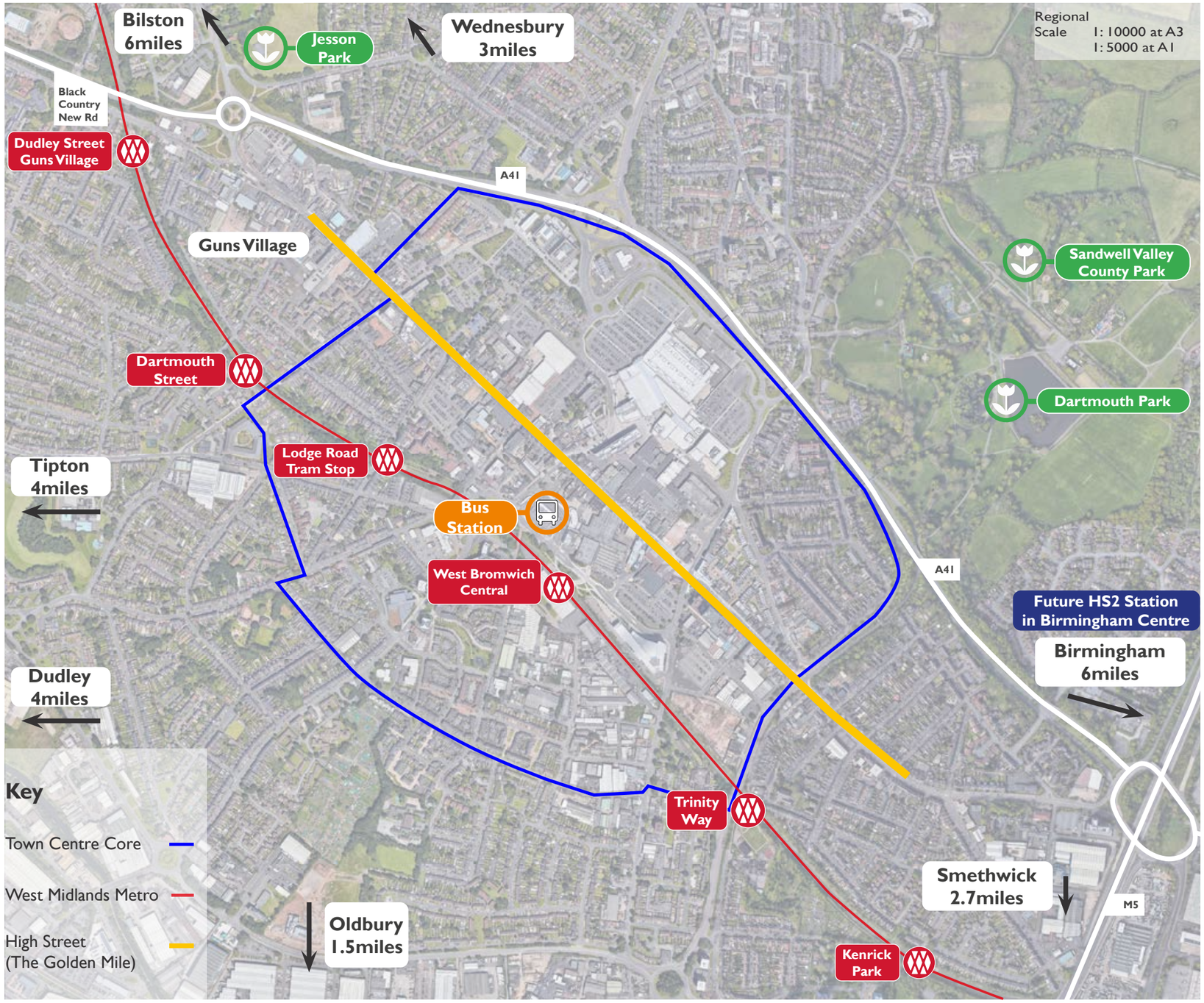
Its housing markets include older terraced housing in the town centre, extensive council-built neighbourhoods to the north and the more affluent suburban Great Barr area. The town also has one of the most successful new residential developments in the Midlands at the Lyng Phase 1.

It has the second oldest age profile in Sandwell with 16.6% of its population aged over 65.

It has the second highest number of jobs at 36,400 and has experienced 6% employment growth since 2012. Its 2,430 businesses have experienced similar growth.[1]







[1] Reference (The Sandwell Plan).

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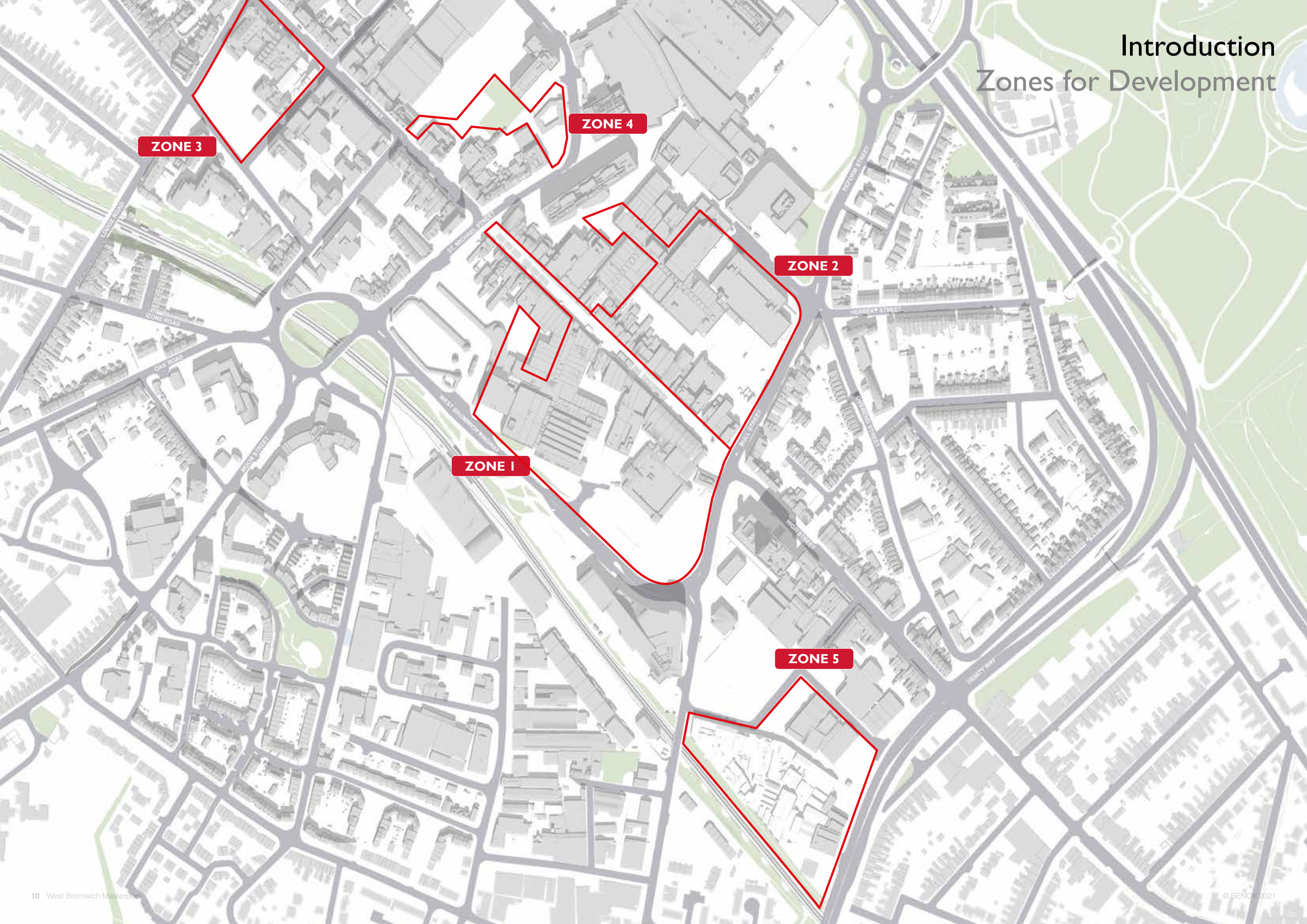
Introduction

Zones for Development



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*“**Re-discover***
our history”

Kenrick & Jefferson Grade II listed printing works

Vision

2

*"A warm **welcome**"*



Our vision is for West Bromwich to be a thriving, optimistic and resilient town. West Bromwich is the strategic heart of Sandwell, a destination town, a place where the people of Sandwell and the wider West Midlands come to shop and relax, with things to do for all. It is a gateway into higher education, where students choose to come to study; a landmark of sport through our public spaces and sports clubs; and a safe place where people want to live, with high quality housing available for people of all ages.

The vision will be achieved by:

1. Creation of metro gateway, new town square and a step change in the quality of place / public realm

2. Creation of green links, squares, parks and sustainable travel networks

3. Development of a major mixed use community including residential and employment to create a vibrant, active and sustainable town centre

Introduction
Need for Change

There are many drivers for change in West Bromwich and reasons why investment here can deliver wider benefits. They include:

Population growth and residential demand – The local population is growing, but housing delivery has not occurred at the same rate. In 2018-19 only 794 net additional dwellings were delivered in Sandwell, well below the Governments assessment of housing need of 1,432 homes. This has resulted in significant housing demand and people are seeking homes in good quality locations with access to amenities and good transport links. West Bromwich in the future could deliver on these needs and grow a sustainable residential community.

Deprivation and Skills – The local population and surrounding area is characterized by some of the most deprived communities in the country (top 10% most deprived) according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation. Qualifications and wages are low. Delivering a step change in the quality of environment, economic, skills and training opportunities to this community aligns with the Governments Levelling Up agenda.

Quality of the environment – The Town Centre is blighted by a number of high profile vacant and derelict spaces. It suffers from a number of structural issues which hinder access and create opportunities for crime. Over 12-months around 1,000 incidents of crime were recorded in the town. There are negative perceptions of the town as a place to live, work and visit. To create a centre capable of supporting a residential community and attract visitors requires transformation in the quality of the centre.

Retail oversupply and changing demand – There is a lack of economic diversity and an oversupply of retail floorspace, much of which is long term vacant and obsolete. Vacancy rates were close to 20% pre-pandemic and have worsened. To tackle the oversupply of retail uses there is a need to repurpose redundant retail space to new uses, increase the shopper population of the area via residential development, and improve the vibrancy and quality of the shopper experience in the town.

Economy and Job growth – We are a 15 minute commute to Birmingham, and at the centre of the Black Country. We are well placed to capture economic growth opportunities. Job growth is strong (15% increase since 2015) and there are opportunities in emerging sectors including leisure, arts, creative, digital, tech, and professional service sectors.

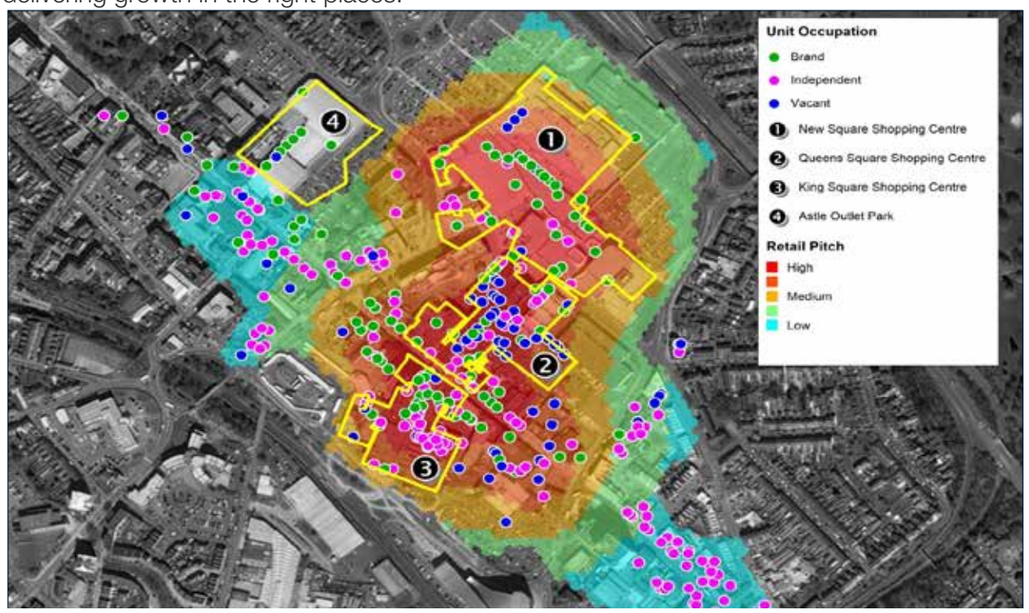
As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic the conditions for office working have changed significantly. There is greater flexibility over where people work and more home working. There is also more demand for workspace on our high streets, in co-working spaces, and in areas that are close to home. There is also increased demand for incubator space for new business start ups in a variety of sectors which can help to diversify the economy. These trends are creating significant opportunities for towns like West Bromwich to support future job growth and deliver jobs close to peoples homes

Sustainability – Our metro and bus station mean we can provide communities with sustainable, low carbon travel options. The proximity to Dartmouth Park will provide our communities with active space. Improvements to our cycling and walking network will create a sustainable place to support population growth.

All Town Centres across the country are facing similar challenges to West Bromwich. Changing retail demand, greater demand for housing, changing employment markets, issues with quality of environment. At the same time it is important that town centres work well as economic drivers for our national economy, alleviate pressure on housing growth in green belt areas, help tackle the housing affordability crisis, link people with jobs and avoid long commuting, promote sustainable transport, and help meet the challenge of global warming by transitioning to low carbon and sustainable practices.

West Bromwich has a unique opportunity to deliver transformation due the successful allocation of Town Deal funding, which will be used to help deliver this change in the town and respond to future opportunities.

This Masterplan recognises that in order to achieve these complex challenges requires an ambitious and transformational approach to regeneration. Creating a new balance of uses and delivering growth in the right places.



Retail and Leisure Use Analysis
Source: GOAD, Geolytix, Savills, 2019

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Introduction

Collaborative Approach and Engagement

Process

In order to create the vision, we needed to understand the challenges facing the town today and the aspirations of those who live, work and play in West Bromwich. The views of the local community were embedded in the design and formulation of the final masterplan.

In Spring 2021 West Bromwich was granted funding from the Towns Fund as part of the Town Investment Plan strategy. As part of this, significant Public Engagement was undertaken with the local community to hear the views of the public and stakeholders.

The masterplan has further engaged with the community through online workshops and meetings and a public consultation was undertaken in July 2021 to present the ideas. The resulting feedback fed in to the final masterplan which continually developed throughout this process.

Regular meetings and workshops have been undertaken between the local authority, organisations and individuals to inform the design and test the viability and concepts throughout the process.

The masterplan is the result of a shared vision to unlock investment and deliver new schemes that can drive economic growth and improve the quality of life for local people.

Public Consultation Events





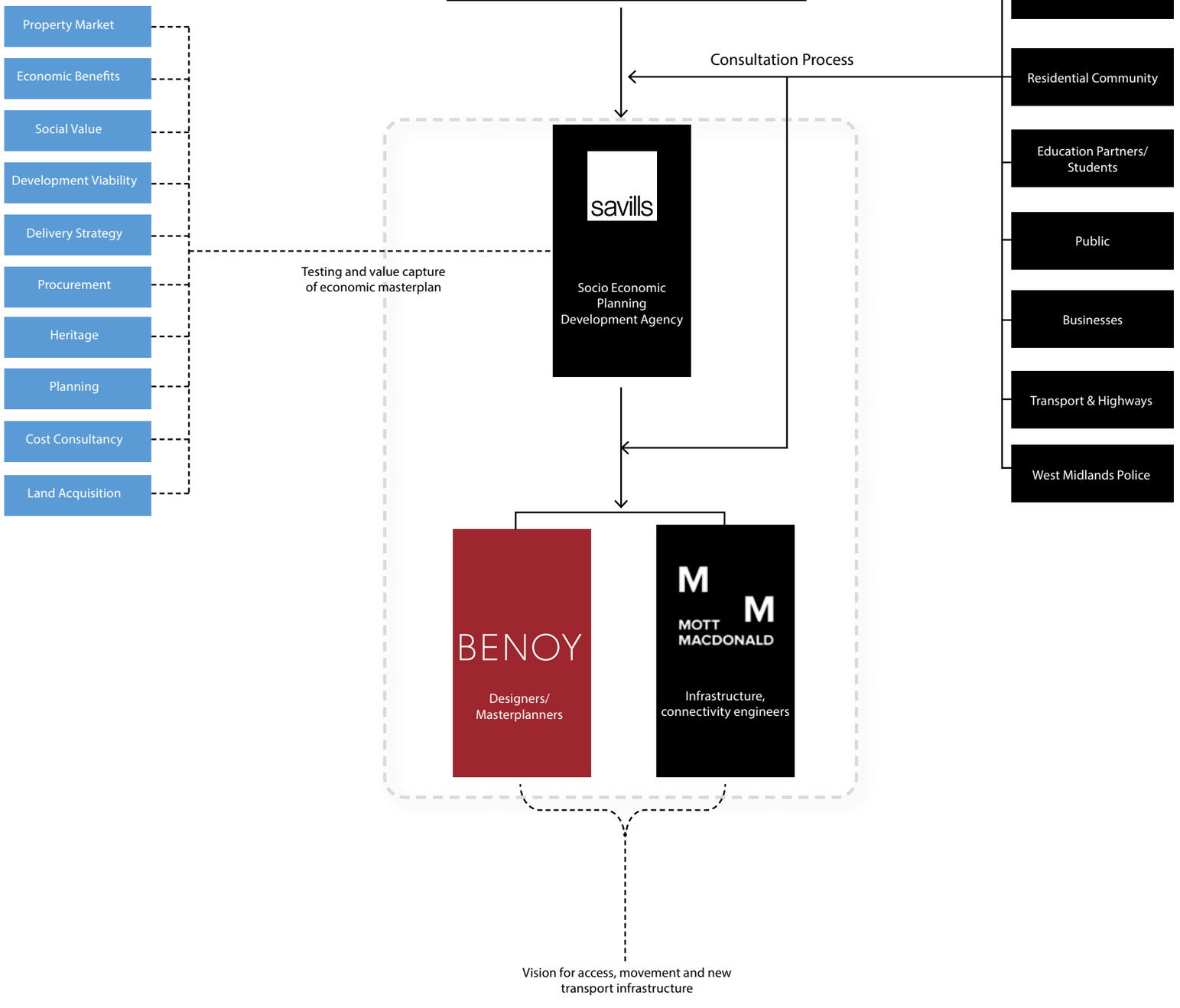

Diagram identifying the process

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*"**Consultation Responses-** Common Themes"*



NEED FOR EVENING ECONOMY



REVITALISED ECONOMY



EMPTY OFFICE SPACE RE-PURPOSING



VERMIN



COMMUNITY SPACE NEEDED



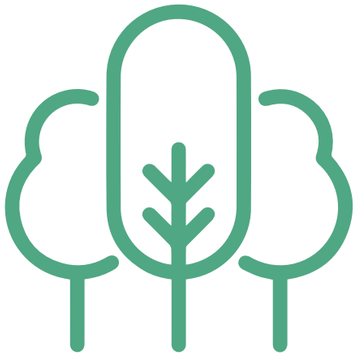
INCREASE RECYCLING



LACK OF HOUSING



CRIME & ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR



GREENERY NEEDED



MORE PUBLIC TOILETS



MORE DISABLED FACILITIES



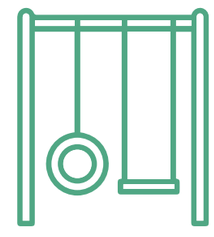
RE-UPTAKE OF LIBRARIES



GREEN TRANSPORT SOLUTIONS



SECURE CYCLE PARKING



SPACE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

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MAKE WEST BROMWICH BETTER
Save water
Lovely Fab
Super Rodrigo
would you save animals

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Introduction
Engagement Feedback

Youth Engagement

A workshop was held on an online platform with Sandwell College and a writing and Illustration competition was undertaken with the Lyng Primary School to understand key issues and challenges facing the younger generations within West Bromwich and their aspirations and ideas for the future.

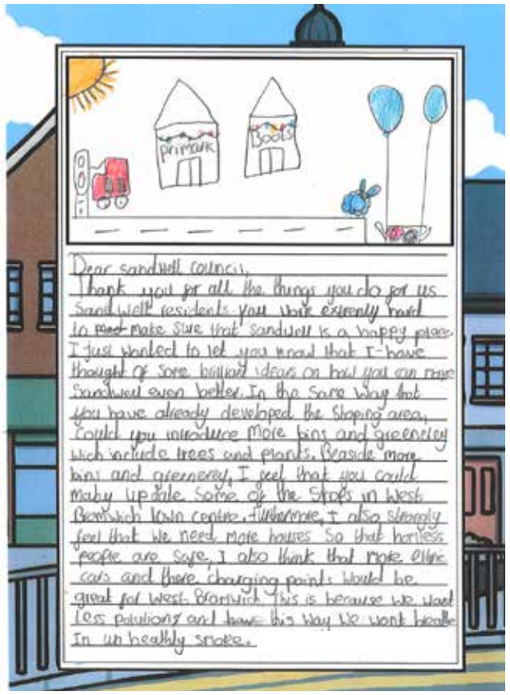
Key Challenges Identified and aspirations

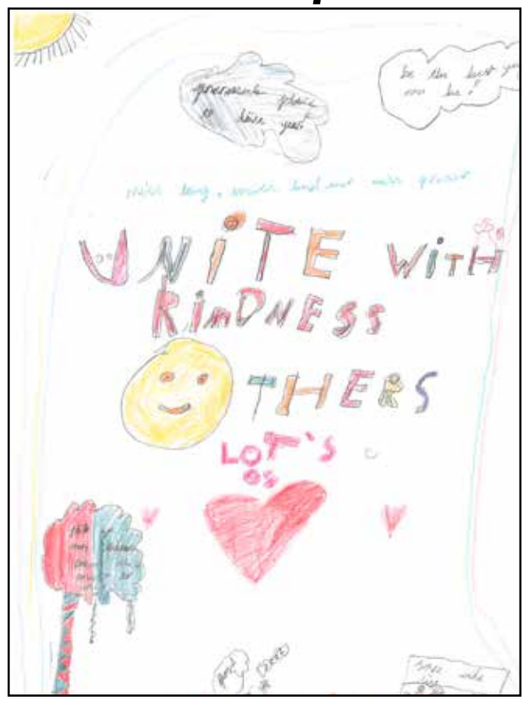
- Anti social behaviour/litter and graffiti. Fear for safety. Problems around the bus station where people hang out.
- Nothing to do & nowhere to go day and night. No social space for young generation after school/college.
- Poor connections from metro to centre.
- Need for leisure/active facilities, pop up events, music festivals, cinemas, crazy golf, bowling, ice skating and trampoline parks.
- No green central space/no central park. Nowhere to exercise. Indoor/outdoor playing space limited. Sports pitches needed.
- Homelessness.
- Too much surface car parking and limited cycle provisions.
- Not enough suitable eating provisions/no foodhall/no outdoor seating.
- Traffic and congestion. Road network confusing.
- Urban allotments for growing food needed.
- Better quality markets/farmers markets/Independent food shops.
- Need additional better quality homes and retirement homes.
- More healthcare and pet care.
- University/education campus would improve town.
- A more attractive centre- Murals, art and sculpture.

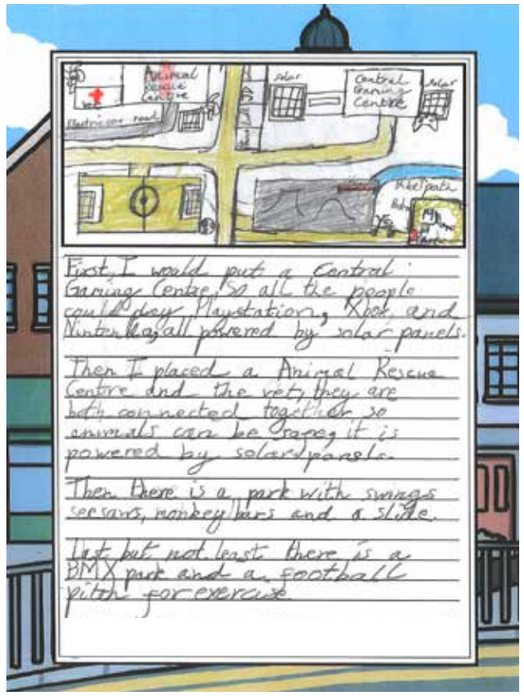
Public Consultation Feedback on Key Challenges

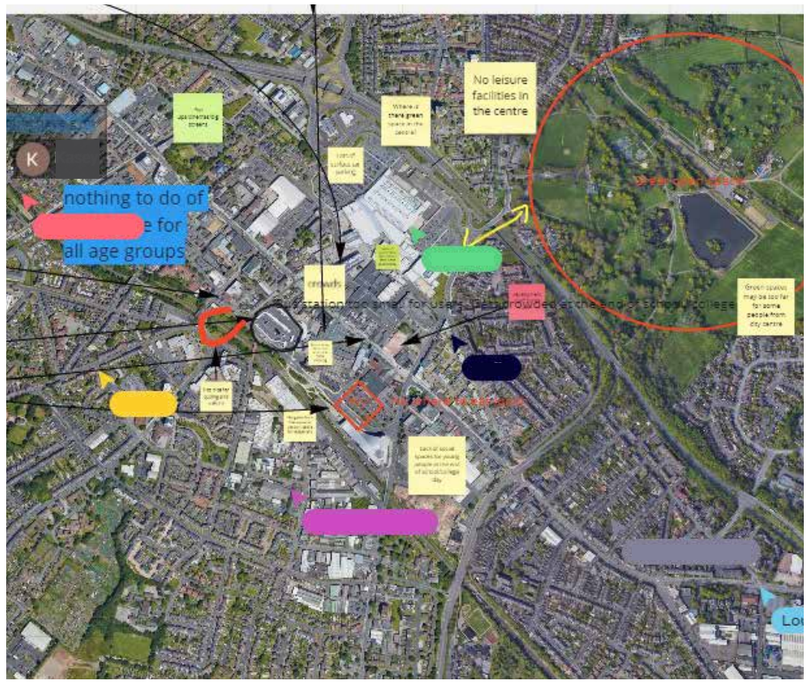
- Anti Social Behaviour
- Crime
- Image and perception of West Bromwich

"We Listened- And Responded"











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Introduction

Previous Town Investment Plan (TIP) Engagement - Common Themes

The Town Investment Plan has already engaged with businesses, community organisations and residents across West Bromwich, as well as from previous engagement developed during Vision 2030, the Inclusive Economy Deal, and through local community surveys and interviews. Common themes are listed below. The masterplan will also consider this feedback.

*"West Bromwich needs an **identity**"*

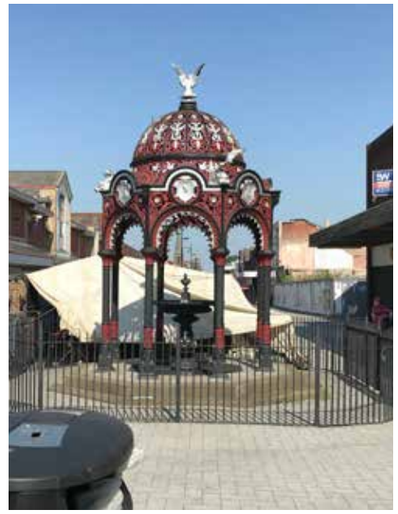
*"Provide theatre and **community events** and activities for all ages" "Provide **support for all residents**, i.e. career advice, mental health services"*

*"Amenities are too spread out across the town centre, with a **need to improve connectivity** and create a **stronger core**"*
*"**Pedestrianised zones** may help to increase space and better connect the town centre"*
*"Include information and **sustainable travel** options to encourage their use and make the developed spaces multi-use and accessible to all"*
*"Better **walking and cycling** routes-travelling to work"*
"Green transport is more important than ever"

*"More **social spaces**, access to **free WiFi**"*
*"Gaming centre, youth lounges, social spaces to eat and drink. **Better youth facilities**. Things for young people"*
*"More entertainment and **activities for families and old people**"*

*"Capitalise on this opportunity and better **connect the town with the green space/Sandwell Valley**. Better signage to green spaces"*
*"Use **derelict sites as green spaces**, easily accessible and **within walking distance** from residents' houses. Create areas of urban natural play"*
*"Consider **places for young people to play sports**, both indoor and outdoor spaces."*
*"Consider **street furniture**"*
*"Creative design of the built **environment for children to play**"*









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Introduction

Previous Town Investment Plan (TIP) Engagement - Common Themes

"Create night time offer ***Live entertainment*** *venues"*

"Outdoor farmer/local market. ***Upgraded markets and shopping areas****"*
"Market area and old square to be refurbished. New food and drinks market"

"Full fibre internet ***access to digital technology****. Improve digital capacity"*

"Complement (or enhance) existing schemes or assets. ***Better lighting & Improved CCTV****"*

"Small and medium-sized ***local businesses to access commercial spaces*** *with reasonable rents and business rates is important to keeping them in West Bromwich"*
"Opportunities for businesses to innovate within the area and make West Bromwich a centre for the ***future of industry and manufacturing****"*

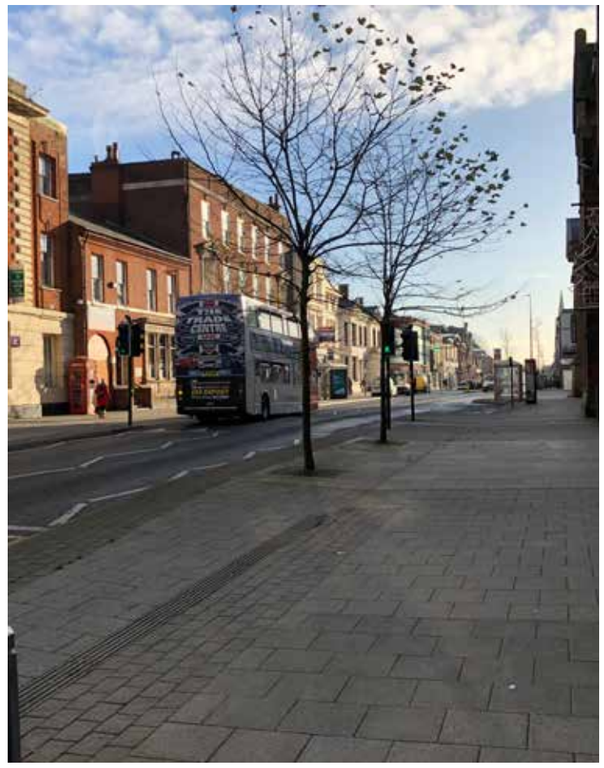
*"****Existing retail*** *offer which shouldn't be added to, but* ***improved****"*
"More ***social spaces and popular brands*** *to the town centre"*
*"****Re-purpose*** *empty shops/market stalls"*
"Create synergy between the new shopping areas and the old shopping areas by ***linking them with sustainable travel routes and a green corridor****"*

*"****Aspire for a University campus****, Student village, student accommodation, recreation and leisure opportunities"*
"Improved ***training and education for local people*** *of all ages, particularly for traditional trades, digital skills and arts"*
"A ***hub for young people*** *to further develop their skills"*
*"****Collaboration between businesses and education*** *institutions are vital"*









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Analysis
What is West Bromwich?

Image: Top left

- High Street- Mixed Use
- Retail
- Health & Services
- Education
- Leisure/Sport/Recreation
- Industrial
- Residential

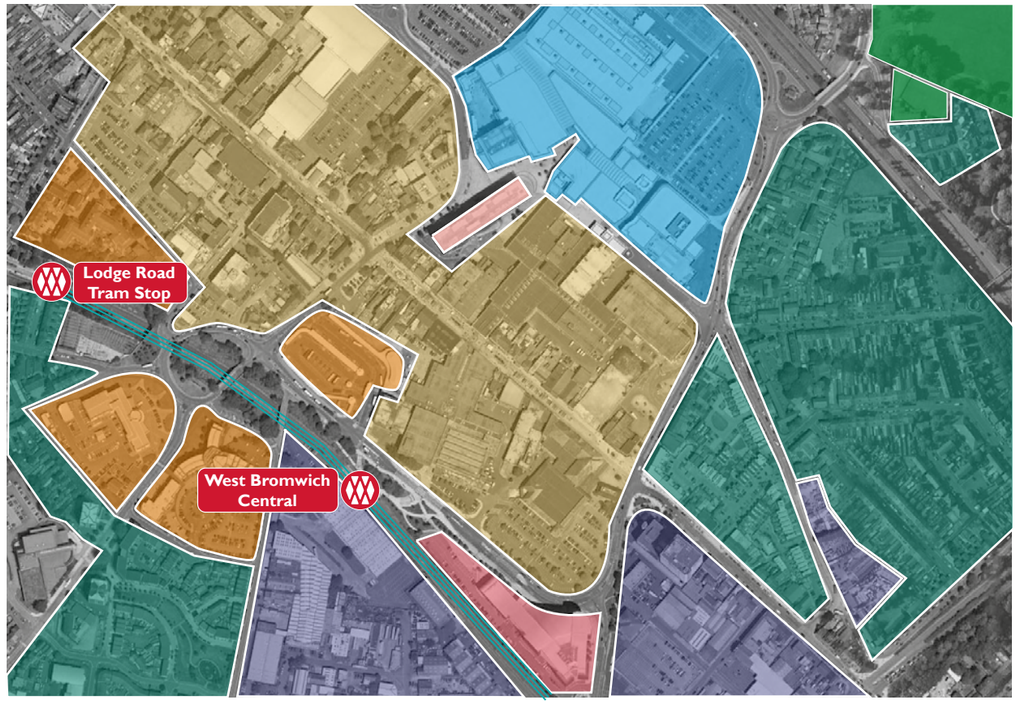
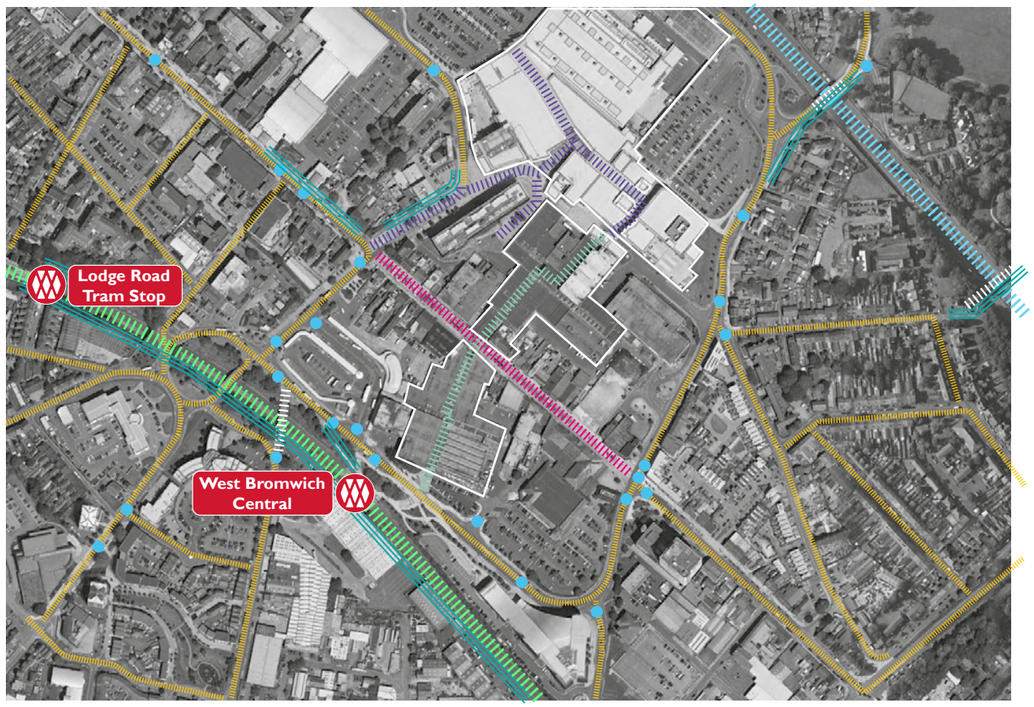


Image: Top right

- A41
- Metro line
- Primary vehicle routes
- Restricted zone- Buses only
- Pedestrianised zone
- Internal pedestrian route
- Cycling routes
- Key crossings



Uses - Predominant Zoning

Town Centre uses are predominantly grouped with the main retail core circled by housing to the east and south. The centre and chain retailers have shifted north over the last decade with the development of St Michael's Square and New Square Shopping Centre. The High Street has suffered as a result and has less footfall. There is a limited draw to the west of the High Street although Astle Retail park is well used and attracts visitors. Light industry sits to the south and boarders the Lyng community.

