Foreword

The Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Regeneration Framework has been prepared to provide the planning and development guidance to maximise its potential as a major strategic centre. It sets out a clear vision for future development, which builds on the Centre’s key assets, specifically the heritage of the Old Town and the main shopping areas, and lays out a clear, coherent and deliverable strategy for major commercial and environmental investment.

This Regeneration Framework is based on a thorough analysis of local needs and aspirations and outlines a range of development opportunities which have been the subject of extensive and inclusive public consultation.

We are committed to transforming Sutton Coldfield Town Centre into the quality retail, leisure and residential destination that local people, businesses and visitors deserve. This will require a concerted effort by landowners / developers, Birmingham City Council, local people, community organisations and public/private sector partners, working together to deliver the vision over the coming years.

Sutton Coldfield has a rich historical heritage dating back to Roman times, in particular the time of Henry VIII with his endorsement of the Park, which thanks to new technology, is still revealing its secrets and is a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest.

All of this, together with the current rich cultural and sporting life in the town, must feed into the regeneration process. We are indebted to the Sutton Coldfield Civic Society in particular for their valuable help in facilitating and co-ordinating the public consultation exercise prior to the adoption of this Framework.

We are confident that the Regeneration Framework provides an aspirational vision for the future transformation of Sutton Coldfield Town Centre and will take active steps to pave the way for its implementation.

Councillor Neville Summerfield - Cabinet Member for Regeneration

Councillor Anne Underwood - Sutton Coldfield Constituency Chairman

Councillor Philip Parkin - Chairman, Sutton Coldfield Economic Development and Enterprise Theme Group
## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>01</strong> INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 - Background</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 - Purpose</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 - Sustainability Appraisal</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>02</strong> DRIVING CHANGE: A REGENERATION FRAMEWORK FOR SUTTON COLDFIELD TOWN CENTRE - STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>03</strong> CONTEXT</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>04</strong> POLICY CONTEXT</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>05</strong> INTRODUCING THE SPD</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Development Themes</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B Character Areas &amp; Area Specific Guidance</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C Deliverability</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>06</strong> NEXT STEP</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Broadway Malyan
Interchange Place
131 - 150 Edmund Street
Birmingham
B3 2TA
E-mail: a.golding@broadwaymalyan.com
1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

It is recognised that Sutton Coldfield Town Centre is not fulfilling its potential as a strategic centre, offering the quality of shopping, leisure and residential opportunities that local residents would expect from one of the wealthiest parts of the Birmingham area. It is felt that Sutton Coldfield has ‘lost its way’ in the wider regeneration of the city and needs to promote a vision that establishes the town’s ‘Unique Selling Point’ distinguishing it from other centres within the broader Birmingham city conurbation.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this SPD is to:
- set out the Council’s aspirations for the regeneration of Sutton Coldfield Town Centre.
- explain how spatial planning policies will be applied at the local level
- provide guidance to support the determination of planning applications
- ensure sites coming forward for development fit together coherently and contribute to the regeneration objectives for the area
- provide guidance for developers, land owners and residents.

Following formal public consultation, this Regeneration Framework was adopted in November 2009 as a Supplementary Planning Document within the Birmingham City’s Local Development Framework following formal public consultation.
1.3 Sustainability Appraisal

A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) accompanies this framework and examines the social, environmental and economic effects of the strategies and policies proposed, to ensure that principles of sustainable development are adhered to.

The Appraisal will assist the Council in the development and appraisal of options that emerge for the development of the town centre.

Ultimately, the Appraisal will be used to assess the performance of the SPD, in delivering the aspirations expressed in the Regeneration Framework.
2.0 Driving Change: a Regeneration Framework for Sutton Coldfield Town Centre - Strategic Objectives

The purpose of this Regeneration Framework is to promote a vision for Sutton Coldfield, to ensure that it improves the economic, social and environmental status of the town centre, within the hierarchy of Birmingham local centres. It also needs to promote a regional vision that establishes the Town’s USP.

The vision should be founded on promoting Sutton Coldfield as an attractive, thriving and sustainable place, with a diverse range of quality shops, improved leisure/cultural facilities and a more dynamic range of commercial and residential accommodation. It should distinguish Sutton Coldfield from other centres within the broader city conurbation, while promoting the wider regeneration interests of Birmingham, supporting it as a regional capital and international city.

The Regeneration Framework highlights some of the central challenges for Sutton Coldfield Town Centre which need to be addressed. The key proposals respond to these issues in a comprehensive and holistic approach. Key themes and proposals include:

1. To establish Sutton Coldfield town centre as a destination and location to visit for a range of activities. It is not simply about ‘shopping’.

2. To help recapture the grandeur of a ‘Royal Town’.

3. To enhance the retail offer and provide a mix of uses which will act as the principal catalyst for regeneration and inward investment in the Town Centre.

4. To create a town centre offer which integrates and builds on its existing environmental and historic offer, creating a cohesive development framework, which connects Sutton Coldfield together.

5. To highlight, strengthen and promote Sutton Park as an asset to the town centre offer.

6. To establish a sustainable transport strategy which supports the Regeneration Framework. This new strategy acknowledges the need for improving the local environment, improving conditions for pedestrians and cyclists and not allowing the Town Centre to be dominated by motor vehicles.

7. To consider the needs of the historic heart of the ‘Old Town’ with regard to its future role and commercial function, building on the Council’s Conservation Area policies.

8. To ensure that the Regeneration Framework is robust and deliverable, with commitment to the aspirations and vision from the major landowners.
The Framework sets out a visionary, yet deliverable, long-term strategy for the regeneration of the area. It builds on the evolving policies of Birmingham City Council and the growth projections of the Regional Spatial Strategy by promoting significant expansion in retail, residential and other mixed use opportunities, to strengthen Sutton Coldfield’s strategic position in the sub region. It also builds on the aspirations of key landholders in the town, to promote effective and sustainable regeneration.

The Framework envisages significant change taking place over the next 10 to 15 years, and suggests that the key objectives could be realised by the following incremental proposals:

- A comprehensively enhanced quality retail offer, building on the refurbishment and extension of the existing Mall shopping centre, with significant redevelopment to the east of the Parade, to create a new anchor store within a vastly improved pedestrian environment.

- The creation of a new civic focus for the Town Centre, with public services being a major part of the mixed use offer. There is the potential for a new library and local civic centre set in a public piazza which will become the environmental centrepiece of Sutton Coldfield.

- Improving connectivity between the High Street and Birmingham Road, by creating a new environmental corridor that links through the heart of the town.

- Removing buses from the prime shopping area, enabling the public piazza to be created. In locating the bus services, it is essential that they continue to adequately serve the centre, either via an interchange (to improve access to the railway station), or at strategically located bus stops.

- Reducing traffic flow along the High Street through new public realm improvements, making walking and cycling both safer and more enjoyable.

- Promoting a new use for the Council House and Town Hall, to enable it to act as a catalyst for the regeneration of the ‘Old Town’ through new commercial / residential and leisure development.

- Promoting the historic and leisure value of Sutton Park by emphasising its close proximity, creating new environmental links through the town centre.

- Encouraging the local Town Centre Partnership (especially for the ‘Old Town’ and the Birmingham Road) to promote local enterprise and finds new uses to complement the core activities within the Town Centre.

- Improving the quality of public realm along the Birmingham Road and High Street encouraging uses which complement the three distinct areas of the town centre, allowing visitors to stay, relax and enjoy the ‘destination’ experience.
3.0 Context

This section summarises Sutton Coldfield's principal locations and development opportunities.

The Regeneration Framework area covers 26.5 hectares of Sutton Coldfield Town Centre. It extends from the High St (A5127) in the north to Birmingham Road to the south, incorporating the train station and Town Hall to the North-West and bounded by Victoria Road and Queen Street to the east and the railway line to the West.

3.1 Key Sites within Sutton Coldfield

The characteristics of the key sites within this area are summarised below.

1 Town Hall and Council House

Located to the north of the town centre within Conservation Area no.13 ‘High Street’. At present, civic services operate out of the Council House, whilst the Town Hall is a valuable asset as a venue for local amateur dramatics. An opportunity exists to review the use of the building, as part of the Council’s current consideration of its broader accommodation requirements, to promote new commercial and leisure uses that could help to strengthen this part of the ‘Old Town’

2 Train Station

Network Rail has proposals to improve services for people with mobility difficulties at the station, which could be linked with new development proposals to the south of the station.

3 Train Station Car Park

Large surface car park within a primarily residential area. Consideration needs to be given to the potential for increasing car parking to meet local need, but the Conservation Area status needs to be taken into account.

4 Sutton Coldfield URC Church

Situated between The Parade and the Train Station, the church is a gateway to the Town Centre. There is an opportunity to provide a new setting for the Church as an ‘entrance’ into the shopping centre, attracting additional café and restaurant uses to new development.

5 Vesey Gardens

The gardens surround Holy Trinity Parish Church and form one of the few public spaces in the town centre. An opportunity exists to improve this as part of a wider upgrading of the public realm and highway in the Conservation Area.

6 Brassington Avenue

Vacant site adjacent to the town centre and railway line. Currently has planning permission for predominately mixed use scheme. Redevelopment and integration is important to the successful regeneration initiatives.

7 The Parade

Located in the heart of the town centre, this large central space provides an unattractive environment, often occupied by vehicles and waiting buses, and creating a barrier between the Mall shopping centre and the Red Rose Centre. This is an important site in the town centre which needs to provide a ‘sense of place’

8 Red Rose Centre

This is an imposing structure and includes the Sutton Coldfield library and a Council car park. An opportunity exists to better integrate this important site into an improved, mixed use offer for the town centre, possibly including a new Civic offer, with council accommodation and a replacement library.

