

# Selly Oak: Local Centres Study

A Vision for the future

November 2005

Version	Date	Amended by	Principal Changes
Version 5	25 Nov 2005	AK/ MD	First draft issued



SELLY OAK : LOCAL CENTRES STUDY

# Selly Oak Local Centres Study

1.	Introduction	1
2.	Key Characteristics	4
3.	Main Development Sites in Selly Oak	14
4.	Summary of Key Issues	26
5.	Future Vision for Selly Oak	29
6.	Implementation	45
Glos	sary of Terms	54



### Introduction

- 1.1 Drivers Jonas was appointed by Birmingham City Council in April 2005 to undertake a study of Selly Oak local centre.
- 1.2 The Council's required output for this report was to:
- 1.3 "Prepare a coherent report that outlines a vision for Selly Oak Centre, a strategy and action plan that is supported by recommendations that provide viable proposals and options that are deliverable within realistic timescales and budgets that are likely to be available. The report should be supported by appendices with survey results, background information etc."
- 1.4 This report builds on a number of previous studies which have been undertaken in Selly Oak, and the Selly Oak Local Action Plan (adopted as supplementary planning guidance in 2001).
- 1.5 Upon appointment a brief was agreed and the study report was prepared using the following broad framework:

### Survey

- n Review existing studies
- n Update Studies (as appropriate)
- n Undertake detailed Site Inspections

#### **Markets**

- n Identify key themes, constraints, opportunities
- n Assess impacts of new developments
- n Identify key influences of change
- n Future Role of Centre

### **Vision Actions**

- n Prioritise
- n Employment / Retail/ Housing/ Community
- n Develop the vision
- n Shared Vision / Partnership
- n Develop Strategy / Policy
- n Delivery

#### Report

- n Draft / Final Report
- 1.6 Rather than focus on general requirements for Selly Oak local centre, this report provides a focus on commercial matters which are considered to be important to the future of the centre.
- 1.7 The study places greatest emphasis on the retail shopping area between Oak Tree Lane and Birmingham University's Bristol Road entrance.
- 1.8 This study has reviewed previous studies, investigated the role and function of the existing centre, sought the views of a wide range of people and provides an overview of how Selly Oak will change in the next 5,10 and 15+ years. The study contains a number of visions and recommended strategy



2

for implementing these visions. The overriding objective has been to prepare a vision for Selly Oak that is realistic and commercially deliverable.

### **Background Data**

- 1.9 As part of the background research undertaken to inform this study, a thorough review of existing documentation has been undertaken. This review has included documents from a wide variety of sources, including:
  - n Planning application documents;
  - n National and Regional Planning Guidance;
  - n Officer's reports to committee;
  - n Planning appeal decision notices;
  - n Birmingham UDP (and alterations);
  - n Supplementary Planning Guidance;
  - n National Planning Guidance;
  - n Previous Selly Oak studies;
  - n Community plans;
  - n Census Data;
  - n Draft section 106 agreements;
  - n Government research and other best practice reports; and
  - n Joseph Rowntree research reports.
- 1.10 A full list of the documents reviewed is provided at **appendix 1**.
- 1.11 These documents all provide comprehensive detail about the issues and problems which are being faced by Selly Oak centre, and which have been faced by the centre for a number of years.
- 1.12 In many of the documents, a series of actions and visions were identified which proposed changes in Selly Oak. These visions included making the centre more visually attractive, revitalising shopping and community life, and creating major employment opportunities (further details of these visions and ideas can be found in the summaries provided at **appendix 1**). The drawback to these suggested actions and visions is that very little attention is given to how commercially realistic they are, or how they will be funded.
- 1.13 The previous conclusions and advice provided may still be valid. This report has been prepared to provide an up-to-date vision of how Selly Oak may develop in the future. This report is based on current proposals and provides advice on how Selly Oak can work towards securing a more vibrant centre.

## Steering Group and Officer Involvement

- 1.14 During the course of preparing this study, regular meetings were held with both the client team (Birmingham City Council representatives) and members of the local business community. From the outset of the study two regular working party groups (the officer's working group and the steering group) met to share ideas and information.
- 1.15 The members of the steering group involved / consulted in this study were:
  - n Barbara Mason (BCC Regeneration Services);



- n Andrew Gonzales (BCC Regeneration Services);
- n Liz Jesper (BCC- SW Planning Team);
- n Lauren Templeman (BCC SW Planning Team);
- n Marcia Greenwood (Selly Oak Ward Support Officer);
- n Councillor Alistair Dow (Birmingham City Council);
- n Stephen Wycherley (Business Community Representative);
- n Ted Grizzell (Residents Association);
- n Mike Smith (Residents Association);
- n Barry Toon (Bournbrook Community Safety Project);
- n Stuart Mathers (Birmingham University Guild of Students); and
- n Tony McKinlay (Business Community Representative).

### Consultation

- 1.16 Significant consultation was undertaken in accordance with the study brief and included:
  - n Interviewing a sample of the businesses, residents, students;
  - n Meeting representatives from Sainsbury's and Birmingham Hospitals Trust;
  - Meeting with representatives from Birmingham University and the Guild of Students:
  - n Meeting Bournbrook Medical Practice;
  - n Speaking to a range of community service providers e.g. police and 641 Youth House.
  - n Interviewing a representative from St Mary's Church of England.
- 1.17 Full details of the consultation undertaken for this study, including the results of the questionnaires can be found in **appendix 2**.



# 2. Key Characteristics

2.1 This section of the report provides an overview of the key characteristics of Selly Oak local centre, the population, the property sector, transportation, and community facilities.

### Census Data

- 2.2 For the purposes of this study we have used 2001 Census population data that has been adjusted for 2004 ward and district boundaries.
- 2.3 The key headline data we have extracted is as follows:

### Age, Sex and Ethnic Profile

- n Selly Oak has a resident population of 22,654 49.44% are males and 50.56% females;
- n Selly Oak has a population density of 3,721people per km<sup>2</sup>;
- n 73.75% of Selly Oak's population is aged between 16 and 59 years old, in Birmingham the average is 57.71% and in England & Wales it is 58.98%;
- n The average age of the population in Selly Oak is 34.3, compared to England & Wales where it is 38.6;
- n The largest age bracket is 20-24, accounting for 31.94% of the local population the average for Birmingham is 7.59% and 6% in England & Wales;
- n 14.45% of Selly Oak's population is aged over 60, compared with 18.86%. in Birmingham and 20.86% in England & Wales; and
- n Selly Oak has an ethnic population of 24.83% (5624 people), compared with an average of 34.36% for Birmingham and 12.51% for England and Wales.

#### **Economic Profile**

- n Selly Oak is one of the least deprived wards in Birmingham (35<sup>th</sup> out of 40) as measured using the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD,2000);
- n 68.4% of Selly Oak ward's residents were classed as economically inactive students compared with 14.04% of England and Wales and 18.8% in Birmingham:
- n Of the 18,627 people in Selly Oak aged between 16 and 74, 41.77% are classified as full time students compared to 7.04% in England and Wales;
- n Lower managerial and professional people, account for 13.81% of the population in Selly Oak, compared to 18.59% in England and Wales;
- n 26.5% of Selly Oak residents own their house outright, this is compared with 29.46% in England and Wales and 26.36% in Birmingham; and
- n 11.01% of households are occupied by single pensioners, 18.31% are all student households - compared with England and Wales at 14.43% and 0.39% respectively.

## **Commercial Overview**

2.4 For centres larger than Selly Oak additional market information can normally obtained from sources including Experian, Dunn & Bradstreet, Focus, Egi etc. However, most of the market information produced for retail centres in the West Midlands focuses on larger centres such as Birmingham, Coventry, and Wolverhampton. We have therefore relied

Key Census Statistics

Over 1/3 of the population in Selly Oak falls in the 20-24 age bracket which is around 4 times the average across Birmingham

Almost 70% of population in Selly Oak economically inactive



upon our own research and local market knowledge, as well as information obtained from local agents and developers.

- 2.5 The commercial property sector within Selly Oak clearly reflects its position as a suburb of a major conurbation. Whilst each of the three main commercial property sectors, retail, office and industrial, are represented in Selly Oak, the area is not recognised as being a key location for any particular sector and this is reflected in the imperfect nature of the commercial property market.
- 2.6 We would comment on the principal commercial uses as follows:

Retail

- 2.7 Selly Oak is a local shopping centre, providing for the day-to-day needs of local residents. In addition to the range of unit shops the centre is also supported by a large Sainsbury's store and a retail park.
- 2.8 The retail units fronting the Bristol Road predominantly comprise older two or three storey properties, the majority of which are small and in a poor condition for modern retail requirements. Above the ground floor retail use, the units typically provide separate residential use at first and second floor level, much of which we assume is let to students.

Old retail property stock in tired condition

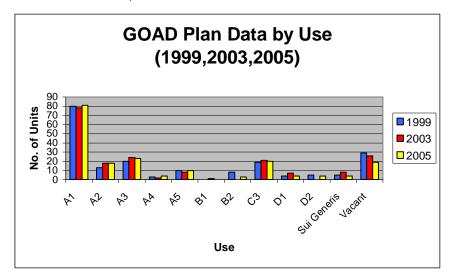
- 2.9 Retail occupiers along the Bristol Road clearly reflect the demographics of the area together with the type of property stock available. The majority of occupiers are independent retailers with a particularly high proportion of the retail uses comprising restaurants, cafes, take-aways, letting agents and other uses associated with a high resident student population.
- 2.10 There is limited representation from 'high street' national retailers/occupiers along the Bristol Road, however, those identified included Lloyds Pharmacy, William Hill, Dixons Estate Agents, and Halifax Estate Agents. At present we consider there is little prospect of the Bristol Road securing more national operators in the short-term due to the demographics of the area, the unsuitability of property stock, the existing tenant mix and irregular footfall. However, the centre could become more attractive in the medium to longer-term and this is discussed in more detail in the latter sections of the report.

Selly Oak not attractive to national multiple retail operators at present

- 2.11 For a local centre, Selly Oak has a reasonably good provision in terms of the number of shop units and services provided. In particular there are a number of specialist shops (e.g. second-hand bookstore, kitchen appliance store) which serve a variety of customers likely to be drawn from a catchment wider than the Selly Oak ward.
- 2.12 There is a wide variety of restaurants, cafes and takeaways within the centre. These offer cuisine from a number of countries, including Italy, India, and Thailand. In addition to this, there are also a number of public houses. These facilities serve both the student and resident populations.
  - Wide range of restaurants, cafes and pubs
- 2.13 No firm evidence of retailers looking to move to Selly Oak centre has been found. This is mainly because there is a lack of publicly available data for small centres such as Selly Oak. Furthermore, national retailers are unlikely to list Selly Oak as a location they wish to locate to.
- 2.14 Our discussions with Sainsbury's did establish that there is some interest from national multiple retailers although there is no way of confirming how serious this interest is.
- 2.15 Information from Birmingham City Council's development control department indicates that there have been a number of A3/ A4/ A5 users



- looking to locate in the centre, although the reported demand is not as high as other areas such as Stirchley.
- 2.16 As part of this study we have updated the most recent GOAD plan published in 2003. This has enabled us to make a comparative assessment of the key use classes between 1999, 2003 and 2005.
- 2.17 The units have been classified according to the revised Use Classes Order issued on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2005.



- 2.18 The graph above compares the number of units within each use class in the three survey years identified. Overall, there appears to have been little change in the retail composition of the centre over the past six years. However, there does appear to have been a fall of around 5% in the total number of units within the centre (from 195 to 185 units). This may be due to a number of factors such as redevelopment and enlargement of units.
  - The other positive indicator to note is the number of vacant properties within the centre. Over the past six years a promising trend is identified. The number of vacant units has halved during the period 1999 2005, with the most significant drop being in the period between 2003 and 2005.
- 2.20 Class A1 ('shops') units provide most of the retail accommodation in Selly Oak. The number of Class A1 shops has remained relatively constant over the past six years.
- 2.21 A copy of the latest updated 2003 GOAD plan is contained at **appendix 3**.
- 2.22 In terms of commercial property uses within Selly Oak, retail is clearly the predominant use. The retail properties can be broadly categorised into two areas; secondary and tertiary 'high street' retail fronting the main Bristol Road (A38) and purpose built 'out-of-town' retail warehousing concentrated to the south.
- 2.23 Overall demand for the 'high street' units would appear reasonable and at the date of our inspection there appeared to be no vacant properties being actively marketed. Our searches of various commercial property marketing websites have also revealed no current opportunities.
- 2.24 We are, however, aware that Birmingham City Council will soon be marketing a small unit opposite Sainsbury's which is currently occupied by a firm of solicitors. Whilst marketing has not yet commenced, it is

Little change in retail composition

Reduction in the number of vacant retail units

Reasonable demand for high street units

NOVEMBER 2005

2.19



anticipated that the quoting rent will be in the region of £107.64 per sq m (£10.00 per sq ft), however, offers would be considered around this level. This demonstrates the nature of the market in Selly Oak whereby it would appear that there is no definite rental tone and that Landlords will often accept what a tenant is prepared to pay.