Rather than grouping uses the masterplan vision will focus on truly mixed use environments with uses to complement one another and create sustainable, well connected mixed use neighbourhoods and communities with multiple functions that will be used both during the day and in the evening.

Access & Flows

The Masterplan will align with the TIP project to deliver 'green links' through the town making sustainable transport via walking and cycling easier and improving links to Dartmouth Park.

The current street network is relatively impermeable to pedestrian movement and hinders active north-south and east-west connectivity. In addition to the weak permeability, the key 'gateway' points into the heart of the town centre lack identity with no clear sense of 'arrival' with inactive exposed service areas and backs of buildings dominating an inward looking town centre.

The masterplan will increase active frontages, create direct, permeable and more purposeful street networks prioritised for pedestrians with legible routes and a new central market heart/square whilst appreciating the historical urban grain and authenticity of the Town Centre. Ultimately to find a balance between movement & place functions.

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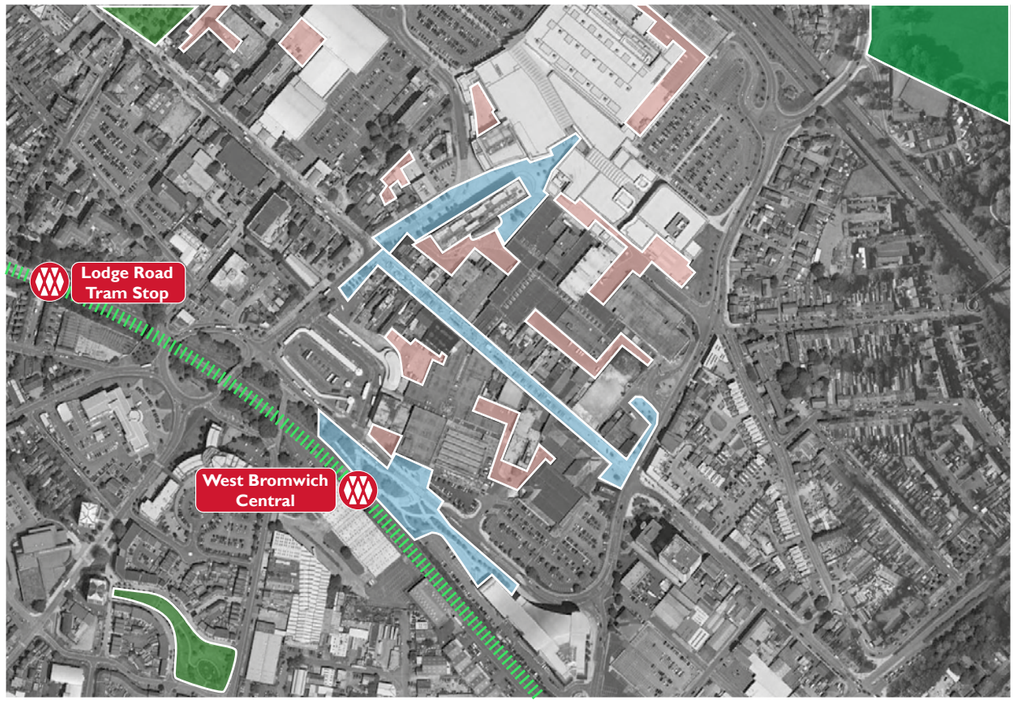
Analysis

What is West Bromwich?

Image: Top left

- Public Realm / Public Space
- Parks /Public Access
- Back of House/Servicing Areas



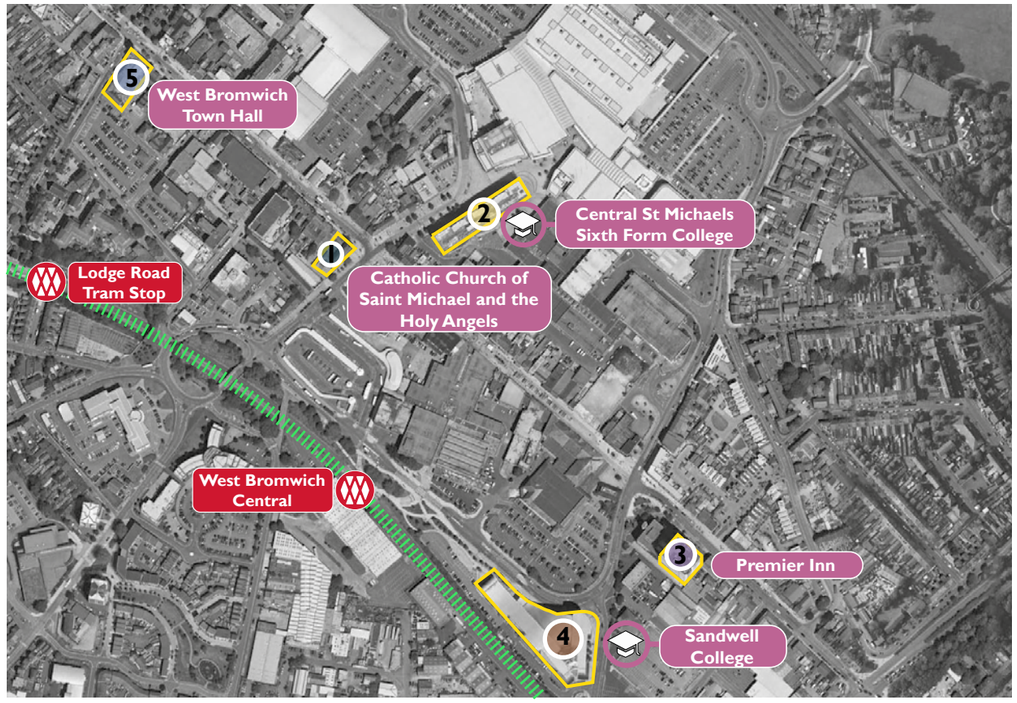


Image: Top right

1. The Catholic Church of Saint Michael and the Holy Angels
2. Central St Michaels Sixth Form College
3. Premier Inn
4. Sandwell College
5. Town Hall & Library

Public & Private Spaces

The Town Centre has minimal high quality public realm accessible to all. Relatively recent improvements to St Michael's Square, the Ringway and the high street have been successful in their own right but an overriding strategy is required to connect, enhance and provide additional quality public space.

The masterplan will create a number of streets, squares green parks and spaces for meeting and enjoying in the Town Centre. These public spaces will be accessible, multi functional, and consider the environmental, social and economic benefits of quality, well designed public realm.

The masterplan will better connect the town centre with Dartmouth Valley and it's expanse of greenery and will encourage tourism and day trips to experience the town and plentiful amenities.

Scale, Massing & Legibility

The Town Centre is predominantly low rise with 2-3 story buildings. The areas highlighted on this map are buildings/structures with height above 3 storeys and are key way finding elements which aid legibility and visible connections within the centre.

The masterplan will preserve these elements and key vistas and position the taller landmark buildings to aid legibility and create variety in the roofscapes.

The arrangement, volume and shape of the buildings will be considered in relation to surrounding buildings and the relationship with street and pedestrian size.

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Analysis
What is West Bromwich?

Image: Top left

A41

Metro line

Primary vehicle routes

Restricted zone- Buses only

Pedestrianised zone

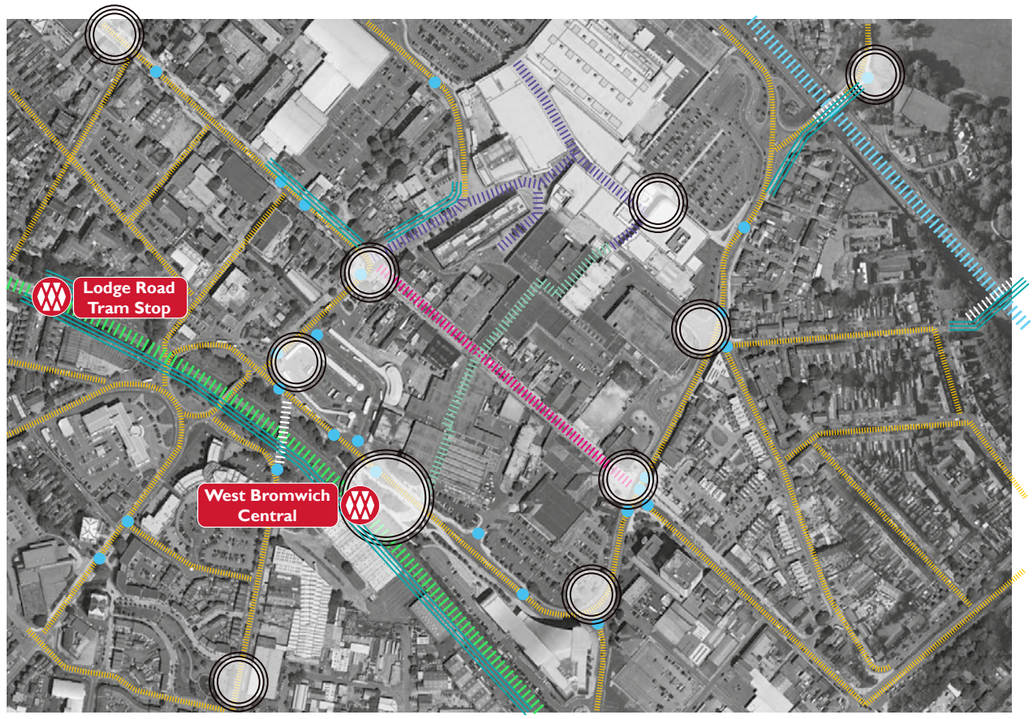
Internal pedestrian route

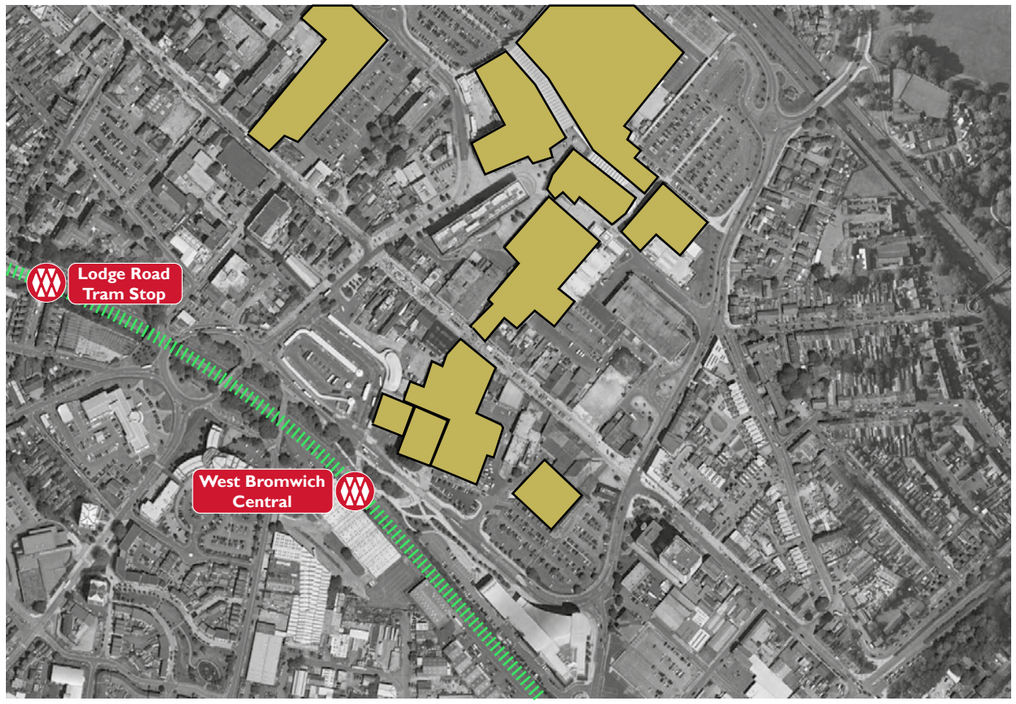
Cycling routes

Key crossings

Image: Top right

Large Town Centre Building Footprints





Key Gateway Nodes

Opportunity to create positive and active pedestrian entrances to the Town Centre especially around West Bromwich Central Metro and Bus Station.

Pedestrian approaches will consider:

- Pedestrian scale landmarks
- Active edges focused on primary pedestrian linkages
- Views into enclosed spaces / routes to aide legibility

Public & Private transport to consider

- Access and egress
- Vehicle & cycle parking
- Servicing
- Vehicle charging
- Clear designation of space

Building Blocks & Urban Grain

Town Centre blocks within the retail quarter are dominated by covered shopping centres. The masterplan will propose a variety of blocks and scales to break down the oversized and inflexible footprints. The internal covered shopping arcades will be replaced with externalised streets and the footprints broken down to acknowledge the town's urban grain and scale.

This will create the opportunity not only for high quality public realm space, but also flexible space for new uses and functions that will make the town more resilient to future economic changes.

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Analysis
What is West Bromwich?

Image: Top left

Vacant units
(Pre Covid estimate)

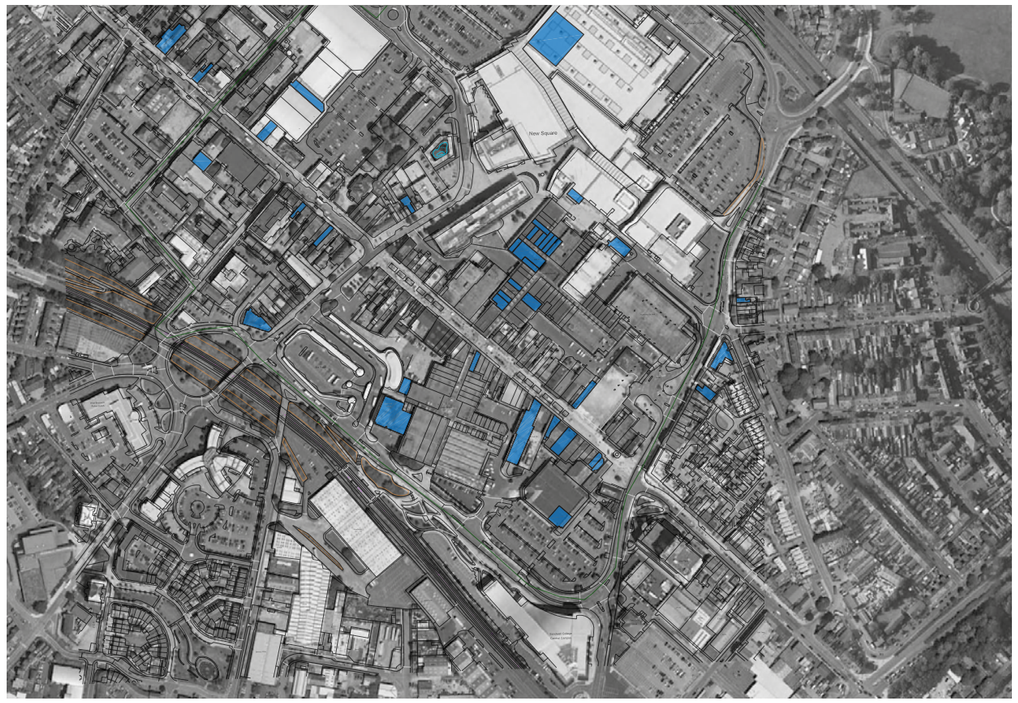



Image: Top right

Retail / Leisure / F&B

Commercial / Offices

Public / Civic / Community

Educational

Light Industry

Car Parking

Vacant Ground Floor Uses

Nearly a fifth of shops in West Bromwich town centre are empty.

Shopping habits have changed dramatically since the current plan for West Bromwich was approved. The number of vacancies, particular in the older units, is clear proof of this.

We need to investigate other uses for town centre land and buildings such as housing and leisure facilities that will bring more vibrancy to the town, particularly in the evenings.

Current Ground Floor Uses

In the post covid world with increased internet shopping, we must re-invent our high streets and this part of town, so reliant on retail.

The masterplan will explore alternative uses, adaption and re-use of existing buildings and a more fundamental approach which offers flexibility in delivering proposals in phases and flexibility in use for a more sustainable and prosperous Town Centre.

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Analysis
Existing Constraints & Challenges



Inward facing centre with inactive externalised façades to the periphery.

Poor linkages and connections.

No central heart of town.

Limited relationship between buildings and boundary treatment/ frontage condition at street level.

Poor architectural expression of entrances, corners, roofscape and projections.

No rhythm & pattern of openings and blocks.

Key Anchors

Metro line

A41

Bus Station

Listed Buildings/Heritage Assets

Active Frontages/Direction of activity

Inactive Frontage

Oppressive & unattractive edge condition to town centre

Convoluted and indirect internal north-south links.

Noise

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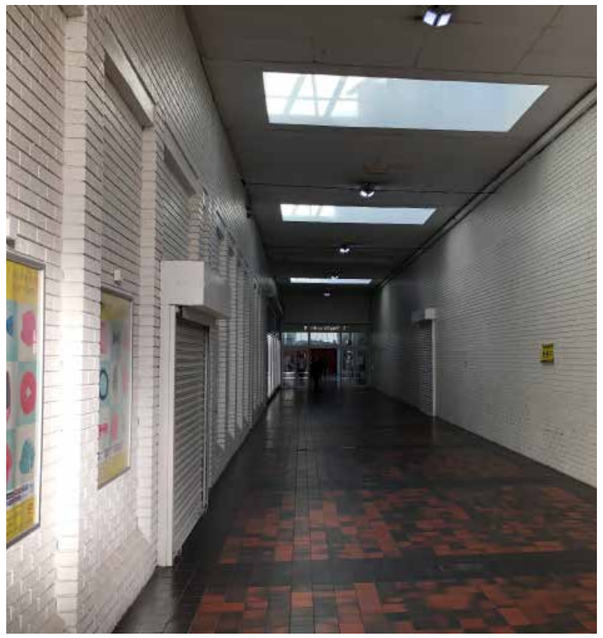
First Impression

Inactive Facades & Surface Car Parking



Streets cluttered with furniture



Poor legibility & Inactive routes through to the centre



Inactive blank facades as the arrival experience



Surface car parking & inactive public realm treatments



Tired, hoarded sites require stimulating graphics. Opportunity for branding



Unsecured, poorly maintained sites awaiting development

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West Bromwich
Image & Branding

Identity

The masterplan will build on the identity, branding and cultural offer for the Town and celebrate the history, arts and passions of the local community. The community are proud and resilient and are passionate about changing the perception of West Bromwich for the better.

The centre will be more permeable and accessible, and outward looking creating a more welcoming and attractive appearance.

With nature on its doorstep (Sandwell Valley/Dartmouth Park), West Bromwich must tap in to this and promote the image of health, well-being and nature and integrate within the urban centre.

West Bromwich will embrace the history of indoor and outdoor markets, so distinctive and enjoyed by the community.

West Bromwich Albion is a significant local brand which draws over 26,000 people to the area regularly. This is an opportunity to strengthen the brand further, link to sport and active, healthy living but also develop complementing offers around this to support and attract further Town Centre investment and regeneration.

There is an opportunity for the Town to roll out a considered and cohesive branding strategy which encompasses all of the above to link and knit together the architecture and spaces. SMBC are undertaking a branding exercise which will help mould the development phases being brought forward over the short to long term.

The design and appearance of West Bromwich should reflect the hopes and aspirations of the local community and be bright, bold and colourful. Providing welcoming, vibrant spaces with street art, murals and sculpture to enhance the brand.







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Concept Development
The Future of West Bromwich













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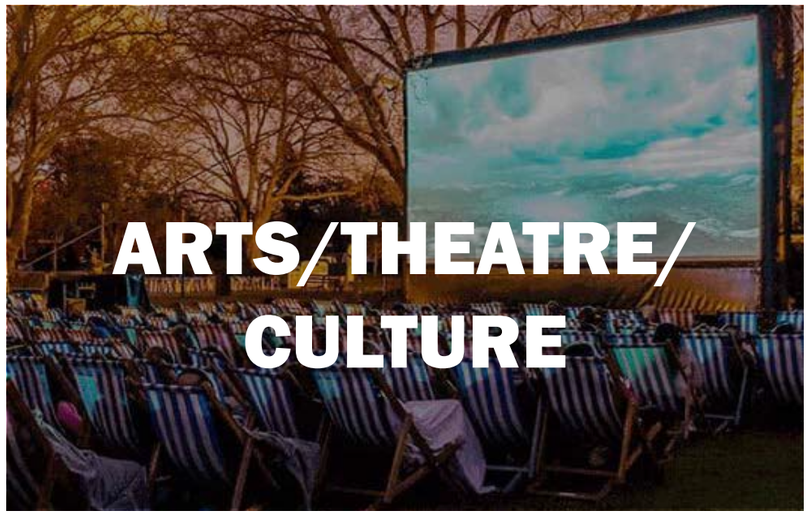
Concept Development
The Future of West Bromwich













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"Vibrant spaces and activities"

Opportunities

Connectivity

- Maximise the impact of metro and bus station and links to Wolverhampton and Birmingham with new arrival experience, new links to the bus station, high density and first phase development here.
- Improve the connectivity by delivering legible direct routes for pedestrians within the Town Centre with a new boulevard and entrance point and improved links to the park, the Lyng, Town Hall and through to St Michaels Square.

Green and Sustainable

- Maximise opportunities for sustainable transport around station development; cycle and walking routes; making a pedestrian friendly, liveable town centre.
- Move away from private car as the dominant means of accessing the town through improved walking and cycling routes, connections to public transport and embracing new opportunities for transport such as car clubs, e-bike hire, e-scooters and remote working.
- Improve greening and environmental improvements in the town with new public squares; links to green space and high quality public realm.

Growth Drivers

- Respond to changes on High Street and re-imagining/reducing of retail space, delivering experiential leisure, improve quality and public realm.
- Respond to local opportunities and strengths with new market; new College Campus; new Town Hall Cultural Quarter.
- Respond to wider economic drivers (inc. Covid and Brexit) with space for co-working; residential growth in Town Centre; and health, education, public sector, digital and creative industries.

Community

- Respond to the unique character of the existing community by improving much loved assets such as the Market; delivering new public space (Central square) and community facilities/open space for public use and interaction, and delivering a new retail and leisure offer.
- Grow a new Town Centre community in a sustainable way by creating new communities around the Town Hall, Queens Centre and George Street and creating a new town centre population with high quality housing.

Ambition

- Change perceptions of West Bromwich as a place to live, work and invest through 'transformational' change and an ambitious strategy.

Deliverability

- Acquire key sites, but also test phasing and funding opportunities through identifying the gap, then identifying solutions to reduce or manage this.
- Bring together key stakeholders, including land owners and delivery partners, to invest in the future of West Bromwich by presenting an ambitious and transformational plan.

"A Town full of
Potential"

Concept Development

Key Design Drivers - Uses, Linkages & Connectivity

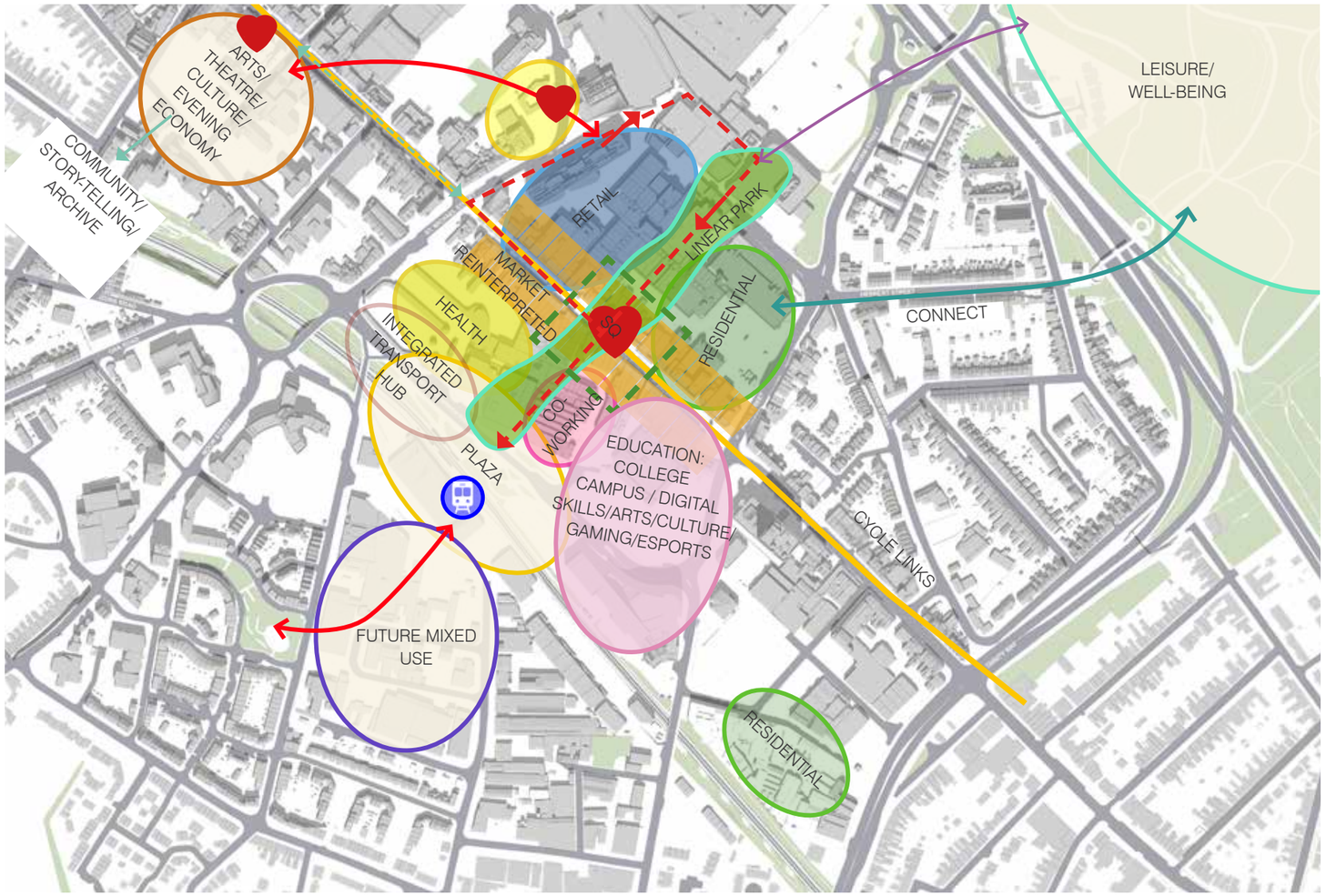
Use Proposals & Linkages

The masterplan has to get the mix of uses right to create an inclusive community with a comprehensive mixed use urban environment. This diagram presents the uses, linkages, connectivity and key nodes expanding the educational offer, condensing residential living, providing a central green spine surrounded by a vibrant mix of connected uses and plots designed to be fully mixed use.

The diagram shows a connection from the Lyng to the Metro and a direct clear link to the High Street and up to meet New Square Shopping Centre and beyond to connect to Dartmouth Park.

A reduced retail offer and strengthened retail circuit enhances pedestrian flows to the Queens Square area and a new central heart of the Town Centre is created providing a clear identity and meeting space for the community.

Further development plots strengthen the cultural offer to the north and provide high density living to the south.



Creating well defined Squares and Streets

The masterplan will create a number of streets, squares green parks and spaces for meeting and enjoying in the Town Centre. These public spaces will be accessible, multi functional, and consider the environmental, social and economic benefits of quality, well designed public realm.

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Concept Development

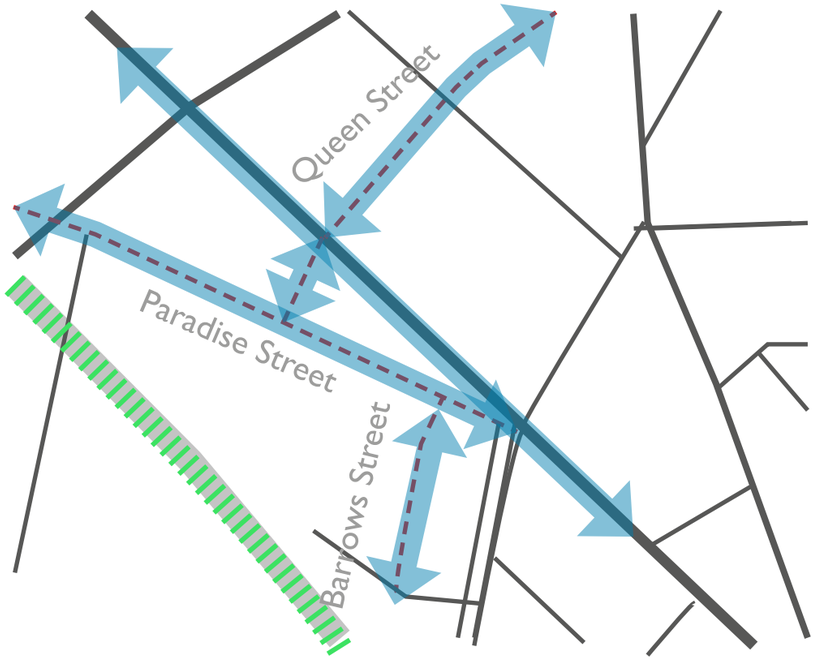
Key Design Drivers - Historic Connections

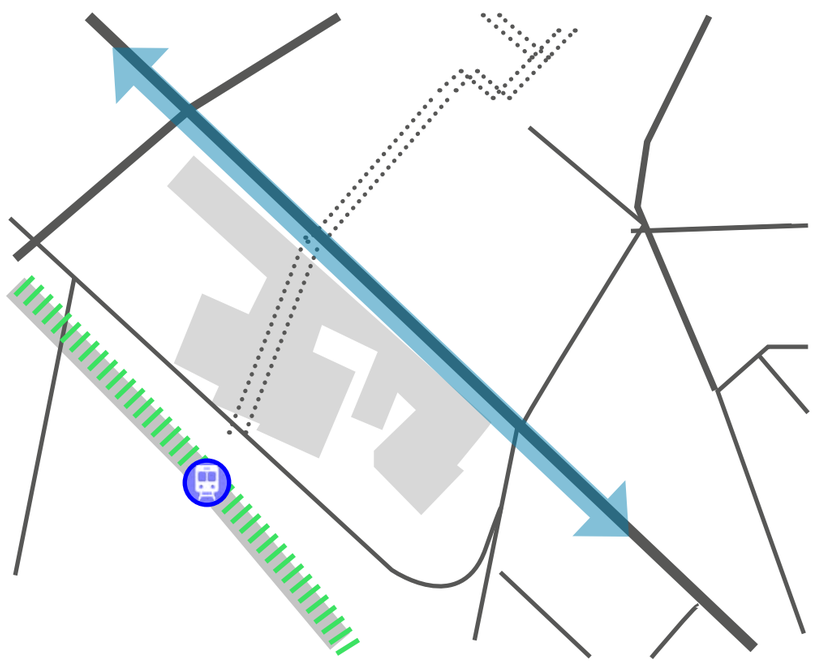
Street Networks

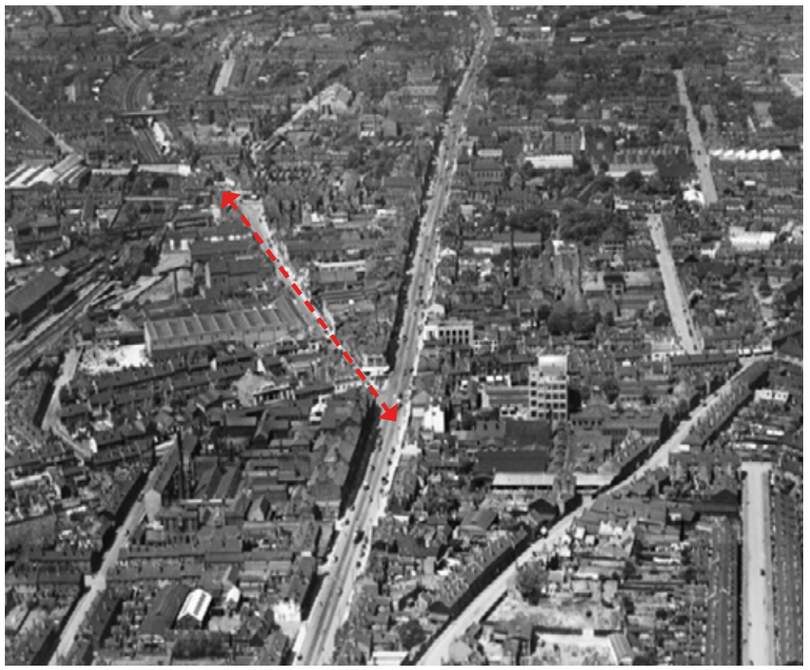
The masterplan draws inspiration from local architectural character and traditional street patterns. The masterplan appreciates the historic urban grain and the network of streets and squares and re-interprets this in an authentic and exciting town centre development with permeable routes and public space.

The historic urban grain emphasises the importance of Paradise Street, Queen Street and Barrows Street as significant routes and flows through to the High Street. These lost streets were once home to a vibrant community of performers and trades people with theatres, the old market and skating parks adjoining light industrial operations.

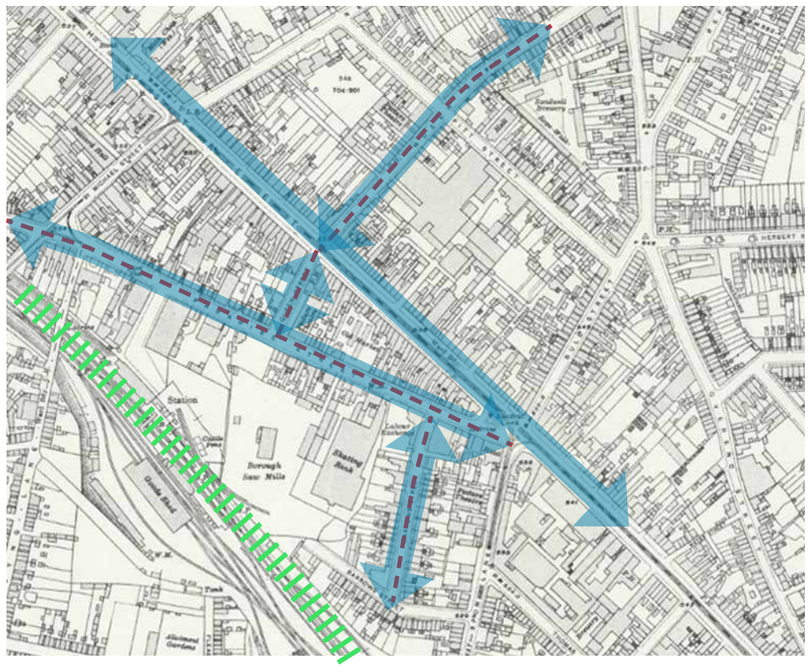
Re-establishing the connections and incorporating new prominent routes to the High Street from the north and south will create a more legible and accessible town centre.