9 Newhall Walk

Located at the rear of the Parade are several retail sheds and a large surface car park. While serving a local demand, these retail units do not add significantly to the overall offer of Sutton Coldfield. The opportunity to completely regenerate this part of the Town Centre with a substantially enhanced retail offer, plus the provision of quality urban residential apartments, should be explored.
10 Southern Gateway to the Parade

The Birmingham Road joins Brassington Avenue at this location and creates a difficult junction which severs the southern part of the Town Centre from its heart. By reconfiguring this junction it will be possible to rationalise and improve traffic circulation, as well as improving the public realm links into the shopping area.

11 Birmingham Road

The Birmingham Road provides the key approach into the Town Centre from the south. Boulevard like in appearance, the road is characterised by wide pavements, on-street parking and small retail units. There is the opportunity to undertake significant environmental improvements to the area to improve pedestrian circulation and provide a more attractive retail environment.

12 Sutton Park

‘A busy, bustling quiet place: this City bound countryside’. Although not directly included within the Regeneration Framework, Sutton Park is a ‘jewel in the crown’ and an asset to the town centre. Its close proximity and recreational value should be promoted and celebrated in the development of the town centre. Whilst it is unlikely that there will be any new access points through the railway embankment, aesthetic improvements along Park Road should be actively explored. The Sutton Park Vision and Management Plan will help cement the relationship between the Park and the town centre.
4.0 Policy Context

This section provides a brief overview of the current National, Regional and Local planning policies framework outlining the principal policies affecting the delivery of town centre development in Sutton Coldfield.

The SPD has been prepared within the context of the City’s emerging Local Development Framework and provides a clear regeneration context for development proposals that will be brought forward during this period.

NATIONAL POLICY

PPS1: Delivering sustainable development
The four objectives of sustainable development are identified as:

- ‘Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone;
- Effective protection of the environment;
- The prudent use of natural resources; and
- The maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.’

In keeping with this, PPS1 sees planning as needing to facilitate and promote sustainable and inclusive patterns of urban and rural development.

To attain sustainable economic development, PPS1 states that planning authorities should:

‘ensure that suitable locations are available for industrial, commercial and retail, public sector etc. so that the economy can prosper’ (para 23III).

To enable economic development PPS1 states that planning authorities should:

‘focus developments that attracts a large number of people, especially retail, leisure and office development, in existing centres to promote their vitality and viability, social inclusion and more sustainable patterns of development’ (para 27vi).

Central locations often have the necessary infrastructure in place to provide for redevelopment, however LAs must ensure that there is capacity for new retail development and ensure that existing town centre uses do not suffer due to the introduction of new competition.

PPG4: Industrial, Commercial Development and Small firms

One of the government’s key aims is to:

‘encourage continued economic growth’ and, more specifically, achieve economic growth in line with a high quality environment (page 3).

The PPG states that it is the role of the development plan to:

- ‘encourage new development in locations which minimise the length and number of trips, especially by motor vehicles;
- Encourage new development in locations that can be served by more energy-efficient modes of transport’ (para 10).

Through the adherence to national policy, the SPD provides the opportunity to guide and promote development in suitable locations which takes advantage of transportation proposals to promote economic growth. In the context of Sutton Coldfield, the redevelopment of the Town Centre could allow a more productive use of land, whilst also increasing the centre’s profile within the region, in terms of the shopping hierarchy.
PPS6: Planning for Town Centres

The government reiterates the importance of sustainable development as the core principle underpinning planning in PPS6. In addition, the vitality and viability of towns is emphasised through the need to plan for the growth and development of existing centres. Development should be focussed so that a wide range of services is provided in a positive environment, so as to benefit to all members of society (para 1.3).

The need for town centres to be efficient is also emphasised through the need to:

‘deliver more sustainable patterns of development, ensuring locations are fully exploited through high density, mixed-used development and promoting sustainable transport choices’ (para 1.5).

Where growth cannot be facilitated within existing centres, PPS6 promotes the extension of the primary shopping area where there is requirement for additional retail provision (para 2.5).

Where extensions of primary shopping areas are proposed, the PPS emphasises the need for there to be careful integration with the existing centre in terms of design and access within the public realm. It further states that:

‘Extension of the primary shopping area or town centre may also be appropriate where a need for large developments has been identified and this cannot be accommodated within the centre. Larger stores may deliver benefits for consumers and local planning authorities should seek to make provision for them in this context. In such cases, local planning authorities should seek to identify, designate and assemble larger sites adjoining the primary shopping area’ (para 2.6).

However, the Framework is more than just about creating a modern, attractive and thriving shopping centre. The range of activities envisaged, will help re-establish Sutton’s character again, becoming the ‘town centre’, as well as a regional destination for visitors.

PPG16: Archaeology and Planning

This document sets out the importance of archaeology and why it is important to consider the effects of development on the archaeological record. It states that archaeological remains should be seen as a finite and non-renewable resource that form part of the UK’s national identity and as such, requires appropriate management to ensure that they are not needlessly destroyed.

The key to the protection of most sites of archaeological interest lie with the Local Planning Authority. PPG16 sets out how Local Authorities can plan for, assess development schemes and reconcile the need for development and archaeological protection.

The redevelopment process for the town centre, and especially development within or near the Conservation Area, will identify and consider the conservation of sites of archaeological interest and enhance their settings with careful design solutions. This will include consideration of the special characteristics of the Sutton Coldfield Conservation Area.

REGIONAL POLICY

Regional Spatial Strategy 2008

In January 2008, the GOWN produced the Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands (RSS) which incorporates the Phase 1 revision and provides the spatial framework for the Regional Economic Strategy discussed later on. The RSS chapters of particular relevance to this study are as follows:

Towards a More Sustainable Region

Key themes of the Government’s sustainable development objectives include the:

‘maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment’ (“A Better Quality of Life” 1999).
Urban Renaissance

Sutton Coldfield is seen as a strategic centre within the West Midlands spatial strategy in terms of regeneration, lying within the Birmingham-Solihull Major Urban Area (MUA).

Policy UR1 Implementing Urban Renaissance—the MUA

Policy UR1 highlights the importance of Local Authorities (LA’s) regional agencies and partnerships working together to achieve objectives including:

- ‘rejuvenation of urban centres to act as a focus for regeneration; and restructuring of land use and transport networks to create employment growth’.

Policy UR3 Enhancing the role of City, Town and District Centres

City, town and district centres are seen of particular importance in the desire for urban Renaissance. They play a leading role in the provision of services for local communities, creating a sense of identity and acting as drivers of economic growth (Policy UR3).

Specifically in terms of retail growth, Policy UR3 Advocates that urban centres should achieve urban renaissance through:

- ‘maintaining and enhancing the pattern of urban centres according to their function and role in the Region’.

Developing strategies to maintain and enhance the underpinning role of all urban centres to serve their local communities in terms of retail provision; identifying and creating opportunities for development, particularly for business, retail, leisure, tourism etc.; adopting strategies to encourage more people to live in or close to centres through the reuse of sites, development of mixed-use schemes etc’.

Prosperity for All

Policy PA11 The Network of Town and City Centres

Sutton Coldfield is identified as one of 25 networked strategic town and city centres to be developed across the Region, and one of the 10 centres which are both within MUA’s and strategic centres.

Policy PA11 states that such centres will be the focus of:

- ‘major retail developments (i.e. those of more than 10,000 sq.m gross floorspace, excluding floorspace dedicated to the retailing of convenience goods); uses which attract large numbers of people, including major cultural, tourist, social and community centres; and large scale leisure and office (Class B1a) development (i.e. those of 5,000 sq.m of more gross floorspace).’

Policy QE5: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

Policy QE5 highlights the importance of protecting, conserving and enhancing the West Midlands Region’s diverse historic environment, with particular regards to nationally protected buildings and structures, conservation areas, historic gardens and their settings. It seeks to develop an increased understanding of the role that the historic environment can have within regeneration.

Particularly in the MUA’s, this understanding includes highlighting the regeneration potential that Victorian and Edwardian commercial centres can have, which should be set out in development plans and strategies.

Consideration should also be given to providing appropriate resources and guidance to secure long term preservation and conservation of the historic environment.

With reference to this, the Sutton Coldfield SPD recognises the value that the historic environment has in the social and economic vitality of the local community and the role it plays as part of the areas regeneration objectives.
West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy
Phase 2 Revision

The Prosperity for All policies of the WMRRS are currently being reviewed through the Phase 2 Revision. The Examination in Public into this Revision took place between April and June 2009, and the Panel Report was published in September 2009. The Secretary of State’s proposed changes are expected to be published shortly.

The Phase 2 Revision maintains the existing urban renaissance strategy of the RSS. In line with this it updates and expands the policies for town centres.

Under these revised policies Sutton Coldfield continues to be identified as one of the regional network of town and city centres (policy PA11). Subsequent policies (PA12A and PA13A) go on to identify levels of comparison retail and office floorspace which should be provided in each of the strategic centres. These figures are based on the West Midlands Regional Centres Study 2005 (undertaken by Roger Tym and Partners) and its subsequent updates.

The requirements for Sutton Coldfield are:
- Comparison retail floorspace 2006 - 21: 35,000 sq m, gross
- Comparison retail floorspace 2021 - 26: 15,000 sq m, gross
- Office floorspace 2006 - 2026: 20,000 sq m gross

Policy PA12A also specifies that planning permission for comparison retail requirements arising after 2021 should not be granted before 2016.

These comparison retail and office floorspace requirements have been supported in the Panel Report.

REGIONAL ECONOMIC STRATEGY

The Strategy’s vision for the West Midlands is ‘to be a global centre where people and businesses choose to connect’. Consequently, the Strategy is aligned with the RSS in order for objectives to be accomplished. Specifically, for the strategy’s vision to be realised, the following achievements are identified as being important:

‘a more prosperous region but recognising that economic growth must support overall improvements in the quality of life and wellbeing of all the region’s residents;
A more cosmopolitan and inclusive region;
A more sustainable region, correctly valuing our natural, historic and cultural assets, seeking to minimise our use of the planet’s resources and preparing for a low carbon future.’