- 2.25 In terms of the national retail market, the sector has demonstrated both strong rental and capital growth in recent years and has outperformed both office and industrial properties. However, Selly Oak is not considered a regional retail centre and therefore there is little or no published information available in order to compare whether the area mirrors national trends. Having regard to the nature of the properties and the type of occupiers within Selly Oak, we would consider that the market would be imperfect with no strong trends.
- 2.26 The other category of retail property within Selly Oak is purpose built retail warehousing. At the southern edge of the study area is Battery Retail Park, a 12,635 sq m (136,000 sq ft) retail warehouse park constructed in the early 1990s. The retail park comprises a terrace of 5 units together with a solus leisure unit and current occupiers include Homebase, PC World, Currys, Comet, Halfords and a Deep Pan Pizza Restaurant. The retail park is also adjacent to a solus B & Q unit and the Sainsbury's supermarket.
- 2.27 Retail warehousing has been one of the best performing retail sub-sectors over the last two or three years and has experienced strong rental growth. Open non-food consented units have demonstrated the best performance in the sub sector and this is particularly evident on prime retail parks. Much of the success of the retail warehouse sector over the past 15 years has been a consequence of consumer spending trends and also the need by the retail operators to increase profit margins.
- 2.28 Bulky goods operators have historically favoured out-of-town locations due to the low rents in comparison to the High Street. However, more recently, retail parks have proved popular with High Street retailers such as Next and Argos and this has affected the supply/demand balance resulting in rental growth. Market reports indicate that during 2003 Next increased their floor space by 144%, Argos by 33%, TK Maxx by 31% and Matalan by 20%. In addition, planning policies have constrained out-of-town development resulting in increased competition for prime units.
- 2.29 As retail warehousing is a national market we would expect the retail warehousing units in Selly Oak to have broadly followed these recent national trends. Typically, out-of-town retail rents can range from approximately £161.46 per sq m (£15.00 per sq ft) to in excess of £322.92 per sq m (£30.00 per sq ft) depending on the location, age and size of the unit.
- 2.30 We understand that the landlords managing agents for Battery Retail Park are Donaldsons in Bristol and whilst we have been unable to confirm this, we would expect that rental levels for the park are between £215.28 to £269.10 per sq m (£20 to £25 per sq ft).

Office

2.31 Selly Oak is not a recognised office location and one of the principal reasons for this is due to its close proximity to the core office locations of Birmingham City Centre and Edgbaston. The minimal office stock in Selly Oak reflects this position and the only purpose built offices we identified during our inspection was the vacant former job centre and associated offices on Harborne Lane, and the probation services offices on the Bristol



Road, opposite the existing Sainsbury's store. We are aware that the job centre is being re-developed for a new 'Job Centre Plus'. We would, however, also expect a number of retail units fronting Bristol Road to provide basic office accommodation at first and second floor levels.

Minimal office stock with basic provision found at upper levels

2.32 Office rental levels are very much dependent on the type and quality of accommodation together with the lease terms. The is little by way of recorded rental evidence for Selly Oak, however we are aware that 749 sq m (8,064 sq ft) of offices on Birkdale Avenue was let to Sense on a ten year lease commencing January 2003 at a headline rent of £73.30 per sq m (£6.81 per sq ft). We consider that this level of rent would be the typical of reasonable office space in Selly Oak and compares to say £107.64 per sq m (£10.00 per sq ft) which is being achieved on offices in nearby Harborne.

### Industrial

- 2.33 The West Midlands remains the UK's industrial heartland predominately due to the strong communication links to the national motorway network. Typically, strong industrial locations are established in areas with good road communication links and an example of this in south Birmingham is Kings Norton Business Centre which benefits from having direct access to junction 2 of the M42. Due to the road infrastructure within and around Selly Oak, the area is not a recognised industrial and warehousing location and the level and quality of stock reflects this.
- 2.34 There is a small concentration of warehousing situated at Selly Oak Industrial Estate, to the east of the Bristol Road and accessed from Elliot Road. The accommodation briefly comprises a small estate of approximately nine part brick and part profile clad units. There is also more secondary accommodation provided at the Imex Business Centre where 2,434 sq m (26,200 sq ft) is currently available to let, however, we have been unable to identify the landlord and obtain a quoting rent.
- 2.35 In term of industrial rental levels, rents can generally range from £26.91 per sq m (£2.50 per sq ft) up to £59.20 per sq m (£5.50 per sq ft) for new units in prime location. We would envisage that the accommodation on Selly Oak Industrial Estate would command rents in the region of £37.67 per sq m (£3.50 per sq ft) to £43.05 per sq m (£4.00 per sq ft), however, we would expect minimal rental growth from this level. This level of rent is confirmed by a letting of 1,867 sq m (20,092 sq ft) of industrial space on Elliott Road in October 2004 which achieved a rent of around £39.83 per sq m (3.70 per sq ft).
- 2.36 Generally, prime industrial land values in key locations have risen over the last five years at currently stand at approximately £300,000 to £350,000 per acre. In terms of Selly Oak, having regard for the location, level of demand and achievable rental levels, we consider that a typical industrial land value would be in the region of £250,000 per acre.
- 2.37 Although Bristol Road forms part of the hi-tech corridor Selly Oak centre does not land itself to supporting hi-tech uses. The Birmingham Battery site offers the best opportunity to support the hi-tech corridor links from central Birmingham to Longbridge and into Worcestershire.

#### Residential

2.38 The residential market in the last five years saw a period of enormous growth as it came out of the trough of the early to mid-1990s and as interest rates fell to the lowest point for several decades making mortgages much more affordable. This was coupled with planning restrictions on

Limited industrial provision – Elliot Road

Poor location for industrial uses



greenfield development, slowing down the rate of construction of new properties, thereby restricting supply, but also the emergence of residential property as a serious investment vehicle for a much higher number of purchasers, thereby increasing demand over and above the traditional owner-occupier sector. The owner-occupier sector itself was also growing with changing demographics as people marry later and divorce rates rise. As supply could not keep up with demand, and with lending rates low, prices rose considerably.

- 2.39 The last year has seen a considerable slowing down in the market as affordability, despite low interest rates, became an issue for the average purchaser, and mortgage activity saw a greater proportion of re-mortgaging and extensions to houses rather than new lending. Interest rates were predicted to rise to 5% by the end of this year, which when taken with levels of personal debt, caused many to express fears regarding repayments and debt risk.
- 2.40 The market in Selly Oak is reflective of moves in the wider market and is typical of many city suburbs, experiencing, as it did, rises in the first few years of this decade but calming in the last year. There are no indexes specifically related to Selly Oak, and no research that we know of that concentrates on that market alone. The Halifax House Price Index for the West Midlands is averaged across the region, and shows prices grew between Q1 of 2000 and Q1 of 2005 by 14.93% per annum overall.
- 2.41 The Selly Oak area is characterised by two distinct residential areas; the area immediately east of Selly Oak railway station (Bournbrook) comprising terraced streets with a high proportion of student occupation, and the area west of the Harborne Lane/Bristol Road junction, providing housing of a lower density comprising semi-detached and detached housing built in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century with high proportion of owner-occupation.
- 2.42 Terraced housing accounts for the most common type of housing stock, making up almost 47% of the total, detached housing accounts for 9.12%, compared to England and Wales which has 26.04% and 22.77% respectively. 9.02% of the housing stock is purpose-built flats, whereas in England and Wales the percentage is 13.62% (2001 Census Data updated 2004).
- 2.43 The Bournbrook area is more affordable, but owner-occupiers have been deterred by the number of students in the area; such a transient population allows little community spirit to be generated. Values have risen partly because of the general markets but also because landlords have been keen to acquire properties to rent to students, thereby making a profitable return.
- 2.44 The latest census information available shows that private rented accommodation accounts for the most common type of housing tenure in Selly Oak at 28.38%, compared with 8.72% and 7.84% for England and Wales and Birmingham respectively.
- 2.45 Property prices in Selly Oak range from around £120,000 to £160,000 for a 2-bedroom mid-terraced house, and £160,000 to £230,000 for a 3-bedroom terraced house.
- 2.46 The area west of Bristol Road is more expensive, with some properties owned by the Bournville Village Trust, a historic land association connected to the Bournville chocolate works, and is more sought after with attractive greenery and street elevations. Prices there generally start in the region of £235,000 for a three bedroom semi-detached.

Terraced housing the most common housing type – accounting for 47% of the stock in Selly Oak

Owner –occupier interest in properties affected by student population – additional impact on residential values caused through buv-to-let demand



- 2.47 Aston was chosen as a comparable due to its distance from Birmingham City Centre, and high student population, both of which are similar to those of Selly Oak. It was found that a 2-bedroom terraced property in Aston can be purchased from £88,000 with 3-bedroom terraced properties around £110,000.
- 2.48 A review of residential rental values in Selly Oak was undertaken. Our analysis identified that, a 4 bedroom house costs between £693 and £1100 per calendar month to rent. In comparison, a similar sized house in Aston costs between £550 and £750 per calendar month.
- 2.49 Discussions with estate agents in Selly Oak confirmed that properties closer to the University entrance command higher values than those located closer to Pershore Road. Agents also confirmed that the development of new purpose-built student accommodation was having an impact on demand for buy-to-let properties with evidence of falling values in some locations.

2.50 Agents confirmed that the buy-to-let property values were significantly influenced by the quality of the internal space and decoration, e.g. provision of internet facilities.

## Community / Leisure Facilities

2.51 The list below contains the facilities we have identified within a mile of Selly Oak. A more detailed list of facilities beyond 1 mile is provided at appendix 4.

Organisation	Facilities
Selly Oak Adult Education Centre	Adult Education, Computer Courses etc
Selly Oak Library	Library, Coffee Mornings (50+), Children's Saturday Club
641 Youth House	Youth Centre
NACRO Centre	Charity – crime reduction
Bournbrook Medical Practice	Doctor's Surgery
Dawlish Road Dental Practice	Dental Practice
Coronation Road Adventure Play Centre	Play Centre
Tiverton Pool and Fitness Centre	Leisure Centre including Gym and swimming pool
Ex-Serviceman's Institute	Member's Club
Selly Oak Park	Park/Public Open Space, Children's Play Area

2.52 Although this list shows that there is a good range of facilities for resident's living in the area, there is not a building which is solely for the use of the community, i.e. a traditional community centre.

Faith Groups in Selly Oak

- 2.53 Faith groups in Selly Oak have an important role to play through the support they offer to the community. In addition to the provision of facilities and running of community activities, the church also operates within the wider Selly Oak community.
- 2.54 Places of worship in Selly Oak play a number of roles, including: -
  - Provision of detached youth workers who try and reach those who would not normally attend youth clubs;
  - n Coordination of volunteers to work in local hospitals; and

Potential benefits from building more purpose-built student accommodation



n Provision of counselling services.

2.55 The main places of worship within 1 mile of Selly Oak include: -

Place of Worship	Location
Jalalabad Mosque	24 – 26 Dartmouth Road, Selly Oak
Christian Life Centre	900 Bristol Road, Selly Oak
St Mary's Church of England Church	Bristol Road, Selly Oak
St Stephen's Parish Church	Serpentine Road, Selly Oak
Elim Church Centre	Exeter Road, Selly Oak
Tiverton Christian Fellowship	25-31a Tiverton Road, Selly Oak
Selly Oak Methodist Church	Langley's Road, Selly Oak

2.56 Some initial consultation has been undertaken with Faith Groups as part of this study. Further details on this consultation are set out in section 4 of the report.

### Transportation

### Accessibility

2.57 Selly Oak is very accessible by public and private transport, by road, rail, on foot and bicycle. The A38 Bristol Road is a Primary route linking Birmingham City centre with the M5 and M42 motorways. The A4040 outer circle route also passes through Selly Oak. The centre is served by the regular 'cross-city' rail line which runs between Lichfield and Redditch, via Birmingham New Street runs through Selly Oak. The centre is also well served by over 20 bus services (including the 61,62,63 routes).

Good accessibility by all forms of transport

### Congestion and Parking

2.58 Although Selly Oak can be described as very accessible, a widely reported problem is the significant levels of congestion caused by the volume of traffic flowing along Bristol Road (A38). This in turn has resulted in a significant impact on the environment caused by noise and air pollution from traffic.

Significant congestion and problems of noise and air pollution

2.59 There are long-standing proposals to relieve Selly Oak of the congestion by the development of a new road. In the past, proposals had been put forward to widen the existing Bristol Road. These proposals, and the uncertainty surrounding the potential development of the Bristol Road, led to some properties being compulsorily acquired. This in turn led to a period of prolonged uncertainty for both retailers and businesses.

Selly Oak New Road

- 2.60 The proposals for the Selly Oak New Road, which will by pass the centre were considered at a Compulsory Purchase Inquiry in May 2005 and the Inspector is expected to report in autumn 2005. We have assumed that the Orders for both sections of the road will be granted and this, when constructed, will relieve much of the congestion through the centre of Selly Oak.
- 2.61 Assuming a favourable public inquiry, construction of the new road is expected to start in Spring 2006, with completion due late 2008. The Bristol Road improvements are expected to be completed by Summer 2009.
- 2.62 The construction of the Selly Oak New Road will include a number of related transport and environmental improvements on the Bristol Road: -

Significant improvement to Selly Oak will arising from the new road



- n Provision of bus interchange on Bristol Road between Oak Tree Lane and Chapel Lane
- n Parking bays along Bristol Road;
- n Wider footways to give more space to pedestrians in Selly Oak centre;
- n Tree planting and replacement street furniture in the centre;
- n Reduction of through traffic leading to less noise and air pollution in Selly Oak centre; and
- n Facilities for cyclists including cycle lane and parking in Selly Oak centre.
- 2.63 Approximately 1,300 spaces are provided in Selly Oak for shoppers, although these are mainly provided at Sainsbury's and the Battery Retail park. These spaces are not convenient for the visitor wishing to make a single trip to a shop on Bristol Road. The centre is not considered attractive to people arriving by car for convenience trips because there are limited parking facilities on Bristol Road during normal business hours. The only spaces available within the Bourn Brook shopping area are the 30 spaces within the Aldi car park which are available for use by the public. All of the spaces provided in Selly Oak are free, with the exception of the Lottie Road car park (located behind the Oak Tree Lane shopping parade).
- 2.64 Furthermore, parking problems exist for residents on the side streets off Bristol Road, with on-street spaces at a premium, particularly during term time.