Paradise Street



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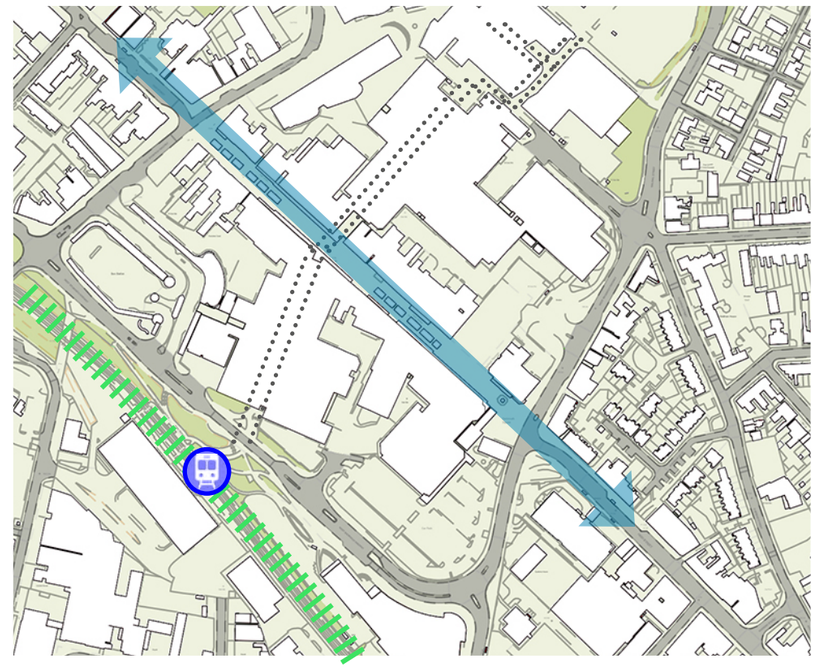

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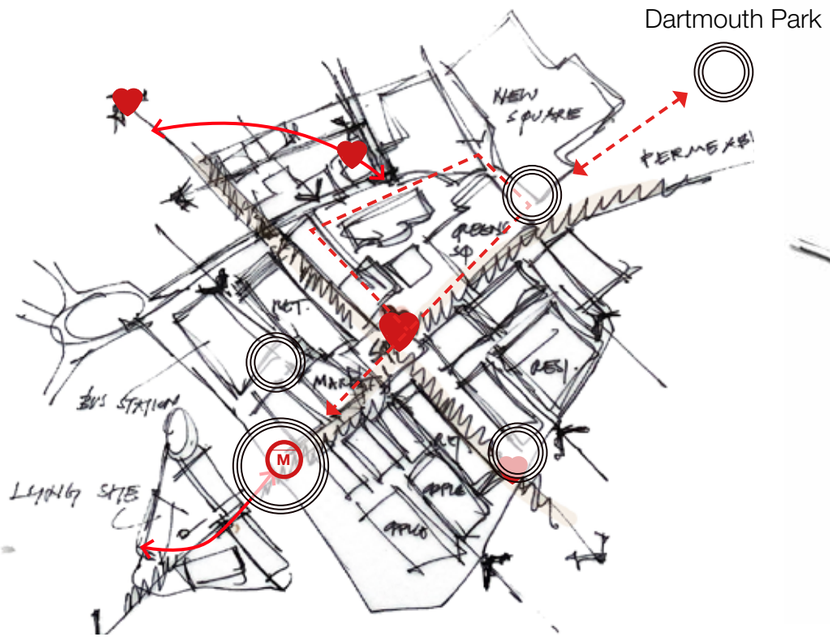
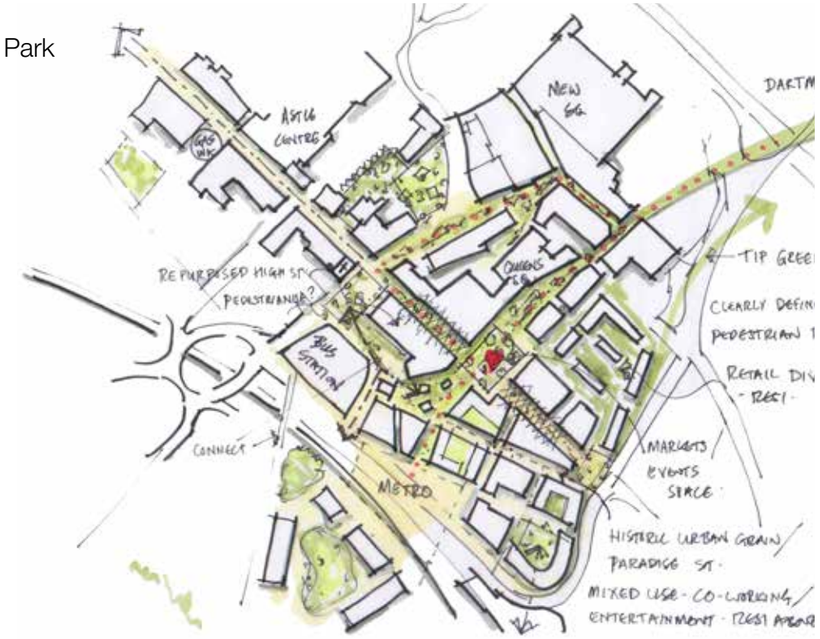
Concept Development

Initial Sketches



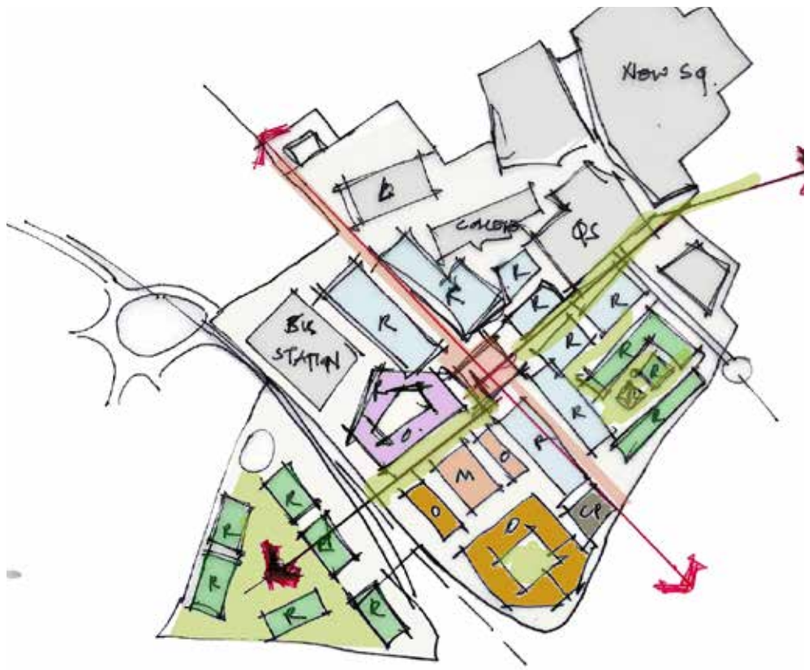
Key gateways, squares & new direct north-south linkages



De-constructing the buildings and footprints. A fine urban grain



A truly green Town Centre and revitalised High Street with Canopy



Development of street networks



Rationalising blocks



Reinstating the historical routes and street networks

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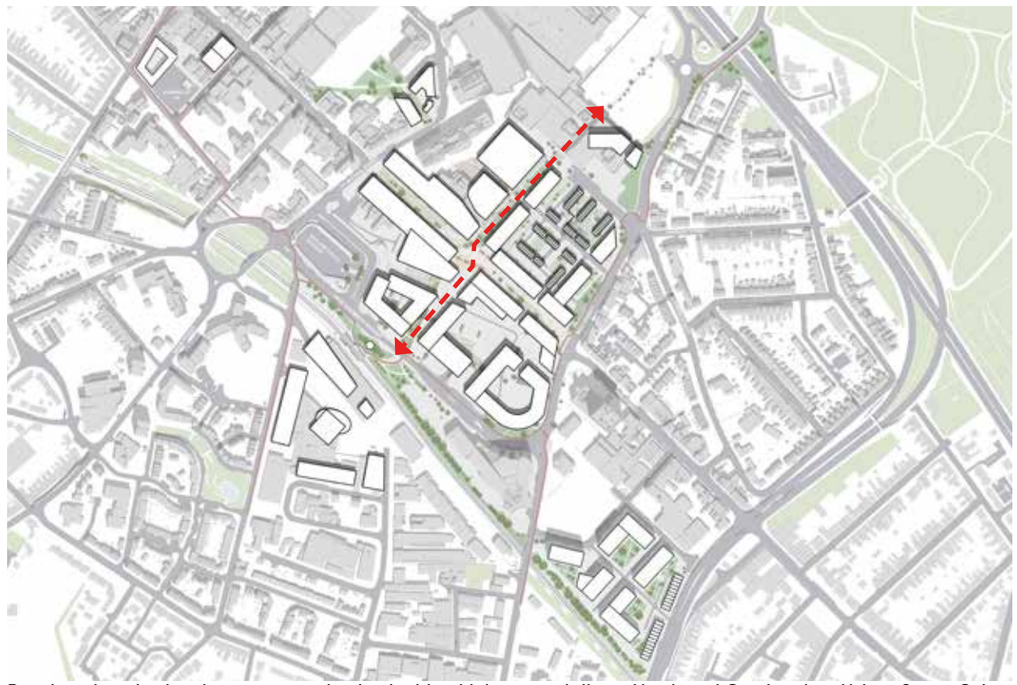
Concept Development

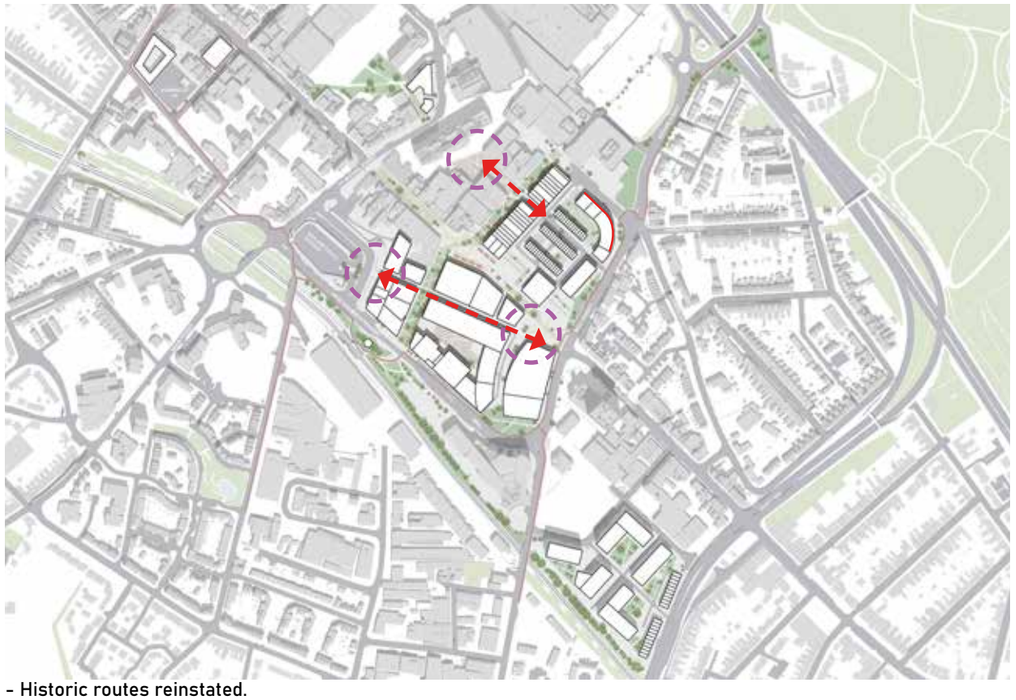
Creating a Framework Plan



Existing Context



Developed aspirational concept emphasised with widely opened direct North and South axis - Urban Green Spine.
Queens Sq Shopping centre replaced with new blocks.



- Historic routes reinstated.
- Town Centre defined with education and Multi-storey car park blocks connecting back to bus interchange.
- Existing Queens Square Centre reduced and opened up connecting St Michael College plaza.
- Introduction of curved block to North East end of Queens Sq Resi zone to create a well defined edge to Bull street.



- Enhanced development density with centre apartment blocks in Queens Square Residential zone.
- Improved permeability in the heart of Town Centre by creating open paths between blocks.

Concept Development

A framework plan of West Bromwich was developed by exploring different approaches to redeveloping the town centre site based on data, research and stakeholder feedback.

The options ranged from providing limited interventions through to a highly aspirational wider approach.

Following engagement with the stakeholders, the framework plan principles were established.

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Concept Development
Key Design Drivers

Key Design Drivers

1. Creation of metro gateway, new town square and a step change in the quality of place / public realm
A new framework of streets and squares glued together by quality linkages and public realm. The masterplan will enhance first impressions on arrival at the West Bromwich Central Metro stop and bus station with attractive public space and a new distinct gateway to the Town Centre. A vibrantly varied facade of new high quality, high density and mixed use buildings along West Bromwich Ringway will replace the inactive brick walls with bright active uses and provide a welcoming Town Centre experience.

This new substantial mixed use Town Centre destination will provide space for working, living, playing and resting for all ages and be the catalyst for regeneration within West Bromwich Town Centre and harness the potential from the metro connection. Whilst the Town Centre has a strong linear High street, and areas of public realm surrounding St Michael's Square, and the Sixth form college, the centre lacks a vibrant, accessible heart of the town. The masterplan will provide a new town square with quality public realm and a new indoor flexible market/foodhall experience in a contemporary and exciting environment.

The proposals will offer opportunities for existing retailers to grow and prosper in this new, exciting environment. Increasing Town Centre densities and uses will provide more visits and encourage greater spend.

2. Creation of green links, squares, parks and sustainable travel networks
The masterplan will significantly improve the quality of the public realm and environmental credentials through urban greening. Strategically linked community parks and open space will regenerate the Town Centre, emphasising health and well-being and attracting a wider demographic and experience. The network of streets and squares will be pedestrian friendly public spaces in a wider sustainable travel network.

3. Development of a major mixed use community including residential and employment to create a vibrant, active and sustainable town centre
The masterplan will strengthen the links between the Town Centre and adjoining areas such as the Cultural Quarter and Dartmouth Park/Sandwell Valley by creating strategically connected functional and active zones with playful street furniture, public art and art trails connecting spaces along the routes. Cycle routes are extended east to west and north to south to further strengthen connectivity and access across the Town Centre and beyond.









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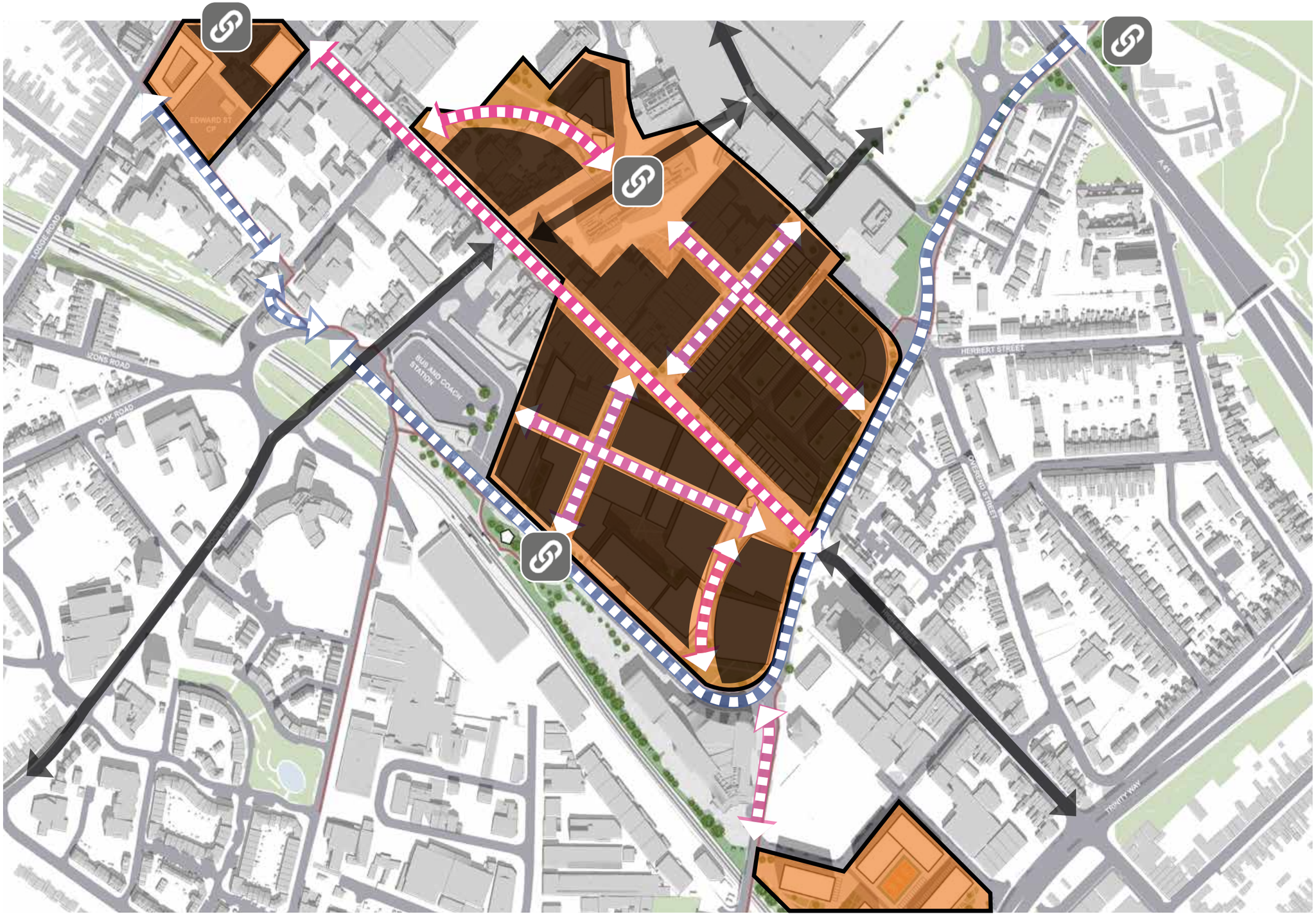
Concept Development

Key Design Drivers



KEY

- Links
- Key pedestrian routes
- Key cycle routes
- Block massing
- Site area

Diagram showing the extent of the subdivision of the area into smaller development parcels with pattern and scale of streets, blocks and plots.

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*"A focus on **people** to create **vibrant, happy and healthy** communities"*

Masterplan

3

*"Meet me at **the Hub!**"*



Concept Development
Framework Plan

Framework Plan

The Town Centre transformation will have a distinctive image, identity, legibility and urban structure, which is key for successful place making. In practice this means ensuring that buildings are of an appropriate design and scale, that the plan addresses the key streets, spaces, uses and local landmarks and that the street structure is used to emphasise and create key views and vistas to reinforce routes or spaces. This creates arrival points that are well designed, attractive and make it easy for people to orientate.

Regeneration across the Town Centre provides opportunities for significant transformation. The changes on the High Street will re-imagine the Centre as a truly mixed-use environment tying together individual sites through improved connectivity and high quality public realm. Improved cycle and pedestrian routes will strengthen the connections between the Town Hall, High Street, St Michael's Square and the retail centre, through to Dartmouth Park.

New green routes between the "live and play" area in the South and Dartmouth park in the North are shown in the framework plan vision on the following page. This shows the relationship of the new development with nature and enhances the concept of 'connecting to nature'. Interconnected public realm with green routes will further enhance the natural penetration of green into the heart of Town Centre. A new central green linear park flows north to south providing much needed public space for relaxing, entertaining and playing surrounded by a mix of uses with education, health and learning at the heart of the Town Centre.

The vibrant mix of uses in the framework plan will create an inclusive community for all age groups and include shops, restaurants, cafés, leisure, entertainment, markets, performance, event spaces, community facilities, education campus, health and residential living. Additionally, there will be an emphasis on green public spaces for the community to enjoy. The reinstatement of historic connections and re-interpretation of the streets and squares are an authentic and contemporary approach of the plan. A strong focus on provision of spaces for community and social interactions will promote well-being and health in a truly green environment.

There are five distinctive character areas of the masterplan: West Bromwich Central, Queens Square Living, St Michael's Pocket Park, The Cultural Quarter and George Street community. These have been identified in the framework plan to ensure that development is taken forward in a coordinated and cohesive manner in line with the masterplan objectives, and to ensure that each phase represents a piece of urban development in its own right, that is well connected to the other key areas around the town centre. The framework plan also identifies the proposed main streets and spaces that will form the basic skeleton of the masterplan area, and the landmarks, activity hubs and arrival points.

The character areas have also been designed to balance infrastructure requirements throughout the development, ensuring in particular that the early infrastructure requirements are not overly onerous. Furthermore, each character area is a response to its surrounding landscape and existing built character and to its proposed uses.

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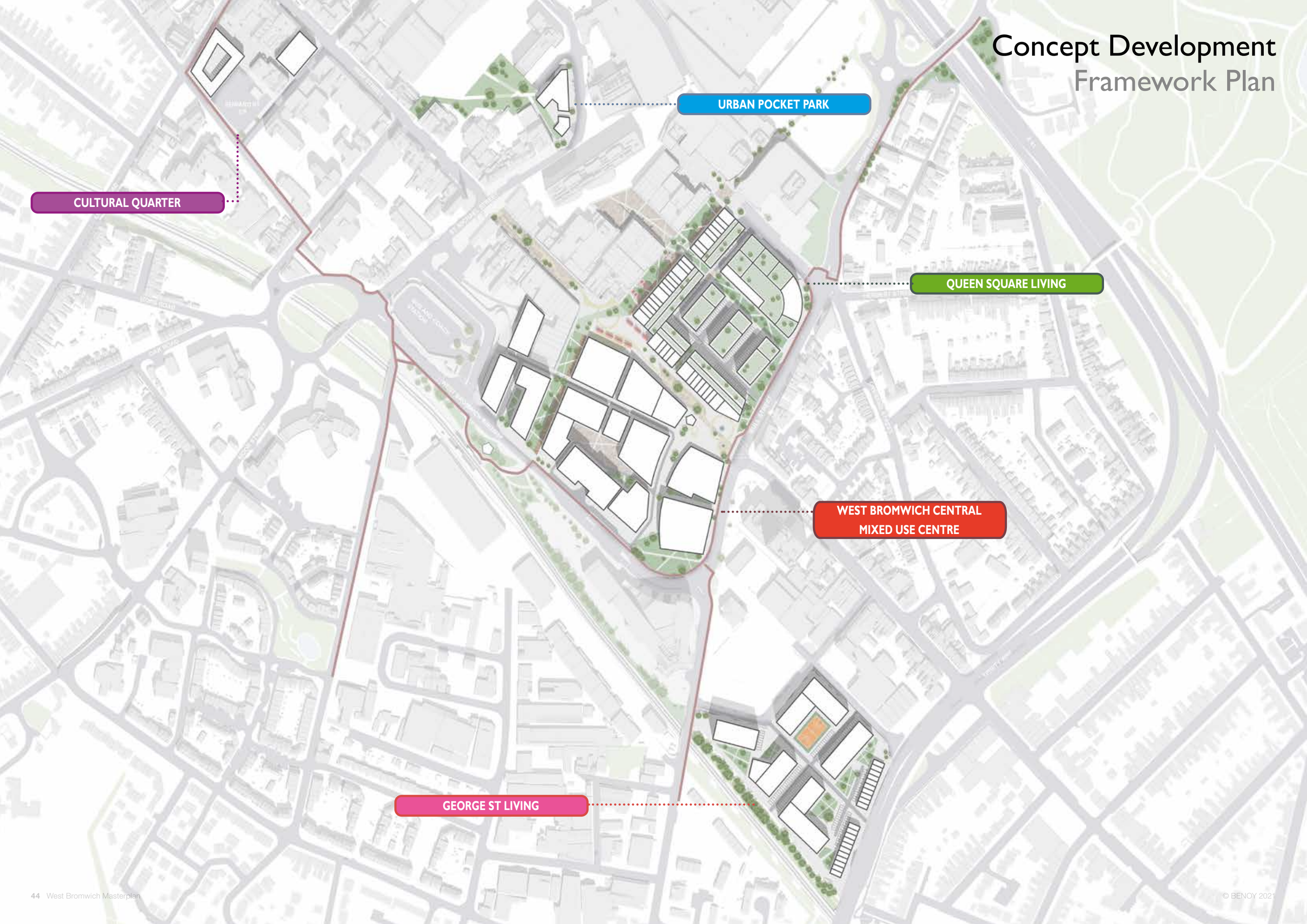
Concept Development
Framework Plan



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The Framework Plan
Zoning

Functional Zoning

The framework plan consists of the following functional zones:

1. West Bromwich Central Mixed Use Centre
A mixed use centre with central market square at it's heart and comprising F&B and leisure blocks to the North/West, office blocks and residential to the South and education and multi-storey car park to the East of central courtyard.

2. Queens Square Living
A new centrally located high density residential community is set within a blanket of green park with external parking spaces, office and gym/amenities space at ground level of the northern residential block. Retail blocks with town houses above to the North and East of the square also form a well-defined edge with active market streets to the High Street and Queens Street.

3. Cultural Quarter
The site comprises two blocks. Main block along High Street adjacent to Town hall provides the ideal setting for cultural/ community space with restaurant/F&B activating the street. The building to the rear facing Edward Street and Lodge Road is proposed as aged living accommodation, set beside a cultural offer this is a perfect setting for relaxation for later stage of life.

4 Urban Pocket Park
A new park/route that connects St. Michael Street, the Astle Retail centre and the High Street. We will work with key stakeholders and landowners to bring forward these desirable future connections and management of spaces.

5. George Street Living
A new high density residential community comprising a series of 3-8 storey blocks with landscaped courtyards and amenities. The site is ideally positioned close to Trinity Way Metro and accommodates on-site parking and amenities.

The Lyng Future Mixed Use Development Zone
This area has been highlighted as a long term mixed use future development zone. The complexity inherent with the future delivery of this site and the surrounding area means we have not considered the same level of detail as provided for the masterplan.

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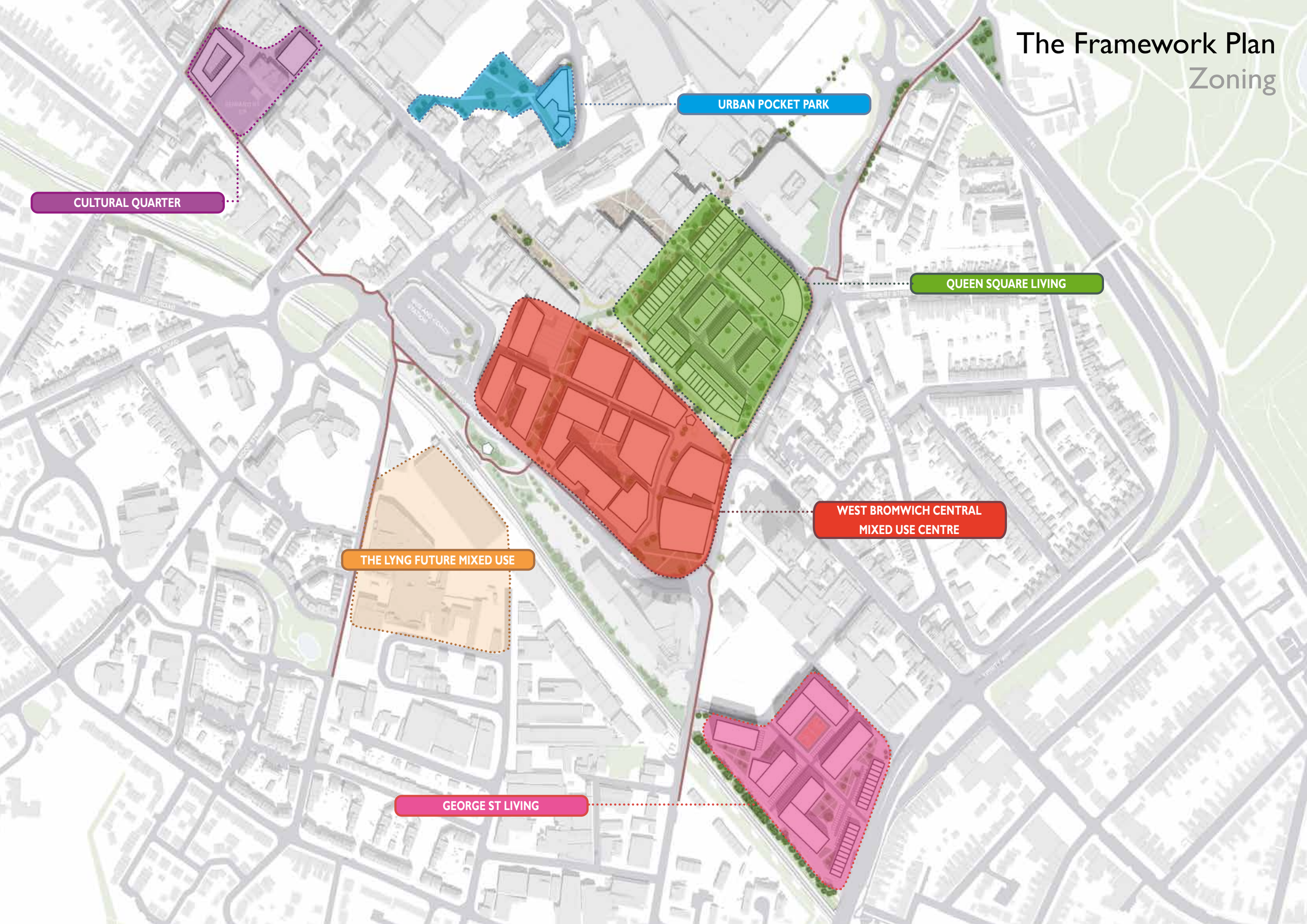
The Framework Plan

Zoning



Concept Development
Aerial Sketch

View towards Dartmouth Park

The masterplan vision is ambitious and builds on the strengths of the current Town Centre. The plan embraces much loved assets such as the market but also responds to wider economic drivers (inc. Covid and Brexit). The plan also shows space for co-working, residential growth in the Town Centre, as well as buildings for health and well-being, education, public sector, digital industries and creative industries. The creation of a new Town Centre population is also vital to the support of the retail, High Street shops and venues.

The image on the following page shows the proposed development plots and massing from the Town Hall to George Street, showing varied green roofscapes and public realm linkages. The old gas showrooms site next to the Library and Town Hall will be revitalised and brought back to life with a variety of uses to reinforce activity at street level whilst animating the public realm and providing an evening destination to enhance the cultural offer. Community space above will provide flexible space for activities and groups creating a real Creative Cultural Quarter in the Town Centre. This area is also attractive for high quality housing with the pull of the arts and theatre attracting new residents.

This Cultural Quarter is linked back to the main Town Centre through new cycle and pedestrian routes, with an arts trail along the High Street and a new green public pocket park linking the High Street and St Michael's Sq. The dated Kings Square shopping centre has been re-imagined with open streets, squares and green space and a new central market square sits beside the re-configured/downsized Queens Square shopping centre. There is a real opportunity to create activity, not just at ground level but at roof levels too with potential for green roofs, rooftop restaurants, gardens, urban farming, open air theatres and sports pitches.

The improvements to the public realm and layout of the town will create the opportunity to build a large new residential community with high quality units. This will add to the vibrancy and activity in the town.

Flexible new economic uses, including co-working and business incubation space can be delivered to create a more diverse and resilient town centre economy and capture job opportunities which will enhance the economy of the town further.

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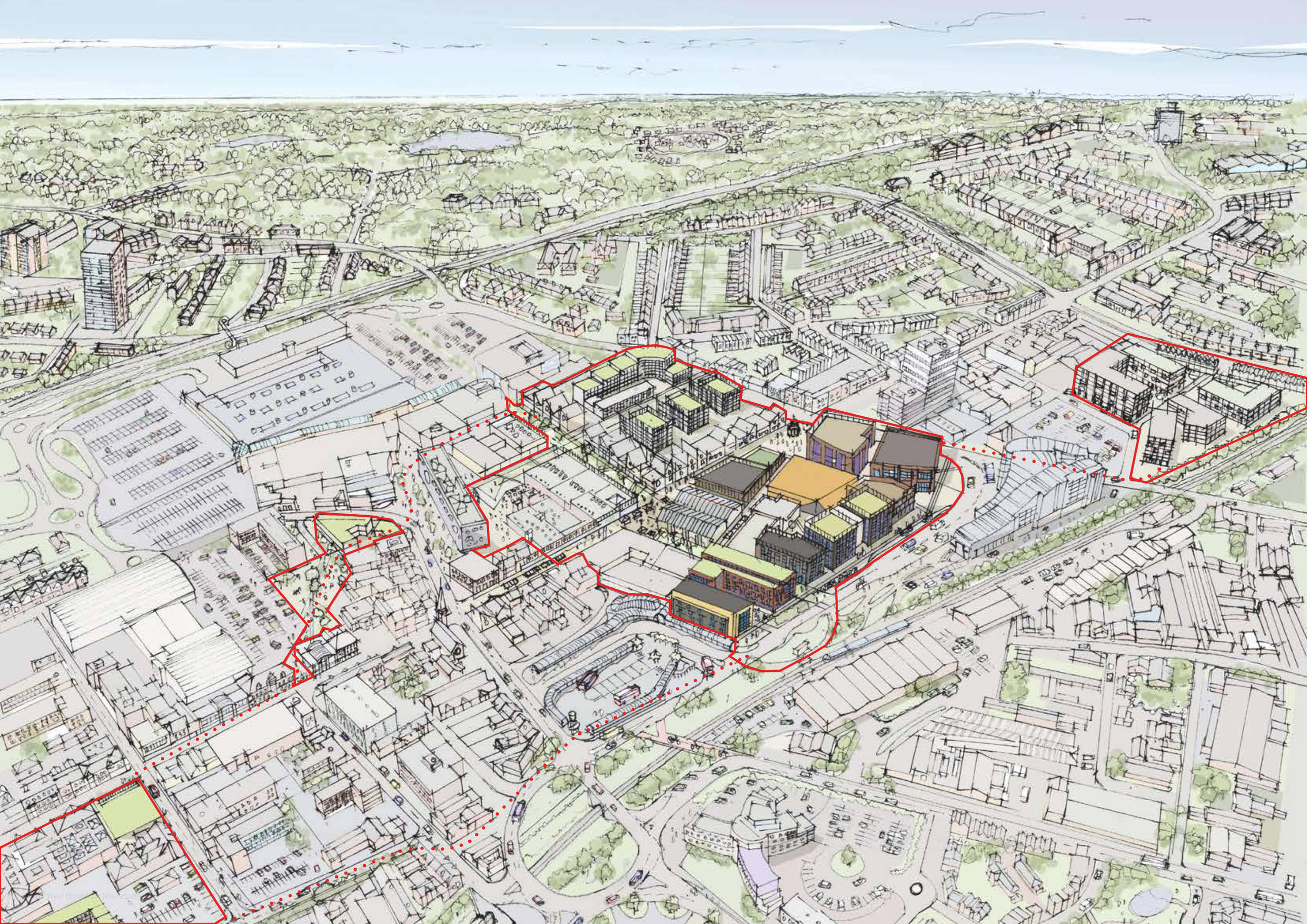

The Framework Plan
Floor Use

Typical Floor Use

Typical floor use reflects the functional zoning of the framework plan.

Increased leisure, F&B, foodhall/market, flexible office, public services, shops and community amenities are typically facing the public realm with residential apartments above. Health and education blocks book end the West Bromwich Central development providing a strong live edge and with an active dialogue between the proposals and the existing college/context. The key public facing elements are arranged spatially within the mixed use centre in the heart of the framework plan with the proximity to central bus station and West Bromwich Central metro.