Through a structured approach, the strategy seeks to focus upon three main economic components; business, place and people. In terms of Sutton Coldfield, this would equate to a public realm which attracts and enables economic growth, together with policies which dissipate activity which would potentially constrain economic growth.

The strategy has established 5 headline indicators that work together to achieve the overall main indicator of GVA per Head (or Gross Disposable Household Income - GDII). This measures different aspects of a region’s income, providing an indication of the income received by resident households and non profit organisations that serve households. The strategy’s 5 headline indicators of economic performance are as follows:

- GVA per employee
- Index of Sustainable Economic Wellbeing
- Worklessness - % of working age population
- Carbon Emissions per unit of GVA generated
- Perception of the West Midlands as a global centre where people and businesses choose to connect

‘Gross Value Added (GVA) per employee—a measure of economic productivity.
Worklessness—a measure of unemployment and economic inactivity.
Index of Sustainable Economic Wellbeing—which can be viewed as a measure of the extent to which economic growth is supporting improvements in sustainable wellbeing for citizens.
Carbon Emissions per unit of GVA generated—a measure of the extent to which we are successful in decoupling economic growth from carbon emissions.
An indicator of the perceptions of the region as a global centre, where people and businesses choose to connect an assessment of the perceptions of a number of specific stakeholder groups.'
Such indicators need to be a key factor in all policy decisions within the region. It will consequently allow Sutton Coldfield Town Centre to achieve economic growth which benefits all members of the community, without degradation to the natural, or built environment. The strategy seeks to break the correlation that seems to be apparent, as indicated in the diagram below, whereby at current levels of economic growth with current practices, environmental degradation would continue to be an issue:

There are three key features underlying the whole economic strategy including:
- 'Pursuing equality, reaping the benefits of diversity.'
- 'Valuing the natural environment.'
- 'Supporting urban and rural renaissance.'

The objectives seek to ensure that jobs and people are attracted to urban areas, as well as sustaining more rural areas; that no group is left disadvantaged as result of any initiatives undertaken due to the strategy, and that environmentally-friendly practices are not ignored whilst following the objective of economic growth.

The approach seeks to ensure that communities are sustainable in line with the RSS. Economic interventions have been targeted within three primary areas (page 74):
- 'Areas of Multiple Market Failure.'
- 'Concentrations of Knowledge Assets.'
- 'Birmingham.'

In addition, the strategy emphasizes that economic activity and opportunity exists beyond the areas above, where more limited investment should be targeted including:
- 'Market Towns.'
- 'Locations facing economic change or responding to opportunity.'

Sutton Coldfield could be deemed to be an area where development would be seen as responding to policy initiatives, boosting the retail function of the town centre and providing an enhanced public realm for the community.

The strategy identifies numerous interconnected factors which together, impact upon an overall economy, and on an area's economic growth or decline. As a consequence of this, the quality and supply of business space, quality of infrastructure and the overall attractiveness of an area, can be key. Skills and levels of enterprise must also be addressed (page 75) in order for the West Midlands to close the gap in terms of performance on the UK as a whole.

In summary, the strategy seeks to create a region which possesses a diverse and dynamic business base and a skilful population, where communities are sustainable and the conditions for growth can be realised.

LOCAL POLICY

Birmingham Unitary Development Plan October 2005

The Birmingham Plan (UDP) was adopted in October 2005. Together with Regional Spatial Strategy, it forms part of the City's statutory Development Plan Framework.

The most significant sections of the Plan are Chapter 7: Shopping and Centres, and Chapter 9: Sutton Coldfield. The most relevant policies within these chapters relating Sutton Town Centre are as follows:
SPECIFIC POLICY

Policy S1 - primary shopping frontage policy

'Sutton Coldfield will be encouraged to consolidate its position as an important shopping centre providing a wide range of durable and convenience goods, serving a wide catchment' (para. 9.18).

Paragraph 9.18 further states that:

opportunities for environmental improvements will be taken as appropriate, and primary retail frontage policies will apply.' Consequently, any growth within service uses which is at the expense of the town centre's shopping function will lead to restrictions and proposals for additional non-retail uses are likely to be refused' (para. 7.25).

GENERAL POLICY

NEW RETAIL DEVELOPMENT - EXISTING CENTRES

Para. 7.13 emphasises the national, regional and city-wide requirement to strengthen and enhance existing shopping centres. Consequently, the plan promotes the idea that

"existing centres will continue to be the focus for new retail development".

The Council seeks to create a 'network of local centres' within Birmingham in order to:

• provide for the majority of day to day shopping trips and ensure that a range of shopping facilities is retained to suit all needs;
• provide a focus for local community life and to give a sense of identity to local areas' (para. 7.21).

In addition to the promotion and enhancement of existing centres, attention will be placed on:

• 'the need for centres to be as accessible as possible by public and private transport and also on foot, including the provision of conveniently located bus stop facilities and car and cycle parking;
• The need to provide a pleasant, safe pedestrian environment within and on the approaches to shopping centres, taking account of the needs of cyclists, disabled people, parents with young children and others with restricted mobility;
• The need for a high standard of design in all new developments.' (para 7.15).

The need for high quality design is particularly important for Sutton, due to the proximity to the High Street Conservation Area.

Sustainability and accessibility is strengthened by its close proximity to Sutton Coldfield Railway Station and the large number of bus stops within the centre. Currently Gracechurch Shopping Centre and the Parade are pedestrianised environments.

The Plan states that 'proposals for additional retail development/redevelopment in existing centres will normally be encouraged' provided that proposals (para. 7.23):

• [are] of an appropriate size, integrated with the existing shopping centre, and have no significant adverse effect on the continued viability and viability of an existing centre;
• [are] integrated with the existing shopping area;
• help to maintain a range of shops to meet the needs to the local community within the centre'.

Throughout the UDP, the importance of ensuring that new retail development does not detract from existing centres/services is highlighted. Development within Sutton Coldfield therefore should seek to add to the range of town centre activities/facilities and increase the number of people who use it as more than just a destination for shopping.

OFFICE DEVELOPMENT

In addition to retail uses, Sutton Coldfield town centre is identified as being an established suburban office location (para. 9.19). The UDP indicates that 'additional office development at a scale compatible with the role of the centre, will be encouraged'.
MIXED USE DEVELOPMENTS

Local centres are seen as being of great importance due to the opportunity they provide for a wide range of services. Consequently, the Plan states that:

‘Mixed use schemes of an appropriate scale...will be supported in centres provided that they do not harm the vitality and viability of the shopping function of the centre’ (para. 7.23A).

In order that non-retail uses (that could be adequately located outside of the town centre) do not have a detrimental impact such uses would have to demonstrate their complimentary value.

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

This historic legacy of Birmingham is seen as of ‘prime importance’ within the UDP (para 3.20) and designated Conservation Areas are seen as a way of ensuring that architectural and historic heritage is preserved.

In accordance with paragraph 3.27, and due to the proximity to the High Street Conservation Area, proposals “should respect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area”.

The Council’s respect for its historic legacy is especially important for appropriate heritage buildings (listed or otherwise), that fall within the wider town centre, but are outside of the Conservation Area. Similarly, archaeological remains (known and unknown) must be safeguarded in accordance with Government guidelines and best practice.

Attention to good urban design principles will also safeguard the local character of Sutton Coldfield town centre (para. 3.14D).


The High Places Policy Framework states that tall buildings can have the effect of: ‘concentrating the quantum of business activity in a relatively confined area’ (p7); an effect which needs to be carefully considered. However, it also emphasises that given ‘current and projected take-up rates for commercial floorspace, there is a finite quantity of activity that future tall buildings can accommodate in Birmingham’.

The policy framework explains that ‘a building is considered tall if it is significantly higher than the buildings in context’ (p10).

The policy framework explains that ‘a building is considered tall if it is significantly higher than the buildings in context’ (p10).

It further states that ‘well positioned and well-designed buildings can fulfil a number of useful functions’. These include:

• ‘as landmarks that help to make the form of the City legible’.

There is a need to ensure that the location and height of buildings respect air transport activity. The policy states that tall buildings across the city scale should be located sparingly so that their contribution to the city is maximised in terms of form and legibility.

The SPG emphasises that:

‘unless there are exceptional reasons otherwise, tall buildings should not be located in areas where they disrupt an existing coherent townscape of merit, or block important view and sightlines of key buildings and spaces; for example in a conservation area’.

In terms of design, the policy promotes the importance of buildings responding positively to their local context without having an unacceptable impact upon the local environment.
**Conservation Strategy SPG**

The Conservation Strategy provides planning guidance at a local level for all historic environments within Birmingham, such as historic landscapes, listed buildings, locally listed buildings, Conservation Areas, and archaeology.

It aims to include a wider range of structures and features that represent Birmingham's industrial history, and encourages sympathetic use and adaptation of listed buildings. It highlights that local areas of townscape value should be taken into account, and that within Conservation Areas development proposals should respect and enhance their character or appearance.

The Strategy acknowledges that an Article 4 (1) Direction covers part of the High Street Conservation Area. This strategy has helped shape the conservation and urban design considerations of the Regeneration Framework.

**Archaeology Strategy**

Locally there is a rich and diverse source of archaeological remains which form part of Birmingham's local distinctiveness. The Sutton Coldfield area contains evidence of Iron Age settlements, as well as many sites where both Roman and Medieval remains have been found. Such resources should be safeguarded, but without stifling new development, or hindering regeneration.

The Archaeological Strategy explains the process when proposed development is likely to affect any archaeological remains. It sets out three main stages:

- Early consultation concerning archaeological implications;
- The process of assessment needed;
- Evaluation to inform decisions and requirements for preserving and recording of remains.

As a result, the Sutton Coldfield Regeneration Framework must take into account the assessment stages (above) and give careful and appropriate consideration and protection of its varied archaeological resources.

**FUTURE POLICY**

The local planning policy framework is undergoing change, and future plans and policies may take into account new issues not covered by the Unitary Development Plan.