Lack of on-street parking for shoppers and parking difficulties for residents

### **Environment**

- 2.65 Selly Oak can be described as having a vibrant and active urban environment. However, for most visitors to Selly Oak the experience involves congestion, noise, fumes generally providing a poor quality experience. The congestion regularly hampers the progress of motorists and bus users. For pedestrians and cyclists the high volumes of traffic create an uninviting and sometimes dangerous environment.
- 2.66 The natural environment is limited with few trees or natural open space. The Birmingham to Worcester canal passes through Selly Oak, although accessibility and visibility are generally poor.
- 2.67 The central area of Selly Oak has little in the way of quality open space. However, this is not uncommon in urban centres. For residents of Selly Oak, significant 'green' space is provided at Selly Oak Park, with additional facilities provided further away at Cannon Hill park.
- A recreation facility (Bournbrook Recreation) is provided on Bristol Road opposite the Adult Education centre between Selly Oak library and Aldi, although it is mainly used by young people. This facility is poorly maintained and uninviting to most people seeking a place to relax. A graffiti wall has been provided to the rear of 641 Bristol Road. However, the graffiti has extended on to the rear of Aldi, residential properties on George Road, the children's playground and the Grade II listed 641 Bristol Road. There is also a lack of public realm or a space that can be described as a public square or meeting place.



# 2.69 There are a number of listed, locally-listed and landmark buildings within Selly Oak. These are set out in the table below.

Level of Protection	Building	Location
Listed (Grade 2)	Selly Oak Electricity Sub-station	659 Bristol Road
Listed (Grade 2)	Selly Oak Adult Education Centre	Bristol Road
Listed (Grade 2)	Youth House	641 Bristol Road
Listed (Grade 2)	Dwelling House	659 Bristol Road
Listed (Grade 2)	Birmingham University Chamberlain Tower	Birmingham University
Listed (Grade 2)	Birmingham University Great Hall & Quadrant Range	Birmingham University
Listed (Grade 2)	Ashley & Strathcona Buildings	Birmingham University
Locally Listed Buildings (Grade A)	Gun Factory	Dale Road
Locally Listed Buildings (Grade A)	Bournbrook Rest Home	Bournbrook Road
Locally Listed Buildings (Grade A)	Goose at OVT	561 Bristol Road
Landmark Buildings (not listed)	Selly Oak Library	Bristol Road
Landmark Buildings (not listed)	The Bristol Pear	Bristol Road
Landmark Buildings (not listed)	Birmingham Battery Offices	Bristol Road
Landmark Buildings (not listed)	Probation Office	Bristol Road
Landmark Buildings (not listed)	Birmingham University Students Union	Birmingham University
Landmark Buildings (not listed)	Queen Elizabeth Hospital Tower	QE Hospital
Landmark Buildings (not listed)	University Medical School	Vincent Drive



# 3. Main Development Sites in Selly Oak

- 3.1 There are a number of development proposals in the pipeline in Selly Oak. The principal development proposals in Selly Oak centre are the redevelopment of the former Birmingham Battery site, the new Super Hospital and the Selly Oak New Road. These developments represent a significant investment in the area totalling in excess of £1billion.
- 3.2 We believe that these development proposals represent a significant boost to Selly Oak and could kick-start a wholescale change in the centre.
- 3.3 This section of the study considers the following sites:
  - (i) Development sites with Planning Permission;
  - (ii) Proposal sites subject of a planning application;
  - (iii) Pre-application proposals; and
  - (iv) Potential development sites.
- 3.4 A timeline showing the main developments / schemes proposed in the area is provided at appendix 5.
- 3.5 The main development sites identified are reviewed individually however, the proposals for the Selly Oak New Road are described below.

### Selly Oak New Road

- 3.6 The Selly Oak New Road is a major initiative to downgrade the Bristol Road where it passes through Selly Oak Centre. The 1.5km New Road will be constructed to provide an alternative route to through traffic.
- 3.7 Phase 1 is expected to begin in Autumn 2005, incorporating Harborne Lane and Chapel Lane Improvements, the New Road from Harborne Lane to Bournbrook, the Hospital Link Road and a Public Transport Interchange.
- 3.8 Phase 2 is expected begin in 2006 with completion expected in 2008. This will incorporate a new roundabout at the junction of Selly Oak New Road/Hospital Link Road, the widening of Bristol Road between Arley Road and Edgbaston Park Road and associated junction improvements.
- 3.9 Major improvements to the Bristol Road within Selly Oak Centre are planned to come forward in 2010/2011 and will include:
  - n A reduction in carriageway width. The existing four 2.5 metre wide lanes will be replaced with two 3.65 metre wide lanes;
  - n A bus interchange on Bristol Road between Oak Tree Lane and Chapel Lane for the Outer Ring Road and Bristol Road services;
  - Facilities for cyclists, including cycle parking and cycle links;
  - n Parking facilities along the Bristol Road;
  - Widening of pathways; and
  - n Planting of trees and replacement of street furniture.
- 3.10 Whilst we understand there are concerns regarding the potential loss of passing trade to businesses on Bristol Road, we would conclude that on balance the road proposals should result in an overall benefit to retailers, with greater opportunities afforded to passing trade and an overall improvement in the shopping environment.



- 3.11 The new road and the developments with planning permission represent a significant step forward in delivering the changes needed to improve Selly Oak. However, these developments alone will not deliver the changes required to make Selly Oak a more attractive place to live, work and shop.
- 3.12 Each of the sites we have identified as having development potential in Selly Oak could have an important role to play in shaping the vision we set out in section 5 of this report.



# **Development sites with Planning Permission**

3.13 The sites identified in this section include all those schemes where planning permission has been granted by Birmingham City Council.

Site No. 1a	Birmingham Battery Site (JS)
Proposals Status	Outline planning permission was granted for the scheme in May 2005 and includes a substantial section 106 agreement which comprises contributions to the Selly Oak New Road and the provision of allotments. Discussions are currently taking place regarding a revised application which could include elements of comparison retail floorpsace beyond the new foodstore.



	<b>多</b> 年	
Size	16 hectares (40 acres)	
Existing Uses	Two former tips and Birmingham Battery factory, retail (including former garden centre), and allotments/ open space area.	
Ownership Details	J Sainsbury	
Proposals Known	Full details yet to be confirmed, although the scheme is expected to comprise some or all of the following uses: -	
	§ Supermarket	
	§ Retail warehouse & storage	
	§ Technology centre	
	\$ Leisure (possibly health & fitness)	
	§ Small retail units	
	§ Residential units	
	§ Council offices/ library	
	§ Offices	
	§ Public Plaza	
	§ Petrol station	
	§ Car Parking	
	§ Re-instatement of Lapal canal and improved access / frontage	
Proposals Timing	Development is due to commence 2006 with phase 1 of the Selly Oak New Road due to start autumn 2005. New store expected to open in 2008 – completion date for the remainder of the sile unknown.	
Local Plan Policies	N/A	
DJ Comments	Revised proposals which include increased retail provision over and above that granted planning permission should consider and address the potential to provide new floorspace along Bristol Road to complement existing shopping facilities – in accordance with PPS6. Possible opportunity to re-visit the s106 agreement where uplift in floorpsace is proposed. Revised negotiations should be undertaken in accordance with the latest guidance on planning obligations contained in Circular 05/05.	



Site No. 1b	Former Birmingham Battery Offices (part of site 1a above)
Proposals Status	As with site 1a, planning permission for this scheme was granted in May 2005. However, it is expected that a revised application for the Battery Site will be submitted in Autumn 2005.



Size	Included in site 1a
Existing Uses	Vacant building – former main offices for Battery site referred to above
Ownership Details	J Sainsbury
Proposals Known	This building is proposed to be developed as part of the scheme on the former Battery site.
	The building is proposed to be retained as part of the scheme, although the precise use is unknown.
Proposals Timing	Development of the J Sainsbury scheme is likely to start in early 2006.
Local Plan Policies	N/A
DJ Comments	This is a landmark site and the former office building represents a potential architectural asset to Selly Oak local centre. Proposals which seek to retain this building should be positively encouraged. Bringing this building back into use will assist in creating a more active frontage along Bristol Road throughout the whole of the centre. Development proposals for the building should seek to ensure that the historic building is sympathetically restored. Clearly the viability of reuse / redevelopment needs to be tested.



Site No. 2	The Former Brook Public House
Proposals Status	Permission granted subject to the signing of a section 106 agreement – 23 March 2005.



Size	0.44 Ha
Existing Uses	Having been recently cleared the site is awaiting development.
Ownership Details	Private Ownership – Finsbury Construction
Proposals Known	Erection of food retail unit with an element of student accommodation over the retail unit, a further block of student housing to the rear of the site and an additional 7 private dwellings to be provided.
Proposals Timing	Unknown
Local Plan Policies	N/A
DJ Comments	Further food retail in Selly Oak will provide additional convenience goods offer and will support the vitality and viability of the centre.
	The proposals will provide additional retail frontage along Bristol Road and will contribute towards the creation of a continuous frontage.
	The new student accommodation will assist in providing much needed modern purpose built accommodation.



# Proposal sites subject of a planning application

3.14 A planning application for the site identified below has been submitted to Birmingham City Council. However, this has yet to be determined and proposals are therefore not yet fixed.

Proposals Status Application Submitted July 2005	Site No. 3	Elliot Road Industrial Area	
	Proposals Status	Application Submitted July 2005	



Size	We have been advised by Birmingham City Council that the applicants stated that the site size for this scheme is 18,000m².
Existing Uses	The site forms part of the wider Elliot Road industrial estate.
Ownership Details	Unite Integrated Solutions PLC.
Proposals Known	Proposals for residential development comprising 97 residential properties, comprising 15 1-bed apartments; 62 2-bed apartments and 20 town houses plus student accommodation providing 441 bedrooms.
Proposals Timing	Application submitted July 2005 – subject of officer consideration – decision expected by the end of 2005 and development to commence by early 2006.
Local Plan Policies	N/A
DJ Recommendations	The proposal for new student accommodation will assist in providing much needed modern purpose-built accommodation. The new private residential accommodation will also assist in providing new residential stock to the area, although there is a limited amount of family accommodation.
	S106 obligations should seek contributions towards education; community / leisure facilities; open space; health; affordable housing, public transport improvements.



# Pre-application proposal sites

3.15 Development proposals for the sites identified below have been discussed with Birmingham City Council. However, planning applications have not yet been submitted. Proposals are therefore still in the early stages and may change, or may not come forward.

Site No. 4	Bournbrook & Varsity Doctor's Surgery and Former NACRO Centre
Proposals Status	Pre-application discussions have taken place. It is expected that a planning application will be submitted by Autumn 2005.



Size	
Existing Uses	Doctor's Surgery and NACRO centre
Ownership Details	Bournbrook and Varsity Medical Practice / Birmingham City Council
Proposals Known	Proposals being prepared for development comprising:
	§ Doctor's surgery;
	§ Dental practice;
	§ Retail units; and
	§ Residential apartments
Proposals Timing	Development is expected to begin in early 2006
Local Plan Policies	The Adopted UDP (1993) does not allocate this land for any particular use. This is a position maintained in the revised UDP which has now been the subject of an Inspector's Report.
	The Local Action Plan identifies that the site falls within the area of restraint (A3 uses). It also identifies that the site is opposite a proposed new road junction which will be the subject of detailed design and form part of the Selly Oak new road proposals.
DJ Recommendations	This scheme comprises mixed use proposals which will contribute to the vitality and viability of Selly Oak, whilst restoring an historic prominent gateway site to Selly Oak. The design of the proposals is particularly important in this location because when the Selly Oak New Road is built, this site will sit at the "new" entrance to Selly Oak. Subject to other requirements, it may be appropriate to seek S106 contributions towards education; community / leisure facilities; open space; health; affordable housing, and public transport improvements.



Site No. 5	Selly Oak Triangle (existing Sainsbury's store)
Proposals Status	Pre-application discussions have taken place between Sainsbury's and Birmingham City Council.



Size	Included in wider Sainsbury's development (see site 1a)
Existing Uses	Currently occupied by Sainsbury's supermarket
Ownership Details	Sainsbury's
Proposals Known	Pre-application discussions have taken place to consider the future of this important and major development site. A mixed-use scheme is likely to comprise:
	§ Hotel;
	§ Restaurant/ bar;
	§ Retail;
	§ Offices; and
	§ Residential (student and private residential)
	§ Parking (underground)
Proposals Timing	An application for the scheme is expected in autumn 2005. However the store on site cannot close until the new store on the Battery Park scheme is fully operational. Development is likely to start 2009/ 2010 – once Sainsbury's have built and opened their new store on the former Birmingham Battery site.
Local Plan Policies	The site is not allocated in the adopted UDP.
	The site is identified in the Selly Oak Local Action Plan as a 'key developmen opportunity site'. It is noted that the site will be suitable for non-food retailing units (up to 10,000sq ft gross) on ground floor with commercial/ offices/ leisure/ hotel and residential above.
DJ Recommendations	This site can play an important role in providing new retail floorspace (shop units) in Selly Oak and assist in the continuity of frontage along Bristol Road. A mix of uses (including residential, commercial offices, hotel and retail) could add to the vitality and viability of the centre.
	Any redevelopment of the site should ensure that buildings do not turn their back of the Bristol Road, rather the frontage should be brought back into active use.
	\$106 obligations should seek contributions towards education; community / leisurfacilities; open space; health; affordable housing, public transport improvements.



# **Potential Development Sites**

3.16 These sites are not currently the subject of any planning application or preapplication discussions. However, they have been identified by Drivers Jonas as sites which may come forward for development over the longer term.

Site No. 6	Selly Oak Hospital
Proposals Known	No specific proposals have been suggested for the site (see below for Local Area Action Plan suggestions).