New residential led communities are located adjacent to Trinity Way and Edward Street, surrounded by local amenities and are suitable in the context and the framework plan.

Ground Floor Use

There is a mixture of active uses on the ground floor which provide the streets with a distinct character and feel including flexible space that accommodates educational, skills and training uses linked with existing and future growth sectors in the economy and supports innovation and entrepreneurship; a stronger mix of leisure uses that serve the needs of existing and future residents, and visitors to the town.

These new land uses will help support the transition away from retail, bringing new life into existing buildings and supporting the development of vacant sites in and around the town centre. Blank facades are replaced with glazed shopfronts promoting activity with food and beverage units placed in strategic locations, particularly around the gateway entrances and new squares. Residential lobbies are located off the public realm to take residents to the floors above with bright, well overlooked entrances. The green parks and public realm connect all of the blocks together including the new education campus, digital industries and leisure offer with the existing High Street shops and businesses.

A strategically placed market hall at the Central Square connects with leisure and food & beverage along the former Paradise Street route creating active frontages and a vibrant environment for both daytime and evening entertainment.

The college and multi storey car park occupy the South -East corner of the mixed use Town Centre and are easily accessible from the surrounding road network and adjoining multi storey car park.

Existing transport gateways and connectivity is enhanced to the bus station and metro stations and new multi storey car part, taxi ranks, drop off points, electric charging points, cycle stations and E-scooter docs will all aid mobility and accessibility.

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The Framework Plan

General Floor Use



The Framework Plan

Ground Floor Use

KEY

- Residential
- Mixed Use
- Retail
- F&B/Market
- Leisure/Entertainment
- Educational
- Community/Health
- Multi Story CP
- Office

"Building a
Green Future"

The Framework Plan
Public Squares and Greening

Public Squares and Greening

These proposals build on the Town Investment Plan projects including the Urban Greening and Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Improvements.

West Bromwich has an opportunity to significantly improve it's quality of public realm and environmental credentials through urban greening and green infrastructure.

The introduction of well designed public squares, green boulevards and centrally located play areas for children and families are critical to creating a memorable and successful space. By introducing carefully located natural elements, the hard public realm can be softened and provide distinct zones for movement, recreation and sports. These boulevards enhance both the visual and physical link of green spaces in the framework plan.

High quality paving, planting and street furniture will provide an interesting and varied street scenes with the integration of public art, lighting, signing and way finding carefully curated. These spaces will be carefully detailed, uncluttered, suited to the needs of everyone, including disabled and elderly people, be attractive and robust and provide a feeling of safety and security.

Encourage living healthy lifestyles

Strategically linked community parks and open space will regenerate the town centre, emphasising health and well-being and attracting a wider demographic and experience.

Integration of street furniture and public leisure opportunities/sports within the landscape will encourage the engagement of the public. These spaces such as the recreation areas for play will be well overlooked by residences for safety.



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Connectivity & Wayfinding

Public Arts Trail - Connecting Routes

Murals

Like many Towns and Cities, West Bromwich suffers from inactive facades at street level and above. Many councils have employed artists and run competitions to design and implement urban murals throughout the street-scape. The murals can be bright, vibrant and radiate energy and play an important role in wayfinding and creating connections through the spaces.

These proposals also tie into the potential enhancements to the Town Hall, including an archive and 'story telling' elements to the library, where a process of capturing local stories, and discovering local history can inspire the street art.

The murals could strengthen the identity and show off the images of the proud inventors and trail blazers in the area. This will form part of a wider arts trail with periodically changing images and sculptures designed by the local community. The locations below better connect the cultural quarter with the Town Centre and promote energy and colour on the mainly red brick High Street facades.

The masterplan has defined zones and raised stages for buskers and a speakers corner to express the creativity within the community. Refer to the following page for map locations.



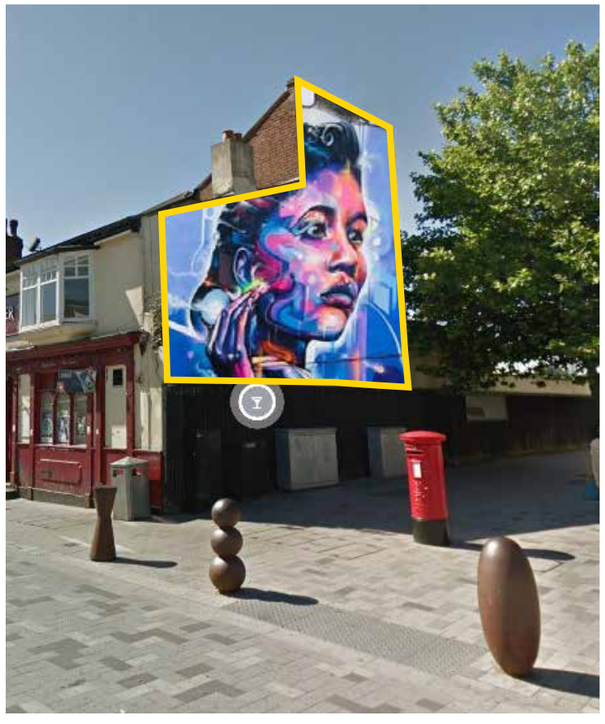




View 1



View 2



View 3

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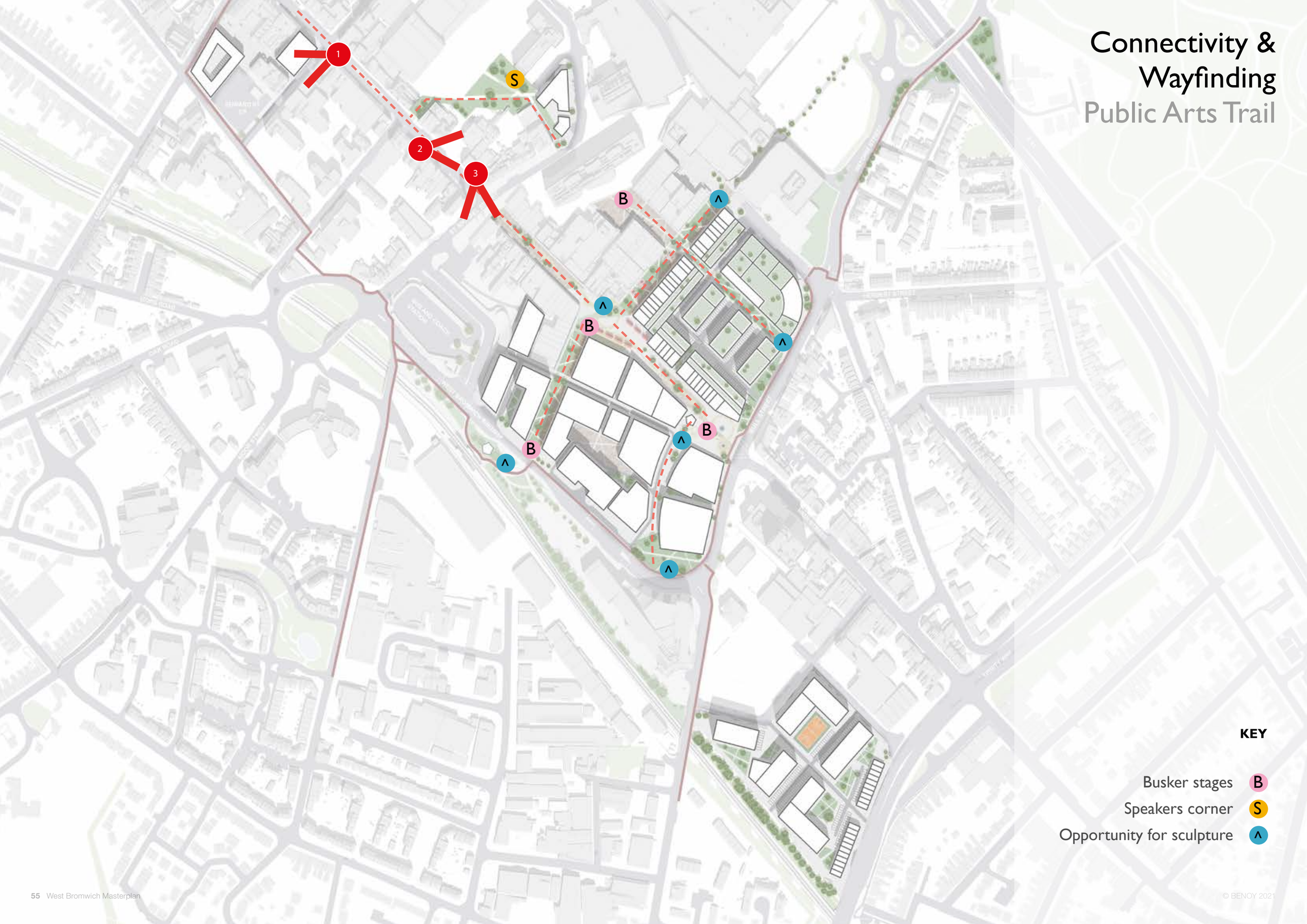
Connectivity & Wayfinding

Public Arts Trail



KEY

Busker stages B

Speakers corner S

Opportunity for sculpture ^

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Concept
Street Furniture, Lighting & Security

Furniture

The clutter will be removed from the public realm and street furniture rationalised. Bins, benches, bollards, railings, lighting, signposts, CCTV, substations and cycle stands will establish a visual and functional logic. Creation of spaces with clear functions will minimise the need for signs with coordinated design, installation, management and maintenance, forming part of a well designed public space strategy.

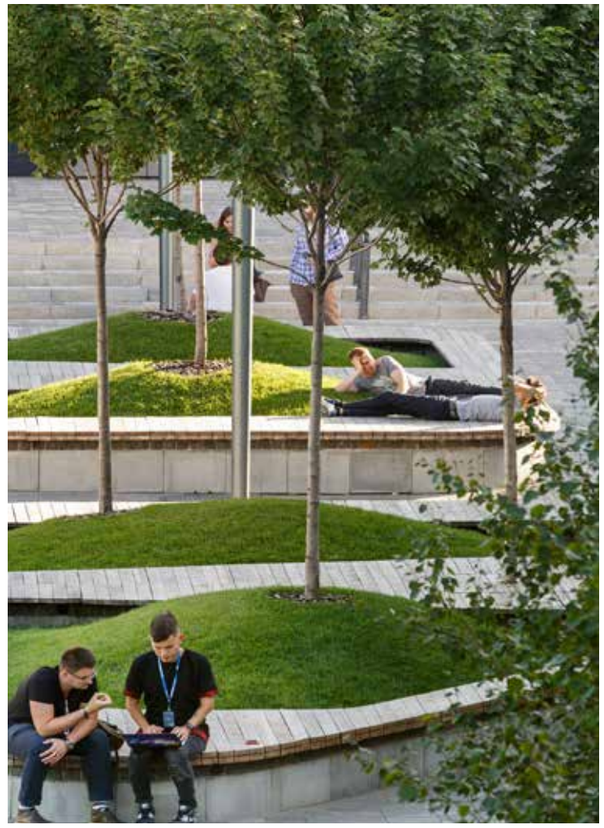
High quality public realm will be essential to help enable residential development by creating a place people feel safe in an proud of. It will also help to change the perceptions of West Bromwich to visitors.











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Concept
Street Furniture, Lighting & Security

Lighting and Security

Safety and security were raised as major concerns by the public during the consultation process. Improvements to active and passive surveillance will be required. These improvements will help people feel safer and more willing to use the town centre at all times of the evening and night.

Street lighting and illumination will be selected carefully for each particular space. Artificial lighting will complement the natural daylighting forming well lit public realm and creating attractive and safe spaces.

Lighting will be integrated within furniture and the landscape to provide integrated and tamper free solutions.

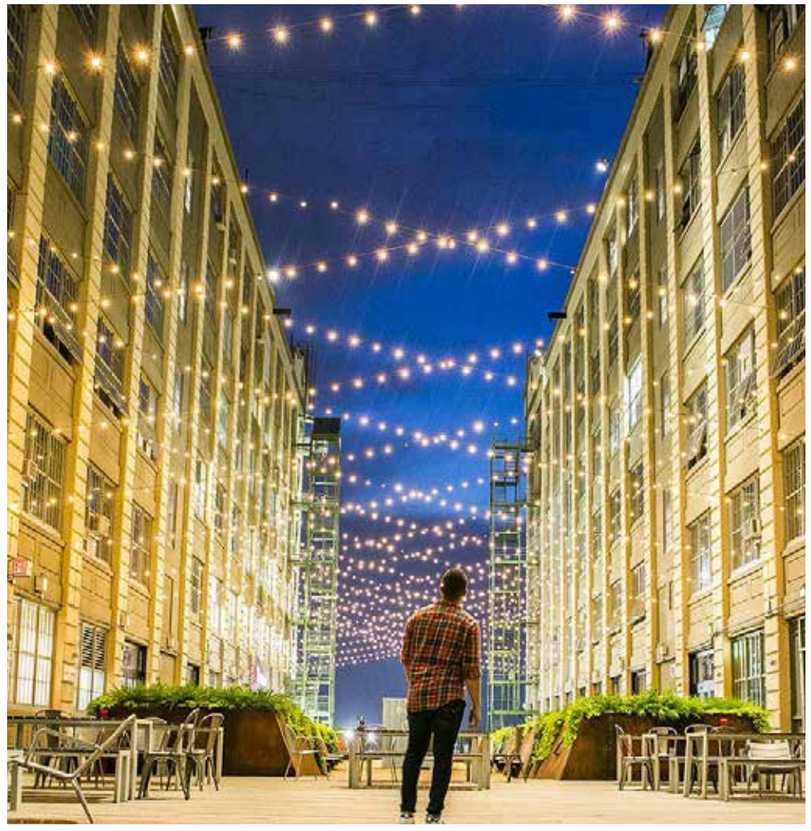
Paradise street will have a number of evening entertainment and uses and the lighting should be exciting yet functional.

CCTV cameras will cover public areas, ensuring safety for the community/town centre. Creating well designed public realm which is overlooked by residential communities will help to deter anti social behaviour and crime.











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Concept
Sustainability

Principles

The masterplan considers the design of routes and spaces, their micro-climate, ecology and biodiversity. Future development plans should consider the following sustainability principles:

- Re-purpose + reuse of existing buildings where possible (e.g. Queens Square Shopping Centre reduced in size and re-purposed).
- Fewer finishes: strip back (Propose a carefully selected material palette e.g. The Market could be delivered in stripped back new building).
- Renewable energy: rooftop + facade photovoltaic. Energy generating glass. (Integrated in terraces and on roof pitches from the outset).
- Improve comfort + increase natural ventilation - shading, louvres, night purging.
- Community offers (e.g. markets, incubator hubs, pop-ups).
- Reduce Parking.
- Increase site permeable surfaces focusing on Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDS).
- Green Axis + parkland creation (central linear park).
- Encourage sustainable transport (e.g. Metro or walking and cycling).
- Job creation - flexible work space that can be tailored to support multiple economic uses and growth across multiple sectors.
- Circular Food Economy - Urban Farming.
- Low Energy Lights -> LED.
- Flexible for future adaption with minor build rework. Plug and play.
- Heating: Potential to connect to a new heat network (distribution system of insulated pipes that takes heat from a central source and delivers it to the town centre reducing carbon and cutting heating bills for customers).









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Concept
Materiality

Sense of place and history

The masterplan takes inspiration form West Bromwich's proportions and material palettes and celebrates the industrial heritage to create distinctive landscapes and buildings in a contemporary and authentic approach.

West Bromwich has historically be renowned for its metal work industries and trades. The masterplan should embrace this skill and encourage exposed structure and metal details to complement the architectural style. The new Central Hub market will reflect this and use a metal frame to increase flexibility/function and be able to adapt over time.

The architecture will also utilise brick as a predominant building material to provide robustness, textured facades, colour, pattern and fine detailing with a mix of brickwork from buff to black textured brick. The latter is a reference to the heavy industry in the Industrial Revolution that mined the coal and used it in foundries and steel mills turned the air and buildings black. This added to the notion of the Black Country.

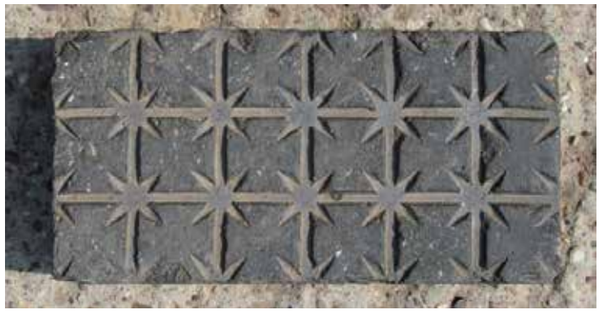
West Bromwich may have lost the brick making industries of the past (Joseph Hamblet Albion Road), but the new developments should reflect the historical material quality and variety. The contemporary architectural language must complement the heritage, incorporating flexibility, environmental sustainability and technology in the designs.















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"New Travel Routes,
No Emissions"

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The Framework Plan
Transport Strategy Vision

Looking to the future

West Bromwich is well served by public transport in the form of buses and Metro. The bus station and West Bromwich Central Metro stop are conveniently located for the southern side of the town centre. The centre of the town is largely pedestrianised, and restrictions were made to through traffic in central areas as a result of the changes to the town's network in the early 2000s and 2010s to accommodate regeneration and development schemes such as the New Square retail and leisure venue. Nevertheless, it is still relatively easy to drive around the edges of the town centre and based upon data from the 2016 PRISM regional transport model there are no notable congestion issues identified on the existing highway network in the peak periods in the town centre.

The vision is to develop a town centre which moves away from the private car as the dominant form of transport to public transport and active modes. The town centre will be environment which is attractive and where people can easily walk. The Metro is an important asset and the masterplan aims to re-orientate the town to provide greater access to the metro and encourage greater use.

The context to the transport vision is within existing and emerging policy. In June 2019, the UK became the first major country to legislate for a net-zero target for carbon emissions by 2050. Transport contributions to carbon emissions therefore need to be addressed through a combination of new technology, more sustainable transport and reducing non-essential journeys. Regionally the West Midlands Combined Authority's WM2041 Five-Year Plan contains a target to avoid travel, shift to more sustainable modes and improve transport through electric cars and taxis. Sub-regionally the Black Country Transport Strategy (2020) identifies a suite of schemes across all forms of transport, which improve connectivity, journey time reliability and public health, and reduce harmful emissions and CO2.

Locally, Sandwell's Climate Change Strategy 2020 – 2041 (2020) identifies three means of reducing transport's impact on emissions, promotion of sustainable travel, developing a low carbon transport system and establishing planning policies that encourage developers to promote sustainable transport choices.

Key principles and interventions for the town's transport strategy are:

- **Provide improvements to the public realm including more legible, direct pedestrian routes**
- **Use the Metro as a key driver for access to and from the town**
- **Develop a north to south and east to west grid of high-quality cycling infrastructure**
- **Embrace new ways of working and town centre living which reduce non-essential journeys**
- **Maintain and enhance the high mode share of bus journeys in the area**
- **Focus private car journeys on the primary road network around the edge of the centre**
- **Ensure access is maintained for deliveries and servicing at appropriate locations and times of the day**
- **Review parking provision to ensure it is in suitable locations and the supply is correct for how the town centre will work in the future**

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The Framework Plan
Pedestrian and Cycle Network

Better Connectivity

Site wide new pedestrian routes are created across the entire masterplan. The new pedestrian network makes more active and convenient connectivity within the new town centre as well as between all other development zones. All new routes are formed as an integral part of the new landscape design strategy with distinctive paving patterns and soft landscape.

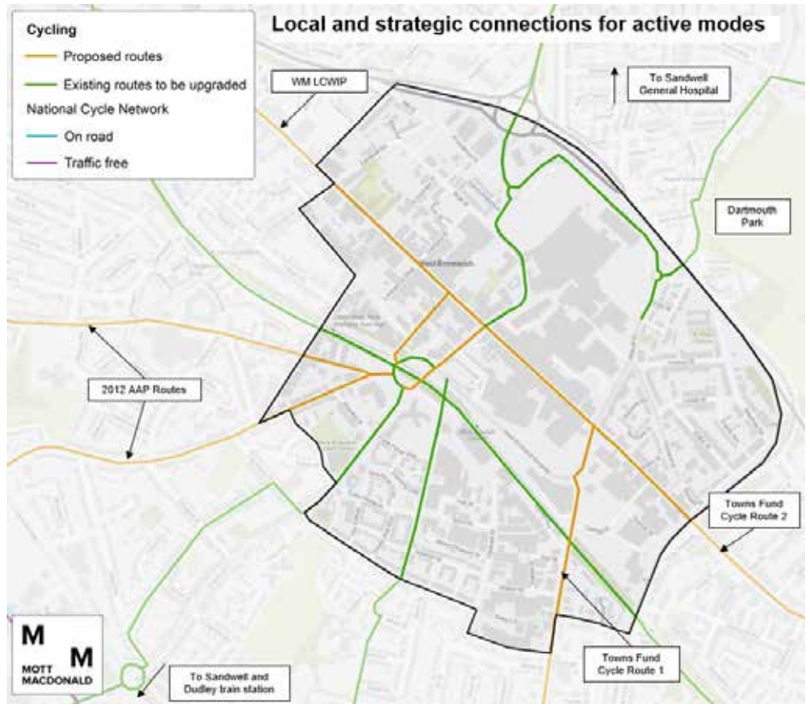
The existing cycle network is extended through the site creating an integrated, permeable cycling network. Cycle stores are provided within the individual building blocks, with additional street level cycle kiosks.

Enhancing pedestrian permeability and legibility is a key driver of the proposals for the town centre. Currently it is difficult to navigate through parts of the town as a result of the built environment. The masterplan will provide wide, direct routes north to south and east to west within the town.

Similar to the pedestrian network, the plans propose new cycling infrastructure which is direct, comfortable, safe and provides a ladder network which runs both north to south and east to west. In line with current design guidance these routes should be segregated from motorised traffic and wide enough to accommodate the current levels and any future increased needs for cycling. The masterplan proposals tie in with SMBC's and TfWM's plans for other cycle routes close to the town centre.

It is planned to provide a transport hub at a strategic gateway into the town centre. A 'transport hub' is a recognisable place with an offer of different and connected transport modes supplemented with enhanced facilities and information features to both attract and benefit the traveller. This could include:

- Access to secure cycle parking
- Access to cycle hire
- Cycle maintenance facilities
- Access to a car club
- E-scooter or other forms of transport if these were available for hire in the future
- Public transport information, timetables and off-bus ticketing
- Information on EV charging



Routes SCWIP CR1, CR2, NCN5 & WM LCIWP from Roebuck Lane to Bull Street (all to the east side of the town) have been awarded Towns Funding and will be delivered over the next 4 financial years.

New routes in the west side of the town identified within the West Midlands LCWIP are for delivery in tranche 4 (most long term) and therefore it may be beneficial to accelerate these proposals where they unlock Masterplan proposals sooner.

2012 AAP schemes to the SW of the town are yet to be delivered and considered lower priority for the Masterplan emerging options.

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The Framework Plan

Pedestrian and Cycle Network

KEY

Pedestrian Route

Cycle Route

Transport Hub

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The Framework Plan
Public Transport

Public Transport

The West Midlands Metro serves West Bromwich and has a strategic importance for the Town Centre. There are frequent services (every 6 minutes[1]) towards Birmingham City Centre and Wolverhampton St George's. West Bromwich Central has the largest footfall of all Metro stations in Sandwell[2].

The masterplan will see enhanced connectivity to and from West Bromwich Central Metro stop, providing a focal gateway point into the town.

West Bromwich bus station is well served with frequent services to Wednesbury, Dudley, Wolverhampton and Halesowen. There are also regular buses to Bilston and Birmingham City Centre. Bus use in West Bromwich is higher than the averages for the West Midlands as a whole. The masterplan sees buses as a continued important form of movement to, from and within the Town Centre.

Ideally these excellent, and enhanced public transport connections will reduce the need for private car ownership for the incoming residential community that will be created here. These incoming residents will be able to utilise the public transport and walking and cycling routes for their primary transport needs.

1 https://westmidlandsmetro.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/WMM-Full-Timetable-October-2020.pdf

2 West Bromwich Town Investment Plan, October 2020 (Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council)

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The Framework Plan

Public Transport

KEY

Metro Line

Bus Stop

Bus Station

Bus Travel Corridor

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The Framework Plan
Highway Network

Highway Network

The Masterplan proposes an increase in land being developed / redeveloped within the town centre in comparison to the current built form. However, this does not necessarily mean an increase in private car trips in the centre for a number of reasons. The Masterplan proposals include significant areas for new town centre living. This will result in the internalisation and linking of a number of trips, for example people who live in the town centre will walk to nearby shops and services rather than drive as those currently travelling into West Bromwich from surrounding areas often do. Secondly, the demographics of future residents may be very different to users of the current centre and as is more typical with city centre living all residents may not wish to own a private car and instead use public transport and mobility hubs / car clubs to travel away from the centre. Trends relating to home working and internet deliveries are also likely to reduce the influence of car movements in the town centre over the lifetime of the Masterplan.

The highway strategy is to provide appropriate access for essential movements into the town centre for deliveries, loading and unloading. High Street, Bull Street and the West Bromwich Ringway will continue to provide East to West and North to South connectivity for motorised traffic. To maximise the opportunities for pedestrians and cyclists within the central core, motorised traffic will be encouraged to stay on this primary network. Further improvements will be made to the public realm adjacent to and across these routes, however to ensure suitable infrastructure is provided for cycling and pedestrians, particularly to enable them to cross highways in a safe and direct manner.

Secondary streets will be provided to access to the development sites at Queens Square and George Street. These will have lower design speeds and discourage travel by car other than by those who need to access these locations.

In West Bromwich Central, access will be provided for loading and unloading in a way which balances the needs of pedestrians in this area.

A new multi-storey car park is proposed on Bull Street.

The National and Regional policy context identifies a need to move away from private car trips to meet the region's Net Zero carbon ambitions. As a result, the future car parking provision will need to be reduced in comparison to current maximum standards. Parking requirements for the town centre will need to include:

- Blue badge parking
- Provision of and future proofing for electric vehicles
- Cycle parking
- Car clubs with priority spaces at strategic locations on and off street to be considered
- Provision of areas / routes for loading / unloading for premises
- Zoning parking, so that where it is essential for people to drive, car parks are in locations close to strategic routes, not central areas where more people will be walking and cycling
- Review the locations of on and off street parking to ensure sufficient short-stay parking to maximise parking turnover and as a result footfall in the town centre

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The Framework Plan

Highway Network

Car Park

KEY

Primary Vehicle Movements

Secondary Vehicle Movement

Servicing Connections

Restricted Movement

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"Building sustainable
Infrastructure"

Character Areas

4

Zone 1 - West Bromwich Central

Sketch

*"A **growing** town centre"*



Zone 1 - West Bromwich Central

Location

© BENOY 2021

Zone 1 - West Bromwich Central

Key Information

Retail
4,502 sqm

Offices
5,032 sqm

Residential
25,377 sqm

Education
5,060 sqm

F&B
11,840 sqm

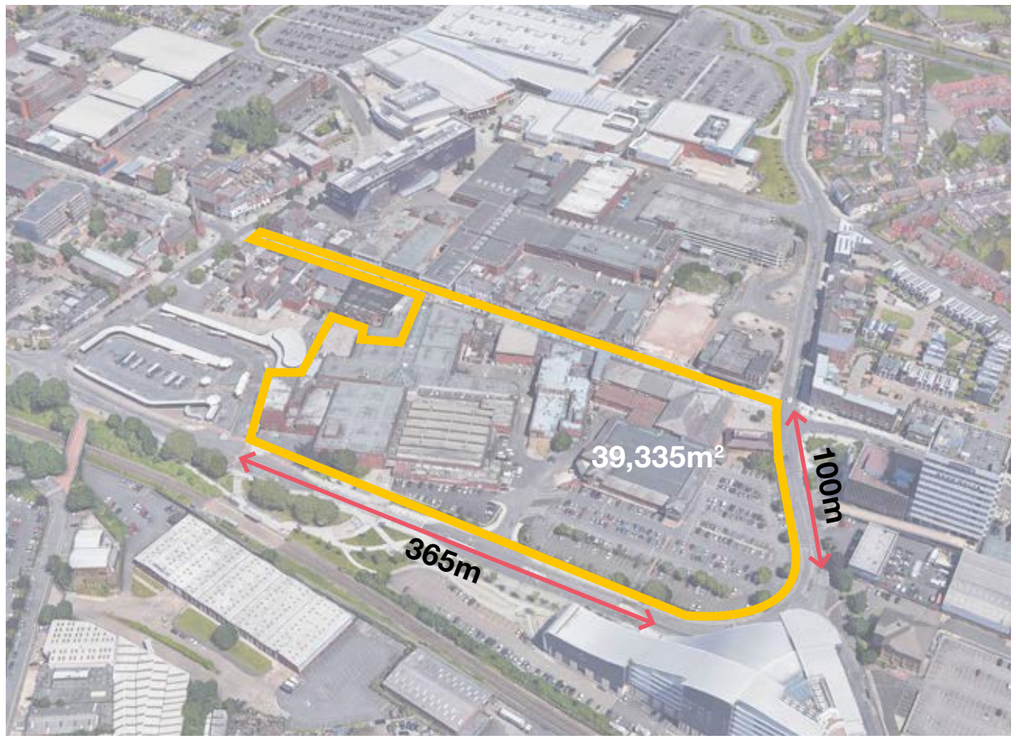
Community/
Leisure
9,862 sqm

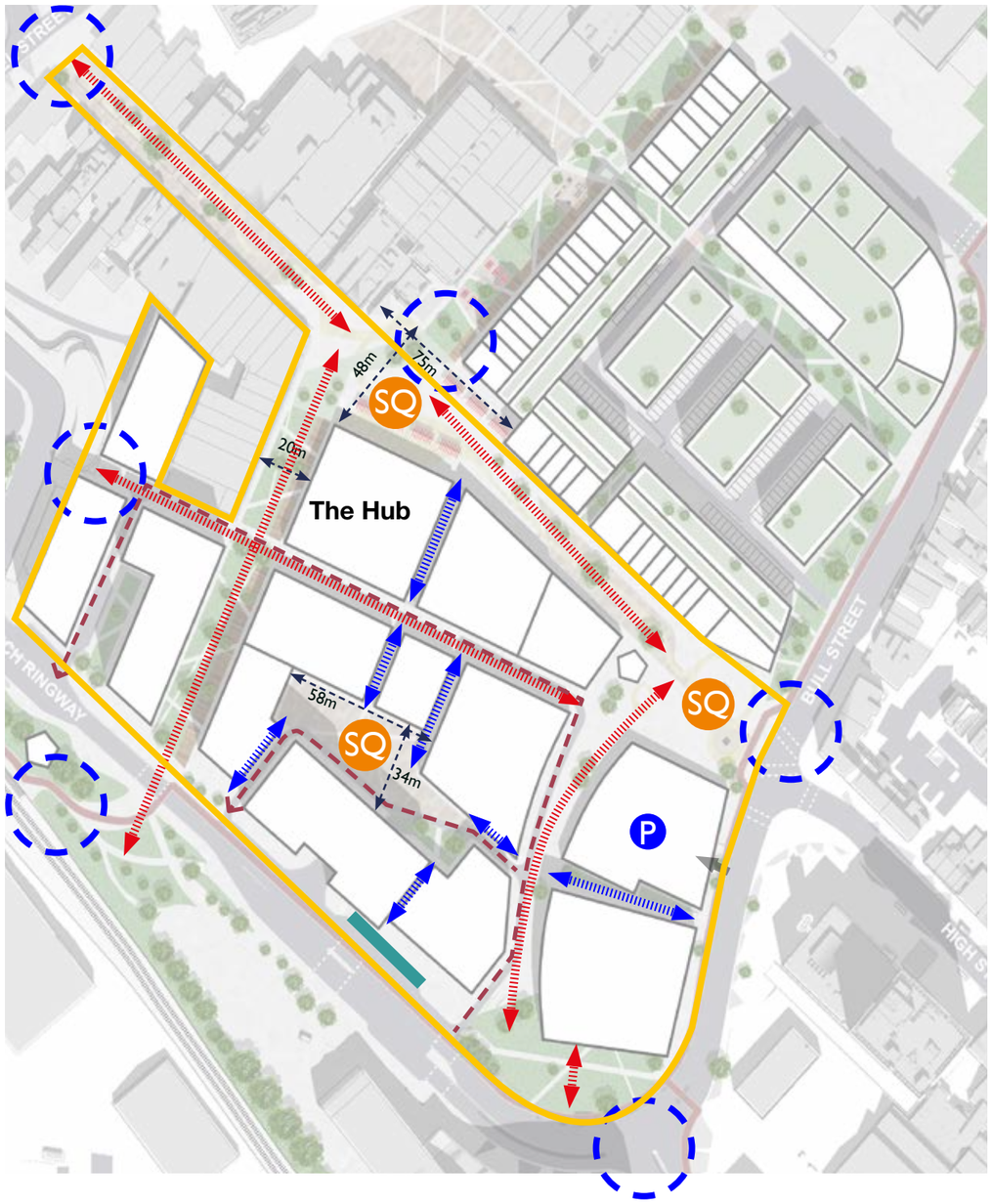
Health
5,205 sqm

Parking
18,945 sqm

KEY

- Primary Pedestrian Routes
- Secondary Pedestrian Routes
- Vehicle Routes
- Servicing
- Multi-storey Car Park
- Square
- Key Gateways
- Drop off





Town Centre - West Bromwich Central

A new multi-purpose Town Centre and a square at the centre of enhanced linkages and green public realm. The emphasis is on high quality public space and surrounding amenities to embrace West Bromwich's rich character of markets and trade and encouraging interaction and entertainment in a vibrant environment. This is a place with a strong identity where people will meet, interact and enjoy.

The Hub is part of the new generation of food halls providing flexible spaces which are also able to adapt to all kinds of events from concerts to toddler groups and a strong emphasis on community. A year round programme of season events with farmers markets, music, crazy golf and ice skating would all be suitable within this flexible heart of the Town.

