



A Joint Core Strategy for the Black Country

Black Country Core Strategy

Adopted February 2011

BLACK COUNTRY CORE STRATEGY

Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

Walsall Council

Wolverhampton City Council

This is a Development Plan Document under Section 13 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004.

The four authorities resolved to adopt the document on 3rd February 2011.

This and other Local Development Framework documents are or will be made available on request in large copy print, audio cassette, Braille or languages other than English.

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FOREWORD

The Black Country Core Strategy: Our Distinctive Approach

The Black Country forms a distinctive sub-region in terms of its economic history, settlement form and topography which has led to the 4 local authorities having a shared set of social, economic and environmental issues to respond to, often on a cross-boundary basis. This has led us to work together on the Black Country Vision and Study establishing a clear and shared set of ambitions and direction of travel with an agreed economic and spatial strategy.

There is a common will amongst the authorities and an agreed political consensus, to meet the challenges and make the changes that will transform the Black Country. Our Core Strategy is bold, reflecting our shared goals of creating a growing, competitive and sustainable urban area which is a quality place in which to live and work for our existing population (1.1 million) and our future residents. Our Core Strategy is unique, not only that it will cover the largest population in England, but also in its ambitions.

The scale of the Black Country challenge requires long term commitment and mutual support, a sharing of skills and resources, and consideration of dedicated leadership and teams. We ourselves identified a huge transformational challenge through the Black Country Study and this is now taken forward in this Core Strategy. We believe that the Black Country is up to the challenge. There is no alternative if the demands and aspirations of this and future generations are to be met.

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1. INTRODUCTION

a. What is the Role of the Core Strategy?

- 1.1 The Black Country Core Strategy (which is referred to as the Core Strategy throughout the document) is visionary and transformational. It sets out how the Black Country should look in 2026 and establishes clear directions for change in order to achieve this transformation.
- 1.2 The Government encourages local authorities to explore and exploit opportunities for joint working on Core Strategies. Partnership working has been embraced by the Black Country local authorities of Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton as a logical response to the intertwined nature of the sub-region's challenges and opportunities. Joint working, through the Black Country Consortium, was key to delivery of the Black Country Study and the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) Phase 1 Revision, which dealt specifically with the Black Country.
- 1.3 Due to the strategic location of the Black Country at the heart of the region, the Core Strategy has been prepared in the context of spatial and economic relationships with adjacent areas of Birmingham, Southern Staffordshire, Worcestershire and with parts of Shropshire, particularly Telford and Wrekin.
- 1.4 The Core Strategy is a spatial plan, as required by current legislation, which means that it goes well beyond the traditional land-use based development plan and addresses a wide range of activities and interventions that are required to create sustainable communities across the whole of the Black Country. It provides a clear spatial or locational dimension to the regeneration and renaissance of the area, addressing its economic, transportation, social infrastructure and environmental needs whilst reducing its carbon footprint and helping to tackle climate change.
- 1.5 This submission report also represents a major stage in the Black Country Local Authorities' work to replace their Unitary Development Plans (UDPs) with new Local Development Frameworks (LDFs). The requirement to produce an LDF was established by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 which came into force in September 2004. The Local Development Framework forms what is called 'the Development Plan'. This is the template against which planning applications and regeneration programmes are tested. The LDF also has a key role in providing a spatial dimension for many other strategies, in particular the Sustainable Community Strategy and helping in their coordination and delivery throughout local planning authority areas.
- 1.6 The statutory Development Plan for the Black Country will comprise:
 - the Core Strategy, setting out a detailed spatial strategy and the policies and mechanisms needed for delivery across the Black Country and;
 - a series of area action plans (AAPs), site allocations documents (SADs) and other local development documents (LDDs) prepared by individual local authorities, containing site allocations, detailed policies and local implementation mechanisms for specific areas. A number of area action plans are already adopted and others are in progress.
- 1.7 The Core Strategy has been developed through a comprehensive and inclusive process which began with the preparation of the Black Country Study and the RSS Phase 1 Revision, adopted in 2008. An Issues and Options consultation took place in June-July 2007, followed by a Preferred Options consultation in March 2008. Throughout this process there have been opportunities to integrate the emerging Core Strategy with emerging Sustainable Communities Strategies, culminating in the publication of the Core Strategy in November 2009.

- 1.8 The process has involved public and stakeholder engagement at every stage and has considered all reasonable options and approaches to delivering the changes required to transform the Black Country into a series of sustainable local communities where people want to live, work and visit.

Structure of the Core Strategy

- 1.9 The Core Strategy is structured as follows:

Chapters 1, 2 & 9

- set out a spatial portrait of the area as it is now and summarise the main issues facing the Black Country up to 2026.
- outline the key regional, sub-regional and local context within which the Core Strategy has been prepared, including links to other documents such as sustainable community strategies.
- set out the Core Strategy Vision, sustainability principles and spatial objectives.
- detail the spatial strategy for the Black Country.
- include a series of core spatial policies to provide a framework for the more detailed thematic policies.
- set out how the Core Strategy will be delivered and monitored.

Chapters 3-8

- include a series of more detailed policies and proposals that are required to achieve the Core Strategy Vision. They reflect the key elements of the Vision and are grouped into seven sections - creating sustainable communities; economy, employment and centres; transportation and accessibility; environmental infrastructure; waste; minerals; and monitoring.

Appendices

The Appendices include more detailed information on a number of aspects of the Core Strategy. Appendix 2 sets out the detailed development framework, or Spatial Strategy, for each of the Regeneration Corridors and Strategic Centres. This includes broad locations for new development and the key infrastructure improvements necessary to ensure the delivery of the Strategy. Appendix 8 lists, for each local authority, the current UDP policies and proposals which will be superseded by Core Strategy policies and proposals upon adoption. The Core Strategy results in various changes to the adopted Proposals Maps of Dudley, Sandwell and Wolverhampton: these changes are provided separately.

b. The Black Country Today - A Spatial Portrait

Location

- 1.10 The Black Country comprises the Boroughs of Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and the City of Wolverhampton, covers 356 square kilometres and sits at the heart of England, forming the western part of the West Midlands Metropolitan Area, the largest conurbation outside London.
- 1.11 The Black Country is adjoined by some very different neighbours, with Birmingham, the UK's largest Local Authority, to the east, whilst to the north, south and west are smaller mostly rural Districts in Staffordshire and Worcestershire, including a necklace of centres - Cannock, Lichfield, Bromsgrove and Kidderminster.
- 1.12 The Black Country lies at the heart of the West Midlands transport hub, with national rail and motorway links north, south, east and west, notably the West Coast Main Line and the M5 and M6 motorways.

Topography

- 1.13 Relative to its size the Black Country is the most geologically diverse area on the planet, and the richness and variety of its mineral deposits have created a legacy which still shapes the Black Country today.
- 1.14 Historic buildings and other structures made from locally produced bricks, tiles and stone make a significant contribution to the character of many of our town and district centres, most notably Dudley Town Centre. The geodiversity, of the Black Country also influences the natural environment and biodiversity through influence on soil type and hydrology. The restoration or return to nature of former mineral workings has also provided important recreational resources and wildlife habitats, such as Wren's Nest in Dudley, Baggeridge Country Park adjacent to the Black Country in southern Staffordshire and Cuckoo's Nook and the Dingle in Walsall.
- 1.15 There is hardly any part of the Black Country without mineral resources, although mineral working today is confined to a few quarries concentrated in the Kingswinford / Pensnett areas of Dudley and the Aldridge / Stubbers Green areas of Walsall. The mineral resources present in the Black Country include Etruria Marl (a nationally scarce clay which is still worked today and used for brick and tile making), sand and gravel (also still worked, but in limited quantities), coal, fireclay, ironstone, limestone and dolerite. The South Staffordshire coal seam – 'the 30 foot seam' - which is the thickest in Great Britain outcrops at various places throughout the area.
- 1.16 The landscape is characterised by a number of prominent high points and beacons, still largely undeveloped, including the Sedgley to Northfield Ridge, the Queslett to Shire Oak Ridge, the Rowley Hills, the Sedgley Beacon, Wren's Nest, Castle Hill and Barr Beacon. The Black Country's overall elevation is demonstrated by the rather surprising fact that The Hawthorns, West Bromwich Albion's ground, is the highest above sea level of all the English Premiership and League football grounds.
- 1.17 The Black Country is at the watershed of two major rivers. The larger, south west, part of the Black Country drains into the River Severn via the River Stour, while to the north east, the River Tame carries water downstream to the River Trent. Many watercourses, particularly in the River Tame catchment, are culverted or in concrete channels through the urban areas.

Heritage

- 1.18 The Black Country today is very much a product of its industrial past. It has a special place in UK and world history as the area which pioneered the urbanisation of the industrial revolution, but its industrial past goes back much further to at least the 16th century and it was an important area of weapons manufacture during the Civil War.
- 1.19 The Industrial Revolution, however, had a significant impact and by the 19th century many of the towns and villages had their own specialist manufacturing such as chains at Cradley and hollowware at Lye, locks in Willenhall and Wolverhampton, and leather goods in Walsall. By Victorian times, the Black Country was one of the most heavily industrialised areas in the world, based on iron and coal and their many associated businesses. A dense network of railways, canals and tramways was developed to serve the industries and get the goods to markets around the world.
- 1.20 The Black Country at the height of the industrial revolution is typified by the quote in 1862 by Elihu Burritt, the American consul to Birmingham, who described the area as 'black by day and red by night' and by the belief that the grim region of Mordor (dark land) in J.R.R. Tolkien's 'Lord of the Rings' is based on the Black Country.
- 1.21 It is popularly believed that the Black Country got its name from heavy industrial pollution although historians now believe that its derivation is much earlier arising from the coal outcroppings and the resultant very black soil. Irrespective, there is no doubt that the industrial revolution and the pollution that came with it has created a very unusual urban structure and left a legacy of important industrial heritage together with a series of post industrial challenges.

Urban Structure

- 1.22 The word polycentric could have been invented for the Black Country, with its urban structure arising directly from its industrial heritage. Each village or town developed into a strong community with distinctive characteristics, often based on a particular manufacturing specialism. These settlements have now largely coalesced into a continuous urban area, but local identities and loyalties still remain important. There are some 25 towns and 4 major strategic centres, Brierley Hill, Walsall, West Bromwich and Wolverhampton. The denseness of the urban area and the number of centres created particularly complex movement patterns and led to a complicated transport network.
- 1.23 The legacy of the Black Country's industrial past and the changing economic situation has resulted in significant areas of ground contamination, hidden mine workings and dereliction, and also the abandonment of many canals and railways lines. However, these abandoned areas now provide significant opportunities for reversing decline, repairing environmental damage and creating more healthy and sustainable communities. For example, on-site recycling of construction, demolition and excavation waste as part of the land remediation process helps to maintain supplies of aggregates for building and engineering. Currently, the majority of the Black Country's supply of aggregates is believed to come from secondary or recycled sources or from outside the area, as the Black Country produces very little primary land won aggregate. Restoration of former limestone workings and mines also provides opportunities for disposal of inert (non-biodegradable) wastes.