Size	17.5 hectares (43.1 acres)
Existing Uses	Selly Oak hospital and associated uses. Also includes a cricket ground and playing field area.
Ownership Details	Birmingham Hospital Trust
Proposals Status	Drivers Jonas are advised that the site will be cleared for redevelopment by 2010. It is expected that a planning application would be submitted to Birmingham City Council around this time.
Proposals Timing	Re-development can only take place once the Queen Elizabeth super hospital is complete.
Local Plan Policies	The site is not allocated for any particular use within either the emerging or adopted Birmingham UDP. However, the Local Area Action Plan suggests that a number of uses would be acceptable, including: -
	§ A mix of high quality family housing which makes a positive contribution to the adjoining Bournville Village Trust conservation area;
	§ Development which takes advantage of, and enhances, the canal side area which forms the north eastern boundary of the site.;
	§ Provision of a large area of open space;
	§ Improved access to the site.
	The Selly Oak local action plan confirms that the Council will seek to prepare a development brief for the site.
DJ Recommendations	This site offers a rare opportunity to provide family accommodation in the Selly Oak area and should be promoted through the Local Development Framework / Local Area Action Plan.
	The linkages / permeability through the site should place a heavy emphasis in access toward Bristol Road and the retail frontage, as well as the station / proposed transport interchange.
	S106 obligations should seek contributions towards education; community / leisure facilities; open space; health; affordable housing, public transport improvements.



Site No. 7	The Dingle & Adjoining Garage
Proposals Status	No applications for development on this site have been submitted.



Size	Approx 1.5 hectares (3.8 acres)
Existing Uses	Part of the site is currently occupied by a car showroom and garage. The remainder of the site is vacant.
Ownership Details	Birmingham City Council/ Private Ownership
Proposals Known	No fixed proposals for this scheme have been submitted.
Proposals Timing	N/A
Local Plan Policies	The Selly Oak Local Action Plan proposes that the site may be suitable for a number of uses including: -  § Offices § public house § hotel § mixed use § small scale retail.  Relating the units to the canal side is outlined as being essential.
	The Action Plan also notes that buildings must be close to the back of the pavement and the canal embankment to provide an active ground floor frontage with doors and windows to both the canal and Bristol Road.
DJ Recommendations	The prominence of the site close to the canal and opposite the proposed Battery Park redevelopment offers the opportunity for a landmark scheme to be developed.  There should be a significant element of market housing (preferably not student accommodation) provided as part of a mixed-use scheme. Occupiers will be able to take advantage of the excellent transport links (bus, road and rail) into the city.  Ground floor retail development (A1/ A2/A3/ A4) which fronts the Bristol Road should also form an integral part of the development. This would enable an extension of the existing retail frontage on the Bristol Road.  Fast food takeaways (A5) should be avoided.  Possible use of Compulsory Purchase to create the critical mass for a larger development site.  There appear to be two options available to Birmingham City Council:  1) Dispose of the site subject to planning; and  2) Promote planning allocation / prepare development brief before marketing the site.



Site No. 8	Site Between Timber Merchants and 641 Youth House
Proposals Status	Drivers Jonas are not aware of any proposals for development on this site.
Size	
Existing Uses	The site is currently occupied by a number of uses including: -
	§ Selly Oak library (landmark building not listed);
	§ 641 Bristol Road Youth House (Grade II listed);
	§ Bournbrook Recreation Ground, including a basketball court area and children's play area;
	§ A residential property 659 Bristol Road (Grade II listed)
	§ Electricity sub-station (Grade II listed); and
	§ A number of vehicle repair units.
Ownership Details	Mixed, including BCC and Central Networks (electricity)
Proposals Known	None
Proposals Timing	N/A
Local Plan Policies	The site is not allocated within either the emerging or adopted UDPs.
	The Selly Oak Local Action plan does not allocate the site for any specific development types, although it notes the poor frontage in this location and the need to enhance the Bournbrook Recreation ground. In addition to this, it is also identified in the plan that a number of listed buildings fall within this site area.
DJ Recommendations	The site represents one of the poorest sections of urban environment in Selly Oak which is having a negative impact on the few surviving buildings with architectural quality and character.
	The site contains a number of listed and landmark buildings which need greater protection as well as enhancement. The site also forms the setting for other listed and landmark buildings including the Adult Education Centre and the Bristol Pear pub.
	The following proposals should be considered as part of the wider enhancements needed in Selly Oak:
	<ul> <li>Create an historic or heritage quarter in this location;</li> </ul>
	Compulsory purchase of incongruous uses may be necessary;
	Major environmental improvements needed as a minimum;
	Provision of new retail frontage and/ or market square;
	<ul> <li>Possible land swap with Central Networks to re-provide their access from George Road and to take their existing Bristol Road access for a development site or market square;</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Consideration given to loss of urban park or re-provision elsewhere;</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Scope to re-provide or extend community facilities – particularly the library, 641 Youth House as part of a large community centre; and</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>The site/area should be the subject of a detailed development brief.</li> </ul>

- 3.17 The sites considered above provide a number of significant opportunities to regenerate Selly Oak in the future. However, each of the sites will require careful consideration by Birmingham City Council to ensure that the opportunities to secure maximum benefits to the centre can be achieved.
- 3.18 Overall, we would conclude that the sites which have received planning permission will provide a significant "kick start" to local regeneration. The

NOVEMBER 2005 24



sites which are the subject of pre-application discussions also offer significant potential to provide an uplift in the retail and residential offer of the centre, whilst at the same time providing other complementary facilities, such as offices and student accommodation.

- 3.19 The continued provision of new purpose-built student accommodation is seen to have both benefits and dis-benefits to Selly Oak. On the one hand it will provide much needed improvements to student facilities and potentially release private-rented accommodation back into the market for first time buyers. On the other, these developments can take up valuable development sites that could be developed for private residential accommodation.
- 3.20 Finally, if all the development sites come forward then they will fill many of the gaps in the urban environment that exist at present. Furthermore, if demand can support retail at ground floor level then an increase in the continuous active frontage along Bristol Road could lead to an enhancement of the vitality and viability of Selly Oak.
- 3.21 The next section of the report provides a summary of the key issues that have been identified during the course of the study, particularly through the detailed consultation that has been undertaken.



# 4. Summary of Key Issues

- 4.1 Through the research and detailed consultation undertaken for this study a number of key issues have been identified. The summary of issues provided below seeks to capture the issues identified in our research, as well as the comments and views provided by all of the groups, organisations and individuals we have consulted.
- 4.2 The key issues are summarised below.

## Population Imbalance

- n Census data shows 30% of the population is 20-24 living in Selly Oak this is four times the average for Birmingham;
- n Almost 70% of the population in Selly Oak is economically inactive;
- n The high student population has an impact on businesses, whereby sales drop during the holiday period.

### Retail

- n Poor quality of retail offer with a lack of range in the type of shops and few national multiples;
- n The centre is dominated by Sainsbury's;
- n The existing stock of retail property is poor and in many cases unsuitable for modern requirements;
- n There is a concentration of restaurants and bars at the north-eastern end of the centre;
- n The retail centre has undoubtedly suffered from the uncertainty of the Selly Oak new road proposals;
- n There is no defined boundary which establishes the retail centre in Selly Oak;
- n The is no market facility, e.g. a farmers market;
- n The presence of a number of undesirable uses (e.g. massage parlours and sex shops) within the centre;
- n There is a lack of banking facilities, particularly cash points, along Bristol Road, with many people required to travel to other centres; and
- n The lack of continuous frontage along Bristol Road has resulted in an extremely fragmented centre which has an impact on the vitality and viability.

### Offices and Industrial

- n Selly Oak is not a recognised location for office or industrial uses therefore any facilities provided are generally poor quality;
- n Hi-tech uses are encouraged in Selly Oak as part of the A38 hi-tech corridor between Birmingham and Worcestershire;
- n There is little scope for hi-tech uses to be incorporated into the centre of Selly Oak due to lack of available sites and the juxtaposition with retail.

### Residential

- n Selly Oak generally has a poor quality stock of housing;
- n The range of housing on offer is also very poor almost half of the housing stock in Selly Oak is terraced, with little family or entry level accommodation available;



- n There is a significant demand for buy-to-let property caused by the proximity to Birmingham University and other universities / colleges – around 1/3 of the properties in Selly Oak are privately rented;
- n The significant demand from investors in buy-to-let properties creates an inflated housing market where freehold and leasehold values are high;
- n Affordability of entry level accommodation is a problem for first time buyers, and particularly graduates from local universities and colleges who have studied in the area and wish to remain once they commence full-time employment;
- n The provision of purpose-built student accommodation is reducing the demand for buy-to-let properties further away from Bournbrook Road.

# **Community Facilities**

- n Despite the reasonable range of community facilities in Selly Oak the centre lacks a modern traditional community centre;
- n Many of the existing facilities are not fit for purpose for modern day requirements and some are in a poor state of repair requiring significant investment. For example, the Adult Education Centre requires £300,000 to £400,000 to bring the building up to the standards required for compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act;
- n There appears to be duplication of provision with many organisations having similar space requirements;
- n Distribution of information about what's happening in Selly Oak is perceived as being very poor e.g. knowledge of Selly Oak New Road and Sainsbury's development;
- n The quality of leisure facilities provided publicly is poor although, additional facilities are provided at Birmingham University, some of which can be used by the public, awareness of these is limited.

### **Transportation**

- n Although Selly Oak can be described as very accessible, this is restricted by the significant levels of congestion experienced - the number of vehicles using Bristol Road is around 24,000 per day;
- n There are significant impacts from congestion on Selly Oak including loss of business as well as significant noise and air pollution;
- n Bristol Road is difficult to cross at peak times and pedestrians are therefore required to navigate one of the nine crossings provided between Oak Tree Lane and Bournbrook Road;
- n Parking provision is generally good, in terms of overall numbers with
- n On-street parking provision is restricted between 7.45am and 6.45pm (Monday to Saturday) which means there are limited opportunities for businesses to benefit from the passing trade;
- n The side roads in Selly Oak (e.g. Tiverton Road, Dawlish Road and Healey Road) do not have restrictions on car parking and this has a significant impact on residents, as spaces are taken up by those attending the University:
- Businesses are uncertain as to how the Selly Oak New Road will impact upon them:
- n The Park and Ride facilities provided at Selly Oak train station do not appear to bring any benefits to Selly Oak and expansion should therefore be avoided unless there are wider benefits which can be achieved.



### **Environment**

- n Both the urban (e.g. NACRO) and natural environment (e.g. trees and greenery) in Selly Oak are poor in quality;
- n There is a lack of good quality public open space in the centre hard or soft (e.g. public square or park area);
- n There is no public square or meeting place;
- n There are relatively few benches (or other street furniture), public art or trees in the centre;
- n Many of the residential and business areas are affected by a significant rodent problem – considered to be caused by refuse left in the open for long periods;
- n Un-even pavements/ litter on pavements;
- n The graffiti wall behind 641 Bristol Road has a negative impact on the environment and is out of control with "vandalism" now spreading beyond the designated wall to other properties and the children's playground;
- n Waste collections are considered to fall on the wrong day of the week thereby making it difficult to store waste before it is collected; and
- n Poorly maintained shop fronts.

### Leisure Facilities

- n Very limited number of leisure facilities available in Selly Oak limited to those provided at the Tiverton Road Centre;
- n Outdoor play areas limited to basketball court/ skate park to the rear of Aldi store is reportedly well used, but is also an area identified by many as unwelcoming, visually unattractive and poorly maintained; and
- n A wide variety of leisure facilities are available at the University but they are not all available for use by the public and the cost of using these facilities is prohibitive to many.

### Safety and Security

- n External security is seen as a problem by many businesses;
- n There is a perceived low police presence;
- n Anti-social behaviour essentially found around licensed premises
- n Incidents of burglary at student properties attributed to level of high-value electrical goods used e.g. computers, stereo equipment; and
- n Generally poor security standards found in the buy-to-let properties.

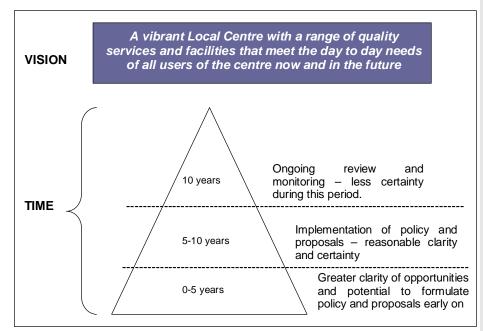
### Way Forward

4.3 The key issues identified above have been taken into consideration as part of the visioning and implementation strategy that is provided in sections 5 and 6.



# 5. Future Vision for Selly Oak

- 5.1 Having carried out extensive research and consultation we have established there is a wide range of issues and problems experienced in Selly Oak. However, we have also recognised that Selly Oak has a fantastic opportunity to undergo regeneration and provide a centre that overcomes many of the issues and problems identified by businesses, residents and others.
- 5.2 The strategic vision we have identified for Selly Oak is:
  - "To provide a vibrant Local Centre with a range of quality services and facilities that meet the day to day needs of all users of the centre now and in the future."
- 5.3 In order to deliver this single vision, we believe that a number of more detailed visions need to be progressed. This study has identifies 6 key visions. These are: demographics; housing; retail provision; community facilities; environment, and transport.
- 5.4 For each of the visions we have attempted to apply timescales within which the centre is likely to change. These timescales are broadly 0-5 years, 5-10 years and 10+ years. Clearly the further into the future we look then the less certain proposals and predicted changes will be.



- 5.5 As well as contributing to the achievement of the overall single vision for the future Selly Oak, the visions proposed should address many of the key issues and problems that have been identified during this study. Indeed, most of the issues identified have been reported on previously.
- 5.6 The future visions for Selly Oak have been influenced by a number of key factors. These include:
  - (i) The existing urban environment and infrastructure;
  - (ii) Confirmed development proposals;



- (iii) Land ownership considerations; and
- (iv) The views of all consultees.
- 5.7 Each of the key visions we have prepared relates to all of the others and so overlap is inevitable.