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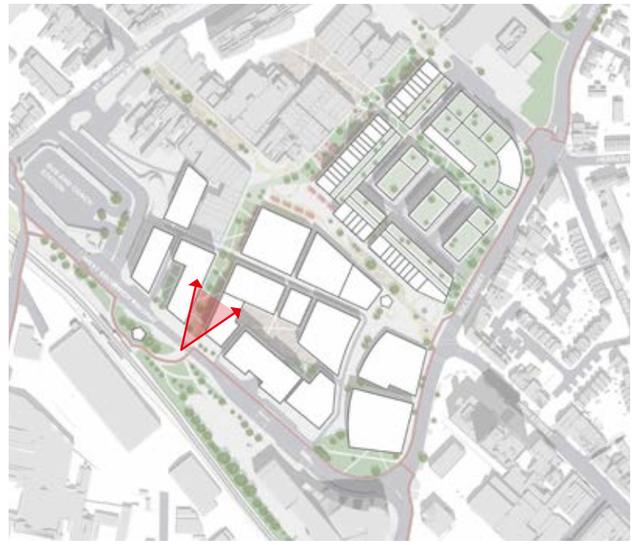
Zone 1 - West Bromwich Central

Visual - Green Boulevard



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Zone 1 - West Bromwich Central

Precedents - Green Boulevard

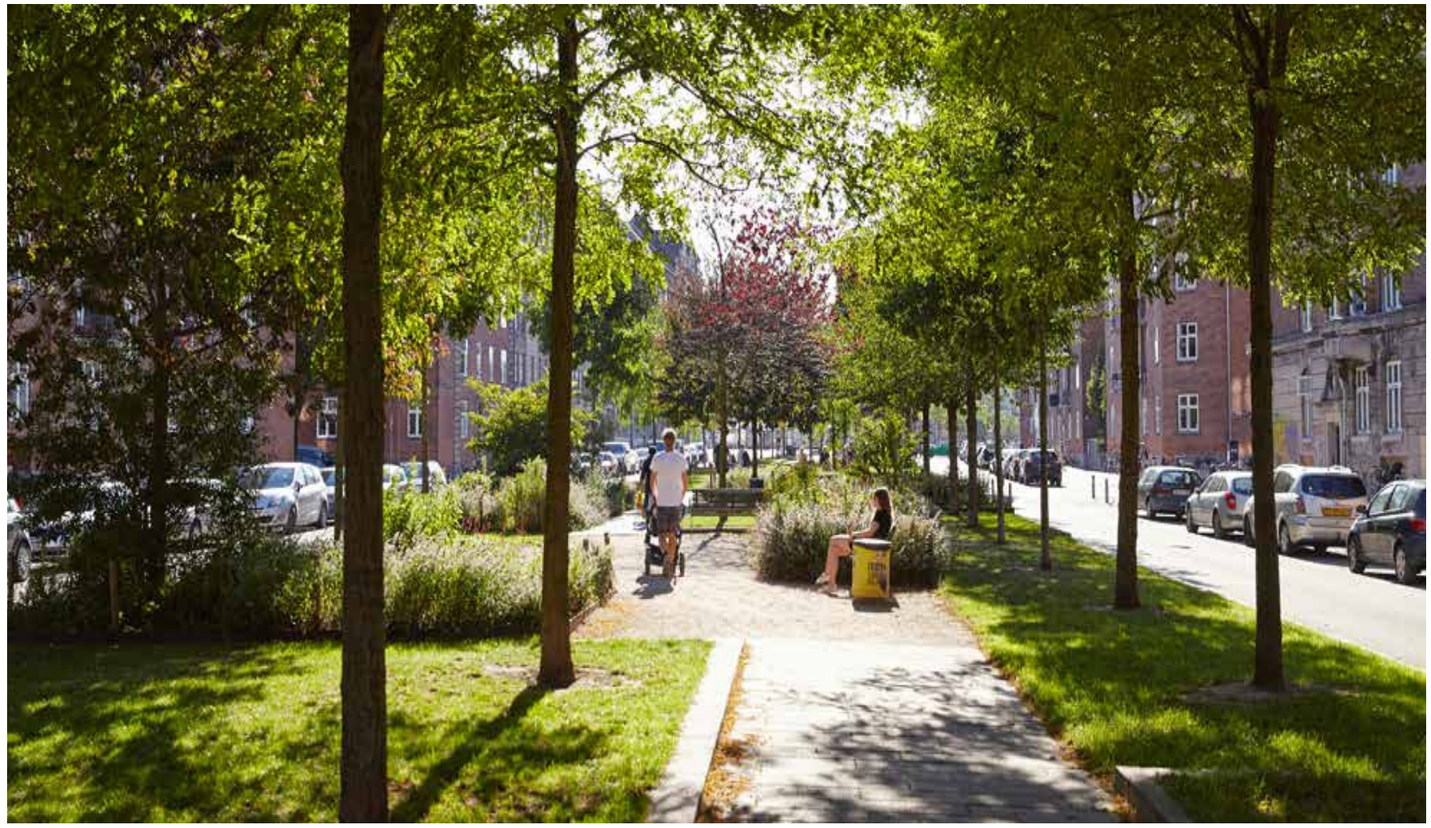
Green Boulevard

West Bromwich needs more quality green public realm within the Town Centre. The masterplan re-imagines the street for community and experiences integrating public art, signage and way-finding and defining space for sports and activities. This linear park is overlooked by residential apartments with active shop fronts such as food and beverage and community uses at street level. Yes it's a street, but it's also a community park. A place to have a picnic, enjoy a book or catch up with friends.









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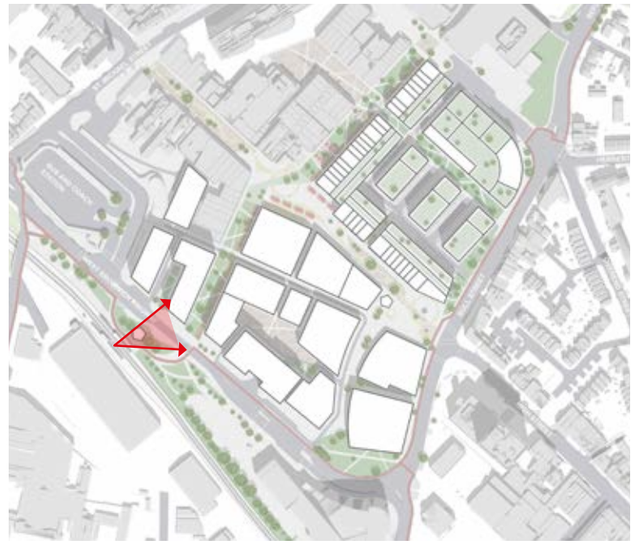
Zone 1 - West Bromwich Central

Visual - Metro Gateway



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Zone 1 - West Bromwich Central

Precedents - Metro Gateway

First Impression

People's first impression of West Bromwich is really important. The Town Centre suffers from inactive red brick facades facing many of the circulation routes in to and around the Town Centre. The vision will externalise the activity providing interesting and varied facades and promote an exciting and ambitious arrival experience. Clearly defined pedestrian and cycle routes with cycle hire hubs will improve connectivity throughout the town and strengthen wider connections to Dartmouth Park and key assets. West Bromwich is very well connected with the Metro and Bus Station and has the opportunity to be a destination of choice for living, visiting, learning, shopping and playing.









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Zone 1 - West Bromwich Central

Visual- Market Square



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Zone 1 - West Bromwich Central
Precedents - The Hub

A flexible new generation of food hall

The ambition is to provide West Bromwich Town Centre with a new centrally located heart. A new multi-purpose town square at the centre of enhanced linkages and green public realm. The emphasis is on high quality public space and surrounding amenities to embrace West Bromwich's rich history of markets and trade and encouraging interaction and entertainment in a vibrant environment. This is a place with a strong identity where people will meet, interact and enjoy.









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Zone 1 - West Bromwich Central

Precedents - Market Square















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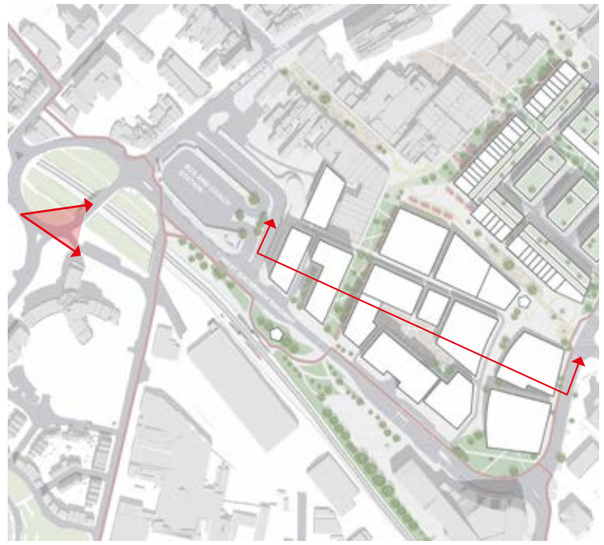
Zone 1 - West Bromwich Central

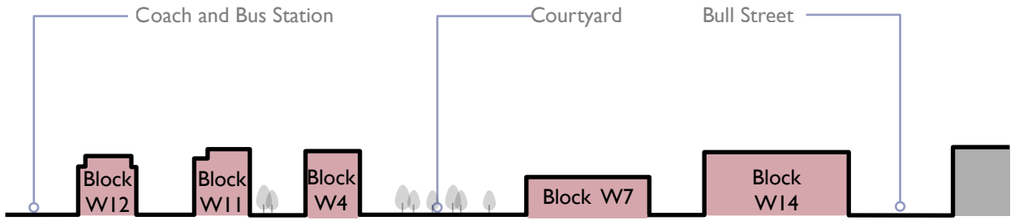
View from Price Street

Scale, massing & legibility

The scale and massing of the proposals consider the existing buildings and retain the visibility of key wayfinding nodes. Refer to the image below and the gateway view from Price Street which retains the view of the Premier Inn Hotel (outlined in red).

The framework plan increases densities in the Town Centre and provides the amenities for these new communities and visitors and limits building heights in the process.









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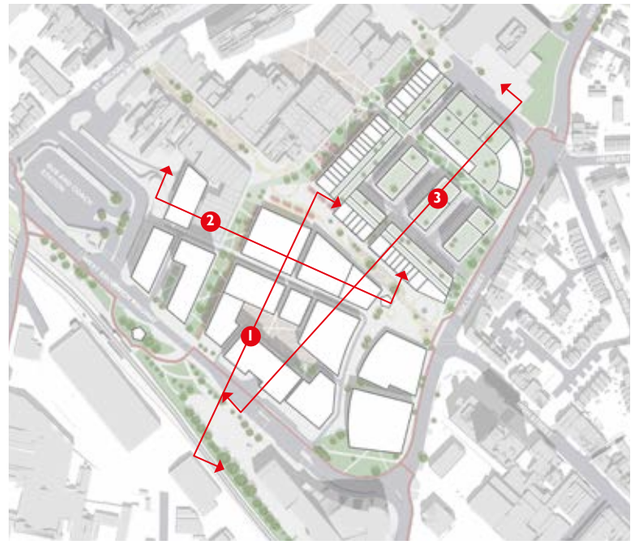
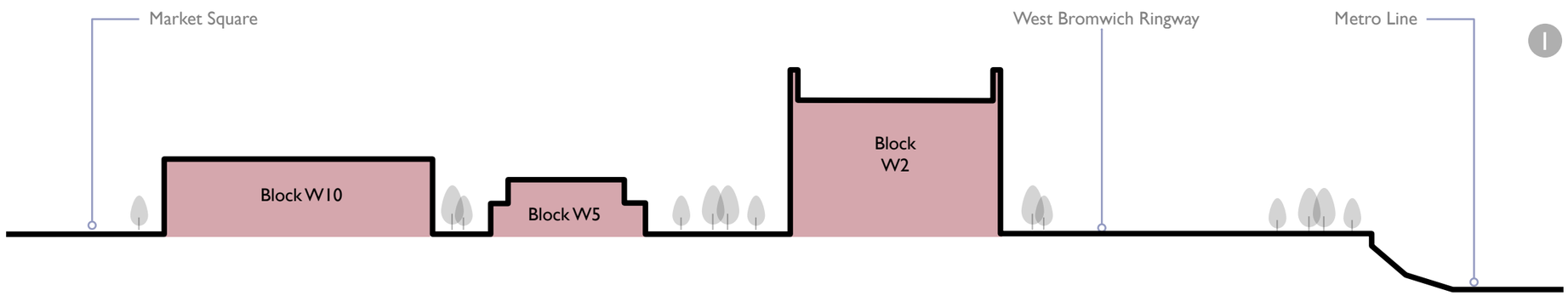
Zone 1 - West Bromwich Central

West Bromwich Central Sections





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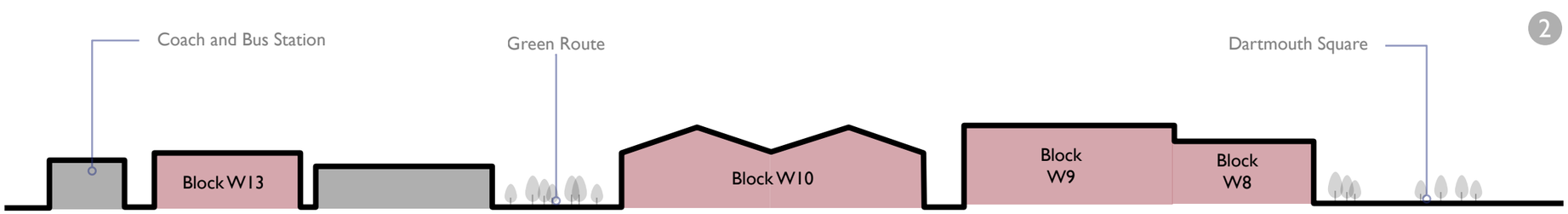

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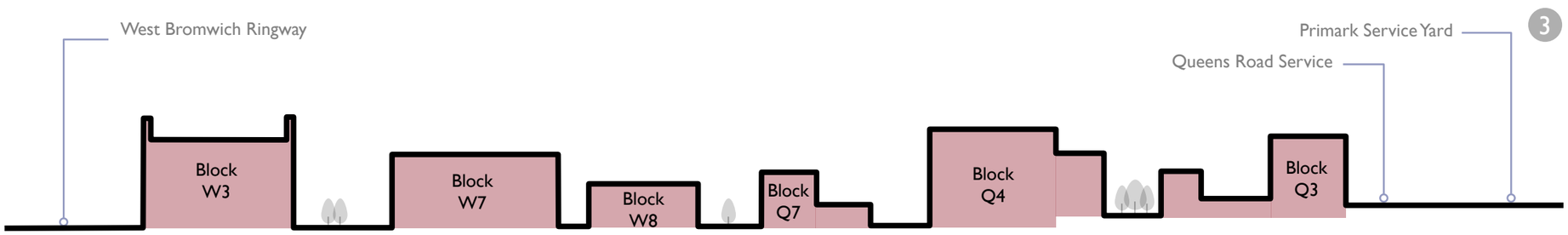

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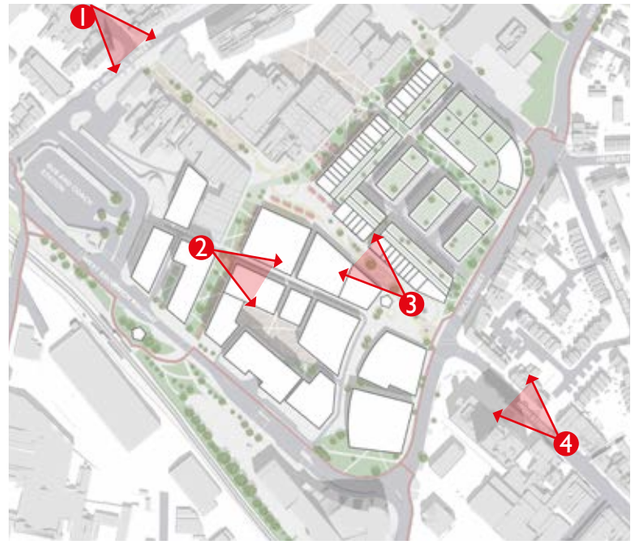
Zone 1 - West Bromwich Central

Illustrative Massing Views















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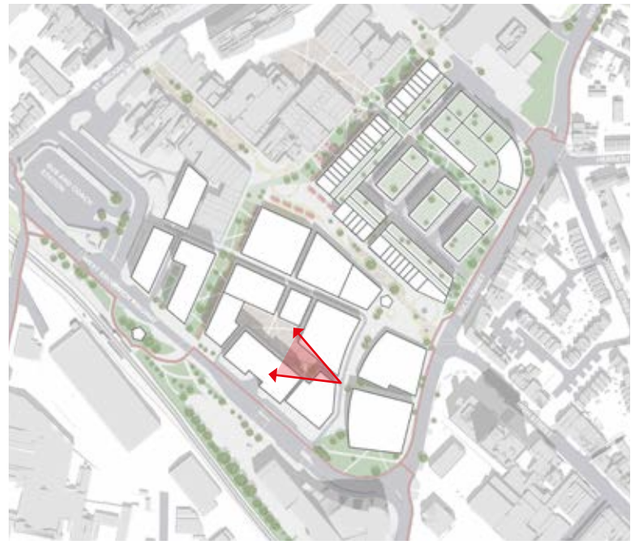
Zone 1 - West Bromwich Central

Visual - The Courtyard





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Zone 1 - West Bromwich Central
Precedents - The Courtyard

Creating a Vibrant Mix of uses

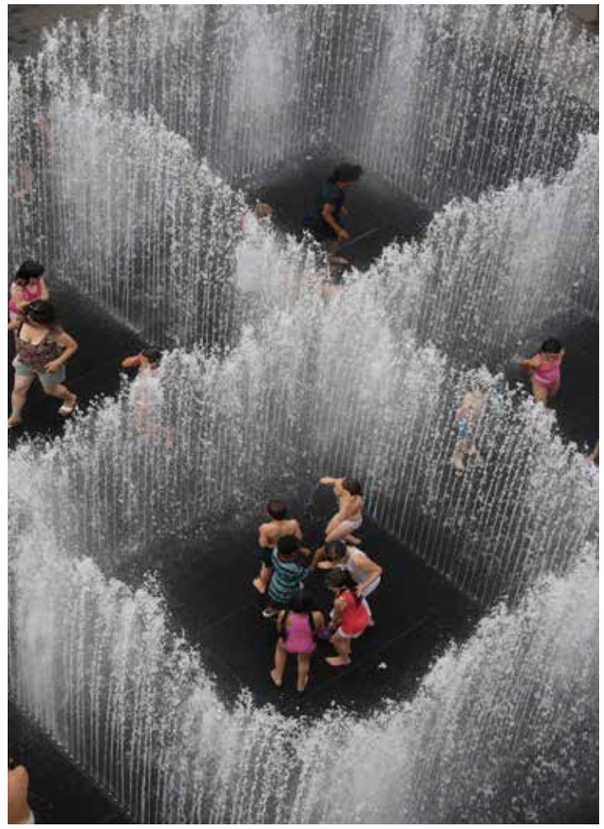
The masterplan creates a number of distinct squares as a place for meeting, dining and playing. This view within the West Bromwich Central Square Courtyard is enclosed by a vibrant mix of uses from office, co-working, restaurants, digital industries, residential apartments and community facilities. Independent retailers, food operators as well as incubator space for small businesses and start-ups sit side by side with much needed venues for digital gaming and indoor active sports. It's a place for daytime and evening entertainment for all ages in a safe, accessible, well-lit and overlooked environment.











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Zone 1 - West Bromwich Central

Precedents - Paradise Street

Leisure

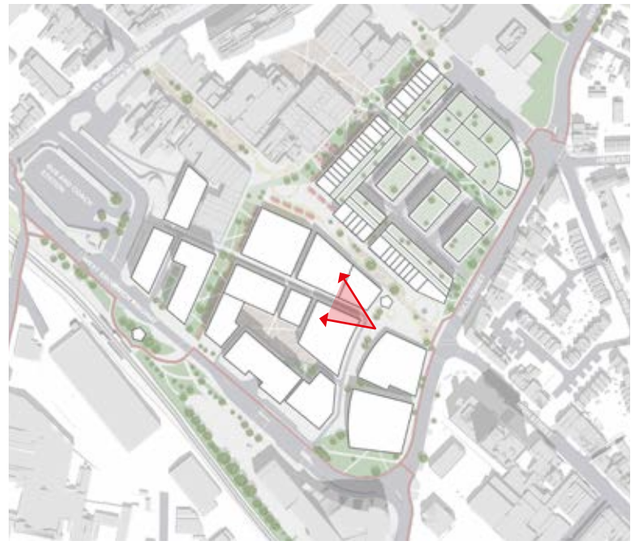
Active and experiential leisure uses, such as gaming bars and venues, which respond to the growth in ‘competitive socialising’ will help to attract a young and diverse profile of visitors to the town.

A new destination for daytime and evening entertainment with an active ground floor plain with pavement seating to F&B and cafes interspersed with leisure venues and community facilities. The strong axis connects the bus station in the west and Dartmouth Square in the east and provides an opportunity to site sculpture within the public realm as a focal point within Dartmouth Square.











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Zone 1 - West Bromwich Central

Sketch - Education Campus & Digital Industries

Technology /Future

Our Towns, High Streets and communities must embrace technological change and re-imagining the role and function of town centres in the digital age.

West Bromwich is the education and retail hub for Sandwell. It provides employment, educational, and other services to thousands of residents daily. The Town Centre benefits from good quality public transport links making it a strong, sustainable, accessible location with 10,000 staff and students travelling to West Bromwich for Sandwell College and Central Saint Michael's Sixth Form.

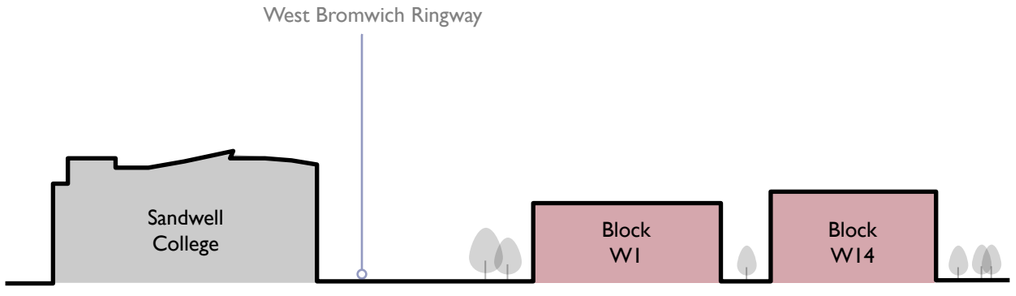
Education provision is expanding, with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra choosing West Bromwich to open a new specialist music school. Education will continue to grow due to our young population; 0-29- year olds comprise of almost 40% of our population.

Through engagement with stakeholders we know there is a desire to extend education provision in West Bromwich and create a college/university campus in the heart of the town. This has the opportunity to create stronger ties with Birmingham & Wolverhampton and increase training and skills provision. The masterplan locates a new teaching/learning and living facility opposite Sandwell College with a cluster of flexible work space/co-working offices aimed at creative digital industries and incubator space for start ups and accelerators.

The existing Farley centre footprint is removed and the historic Barrows Street route re-instated with high quality public realm connecting the college back to the High Street. By directing pedestrian flows back towards the High Street, the surrounding uses with benefit from increased footfall and activity within the town centre.









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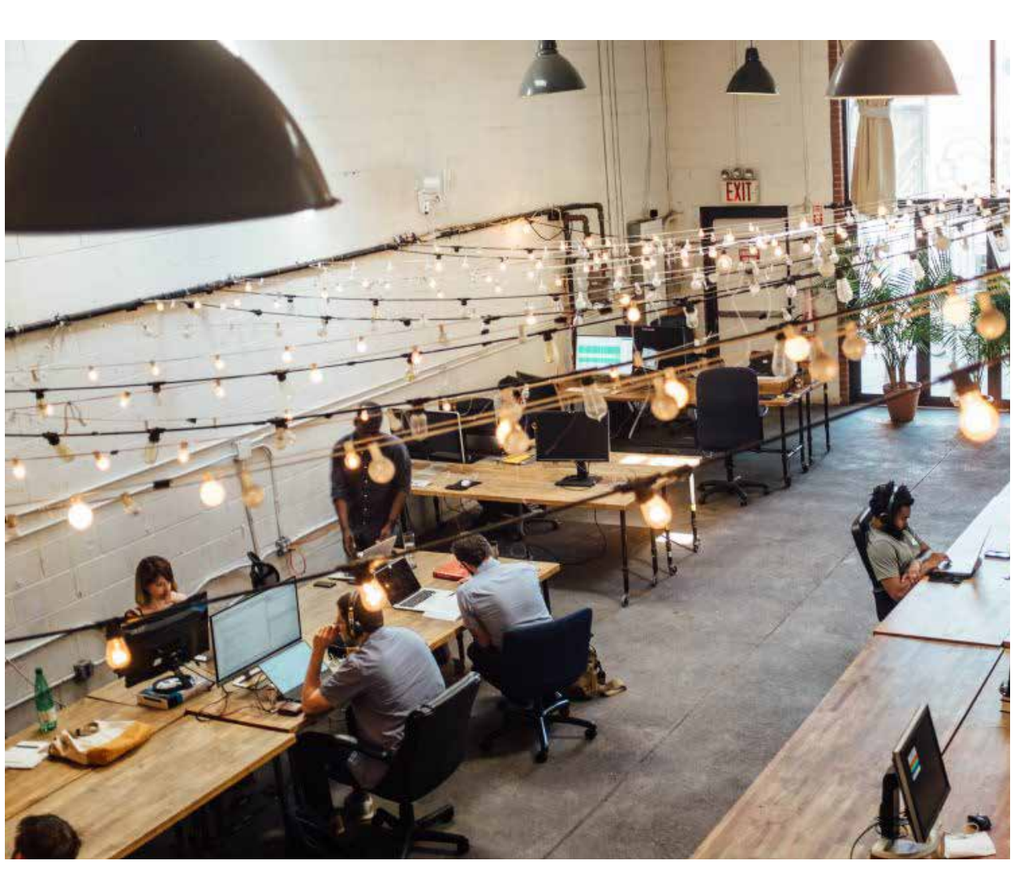
Zone 1 - West Bromwich Central

Precedents - Co-working & Live/Work Residential











© BENOY 2021

Zone 2 - Queens Square Living

Location

© BENOY 2021

Zone 2 - Queens Square Living

Key Information

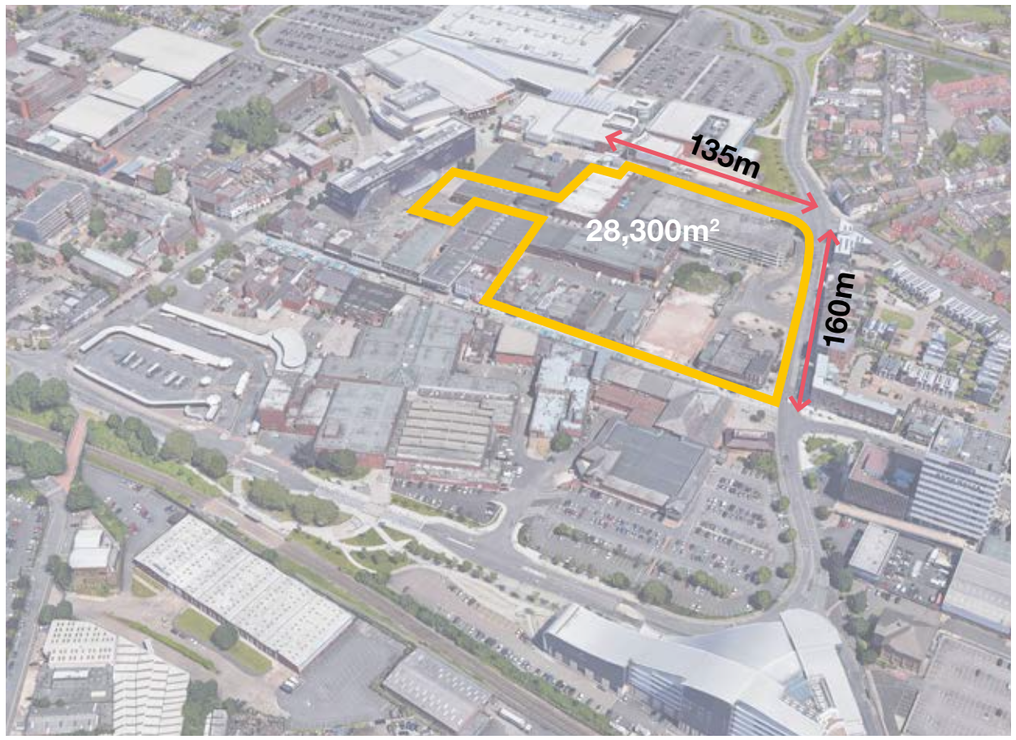
Retail
7,447 sqm

Offices
855 sqm

Residential
36,815 sqm

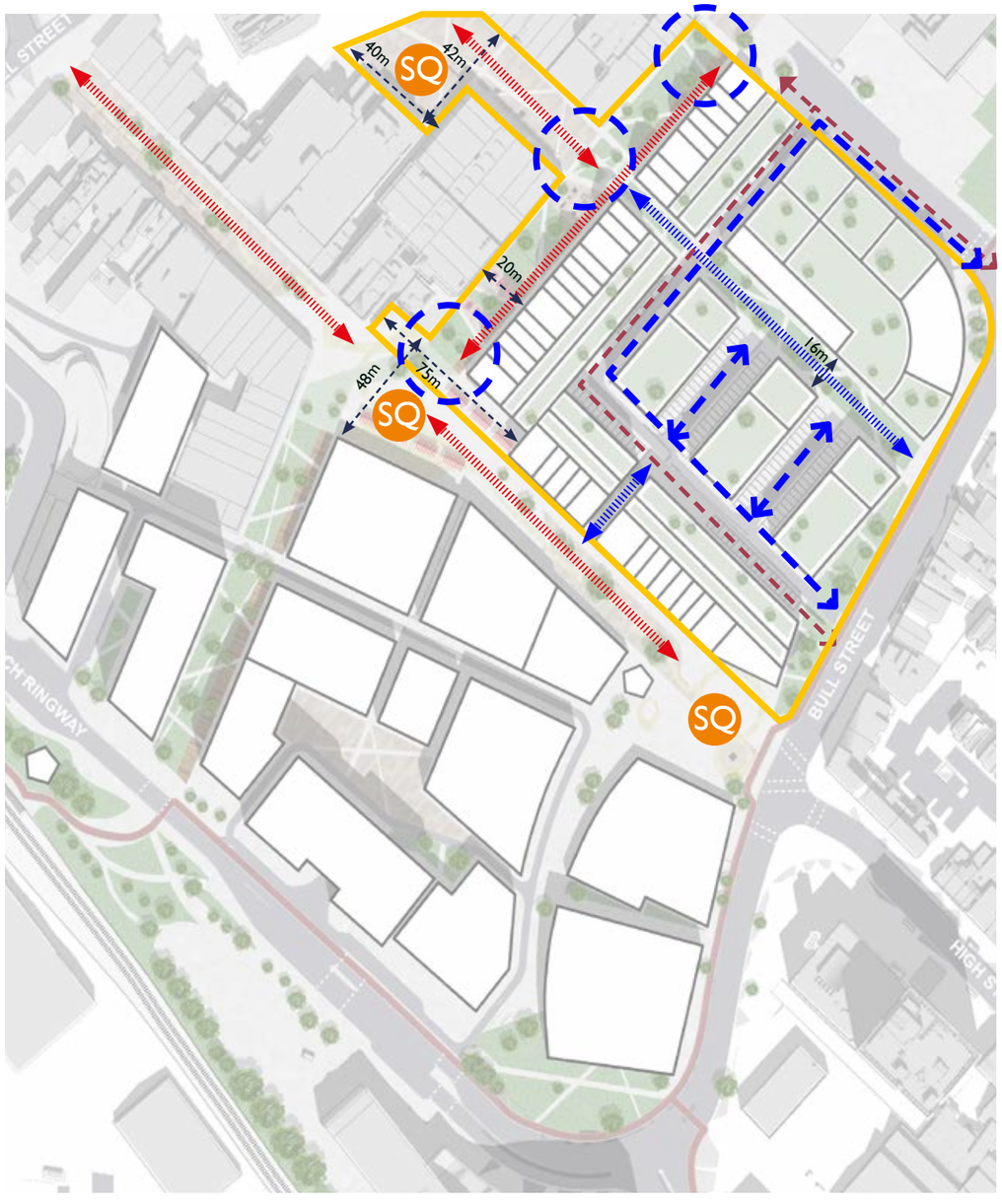
Community/
Leisure
1,395 sqm

Parking
3,705 sqm



KEY

- Primary Pedestrian Routes
- Secondary Pedestrian Routes
- Vehicle Routes
- Servicing
- Square
- Key Gateways



Queens Square Living

The north/south green spine connects the central market square with the New Square shopping centre and strengthens the retail circuit with a mix of leisure, recreation and office uses. A new external route and plaza creates links back to the Central St Michaels Sixth Form College.

Town houses above retail units create a well-defined edge with active market streets to the High Street and Queens Street with a new centrally located high density residential community set within a blanket of green park with external parking spaces, office and gym/ amenities.

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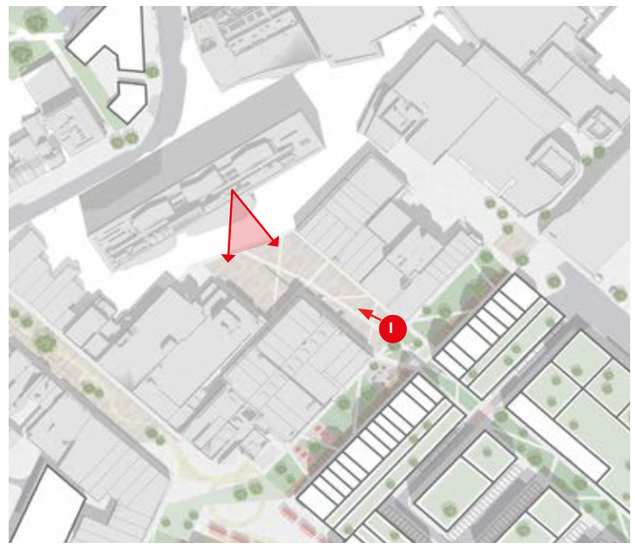
Zone 2 - Queens Square Living
Sketch - Cinema Square/Park

Outdoor Events & Activity Space

The new square carved out of the Queens Shopping Centre extends the existing food and beverage offer from New Square. The blank red brick walls facing the service yards are replaced with a family orientated mix of uses and restaurant/cafes which overlook the plaza for seasonal events and pop up entertainment with water fountains and children's activity park.









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Zone 2 - Queens Square Living

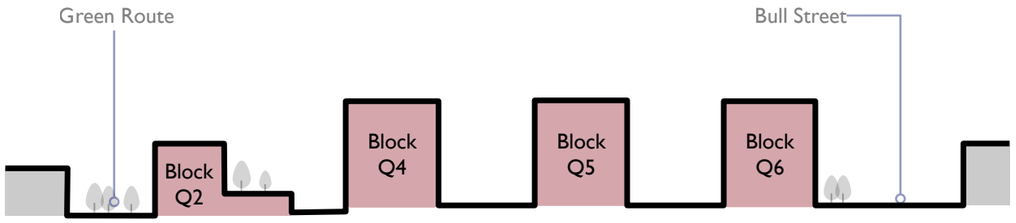
Queens Square Residential

Queens Square Community

This is a high-density residential community combined with ground level retail area with a tight urban form and excellent links to the town centre and wider green spaces. It will be set within a strong geometry of streets and spaces, reflecting the linear pattern and landscape. Housing form will principally be high density apartment up to 7 storeys plus town houses above retail, ensuring efficient use of land, and helping to define the public streets and spaces through overlooking and uniform building setbacks. Roof gardens and green public gardens at ground floor provide ample controlled external space for residents.









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Zone 2 - Queens Square Living

Precedents











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Zone 2 - Queens Square Living

Sketch

Bull Street

The form of the Bull Street corner block follows the curved ownership boundary and has been designed to be implemented as one of the first development phases. 6 storeys of residential sit above the office, gym, car park and flexible commercial space at ground floor level creating a visible gateway in to the town centre.