In February 2007, the Core Strategy for Birmingham was launched with its initial consultation setting the vision and objectives for the future of the city as part of the Local Development Framework.

Initial responses suggest that 52.7% of those consulted, were concerned, or wished to see improvements to local centres. Their strength was seen as very important to the achievement of sustainability in terms of viability and transport links.

Other responses highlighted the need to reduce emphasis upon the city centre and concentrate on the city as a whole, with greater emphasis on major suburbs.
SUMMARY OF PLANNING POLICY - KEY ISSUES

- National, regional and local planning policy emphasises sustainable development, providing economic growth and enhanced employment opportunities for local residents. Such growth needs to have balanced transport, environmental and social programmes which are inclusive and do not adversely affect the local urban fabric and existing communities.

- In terms of regional policy, Sutton Coldfield is seen as a strategic centre within the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (WMRSS).

- The RSS 2008 is seeking the rejuvenation of urban centres as a focus for regeneration and also the restructuring of land use and transport improvements to create employment growth in the Major Urban Areas.

- Policy PA11 identifies Sutton Coldfield as one of the 25 networked strategic town and city centres where there will be the focus of a “major retail development” (i.e. those of more than 10,000 sq m gross floor space) and also be the focus for uses which attract large numbers of people and large scale leisure and offices.

- The WMRRS Phase 2 Revision identifies a requirement for 35,000 sq m gross of additional comparison retail floorspace in Sutton Coldfield by 2021, and a further 15,000 sq m gross by 2026. It also identifies a requirement for 20,000 sq m gross of additional office development by 2026.

- In addition the UDP emphasises the national, regional and citywide requirement to strengthen and enhance existing shopping centres, with them continuing to be the focus of new retail development. Mixed use developments are to be supported in the centre provided that they do not harm the vitality and viability of its shopping function.

- The plan supports the need for high quality design particularly in the High Street Conservation Area.

- Any proposals put forward should respect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and thereby safeguard the local character of Sutton Coldfield Town Centre.

- The historic character of Sutton Coldfield Town Centre as a whole (its legacy both above and below ground), should be respected in any development proposals. This is particularly relevant within and adjacent to the Conservation Area, but must acknowledge Sutton’s wider heritage legacy, since it contributes to its uniqueness within Birmingham’s local centres.
5.0 Introducing the SPD

The SPD sets out the framework for the future of the area together with a set of principles and standards. Development proposals in Sutton Coldfield town centre will be expected to adhere to these and contribute to meeting the wider regeneration objectives.

The rest of this Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is presented in three parts:

Part A - Development Themes and Standards

Applies general development principles and standards for all new development and explains how this fits together to deliver regeneration objectives across the area.

Part B - Character Areas

Sets out the three main areas that comprise the boundary of the study area, and provides the framework within which the aspirations for the future are set.

Part C - Deliverability

Considers the scope and mechanics of delivering the vision contained within this Framework.

Part A:
Development Themes

Five principle development themes have been defined to shape the Regeneration Framework. These have evolved through consideration of local, regional and national planning and development policies. They were tested during the public consultation exercise and were firmly supported.

• Strengthening and improving the retail and leisure offer of the Town Centre
• Connecting Sutton Coldfield
• Maximising the Historic Core
• Promoting street character and secure design
• Deliverability
Development Theme: Strengthening and improving the Retail and Leisure Offer of the Town Centre

It is clear that Sutton Coldfield Town Centre is under performing in relation to its population and local spending power. The shopping centre has effectively become a local shopping centre whilst higher spend shopping trips are being undertaken in centres such as Birmingham and Solihull. The Sutton Coldfield offer therefore needs to capture the significant ‘spending power’ of local residents, especially patronage of its affluent shoppers.

CB Richard Ellis carries out bespoke retail survey work on an annual basis through its ‘National Survey of Local Shopping Patterns’ Report (the 2008 based figures being released August 2009). The survey is based on the 2001 census area statistics, but to maintain relevance, annual changes are factored into the data calculation.

According to this survey, the postal sectors forming the catchment of Sutton Coldfield contain a population of 2,012,731 (this has risen since 2007 when it stood at 1,946,913). Sutton Coldfield ranks 113 nationally out of more than 2,000 trading locations by size of catchment population. The rank in 2007 was 108.

Sutton Coldfield attracts a regular comparison goods shopping population from its catchment of 89,253 - a catchment penetration rate of 4.43%. This was the same in 2007, however the 2006 data suggested a higher catchment rate of 5.66%, indicating a fall in catchment penetration.

Sutton Coldfield’s shopping population ranks 160 nationally by size out of more than 2,000 trading locations. In 2006 the data suggested that Sutton’s rank was 150 out of the 2000 towns.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trading Location</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Catchment Population</th>
<th>Shopping Population</th>
<th>National Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carmethan</td>
<td>Carmarthenshire</td>
<td>915,190</td>
<td>95,956</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heliex</td>
<td>West Yorkshire</td>
<td>1,488,030</td>
<td>95,130</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashford</td>
<td>Kent</td>
<td>1,030,435</td>
<td>94,887</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scunthorpe</td>
<td>North Lincs</td>
<td>640,290</td>
<td>94,293</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuneaton</td>
<td>Warwickshire</td>
<td>1,231,515</td>
<td>94,082</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sutton Coldfield</strong></td>
<td><strong>West Midlands</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,012,731</strong></td>
<td><strong>89,253</strong></td>
<td><strong>160</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hastings</td>
<td>East Sussex</td>
<td>637,209</td>
<td>84,397</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scarborough</td>
<td>North Yorks</td>
<td>1,356,137</td>
<td>83,983</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Albans</td>
<td>Hertfordshire</td>
<td>2,050,350</td>
<td>83,918</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newport</td>
<td>Isle of Wight</td>
<td>178,661</td>
<td>82,475</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamworth</td>
<td>Staffordshire</td>
<td>1,763,402</td>
<td>81,104</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: National Survey of Local Shopping Patterns; 2001 Census Area Statistics; Crown Copyright Reserved
The range of competing towns such as Birmingham, Walsall, Solihull, Tamworth, Merry Hill, Wolverhampton, Lichfield and Stafford show just how strong the competition is for Sutton Coldfield’s catchment population. The table above shows the percentage of Sutton Coldfield catchment residents attracted by Sutton Coldfield Town Centre, and Sutton Coldfield’s competing centres, for comparison goods shopping purposes.

For example, Sutton Coldfield attracts 89,253 shoppers from its catchment - only 4.43% of the catchment total. Birmingham Central attracts 453,419 shoppers - 22.53% of total Sutton Coldfield catchment residents, and the likes of Tamworth penetrates to a percentage of 3.83% of Sutton’s shoppers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competing Centre</th>
<th>Population Attracted</th>
<th>Catchment % of Total</th>
<th>Shopping Population Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham Central</td>
<td>453,419</td>
<td>22.53</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walsall</td>
<td>169,072</td>
<td>8.40</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burton upon Trent</td>
<td>101,738</td>
<td>5.05</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solihull</td>
<td>91,174</td>
<td>4.53</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sutton Coldfield</td>
<td>89,253</td>
<td>4.43</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamworth</td>
<td>77,078</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merry Hill Shopping Centre</td>
<td>74,973</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wolverhampton</td>
<td>48,484</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stafford</td>
<td>47,921</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lichfield</td>
<td>40,300</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,193,413</strong></td>
<td><strong>59.29</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smaller Centres</td>
<td>571,511</td>
<td>28.39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mail Order</td>
<td>28,581</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>219,226</td>
<td>10.89</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,012,731</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Birmingham City Council's planning policies, supported by the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) and national planning policy guidance, recognise and promote a significant improvement to the size of the Town Centre. The Birmingham Unitary Development Plan states that 'proposals for additional retail development / redevelopment in existing centres will normally be encouraged' given that proposals (Para. 7.23):

- 'are of an appropriate size, integrated with the existing shopping centre, have no significant adverse effect on the continued vitality and viability of an existing centre;
- 'are integrated with the existing shopping area;
- have no significant adverse effect on the continued vitality and viability of an existing shopping centre as a whole;
- help to maintain a range of shops to meet the needs to the local community within the centre'.

The vitality and viability of towns is emphasised in PPS6 ‘Planning for Town Centres’, through planning for growth and development and focussing actively, so that a wide range of services is provided in a positive environment, to benefit all members of society (Para 1.3).

CB Richard Ellis’s NSLSP report suggests Sutton Coldfield’s shopping population is forecast to change (due to development activity and inward and outward population migration) by 3.88% over the 2008-2018 period; a total change in shopping population of 3,463. The report has also identified a consistent worsening in performance since 2006, with its ranking falling in each category.

This missed retail spending opportunity is substantial; a relatively small increase in the amount that residents spend locally would support an increase in the quantity and quality of the town's retail offer. Therefore, any increase in the quality of retailers/occupiers, targeting the affluent shoppers, would have a positive benefit in capturing local 'spending power'.

In terms of local competition, there is a sizeable perception that Solihull's 'Touchwood' centre is damaging Sutton Coldfield. Solihull has a much higher shopping population rank of 70 and attracts a greater proportion of Sutton Coldfield’s shopping population than Sutton itself at 4.53%. It has to be borne in mind however that Solihull is a greater draw with a catchment population of 3,436,590. Relatively speaking, it therefore has a much greater volume of spend attracted to its catchment, which then attracts relatively 'better' retail traders. Solihull's own catchment penetration rate is 5.59%.

This still highlights the importance of new retail provision and its impact in improving catchments locally; improved catchment will bring improved trader quality. A greater provision of retail outlets in Sutton Coldfield could therefore have the same knock-on effects that Solihull has experienced over the last 10 years, having the possible impact of increasing Sutton Coldfield's ranking.
The need for town centres to be efficient is also emphasised through the need to:

‘deliver more sustainable patterns of development, ensuring locations are fully exploited through high density, mixed-use development and promoting sustainable transport choices’ (Para 1.5).