### **Demographics**

- 5.8 The study has identified a significant imbalance in the demographics of Selly Oak Ward which are having a negative impact on the local economy. There is a high number of economically inactive people in the ward which places severe limitations on the on the available expenditure in the area. In turn this reduces the requirements on the range and type of facilities provided in the centre.
- 5.9 Addressing the imbalance in the population is identified as one of the key visions to securing a more vibrant Selly Oak. Whilst most of the other visions can be encouraged, without an increase in available expenditure the prospect of achieving the other visions will be made more difficult. There is a clear need in Selly Oak to encourage a more varied population (i.e. families and those who are economically active) to live in the ward. If this can be achieved then the prospects for sustaining a wider retail offer and better community facilities will be dramatically enhanced. The prospects for securing regeneration in Selly Oak will be enhanced with a more economically active population.
- 5.10 Our proposed vision for demographics in Selly Oak is:

To actively encourage a better balance in the population of Selly Oak by encouraging more families and economically active people

5.11 In most cases delivering changes to the demographic structure of a centre is normally one of the more difficult issues to address. However, in Selly Oak there are significant opportunities for delivering this change as a result of the new developments which are to be brought forward in the next 5-10 years. The developments will support the wider regeneration requirements of Selly Oak.



- 5.12 The change in demographics is most likely to be achieved by new residential developments delivering private accommodation, providing opportunities for more families and economically active people.
- 5.13 At this point in time there are a number of factors which lead us to the conclusion that the vision for demographic change can be achieved:
  - n Expansion of the University Hospital will result in an additional 1000 staff further employment growth could take growth in jobs over 1,500. This is likely to lead to an increased requirement for residential accommodation to support this facility; and
  - Strong requirement for residential accommodation close to Birmingham City Centre but not at premium values (e.g. as has been provided at Griffin Close in Northfield).
- 5.14 The table below sets out our broad vision for how the demographics for the Selly Oak Ward could change following the completion of the development proposals and opportunities of which we are currently aware.

TIMESCALE	VISIONS
0 – 5 years	<ul> <li>Some minor change in population/ demographic i.e. more families moving to the area</li> </ul>
	·Some increase in available disposable income
	·Stagnation of student population numbers resulting in lower demand for terraced housing in Selly Oak.
5 – 10 years	<ul> <li>Significant increase in professional / younger population following new residential developments at the Dingle site; former Battery site and the Triangle site</li> </ul>
	·Significant increase in available disposable income
	Further stagnation of student population numbers
	· Better range and quality of accommodation
10+ years	<ul> <li>Further increase in family population as a result of development at Selly Oak hospital site</li> </ul>
	·Further increase in available disposable income

# Housing

- 5.15 There is a national requirement for a range of housing types to be provided to meet local housing need. There are a number of proposals for new housing (in most cases as part of mixed use schemes) which provide an opportunity to meet future requirements.
- 5.16 Whilst our study has shown that there is a demonstrable need for more modern private residential accommodation, this should be considered in the context of the defined local need. This is normally identified through the preparation of a Housing Needs Assessment.
- 5.17 Our proposed vision for housing in Selly Oak is:

To provide a better range (in type and quality) of housing to meet the needs of the future population, and to provide specific opportunities for families and first time buyers.

5.18 It is recommended that policy support for enhancing the mix of housing available needs to be undertaken. Opportunities to achieve this could be provided through a several sites, including the Selly Oak hospital, the existing Sainsbury's, the former Battery Park and Dingle sites. These sites could all assist in delivering improvements to existing housing stock.



5.19 In the short-term, we recommend that a Housing Needs Assessment for Selly Oak is required to provide an 'evidence base' to inform the future local requirements for housing provision.

**Private-Rented Sector** 

- 5.20 Research on the housing sector, set out in section 2, has identified a recent decline in the demand for private-rented accommodation. This is particularly in respect of private-rented accommodation which is located further away from Birmingham university.
- 5.21 Birmingham University has confirmed that it does not expect its student population to grow significantly within the next 5–10 years. Notwithstanding this, it is difficult to predict whether this will result in a reduction in the numbers of students living in the traditional Victorian terrace properties in the area to the south of the Bristol Road (Dawlish Road, Tiverton Road etc.). This is mainly because of the influence that exists from students attending other universities and colleges choosing to live in Selly Oak.
- 5.22 We consider that as long as the area remains relatively 'low-cost' then it is likely that Selly Oak will continue to attract students from Birmingham University and other universities and colleges, as well as low income residents. We recommend that there should be a continuation of the restraint policy as set out in the Action Plan.

**Residential Opportunities** 

- 5.23 The anticipated increase in employment over the next 5-10 years could lead to an increase in demand for owner-occupied residential properties. The proposed developments in Selly Oak could provide in excess of 1,500 new jobs, with the hospital alone expected to provide 1,000 new jobs.
- 5.24 In section 4 we have identified several sites in and around Selly Oak where new residential accommodation could come forward in the future, providing in excess of 1,000 new homes.
- 5.25 The main opportunity for the Council to influence the supply of housing is through planning policy and land use allocations. However, in Selly Oak, the City Council has a further opportunity to be pro-active in delivering housing sites. The Dingle site represents a good opportunity for housing development, with retail units at ground floor level fronting Bristol Road.
- 5.26 In broad terms the city Council could pursue two options:
  - (i) Dispose of the site subject to planning;
  - (ii) Prepare a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) or secure a planning permission for residential development prior to disposal.
- 5.27 Both of these options have merits although the choice may be driven by issues such as timing, need for receipts and availability of resources.

Housing Renewal

5.28 Potential 'renewal' areas may also exist, although this study has not sought to address this matter specifically. However, there may be housing areas where further investigation could assist in establishing the quality of the housing stock in Selly Oak. We therefore recommend that BCC undertakes a Housing Stock Conditions survey to identify potential areas where renewal or improvement may be appropriate.



- 5.29 From our discussions with the Council's local housing team, we are aware that grants are available to owner occupiers who are seeking loans to undertake improvements to their property, run using a scoring system.
- 5.30 In areas where the opportunity to redevelop / improve areas older housing stock exist, then positive policy guidance should be given to provide higher quality housing which is attractive to young professionals, first-time buyers and families in the first instance. We assume that the Council's adopted policy on affordable housing would also apply.

TIMESCALE	VISION
0 – 5 years	<ul> <li>Significant proposals likely to come forward with 1000+ new residential units</li> <li>Anticipated increase in voids/ vacancies of older private rented accommodation as a result of stagnating student numbers</li> </ul>
	-Assessment by Birmingham City Council of potential refurbishment of void/vacant older properties – preparation of housing renewal strategy
5 – 10 years	<ul> <li>Significant increase in new residential accommodation (Selly Oak hospital/ Triangle site/ Battery site)</li> <li>Potential further increase in voids/ vacancies of older private rented accommodation</li> </ul>
	Potential refurbishment of void/ vacant older properties by Birmingham CC     Review of housing renewal strategy
10+ years	Further key development sites completed Potential refurbishment of void/ vacant older properties by Birmingham CC

### **Retail Provision**

5.31 There are a number of detailed matters which we have taken into consideration as part of our vision for retail in Selly Oak. These are set out below.

### **General Overview**

- 5.32 The existing retail accommodation in Selly Oak is generally poor in terms of the quality and range of goods on offer. We consider convenience to be better than comparison goods provision. There is a good range of convenience goods with Sainsbury's Tesco and Aldi as well as a number of smaller independent stores. This could be further complemented with the addition of Budgens on the former Brook pub site. Apart from the few national multiples which occupy the Battery Retail Park, comparison goods (e.g. clothing, footwear, and furniture) provision is poor.
- 5.33 At present, there is little prospect of encouraging visitors to Sainsbury's and the Battery Retail park to make linked-trips to the local shops mainly because the range and quality of the offer is better in other centres e.g. Harborne and Northfield.
- 5.34 Our proposed vision for retail in Selly Oak is:

To provide new and upgraded retail stock that will provide opportunities for new and existing retailers to enhance the retail offer and the vitality and viability of the centre.

### Fragmentation of the retail frontage

5.35 In the issues section above, fragmentation of the retail frontages has been identified. We consider that this has a negative impact on the overall vitality and viability of the centre.



- 5.36 The retail frontages are characterised by significant breaks in activity which does not make for an attractive and convenient shopping experience. There are two clear options for dealing with this issue. One is to divide the centre up into 3 distinct areas i.e. Battery Retail Park, Bournbrook shops and Bristol Road / Oak Tree Lane. The other is to plug the gaps in the retail frontage with new retail accommodation.
- 5.37 A number of regeneration opportunities exist within the centre for addressing the problem of fragmentation (see plan at **appendix 6**). We believe that the option of infilling the gaps in the retail frontages with more retail units is more preferable than dividing the centre up.
- 5.38 We consider that where retail demand exists in the future this should be met, where possible along Bristol Road. By infilling existing gaps with quality new retail accommodation, we believe that the vitality and viability of the centre is more likely to improve, and the shopping experience as a whole made more attractive. The infilling of existing gaps will regenerate areas of land and properties which are currently underutilised.
- 5.39 We consider there is a need to enhance the existing retail offer. The average size of the older shop units is around 750 1,500 sq ft. Future retailers moving to the centre with modern requirements would probably seek larger units than this, say 1,500 2,000sq ft.
- 5.40 Future developments should not be allowed to turn their back on the Bristol Road as has been the case in the past (e.g. the existing Sainsbury's superstore).
- 5.41 Shop front improvements could also be promoted by the Council where funding is available. However, beyond this there is little the Council can do to directly improve the retail offer or appearance of the shop units.

### Sainsbury's

- 5.42 The Sainsbury's development proposals on the Birmingham Battery site will provide significant improvements in the convenience and comparison goods offer in Selly Oak. Whilst this may be seen as a threat to some businesses there will be benefits too. For example, the store will potentially attract more people to Selly Oak centre.
- 5.43 In order to capitalise on this expected increase in footfall, it will be essential to secure clear and legible linkages between the new store and the existing retail centre. The Selly Oak Action plan requires a new attractive, direct and safe pedestrian / cycle link to be provided between the store and Bristol Road via a new canal bridge. Our understanding of the approved Sainsbury's scheme, is that this route would pass through the railway arches to link to Bristol Road. This link may be different in the revised scheme which Sainsbury's is preparing.
- 5.44 Whichever scheme Sainsbury's decide to pursue, it will be important for the store to provide permeability through to Bristol Road, to promote the strongest linkages with the existing retail parade on Bristol Road.
- 5.45 Whilst there are benefits to be gained from having a new high profile Sainsbury's development in Selly Oak, there is also a concern that it could divert some further trade away from existing shops. However, in reality there are very few stores that are likely to be affected. Other than groceries, the store is likely to expand it's non-food offer which will include electrical items, kitchenware, CD's books and clothing. Apart from a small electrical goods store opposite Aldi, most of the shops in Selly Oak do not sell the same goods as Sainsbury's.



#### Niche Markets

- 5.46 In terms of niche markets, this is a specialist attraction which uses the clustering of a particular retail market to create a distinctive character.
- 5.47 This attraction can include arts and crafts, antiques. For example, Warwick town centre specialises in antiques.
- 5.48 Whilst attracting a niche market or cluster of businesses to Selly Oak is not out of the question, it is not apparent that Birmingham City Council could deliver this.
- 5.49 The Council does not have control over retail accommodation required to support an initiative. Normally, niche markets are enterprising and involve start-up businesses which require cheap or rent-free accommodation. Unless there are landlords willing to support the niche market proposal or the City Council has alternative accommodation available it could be difficult to promote such an initiative in the short-term.

#### A3 (Food and Drink)Uses

- 5.50 One of the requirements of the brief was to consider the role of A3 uses within Selly Oak and to assess future policy approaches to A3 uses. We recommend that BCC undertakes a detailed review of how successful the A3 constraint policy has been and at the same time consider how alternative / additional policies could be used in Selly Oak.
- 5.51 The first thing to note is that since the brief was issued the Use Classes Order (UCO) has been updated. The new Use Classes Order (England) came into force on 21 April 2005.
- 5.52 The UCO has split food and drink uses into the following 3 categories:
  - n A3 Restaurants and cafes:
  - n A4 Drinking Establishments; and
  - n A5 Hot Food Takeaways.
- 5.53 In terms of the role that A3 uses play, we consider that this is one of the stronger functions of Selly Oak. Whilst the area of restraint has been effective in preventing the increase in the amount of A3 uses in the northern part of the centre, the policy has some drawbacks. Firstly, we are aware that there is continuing demand for A3 uses and this demand is being frustrated. Secondly, the restriction only applies to the area of restraint. This means that A3 uses could locate anywhere else in the centre. Careful consideration will need to be given to whether this restriction will be appropriate in the future.
- 5.54 Whilst some parts of Selly Oak may not at present be attractive to A3 uses to locate to due to lack of available parking outside, this situation could change in the future as Bristol Road is downgraded. For example, the parade of shops 764-828 Bristol Road opposite Sainsbury's may become a more attractive location when this part of the road is remodelled.
- 5.55 It may be appropriate from both a policy and a policing point of view for an area where restaurants and other food and drink uses can be encouraged to be defined as an area of 'focus' rather than restraint.
- 5.56 Government best practices encourages policies to be positively worded. The policy in the Action Plan is very negative.
- 5.57 If an area was defined for A3, A4 and A5 uses then the following (or similar) policy wording could be used:



Proposals for Class A3 uses will be approved in the defined "Food and Drink Area" provided that they do not undermine the evening economy, the function or effectiveness of the area or have any unacceptable environmental or amenity impacts.

Proposals for A4 and A5 uses will be considered on their merits. The Council will approve proposals where they support a minimum of 50% A1, A2 or A3 uses in the defined area.

Proposals for A3, A4 and A5 uses outside the "defined" food and drink area will only be permitted where they maintain 60% of the linear retail frontage in Class A1, A2 or A3 use or in two or more consecutive units being occupied by non A1, A2 or A3 uses.

5.58 In order to establish the appropriate percentage or unit frontage to be used in a "food and Drink" area policy, a detailed review of frontages in Selly Oak would need to be undertaken.