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Zone 3 - Cultural Quarter

Sketch

*"A community that **connects**"*



Zone 3 - Cultural Quarter

Location



© BENOY 2021

Zone 3 - Cultural Quarter

Key Information

Residential
5,450 sqm

F&B
1,054 sqm

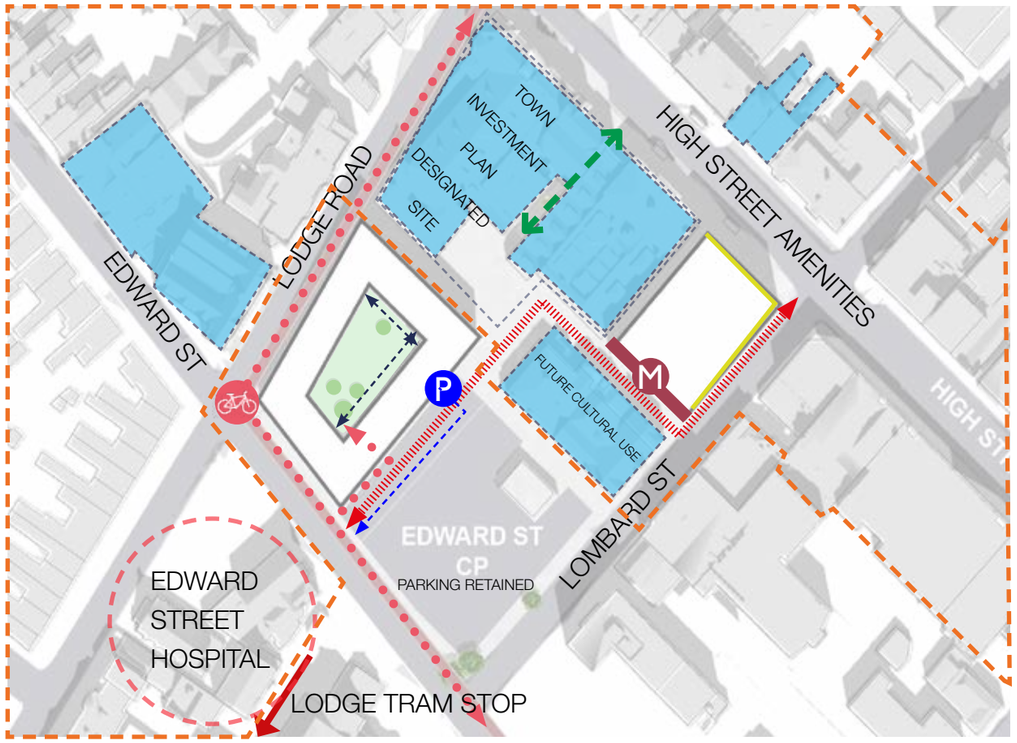
Community/
Leisure
2,000 sqm

Parking
123 sqm



KEY

- Key pedestrian routes
- Conservation Area
- TIP proposals- New connection
- Listed Building
- Cycle route
- Arts trail mural
- Vehicle parking
- Active frontage



Cultural Quarter

The masterplan aims to reinvigorate and reconnect the Town Hall area as West Bromwich main cultural offer. The plan seeks to breathe new life into the area to complement the rich heritage assets and historic connections, enhancing the distinctive character and special qualities of the quarter.

The High Street gas showrooms site will provide a new 3 storey building comprising restaurant and bar at ground floor level to provide much needed activity along the street and create a destination for evening entertaining and dining to complement the adjoining theatre/production offer at the Town Hall. The upper storeys are identified as community space with an open terrace at roof level and a community garden to the rear. This site sits within the conservation area and is surrounded by listed buildings.

With an increased cultural offer the area will be desirable for a new residential development to the rear of the Town Hall site specifically for older age living more humbly responding to the surrounding character and urban fabric of the setting. Located adjacent to the conservation area It will comprise 3-4 storey low dense apartment blocks with a green courtyard at the centre. Through considered treatment of building boundaries, a well-defined, meaningful street edge will be created and off-street parking provision provided.

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Zone 3 - Cultural Quarter
Sections





© BENOY 2021

Zone 3 - Cultural Quarter

Precedents











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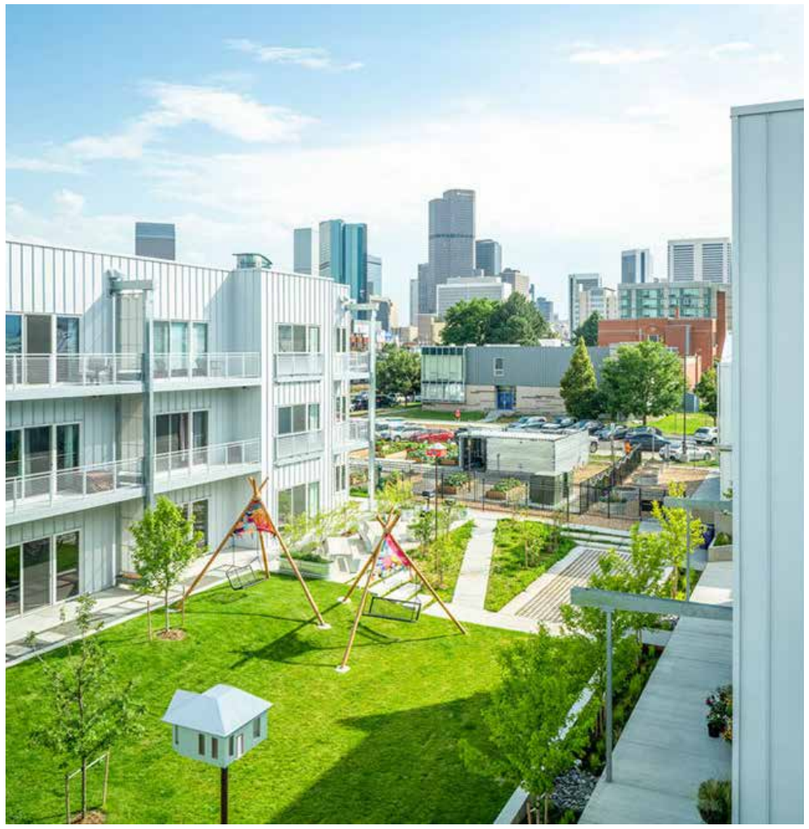
Zone 3 - Cultural Quarter

Precedents











© BENOY 2021

Zone 4 - Pocket Park

Sketch

"Lunch in the Park?"

Zone 4 - Pocket Park

Location

© BENOY 2021

Zone 4 - Pocket Park

Key Information

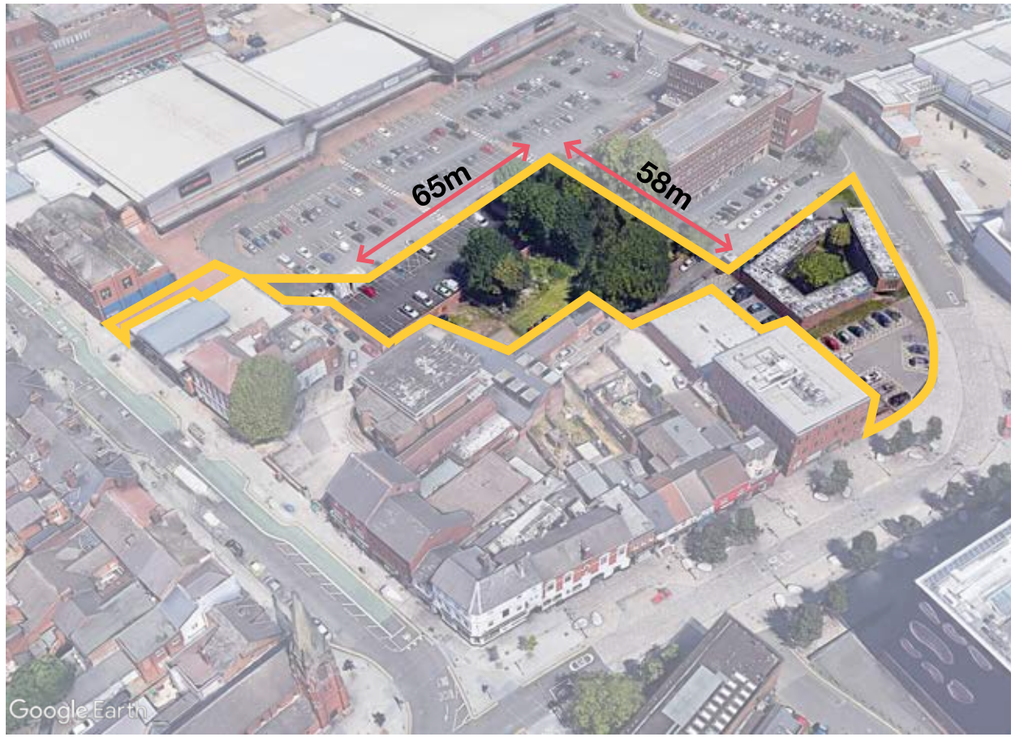
F&B
260 sqm

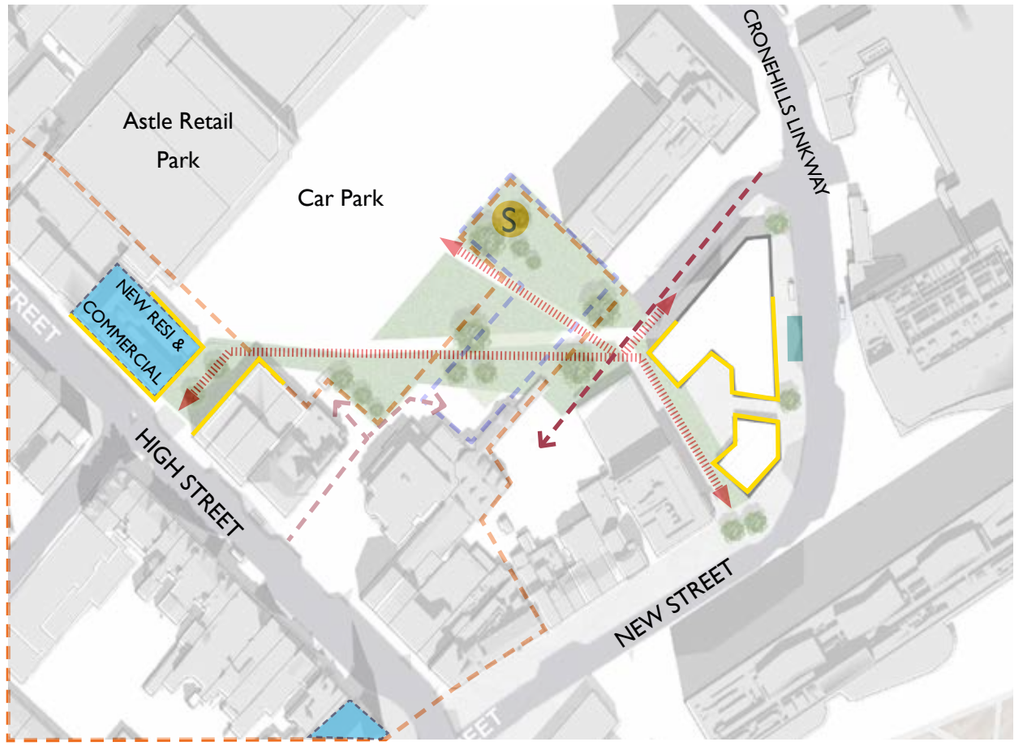
Community/
Leisure
1,350 sqm

Parking
77 sqm

KEY

- Key pedestrian routes
- Conservation Area
- Restricted vehicle access for servicing/ emergencies
- Listed Building
- Sensitive route to the rear of Wesley Methodist Church
- Drop off
- Speakers corner
- Active frontage





Pocket Park

This urban pocket park strengthens the routes from New Square/St Michaels Square to the High Street and provides a tranquil green space in the heart of the town. The park treats the rear of Wesley Methodist Church sensitively and access for servicing is maintained from Cronehills Linkway.

It's a place for relaxation, picnics and eating lunch.

We will work with key stakeholders and landowners to bring forward these desirable future connections and management of spaces.

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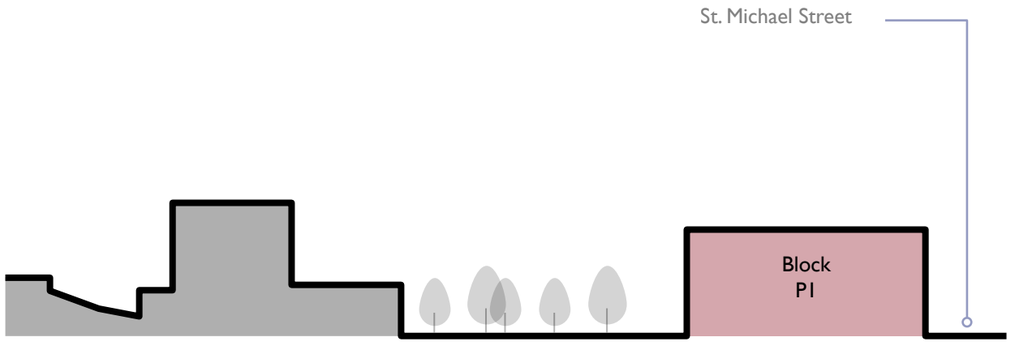
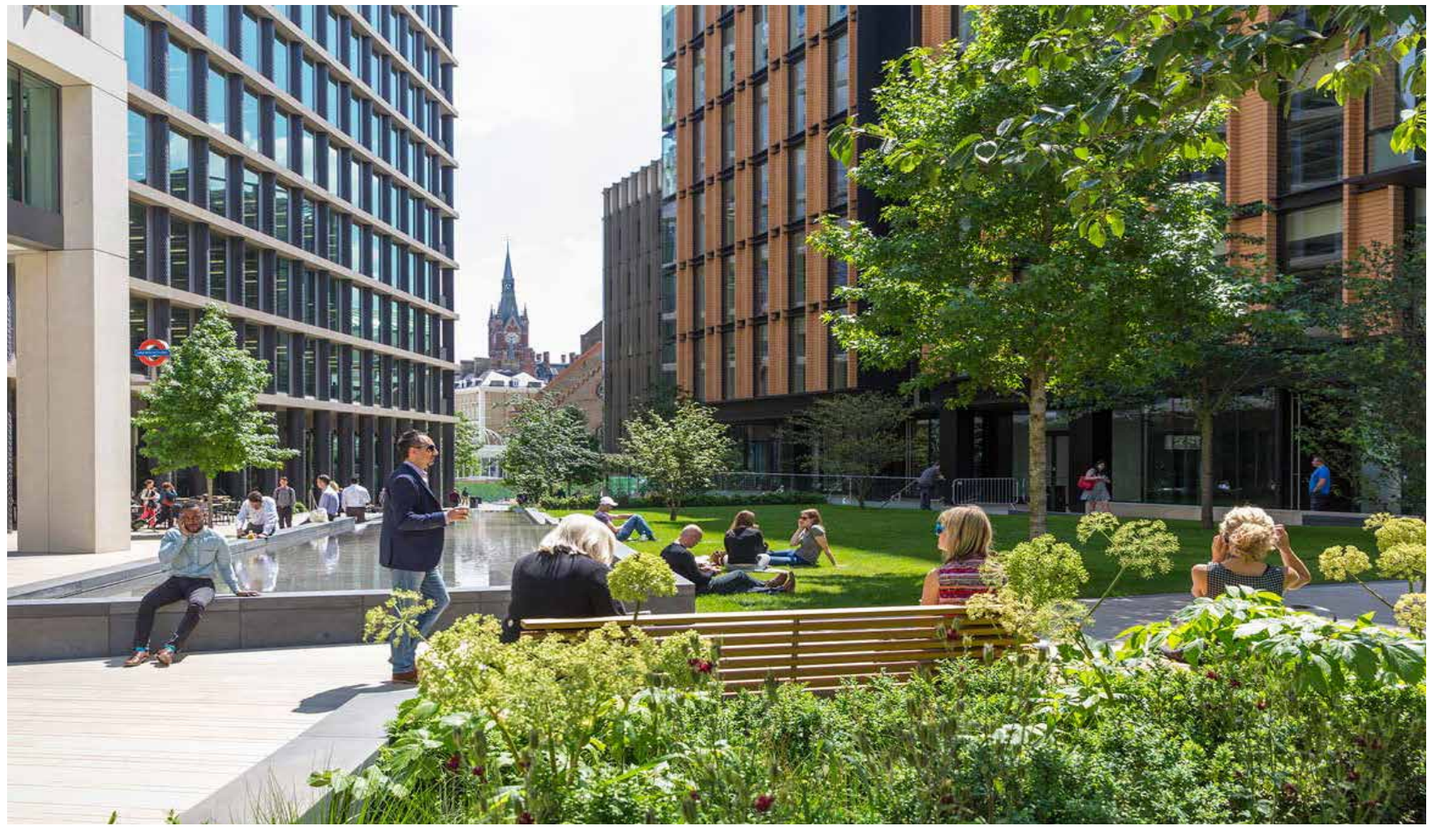
Zone 4 - Pocket Park
Precedents









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Zone 5 -George Street Living

Sketch



Zone 5 -George Street Living

Location

© BENOY 2021

Zone 5 -George Street Living

Key Information

Residential
50,232 sqm

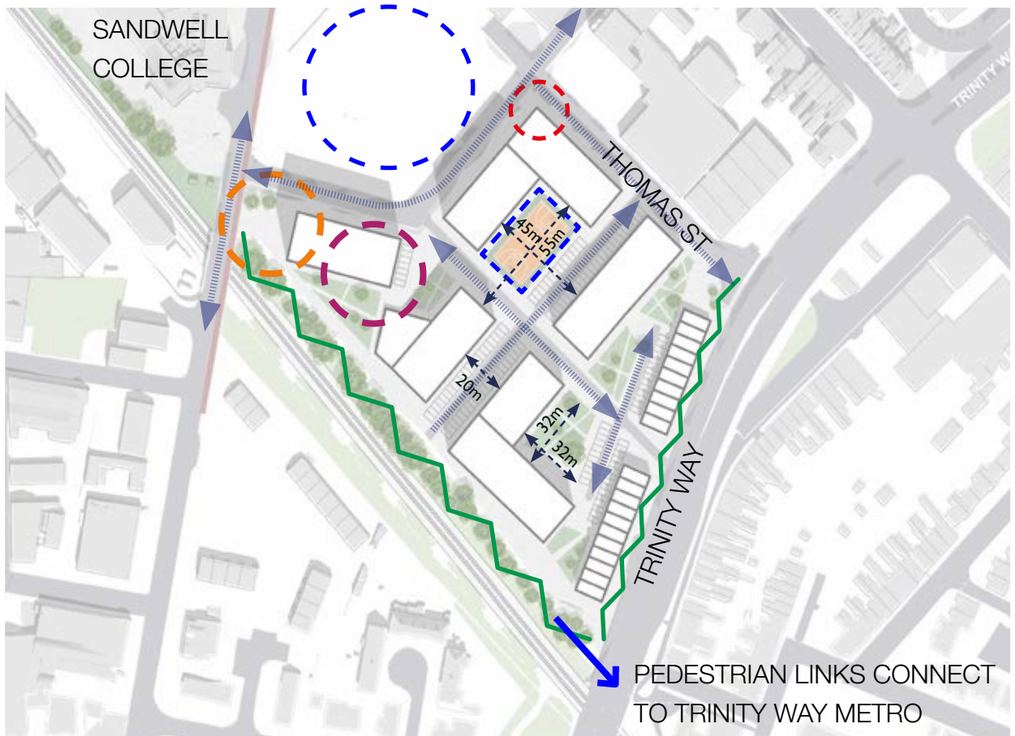
Community/
Leisure
1,150 sqm

Parking
1,611 sqm

KEY

- Vehicle route
- Soft edge for screening and acoustic protection
- Vehicle route
- Key gateway position
- Community facilities and amenities
- Future development plot
- Active amenity at key locations
- Integrated public realm and sports facilities





George Street Living

A new high density residential community to the south-east of the town centre is proposed, with a tight urban inner development and low scale residential frontage to Trinity way dual carriageway.

Building forms will principally be 3-7 storey apartment blocks with densities reducing eastwards towards Trinity way. Terraced houses bordering the highway ensure efficient use of land, helping to define the public streets and spaces. Street tree planting will help to reinforce the linear form and provide links to the wider landscape. This area will form the main arrival image into the town centre from the south east border of the site.

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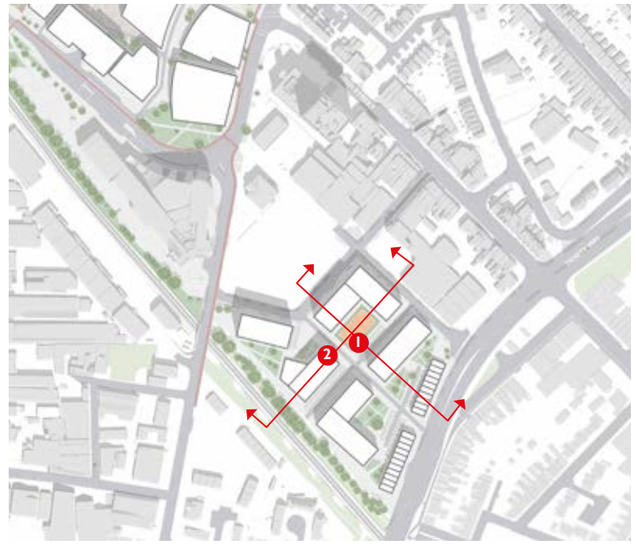
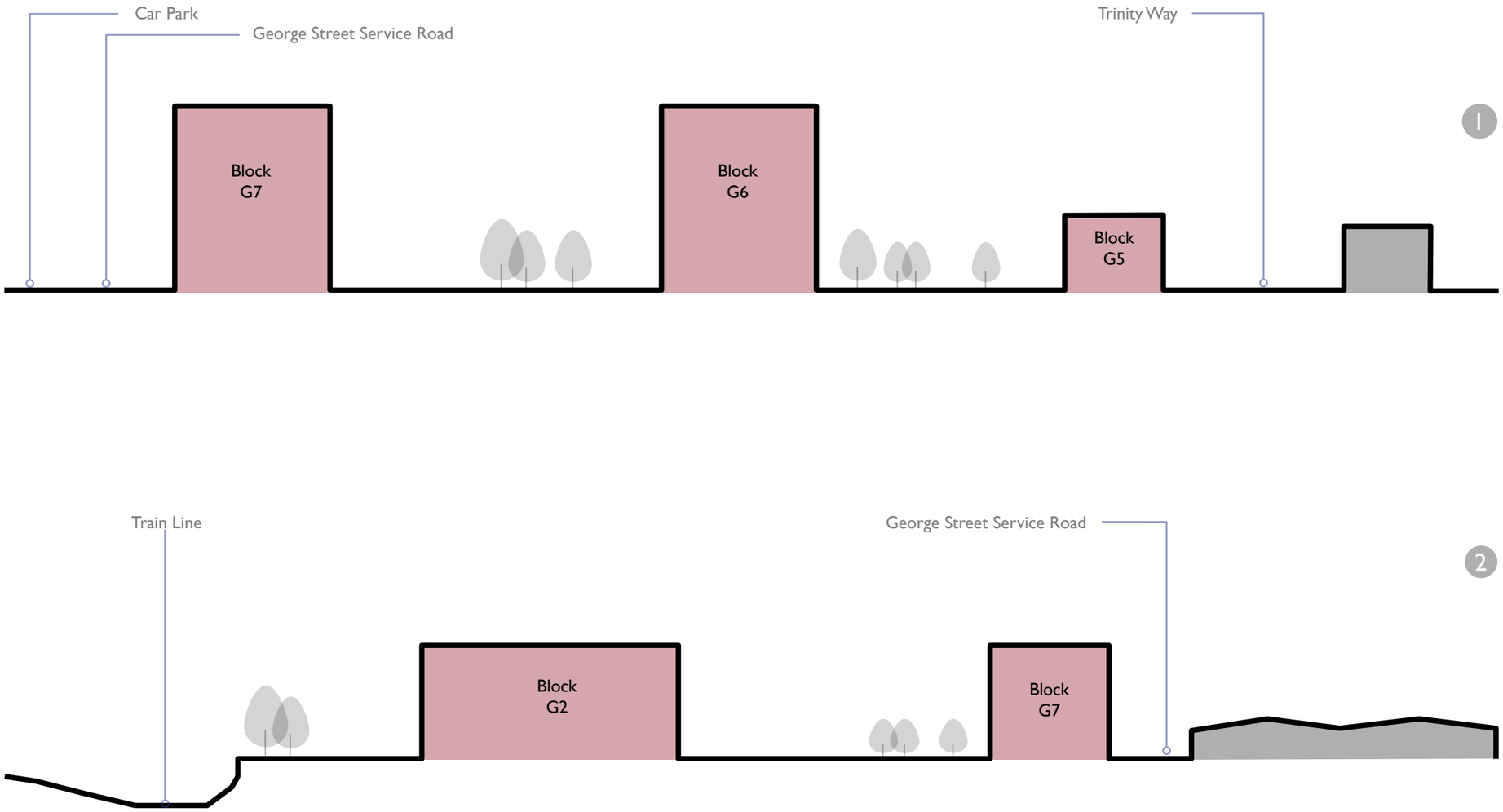
Zone 5 -George Street Living

Sections





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Zone 5 -George Street Living

Precedents











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Impact Assessment

5

Area & Phasing
Use Analysis

In order to create a diverse and vibrant town centre, the Masterplan proposals include a range of uses which aim to build on the current strengths of West Bromwich, while also delivering new economic uses and functions to the town to capture future opportunities.

The proposed mix of uses have been informed by detailed property market analysis, including supply and demand analysis for residential, office, employment, retail and leisure uses. This considered the local, regional and national context and latest market trends. The analysis is summarised in the accompanying Baseline Report.

The Market – West Bromwich is known for its High Street and indoor market. They are much loved community assets and will be important features of the revitalized town centre. A new and improved indoor market will be provided and act as a catalyst and central hub to the town. It will provide sufficient space for current and new traders, and a diversity of new stalls including food and drink offering to support and evening economy.

Education – The role of education will be crucial in upskilling and reskilling the workforce and capturing jobs in emerging economies, including digital and tech sectors. Sandwell College has expansion plans and there is an opportunity to deliver an education campus in the centre of the town. This education space can provide a link between Higher and Further education and industry. It can also provide facilities for business startup and innovation space creating a supportive business ecosystem and attracting people to stay in West Bromwich.

Health – West Bromwich has high employment in the health sector with a number of key institutions. The town centre redevelopment presents the opportunity to respond to the needs of the local community, and COVID-19 pandemic recovery, by providing new town centre, community focused health service provision that could consolidate wider services into a single, well accessed centre.

Entertainment and leisure – The town hall and its theatre is a jewel in the crown of West Bromwich, and the masterplan envisages an entertainment and cultural quarter to be developed in this area. Elsewhere there will be a focus on leisure uses including evening and night time economy uses to create a destination for residents and improve safety, vibrancy, footfall in the town of an evening. This may include restaurants and bars, but also potentially competitive socializing and experiential leisure uses. There will also be open space for activity and community events (e.g. Outdoor cinema).

Office space / workspace – West Bromwich is not a major office location, and we don't anticipate it will be in the future. However, the delivery of right sized office / workspace to support the economic function of the town is imperative. Covid-19 has changed the way we work, with many people working from home. However research shows most people are hoping to get back to the office. The future of office work is likely to be flexible, with home and office working, mixed with work from 'third spaces' including co-working in town centres like West Bromwich. The office space envisaged in this masterplan is not 'traditional' offices filled with banks of desks, but rather flexible and diverse workspace to support start ups, grow ups, innovation space, sole traders, remote workers. There will be larger floorspace for growing or established businesses in higher value digital or creative sectors.

Retail – The town is oversupplied by retail floorspace. In the short term, some of this retail space will be repurposed for other uses as described here. This will increase footfall, vibrancy and activity in the town and make the remaining retail space more sustainable.

Residential – Underpinning this strategy is the delivery of a new, sustainably located, residential community in West Bromwich. Delivery good quality homes in the town centre with access to jobs, amenities, open space, and sustainable transport. This will create the vibrancy, footfall, spending, and economic growth that will support the viability of other uses in the town. It will include space for current 'missing groups' including young people and professionals, as well as older professionals and early retirees who want to enjoy retirement in a high quality space.

Public space – To accommodate a new residential community requires a transformation of the quality of the town centre public realm. The plans include a new boulevard and revitalized open spaces and green links that will transform perceptions of, and how people use, the town.

Car Parking – West Bromwich is one of the most sustainably well connected places in the Midlands with excellent metro and bus links. It also has ample existing car parking facilities in the town. Many of the development opportunities that exist are on underutilized surface car parks. A new multi-storey car park is planned, however the provision reflects the future trends of more sustainable travel via bus, metro, bike and walking, and less travel by car.

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Area & Phasing

Area Schedule

Masterplan For West Bromwich Town Centre - Schedule of Areas and Residential Unit Numbers														
Block	GF Block Coverage	Retail	Offices	Residential	Educational	F&B	Com./Leisure	Health	Parking/ Approx spaces	Floor Area for Parking	Residential Unit Nos			Storeys including ground
											1B	2B	3B	
Queens Square														
Q1	1650m2	1650m2	n/a	2300m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	(5 no. Open GL parking+ Loading Bay)	155m2	0	4	6	4
Q2	2430m2	2430m2	n/a	3530m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	(5 no. Open GL parking+ Loading Bay)	163m2	0	8	6	4
Q3	4342m2	n/a	855m2	12000m2	n/a	n/a	1395m2	n/a	(70 no. Open GL parking)	1350m2	120	40	6	7
Q4	944m2	n/a	n/a	4627m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	(32 no. Open GL parking)	635m2	40	19	0	6
Q5	944m2	n/a	n/a	5064m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	(38 no. Open GL parking)	510m2	44	20	0	6
Q6	944m2	n/a	n/a	5064m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	(19 no. Open GL parking)	255m2	44	20	0	6
Q7	2285m2	2285m2	n/a	2970m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	(23 no. Open GL parking)	435m2	0	7	6	4
Q8	1082m2	1082m2	n/a	1560m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	(14 no. Open GL parking)	202m	0	4	2	4
										Total	248	122	26	
West Bromich Central														
W1	2530m2	n/a	n/a	3800m2	5060m2	n/a	n/a	n/a			56	40	0	4
W2	1288m2	n/a	1288m2	2576m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a			12	2	6	3
W3	1872m2	n/a	3744m2	7115m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a			50	34	10	7
W4	882m2	n/a	n/a	2646m2	n/a	1764m2	n/a	n/a			15	10	0	5
W5	1318m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2636m2	n/a	n/a			n/a	n/a	n/a	2
W6	550m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1650m2	n/a			n/a	n/a	n/a	3
W7	1964m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	5892m2	n/a			n/a	n/a	n/a	3
W8	806m2	1612m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a			n/a	n/a	n/a	2
W9	1560m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3120m2	780m2	n/a			n/a	n/a	n/a	3
W10	2160m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	4320m2	n/a	n/a			n/a	n/a	n/a	2
W11	1540m2	n/a	n/a	9240m2	n/a	n/a	1540m2	n/a			66	42	0	7
W12	1041m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	5205m2			n/a	n/a	n/a	5
W13	1100m2	2200m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a			n/a	n/a	n/a	2
W14	2138m2	690m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	(625 no. in 6fls+roof+base-ment)	18945m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	B+6
										Total	199	128	16	
Pocket Park														
P1	892m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	260m2	1135m2	n/a	(5 no. Open GL parking)	77m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	2
P2	247m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	215m2	n/a			n/a	n/a	n/a	1
Cultural Quarter														
C1	1018m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1054m2	2000m2	n/a			n/a	n/a	n/a	3
C2	1384m2	n/a	n/a	5450m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	(10 no. Open GL parking)	123m2	0	32	20	4
										Total	0	32	20	
George Street														
G1	925m2	n/a	n/a	5550m2	n/a	n/a	925m2	n/a	(8 no. Open GL parking)	92m2	36	36	0	7
G2	1120m2	n/a	n/a	7615m2	n/a	n/a	225m2	n/a	(22no. Open GL parking)	306m2	45	45	0	7
G3	1790m2	n/a	n/a	12530m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	(34no. Open GL parking)	417m2	84	70	0	7
G4	675m2	n/a	n/a	2025m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	(15no. Open GL parking)	195m2	0	0	11	3
G5	490m2	n/a	n/a	1470m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	(11no. Open GL parking)	182m2	0	0	10	3
G6	1206m2	n/a	n/a	8442m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	(25no. Open GL parking)	288m2	42	42	0	7
G7	1800m2	n/a	n/a	12600m2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	(15no. Open GL parking)	161m2	77	70	0	7
										Total	284	263	21	
									Overall Total		731	545	83	
									Total residential		1,359 Units			

All areas subject to change as the design develops

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Area & Phasing

Areas



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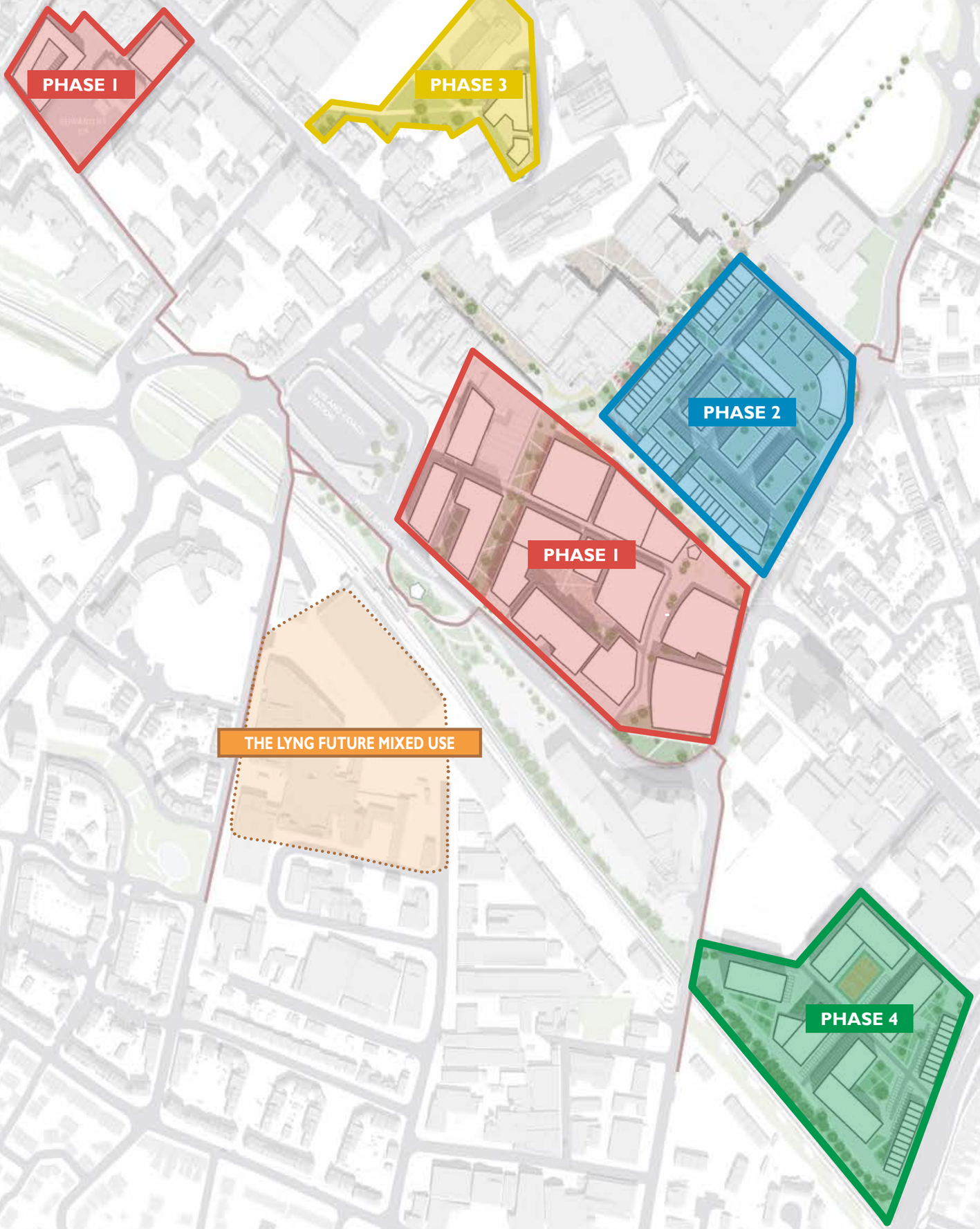
Area & Zones

Phasing



Introduction
Economic Benefits

The proposed transformation of West Bromwich Town Centre, as outlined in this Masterplan document, could have significant economic benefits for the town and wider region, including:

1,359 New Homes

1,730 New Residents

£507 Million Construction Value

760 Construction Jobs each year

590 Jobs for local construction workers

£27.1 Million Construction GVA output each year

£14.1 Million Resident expenditure in the region each year

£6.6 Million Resident expenditure in the town each year

200 Local retail and leisure jobs supported

2,240 Jobs supported in the town

1,740 Jobs for local residents

£105.9 Million GVA output each year

£2.7 Million Council Tax each year

£2.5 Million Business Rates each year

£37.4 Million Cumulative Council revenue over 10 years

Estimates of operational jobs, GVA and public sector revenues are gross rather than net additional

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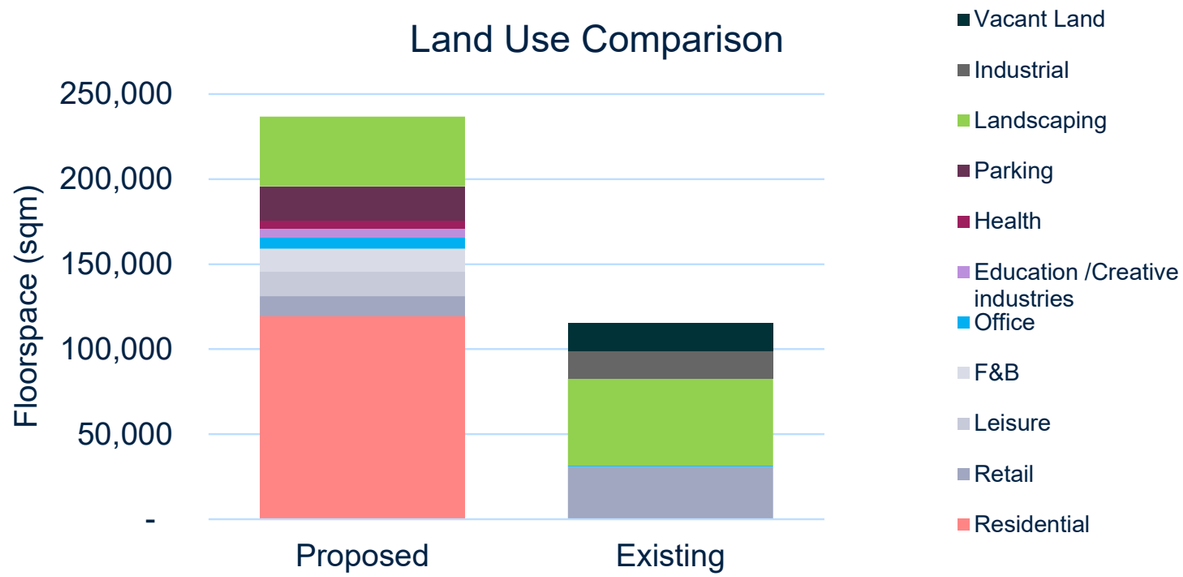
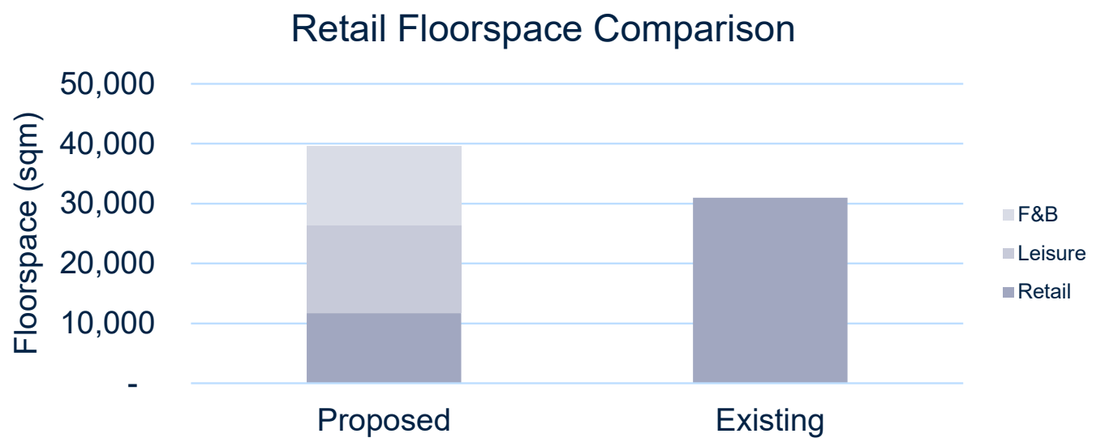
Introduction
Transformational Impact

The proposed transformation of West Bromwich Town Centre, as outlined in this Masterplan document, will have a significant impact on the diversity of uses and economic growth potential in the town including:

- Reducing existing over dependence on retail uses
- Capturing future job markets and economic growth in digital, tech, arts, culture and public sector work
- Delivering new, consolidated education campus offering
- Reducing vacant, redundant, and derelict land
- Increasing the diversity of the evening and night time economy
- Transforming the leisure and socializing opportunities
- Delivering new community open space
- Transforming the markets
- Creating a new, high density and sustainable residential community in the town centre





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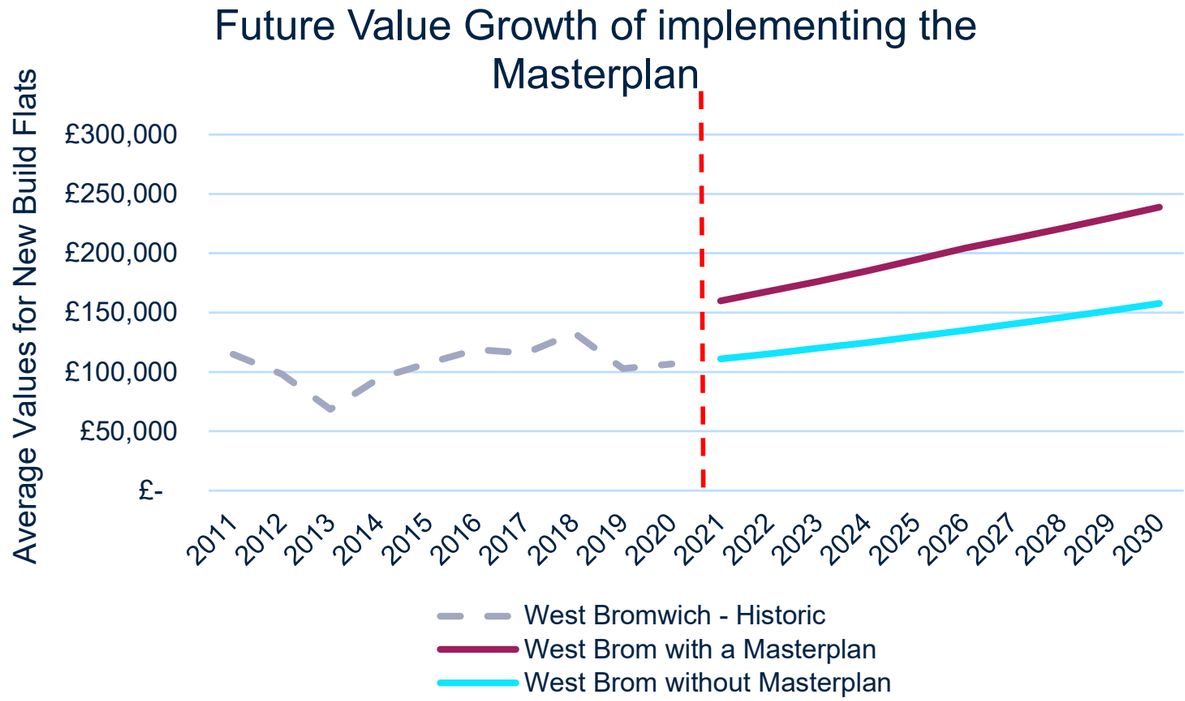
This transformation and investment will have a significant impact on land values in the town and put West Bromwich on a high future value growth trajectory. This will help to attract further investment from the private sector.

Value Growth Impacts of the Masterplan

5% per annum for **new Flats,** compared to 4% currently

3% per annum for new **Office Space**, compared to 0.9% currently

0.8% per annum for **Retail and Leisure space**, compared to -0.6% currently.



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Delivery Strategy

6

Delivery Strategy & Next Steps

Challenges

This is a transformational masterplan which depicts the wholesale redevelopment of West Bromwich town centre, to reposition the town to capture current and future opportunities and tackle the challenges the town currently faces.

There are major deliverability challenges to such an ambitious and transformational plan. There are no simple solutions to delivering such growth and a number of different options in terms of how it can be achieved.

The purpose of this masterplan was to set a strategic vision for how the town could change, to energise the market, attract discussion and debate and to enable stakeholders and the community to come together to identify how best to deliver these changes.

Here we set out a number of challenges in terms of delivering the ambitious plans detailed in the masterplan.

Planning

Planning policy for the Masterplan area currently consists of the adopted West Bromwich Area Action Plan (WBAAP, December 2012). The WBAAP expires in 2026 and is now dated. The Black Country Core Strategy (BCCS) is also under review and a new Plan is proposed for adoption in 2024. To bridge this gap it is intended that this Masterplan will form part of an Interim Planning Statement (IPS) which will be used to help guide development and planning decisions until the full review and adoption of a revised WBAAP in 2024. The IPS will be treated as a material consideration for any future proposals put forward in the area.
The IPS sets out the anticipated 'direction of travel' of planning policy for the town and the general locations and scale of development anticipated. This aims to provide confidence to developers and land owners on what can be accommodated in the town and what Council and the community expects to see delivered as part of the ongoing regeneration of the town.

Viability

Development viability is a major challenge to achieving the masterplan vision.

Even for non-complex sites and schemes, development viability and feasibility in the town and wider region is challenging. To deliver the ambitious scale of change outlined in the masterplan will need significant upfront costs including land acquisition, demolition, site preparation, engineering, public realm works, and delivery of high quality buildings, with sustainable design principles, which are fitting for a new town centre and are capable of changing perceptions of the area and delivering a high quality environment to attract a new residential market.

In order to achieve this will be extremely costly. In addition to this, the development market is currently faced with unprecedented cost inflation for materials and labour.

The current and demonstrated values for new homes and commercial property in the town, would not support delivery of such large scale changes. The values would not outweigh the costs.

As such other strategies in terms of funding and deliverability must be considered.

Funding

Without question, this scale of change and development will not be achievable without significant public and private sector funding support. Sandwell MBC has been successful in securing £25 million of Town Deal funding as part of the Governments £3.6 bn commitment to transform town centres across the country. Of this approximately £15.62 million can be allocated to schemes which will help to progress the delivery of the masterplan vision, including:

- £13 million for retail diversification including land acquisition, demolition, and remediation
- £1.4 million for walking and cycling improvements
- £1.22 million for urban greening works

In addition to this, £1.3 million has been secured from WMCA to support the retail diversification strategy.

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Delivery Strategy & Next Steps
Challenges

However, even this level of secured public sector investment is unlikely to be sufficient to deliver the masterplan and further public intervention will be required. This could be sourced from Sandwell Council (via prudential borrowing), via WMCA, or via other government agencies (eg. Homes England, MHCLG, BEIS etc). It is likely that a range of public funding streams would need to be secured to unlock the growth ambitions in West Bromwich.

It is anticipated that the scale of the impact that this ambitious regeneration could have on the economy, social outcomes for the community, and in tackling environmental challenges, would present a compelling value for money case to support public sector investment.

At the same time, the scale of growth can only be delivered with major private sector investment also. This will require developers, investors and landowners to recognize the unique opportunity and growth potential for West Bromwich and develop and plan for schemes which will support this transformational growth strategy.

There is potential that major development could be brought forward in partnership between the public and private sector, with an understanding that early stages of the regeneration may not be viable but are required to deliver longer term, and potentially more viable future stages of development.

Phasing

This masterplan presents a long term 20 year growth strategy for the town. Phasing growth in an appropriate way will be important to support viability and deliverability, also to reduce disturbance and support the transition of the town. Below presents an indicative phasing strategy for how development could come forward:

- Phase 1 – 2024-2029: Kings Square, the Farley Centre, Bull Street and the Town Hall Quarter
- Phase 2 – 2029-2034: Queens Square
- Phase 3 – 2030-2032: Urban Pocket Park
- Phase 4 – 2034-2038: George Street Living and wider growth opportunities (e.g. The Lyng mixed use development).

This phasing strategy aims to deliver the most transformational projects first. The redevelopment of the Kings Square and Farley Centre will transform the central area of the town, creating new connections and new uses that will set the precedent in terms of quality of space to support delivery of the remaining areas.

Phasing would also consider the relocation and retention of important community assets such as the market. The level of vacant space within the town at present means that it may be possible to identify opportunities for the temporary relocation of space while redevelopment takes place and until new facilities are ready for occupation.

Community and Stakeholders

This Masterplan will not be successful without the support from the community and a range of stakeholders. Sustainable masterplanning is hinged on the success of local partnerships and buy in from stakeholders into the vision and strategy outlined.

This will need support from public sector at local, regional and national levels. It will need support from the private sector, including land owners, developers, and businesses. It will also need support from the community to direct growth and realize the benefits of such transformational change.

As a long term strategy, there would need to be a long term approach to stakeholder engagement and support in a similar way to the Town Deal has leveraged support via the Town Boards.

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Appendix A- Policy Review

Appendix
Key National and Local Design Guidelines

The following National and Local design guidelines have been considered in the formulation of the masterplan concept and concept development. The overarching objectives throughout are based around the creation of high-quality sustainable environments, well integrated and connected placemaking and the inherent importance of community, people and facilities.

National Design Guide:

- The most relevant characteristics will be determined by: Local priorities and concerns; the strategic priorities of the local authority; the priorities of a particular user group; the scale of proposal; its site and location; and/or; the design process, including whether it is at a strategic or detailed stage.

- Good design involves careful attention to other important components of placemaking; context for places and buildings; hard and soft landscape; technical infrastructure – transport, utilities, services such as drainage; and social infrastructure – social, commercial, leisure uses and activities.

- A well-designed place is unlikely to be achieved by focusing only on the appearance, materials and detailing of buildings. It comes about through making the right choices at all levels, including: the layout (or masterplan); the form and scale of buildings; their appearance; landscape; materials; and their detailing.

- Characteristics: Context, Identity, Built form, Movement, Nature, Public Spaces, Uses, Homes & Buildings, Resources, Lifespan.

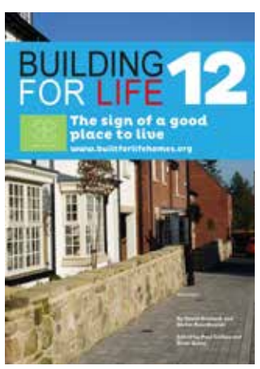
Building for Life 12/ Building for a Healthy Life

- Initiative by the housing industry- setting standards through a traffic light system which developers must meet to achieve planning approval.

- Links back to national Planning Policy Frameworks and National Design Guides. Reviewed by Local Design Network partner with possible Design for Homes commendation.

- Creating quality places that are better for people and nature through better design and placemaking from the outset of a project based on 16 points:

1.Integrated neighbourhoods;
2.Natural connections and permeability;
3. Walking, cycling and public transport;
4. Facilities and services to respond to community needs/Public squares;
5.Homes for everyone/mix of types and tenures/flexibility;
6.Distinctive places;
7.Making the most of what's there/Opportunities;
8.Constraints and assets with LA;
9.A memorable character;
10.Well defined streets and spaces with active frontages;
11.Easy to find your way around/ legibility to inform mental mapping;
12.Streets for all;
13.Healthy streets/Balance between movement & place functions;
14.Cycle and car parking;
15.Green and blue infrastructure/A network of different spaces;
16. Back of pavement front of home.



Black Country Garden City Principles - BCLEP

- The Black Country LEP, Local Authorities and the Homes & Communities Agency Partnership to create a new 21st Century Garden City in the centre of England, which will connect into existing communities and infrastructure based on 10 Principles:
  1. Land Use - Brownfield sites, 45,000 homes make the most of context, mixed density, use and tenure, £6 billion investment over the next 10 years
  2. Black Country - Maintain existing assets and heritage
  3. Garden - Green streets and spaces
  4. Connectivity - car, walk, public transport
  5. Accessibility - Convenient access to local facilities: schools, health and shops.
  6. Distinctive - Clear sense of identity
  7. Enterprising - Support and encourage growth in enterprise and creative industry
  8. Engaging - Local people involved in managing communities
  9. Smart - Technology innovation
  10. Health - Encourage living healthy lifestyles - well designed environment
- Vision - Transform perceptions, walkable neighbourhoods, green spaces, beautiful efficient homes, mixed use, accessibility to public transport and facilities. eg: low carbon timber framed homes, Beechdale, Walsall. Black Country, heart of construction technologies in the UK: 4000 companies, £1.6 billion to UK economy, 44,000 jobs.

SMBC's Residential Design Guide SPD

(Link to Building for Life12, Black Country Core Strategy & Sandwell Site Allocations)
Encourages a comprehensive design approach to the delivery of new residential environments with a commitment to high quality sustainable housing and based upon key objectives:

- To use land more efficiently for new homes
- Build good quality housing set in attractive environments.
- Connect and integrate designs physically and visually to the local context and facilities

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Appendix
Key National and Local Design Guidelines

- Respect the local character and landscape when designing development
- Ensure that housing designs are flexible to meet changing demands during their lifetime
- The delivery of good quality sustainable external spaces
- Integration into the neighbourhood through well connected & Integrated new and existing development. Connected to local facilities and demands of different ages; connected to transport links (Rule of thumb: walking distances, 320-400m in high density and 560-700m in low density). Improve & maintain existing spaces. Variety of open spaces - route through. New developments (10 plus) - mix of housing and sizes to encourage mix of occupants, avoid continues runs of housing, rear bin stores and parking is easily accessed, design set back from existing. Affordable housing scattered through development. Meet changing needs of people through their lifetime & occupier - Require Sustainable Homes, Level 3, Re-use not rebuild. Renewable energy to off-set 10% of residual energy. Personal extensions will be limited, considerations are given to scale and appearance etc
- Creating a Place
- Street and Home

Big Plans for a Great Place - for the people of Sandwell - Vision 2030 Sandwell

- Sets out an ambitious plan to deliver Vision 2030 with 6 outcomes:
  - The best start in life for children and young people
  - People live well and age well
  - Strong, resilient communities
  - Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods
  - A strong and Inclusive Economy
  - A connected and accessible Sandwell

- Put Sandwell on the Map - better opportunities – next 5 years:
  - Sandwell Aquatics Centre - 2022 Commonwealth Games
  - New housing developments
  - New infrastructure - Midlands Metro line extension & HS2
  - New Midland Metropolitan University Hospital as catalysts for wider regeneration
  - New Inclusive Economy Deal
  - 5G collaborative ways of working with residents, businesses
  - Building community wealth
  - Stronger Towns Fund

Vision 2030
- Opportunity and aspirations
- Healthy lives
- Skilled workforce
- High quality education
- Community with mutual respect
- Public transport - connected and affordable
- New connected homes
- Successful neighbourhoods - bring up families
- Choice for industries
- National reputation for getting things done - people's lives and communities.

- The Sixth Outcomes:

1. The best start in life for children and young people
   - 1st 1000 days, foundation of child's development
   - Support to be school ready
   - Vulnerable children

2. People live well and age well
   - Being with people
   - Access to food
   - Choice and Independence





3. Strong, resilient communities
   - Vibrant town centres - SHAPE, places for young people
   - Clean & Green, carbon neutral by 2041
   - Minimum energy performance standards for homes
   - Enhance existing green spaces and create new - plant tree for every child starting school
   - Safe environment

4. Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods
   - 1/5 of homes managed by council

5. A strong and Inclusive Economy
   - Economy Deal will be a complementary document
   - Put on map - transformational opportunities
   - Strong business sector & routes into jobs

6. A connected and accessible Sandwell
   - Wednesbury- Brierley Hill West Midlands Metro Corridor (£450million investment) which is the largest light rail project in Europe - link to Dudley and through West Bromwich to Birmingham
   - Cycling and walking strategy

Regional Level: Sandwell council is working with the West Midlands Combined Authority, WMCA & Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership, BCLEP

Local Level:
- Sandwell Health and Wellbeing Board
- Sandwell Safeguarding Children's Partnership
- Sandwell Safeguarding Adults Board
- Safer Sandwell Partnership
- Volunteering and Community sector

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Appendix
Defining Sites Strategy

Piecemeal Development & Visionary Strategy

Over the last decade West Bromwich has seen the opening of a new Central College Campus, the Providence Place office development, a revamped High Street and metro station, the New Square retail and leisure complex, a revitalised Dartmouth Park, and a leisure pool and fitness centre to name a few.

Wider regeneration is also currently taking place across the borough such as the Midlands Metro line and the Midland Metropolitan University Hospital development. These are catalysts for future development.

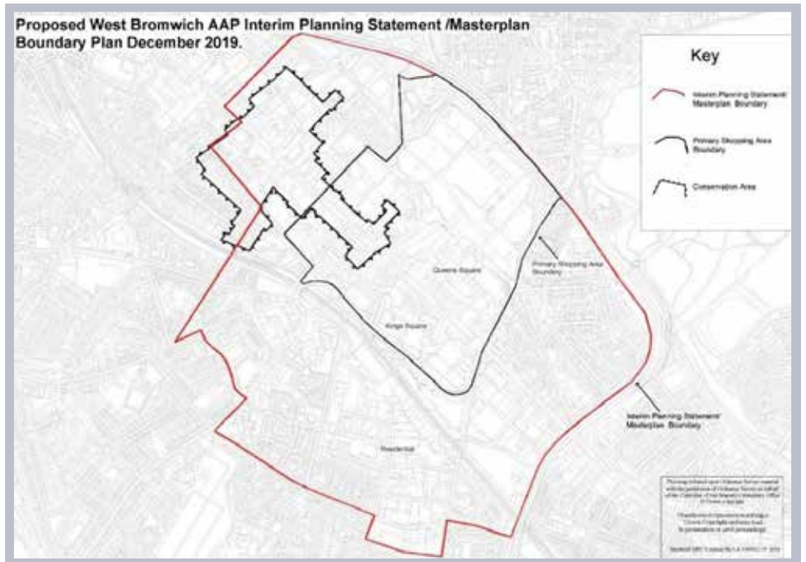
Area Action Plan (AAP 2012)

The initial stages of the masterplan looked at the existing building stock and potential for adoption to regenerate individual areas. Although West Bromwich has previously developed individual sites around the Centre and identified a number of key sites within the Area Action Plan (AAP), it became evident early on that this strategy would not lead to transformational and aspirational change and many buildings were not flexible to accommodate additional uses.

Through workshops, analysis and dialogues, it was agreed that a more fundamental, and coherent approach to Town Centre regeneration was required to drive significant change, growth and prosperity across the Town Centre. There is a need to prioritise schemes which can have a transformational impact.

The design team worked closely to understand West Bromwich's growth industries and future projections based on data analysis to determine viable uses and locations for these sites. Continued analysis was undertaken throughout the masterplan process to test the mix of uses with viability, market testing and engagement.

The resulting masterplan would need to create a balanced offer for a variety of new shops/spaces and differing uses but would also need to facilitate local needs and support local business and retailers.



AAP Masterplan Boundary Plan December 2019

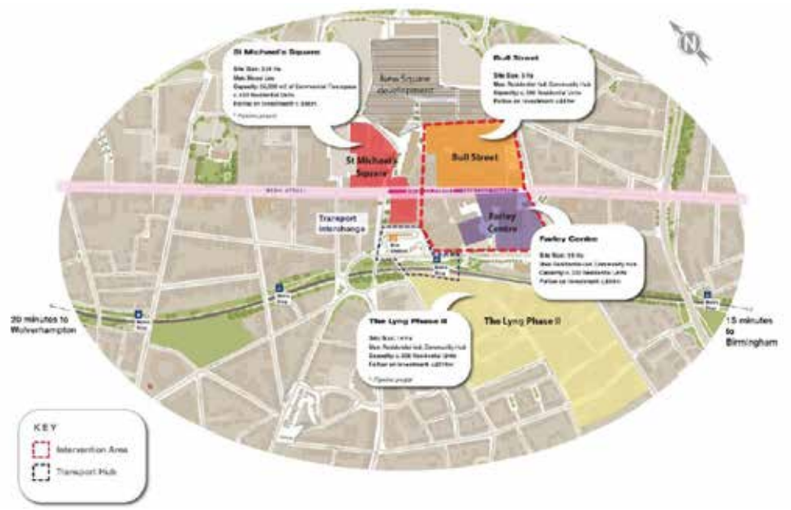


Identified sites and opportunity locations

WMCA and Sandwell MBC Draft DIP

In 2019 Sandwell MBC prepared a Draft Delivery and Investment Plan (DIP) for West Bromwich Town Centre as part of the WMCA Town Centre Programme. This identified 4 development opportunity sites in close proximity to the existing metro and bus interchange station.

This has been considered within the masterplan proposals and further strengthens the potential to shift perceptions of the town and attract inward investment for a range of uses.



West Bromwich DIP

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Appendix B- Need for Change

Appendix
Need for Change

Overview

There are many drivers for change in West Bromwich and the wider Black Country and West Midlands region. Theses include complex challenges as well as exciting opportunities for growth of the town. The following section provides an overview of some of these challenges, opportunities and drivers for change. Further detail on this is provided in the Baseline Report which accompanies this Masterplan.

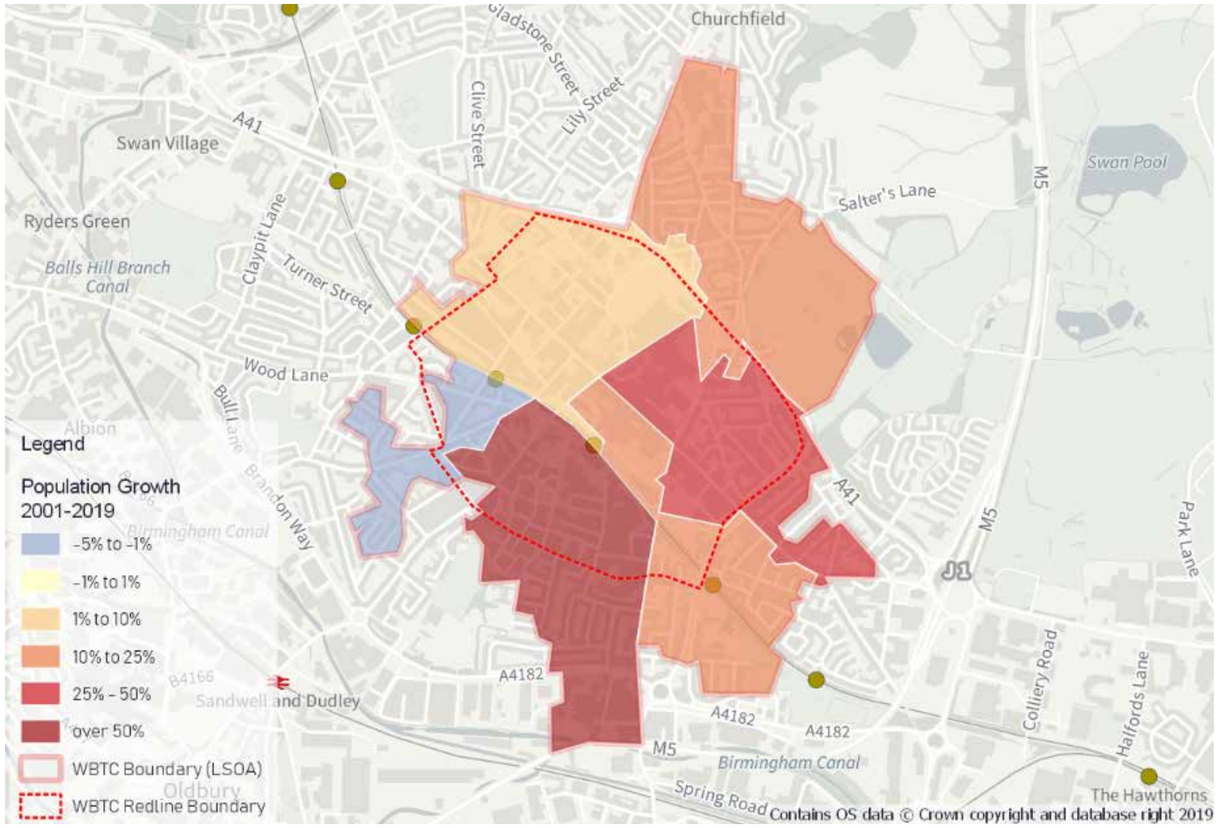
Population growth and residential demand

West Bromwich and Sandwell both have growing populations, however housing delivery has not occurred at the same rate. This has resulted in increased housing demand in the area. There are currently unprecedented levels of housing demand and people are seeking homes in good quality locations with access to amenities and good transport links – West Bromwich in the future could deliver on these needs and grow a sustainable residential community.

Demand is strong across multiple housing types, including homes for young couples and singles looking to get onto the property ladder, families, as well as older professionals or retirees looking to downsize and move somewhere that has an active and vibrant community and social scene.

- The town centre population is growing. Major residential development schemes such as the Lyng Phase I and Eastern Gateway, have been extremely successful in meeting residential demand and increasing the local population. The Lyng Phase I completed in 2013 was one of the most successful housing developments in the region in terms of sales rates

- This demonstrates the demand potential for such a well connected and sustainable location as West Bromwich. However there remains significant unmet demand in the town for residential development



LSOA population change 2001-2019
Source: ONS Population Estimates, Savills 2020

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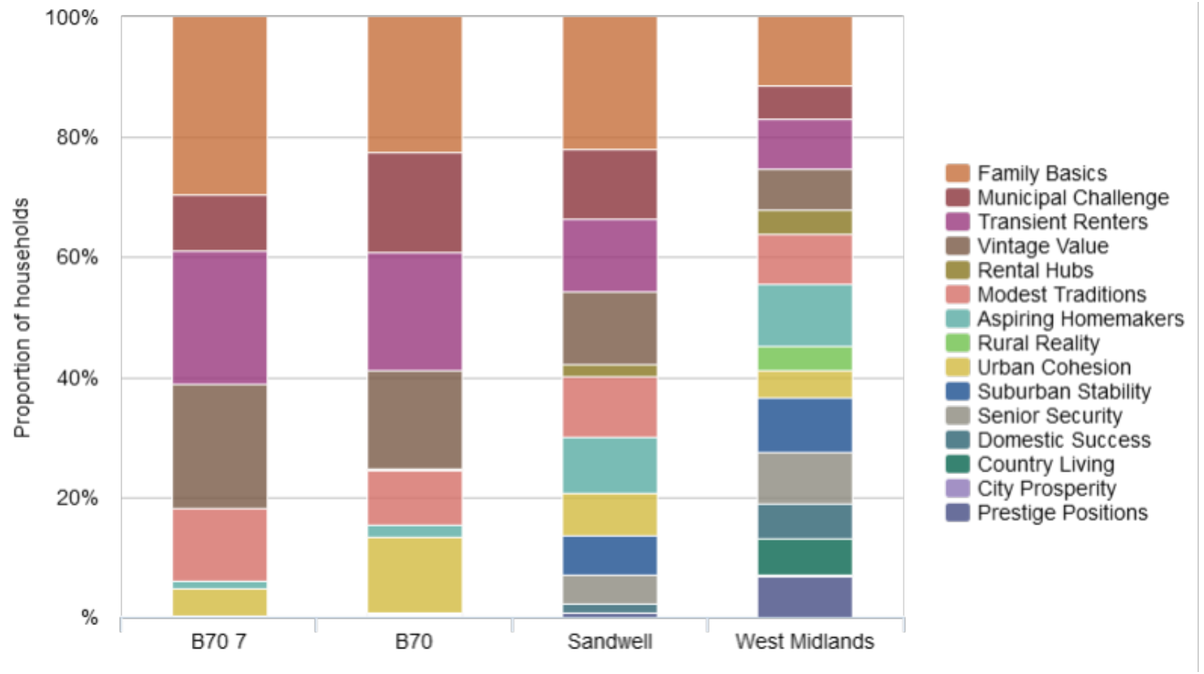
Appendix
Need for Change

- There were 794 net additional dwellings in Sandwell between 2018-2019, a 4% increase on the 5 year average. While this presents a growth in homes built it is well below the Governments assessment of housing need of 1,432 homes per annum – this suggests a significant undersupply of homes, and need to increase homes built

- There are also a number of 'missing markets' for residential development. Experian data provides a classification of residential populations based on multiple characteristics, including family status, employment, occupation and wages. For West Bromwich this indicates that there are a number of potentially 'missing' residential markets not catered for compared to the wider region. For example there are none of the more affluent categories of 'City Prosperity', 'Domestic success', 'senior security' or 'aspiring home makers' in the town, but a high proportion of 'Transient renters'

- Town Centre residential development will provide a range of benefits, including increased footfall, vibrancy, increase retail and leisure spending, support for an evening economy and entertainment, use of the metro, and use of sustainable low carbon transport

- To deliver high quality residential development in the town centre would require a transformation of the urban design and layout of the town, as well as a step change in the quality of place and public realm



Experian MOSAIC Consumer Classifications for West Bromwich Town Centre Residents and wider area
Source: Experian MOSAIC, 2019

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Appendix
Need for Change

Deprivation and Skills

The local population and surrounding area is characterized by some of the most deprived communities in the country. Delivering a step change in the quality of environment, economic and skills and training opportunities to this community aligns with the Governments Levelling Up agenda.

