

Housing and Land Delivery Board, 25 October 2018

Supplementary Town Centre Information

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This supplementary paper has been provided as per recommendation one of the Town Centres Programme Housing Land and Delivery Board Meeting paper. The paper provides supplementary information on the process and analysis for recommending the centres to form the first wave of the programme.

2. Selection Process

Nominations

- 2.1 Following the initial request, a total of seventeen centres were nominated for consideration as wave one centres:

Birmingham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bordesley Green • Coventry Road • Stirchley • Sutton Coldfield
Dudley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brierley Hill • Lye • St Thomas Quarter, Dudley Town Centre
Sandwell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bearwood • Cradley Heath • Wednesbury • West Bromwich (East)
Walsall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aldridge • St Matthews Quarter, Walsall Town Centre • Willenhall
Wolverhampton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bilston • Wednesfield • Wolverhampton City Centre

- 2.2 Solihull responded to the request stating that they already have well developed programmes for their centres working with support from the combined authority. The UK Central masterplan sets out the long-term growth and development ambitions of Solihull, and identifies four economic opportunity zones. Three of these contain town and local centres that fall within the scope of the WMCA's Town Centres Programme. These centres are already benefiting from WMCA support through the approved UK

Central Infrastructure Package Strategic Outline Cases (UKC IP SOC Phase 1 and Phase 2). Therefore, at this stage, the town centre programme first wave was not seen as adding value to that existing work.

- 2.3 At this stage, Coventry are not proposing to put forward any town centres for the first wave but are very interested in the programme and shared learning.

Assessment

- 2.4 From the nominations, to date five centres were chosen by the officer sub-group to be included within the first wave. It was considered that five centres would be an appropriate number to test and learn from a broad range of interventions, whilst remaining focussed to ensure successful delivery and allow lessons learned to be rolled out quicker across the region. Centres not chosen at this stage will still be eligible in the second wave of the programme. This is an opportunity for live research on town centres and interventions which will benefit centres across the region.
- 2.5 The Housing and Land Delivery Steering Group (HLDSG) agreed that it was important that the programme identifies ways of working that can cascade assistance to all town centres regardless of size, geography or issues and not just focus on the larger strategic centres. The town centre programme will not, therefore, reduce the support or priority of these centres and they remain an important focus for delivery inclusive growth in the region; instead it will allow other centres to access assistance.
- 2.6 Working collaboratively with a sub-group of the HLDSG a holistic approach has therefore been taken to identifying the centres for inclusion in the first wave to ensure that a broad range of centres are chosen to maximise the potential to learn lessons and apply that learning to all types of centre across the region. This has been based on a desk top analysis of the centres using the information provided by local authorities.

Recommendation for wave one centres

- 2.7 Based on the analysis above, five centres have been recommended for inclusion in the first wave of centres. The programme will be assessed over the coming months with the benefits of a second wave being considered in six months. A second wave would be open to all constituent and non-constituent members where they would like support. The recommended centres are:
- Bilston
 - Bordesley Green
 - East West Bromwich
 - St Thomas Quarter, Dudley
 - St Matthews Quarter, Walsall
- 2.8 A summary of each centre is set out in Annex A.

Annex A: Recommended Wave One Town Centre Summary

Town Centre	Strengths and Opportunities	Connectivity	Community & Business	Planning West Midlands Investment Prospectus, Emerging industrial strategy and SEP
Bilston	Identified as an area of significant change. Current priorities are bringing forward proposals for the High Street Link to attract a new offer to the town and provide an events space, focused interventions on poor quality retail units, increasing the quantity and quality of town centre residential stock and significant enhancements to the Metro stop. Now require a place based delivery plan and feasibility work. Opportunity to build on investment in Bilston Urban Village.	Well connected with the exception of pedestrian connections to the Urban Village regeneration sites to the south where the Black Country Route presents a real and perceived barrier to movement. Good tram connections – Bilston is the second busiest intermediate stop on metro line 1.	Bilston BID provides focus. Strong community loyalty to the town focussing on specific sites/issues e.g. former town hall, war memorial etc. Voluntary activity also takes place in terms of cultural events e.g. film screenings	Bilston Area Action Plan and Bilston Neighbourhood Plan (2014).
Bordesley Green	<p>A linear centre with proposed Metro extension to serve the area.</p> <p>Alongside the proposals for the Wheels Site and Environs (Key Opportunity 1) and Cherrywood Road (Key Opportunity 2), a number of opportunities to realise the vision for the Bordesley Green neighbourhood have been identified in the AAP. Mixed use regeneration of Bordesley Green North.</p> <p>Opportunities for land assembly and site acquisitions to accommodate business in advance of metro works. Public realm enhancements (southern side). Parking Strategy - to reflect loss of on-street parking from metro works.</p>	Adderley Park rail station less than a 10 minute walk from the centre. Metro will run along the entire length of Bordesley Green.	East Birmingham & North Solihull Project Board has been established which includes representation from BCC, Solihull MBC, the WMCA, Transport for West Midlands, Department for Work & Pensions, HS2, Homes & Communities Agency, and the NHS.	<p>Emerging Bordesley Park Area Action Plan, which promotes the creation up to 3000 new jobs and the delivery of around 750 new homes (Winter 2018 Examination).</p> <p>Bordesley Green is identified as a Local Centre in the BDP and within the Bordesley Park Growth Area (Policy GA7).</p>