Defining a Retail Boundary for Selly Oak

- 5.59 A further policy consideration which we recommend to be considered is the identification of a defined retail boundary for the whole of Selly Oak centre. This area would include all existing retail facilities, including the Battery Retail Park.
- 5.60 By establishing a boundary and supporting retail policy that seeks to provide all new development within or on the edge of this area first, in accordance with PPS6, the Council will establish a defensible position for dealing with retail and leisure applications that may come forward in the future. We recommend that all future retail and leisure developments should support the role of the centre and especially the Bristol Road / Oak Tree Lane frontages.
- 5.61 Below, we have set out some broad indications of how elements of the vision may come forward.

TIMESCALE	VISION
0 – 5 years	New foodstore with increased offer and small retail units (Sainsbury's and possibly the Dingle site)
	·Additional convenience offer arising from the Brook pub site redevelopment
	· Promotion of shop front improvements
	Promotion of food and drink quarter in conjunction with traffic calming, pavement widening, and environmental improvements
	·Review of 'restraint' policy – balance of frontage policy proposed
	-Review of retail policy – Food and Drink Area and policy + Defined Retail boundary
5 – 10 years	-Anticipated further increase in retail units both in quality and range of size (Triangle site/ Recreation site)
	·Review of retail and leisure demand arising from population changes
	·Review of retail policy
10+ years	-Monitoring and review of retail composition and retail requirements/ shop quality and size of units
	·Further monitor / Review of retail policy

#### Future for Small Retail Shops

5.62 In broad terms the Selly Oak area will benefit from the planned investment that is expected to come forward in the next 10-15 years. The number of people living and working in the area is expected to increase, which in turn



- should lead to an increase in the number of people visiting the centre and opportunities for local businesses.
- 5.63 In the short term it is likely that the most significant interest in retail terms will be generated by the new Sainsbury's development. Whilst predicting what the future holds for the smaller independent retailers is more difficult, it is clear that with the growth and investment planned for Selly Oak, there could be opportunities for local retailers.
- One potential draw back that may occur for some retailers in the future is rising rental levels should demand for retail space in the centre increase. Should the scenario of retail growth occur and cause an increase in national multiple requirements, then this could potentially result in an uplift in retail rents, which in turn could lead to the loss of some smaller independent retailers.

## **Community Facilities**

- There is a reasonable range of community facilities available in Selly Oak, however we feel the quality is generally poor. For example, the Bournbrook Recreation facilities behind 641 Youth Group are unattractive and represents an intimidating environment. The upgrading or replacement of this area with an alternative is one option that could be considered. Another is to upgrade and modernise the whole area to make it more attractive.
- 5.66 At present there appears to be no available accommodation within Selly Oak which provides adaptable space for use by a wide range of users from the local community. Existing provision (e.g. Youth House and the Selly Oak Adult Education Centre) generally caters for specific community groups. If, for example, a group wanted to hire out a hall for an event or meeting, there is no community space for this purpose.
- 5.67 We are also aware that the library, Youth Group, Adult Education Centre and Neighbourhood Office could benefit from improvements to their accommodation provision. Furthermore, other community facilities are actively pursuing their own improvements e.g. St Mary's church is proposing an extension if sufficient funding can be obtained.
- 5.68 Existing service providers (Birmingham Adult Education Service) at the Selly Oak Education Centre have indicated that their existing premises are increasingly unsuited to the activities which they offer (e.g. groups have to use the Selly Oak library for IT services). To upgrade existing facilities would cost between £300,000 and £400,000. Even if this expenditure was made, the centre would not provide suitable accommodation to meet the adult education service requirements, and they would therefore benefit from re-locating to new premises.
- 5.69 In terms of future provision, the resident's questionnaire responses have indicated a requirement for a new community centre, new sports facilities, a cinema, and a children's playground within the centre.
- 5.70 This study has also shown that Selly Oak would benefit from public realm improvements. In particular, a meeting place or public square is needed within the centre. It is expected that the Sainsbury's proposals for the former Battery site will provide this much needed facility in the form of a square fronting the Bristol Road, opposite the railway station.
- 5.71 Our proposed vision for Community Facilities in Selly Oak is:

To provide improved community facilities which meet the requirements of all users, now and in the future.



- 5.72 With increased demands placed on the provision of community facilities (e.g. Disability Discrimination Act / Access) it may be appropriate for Birmingham City Council to undertake an audit of existing facilities. This audit or review could identify the facilities available, the suitability of accommodation, future accommodation requirements and opportunities for re-provision.
- 5.73 Before any firm decisions can be taken on what community facilities should be provided in the future and where they should go a detailed audit is essential.
- 5.74 Our broad assessment of the community facilities in Selly Oak indicates that there may be opportunities to combine some of the facilities into a new single purpose built building, that offers flexible space to accommodate a range of community uses on a number of floors.
- 5.75 The key constraints to the provision of new community facilities is the availability of funding and a lack of suitable sites on which they could be located. One option is the re-provision of 2 or more facilities into a new single purpose-built building to enable the release of surplus land to provide receipts which could be used to fund new facilities.
- 5.76 From our assessment there is no evidence of requirements for more commercially driven "community" facilities such as a cinema or bowling alley, in the short-term. This is primarily due to the number of competing facilities in both Birmingham City Centre and at the Rubery Great Park complex whose catchment areas would cover the Selly Oak ward.
- 5.77 As part of the significant regeneration which is planned for Selly Oak there are a number of other improvements to community facilities expected to come forward including a new plaza and transport interchange at the hospital. In addition to this, new development proposals may allow scope for further new community facilities to be provided e.g. at the Triangle Site / Battery Site / Selly Oak Hospital through s106 obligations.
- 5.78 Opportunities for co-ordinating community events with the University, residents and the business community should be explored. The appointment of a town centre manager could support this aim.

TIMESCALE	VISION
0 – 5 Years	<ul> <li>Initial audit of all community facilities – including the potential for re-provision and efficiencies that could be achieved from existing situation</li> </ul>
	· Detailed study of options available for the Bournbook Recreation area
	· Re-provision of facilities where funding allows
	· Provision of new public square
5 – 10 Years	· Re-provision of key facilities
	Review and monitoring of community facility provision
10 + Years	· Ongoing review of community facilities provision

#### **Environment**

- 5.79 The urban and physical environment of Selly Oak is in need of some careful attention and regeneration in order to make the centre more attractive to residents, businesses, shoppers, students and other users.
- 5.80 Our proposed vision for the Environment in Selly Oak is:

To improve and enhance the built and natural environment of Selly Oak to make it a more attractive, safer place in which to work, live, shop and visit.



- 5.81 A number of problems have been identified as part of the study which can be addressed in the short-term and at relatively minimum cost to BCC e.g. dealing with rat infestation; changing the day on which waste collections are made; painting the railway bride across Bristol Road and provision of more litter bins.
- 5.82 In terms of the appearance of the retail centre, we would recommend greater enforcement of the 'Shopfronts Design Guide' Supplementary Planning Guidance as part of a wider initiative to improve the physical appearance of the centre.

'Quick Wins' for Selly Oak

- 5.83 There are a number of quick wins which could be delivered by BCC in conjunction with the business community. We understand that some limited funding is available in this financial year to make public improvements to Selly Oak.
- 5.84 The painting of the railway bridge is one proposal where an early tangible result can be reported by the City Council at relatively little cost. Our proposal for this bridge would be for the use of bright colours and a simple message which could include "Welcome to the centre of Selly Oak". Permission would be required from the owners (Network Rail) in order to achieve this outcome.
- 5.85 One way of BCC securing 'quick wins' at nil cost is to encourage businesses to 'sponsor' improvements or activities e.g. street furniture or public art.
- 5.86 Regeneration or improvement projects could be tied into the sponsoring or donor business. e.g. the timber merchants could be encouraged to 'sponsor' a new park bench. The sponsor money and / or materials would be provided to meet the costs of the furniture, with a small plaque attached to advertise the timber business.
- 5.87 Local colleges (e.g. Bournville College) which run vocational courses, such as construction and woodwork, could 'build' new street furniture and / or provide public art as part of their course. The benefit to BCC would be the nil cost of improvements and the also the students who would have a public focus for their work whilst gaining some practical experience. Furthermore, the colleges benefit may be derived from the "partnership" approach between the City Council and the local colleges. Such relationships can provide a strong message to the community and help to increase the involvement of the wider community in local activities and events.
- 5.88 Other improvements could include removal of graffiti, cosmetic improvements to the park, and provision of more litter bins. A schedule of quick wins is provided below.

Action	Justification	Timescale	Estimated Cost
Hanging baskets	Improve the visual appearance of the centre	Spring/ Summer 2006	£25 - £30 per basket (content dependant)
Graffiti removal	Would improve the visual attraction of the centre – particularly where graffiti is removed from listed/ locally listed buildings such as 641 Youth House.	Could be carried out at any time (funding dependent)	Undertaken by BCC internal team – staff time costs to be considered
Increased number/ larger litter bins on streets	Would provide visitors to the centre with improved facilities, with the knock-on impact being that the amount of litter abandoned on streets within the centre is removed.	Could be carried out at any time (funding dependent)	£250 - £300 per bin (size dependent)



Action	Justification	Timescale	Estimated Cost
Public art (e.g. statues)	Improve the visual appearance of the centre.	Could be implemented at any time (funding dependent)	Dependent on public art to be provided
Shop front improvements	BCC have advised that there is currently no funding available for these to be paid for by the Council. However, it may be that this objective can be implemented within the medium-term. One option may be to allocate a limited amount of funding and ask shopkeepers to enter a competition to compete for this funding.	Run competition throughout Spring 2006, with 'prize' to be awarded and implemented before end of 2006	Approx £3,000 per linear metre for typical alluminium frame and glazed frontage with signage above.
Cosmetic Improvements to the park area	Re-painting of the swings and basketball court area could visually improve the attraction of the area, as well as making the park area more welcoming for a wider range of users.	Could be implemented at any time (funding dependent)	£10/ sq metre for paint costs + other additional charges
Removal of chewing gum from pavements	Improve the visual appearance of the centre.	Could be implemented at any time (funding dependent)	£5 per sqm
Removal of graffiti	Buildings such as Youth House and the Bournbrook Recreation Ground have an identified problem with graffiti.	Could be implemented at any time (funding dependent)	£10 per sqm (upto head height only – above this may require scaffolding + costs for dealing with Listed buildings may be greater where sensitive materials are involved)
Provision of cycle stands within the centre	This would encourage visitors to use alternative means of transport to access Selly Oak and could ultimately reduce the amount of traffic and parking problems. In addition, it would encourage people to stop in the centre, rather than simply passing through.	Could be implemented at any time (funding dependent)	£35 per stand (will hold 2 bikes) + £100 per stand for installation
Business Newsletter/ Magazine	Would keep businesses up to date with what is happening within the centre. Could be paid for by businesses who advertise within the magazine. Eventually, it may be possible to 'roll out' to residents who could be made more aware of what is on offer within Selly Oak.	Could be implemented at any time (funding dependent)	BCC Staff time costs of coordinating the newsletter/ editing. Additional costs for delivery
Provision of improved 'welcome' signs	These could replace existing signs and would provide a sense of place for those passing through or visiting the centre. Would also be a visual improvement to the centre.	Could be implemented at any time (funding dependent)	£1000 - £2000 per sign depending on size/ colours etc.
Loyalty Card Scheme and/ or Discount Voucher Scheme	May require a complex implementation process. Would require cooperation of businesses within the centre who would offer 'points' to those who join the scheme. A discount voucher scheme is a low-tech but cheaper alternative. Each of the participating businesses offers incentives/ discounts and these are put together in a 'booklet' which is distributed to residents. May encourage more people to use the centre for their shopping.	Could be implemented at any time (funding dependent)	BCC Staff time costs involved in engaging businesses, developing voucher booklet/ cards etc. excludes delivery costs. This could be undertaken by an appointed TC manager
"Branding" of Selly Oak	Would involve painting all lamp-posts, barriers etc. the same colour (e.g. dark green). Would give the centre a 'fresh' look and provide an indicator for those visiting Selly Oak that they were in the centre. If this was undertaken in conjunction with the painting of the railway bridge, it could be used to give the centre a real sense of identity.	Could be implemented at any time (funding dependent)	£10/ sq metre plus access costs



Action	Justification	Timescale	Estimated Cost
Lamp post banners	As part of the above, all lamp posts would carry a 'banner' which could either be used to advertise events/ businesses within the centre. Those who wished to advertise could 'sponsor' a banner which would pay for the banners to be produced.	Could be implemented at any time (funding dependent)	£100 - £200 depending on size/ material/ colour
Provision of a new clock 'tower'	Could be placed on the crossroads of Tiverton Road, Bristol Road, and Dale Road. If branded in the same colour as the lamp posts/ bridge it would provide a land mark feature within the centre.	Could be implemented at any time (funding dependent)	£10,000 - £20,000 depending on size of clock/ materials used/ construction costs.

It should be noted that these are broad indicative costs only and will vary according to supplier/ materials used/ any additional work which results from implementation.

- 5.89 Careful consideration to be given to the timing of other environmental improvements (e.g. tree planting) in the centre in order that they do not conflict with more strategic improvements planned (e.g. Bristol Road enhancements).
- 5.90 The proposed Bristol Road highway improvements should lead to a more attractive shopping environment. New street furniture and pavement surfaces will be important to complement improvements to Bristol Road.

Open Space

- 5.91 Provision of open space must also be addressed. We understand that an open space study is currently being undertaken and this should feed into any decisions which are made regarding proposals for the replacement or loss of open space.
- 5.92 As described above, the Bournbrook Recreation area is a prime example of a poor quality environment. The location of open space next to an electricity sub-station does not present an attractive environment to users of this space.