- 1.24 Beyond its industrial heartland, the character of the Black Country is quite different and varied. The green borderland, which has been designated as Green Belt, is most prominent in parts of Dudley, Walsall and the Sandwell Valley, and is a largely open landscape made up of agricultural land, woodland, nature reserves, sports and recreational facilities and scattered communities, containing fragile remnants of the ancient past. The urban fringe areas are also characterised by attractive, well treed suburbs with large houses in substantial gardens. Where areas are still affected by quarrying, in most cases visual impacts have been minimised by screening and planting.

Economy

- 1.25 Until the 1980s the Black Country, together with Birmingham and Coventry, was the powerhouse of Britain's manufacturing economy and the home to internationally known companies such as Stewart and Lloyd (later part of British Steel), Holcrofts, Mander Paints, Goodyear, Joseph Sankey (later part of GKN) Boak, Chubb, Avery and Legg. The area also has a tradition in brewing including Banks (the Wolverhampton and Dudley Brewery now part of Marstons), Mitchells and Butlers at the Cape Hill Brewery in Sandwell, Bathams and Holdens together with many small local breweris often linked to individual public houses. With the on-set of globalisation and changing economic imperatives, manufacturing has declined although it still remains a vital part of the local economy with over 18% of all jobs still in this sector compared with 11% nationally.
- 1.26 There are over 100,000 fewer jobs today than in the 1970s resulting in about 450,000 being in work. In addition to manufacturing the biggest employment sectors are now public administration, including education and health at 26%, and the growing distribution and logistics sector at 23%, which benefits from the area's central location in the UK.
- 1.27 The waste management sector provides an important element of the Black Country's infrastructure. Altogether, there are more than 200 waste management facilities, including some of the largest commercial waste management facilities in the country. The facilities are mostly concentrated in employment areas, the main exception being landfill sites which are mainly on the periphery of the urban areas, reflecting their origin as former mineral extraction sites. However, the Black Country does not have the full range of facilities necessary to manage the waste it produces.
- 1.28 A major issue for the whole of the West Midlands Region is its output gap measured in Gross Added Value (GVA) compared to the national average which has been estimated to be £15bn per annum. A significant part of this, £2.4bn or about 30% is attributed to the Black Country and arises from 3 particular circumstances; people not in employment, skills deficit and a lack of economic dynamism, which results in a GVA shortfall of almost £4,400 per head of the population. 1 in 4 of the population have no formal qualifications and only 17.4% have degrees which is more than 10% below the national average.

The People

- 1.29 The Black Country is home to over 1.08 m people, nearly one fifth of the Region's population, comprising some 440,000 households. After years of decline the population is starting to increase, and loss due to migration is falling.
- 1.30 It is a very diverse community, with some 15% of people from Black, Minority and Ethnic (BME) origins, particularly from the Indian Sub Continent and the Caribbean, compared to the national average of 9%.

- 1.31 Whilst there are a number of attractive and popular housing districts, many parts of the core of the Black Country are dominated by concentrations of low priced private housing and large areas of social rented housing. Some 5.1% of the total dwelling stock is classed as unfit and 20% of Black Country communities are in the 10% most deprived in the country.
- 1.32 There is a low level of affluence with less than 15% of the population in Social Groups A and B compared to the national average of 22%.
- 1.33 Although levels of health and well-being vary across the Black Country, there are some common trends. Work by Sport England has identified consistently low levels of participation in sports and physical activity across the Black Country (16%) compared to both national (21%) and regional (19.3%) averages. Linked to this, health deprivation, measured as part of the Index of Local Deprivation, is also high, particularly in the traditional heart of the Black Country.

Culture

- 1.34 The Black Country's heritage and industrial legacy together with immigration has resulted in particularly diverse and distinctive local cultures focussed on strong loyalties to the many local communities. The area's industrial archaeology and heritage permeates the whole area and continues to dominate the image of the area, from the canal network above ground to the limestone caverns beneath it.

Governance

- 1.35 Until Local Government reorganisation in 1974 created the 4 Metropolitan Districts of Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton, the Black Country comprised some 21 urban and rural District Councils largely reflecting the range and distribution of the communities that still exist today.
- 1.36 The Governance arrangements which cover the Black Country today are complex and reflect the range of issues which need to be tackled. In addition to the Local Authorities themselves, all 4 are partners in the Black Country Consortium, whose remit is to enable and commission holistic regeneration across the Black Country by working with its partners in the public, private and third sectors.
- 1.37 Although there is no joint waste authority, the four waste disposal/collection authorities have informal joint working arrangements, and the chief officers and other senior officers have regular meetings and discussions. They have also assisted with the preparation of the waste policies in the strategy, ensuring that they are aligned with municipal waste management strategies.
- 1.38 A range of national, regional and local organisations have key roles to play in the regeneration and growth of the area. These roles were in a state of flux at the time of writing, but the organisations have included to date the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), the regional development agency, development companies and local strategic partnerships. The latter provide important perspectives on local issues and priorities.

The Opportunities

- 1.39 If current trends continue, employment in the Black Country will decline further, the income and productivity gap with the rest of the UK will continue to widen, net outward migration will persist and the population will fall. The result will be a reduction in quality of life and reduced access to opportunities for those who remain.
- 1.40 Many of the negatives can, and are, being turned around and provide the opportunities for sustained regeneration and renaissance, retaining the strength of the area's industrial heritage, whilst at the same time increasing economic growth, improving the housing stock, building business confidence, increasing environmental sustainability and tackling climate change.
- 1.41 The public and private sectors have a strong record of successful working in the Black Country and across the conurbation. However, the difficulty and complexity of the tasks ahead, exacerbated by the current economic downturn, require a particularly focussed and co-ordinated response to ensure that spatial planning, economic development, transport, regeneration, housing, carbon reduction and sustainability are all delivered in a mutually supportive manner. This Core Strategy is one of the principal mechanisms by which this will be achieved.

c. What Are Our Guiding Principles?

i. Links with Existing Strategies

(a) Adjacent Authorities

- 1.42 Liaison has taken place directly with the adjacent authorities and via the former West Midlands Regional Assembly to ensure that the Core Strategy for the Black Country is compatible and co-ordinated with emerging core strategies in those authorities. Regard has also been had to the core strategy for Telford & Wrekin, which although not contiguous, has important links with the Black Country.
- 1.43 The emerging Core Strategies for South Staffordshire, Cannock, Lichfield and Bromsgrove seek to consolidate their relationship with the Metropolitan Major Urban Area (MUA) whilst promoting sustainable patterns of growth to best meet the needs of their catchment areas and achieving rural renaissance.
- 1.44 Telford is a former New Town and is a designated Growth Point. It sits at the western end of the Wolverhampton High Tech Corridor emphasising the economic links with the Black Country. The approved core strategy adopted in December 2007 and the area action plan for Central Telford set a framework to create a largely self contained sustainable community.
- 1.45 Walsall, Sandwell and Dudley all adjoin Birmingham on their eastern boundaries and the Core Strategy has had regard to the emerging Birmingham Core Strategy even though it is somewhat behind the Black Country timetable. Emerging policies are consistent with those for the Black Country and include a focus on brownfield land redevelopment, growth being focused on four priority areas, two of which have direct implications for the Black Country. These are development in South West Birmingham focusing on Longbridge as part of the central technology belt and the Western corridor based on the Urban Living Pathfinder and linking directly with regeneration corridors in Sandwell.

1.46 The minerals and waste sections have been prepared in the context of the emerging minerals and waste policies in the RSS Phase 2 and Phase 3 Revisions, and in liaison with other mineral and waste planning authorities in the region through informal discussions and through forums such as the West Midlands Regional Minerals and Waste Officers' Group (RMWOG), the West Midlands Regional Technical Body for Waste (WMRTAB) and West Midlands Regional Aggregates Working Party (WMRAWP).

(b) Sustainable Community Strategies

1.47 The Core Strategy builds upon and adds a spatial dimension to the vision and objectives of the former four Black Country community strategies, and influenced their development as they evolved into sustainable community strategies.

Dudley

1.48 The Dudley Borough Challenge vision for 2020 is of sustainable, inclusive and connected communities across Dudley that actively realise their own potential, effectively supported by local services.

1.49 In light of this, the Dudley Community Partnership's strategy seeks to work toward Dudley Borough being a place where;

- businesses thrive and invest, and people are skilled for now and the future.
- people are healthy and have good mental health.
- people feel pride and belonging, and celebrate their heritage and varied culture.
- people care with pride for a natural and built environment that is attractive, healthy and safe.
- people are inspired to reach their full potential.
- people are safe and enjoy a sense of freedom from crime.

1.50 The Dudley Borough Challenge recognises that activities are already taking place that seeks to improve, either directly or indirectly, the quality of life for people living and working in the Borough.

1.51 The Challenge however is to address those priorities identified within it, through shared resources and effort, to fulfil the Challenge outcomes and bring about strong communities.

Sandwell

1.52 The Sandwell Plan 2008 sets out the vision and priorities for the borough to 2021. The Sandwell partnership has spoken to local people, councillors, local businesses, voluntary/community and public sector organisations in Sandwell and found that there is a remarkable amount of agreement about what is wanted for the Borough in the coming years. It is agreed that, above all, the Sandwell of 2021 should be a place where people want to live and work.

1.53 Out of these conversations has come a Vision for Sandwell:

Sandwell: Great People, Great Place, Great Prospects

- People will choose Sandwell for their home, their job and their leisure.
- An inspiring place, easy to get around, with quality homes, schools, shops and great places to go.
- Sandwell will realise its abundant talent and potential through the success of its businesses, schools and communities.

1.54 In addition to working towards the transformation of Sandwell, stakeholders have identified four key factors that need to be at the heart of our future improvement and regeneration:

1. Fair

A Sandwell that is fair for everyone, where no-one is disadvantaged.

2. Listening and Responsive

A Sandwell that is inclusive, where people are actively involved in their town and neighbourhood.

3. Cohesive

A place where people get on well together as the population becomes more diverse.

4. Sustainable

The creation of a strong and healthy society alongside a sustainable economy.

Walsall

1.55 Walsall's Sustainable Community Strategy aims to engage all key partners to work together to develop a plan targeted at sustainable actions that promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of the borough while safeguarding the prospects of future generations.