Town Centre	Strengths and Opportunities	Connectivity	Community & Business	Planning West Midlands Investment Prospectus, Emerging industrial strategy and SEP
West Bromwich (East)	<p>Increased town centre living Proximity to Birmingham Build on recent regeneration 27ha of development sites. Redevelopment of retail sites.</p> <p>Build on New Square shopping development, public realm improvements and improved transport hubs. Consolidation of education facilities of Sandwell College to West Bromwich. Established commercial quarter at Providence Place.</p> <p>Across the wider Black Country region, including more routes through Birmingham City Centre, access to West Bromwich town centre will be even easier.</p>	<p>Generally good with 3 Metro Stops, active Bus Station. Good connection to the Motorway Network via M5 (J2) and trunk road system;</p> <p>Connection to Birmingham and Wolverhampton by the Midland Metro line, which provides tram services every six minutes. Metro line provides access to Birmingham City Centre, Birmingham New Street Station, and HS2 within 15 minutes.</p>	<p>West Bromwich has a central (BID) which co-ordinates improvements to benefit and connect business, retail and the community in the town centre.</p> <p>Linkages and focus on town centre issues is also tackled through a Town Centre / Markets Management team.</p> <p>Existing community links could be improved.</p>	<p>West Bromwich Area Action Plan (AAP) 2012.</p> <p>An interim planning policy statement to update the AAP is currently being considered.</p> <p>West Bromwich Investment Prospectus has been produced</p> <p>West Bromwich Town Centre falls within the Southern (West Bromwich) Triangle Corridor identified in the emerging WMCA SIDP</p> <p>Will develop Town Centre programme strategies in line with National and local industrial strategies, clean growth strategy and the emerging Black Country SEP.</p>
St Thomas Quarter, Dudley	<p>Historic market town, regional and national tourism, Dudley Zoo, Castle, Living Museum, Canal Trust. Purpose built shopping centres have considerable redevelopment potential. Potential for residential led redevelopment. Land assembly opportunities.</p> <p>Meets the local needs of shoppers, students and office workers.</p>	<p>Metro Extension Bus station refurbishment Autonomous vehicle hub linking attractions.</p>	<p>Strong community and town includes a community building. History provides a strong sense of place. Dudley Town Centre Programme Board established February 2018.</p>	<p>Dudley Area Action Plan (2017) £200 million investment package under preparation through the town centre investment programme.</p> <p>Dudley Town Centre included in the prospectus.</p>

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<p>St Matthews Quarter, Walsall</p>	<p>Opportunities around investment, shopping, living, leisure, transport, public realm and business. WMCA support, both capacity and resource, is required to accelerate and augment the Council's existing plans for the town centre. Opportunity to challenge thinking of how to achieve a thriving and vibrant town centre including the scope for cultural and other events, and how long term maintenance of the physical environment can best be achieved. St Matthews Quarter offers a 'blank canvas' to re-purpose this part of the centre.</p> <p>Recent investment providing modern floorspace, significant leisure investment, historic market, good public transport (train station) and strong local character.</p>	<p>Walsall train station. Good car access but inadequate parking. Proposals to redevelop Bradford Place interchange.</p>	<p>A Town Centre Management Group brings together key businesses in the centre a number of social enterprises active within the town centre including the Vine Trust.</p>	<p>AAP being prepared (found sound August 2018).</p> <p>The AAP and emerging masterplan will provide Walsall Council and its partners with an up-to-date analysis of the health of the centre and areas that it will need to diversify into to remain a focal point for the local communities.</p> <p>Walsall Town Centre included in the Prospectus.</p>