Sutton Coldfield Town Centre currently (2004) has around 44,000sqm (net) retail and office floorspace. The revised RSS draft Strategy suggests that retail and office growth in the region of 35,000 sq m (net) would be appropriate for the town centre between 2006 and 2021 with an additional 15,000 sq m (net) between 2021 and 2026. For retail this equates to an additional 22,000-27,000 sqm of additional retail floorspace.

To create an appropriate environment to facilitate this, the redevelopment of The Parade and South Parade is suggested. It would be replaced by a well landscaped, pedestrian only environment, which would focus onto a new public plaza as the centre piece to a new quality retail/civic end leisure offer, at the new heart of the Town Centre.

A new Civic Centre could house the relocated library and provide office accommodation for locally based Council staff. Together with new residential accommodation in the centre, the public buildings and activities would help to re-establish Sutton’s town centre as being more than just a shopping centre.

Buses could be relocated to a transport interchange / plaza at another part of the retail centre, or with bus stops strategically located around the centres road perimeter.

Most importantly, the Town Centre would be the subject of major public realm improvements to complement the increased retail, office, leisure and residential investment. This will help strengthen the ‘destination’ value of the Town Centre, making it much more than simply a place to shop, turning Sutton Coldfield into a strategic leisure and living location, with Sutton Park as its national reference point.
Development Theme: Connecting Sutton Coldfield

Connecting Sutton Coldfield

Although Sutton Town Centre is well served by public transport (bus and rail) the highway network is inhibited by the position of Sutton Park, the embankment of Cross City railway line and the High Street Conservation Area.

Road Hierarchy

Despite these significant constraints, the Framework proposals for the Town Centre emphasise the need to improve connectivity between the separate areas. The area can thereby become welcoming to all, with improved pedestrian and cycle connections.

Although vehicle growth in Sutton Coldfield has been minimal for a number of years, traffic is a significant factor. Congestion on the A5127 to north and south, and at its junctions with the A453 in particular, is an issue. The impact of the topography on the highway network poses questions for future growth aspirations. Striking the balance between desirable growth and an acceptable increase in congestion (or a change in travel habits), is a challenge faced by this framework. It is therefore acknowledged that it may not be able to reconcile the aspirations for growth with the constraints of the current highway network. The 'vision' as set out in this Framework, is predicated upon the provision of a relief road running parallel to High Street, as well as junction alterations over a wider area. Furthermore, it is assumed that detailed designs can be produced to resolve concerns regarding junction operation.

The reason behind the relief road is to better protect the historic significance of the High Street and make it more attractive to businesses and pedestrians. It is therefore suggested that traffic flows could be changed to one way south bound working. This will enable the removal of a running lane to create more space for pedestrians and reduce traffic flows. This would increase the Conservation Areas attractiveness and safety for pedestrians. To ensure that vehicles will not have to reroute significantly to travel north from High Street, a link to the relief road to the north is suggested. A redesign of the roundabout at the junction of Brassington Avenue and Birmingham Road, providing significant benefit for pedestrians and cyclists and establishing an attractive linkage between the Birmingham Road and the core shopping area will also be sought.

The creation of a new bus interchange to the north of the Town Centre could remove buses from South Parade and Lower Parade to enable the Town Centre to be completely pedestrianised. The bus interchange could link directly into the shopping centre and provide passengers and bus drivers with enhanced facilities.

At the southern end of the Town Centre, it is envisaged that minor junction and highway improvements along Lower Queen Street and Holland Road will help with traffic flow and improve parking for local residents. It is envisaged that Queen Street will become less of a through route and be primarily utilised for public transport use, with permissible access for service vehicles and local traffic wishing to access the retail and business establishments along Birmingham Road.

Whilst this regeneration framework is not a 'blueprint' for development, accessibility and permeability for pedestrians and cyclists is essential. It recognises the importance of existing and new pedestrian and cycle routes and promotes their inclusion.

The creation of the bus interchange will also require a modified link between Brassington Avenue and Victoria Road to enable vehicles to travel east to west.
Although much of this Framework is predicated upon the provision of a relief road, if it is not implemented, there is still potential to incorporate the bus interchange in the location proposed: Brassington Avenue would then need to follow the link suggested north of the bus interchange, meeting with High Street and Victoria Road at a new signalised junction. Without the relief road the High Street could not be designated one way. If the junction improvements to Holland Road are not implemented, then the nature of Queen Street could not be changed to a predominately public transport and access only route.

Public Realm Strategy

Surprisingly, there are no areas of attractive open space within the town centre (with the exception of Vesey Gardens). A new high quality public realm strategy is therefore proposed founded on a new Green Corridor, with a series of new quality pedestrian routes, linked through well designed public squares and parks, which connect the Old Town to the Birmingham Road. This corridor will be founded on major ‘destination locations’ along the route, most significantly through the public transport interchange and public square in the heart of the Town Centre, where people can relax and enjoy the experience of being in Sutton Coldfield.

Enhanced Boulevard like pedestrian environments will be made along the Birmingham Road, in order to strengthen the existing retail offer and create more of a ‘café society’ feel. A landscape strategy and design code will be developed, with a stronger tree lined approach to the central core. Key destination locations will be identified at the western end with the iconic cinema, and a new retail gateway at the eastern end. The historic significance of Sutton as a Royal Borough should be celebrated at key gateway locations.

Whilst it will not be possible to create new links to Sutton Park, it is possible to enhance the existing routes with suitable landscaping and better signage. Raising the awareness of visitors to the attractions of and within the Park, will benefit both the Park and the town centre. Bringing the ‘Park into the Town’ as part of the public realm works in the new squares, will also highlight the importance of this leisure asset.
Development Theme: Maximising the Historic Core

Maximising the Heritage

The High Street Conservation Area, the ‘Old Town’, is an extremely important asset, which needs to be both protected and enhanced. The historic variety of Sutton’s heritage building stock (both above and below ground), make it almost unique in the hierarchy of Birmingham’s local centres. It has many intrinsically important historical and architectural elements which make it such a special place, but which need to be better integrated into the main commercial function of the Town Centre.

There are two fundamental issues, which shape the development themes for the Old Town, namely:

- Promoting commercial sustainable development in historic and listed buildings.
- Managing traffic movement.

Commercial offer

The ‘Old Town’, set within the High Street Conservation Area, cannot compete on a retail basis with either the town centre or the Birmingham Road - ‘the Boulevard’. Furthermore, the narrow streets and architecturally significant buildings would be compromised by major development.

It is recognised therefore that promoting sustainable commercial development within the existing Conservation Area requires some creative and lateral thinking.

A market review has shown that Sutton Coldfield is currently not a strong enough centre to command a significant financial and business services sector. As such, the future commercial offer in the Old Town could be to attract niche local businesses in the short term, with an encouragement to improve existing premises through refurbishment, being the principle development activity.

In the medium to long term (when combined with the highway improvements), buildings such as the Council House and Town Hall could have more significant commercial uses, which could complement the existing cultural activities. The Old Town could then be strengthened with a commercial focus (possibly with ancillary residential developments), supplementing the mix of uses in the area. A commercial and residential “purpose for location”, would lead to an increase in activity within the character area.
Consideration has been given to returning the Council House (in King Edward Square), to its original use as a quality hotel. The shortage of suitable hotel accommodation in the area would sustain such a use. Introducing conference / convention activity into the Town Hall (whilst still retaining the current levels of community use through flexible timetabling), could also act as a stimulus to diversification of uses.

In addition to supporting a new use of the Council House and Town Hall, there is the opportunity to extend the Town Hall (or create a new residential offer) by developing the existing Birmingham City Council offices on Clifton Road that currently house the Constituency offices.

A similar regeneration scenario is suggested for Birmingham Road to the south, whereby the intrinsic value of the attractive older buildings would be exploited as a centre for 'café culture'.

To help stimulate and promote niche activity, it is suggested that the Town Centre Business Partnership is promoted both for the Old Town and the Boulevard, to help establish a new commercially sustainable offer. A potential opportunity would be to promote a restaurant and gastronomic offer to complement the retail expansion of the Town Centre, bringing a more individualistic and tailored offer to the Sutton Coldfield market.

It is essential that support and encouragement is given to the Business Partnership throughout the regeneration initiative. The traders and owners of the smaller units will play an important role in promoting Sutton Town Centre during the redevelopment phases. The partnership can also help develop the centres' USP, branding its destination status.

Traffic

As noted earlier, traffic is a dominating feature throughout the entire town centre, but its impact is most heavily felt in the Old Town. Through traffic should be encouraged to use other available existing routes (including the existing A38 Sutton By-Pass), but the High Street needs to remain open to traffic. The relief road proposal will reduce the amount of traffic and assist in managing traffic movements through this sensitive part of the town.

Better defined public spaces, proposed at the northern and southern ends of the High Street, would promote a more pedestrian friendly feel. The northern space could front the civic / legal / college area, and the southern one would be a larger public space fronting Holy Trinity Church / Vesey Gardens. This could be created by taking out the awkward roundabout and creating a T-junction (with reduced radii) with much wider pavements and crossing points. This space would be an ideal and appropriate place for interpretation material on the history of the Royal Town, Bishop Vesey, Holy Trinity etc.
Development Theme: Promoting Street Character and Secure Design

Promoting street character and secure design

This Regeneration Framework promotes a new pedestrian and public realm strategy for Sutton Coldfield which connects and binds together the different areas of the town centre. The key functions for this new strategy are to enhance the quality of the local environment (particularly within the retail heart and around the station and Old Town area), as well as significantly enhancing the perception of the town as an attractive place. Critical to the successful delivery of this public realm strategy will be:

- **Good design**
- **Community involvement**
- **Safety and ‘secured by design’**

The proposed *Green Corridor* that connects the Old Town to the Boulevard, through the new retail and civic heart, is the key plank of the new public realm strategy. There are several key elements to this strategy and the corridor, most notably:

- The Old Town’s pedestrian routes and highways
- Improvements to Vesey Gardens
- The bus plaza / Interchange
- The new civic square
- The Birmingham Road Boulevard
- The visual linkage to Sutton Park

Within a coherent landscape strategy, there is an opportunity to recognise the distinctive character of particular areas, through new paving, finishes, lighting and street furniture, as well as promoting public art specifically with a Sutton Park theme.