1.56 Through extensive research and consultation, the strategy has been able to identify a number of aspirations which people living and working in Walsall have for their future. This has allowed Walsall Partnership to develop a 12 year plan for the borough which sets out priorities and how they are to be achieved.

1.57 The plan includes a number of aspirations for Walsall but there are three overarching aims which feed through all of the strategy:

- Reduce inequalities and narrow the gap between the least and most affluent individuals and communities, while raising the quality of life for everyone.
- Ensure sustainability as we deliver social, economic and environmental benefits.
- Provide effective, high quality, customer-focused services which meet people's changing needs wherever they live in Walsall.

Wolverhampton

1.58 The Wolverhampton Partnership has produced the Wolverhampton Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) which describes the kind of city that residents, partner organisations and stakeholders would like Wolverhampton to be by 2026. It is based around the following vision:

By 2026, Wolverhampton will be a City where people can thrive. The economy is transformed and the gap in health, wealth and prosperity between communities and neighbourhoods in the City is substantially reduced. Wolverhampton is a place with safe, strong, diverse and popular neighbourhoods, a place where everyone has an improved quality of life and the chance to reach his or her full potential and where the benefits of the City's growth are widely shared.

1.59 Five resident outcomes have been identified to measure progress towards realising this vision:

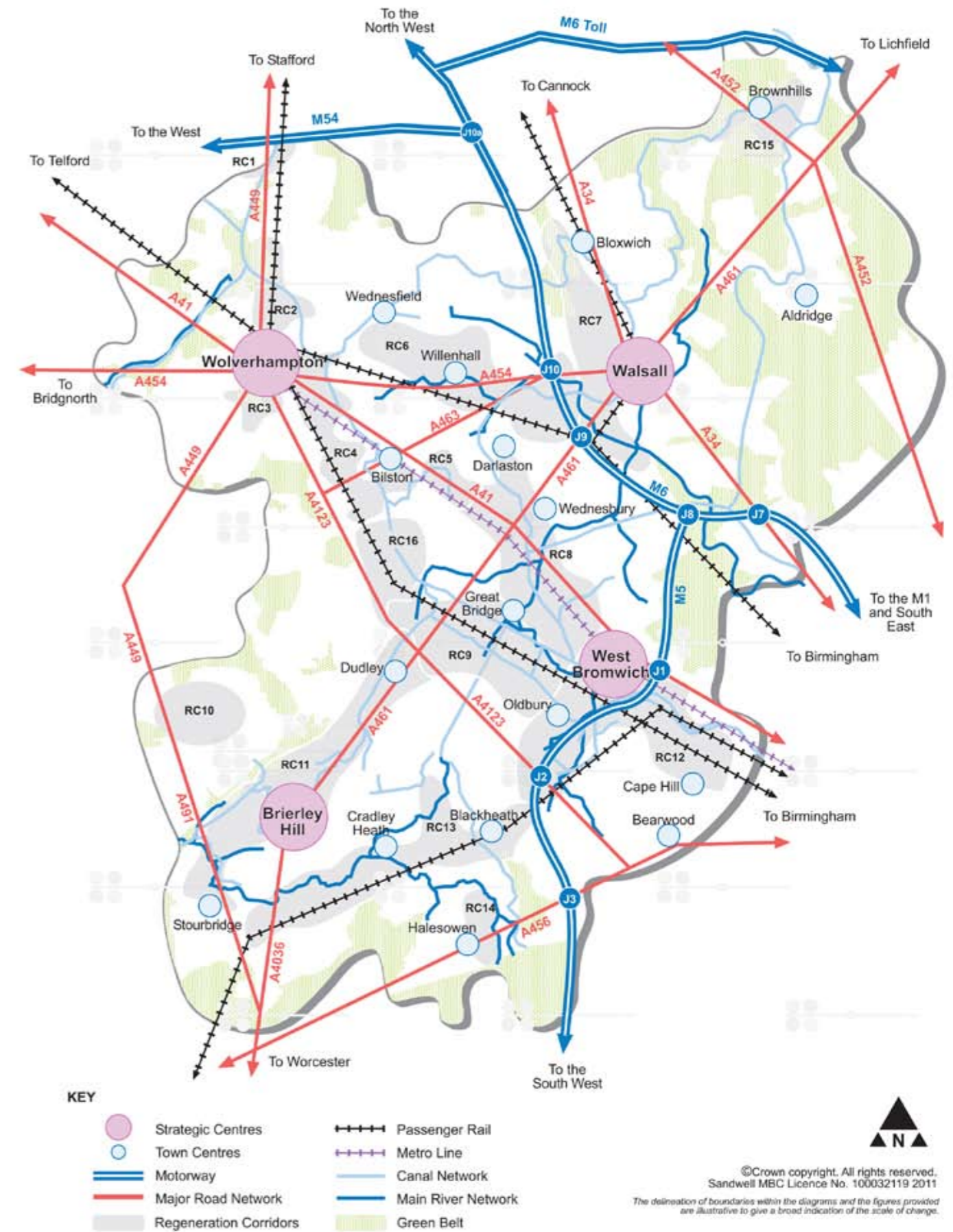
- We like where we live.
- We have the employment opportunities we need.
- We live longer, healthier lives.
- We feel safer and more involved.
- We have the skills and knowledge we need.

These five outcomes were developed from consultation with residents and Local and Neighbourhood Arrangements, and are at the heart of the Wolverhampton Local Area Agreement with Government designed to make clear progress in the most important challenges facing the City.

ii Alternative Approaches

- 1.60 The issue of whether or not the Core Strategy is the most appropriate in all the circumstances has been considered throughout the plan making process. Alternative approaches were considered as part of the Regional Spatial Strategy process, the Black Country Study and the RSS Phase 1 Revision, and during the Phase 2 Revision to a lesser extent. In particular, having considered the alternatives, the EiP Panel for the Phase 1 Revision gave strong endorsement to the strategy of achieving renaissance by focusing growth and regeneration in the Centres and Regeneration Corridors.
- 1.61 Within this context, alternative ways of delivering the Core Strategy were considered through public consultation on Issues and Options in 2007 and Preferred Options in 2008. In particular, two spatial options were considered. Option 1 concentrated high density housing within the Regeneration Corridors, whereas Option 2 proposed a more dispersed, lower density approach. The Preferred Options Report concluded that there was support for a balanced approach, applying a mix of Option 1 and 2 approaches to Regeneration Corridors across the Black Country depending on local circumstances, particularly sustainable transport access.
- 1.62 Since the Preferred Options was published there has been a major shift in the national housing market. This shift has reduced the viability of the most constrained housing sites in the Black Country, and has also made higher density housing difficult to deliver. These two factors are likely to continue to affect housing delivery for most of the first phase of the Core Strategy (2006-16).
- 1.63 However, the Core Strategy has proved sufficiently flexible to adapt to these changes. The four local authorities have produced Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments (SHLAAs) which take the new market conditions into account. The SHLAA's have identified housing sites outside the Growth Network which can now be taken into account in the housing trajectory. It has therefore been possible to reduce the amount of employment land allocated for housing - which includes the most constrained housing sites - and to reduce density assumptions on this land.
- 1.64 Therefore, notwithstanding the shift in approach outlined above, consultations at the Issues and Options and Preferred Options stages showed broad support for the overall spatial strategy which now forms the basis of the Core Strategy. There were many detailed issues raised at both consultation stages, including suggestions that the release of Green Belt land was necessary to meet housing targets. Such an approach would undermine the fundamental principles of the Black Country Study.
- 1.65 Alternatives to the detailed policies in the Core Strategy were also considered at both consultation stages, and have resulted in the policies considered most likely to deliver the various aspects of the overall strategy.
- 1.66 The Black Country Authorities therefore believe that the chosen strategy and the individual policies will best deliver national, regional and local objectives, and are the most appropriate in all the circumstances.

Black Country Core Strategy Key Diagram



2. THE BLACK COUNTRY IN 2026

2.1 A shared Vision, Sustainability Principles, Spatial Objectives and a flexible and robust Spatial Strategy have been developed for the Core Strategy.

2a. The Vision

2.2 The Vision consists of three major directions of change and underpins the approach to the whole strategy;

1. Sustainable Communities

We will create a network of cohesive, healthy and prosperous communities across the Black Country, with equal access to a mix of affordable and aspirational housing, a range of quality community services and an integrated transport network which reduces the need to travel by car. Regeneration should aim to promote and facilitate healthy living and create environments which offer opportunities for active lifestyles and healthy choices, including provision for walking, cycling and outdoor recreation within the urban fabric of the Black Country.

2. Environmental Transformation

We will create a step change in the image and environmental quality of the Black Country to underpin social and economic transformation and help meet the challenges of growth. This will involve delivering high quality, liveable and distinctive places which respect and make the most of the existing diversity of the Black Country's natural and built environment, particularly its canals, open spaces, and industrial, architectural and geological heritage. Transformation, and in particular delivery of a high quality, multifunctional green space network, will be supported by Environmental Infrastructure Guidance.

3. Economic Prosperity

We will make the most of the Black Country's accessibility and location to attract new employment opportunities and investment in innovation and new technology, deliver a network of successful strategic, town, district and local centres and the infrastructure and raw materials needed to support the local economy, improve the wealth and image of the Black Country and support initiatives to lift educational and skills performance. This will include supporting widened participation at entry level in the Higher and Further Education Sector, and creating the right conditions to retain and attract graduates.



2b. Sustainability Principles

2.3 The achievement of this vision requires a number of sustainability challenges to be addressed:

1. Facing up to Climate Change

Ensuring that the spatial approach to development both minimises climate change impacts and is 'climate change-proofed' by mitigating and adapting to predicted changes in the climate of the Black Country.

2. Sustainable Development

Ensuring that development meets the social, economic and environmental needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This will include sustainable management of material resources through minimising waste, making prudent use of minerals, water and energy, using renewable and low-carbon technologies to produce what we need and 'putting the right thing in the right place' to strengthen centres and ensure easy access to facilities.

3. Social Inclusion

Ensuring all members of the community have the best possible access to facilities, housing and opportunities. It will be particularly important to ensure that people who suffer from social exclusion and disadvantage including the disabled are able to fully contribute to the regeneration of the Black Country.

4. Brownfield First

Ensuring that previously developed land, particularly where vacant, derelict or underused, is prioritised for development over greenfield sites.

5. Comprehensive Approach to Development

Delivering complex and large-scale redevelopment in a way that ensures new development links well with surrounding areas, makes efficient use of land, improves amenity, avoids a piecemeal approach that could result in blight and constrain neighbouring uses, and provides infrastructure necessary to support individual developments in a co-ordinated way. Site Allocation Documents, Area Action Plans and other planning documents will be promoted as the preferred mechanism to achieve a comprehensive approach in areas of large-scale change.