- Parts of the town and surrounding area are some of the most deprived (top 10% most deprived) locations in the country according the Index of Multiple Deprivation

- Development and regeneration projects such as the Lyng Phase I have had a significant impact on the deprivation levels in the area, by reducing the opportunities for crime and establishing a new community in good quality housing. This demonstrates the value of good quality residential development in delivering positive outcomes for our communities

- The qualification profile for the town shows a prevalence of resident with no qualifications, and low shares of people with qualifications at degree level or above

- Also annual earnings for residents are and have historically been below Sandwell's and the West Midlands levels', and that gap is widening as the town centre is registering slower growth

- This is despite the prevalence of education facilities in the town. West Bromwich town centre is now home to three further education facilities

- New economic opportunities, including jobs in new, high value, growth industries, can have Social Value benefits to residents via training and apprenticeship opportunities and also raising aspirations of young people in the towns education institutions



Map of Multiple Indicies of Deprivation (2019 and 2015)
Source: DCLG 2019

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Appendix
Need for Change

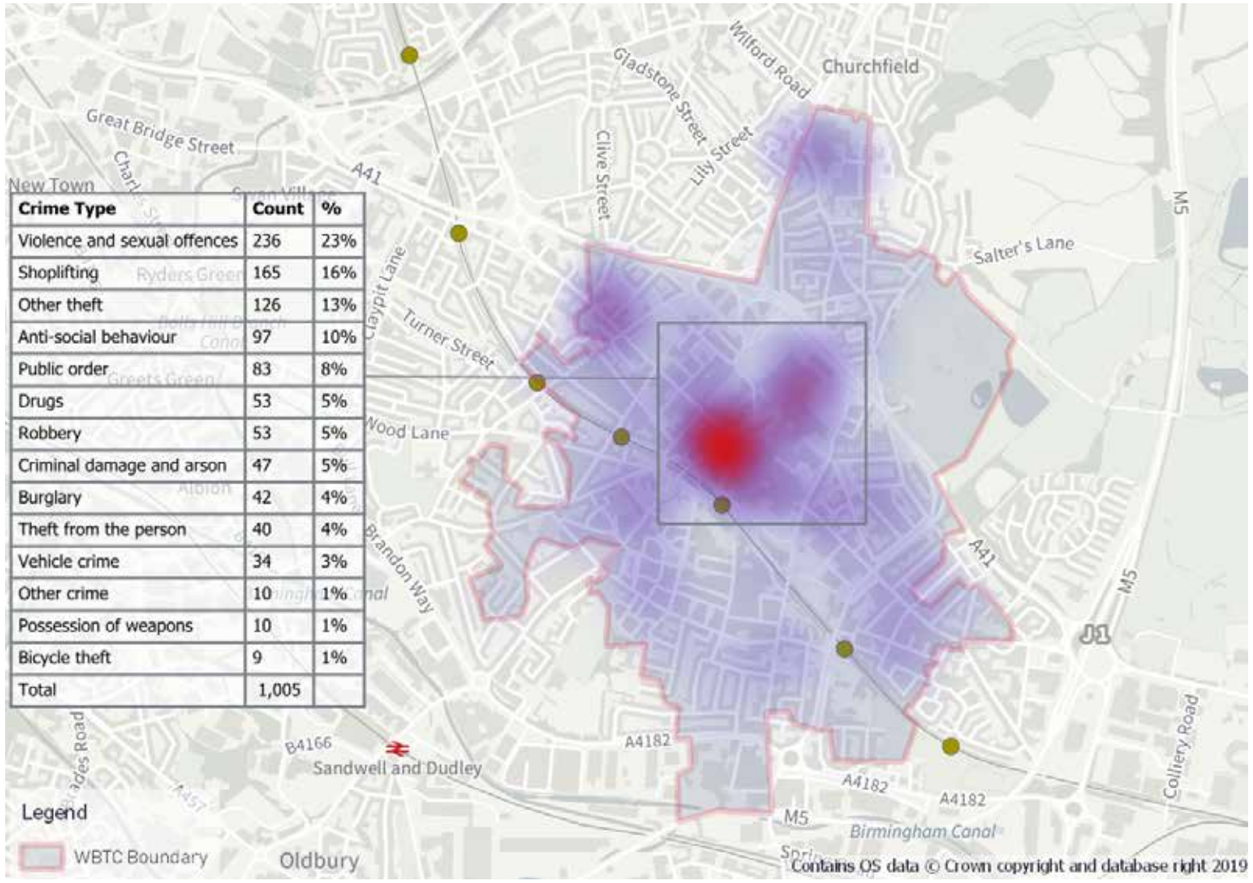
Quality of the environment

West Bromwich Town Centre is blighted by a number of high profile vacant and derelict spaces. It also suffers from a number of urban design issues which hinder access, or create opportunities for crime, and impact on the perceptions of the town as a place to live, work and visit. This Masterplan aims to transform the urban design of the town, completely transforming the face of West Bromwich.

- The town centre is a crime hotspot. Over 12-months around 1,000 incidents were recorded in WBTC
- The current layout and design of the centre exacerbates crime issues, with a number of areas with poor passive surveillance
- The quality of the environment in the town is lacking, with a number of bare brick walls, limited public realm improvements, and only isolated new build developments of high quality
- To create a centre capable of supporting a residential community and attract visitors requires transformation and a step change in the quality and offer of the centre

Development will need to consider the Secured by design principles to create safe and secure communities where the risk of crime and anti-social behaviour can be reduced at the earliest stage.

Crime Type	Count	%
Violence and sexual offences	236	23%
Shoplifting	165	16%
Other theft	126	13%
Anti-social behaviour	97	10%
Public order	83	8%
Drugs	53	5%
Robbery	53	5%
Criminal damage and arson	47	5%
Burglary	42	4%
Theft from the person	40	4%
Vehicle crime	34	3%
Other crime	10	1%
Possession of weapons	10	1%
Bicycle theft	9	1%
Total	1,005	



Crime Incidence Hotspots

Source: West Midlands Police, Savills 2020

Secured by Design Principles



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Appendix
Need for Change

Retail oversupply and changing demand

The town currently has a lack of economic diversity and an oversupply of retail floorspace, much of which is long term vacant and obsolete. This means the town and the local economy are susceptible to the challenges facing the retail sector currently. The masterplan creates the opportunity to plan for and deliver more flexible space targeted at economic growth sectors, and transform the patterns of land use in the town.

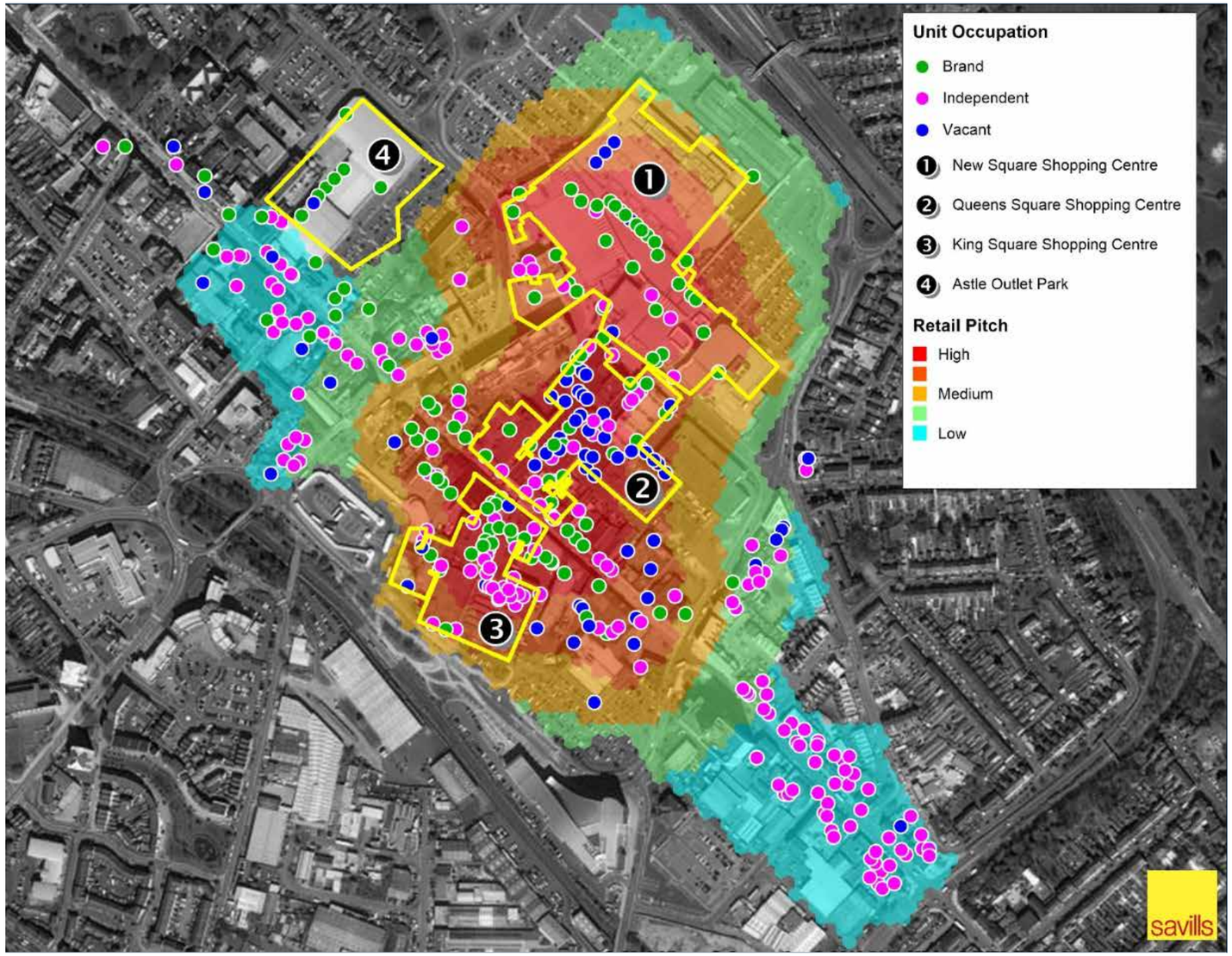
- Even before the pandemic, brick-and-mortar retail outlets in town centres were struggling due to increasing rents and business rates, competition from out-of-town retail and increasing online shopping. Covid-19 accelerated some of these trends, particularly the increase in online shopping

- In 2019 Town Centre vacancy rates were at 19%. Well above the UK average of 11%. Covid-19 is likely to have increased vacancy rates

- 88% of vacant units in the prime pitch have been vacant for more than three years

- There was 8.7sqft of retail space per Shopper Population (number of people in the catchment). By comparison the national figure is 5.2sqft/ Shopper Population. This suggests that the centre is oversupplied with retail space compared to its catchment

- To tackle the oversupply of retail uses there is a need to re-purpose redundant retail space to new uses, increase the captive shopper market of the area via residential development, and improve the vibrancy and quality of the shopper experience in the town



Retail and Leisure Use Analysis
Source: GOAD, Geolytix, Savills, 2019

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Appendix
Need for Change

Economy and Job growth

West Bromwich town centre is within 15 minutes commute of Birmingham, and sits in the centre of the Black Country. It is strategically located to capture the major economic growth drivers for these areas, and in doing so can have an impact on the regional economy. Job growth is strong in traditional sectors such as education and health, but is less so in emerging sectors including leisure, arts, creative, digital, tech, and professional service sectors. The Masterplan will deliver space to capture future growth in these emerging and established sectors.

- The economy in West Bromwich town centre is buoyant, but limited to a number of sectors which are undergoing change, and so potentially susceptible to future changes (eg. retail and industrial manufacturing). At the same time the town has the potential to capture the growth of exciting new sectors and markets which could transform the employment base of the town, including in leisure, arts, creative, digital, tech, and professional service sectors

- Between 2015 to 2019 jobs in the town centre have gone up by 15%, a contrast to the trend across Sandwell where jobs have decreased by 6%. This demonstrates the importance of the town as an employment location

- The employment base and economy of West Bromwich is supported by a number of key sectors, including health which is the strongest sector, and public administration

- Despite the wealth of education facilities in the town, education is not growing as fast as other sectors and there are opportunities to support a greater cluster and scale of education services in the town that could have flow on impacts on the knowledge economy and digital, creative sector specialisms in the town

- There are more jobs (15,300) than people (11,500) living in the town centre. While this is a common feature of town centres, it is significant also in relative terms, whereby West Bromwich has about 3% of Sandwell's population and 12% of total jobs

- West Bromwich town centre benefits from established industrial land assets, to the south of the town but also in the wider region which are well placed to support future industrial land needs

- Well connected centres such as West Bromwich should instead focus on higher density employment uses in high growth and value sectors such as finance, insurance, public admin, real estate, digital, technology, science and knowledge sectors

- This requires high quality, flexible workspace in high quality settings with good transport links

Sector	Sandwell	West Midlands
Arts, entertainment and rec	21%	16%
Human health and social work	20%	18%
Professional, scientific and tech	15%	12%
Real estate activities	9%	3%
Administrative and support	9%	15%
Construction	4%	4%
Transportation and storage	4%	-3%
Other service activities	3%	2%
Information and communication	2%	4%
Education	0%	-1%
Wholesale and retail trade	-3%	-5%
Accommodation and food service	-3%	-5%
Public administration and defence	-9%	-8%
Financial and insurance	-10%	-10%
Electricity, gas, steam and air	-12%	-12%
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	-18%	-18%
Water supply	-21%	-21%
Manufacturing - Total	**-36%**	**-36%**
Mining & Quarrying		-56%

Forecast employment growth by sector until 2040
Source: Oxford Economics (2020), Savills Analysis (2020)

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Appendix
Need for Change

Resilience and sustainability

All Town Centres across the country are facing similar challenges to West Bromwich. Changing retail demand, greater demand for housing, changing employment markets, issues with quality of environment. At the same time it is important that town centres work well as economic drivers for our national economy, alleviate pressure on housing growth in green belt areas, help tackle the housing affordability crisis, link people with jobs and avoid long commuting, promote sustainable transport, and help meet the challenge of global warming by transitioning to low carbon and sustainable practices.

This Masterplan recognizes that in order to achieve these complex challenges requires an ambitious and transformational approach to regeneration. Creating a new balance of uses and delivering growth in the right places.

- The use of metro and public transport is relatively low
- The layout and design of the centre limits access from key transport nodes including the bus station and metro
- Severance of the highway network makes the pedestrian and cycling experience less desirable in places
- Cycling infrastructure around the centre is piecemeal
- Increasing the town centre population, and access to sustainable transport (walking cycling, bus and metro) could help create a sustainable community and support transition to a Low Carbon economy

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Appendix

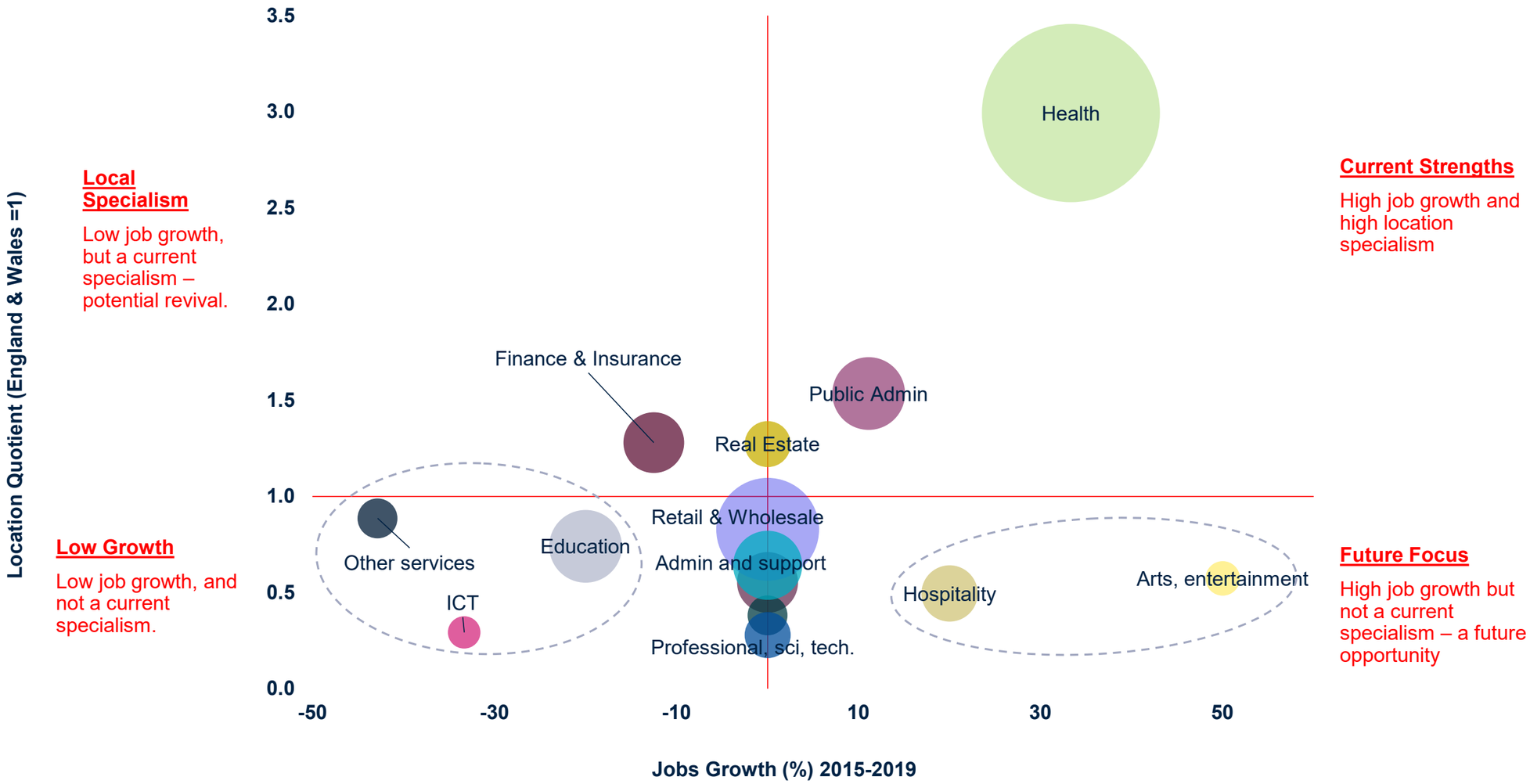
Key economic sectors for size and growth in West Bromwich

Health – Strongest employment sector in the town centre. Consider links with light manufacturing for bio-tech space and nursing homes.

Retail – second largest employment sector. The worst affected by the pandemic. Importance of re-thinking the use of existing retail space (experience driven, more active uses, repurposing, etc.)

Arts & Entertainment – great sector to build on to improve vitality and diverse use of the town centre. One of the fastest growing – driven by sports.

Hospitality – important sector for town centres, also badly affected by the pandemic. Opportunity to consolidate uses with retail.



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Appendix C- Historical and Heritage Context

Analysis
History

West Bromwich is first mentioned as Bromwic in the Domesday Book of 1086. The etymology of the settlements name Bromwic, to mean ‘broom village’, is a reference to the plants that presumably grew in the area.

By the 12th century a Benedictine Priory had been established, around which the settlement of Broom-rich Heath grew. However, it was not until the early-18th century that the settlement began rapid expansion, coinciding with the Industrial Revolution. The natural richness of ironstone and coal in the area led to a number of industries developing, including brick making and coal mining. The enclosure of the Heath in 1804 resulted in a shift of the settlement south-west from Lyndon to what became the High Street stretch of the Birmingham-Wolverhampton road.

The arrival of the railway and opening of the West Bromwich train station in 1854 resulted in further growth of the settlement. The affluence of West Bromwich throughout the mid to late-19th century can be seen in the high quality municipal buildings constructed in this time. A new town hall and library were constructed in 1874-75. In the 1900’s West Bromwich grew rapidly, radiating from the long High Street, with its large public buildings at the western end and industrial activities to the south and east in closer with abundance of retail shops lining the High Street.

The growth and affluence of West Bromwich continued into the early-20th century, which can also be inferred by the construction of a spire added to the Church of St Michael and the Holy Angels by 1911.

Modest buildings were replaced with larger structures, some with greater architectural detailing, such as the Central Library and the original old post office along the High Street which was replaced with a three-storey red brick building to the design of Henry Collins opposite the town hall.

The mid to late-20th century saw pockets of redevelopment along the High Street, including the construction of large shopping centres, replacing a number of smaller retail and residential properties within their footprint. These later developments have had a varying degree of success in design terms and their impact on the local economy, subsequently having been altered or demolished.



Historic West Bromwich High Street- The golden mile & Tram connections


West Bromwich Aerial 1938



Salters Springs

Images from https://www.westbromwichhistory.com/

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Analysis
Heritage

West Bromwich boasts many fascinating places and buildings both within the Town Centre and further afield. The walk 'West Bromwich heritage trail' takes you around the key sites and attractions including the centrally located:

Grade II listed, Gothic style Town Hall and Central Library.

Sandwell Valley & Dartmouth Park.

The Public (Formally the largest community arts development in Europe) now Central St Michaels Sixth Form College.

Additionally:
Kenrick & Jefferson grade II listed printing building is located on the High Street.

Grade II listed drinking fountain and canopy & Dartmouth Sq Clock located at Dartmouth Square.

Football - As one of 12 founder members of the football league WBA attracts thousands of people to the area on a regular basis.

The coat of arms represents the iron and brass foundries and motto- 'Work overcomes all things' This emphasised the working nature of the town.



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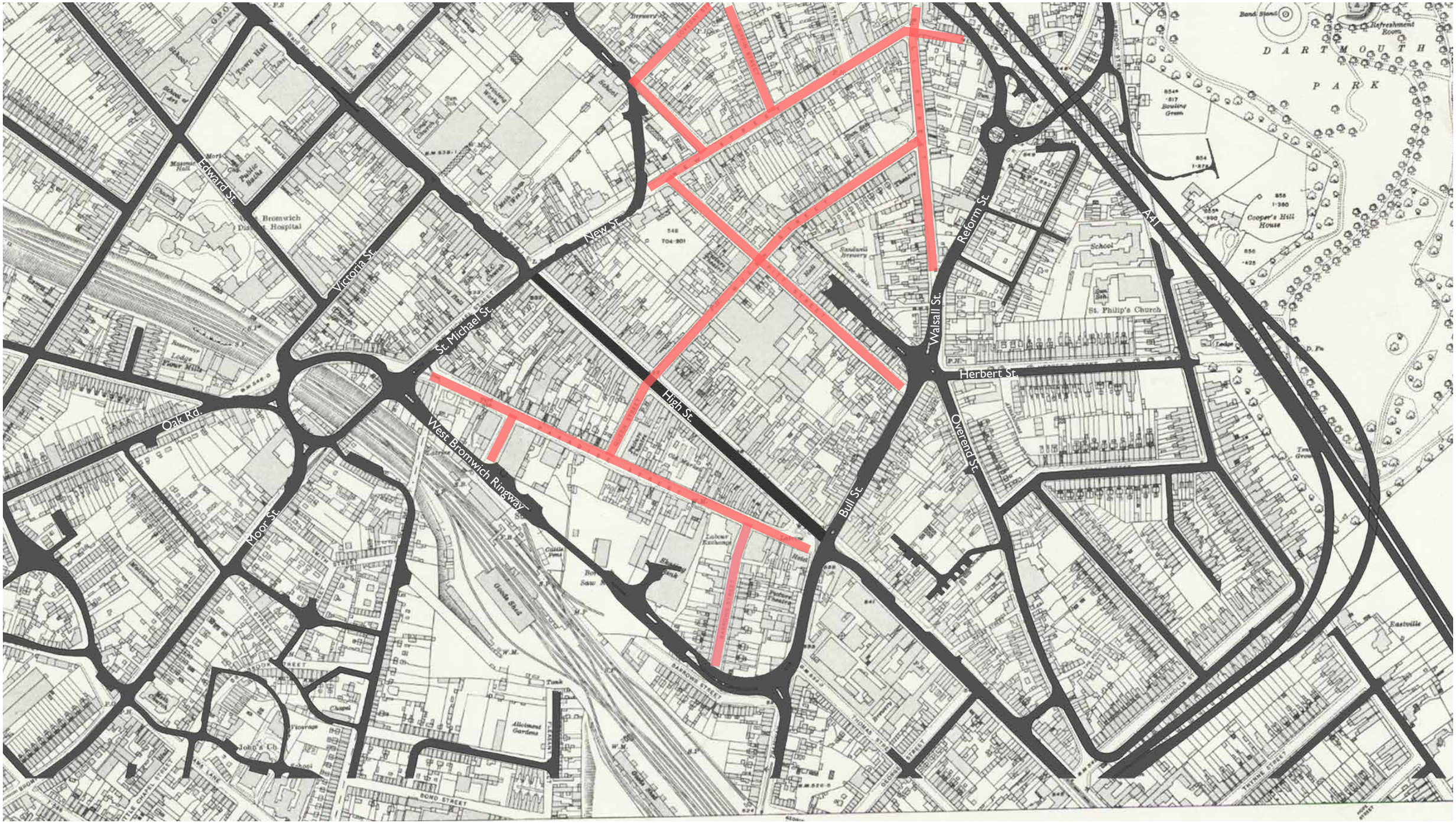
Analysis

Historic Connections - Evolution of the town.

West Bromwich Map 1913

Current Road Network 2021 Lost Streets & Connections



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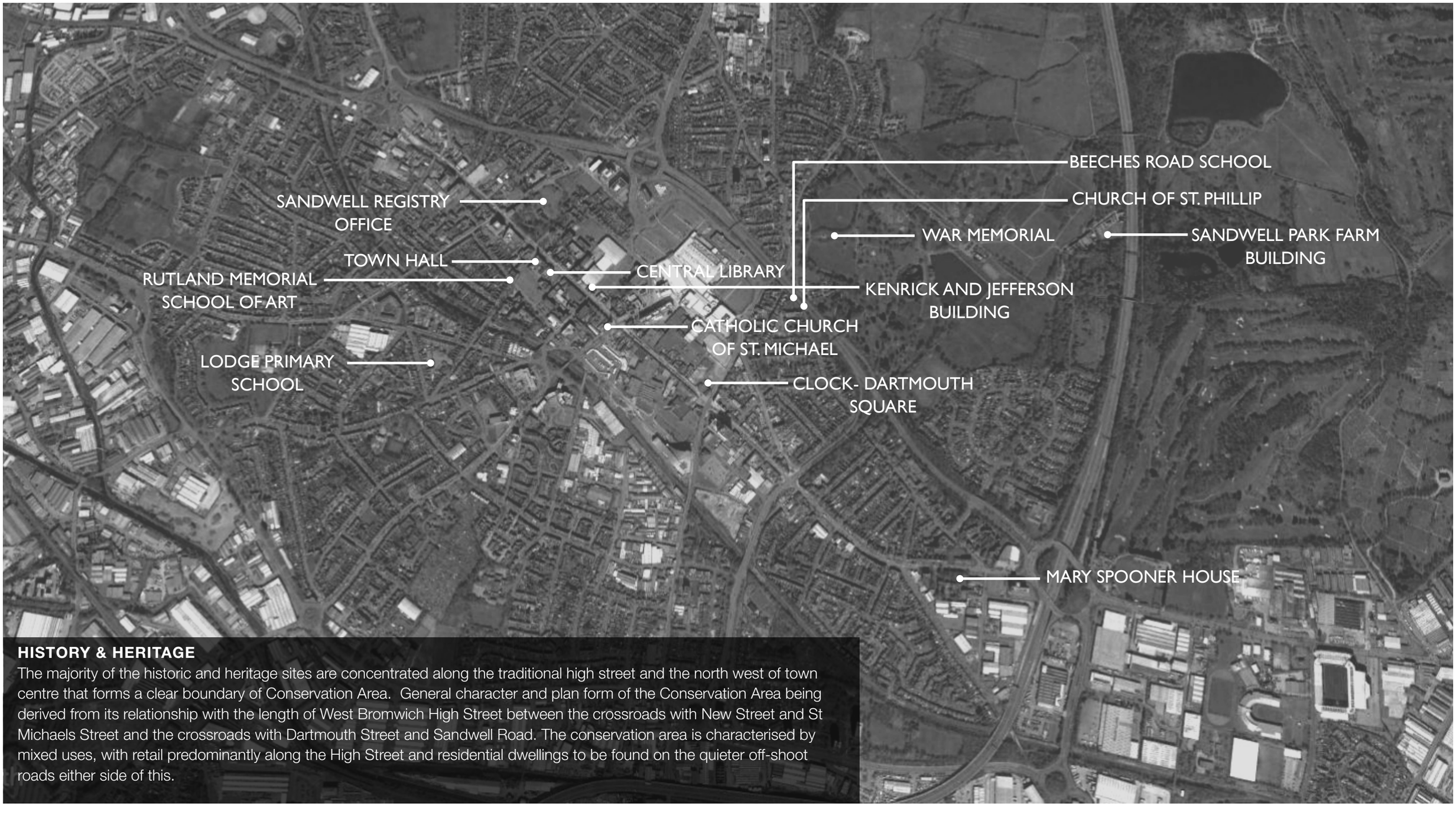
Appendix D- Wider Context

Appendix

Existing Ingredients Wider Context



HISTORY & HERITAGE

The majority of the historic and heritage sites are concentrated along the traditional high street and the north west of town centre that forms a clear boundary of Conservation Area. General character and plan form of the Conservation Area being derived from its relationship with the length of West Bromwich High Street between the crossroads with New Street and St Michaels Street and the crossroads with Dartmouth Street and Sandwell Road. The conservation area is characterised by mixed uses, with retail predominantly along the High Street and residential dwellings to be found on the quieter off-shoot roads either side of this.

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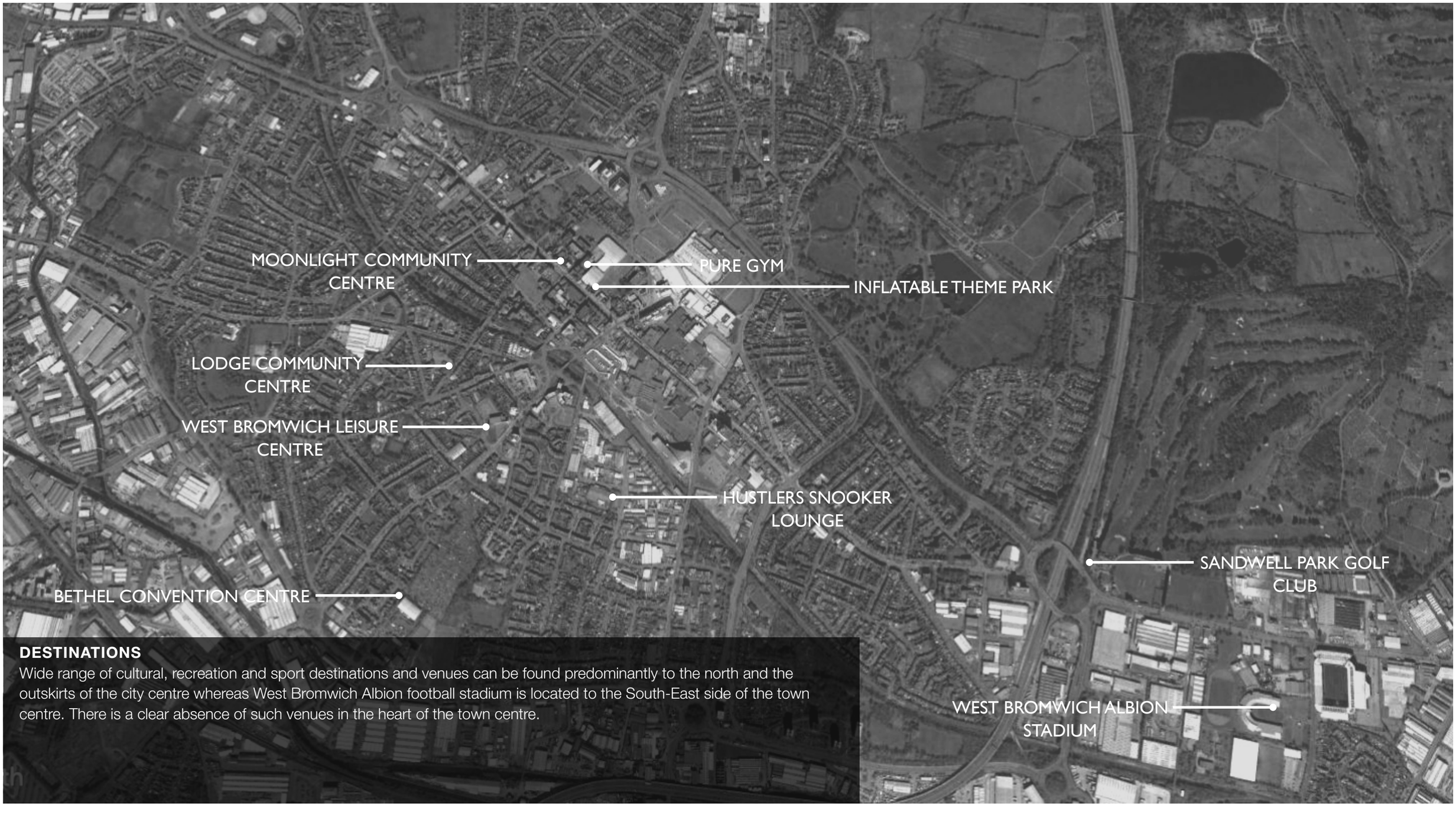
Appendix
Existing Ingredients Wider Context



DESTINATIONS
Wide range of cultural, recreation and sport destinations and venues can be found predominantly to the north and the outskirts of the city centre whereas West Bromwich Albion football stadium is located to the South-East side of the town centre. There is a clear absence of such venues in the heart of the town centre.

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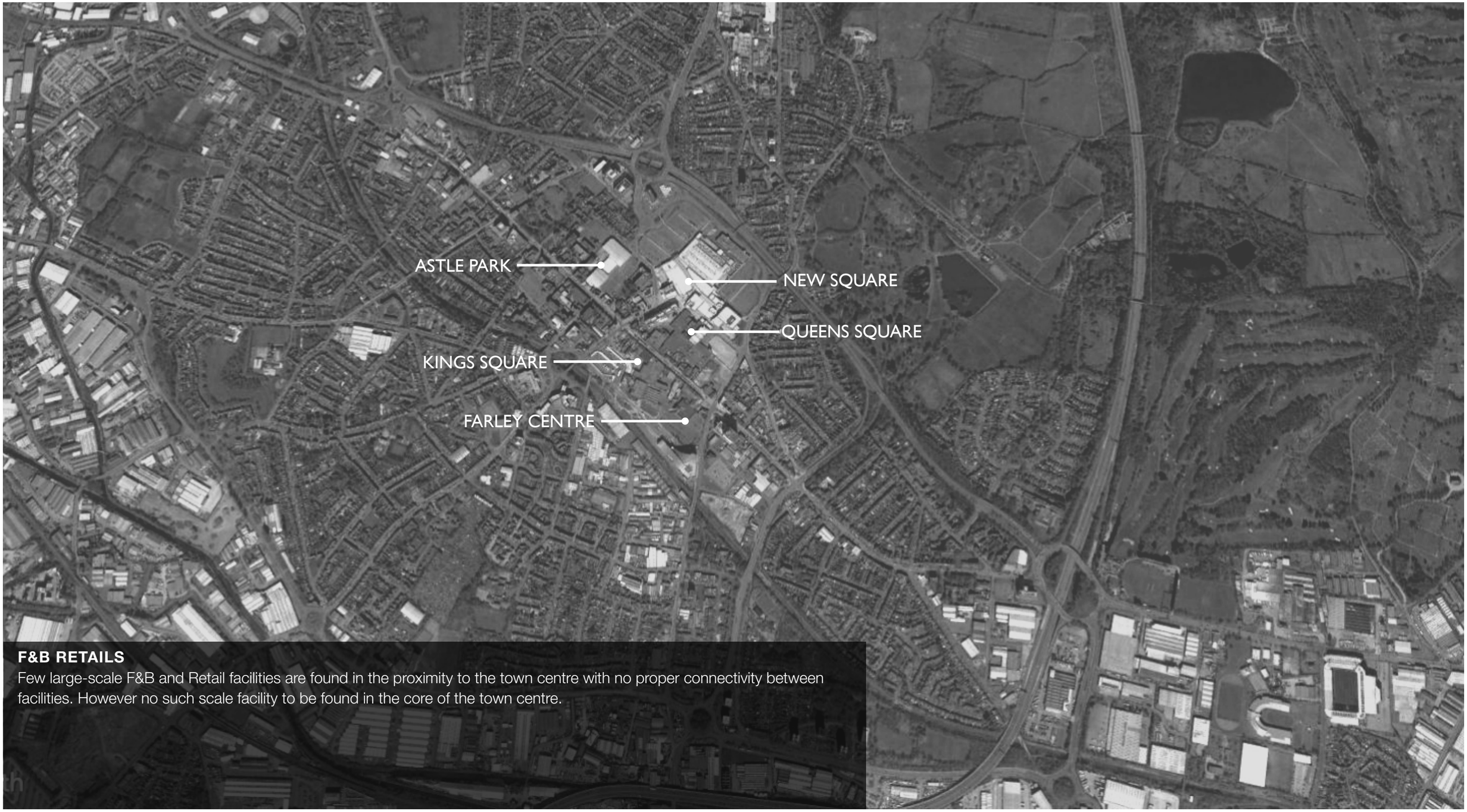
Appendix
Existing Ingredients Wider Context



F&B RETAILS
Few large-scale F&B and Retail facilities are found in the proximity to the town centre with no proper connectivity between facilities. However no such scale facility to be found in the core of the town centre.

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Appendix
Existing Ingredients Wider Context



HIGHER EDUCATION
Higher education institutes can be found across the town centre.

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Appendix
Existing Ingredients Wider Context



PARKS & GREEN SPACE
Two main parkland space in the proximity to the West Bromwich town centre are Dartmouth and Sandwell parks, North-East to the town centre. There are also a few smaller park areas scattered West of the town centre.

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Sandwell
Metropolitan Borough Council