Indicative public realm concepts are suggested within this document; design codes for each ‘character area’ will be produced in due course. This could include a ‘shop front’ design guide for the Old Town, both to enhance the existing character and stimulate commercial interest. This could be taken forward through the Business Partnership initiative.
Public Realm Themes

Providing new and improved public spaces, pedestrian permeability and inclusive access

Despite its central location at the heart of Sutton Coldfield, the Town Centre presently lacks distinctive form.

The ring road forms a collar that inhibits footfall on approach and exit. It also affectively limits the expansion of the central area and cuts it off from its catchment and context. As a result, the connection to the Old Town, the railway station and Birmingham Road are extremely poor.

It is proposed to review the town centre’s transport facilities and to promote a more logical approach to pedestrian movement and access. Central to this strategy is the concept of creating a high quality pedestrian route lining the station, the Old Town / High Street, the retail centre and Birmingham Road. When coupled with the already planned ‘North Birmingham/Connect 2’ cycle network through the existing centre, attractive, safe and inviting access alternatives will complement the improvements to the public transport network.

Moving north to south this could include:

- The Old Town / High Street - an attractive and intimate, historic street environment with fine grain frontage and traditional surface finishes - a possible cultural quarter for Sutton Coldfield.

- The Station Link - a more contemporary streetscape character area with broad footways and busy new retail frontages, providing an attractive link between the station, Conservation Area and the retail centre.

- Bus Interchange / Plaza - an urban place centred on a relocated transport hub with distinctive bus shelter canopy structures and shared surface paving.

- Civic Square - a new public space with the function of leading visitors to and from the Old Town, the station and the retail centre. Laid out as a community space, potentially incorporating water, grass edges and planted trees to reinforce the connection with Sutton Park.

- The Parade - a revitalised street at the heart of the town centre, which broadens in its middle section to form a large contemporary civic square. The range and intensity of activities along its length brings the streetscape and spaces to life, to create a cultural and visual spectacle for visitors and local people.

- South Gateway - a large urban space framing the route to the Parade from Birmingham Road. This would form the setting for landmark retail and leisure developments with high quality public realm components that form a focus of activity by day and night.

- Birmingham Road - The Boulevard - a street renewal project, which applies a high quality palette of materials to strengthen the streetscape character and create a centre for café culture.
Development Theme: Deliverability

Deliverability
Both the UDP and the RSS advocate retail growth in Sutton Coldfield which is supported by initial discussions with key local stakeholders and landowners.

The market assessment undertaken as the first stage of the Regeneration Framework has broadly indicated the commercial deliverability of the key development sectors. Discussions with landowners, developers and investors are now taking place to drive the project forward and consider the most appropriate vehicle to realise the vision.

Retail
The perception that Sutton Coldfield is not performing to its potential and needs to capture the significant ‘spending power’ of local residents is backed up in the recent retail rankings. Any increase in the quality of the environment (to assist in the retention of shopping “length of stay”) will have a positive effect on clawing back this leakage.

Offices
The West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy indicates that Sutton Coldfield is in the fifth and bottom tier of office locations in the West Midlands. Prime rents for offices in Sutton Coldfield are below areas such as Birmingham, Solihull and Coventry and levels of growth are not expected to provide any significant change in these market dynamics.

Residential
Local agent information has indicated that there is still a demand for town centre developments, as to date there has been limited supply of new apartments. There is also currently a strong rental market in Sutton Coldfield.

Land Ownership
Several major players will shape the future development of Sutton Coldfield including Birmingham City Council. The way that the principal landowners and the local authority support the Regeneration Framework and shape its implementation programme, will be critical to the success of the SPD.

Community Participation
Community involvement and general interest was considerable when the draft Framework was consulted upon. Harnessing that interest during the coming development stages will be important to the overall success of the project. Mechanisms for empowering the local community, to ensure that their voice is heard, will be considered.

All the above factors will need to be taken into account in the development of a delivery strategy. Regardless of the state of the economy, a stream of activity must commence (and be seen to do so), in order that the centres regeneration can take meaningful strides when the financial climate is ready.
The Regeneration Framework
The Regeneration Framework

This indicative layout suggests the distribution of appropriate uses within the Town centre. It is not a ‘blue print’ or ‘masterplan’, but is a realistic vision for regeneration.
The Regeneration Framework
Part B: Character Areas

The formulation of this Regeneration Framework is based upon the identification and definition of three character areas across Sutton Coldfield Town Centre.

The character areas relate to the three core components of the wider Sutton Coldfield Town Centre area and provide a robust framework for the delivery of more specific development proposals.

For the purposes of this document, the character areas are referred to as:

- The Town Centre
- The Old Town
- The Boulevard

These areas are further sub-divided, setting out more detailed commentary:

- The Town Centre Retail Core
- The Civic Square
- The Civic Centre
- The Transport Interchange / Plaza
- The Station Sites
- The Town Hall
- The Old Town and Vesey Gardens
- The Boulevard and Roundabout
Character Area 1: Town Centre

The site:
- The town centre is bounded by the A5127 ring road linking Sutton Coldfield to central Birmingham and the M6. Victoria Road also links the Town Centre to the train station.
- A combination of one- and two-way routes handling large traffic flows bypass the town centre via the ring road.
- Largely poor quality landscape character dominated by bus route and the ring road. Uses in the town centre predominantly retail, with some commercial frontage frequently of a secondary nature.
- Poor public realm and pedestrian and shopping environment. Ring road severs connectivity with the High St and Birmingham Road.
- Fragmented at its southern end by an over-complicated arrangement of contra-flow bus route, roundabout and taxi rank, with indirect pedestrian crossings.

Key Objectives:
- Enhance the Core Area to become a higher quality destination within the region, actively competing with the likes of Solihull, Tamworth and Walsall.
- Significant increase in retail capacity.
- Renew outdated elements of centre.
- Create a pedestrian and cycling friendly environment along The Parade.
- Create a new destination utilising the United Reform Church as a focal point.
- Remove bus contra-flow from the ring-road.
- Facilitate improved cycle access into and through the centre, as part of the ‘North Birmingham/Connect 2’ cycle network.
- Unlock potential of culverted brook as a landscape feature.
- Manage car-parking provision more efficiently.

Regeneration Framework proposals:
- Retail Core
  - Redefine The Parade as eastern edge to balance the Gracechurch Centre.
  - Identify a location for an anchor store as catalyst to improve quality of retail offer.
- Town Square
  - Create a town square within The Parade with a Sutton Park emphasis.
  - Impressive structure/building to define high quality public open.
  - Quality planting to effectively ‘green’ the town centre; highlighting Sutton Park as an asset, and destination for visitors.
- Civic Hub
  - Focal building that introduces civic uses into the town centre, framing improved public realm.
- Transport Interchange / Plaza
  - New bus interchange allow the removal of buses from the proposed town square and better connectivity with the train station and Old Town.
  - Improved legibility and environment for bus users, cyclists and pedestrians.
Area 1: Town Centre Retail Core

Regeneration Framework proposals:

- New streetscape layout fully integrates the town centre space. Pedestrians are able to circulate and ‘explore’ the area.

- New traffic orientation removes vehicles from the town centre creating a fully pedestrianised environment to strengthen the public realm.

- Redevelopment increases retail quantum, establishing a range of retail units and the possibility of a new anchor store to considerably enhance the local retail offer.

- Provision of a new civic centre and a mix of uses, alongside public realm and public art investment, mean that Sutton Coldfield delivers more than just a ‘shopping experience’ creating a sense of place with a strong identity.

- Residential accommodation above the retail, brings new life to the town centre and will deliver a greater evening / weekend living environment.

- The new landscaped layout provides a series of open spaces, each encouraging people to relax and spend time in the Town Centre.

Quantum guide:

- The draft RSS suggests that 35,000 sqm of additional floorspace can be accommodated in Sutton Coldfield to 2021, up to 27,000 sqm of which can be retail.

- Retail A1: 17,310sqm footprint (assuming possible mezzanine) at an average of 1.5 levels = 25,965sqm

- Residential C3: 3274sqm at an average of 3 levels = 9,822sqm (approximately 150 units)
Area 2: Civic Square

The site:

- Existing environment is very weak, with no genuine amenity space for pedestrians and is compromised by heavy traffic movement. This reduces the sense of place within the existing town centre.

- A strong public space delivered through the town square will act as a centrepiece to the overall redevelopment of the town centre.

Regeneration Framework proposals:

- To create a new ‘Park in the Town’ in the heart of Sutton.

- A key output of the new square will be to create an area which encourages people to relax and spend time, extending the time they spend in Sutton Coldfield and expanding the offer beyond just retail.

- The space should include attractive and exemplar public art, with a central theme celebrating the benefits of nearby Sutton Park.

- The space should be well defined and enclosed.
Area 3: Civic Centre

The site:
- The site, adjacent to the proposed new Town Square, is central and provides an opportunity to deliver a landmark building.

Regeneration Framework proposals:
- There is potential for a prominent building that defines the centre of the town through presence and design.
- The Civic Centre could house the library, Sutton Coldfield Constituency Offices and other Local Government functions.
- Bringing the Council offices to the centre of the town could act as a driver for further footfall and spending. It would also increase the sense of civic association in the town, bringing the town hall close to commercial activities.

Quantum guide:
- Library: D1: 1,500 sqm footprint over 2 levels = 3,000 sqm (including neighbourhood centre / reception).
- Civic offices: B1: 1,500 sqm footprint over 4 levels = 6,000 sqm. Additional mixed uses could also be accommodated, providing the height of the building is appropriate to the neighbouring developments.
Area 4: Transport Interchange / Plaza

The site:

- The current public transport arrangements involve buses travelling through the central retail area. This imposes on pedestrian space.
- The bus pick up area is separated from the train station and there is no central transport hub.
- The Regeneration Framework provides an opportunity to address public transport issues in a holistic way, creating a defined interchange.