2.4 The spatial strategy is highly sustainable, concentrating growth in the most accessible locations, within Strategic Centres and along public transport corridors. The vast majority of new housing will be built on brownfield land, concentrated close to existing public transport nodes to minimise climate change impacts. Significant new green infrastructure will be created within developments, which will help to mitigate the effects of climate change and make inner urban areas more attractive places to live.

2c. The Spatial Objectives

- 2.5 To ensure that the Vision becomes a reality and is fully consistent with the sustainability principles, a set of Spatial Objectives have been developed.

By 2026 the Core Strategy will have helped to deliver:

1. **Focused investment and development in comparison shopping, office employment, leisure, tourism and culture within the four Strategic Centres: Brierley Hill, Walsall, West Bromwich and Wolverhampton, to retain and increase their share of economic activity and meet the increasing aspirations of their catchment areas.**
2. **A restructured sub-regional economy which provides sufficient strategic high quality employment land in the best locations within Regeneration Corridors to attract new high technology and logistics businesses and also recognises the value of local employment land.** This will have resulted in sustained economic growth and an increase in the choice of jobs available in the Black Country's economy.
3. **Model sustainable communities on redundant employment land in the Regeneration Corridors,** that make the most of opportunities such as public transport and canal networks, are well served by residential services and green infrastructure, have good walking, cycling and public transport links to retained employment areas and centres, are set in a high quality natural and built environment and are well integrated with surrounding areas.
4. **Enhancements to the character of the Black Country's existing housing areas** by protecting and improving high quality residential areas and pursuing a sustained and focussed programme of housing renewal in low quality residential areas requiring intervention.
5. **A network of vibrant and attractive town, district and local centres** across the Black Country, each offering an appropriate choice of facilities. The historic character of these centres will be protected and enhanced through sensitive development of local facilities, housing led development and environmental improvements to create safe, attractive streets and spaces.
6. **A high quality environment** fit for the future, and a strong Urban Park focussed on beacons, corridors and communities; respecting, protecting and enhancing the unique biodiversity and geodiversity of the Black Country and making the most of its assets whilst valuing its local character and industrial legacy.
7. **A first-class transport network providing rapid, convenient and sustainable links between the Strategic Centres, existing and new communities, and employment sites.** To include an enhanced, integrated public transport system, an improved highway network, including walking and cycling routes with strong links to the green infrastructure network. Improvements to the national M5 and M6 motorways network and freight railway network will help deliver better connectivity to Regional and National networks.

8. **A sustainable network of community services, particularly high quality lifelong learning, health care and sport and recreation facilities,** which are easily accessible to all residents at a neighbourhood level, resulting in an increase in levels of qualifications, skills, health and well-being, a decrease in deprivation indicators and improved perception of residential neighbourhoods across the Black Country. Graduates will be retained and attracted to the Black Country as a key element of the knowledge economy. This will be supported by continued enhancement of the Higher and Further Education sector and improved linkages with the wider economy.
9. **Sufficient waste recycling and waste management facilities in locations which are the most accessible and have the least environmental impact.** The Black Country will have zero waste growth and "equivalent self-sufficiency" in managing waste and will have an increased variety of waste management facilities that will enable the management of a wider range of wastes locally, move waste up the waste hierarchy and address waste as a valuable resource. Existing waste management capacity will also be protected against needless loss to other uses.
10. **Safeguard and make the most sustainable use of the Black Country's mineral resources including primary, secondary and recycled materials, without compromising environmental quality.** Potentially valuable mineral resources and mineral-related infrastructure will be safeguarded against needless sterilisation or loss. The Black Country will also minimise waste of mineral resources, maximise use of alternatives, and continue to produce a steady supply of minerals and mineral products to support the local economy and provide the raw materials needed to support regeneration within the growth network.

2d. The Spatial Strategy

- 2.6 The Strategic Key Diagram illustrates the overall Spatial Strategy for the Black Country. This diagram is supplemented by Thematic Key Diagrams for delivery, housing, economy, transport, environment, waste and minerals. Plans in Appendix 2 provide further spatial detail for each of the Regeneration Corridors and Strategic Centres.
- 2.7 The Key Diagrams show how major proposals for the Strategic Centres and Regeneration Corridors fit together and link with proposals for other areas. Core Spatial Policies accompany the Key Diagrams, covering the whole of the Black Country, both the Strategic Centres and Regeneration Corridors, known together as the Growth Network (Policy CSP1), and the areas outside the Growth Network (Policy CSP2). There are also Black Country wide Core Spatial Policies on achieving Environmental Transformation (Policy CSP3), world class quality of place (Policy CSP4) and creating a strong, sustainable transport network (Policy CSP5), as these are both essential to achievement of the Spatial Objectives. High quality design and excellent transport links will bond together growth areas and areas of consolidation, creating varied but cohesive communities.

The Growth Network

- 2.8 The Growth Network will be the focus for delivery of the Spatial Objectives and contains the majority of areas where growth, regeneration and land use change will be concentrated over the plan period (see table 1). The four Strategic Centres and sixteen Regeneration Corridors are already served by an extensive transport system and therefore provide the most sustainable locations for economic and housing growth across the Black Country although significant improvements are required to improve connectivity and accessibility. Tables 2 and 3 summarise proposals for the transformation of the Regeneration Corridors and Strategic Centres, and the role that each will play in the achievement of the overall Spatial Strategy, reflecting their distinctive strengths and opportunities.

- 2.9 Appendix 2 sets out the details of these proposals, including figures for housing and employment, infrastructure requirements and delivery mechanisms. The proposals take into account key constraints and the need to make the most of existing infrastructure such as centres, public transport, open space and residential services. The proposals have been refined through a process of consultation and on-going dialogue with key stakeholders and have been tested through preparation of the Core Strategy Delivery Plan. They provide appropriate guidance for the preparation of Site Allocation Documents and Area Action Plans.
- 2.10 Whilst the majority of change and intervention will be focussed in the Growth Network, some large developments will be brought forward outside the Network, such as on free-standing employment sites and public sector-led housing renewal sites. The land use pattern outside the Growth Network is not expected to alter greatly by 2026, but there will be some incremental change through a mix of allocated sites and windfall developments. Strong links will be created between the Growth Network and surrounding areas, through high quality design and transport, to help spread regeneration benefits, improve community cohesion and create an effective network of centres.

Table 1: Indicative Distribution of Development between the Growth Network and the Rest of the Black Country (2009 – 2026)

	New Housing (net)	New Supply of Employment Land	Additional Comparison Retail floorspace (gross)	Additional Office floorspace (gross)
Growth Network (%)	67%	91%	345,000 square metres in strategic centres plus developments in other centres within regeneration corridors	95%
Strategic Centres	12% ¹	NA	See above	90%
Regeneration Corridors	55% ²	91%	See above	5%
Outside the Growth Network (%)	33%	9%	See above	5%
Total	63000 dwellings	650ha	See above	980,000 sqm

¹ including commitments, after discount, including West Bromwich Strategic Centre
² including commitments, after discount, excluding West Bromwich Strategic Centre

CSP1 The Growth Network

Strategic Objectives

The Growth Network will be the focus of activity for all the Spatial Objectives, but in particular Objectives 1 - 8, in order to bring about the scale of change necessary to achieve growth and regeneration in the most sustainable manner.



Policy

By 2026, the Strategic Centres of Brierley Hill, Walsall, West Bromwich and Wolverhampton will have a much stronger role at a regional and sub-regional level, providing:

- Additional 345,000 square metres gross comparison retail floorspace and additional 880,000 square metres gross office floorspace;
- Major new leisure and cultural facilities;
- 7,500 new homes¹ of mixed type and tenure - the majority built at high densities as part of mixed use developments;
- Excellent public transport links, making the centres highly accessible to increased catchment areas, including new residential communities in the Regeneration Corridors;
- Significantly improved built and green environments integrated into the development of centres.

The common roles of the Strategic Centres are:

- Overall, to provide the right mix of facilities, homes and jobs, set in a high quality built and natural environment, to attract significantly more people to live and work in the Black Country;
- Be the areas of greatest concentration of redevelopment and regeneration in the Black Country up to 2026;
- Act as a focus for and deliver significant growth in comparison retail, offices and high density housing;
- Be the principal locations for major cultural, leisure, entertainment and community facilities, providing the widest possible range of such facilities appropriate for their catchments;
- Provide convenience shopping and local services for the increasing number of residents living within and close to each centre;
- Offer strong public transport hubs which maximise use of the public transport network by residents, workers and visitors.

By 2026 the network of Regeneration Corridors linking the Strategic Centres will provide:

- 1,564 ha of strategic high quality employment land concentrated within easy reach of the motorway network, of which 90ha will be provided by land in South Staffordshire;
- 35,000 new homes² in sustainable communities built on redundant employment land and other brownfield sites close to existing public transport routes and canal networks and locations with the best access to residential services, at moderate densities that allow for a range of house types;
- 1,155 ha of retained local employment land, 14ha of which is located within South Staffordshire.

The common roles of the Regeneration Corridors are to:

- Provide a sustainable mix of modern, strategic high quality employment land and new residential communities well supported by community services and local shops, set within and linked by comprehensive networks of attractive green infrastructure with cycling and pedestrian routes;
- Be the focus for existing, new and improved public transport routes and hubs which will maximise use of the public transport network by residents, workers and visitors;
- Create strong links with the surrounding communities and the network of centres and spread the regeneration benefits by knitting together old and new to create a richer, varied and integrated sense of place.

¹ including commitments, after discount, including West Bromwich Strategic Centre

² including commitments, after discount, excluding West Bromwich Strategic Centre

Justification

Strategic Centres

- 2.11 Securing investment in the Strategic Centres Brierley Hill, Walsall, West Bromwich and Wolverhampton is of fundamental importance for the regeneration of the Black Country, as they are the engines of the Black Country economy, and comprise the hubs of the transport networks. They are in the most sustainable locations, best-placed to provide all parts of the community with easy access to comparison shopping, leisure, entertainment and cultural facilities and office employment. However, they are in need of regeneration and investment to create a better mix of facilities and improve their environment and transport links including public transport, walking and cycling.
- 2.12 Much of the housing growth taking place up to 2026 will be concentrated in locations within Regeneration Corridors which are close to the Strategic Centres, providing the opportunity to enhance their sustainability and viability. Promoting the distinctive strengths and unique opportunities provided by each Strategic Centre will also help to encourage investment. Area Action Plans for Brierley Hill, West Bromwich and Wolverhampton are being prepared to guide regeneration.