**Bournbrook Recreation Area Study** 

- 5.93 We recommend that a site specific review be undertaken into the opportunities which may be brought forward in the area between the library and Aldi.
- 5.94 Consideration should be given to whether the area to the rear of Aldi is appropriate for the provision of a children's play area. The review could identify alternative locations in Selly Oak for this facility. For example, it may be possible to re-provide it at one of the local schools.
- 5.95 We believe that this area has potential to be completely re-modelled and regenerated. For example, the access to the electricity sub-station could be 'swapped' with the children's play area. The electricity company could be provided with the land to the rear of Aldi for access to the sub-station, whilst BCC acquire all the land between the library and 641 Youth House to deliver comprehensive improvements to the centre of Selly Oak. These improvements could include a public open space for a range of activities including festivals, markets, outdoor entertainment etc.
- 5.96 In terms of shop frontages, we understand that funding may be available to businesses who wish to make improvements. Where appropriate the City Council could seek to encourage shop keepers in securing the available funding and promote further enhancements in the centre.



#### Heritage Quarter

- 5.97 In section 2 of the study we have identified a schedule of listed, locally listed and landmark buildings in Selly Oak. The area around the Adult Education Centre contains all of the listed buildings in Selly Oak centre, as well as some landmark buildings.
- 5.98 The presence of these listed buildings presents an opportunity to improve the attraction of the centre. The buildings should be protected and proposals for a heritage quarter have been identified as a way of both promoting and protecting the few remaining historic buildings. An indicative plan is provided at **appendix 7** of how this area could be improved.

TIMESCALE	VISIONS
0 – 5 years	· Initial review of key environmental issues identified above
	· Undertake detailed study on the potential for a Heritage Quarter
	· Tackle specific problems such as rodent infestation, refuse collection day
	· Re-painting of rail bridge to be appraised and costed
	<ul> <li>Re-provision / relocation of Bournbrook Recreation ground - Site specific review required</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Seek s106 contributions from new development proposals towards environmental enhancement works and new security measures e.g. CCTV, street furniture</li> </ul>
	· Consider short-term streetscape improvements prior to Bristol Road improvements
	· Provision of public open space / plaza as part of the Sainsbury's development
5 – 10 years	Ongoing review of environmental quality with audit of issues and problems
,	Comprehensive improvements to public realm, street furniture, signage etc once
	Selly Oak New Road and Bristol Road highway changes have been made
10+ years	· Ongoing review of environmental quality with audit of issues and problems
	<ul> <li>Tangible environmental improvements to Selly Oak centre will be in place, and an associated increase in environmental quality evident.</li> </ul>

#### **Transport**

- 5.99 The problems relating to transportation in Selly Oak have been well documented, particularly with the work undertaken on the Selly Oak New Road CPO Inquiry.
- 5.100 Whilst the delivery of the Selly Oak New Road and the associated improvements to Bristol Road will bring much needed congestion relief to the area, continued efforts will be required in promoting public transport.
- 5.101 Our proposed vision for Transport in Selly Oak is:

# To improve accessibility to and from Selly Oak for users of all forms of transport by enhancing existing facilities

- 5.102 Selly Oak has considerable transport advantages which many other centres do not have. For example as well as a good level of bus provision, the centre is accessible by the cross city rail link and on foot/bicycle by a significant resident and business population
- 5.103 The consultation responses confirmed that people see one of the main benefits of living in Selly Oak is its transport links.

#### New Interchange

5.104 Whilst new developments in the centre will alter the demands placed on the public transport system, careful consideration should be given to providing



a comprehensive approach on parking provision, a new transport interchange etc. We understand that a new bus interchange will be located on Bristol Road opposite the existing Sainsbury's store. Although this is not the most ideal location in terms of its relationship to the railway station, provided satisfactory linkages are promoted the "interchange" should be well used.

5.105 The careful location of new bus stops along Bristol Road, as part of the highway remodelling, will also be important to retailers, businesses and residents.

## Car Parking

- 5.106 As part of the major development proposals which are expected to come forward in Selly Oak, 1450 new car parking spaces will be provided. Whilst the existing spaces at the Sainsbury's store will be lost the new total provision will be around 2,400 spaces (i.e. a 66% increase in provision).
- 5.107 The additional spaces should address the current problems of parking availability. Whilst the new Sainsbury's development will add significant new capacity, the on-street spaces along Bristol Road will also bring significant benefits to both visitors and businesses. As a result of the reduced traffic on Bristol Road congestion is likely to be less, and will enhance opportunities for people to 'stop and shop'.
- 5.108 The pricing policy and parking restrictions must be carefully considered and ultimately support the requirements of local businesses and residents over commuters. For example, if free on-street parking is provided along Bristol road, then it should include time restrictions to prevent long-stay parking.
- 5.109 Further expansion of the existing park and ride facility is likely to be unhelpful to the functioning of Selly Oak. Selly Oak is not considered a suitable location for this type of facility and the Dingle site, which has previously been identified for an extended facility is likely to provide opportunities for more valuable uses e.g. housing and retail.
- 5.110 Improved interchange facilities could assist in modal shift over time (i.e. car to public transport). Possible opportunities to provide these could be at the downgraded triangle junction opposite the existing Sainsbury's site. However, locations such as the former Battery site are unlikely to be able to satisfactorily perform this role. Any new interchange facility which is provided should be located close to Selly Oak railway station.
- 5.111 We are advised that Birmingham City Council is due to begin consultation with residents in the Dale Road area of Selly Oak regarding the introduction of a residents parking scheme in the area. Any consultation should also be supplemented with discussions with businesses and University representatives before any schemes is introduced.

TIMESCALE	VISION
0 – 5 years	Comprehensive review of transportation provision required
	· Review of parking restrictions and pricing needs careful consideration
	· Selly Oak New Road to start construction autumn 2005
	<ul> <li>New developments contribute to better transport provision, signage, pedestrian / cycle improvements</li> </ul>
5 – 10 years	- Ongoing monitoring of traffic / congestion
	New interchange provided around Chapel Lane / Bristol Road with good linkages to Selly Oak rail station and the rest of the centre
10+ years	- Bristol Road environmental enhancements
	· Further ongoing review of transport provision important



5.112 Having set out six key visions for Selly Oak, the following section of the report considers the options available to Birmingham City Council to implement these visions.



# 6. Implementation

- 6.1 Whilst there is a clear requirement for improvements to be made to Selly Oak Centre on a wide range of matters, we consider that the prospects for change are good. Selly Oak is already attracting significant new investment which will lead to increased demands being placed on the area.
- 6.2 This report has identified the key issues facing decision makers responsible for bringing about change in the area. Section 5 of this report has also provided a number of broad visions which are aimed a meeting a wider vision of making the centre more vibrant.
- As a starting point we recommend that the Council carries out an up to date review of the Selly Oak Local Action Plan to reflect the changes that have taken place since it was adopted as SPG in 2001.
- Below we have identified a number of tools that could be used to deliver the proposed visions. Over time the tools may change or their availability may be withdrawn.
- 6.5 The main tools we would expect the Council to use in delivering the visions include:
  - n Proactive support and policy provision for development which meets the vision requirements;
  - n The use of CPO powers where proposals require additional land to create a critical mass;
  - n The disposal of key sites owned by BCC to deliver proposals which support the vision proposals;
  - n Preparation of Development Briefs or Action plans for sites which support the proposed visions;
  - n Policy changes (e.g. Food and Drink uses, defined retail boundary and housing need);
  - n S106 Contributions;
  - n Funding;
  - n Partnership Approach; and
  - n Town Centre Management.
- 6.6 The table below provides a number of key recommendations for each of the proposed visions and an indication of the likely tools that will be required to implement them.

Vision	Key Recommendation	Implementation Tool
Demographics	Focus on bringing forward key development sites and the other Visions which will enhance the attraction of Selly Oak Promotion of developments which can bring more families and economically active people to live in Selly Oak Detailed review of BCC opportunities to engage delivery e.g. Dingle site	BCC Policy Proactive Approach to landowners / developers
Housing	Positive support for securing a better mix of housing  Continued restraint on student accommodation  Actively market Council owned sites e.g.	Stronger policy control on the type of housing to be developed in Selly Oak Allocations could identify the type of accommodation sought  Review of existing restraint policy and / or new policy and evidence base e.g.



	Dingle	Housing Needs Survey, Employment Land Study
	Stock Condition Survey required to identify potential refurbishment / renewal areas	Development Briefs to be prepared/ planning permissions obtained on key sites
	potential relationshiften / renewarareas	Land sales
	Promotion of improvements	Partnership approach with property owners
		Local housing loans led by Birmingham City Council
Retail Provision	Promotion of new retail units along Bristol Road to reduce fragmentation Identification of themed areas e.g. food and	New / updated policy and allocations to promote infill sites
	drink and heritage quarters and creation of a defined retail area Continued restrictions on evening economy	New / updated policy to promote the 'focus' rather than the restraint
	uses	Review of restraint policy and possibly
	Stricter development control approach to applications	introduce a "balance of frontage policy" whereby new uses are only permitted whereby a balance is required
	Actively market Council owned sites – further specialist advice may be needed	Land sales – possibly partnership approach with developers
	Seek to resist new retail or leisure proposals which do not promote the vitality and viability of Bristol Road	Use of PPS6 against new proposals
	Promotion of linkages between new and existing development	
	Creation of a defined retail area	
Community Facilities	Detailed appraisal / audit of requirements for existing and future community facilities to be provided - opportunities for sharing of resources requires more consideration	Close liaison between Birmingham City Council service providers
	Policy/ allocation update. Specific need to provide improvements to Bournbrook recreation area with replacement /	Policy review and detailed site appraisal into options
	refurbishment of existing facility, specific need to remove graffiti wall Securing of new provision through planning	Use of s106 monies or public funding sources where available
	obligations	Use of up to date requirements and
	Consideration of increased access to University facilities or promotion / increased	Use of up to date requirements and use of formulae and standard charges (see Circular 05/05)
	awareness to local people – open days and greater co-ordination of activities and events between university and residents /	Partnership approach with Birmingham University
	businesses	Town Centre Management appointment  Marketing Strategy to be developed
Environment	Detailed appraisal / audit of proposals for	Internal co-ordination required between
	environmental enhancements e.g. refuse collections, rat eradication	decision makers / providers
	Securing of new provision for environmental improvements through planning obligations	Use of up to date requirements and use of formulae and standard charges (see Circular 05/05)
	Painting of railway bridge	Town Centre Management
	Birmingham City Council review of locally available funding	New policy derived from detailed site assessment
	Promotion of an heritage quarter around library, 641 Youth House and Adult	Use of s106 monies or public funding sources where available
	Education Centre	Need for up to date Open Space Study



	Enhanced provision of public open space and public realm e.g. Bournbrook recreation area	(audit)
Transport	Comprehensive approach on all transport matters – especially where new development is proposed	Development control decisions to take into account strategic proposals
	Single vision needed by BCC on transport across the City sub areas and how all proposals inter-connect	Policy Statement
	New Transport (bus) interchange Review of parking restrictions, pricing and schemes such as residents parking	Use of s106 monies or public funding sources where available
	Enhancements to pedestrian and cycle access to and from Selly Oak  New policy for use by development control	New policy/ pricing mechanisms to be provided

## **Funding**

6.7 As part of this study we have liased with Jim Quinn and Siobhan Harper-Nunes on internal (local) and external funding matters respectively.

#### Internal Funding

- 6.8 In short, we have been informed that local funding availability is scarce. The most likely sources of local funding streams are:
  - n Lottery;
  - n Government Office of the West Midlands (e.g. Selly Oak lies on the fringe of the West Birmingham/ South Black Country Regeneration Zone);
  - n Birmingham City Council Economic development;
  - n Local Transport Plan;
  - n Neighbourhood Renewal Fund; and
  - n S106 contributions from local developments.

## **External Funding**

- 6.9 The scope and range of external funding sources is wide ranging. We understand that Selly Oak does not fall within an area that specifically qualifies for European funding.
- 6.10 Other sources of funding from Central Government may be available, depending on the project(s) proposed.
- 6.11 As part of this study, the external funding team ran reports to identify the potential funding available for: -
  - 1. Youth, community, arts and business start up;
  - 2. Derelict property, refurbishment of existing property, open space and urban regeneration.
- 6.12 In short there is a wide range of funding streams that can be applied for. The reports obtained are provided at **appendix 11**. These provide details on a range of schemes and provide information on:
  - n Description of aid;
  - n Necessary qualifications of applicant;
  - n Criteria;



- n Application details; and
- n Sponsor and contact details.

## A 'Costed Action Plan' for Selly Oak

6.13 In order to assist Birmingham City Council with the implementation of a number of the actions outlined above, a 'costed action plan' has been prepared for each of the actions recommended in this study. This are outlined in the table over leaf.