Regeneration Framework proposals:

- New prestigious public transport Interchange / plaza creates an impressive new gateway and sense of arrival for travellers to Sutton Coldfield.
- Repositioning buses from the town centre to another location, makes Sutton more legible and passenger movement more organised.
- Shared surface also facilitates pedestrian movement between the train station and town centre.

- Transport Interchange / Plaza provides enclosure to a new public space surrounding Sutton Coldfield URC Church.
- Cafes, bars and boutique retail in the space surrounding the interchange / Plaza will support the public realm of the Town Centre.
- Links shopping centre into transport Interchange / Plaza.
- Creates better connectivity with the Old Town.

Additional public transport arrangements may be possible, providing the principle of relocation is respected and good accessibility maintained.

Quantum guide:

- Retail A1 / Cafes A3: 4,600 sqm footprint (assuming possible mezzanine) = 4,600 sqm.
- Residential C3: 1,140 sqm at an average of 3.5 levels = 3,990 sqm (approximately 60 units).
Character Area 2: Old Town

The site:
- Sutton Coldfield enjoys a rich history (both above and below ground) and this is reflected in its architectural design and quality. It benefits from a large number of listed buildings and two Conservation Areas.
- The Birmingham UDP defines the Sutton Coldfield High Street Conservation Area. This covers Vesey Gardens, including the Rectory and Holy Trinity Church just to the south, the roundabout and road layout to the north, and extends around a broad area, including the car parks to the west of the rail station, the Town Hall and a large area of residential properties.
- The retail frontage along the High Street are almost entirely statutorily listed buildings.
- The area suffers from heavy traffic flow.
- The retail offer is not as strong as that of the Town Centre and shopper footfall is lower.

Key Objectives:
- Deliver a programme of improvement to the public realm that is sensitive to the historic nature of the area.
- Improve the retail offer to differentiate it from the Town Centre, whilst ensuring it maintains viable commercial appeal.
- Resist redevelopment that is not appropriate in this sensitive area.
- Enhance the public space of Vesey Gardens and improve connectivity and accessibility to this area.

Regeneration Framework proposals:
- Business Partnership
  - By supporting the Town Centre Partnership, develop a range of measures that could be introduced to improve the businesses of the area.
  - High quality street finishing to improve the public realm and appearance of the Conservation Area.
  - Explore opportunities for additional cafe/restaurants in the Vesey Gardens area, once accessibility is improved.
  - Promote a specific retail offer, potentially with a restaurant focus, to define the area with respect to the Town Centre.

- Shop Frontage Strategy
  - Develop a frontage improvement strategy to encourage shop keepers within the Conservation Area to improve the material exterior of their properties, thereby improving the overall impact of the street scene.

- Transport issues
  - Reduce the level of traffic along High Street through the delivery of a potential relief road, to improve pedestrian movement/safety.

- Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP)
  - Produce a stand alone CAAMP that will support the regeneration aspirations of the Framework, whilst at the same time protecting the intrinsic quality of the historic environment.
Area 5: Station Sites

The site:

- The station area consists of four sites, the station itself and the car parks to the east and west.
- The existing layout uses a large surface area for car parking.
- There is an opportunity to intensify the uses around the station to release land and improve the connectivity of the area.

Regeneration Framework proposals:

- The overarching aim of the station sites redevelopment is to support the new transport system, facilitating the new interchange / Plaza and the re-routing of heavy traffic away from the town centre.
- Parking to the east of the Station will be replaced by the new road layout and provide capacity for the development of new retail and residential units. Car parking capacity overall will be maintained through incorporation into new development.

- Sutton Coldfield train station would benefit from a major public sector improvement programme.
- The main car park to the west of the station could accommodate additional parking through the use of the topography of the site. This will free up the eastern car parks for new development and enable greater use of park and ride initiatives.
Area 6: Town Hall

The site:

- The existing Town Hall building is frequently used for theatrical and social functions; the Council House and portacabin buildings on Clifton Road, houses Council staff and the Sutton Coldfield Constituency Office.

- The main buildings are locally listed and have attractive architectural qualities. The Town Hall’s position on the edge of a steep slope means that it commands views over large areas of south Sutton Coldfield and Sutton Park.

Regeneration Framework proposals:

- The exceptional quality of the Council House / Town Hall lends itself to a strong commercial use. The key proposal is to develop the site as a prestigious hotel and conference centre.

- The current level of community activities undertaken in the Town Hall will need to be managed sensitively, for the proposition to be successful.

- Car parking to facilitate such a use could be provided for by the redevelopment of the existing surface level car park opposite the Constituency office on Clifton Road.

- Any development on this site will need to have regard for the areas Conservation Area status. The Site of the Constituency office on Clifton Road could provide an extension to the convention centre, or be redeveloped for residential use.

Quantum guide:

- Conference Centre C2: 1,800 sqm footprint
- Hotel C1: 2,600 sqm footprint on 2.5 levels = 6,500 sqm
Area 7: Vesey Gardens and Old Town

The site:

- At present, the range of commercial activity in the ‘Old Town’ is limited. Diversifying the uses will broaden the area’s appeal.

- Vesey Gardens, although attractive and formally laid out, is under-used due to lack of presence and accessibility.

- The gardens offer a great opportunity to deliver an enhanced and more accessible piece of quality open space to the public.

Regeneration Framework proposals:

- Reduction of traffic flow through the potential development of the new relief road would mean less traffic along the High Street. This would support proposal for a shared surface environment along this section.

- High quality street finishing to improve the public realm and appearance of the Conservation Area.

- Encourage greater diversity in the area, i.e. improved café / restaurants.

- A frontage improvement strategy could be developed, to encourage improvements to the material exterior of properties.

- Introduce café/restaurants.

- Implement a hard and soft landscaping strategy to improve the quality of public realm to reflect the quality of the Conservation Area.
Character Area 3: Boulevard

The site:
- Birmingham Road from the southern junction with Holland Road to Queen St / Brassington Avenue roundabout at the southern edge of the existing Town Centre.
- Traffic is a major inhibitor to pedestrians at the roundabout and along the Birmingham Road.
- The roundabout itself creates a barrier for pedestrians and contributes to reduced footfall along the Birmingham Road.
- The quality of the public realm along the Birmingham Road is poor.

Key Objectives:
- Improve the public realm along the Birmingham Road.
- Improve the pedestrian experience and increase business performance along the Birmingham Road.
- Create a stronger sense of linkage between the boulevard area and the main Town Centre.
- Celebrate the cinema at the southern end of the Birmingham Road by creating a Gateway to the town.

Regeneration Framework proposals:
- Queen St Junction
  - Remove the existing roundabout and create a new junction, improving pedestrian/cyclists crossing facilities and enhance the sense of space.

- Boulevard
  - Make available alternative south bound routes to reduce traffic volumes on Birmingham Road and increase pedestrian safety. Boulevard style planting creates a visual link between the town centre and the southern shopping parade providing a sense of integration.

- Exploit the complementary value of the older buildings along the road, by encouraging café / restaurant uses which allow pedestrians to stay and relax.
- Deliver high quality public realm through the creation of active street frontages, landscaping / planting and regulated parking.
Area 8: Boulevard and Roundabout

The site:

- There is presently weak connectivity between the central retail activity area and Birmingham Road.
- The roundabout at the Queen St / Birmingham Rd intersection is intimidating for pedestrians and becomes congested.

Regeneration Framework proposals:

- Reduce the amount of traffic travelling through Queen Street / Birmingham Road junction by making available alternative south bound routes for through traffic.
- Increase pedestrian space and create an active street frontage through boulevard style landscaping and planting.
- Retain / rationalise on street parking to support retail activity and accessibility.

- Removal of the existing roundabout and provision of a new junction, improves pedestrian / cyclists crossing facilities and enhances the sense of space.
- Boulevard planting creates a visual link between the town centre and southern shopping parade, providing a sense of integration.
- Reduction in traffic will enable delivery of high quality public realm.
- Empowers pedestrian and cyclist through improved environment.

Quantum guide:

- Retail A1 / Cafes A3: 700 sqm footprint on 2 levels = 1,400 sq.m.
- Residential C3: 500 sqm over 5 levels = 2,500 sqm (approximately 35 units).
Part C: Deliverability

The delivery section of this report sets out the basic parameters and logic trail, required to deliver the core elements of the Regeneration Framework.

Given the catchment profile of the town, the retail centre must target a higher value spending offer. It must move away from the ‘weekly shop’ status it currently possesses, in order to take advantage of the local wealth and offer a quality alternative to competing centres.

The town will not greatly benefit from being regarded as another ubiquitous ‘shopping mall’. Shopping trends are favouring more traditional forms of layout and the reintroduction of a street based shopping environment, would set Sutton apart from its competitors.

In order to achieve this stronger retail offer, there are critical delivery factors that must come into play, whichever way the town centres growth is phased. These are:

- The relocation of the buses to another part of the town centre;
- The creation of a quality retail ‘high street’;
- Improved accessibility between the rail station and the shopping area;
- Greater presence of office and residential accommodation in the centre to generate genuine mixed use patronage and demand;
- Public realm improvements;
- Reinvestment in private stock throughout the Town Centre.

In order to drive the regeneration agenda forward, the following assumptions have been made:

1. Values / Demand can be grown over the lifetime of the project to support incremental growth and diversity: to grow the town organically as the major project interventions create each step change in attitude and patronage within the town.
2. Financial Viability is positive.
3. The market will support the phasing based on the review undertaken of the market.
4. Public sector funding can be obtained/mechanisms put in place to deliver the up front infrastructure requirements for the town.
5. Land parcels can be acquired if necessary, to assemble larger scheme areas.