Table 2: A Summary of Proposals for the Strategic Centres

Strategic Centre	Distinctive Strengths & Unique Opportunities	Vision for 2026	Additional Office floorspace (sqm) 2006-26	Additional Comparison Retail floorspace (sqm) 2006-26	New Housing 2009-2026 (including commitments)	Transport Improvements	Environmental Improvements	Cultural and Community Service Improvements
Brierley Hill	A new Strategic Centre to accommodate modern investment and regeneration along with public transport improvements.	A vibrant, inclusive and accessible centre, embracing sustainable urban living and providing superb shops, office employment and cultural facilities. Strong, cohesive communities, where everyone feels included, are served by high quality public spaces and have easy access to all the services needed to enjoy a good quality of life.	220,000	95,000	2,940	Establish a high quality, accessible, affordable and well patronised public transport system including bus and rapid transit. New primary thoroughfares will be created catering for pedestrian and cycle movement.	Green infrastructure enhancements including watercourses and establishing a wildlife corridor linking Fens Pool Special Area of Conservation to Saltwells Local Nature Reserve.	Develop a range of leisure and community facilities befitting of its status as a Strategic Centre and to support the growing community involving design solutions that focus upon 'people' and 'place'.
Walsall	A blend of heritage and modern architecture	A regenerated focus for the local economy and community, which provides its catchment area with an attractive choice of comparison shopping and cultural facilities, and supports a thriving office market and urban living. All activities are supported by a vibrant, safe, attractive and accessible environment that successfully combines local heritage with modern design.	220,000	85,000	450	New improved Strategic Centre Transport Interchange to link Rail, Bus, rapid transit, cycling and walking. Re-opening of rail lines so that Walsall becomes a Rail hub with regional and national connections. All red routes and Bus showcase routes in the borough will increase Public Transport access to the Strategic Centre.	Design of new development which complements and improves the built and historic environment and townscape of this area, and enhances local distinctiveness and a sense of place. Green space and cultural heritage improvements to the canal network. Focus on civic and other town centre squares including public realm at Walsall Waterfront as well as achieving Green Flag status for the Arboretum.	A centre for nightlife and cultural facilities (including the New Art Gallery), with scope for further investment in entertainment facilities and high quality restaurants. Recent relocation and expansion of Walsall College. Mixed-use Walsall Waterfront scheme will provide a mixture of apartments, offices, leisure/recreation, retail and a new hotel.

Strategic Centre	Distinctive Strengths & Unique Opportunities	Vision for 2026	Additional Office floorspace (sqm) 2006-26	Additional Comparison Retail floorspace (sqm) 2006-26	New Housing 2009-2026 (including commitments)	Transport Improvements	Environmental Improvements	Cultural and Community Service Improvements
West Bromwich	In a central location and with the potential for major redevelopment.	An attractive, thriving centre with an expanded and diversified economy, with an emphasis on office employment. A high quality public realm and built environment makes the centre attractive to residents and visitors. A mix of housing in sustainable locations provides accommodation which is both affordable and attracts new residents.	220,000	65,000	900	Extended Ringway to enable expansion of retail core. Improvements to strategic network in north of the town. New highway infrastructure in the south of the town to facilitate public transport/public realm improvements in central area, down grading of the Ringway and integration of new housing/offices with the core.	The strategy for the design of new development, streets and places within the Strategic Centre will be key in setting the standard for the improvement of the built environment. The provision of new spaces and squares coupled with public realm, pedestrian, cycle and green linkage improvements will support the creation of a high quality, legible and permeable townscape.	Develop a range of leisure and community uses, building on "The Public" and associated proposals as part of the retail expansion. Provision of a new college of further education and the retention and enhancement of the High Street Conservation Area.
Wolverhampton	The traditional capital of the Black Country at the heart of the public transport network, with university and office functions.	An established, confident City centre with a wide variety of quality shops and cultural attractions, 21st century offices, urban living and a city-scale public transport interchange. A modern public realm network, vibrant canal-side quarter and remodelled ring road make the compact City centre attractive to walkers and cyclists.	220,000	100,000	3,230	New public transport interchange served by extended metro line. Review the opportunities to improve pedestrian and cycle crossing facilities across the ring road, road traffic capacity requirements and the environmental improvements, including planting strategies that could be implemented along the ring road 'corridor'.	Green space creation along canal. Heritage-led regeneration. Improve links to parks.	Continue to enhance and promote music venues and art gallery. Expansion of Wolverhampton University and completion of City Learning Quarter.

Regeneration Corridors

- 2.14 The Core Strategy draws together the overlapping employment and housing corridors to create an integrated network of Regeneration Corridors. The Regeneration Corridor boundaries broadly reflect the distribution of large parcels of employment land across the Black Country. The backbone of this network is a system of sustainable transport routes (including rail, metro, bus and proposed high frequency rapid transit and also for walking and cycling) and the extensive canal system.
- 2.15 Proposals for the Regeneration Corridors address two key issues arising from the preparation of the RSS Phase 1 Revision - the need to protect and create more high quality employment land, whilst ensuring the release of sufficient lower quality employment land for large-scale housing growth to achieve urban renaissance. Achieving the right balance of jobs and housing by 2026 is a key aim of the Spatial Strategy. The Black Country Employment Land Review (2008) and Assessment of Employment Sites (2009) provide key evidence on demand and supply for employment land up to 2026 (see EMP1-2).
- 2.16 The Black Country and adjacent parts of South Staffordshire contains some 3,586 ha of land currently used for employment purposes in Regeneration Corridors and free-standing employment sites (see CSP2). The Core Strategy will provide 2,858 ha of employment land by 2026. This will be met by the protection and improvement of existing employment areas and by the bringing forward of sites for development. This stock of employment land proposed is considered to be sufficient to meet the anticipated level of demand, including a safety margin to cover risk
- 2.17 Of this retained and new employment land, the Strategy identifies 1,564 ha as being of existing or potential high quality strategic importance with the potential to attract high quality, high technology investment. This includes some 90 ha of existing or committed land within South Staffordshire to the north of Wolverhampton which given its proximity is considered to contribute towards meeting Black Country employment needs. Of the 1,564 ha requirement for 2026, in 2009 only 533 ha is assessed to be existing high quality. Over the lifetime of the Plan we need to secure 1,031 ha of additional high quality land. This will be achieved through a range of improvements from minimal environmental enhancements, to major new access improvements to the rail / motorway network and through to wholesale long-term redevelopment. Achieving improvement across such an extensive area of employment land is a considerable challenge and requires a well-resourced partnership approach.
- 2.18 In addition to these requirements the evidence prepared for the RSS Phase 2 Revision identified the need for a Regional Logistics Site in southern Staffordshire to meet the needs of the Black Country. This proposal will meet the needs of the very large scale distribution sector with space requirements that are difficult to accommodate within the urban area of the Black Country due to its tightly knit urban form and lack of suitably large sites. This proposal will be carried forward through Core Strategies in the light of technical work to identify the most appropriate locations for this site.
- 2.19 The density of housing delivered on employment land in the Regeneration Corridors will determine exactly how much land is required for housing and how much local employment land is retained by 2026. The Spatial Strategy aims for a balanced mix of house types across the Regeneration Corridors as set out in Policy HOU2. This is key to retaining and attracting a mix of residents and businesses.

- 2.20 The release of land for housing in the Regeneration Corridors and the density and type of housing delivered will be closely monitored in order to deliver a balanced housing offer but also ensure the retention of sufficient local employment land to meet identified needs by 2026. Policy EMP3 indicates that 1,294 ha of local employment land is considered necessary to accommodate manufacturing, logistics and other local employment activity which is not appropriate for Strategic High Quality locations and firms which are displaced through employment land restructuring. The Spatial Strategy ensures this amount of land is retained, as a minimum, within the Regeneration Corridors and free-standing employment sites.

Primary Evidence

Black Country Employment Land Review (2008)
Black Country Employment Sites Study (2009)
Black Country Centres Study (2009)
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments (2009)

CSP1 will be delivered and monitored through arrangements set out for individual policies in the Core Strategy.

Table 3: A Summary of Proposals for the Regeneration Corridors

Regeneration Corridor	Vision (summary)	Total New Housing 2009-2026 (including commitments)	Total Employment Land 2026 (ha)	Transport Improvements	Environmental Improvements	Cultural and Residential Service Improvements
1. Pendeford/Fordhouses	A premier high quality employment location in the Black Country and a focus for leading edge, high technology industry in the Wolverhampton to Telford High Technology Corridor.	0	71	I54 access improvements including M54 J2 and Vine Island/Wobaston Road. Rapid transit on Stafford Road.	Enhancement of existing open space and canal network, maintaining drainage functions to minimise flood risk. High quality design to attract high value occupiers.	Not applicable.
2. Stafford Road	A high quality employment location with a focus on innovation and knowledge-based industry and good sustainable transport and education/ training links to existing and new residential communities.	1645	94	I54 access improvements including M54 J2 and Vine Island/Wobaston Road. Rapid transit on Stafford Road.	Enhancement of existing open space and canal network, including new Neighbourhood Park at Goodyear. High quality design to attract high value occupiers, particularly on gateways.	Good residential service access, and improved quality through Building Schools for the Future. Creation of links between local communities and employment opportunities. Maximise regeneration through housing renewal in adjoining areas.
3. South of Wolverhampton Strategic Centre	A vibrant, mixed residential community with strong links both to Wolverhampton Strategic Centre and to Blakenhall BME communities, retaining strong historic character and sustainable local employment.	565	26	Remodelling of internal road network and links to Penn Road and Birmingham Road.	New network of open space and recreation facilities through new housing. Preserved and enhanced historic character.	Good residential service access and enhanced quality through school improvements. Maximise regeneration through housing renewal in All Saints area.

Regeneration Corridor	Vision (summary)	Total New Housing 2009-2026 (including commitments)	Total Employment Land 2026 (ha)	Transport Improvements	Environmental Improvements	Cultural and Residential Service Improvements
4. Wolverhampton – Bilston	A sustainable and attractive balance of new residential communities and job opportunities – with a central area of local and high quality employment land sandwiched between new housing focused along the metro route and canal corridor close to Wolverhampton Strategic Centre and Bilston Town Centre, served by high quality networks of green infrastructure and residential services.	4310	221	Bilston Urban Village access including new metro Stop, and creation of a pedestrian and cycle network.	New network of open space and recreation facilities through new housing, include new Parks at Bilston and Ward Street, linked to canal network enhancements.	Good residential service access in most areas, to be enhanced through school, GP and local shopping improvements.