#### SELLY OAK : LOCAL CENTRES STUDY

Change	Context	Impact/ Benefits	Approximate Cost
Provision of cycle stands	Part of Bristol Road Improvements OR could be implemented prior to this to encourage people to visit the centre	Will encourage people to visit the centre using modes of transport other than the car. Also provides cyclists with a safe means of vehicle storage whilst visiting retail outlets.	£35 per stand (will hold 2 bikes) plus £100 per stand installation
Provision of roadside parking	Part of Bristol Road enhancements	Increase opportunities for people to stop and shop, rather than just pass through Selly Oak	Assumed that this will come forward as part of Bristol Road Improvements
Widening of footpaths/ Improving of Pavement Surfaces	Part of Bristol Road enhancements	More attractive to visitors to Selly Oak. Improves the visual appearance of the centre.	Assumed that this will come forward as part of Bristol Road Improvements
Tree Planting	Part of Bristol Road enhancements	Would improve the environment within the centre and make it a more attractive place to live/ work/ visit.	£15,000 - £30,000
Replacement/ Provision of Street Furniture	Part of Bristol Road enhancements OR could be implemented prior to this to encourage the centre's attraction	Improve the environment within Selly Oak centre. Provide facilities for local residents to stop within the centre.	£500 per bench
Disposal of Dingle site	Disposal of the site for re-development, subject to obtaining outline planning permission (see below for further details)	Could be used by BCC as a means of funding other projects within Selly Oak. By obtaining outline planning permission on the site, the principle of development could be cleared prior to disposal. Furthermore, would allow BCC to 'kick-start' development in the area and ensure that they control the types of development coming forward on the site.	£20,000 - £30,000
Dingle Site Planning Brief	Preparation of guidance for developers wishing to take the site forward.	Would enable BCC to clearly lay out their aspirations for the site and the types of uses which they would like to see brought forward.  If proposals were brought forward within the guidelines laid out in the brief, development could proceed more easily through the planning process.	£25,000
Preperation of planning policy guidance/ planning brief	Provision of policy support for development of land to rear of Aldi/ existing play facilities.	Would enable BCC to clearly lay out their aspirations for the site and the types of uses which they would like to see brought forward.  If proposals were brought forward within the guidelines laid out in the brief, development could proceed more easily through the planning process.	£25,000
Re-provision of Community Facilities	Provision of a 'stand-alone' community facility which could be shared by a number of users within the centre.	This would provide a focus for all community events within Selly Oak centre.	£1000/ sq metre. Total cost would be dependent on size of centre and quality of fit out
Housing Needs Assessment	Review of existing housing provision.  Would also provide focus for new housing development to be brought forward (e.g. at Battery Site).	Could be used as a basis for increased policy support for enhancing mix of housing within the centre, and as an evidence base for justifying the refusal of applications which do not address the needs of the centre.	£25,000 (may vary depending on detail required and size of study area)
Continuation of Student Housing Restraint Policy	Support action as outlined in the Selly Oak Action Plan.	Would limit the amount of new student accommodation, whilst at the same time increasing the options available for other groups (e.g. families) who may wish to move to the area.	Cost to BCC would be limited to existing staff costs
Securing of planning	Assist in regeneration of a key site within	Would increase the attractiveness of the site to potential investors who can take the proposals	£50,000 - £75,000



#### SELLY OAK : LOCAL CENTRES STUDY

permission for residential	the centre.	forward and realise the scheme.	(assuming the need for an EIA)
development on the Dingle		In addition to this, it may also increase the receipt which BCC receive upon disposal.	,
site		BCC would have maximum control over the proposals which are put forward, and could therefore dictate the uses which will occupy the site. However, it should also be noted that if a developer does purchase the site with planning permission, this is no guarantee that the planning permission as obtained by BCC will be implemented.	
Housing Condition Survey	Identify areas where renewal/ improvement might be appropriate.	A comprehensive survey may reveal areas within the centre which may be considered appropriate for comprehensive redevelopment. Any potential redevelopment sites identified could be used to provide housing for families or young professionals.	£20-£30,000 (depending on sample size taken – approx £200 per property
Shop Front Improvements	Visual improvements to the centre.	BCC funded improvements to the shop fronts would significantly improve the visual attraction of Selly Oak centre.	£3,000 per linear metre
		Competitions could be run amongst shop owners who could spend their 'winnings' on the improvement of their shop front.	
Review of Efficiency of A3 Restraint Policy	To determine whether policy has been successful/ requires change.	Detailed review of the success of the restraint policy would determine whether demand for A3/A4/A5 uses to locate to the centre is being frustrated (i.e. 'forced' to move to other centres).	Cost to BCC could be limited to staff time – review could be
,	·	As part of this review, it may also be possible to identify a 'core' within the centre where food and drink uses will be allowed. By identifying a defined area, it may be easier to police the centre and control undesirable behaviour.	undertaken by policy team £5,000 for consultants to undertake study
Designation of a Defined Retail Boundary	To determine those areas where retail development will be encouraged.	By determining where the 'retail core' of the centre is, it will provide those businesses who may wish to re-locate to the centre with guidance as to where their activities should be concentrated. In addition to this, definition of a core will assist residents and others in determining where the true 'centre' of Selly Oak lies.	Cost to BCC could be limited to staff time – review and designation could be undertaken by policy team
Upgrading/ Replacement of Recreation Facilities to Rear of 641 Youth House	To provide improved community facilities which will be more attractive to a wider cross-section of the community.	The existing facilities do not present an attractive offer to those who may wish to visit the park with young children, or older people who may feel threatened by groups of youths who frequent the park.  Upgrading/replacing these facilities would offer an improved attraction to the centre and would	Dependent on approach taken to regeneration of this area, the costs would vary significantly
		provide the community with useable space.	
BCC Audit of Existing Community Facilities	To provide direction to BCC as to what facilities currently exist, and those which are required.	A detailed audit of the existing facilities would identify those areas where provision is lacking or where additional facilities are needed. This would then enable BCC to focus on the areas where improvement is needed, and could enable a more strategic approach to re-development/re-provision to be taken.	This could be carried out by BCC or done by an external specialist – allow minimum budget of £20,000, subject to detailed audit requirements.
Address Rat Infestation Problems	Will help in dealing with rodent problems and make the environment within the centre more attractive.	Many respondents to the questionnaires identified rodent problems as a significant issue within Selly Oak. It is therefore vital that BCC address their concerns.  By reducing/ removing the rodent problem, the environment within the centre could be made	This could be carried out by BCC pest control who currently charge £60 per residential property which
		more attractive.	is affected.
Change of day on which waste collections are made	Will address problems of rubbish being left on the street for prolonged periods,	This is a simple task which could be undertaken by BCC to ensure that the environment within the centre is made more attractive.	Could be undertaken at minimal cost to BCC. It is assumed that the



#### SELLY OAK : LOCAL CENTRES STUDY

	and contributing towards rodent problems as outlined above.	It would also significantly improve the shopping environment as visitors would not have to navigate bags of rubbish on pavements.	only costs associated with this would be staff time taken to agree changes.
Painting of Railway Bridge on Bristol Road	Would improve the visual environment within the centre and would provide a 'gateway' into the centre.	Would be a significant enhancement to the visual attraction of Selly Oak at a gateway site.  Would provide visitors to the centre with a clear indication that they have entered Selly Oak.  Could also significantly contribute to the branding of the centre.	£10 per sq metre plus any associated access costs (e.g. for scaffolding)
Detailed appraisal/ audit of proposals for environmental enhancements	Review of proposals for environmental improvements to set out clear timescales and to ensure that improvements are not 'at-odds' in terms of timings/ objectives.	Through careful auditing it can be assured that progression of environmental improvements will not significantly conflict with one another or work against each other.  Auditing will also ensure that any future Section 106 monies which are obtained can be put to use where they are needed most.	Cost to BCC could be limited to staff time – review could be undertaken by policy team
Promotion of Heritage Quarter	In order to ensure that the unique listed buildings which are found in Selly Oak are put to most efficient use.	Will enable the unique buildings within Selly Oak to be protected and turned into an attraction, rather than simply a functional building.  Would significantly enhance the environmental attraction of the centre.	£25,000 to undertake detailed heritage study which will guide development in the area
Appointment of Town Centre Manager	To co-ordinate all marketing/ business related activities within the centre and to provide a co-ordinated approach to regenerating the centre and taking it forward.	Would allow co-ordination of all regeneration activities within the centre.  Could provide a single point of contact for all businesses and would develop detailed knowledge of both the centre and the activities within it. Could also act as a coordinator between the centre and other important stakeholders (e.g. the University) to encourage a wide range of community events to take place.	£25,000 - £50,000 per annum dependent on experience and hours worked each week
Site Specific Review of Bournbrook Recreation Area	To identify possible alternative uses for the site and to review in detail the potential re-location of existing recreation provision.	A detailed, site specific review could address a number of issues including assessment of the current users of the facilities, the possibility of moving the facilities to another site in order to provide better facilities, and the possible options for redevelopment of the existing site.  The ultimate aim of the review would be to provide better facilities for a greater and more varied proportion of the community.	Limited to BCC staff time costs or consultants study (cost of £25,000)
Employment Land Survey	This would assist in determining whether any new land for employment is required or whether there is an existing overprovision.	A review of existing employment land, and the demand for employment land, could be used to determine whether re-allocation of land could take place to allow for other uses (e.g. residential, retail) to be developed in the centre.  By undertaking this review, it would make a significant contribution to providing an evidence base for the regeneration of the centre.	£10,000 - £18,000
Development of marketing strategy for Selly Oak	To provide a strategic overview of how Selly Oak can be marketed as an attractive centre to invest, visit & live.	By developing a strategy for the comprehensive marketing of the centre, it will be possible to ensure that events are coordinated and that the centre can market itself efficiently to extract maximum value from its activities.	Dependent on the level of marketing undertaken



## **Town Centre Management and Marketing**

- 6.14 As part of the implementation strategy set out above, Town Centre management has been included. We believe that with a good strategy of marketing, which could include the appointment of a Town Centre Management then Selly Oak's prospects for delivering improvements will be increased.
- 6.15 We are not aware of any marketing having taken place in Selly Oak itself. Bournville Community have set up a website: www.bournville-web.net which provides news, information and discussion forums on neighbouring areas such as Selly Oak, Northfield and Birmingham City Centre. The Bournville Village Trust also runs the Bournville Village Festival which takes place annually in summer.
- 6.16 The first Town Centre Manager for Birmingham was established in Northfield but the role is not now in existence. Kings Heath and Sparkbrook have both also been investigating the possibility of introducing Town Centre Managers.
- 6.17 As part of the study we have discussed town centre management activities with Nigel Godfrey, the Town Centre Manager for Erdington who outlined the principal elements of the role of Town Centre Management as facilitating communication within the council and with stakeholders, creating a sense of community and community involvement and ensuring the needs of local residents and businesses are met.
- 6.18 A marketing strategy is a principal means of attracting and retaining inward investment, businesses and new residents and as such has a high priority in Mr Godfrey's vision. One of the most effective methods of establishing community spirit and involvement has been the staging of festivals and events, one example being the St Patrick's day parade. A free magazine, distributed biannually to 17,000 residents and businesses, containing local news and business information, aims to promote Erdington as a major local centre and to encourage investment and growth. The website is also a key tool in establishing a presence both city-wide and across the region. Founding good relations with the local press has been important in ensuring residents are informed of local events.
- 6.19 The establishment of a Town Centre Manager has coincided with significant growth in Erdington. Over the past 18 months 700 new homes have been built in Erdington.
- Mr Godfrey has informed us that the Town Centre Partnership is currently in the process of formulating a proposal and business plan for a Business Improvement District. The potential area of coverage is looking at being expanded to beyond the centre core that the town centre management encompasses. The process takes about 18 months to implement from the initial formation, and the Erdington vote is expected next year. At present the major retailers giving their support to the initiative include Boots, The Co-op and WH Smith. The BID initiative and the Town Centre Management will look to complement each other and serve to bring the community and local businesses together towards their joint aims.
- 6.21 A further marketing initiative we are aware of is Town Talk. There are a number of towns across the UK that have had websites set up as part of a growing national network. Shirley town centre is one of those. Further details can be found at <a href="http://www.shirley.towntalk.co.uk/">http://www.shirley.towntalk.co.uk/</a>.



## **Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)**

- 6.22 The use of BIDs may be another mechanism which is used to deliver improvements to Selly Oak Centre.
- 6.23 BIDs enable town and city centres to approach the management of the trading environment and public spaces in a proactive and planned way allowing them to gain and retain competitive advantage over the (often high quality) managed environment in shopping centres. They also provide equality in ensuring that everyone who benefits to share the cost.
- BIDs can be established in any commercial area (wherever there are non-domestic ratepayers), not necessarily town centres, or where TCM schemes exist. The experience of the National Pilot Project is, however, that BIDs are likely to get off the ground more quickly where there is an established TCM initiative. BIDs cannot replace all the functions of town centre management. The latter takes a comprehensive approach to facilitating the improvement of town and city centres and giving them a competitive advantage.
- BIDs are a mechanism for securing sustainable funding to deliver specific projects and services within a defined area in a specific time-frame. It may be that in smaller centres BIDs and town centre management can be combined, but for the majority of centres where a BID is established, there will still be a requirement for a strategic overview and involvement in the wider approach to town and city centre development that comes through TCM. The two initiatives can work side-by-side and their activities should complement one another. They will however be funded from separate sources.



# **Glossary of Terms**

**Index of Multiple Deprivation:** Measures the wealth of individuals or groups against a set of criteria which may include, for example, access to health care facilities.

**Economically Inactive:** Those of working age who are not in employment, but are not unemployed, e.g. students. It does not mean that they do not spend money, as they may have an income from other sources, e.g. parents or student grants.

**Retail Composition:** The make up of retail provision within a centre e.g. shops and restaurants.

**Tertiary Retail:** Independent/ specialist units interspersed with more predominant uses such as bars and cafes.

**Secondary Retail:** A greater number of specialist/ niche and independent retailers visible on the retail frontage.

**Imperfect Market:** Low level of transactions (i.e. few units bought and sold) with little information about transactions released into the general market.

**Solus Leisure Unit:** A leisure unit which is located on the edge of a retail park e.g. Frankie and Benny's at the existing Selly Oak Battery retail park.

**Owner Occupiers:** Owners of a dwelling who are also the occupiers of that dwelling.

TARA: Tiverton Area Resident's Association

**Convenience Provision:** Retail units which supply consumers with food, drink, tobacco and confectionary.

**Comparison Provision:** Provision of items not obtained on a frequent basis. These include clothing, footwear, household and recreational goods.

**Service Provision :** Provision of services for the consumer e.g. launderettes, estate agents, solicitors.

National Multiple Comparison Goods Retailers: Retailers who are present on the high street at a national scale with shops in most major high streets e.g. Woolworths.

**Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs):** Dwellings occupied by a number of tenants who share living and kitchen space but have their own bedrooms.

**Defined Retail Centre:** An area which is the focus of retail development and uses.

**Continuous Frontage:** A block of retail units separated by key features such as a road or non-retail building such as a church.

**Entry Level Accommodation:** Accommodation which is provided for people who are purchasing for the first time. This is usually young professionals or young families.

**Available Disposable Income:** The amount of money which an individual has available to spend on inessential items after essential outgoings e.g. mortgage/bills.