Many of the phases outlined below are dependent on infrastructure improvements and therefore at each stage there will be a risk to delivery, relative to the cost and timing of the delivery of infrastructure. Whilst a preferred order of change is promoted, alternative strategies need to be borne in mind to ensure that the framework remains viable and deliverable. This will ensure that the possibilities of land assembly, (and attitudes to development opportunity) coming forward in an alternative order, should not be discounted.

At each level of intervention the core objective i.e. the establishment of a town centre capable of out-competing neighbouring centres, has to be at the forefront of the design and delivery proposals. The Town Centre Partnership can play an important role in this respect, in that it can promote the regeneration initiatives to the business community and take an active part in communication throughout the entire process.

Implementation

The Framework is considered to be the strategic vision for the future development of the town. However, it does not intend to be a prescriptive toolkit for development. Rather, it establishes the basis principles for the quantum of development and the general land uses considered to be acceptable.

The document is flexible enough to allow for the submission of one over-arching planning application, or phased developments dealing instead with the area in logical segments. In either event, financial contributions can be anticipated for the following, to ensure the delivery of a coherent and comprehensive regeneration strategy:

- Highway improvements and public transport,
- Public realm improvements, including new street furniture, lighting, paving and hard and soft landscaping,
- Improved pedestrian and cycling links throughout the framework area and especially to Sutton Park and the railway station,
- Affordable housing in accordance with PPG3 and adopted SPG, providing a range of accommodation and mix of tenures,
- Improving educational facilities,
- Public interpretation of archaeological remains, where appropriate,
- Provision of public art,
- Targeted employment and training initiatives to provide employment opportunities for local people, especially the long term unemployed, during the construction and operational phases of any new development,
- Off site Public Open Space, to help strengthen the relationship of the Town Centre to Sutton Park,
- Promotion, development and/or sustainability of the Town Centre Partnership.
Phasing

The mix of uses and floorspace totals promoted within the Regional Spatial Strategy, and integrated into these proposals, cannot come forward as one scheme.

The scale of development may therefore require multiple delivery vehicles and phases, to account for commercial demand and supply.

The Regeneration Framework has identified eight distinct phases which would help to ensure that the vision for Sutton Coldfield Town Centre is realised:
- 01 Interchange
- 02 Retail-Gracechurch link
- 03 Retail-Red Rose
- 04 Retail-Newhall Walk
- 05 Town Hall
- 06 Boulevard
- 07 Old Town
- 08 Residual Retail

It is acknowledged that economic conditions will impact on any timetable or phasing plan, and that some phases will only be able to be developed once others have been implemented. In this context, an indicative programme will be prepared to guide the implementation stages. Provided the overall philosophy and aspirations are not compromised, an alternative phasing approach could deliver the regeneration offer.

However, to deliver the retail core, it is considered that proposals (interim or permanent) to relocate buses from the principal shopping area, should be brought forward as soon as possible, to free up the existing land areas for retail led redevelopment.

The City Council is supportive of the overarching objectives outlined in this draft document, and will endeavour to support proposals that come forward in line with those objectives. Each phase regardless of the order, will be required to deliver the retail circuit and thereby establish the town as a destination of choice. The certainty of delivery must not be compromised through piecemeal change. The use of its Compulsory Purchase powers (in support of approved development and/or transport proposals) may be appropriate.
Deliverability: Transport Interchange / Plaza

A new transport interchange / plaza (01) delivers a number of key outputs in its own right, addressing primarily the arrival and accessibility issues identified in the study, as well as freeing up space to implement the Town Square proposals.

The site takes into account the potential to enhance the new station complex with Network Rail as a partner, and improve the linkage into the retail centre.

Essential elements required to be in place to enable this to happen include:

- Realigned road network
- Significant earthworks/re-profiling
- Partnership amongst bus operators

Risk Analysis

- Costs and resource availability
- Politics (Road Scheme)
- Partnership

Delivery

- Public sector controlled
- Stand alone scheme
- DCC / Network Rail / bus operators
- Developer partner
Deliverability: Retail Centre

In order to achieve the long term goal of retail growth, the regeneration framework requires a pragmatic retail phasing strategy. This phasing scenario is considered to be the most likely to secure this overall objective. However, as noted earlier, private investment decisions and other funding considerations will play a critical part in the eventual regeneration mechanism.

The areas have been divided into three principal blocks. Phase 1 (02) links the retail space between the proposed new road development and the existing Mall around the URC Church (03). Phase 2 relates to the Red Rose Centre and Phase 3 is the Newhall Walk area (04).

Retail 1: Grace Church Link (02)

This phase provides the most direct link into the new transport hub and will enable (with the appropriate level of land acquisition and control) the first opportunity for retail growth. The value generated within this phase will be insufficient to contribute to wider infrastructure elements and public realm improvements; these will either require up front public sector cash flow, or deferred payments provided through the release of value from later retail phases. It is important however, that this represents the initial impression for Sutton Coldfield visitors. Delayed delivery and or reduced quality will have an impact on the objective of delivering a high quality town centre.

Retail 2: Red Rose Centre

This phase offers the greatest impact on the retail shopping environment. It removes the less attractive / outworn properties, provides the first major opportunity to integrate uses, and promotes the wider modern format retail offer.

In addition, this phase has attached to it the responsibilities of ensuring design quality, standards for the public realm and mix of uses. For these reasons, it will be important the public sector retains a degree of control and influence in the release of the opportunity, and/or the shape of final proposals, to underpin these pre-requisites.

Risk Analysis
- Costs and resource availability
- Transportation pre-requisites
- Design integration of interchange and retail frontages
- Partnership/regeneration with URC
- Levels

Delivery
- Public sector controlled interchange has to drive this scheme
- May be better as linked scheme to interchange

Essential elements required to be in place to enable this to happen:
- Land owner agreement / partnership
- Current bus arrangements relocated
- Replacement car parking
- Council commitment to Civic presence

Deliverability
Retail 3 - Newhall Walk

This phase (04) completes the retail circuit and provides for the bulk of future capacity supply. The phase is essentially privately led, though proposals must be comprehensive and in accordance with the vision, to ensure that the quality of offer is consistent and that accessibility throughout the town is maintained.

Essential elements required to be in place to enable this to happen:

• Landowner involvement
• Transport interchange
• Replacement car parking

Risk Analysis

• Costs and resource availability
• Levels
• Timescale

Delivery

• Private sector led
• Significant retail driver for the town
• Public realm improvements, especially at junction of Birmingham Road / Queen Street
Deliverability: Town Hall

The Town Hall and Council House are prestigious buildings in the context of the town and the Conservation Area, and for these reasons their continued use, rather than as a redevelopment site, is recommended.

Their use as a hotel and conference centre would be an attractive additional offer, since a residential conversion will forever shut out opportunities for public access to the property. This is especially relevant with regards to the community uses, currently undertaken in the Town Hall.

Unlike the ‘Boulevard’ and ‘Old Town’ proposals, the Town Hall area could become attractive with the onset of the major retail phase and associated Birmingham City Council led office scheme. Pressure to reuse this building would become intense.

However, there are relatively few operators in the current market who would be prepared to convert this property into a hotel. The catchment profile of Sutton Coldfield has to change in order to consider this option. Sutton’s relative proximity to Birmingham and the quality of the existing offer in the town centre, together provide significant barriers to progression. But, with a strengthened retail core, there would be an opportunity to capture local conferencing and hotel demand in the future.

The space should be promoted on the basis of the preferred use with alternative uses such as residential or office conversion, being a fallback position.

Essential elements required to be in place to enable this to happen:
- Strengthened retail centre
- Consumer pattern changes
- Buoyant hotel market
- Agreement of City Council / involvement of Town Hall User Group
Deliverability: Boulevard

Unlike with the transport interchange and the principal new build retail projects, the success of the Birmingham Road proposals largely rests on strengthening the exiting shopping etc. offer (06).

However, it is unlikely that there will be sufficient patronage in the short term to encourage would-be investors/occupiers to establish high quality restaurants etc without significant risk.

To achieve a quality transformation of the area, and enable it to perform its complementary function to the retail core, the level of public sector investment will be significant. This project could be delivered by the public sector in as much as they relate primarily to public realm and highway improvements. This will require commitment to up front resources, forward funding, or through a phased release of value from early retail elements.

Essential elements required to be in place to enable this to happen:
- Public Realm improvements
- Boulevard parking/environmental improvements
- Strengthened retail centre
- Consumer demand and patronage increase

Risk Analysis
- Costs / availability of resources
- Timescale
- Demand
Deliverability: Old Town

As with the proposals for Birmingham Road, this scheme (07) is again unlikely to be a project that will be delivered in the short term in its entirety. With a reliance on enhancing quality of design and Conservation, niche operators will face higher establishment costs in this area. Commercial premises will be in close proximity to the rail station and these uses are to be encouraged to locate here where they are small scale and will fit into the neighbourhood. The mix of independents that can establish themselves in this environment will complement the other major proposals coming forward.

To achieve a quality transformation of the area, and to enable it to perform its complementary function to the retail core, the level of public sector investment will be significant. Like with the proposals for the Birmingham Road (Boulevard) this will require commitment to up front public sector resources, forward funding, or phase release of value from earlier retail phases.

Essential elements required to be in place to enable this to happen:

- Highway realignments
- Transport interchange / plaza
- Strengthened retail centre
- Operator demand and consumer pattern changes

Risk Analysis

- Conservation implications
- Timescale
- Demand
- Costs and resource availability
6.0 Next Step

It is an exciting, but challenging time for Sutton Coldfield Town Centre. This Framework has been prepared as an aspirational vision for its future, but it is not however a ‘blueprint’ or a masterplan of imminent development. It provides a long term strategy, which is intended to stimulate and guide both private and public sector investment.

During its preparation and consultation, the document and its proposals provoked healthy debate over the direction that stakeholders, investors and the local community wished to see develop. The adopted Framework will now provide the basis for managing co-ordinated change and long-term transformation of Sutton Coldfield Town Centre.