Table 3: A Summary of Proposals for the Regeneration Corridors (continued)

Regeneration Corridor	Vision (summary)	Total New Housing 2009-2026 (including commitments)	Total Employment Land 2026 (ha)	Transport Improvements	Environmental Improvements	Cultural and Residential Service Improvements
5. Loxdale – Moxley	Located in the heart of the Black Country and straddling the Black Country New Road with its fast, reliable access to the motorway network, both to north (M6) and south (M5) this area of Loxdale and Moxley will continue its role as a major industrial and logistics hub serving the Black Country and the region. Through environmental and local access improvements, a new image will be created attracting new investment and jobs. Housing renewal in adjacent areas will have improved housing for local people and attracted new residents, who will also have good access to job and educational opportunities in Walsall, Wolverhampton and Birmingham.	860	86	Improve walking, cycling and public transport links.	Protection of sustainable transport routes along canal network to significant open spaces within or adjacent to the corridor, such as Moorcroft Wood LNR or George Rose Park. Enhancement of existing open space, such as Great Bridge Road playing fields, through new housing proposals.	Improvements to George Rose Park as Part of the redevelopment of Darlaston Academy.

Regeneration Corridor	Vision (summary)	Total New Housing 2009-2026 (including commitments)	Total Employment Land 2026 (ha)	Transport Improvements	Environmental Improvements	Cultural and Residential Service Improvements
6. Wednesfield - Willenhall - Darlaston	This corridor forms one of the main gateways to the Black Country, leading from Junction 10 of the M6. This corridor will play a major part in providing first class quality employment land for knowledge-led manufacturing and logistics businesses serving the regional economy, attracting and providing sustainable jobs for Black Country residents. Building on and extending the high quality road connections for freight to the national motorway network - the Black Country Route and The Keyway - this former heartland of Black Country engineering industry and traditional lock manufacturing will be transformed. The Corridor also includes some of the finest examples of the 'traditional' Black Country industrial villages and towns with their craft based specialisms. Around these towns poor quality industrial land will be restructured to provide new high quality residential development and green spaces. The corridor will have improved cultural, leisure, health and educational facilities to ensure a higher quality of life in the area.	2048	339	Walsall to Wolverhampton Rail line with stations at Willenhall and Darlaston. Darlaston SDA Access improvements. M6 J10 improvements. 5Ws rapid transit route. Improved access from Keyway to Longacres Industrial Estate. Red routes: A454. Bus showcase: 529 route and Wednesbury Road bus showcase improvements. M6J9 and J10 improvements. Relocate Bloxwich Station to improve transport interchange.	Fibbersley playing fields, Willenhall Memorial Park, Villiers Street, The Crescent, Bentley Leisure Pavilion, and Wood Street Cemetery could all benefit from developer contributions to improve the quality of provision in this corridor. Some new open space may be created in residential growth areas through implementation of the Willenhall AAP. Contributions from residential proposals may be sought to support the operation of the Tame Tunnel to continue to mitigate against flood risk in this corridor.	New primary school recently opened at Noose Lane, Willenhall along with a new primary school programmed for Elm Street, Willenhall. A new medical centre in also planned in Willenhall.

Table 3: A Summary of Proposals for the Regeneration Corridors (continued)

Regeneration Corridor	Vision (summary)	Total New Housing 2009-2026 (including commitments)	Total Employment Land 2026 (ha)	Transport Improvements	Environmental Improvements	Cultural and Residential Service Improvements
7. Bloxwich - Birchills - Bescot	This corridor is a typical Black Country mix of homes and industry which skirts Walsall Strategic Centre and extends alongside the railway and canals to the north. Its key potential is one of a mix of renewal and redevelopment to evolve new attractive residential canal-side communities with access to local industrial jobs and, in particular, to the centres of Walsall, Wolverhampton and Birmingham. The Wyrley & Essington and Walsall canals, the A34 and Pleck Road, and the Walsall to Cannock railway connect the area.	1645	156	M6J9 and J10 improvements. Relocate Bloxwich Station to improve transport interchange. Red routes: A4148, A454 and A34. Bus Showcase: 404, 529 and 301 routes.	The area is served by a range of urban open spaces largely in need of qualitative improvement such as, Oily Gough's, Reedswood Park, Sister Dora Gardens, New Mills playing field and Pleck Park. Some of these improvements may be secured through proposals within the canal-side communities initiative. Enhancements to the canal network in this corridor can also be secured through housing proposals.	New community special school at Leamore Lane and replacement school for Joseph Leckie. The re-location of Walsall college into a new campus. Manor Hospital redevelopment.
8. Hill Top	Significant role in the Black Country economy, with additional high quality rapid transit services and a major transformation in the residential neighbourhoods. The River Tame and the Tame Valley Canal will be significant features of the rejuvenated environment of Hill Top.	5472	281	Improved Metro Line1 Service with new trams. Rapid transit - Wednesbury - Brierley Hill. Metro based park and ride extensions. Reopening of freight line from Walsall to Stourbridge. Extensions to cycling network.	Improvement of open space provision and access to wildspaces for residential neighbourhoods. Protection of existing wildspaces at Sheepwash Park, Hydes Rd Pool, River Tame Grasslands and Moorcroft Wood. Flood zones 2 and 3 affect this area.	Opening of a new medical centre to overcome deficiencies. Protection of historic buildings on Wednesbury Town Centre. BSF at George Salter School (wave 5).

Regeneration Corridor	Vision (summary)	Total New Housing 2009-2026 (including commitments)	Total Employment Land 2026 (ha)	Transport Improvements	Environmental Improvements	Cultural and Residential Service Improvements
9. Tipton - Dudley Port - Brades Village	The creation of new environments for urban living - mainline living around railway stations. The retention of significant areas of fit for purpose local employment land. The enrichment of green infrastructure throughout the corridor.	7055	95	Burnt Tree Junction improvement. Owen Street Relief Road. Dudley Port Interchange Improvement. Improved bus interchange Great Bridge A457 Smart Route/Route 87 Bus Showcase Improvement.	There are a number of SLINCs, LNRs and wildlife corridors. The canal corridors offer opportunities for local distinctiveness to be enhanced.	Additional provision for football pitches will be required. There are 2 BSF projects at the meadows School and Alexandra High School. There is the potential to create a new local centre at Dudley Port.
10. Pensnett - Kingswinford	A focus for high quality employment, building on the success of the Pensnett Estate as home to an increasing number of leading-edge technological companies with an improved, well connected road and public transport system. Further development of high quality residential areas with easy access to surrounding recreational areas within the Green Belt as well as wildlife corridors which connect to the heart of the Black Country's urban areas.	670	133	Improve road access between Pensnett Trading Estate and the Strategic Highway. Link cycle routes through Pensnett Industrial estate and adjacent housing to cycleways to the north and west. Public transport improvements serving both residential & employment areas Investigate use of rail freight connection into Pensnett Trading Estate.	Maintain and enhance important ecological links from Fens Pools Special Area of Conservation (SAC) through Barrow Hill Local Nature Reserve and Coopers Bank to the open countryside in South Staffordshire. Improve & enhance links from existing and potential new housing areas into existing parks, open spaces and Green Belt areas to the north and east. Work with brick clay quarry owners at Kettleby, Himley and Oak Lane to develop long term plans for extraction and reclamation.	May be a need for Key Worker housing as Russells Hall Hospital is within a mile of the corridor. Housing growth proposals can be accommodated by existing and proposed education provision at both the primary and secondary level. The centres of Wall Heath, Kingswinford and Pensnett adjacent to the corridor will benefit from increased local population and incremental improvement to local facilities and public realm.

Table 3: A Summary of Proposals for the Regeneration Corridors (continued)

Regeneration Corridor	Vision (summary)	Total New Housing 2009-2026 (including commitments)	Total Employment Land 2026 (ha)	Transport Improvements	Environmental Improvements	Cultural and Residential Service Improvements
11a. Dudley - Brierley Hill - Stourbridge	A focus for family living around the rejuvenated 'market' town of Dudley, a tourism focus of regional and national repute (based on Black Country Museum, Dudley Zoo, Dudley Castle, Dudley's geological and heritage assets) and innovative high quality industry stretching towards the new strategic centre of Brierley Hill. The area will be set in an attractive environment, well connected by public transport through a new rapid transit system and served by adjacent retail, office and leisure growth in Brierley Hill. High quality housing for all in and around both Centres as well as excellent green infrastructure through enhanced green spaces and parks.	1160	191	Development of a rapid transit link from Brierley Hill to Dudley and through to the rest of the Black Country and Birmingham. Protect and enhance Priory Park, Dudley Town Park (Scotts Green) and Buffery Park. Development of Brierley Hill as a central hub for the bus network. Enhance canal corridor including surfaced cycleway with links to cycling & walking routes and adjacent open spaces and green spaces.	Significant areas of high ecological value at Saltwells Nature Reserve and Fens Pools Nature Reserve / Special area of Conservation. Protect and enhance Priory Park, Dudley Town Park (Scotts Green) and Buffery Park. Protect and create views of Dudley Castle. Flood Zones 3a and 2 present on part of Hurst Industrial Estate.	Improvements to the heritage assets of Dudley Town Centre as an historic market town. Increase attraction as a regional and national tourism hub centred around geological and industrial heritage centred on its canal network, Dudley Zoo and Castle, Black Country Living Museum, Wrens Nest geological Reserve and limestone caverns. Protection of strategically important Lister Road Energy from Waste Depot.

Regeneration Corridor	Vision (summary)	Total New Housing 2009-2026 (including commitments)	Total Employment Land 2026 (ha)	Transport Improvements	Environmental Improvements	Cultural and Residential Service Improvements
11b. Brierley Hill - Stourbridge	Characterised by the Dudley and Stourbridge Canal and proximity to the growing Brierley Hill Centre, this Corridor will create new high quality canal-side communities through the redevelopment of outdated and obsolete industrial sites. This will be coupled by improvements to the existing housing stock and supported by their proximity to the vibrant and attractive centres of Brierley Hill and Stourbridge offering a range of facilities. Excellent Green infrastructure will be protected and enhanced including green spaces and parks and improved links into Fens Pool Nature Reserve / Special Area of Conservation, the River Stour and open countryside to the south and west of the corridor.	2480	41	Potential to develop the freight line between Stourbridge and Brierley Hill as a passenger line. Development of Brierley Hill as a central hub for the bus network. Enhance canal corridor including surfaced cycleway with links to cycling & walking routes and adjacent open spaces and green spaces.	Well served by local parks including Mary Stevens Park, Fens Pool Special Area of Conservation and The Leys (Green Belt) area to the west. Green links between these areas through future redevelopment. River Stour to the south of the corridor provides links to open countryside to the west. Flood Zone 2 & 3 along Stour north of Stourbridge town centre. Opportunities to enhance canal basins including Stourbridge wharf area and historic buildings at risk.	Improvements to public realm and historic heritage assets in Stourbridge Town Centre. Protection and enhancement of glass heritage assets and recognition of glass heritage of the area in future development. Links to Stourbridge College and its possible expansion. Corbett Hospital and Health Centre lies within the Corridor just to the north of Stourbridge Town Centre.

Table 3: A Summary of Proposals for the Regeneration Corridors (continued)

Regeneration Corridor	Vision (summary)	Total New Housing 2009-2026 (including commitments)	Total Employment Land 2026 (ha)	Transport Improvements	Environmental Improvements	Cultural and Residential Service Improvements
12. Oldbury - West Bromwich - Smethwick	The gateway to the Black Country from the south and London and Birmingham City Centre. The area will be a major contributor to the economic prosperity of the Black Country through its high quality employment land locations and major office developments, major environmental infrastructure and public realm improvements.	5209 including West Bromwich Strategic Centre	411	All Saints underpass scheme A457 Smart Route / Route 87 Bus Showcase Improvement. Improved public transport for residential and employment areas. Opportunity to Expand Park and Ride at Sandwell and Dudley Station.	The corridor is well served by a network of parks - Dartmouth Park is a major asset. There will be an emphasis on improving and enhancing links from potential new housing areas into new and existing spaces. This corridor also falls within a geodiversity zone.	Archaeological areas will be protected, promoted and enhanced. West Bromwich, Oldbury and Smethwick will be protected as historic centres, as will canal corridors and areas of terraced housing. Regeneration opportunities will be explored for Chances Glass Works and Soho Foundry.
13. Rowley Regis - Jewellery Line	High quality sustainable residential communities accessible to the canal network, parks, open spaces and good transport links to employment areas and centres. This corridor is served by existing passenger rail services between Worcester and Birmingham and straddles the valley of the River Stour. The local centres of Blackheath, Cradley Heath and Lye will be bolstered by a substantial increase in their population base and, along with well integrated and improved bus and rail links, will become thriving and sustainable places to live.	4698	167	Platform lengthening and expanded park and Ride for Cradley Heath, Rowley Regis and Stourbridge Stations Improved bus interchange Blackheath.	Mousesweet Brook, the River Stour and Codsall Coppice will be protected along with woodland to the south of Old Hill station and along the River Stour near Lye (Bob's Coppice and Mear's Coppice). Flood Zones 2 & 3 run along the River Stour and Mousesweet Brook with significant fluvial flooding risk at Lutley Gutter to the south of the corridor. Protect and enhance all parks including the larger Town Parks at Stevens Park, Wollescote, Haden Hill Park and the Town Park for Rowley Regis. Access to Lickey Hills, Hagley Wood, Uffmoor Wood, Warrens Hall Park and Coombeswood encouraged. Protect and promote views of the Rowley Hills. Upgrades to sewer network may be needed in conjunction with development in RC14 (upstream) and RC11 downstream.	New secondary school and special school at Hawes Lane, Rowley Regis. Building Schools for the Future proposals include Heathfield Foundation Technology College and Rowley Learning Campus through a complete new build for St Michaels School, Westminster and Whiteheath Proposed refurbishment of Rowley Regis Hospital. New Health Centres are also proposed for Lye Centre and Cradley within Dudley Borough. A new neighbourhood health centre is being pursued for the Old Hill area.

Regeneration Corridor	Vision (summary)	Total New Housing 2009-2026 (including commitments)	Total Employment Land 2026 (ha)	Transport Improvements	Environmental Improvements	Cultural and Residential Service Improvements
14. Coombs Wood - Halesowen	High quality employment centred on Coombswood with a well connected public transport system and improved access to the M5 Motorway. High quality residential areas in and around Halesowen Town Centre, improving its vitality with good walking and cycling links including to recreational areas at Leasowes Historic Park and the surrounding Green Belt areas. Significant part of the biodiversity network encouraging the penetration of habitats into the sub-region from the surrounding Green Belt areas and Leasowes Historic Park.	295	99	Improvement of road access between Coombswood and M5 Junction 3. Improve access to existing cycleway network.	Need for west-east green links between Leasowes Park, Coombswood and Stour valley and to the open countryside to the south across A456. Some Flood Zone 2 & 3 areas along parts of River Stour particularly south of Halesowen Town Centre. Protect and enhance views of Rowley Hills at Leasowes Park and Furnace Coppice.	Creation of a new local centre at Hawne on the A459 Improvements to public realm and historic heritage assets in Halesowen Town Centre. Protection and enhancement of Leasowes Historic Park. Possibility of new health centre facility in Halesowen / Windmill Hill area. Enhance links between Halesowen College and local businesses.
15. Brownhills	Former mining town on the edge of the Staffordshire Coalfield that is synonymous with the traditional Black Country, but now benefiting from direct access to the national highway network via M6 Toll motorway and with easy access to rural areas and green spaces. Potential for enhanced urban transport links, notably to Walsall, along disused railway line from Lichfield to Stourbridge. If reopened, there is potential for trains to serve a wide range of destinations in the Region.	455	57	Re-opening of Walsall to Lichfield line for passenger services, with stations at Brownhills, and Pelsall. Red route package 2 A452 & A461 which will include: Brownhills TC transport improvements. A4561 junction improvements.	Corridor benefits from an abundance of open spaces and nature conservation areas, all of which can benefit from general improvements.	Recently completed medical centre and housing schemes. Further housing developments are proposed.

Table 3: A Summary of Proposals for the Regeneration Corridors (continued)

Regeneration Corridor	Vision (summary)	Total New Housing 2009-2026 (including commitments)	Total Employment Land 2026 (ha)	Transport Improvements	Environmental Improvements	Cultural and Residential Service Improvements
16. Coseley - Tipton - Princes End	<p>Provision of high quality sustainable residential communities and fit for purpose local employment areas accessible by all modes of transport especially walking, cycling and public transport with links to Coseley and Tipton Railway stations and the centres of Coseley, Princes End and Tipton.</p> <p>There will be an improved public realm and canal network, along with improved links between residential communities and parks and open spaces such as the Wrens Nest Local Nature Reserve.</p>	1909	44	Enhance Coseley Station. Bus transport to access both residential and employment areas	<p>Improve access to open spaces for Tipton and Princes End.</p> <p>Protect and enhance open spaces at Wrens Nest Nature Reserve, Priory Park, Bluebell Park, Silver Jubilee Park and Kettle Hill at the northern end of Castle Hill and improve public links to them.</p> <p>Encourage wildlife penetration along these areas as well as along the canal corridor and railway lines including former Dudley – Priestfield and Princes End railways.</p> <p>Sedgley – Dudley Anticlinorium geological consideration zone is present in the west of the Corridor. Protect and promote views of Dudley Castle.</p>	<p>Neptune Health Park, Tipton is being refurbished providing Town level facilities. Neighbourhood facilities are being sought for nearby Glebefields.</p> <p>Need to consider incremental growth in health facility provision for proposed new residential communities particularly in Coseley and to the north of Princes End.</p>

CSP2 Development Outside the Growth Network

Strategic Objectives

Whilst the focus of activity is on the Growth Network, areas outside the Network will play a vital role in delivering Spatial Objectives 3-10 as part of a balanced and holistic approach to the transformation of the Black Country.

Policy

By 2026, the areas outside the Strategic Centres and Regeneration Corridors will provide:

- A strong Green Belt to promote urban renaissance within the urban area and provide easy access to the countryside for urban residents where the landscape, nature conservation and agricultural land will be protected and enhanced where practical and possible;
- A mix of good quality residential areas where people choose to live;
- A strong network of green infrastructure, centres and community facilities;
- Strong and seamless links to regenerated areas in Regeneration Corridors and Strategic Centres, via access and design improvements to spread regeneration benefits and ensure integration of existing and new communities;
- A constant supply of small-scale development opportunities;
- A limited supply of large-scale development opportunities through allocations on free-standing employment sites and other surplus land.

The main roles of free-standing employment sites and areas outside the Growth Network are to provide local employment opportunities to serve communities outside the Regeneration Corridors and Strategic Centres and to provide a supply of housing land at appropriate densities to meet local needs.

The nature and extent of land use change required in the free-standing employment land located within each local authority area is set out in Appendix 3. The Aldridge free-standing employment site, shown on the Economy Key Diagram, will be protected for employment use. Other free-standing employment sites will be protected for employment use until a Development Plan Document is adopted which allocates the site for a particular use.

By 2026 free-standing employment sites and areas across the Black Country will collectively provide:

- 103 ha of strategic high quality employment land
- 139 ha of retained local employment land
- 3110 new homes*

Additional site allocations and windfall developments will also occur in the following areas shown on the Key Diagrams:

- Housing Market Intervention Areas – areas requiring housing renewal activity;
- Housing renewal Hubs – current foci for housing renewal activity
- Centres – protection and enhancement of the network, to serve new and proposed development.

* including commitments, after discount

The broad approach to development in other areas will be to focus on previously developed land, locations with best access to services (where appropriate) and areas of lowest flood risk.

Green Belt boundaries will be maintained and protected from inappropriate development.

Environmental Infrastructure improvements will be focused in the environmental infrastructure network.

Justification

- 2.21 Free-standing employment sites not located within the Growth Network make up 9% (317 ha) of the Black Country's employment land. They provide valuable local job opportunities, but in some cases prejudice the amenity of surrounding residential areas. Given their location within residential areas, many are appropriate to redevelop for housing, and around 69 ha of free-standing employment sites will be specifically allocated for housing over the Plan period. The site at Aldridge is of a strategic size (170 ha) and it is therefore appropriate for the Core Strategy to establish its retention as 81 ha local quality and 89 ha strategic high quality employment land. The future of other free-standing employment sites will be decided through Development Plan Documents in accordance with the land use figures for each local authority set out in Appendix 3.



- 2.22 Improved green infrastructure networks across the sub region, linked with protected Green Belt at the edge of the conurbation, is a fundamental part of the transformational strategy and will promote health and wellbeing as well as supporting biodiversity (see ENV1-6). The Black Country is predominantly surrounded by open countryside on its northern, southern and western fringes. This is complemented by a network of green wedges and corridors which effectively bring the countryside and its landscape into the heart of the built up area. Much of this is Green Belt and it provides a valuable contribution through a variety of uses. Protection and enhancement of these areas will be looked at in more detail through the Environmental Infrastructure Guidance.
- 2.23 Large scale housing renewal targeted in priority areas and tailoring of new housing to meet identified needs will help to provide a high quality and broad range of housing (see HOU1).
- 2.24 Focussing development in the most accessible locations, developing a strong network of centres and community facilities and creating strong links to the Growth Network will also help support social inclusion and the creation of sustainable communities (see CEN 1-4)
- 2.25 Avoidance of flood risk areas will help the sub-region adapt to the likely effects of climate change (see ENV5) and the focus on brownfield development will help promote more efficient land use and improve soil and water quality through land remediation.

Primary Evidence

Black Country Employment Land Review (2008)
Black Country Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2008)
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments (2009)
Black Country Employment Sites Study (2009)

CSP2 will be delivered and monitored through arrangements set out for individual policies in the Core Strategy.

CSP3 Environmental Infrastructure

Strategic Objectives

Environmental transformation is one of the underpinning themes of the Vision and requires a co-ordinated approach to the enhancement and protection of the built and natural environment and community access to quality assets. This will, in particular, deliver Spatial Objective 6.



Policy

Development proposals will need to demonstrate that the strategic network of environmental infrastructure will be protected, enhanced and expanded at every opportunity.

The environmental infrastructure network comprises open space, sport and recreation facilities, areas of biodiversity and geodiversity importance, wildlife corridors, the canal network, watercourses and drainage systems, air quality and renewable energy generation, pedestrian and cycle routes, areas and buildings of high design quality, and the special character and historic aspects of locally distinctive elements of the Black Country.

This will be achieved by:

- **The production and implementation of the Black Country Environmental Infrastructure Guidance Phase 2;**
- **Resisting any development that compromises the integrity and quality of environmental infrastructure;**
- **Requiring development proposals to improve the quality and quantity of the area's environmental infrastructure in a manner appropriate to the character and needs of the area.**

Justification

- 2.26 The value of the wider environment to the future growth and prosperity of the Black Country and its importance in retaining and attracting people and investment has long been recognised. Environmental transformation is key to successful regeneration of the Black Country, and will also help to address the causes and effects of climate change, improve environmental quality and help improve the quality of life and well-being.
- 2.27 The existing network of environmental infrastructure in the Black Country performs a number of important roles and covers a wide range of assets, including public open spaces, wildlife habitats, geodiversity, canals and watercourses, pedestrian and cycle routes and historic landscapes and buildings. Growth and regeneration will provide many opportunities to extend and increase the quality of this network, contributing to improved environmental quality, quality of life and well-being.
- 2.28 Environmental Infrastructure Guidance (EIG) is being developed for the Black Country, and this will identify priorities and proposals for environmental enhancement across a range of functions namely:
- Nature.
 - Natural Processes.
 - Character, Identity and Landscape.
 - Recreation and Well-Being.
 - Sustainable Movement.

2.29 Phase 1 of the EIG provides the strategic context for the policies on Environmental Infrastructure (ENV1-8), which seek to ensure that the environmental infrastructure network is protected, enhanced and expanded at every opportunity, and to resist development that would compromise the overall integrity of the network. In areas which are a priority for more than one function, it is particularly important that new development assists in the provision of environmental infrastructure carefully designed to address all relevant priorities.

2.30 The overall design of new development also has a key role to play in enhancing environmental quality. There are policies in this section which address high quality design and the reduction of carbon emissions from new development through incorporation of renewable energy generation.

2.31 The principles and priorities of the EIG have also been applied to develop environmental infrastructure proposals for each Regeneration Corridor and Strategic Centre, as set out in Appendix 2. Phase 2 of the EIG will develop these proposals in more detail, sufficient to inform Area Action Plans and Site Allocation Documents. Phase 2 will also identify priorities outside the Regeneration Corridors and Strategic Centres, and set out an integrated delivery plan.

Primary Evidence

Black Country Study Environmental Technical Report: Quality of Place (2005)
Broadening Horizons – A Vision of the Black Country Urban Park, Lovejoys (2004)
Green Infrastructure for the West Midlands Region: Technical Mapping Paper (2007)
Environmental Infrastructure Guidance Phase 1 (2009)
Biodiversity Action Plan for Birmingham and the Black Country (2009)
The Black Country: An Historic Landscape Characterisation – First Report (2009)
Geodiversity Action Plan for the Black Country (2005)
West Midlands Regional Forestry Framework (2004)

CSP3 will be delivered and monitored through arrangements set out for individual policies in the Core Strategy.

CSP4 Place-Making

Strategic Objectives

The environmental transformation of the Black Country is one of the fundamental principles of the renaissance agenda. Place making with high quality urban design are key mechanisms through which this transformation will be achieved, helping to ensure the delivery of Spatial Objectives 3, 5 and 6.



Policy

The Black Country has a unique heritage and urban structure which requires a bespoke approach to place-making and a high quality of design of the built and natural environment.

All development will be required to demonstrate a clear understanding of the historic character and local distinctiveness of the area and show how proposals make a positive contribution to place-making and environmental improvement in the following spatial terms:

- The hierarchy of centres will provide a focus and concentration for essential local services and activities with easy access by walking, cycling and public transport. Its diverse, accessible, affordable and active villages, towns and neighbourhoods will encourage commercial activity, promote prosperity and support the well-being of the area's inhabitants.

- The Black Country will operate on a permeable street network with pedestrian priority that gives maximum freedom of movement and a good choice of means of transport. Vibrant streets and spaces, defined by surrounding buildings and with their own distinct character, should provide the framework for a coherent interconnected network of places that supports social interaction and displays a clear hierarchy of private, commercial and civic functions.
- A high quality of design and utility of all transport proposals will be sought to ensure that interventions make a positive contribution to place making as well as increasing accessibility and connectivity.
- The Black Country's transformation will be supported by buildings providing a range of functions, tenures, facilities and services to support its diverse local communities. A mix of building designs and types will be sought that are appropriate to the Black Country, set within appropriately scaled neighbourhoods.
- The design of spaces and buildings will be influenced by their context and seek to enhance the unique attributes the area offers in terms of its local character and heritage whilst responding to current day needs, changes in society and cultural diversity.
- The Black Country will be a safe and secure place through organising the urban environment in ways that encourage people to act in a civil and responsible manner. The pedestrian environment should be closely associated with active frontages at street level and an appropriate intensity of use in all areas at all times.
- An integrated multifunctional open space network will not only provide space for sport and recreation and help support a balanced ecological environment but help mitigate flood risk, provide space for wildlife and informal recreation for local people.
- The protection and enhancement of the historic canal network and the area's natural waterways which provide a unifying characteristic of the Black Country's urban structure and landscape.
- In appropriate circumstances, the provision of public art will be required as part of new developments through on and off-site provision, to support and enhance the cultural and social development and identity of the Black Country.
- The use of carbon-based products, energy and non-renewable resources will be minimised through the efficient design of buildings and their layout and site orientation.

Justification

2.32 The importance of high quality design in creating places where people want to live, work and invest with renewed confidence is a fundamental plank of both national and regional policy. World Class Places, the Government's strategy on creating and improving the quality of places, highlights how the centres of Britain's older industrial cities have been transformed from decaying inner cities into sources of civic pride through high quality regeneration. The opportunity exists to transform the Black Country's older industrial areas and regeneration corridors into distinctive places that provide a high quality of life for all who live, work and visit them. Investment in high quality places will result in environmental, economic and social benefits, including community safety, health and well-being, inclusive communities, better public services, environmental sustainability, climate resilience, greater financial value of buildings and improved worklessness. Creating a higher quality of life for the Black Country's communities depends on many factors and will play an increasingly important role in attracting private sector investment and skilled workers.

2.33 The Black Country authorities have long recognised the potential of public art to enhance the design of new development and have sought the provision of public art on new developments for many years. Public art can be free-standing or incorporated within the overall quality and design of buildings and landscaping and can involve the engagement of local artists. Thresholds for eligible development and the value of contributions will be set out in Local Development Documents.

Primary Evidence

Black Country Study Environmental Technical Report: Quality of Place (2005)
Broadening Horizons – A Vision of the Black Country Urban Park, Lovejoys (2004)
Environmental Infrastructure Guidance Phase 1 (2009)
The Black Country: An Historic Landscape Characterisation – First Report (2009)

CSP4 will be delivered and monitored through arrangements set out for individual policies in the Core Strategy.

CSP5 Transport Strategy

Strategic Objectives

From the outset of the Black Country Study it has been acknowledged that transport has a key role in providing a catalyst for the urban renaissance of the Black Country, to support national economic competitiveness and growth by delivering reliable and efficient transport networks. Improved access to key destinations is vital to achieve the required step change in the quality and extent of the transport network to reverse the outward migration of population and to support economic and social aspirations. It is important that this network provides rapid, convenient and sustainable links between the Strategic Centres, housing growth areas, employment areas, local communities and the regional and national transport networks.



The Core Strategy sets the agenda for the transformation of the Black Country transportation network. It identifies the key factors required to enhance the transport infrastructure and assist delivery of the Spatial Objectives for the area:

- Improved accessibility and connectivity of an integrated public transport network.
- Improved road network and links to the national M5 and M6 motorway network.
- Improved access to the freight railway network.
- Improved walking and cycling provision.

The overall transport strategy supports all of the Spatial Objectives, particularly 7.

Policy

The large-scale land use changes proposed in the Core Strategy require an effective and integrated transport network which will serve existing and new developments and promote greater use of sustainable transport modes, (walking, cycling, public transport and car sharing) helping to reduce the growth in car borne journeys. This transport strategy for the Black Country is intended to reflect the following strategic outcomes:

- **Enabling the expansion of the Strategic Centres;**
- **Providing communities with improved access to employment, residential services and other facilities and amenities, with travel choices that are attractive, viable and sustainable;**
- **Improving air quality and helping to address negative impacts on climate change;**
- **Improving the accessibility of employment sites to residential areas and providing reliable access for freight to the national motorway network;**
- **Facilitating access to employment land, particularly strategic high quality employment areas;**
- **Containing congestion by developing and managing transport networks to operate more efficiently;**
- **Improve road safety;**
- **Supporting the strategy through demand management and the promotion of sustainable transport;**
- **Improve access to information relating to travel options for visitors, businesses and local people.**

Justification

- 2.34 The transport objectives for the Core Strategy reflect:
- National transport guidance and the West Midlands Local Transport Plan 2.
 - The Vision and Spatial Objectives for Black Country.
 - Existing and future transport challenges.
 - The Black Country Investment Plan.
- 2.35 In particular, they are consistent with the government's DaSTS goals for transport which are summarised as follows:
- Support economic growth.
 - Tackle climate change.
 - Contribute to better safety, security and health.
 - Promote equality of opportunity.
 - Improve quality of life.
- 2.36 The transport objectives for the Black Country have guided the formation of the transport strategy. They are intended to deliver specific outcomes, and will be supported by indicators and targets that will be incorporated into a monitoring and review mechanism that will measure the extent to which transport objectives are being delivered. This will be undertaken by the authorities, through joint working, and particularly in conjunction with the Local Transport Plan process covering the West Midlands Metropolitan area as a whole.
- 2.37 The technical work undertaken by PRISM modelling has demonstrated that the various multi modal networks continue to function during the plan period and that the planned interventions deliver improvements to their performance. An emphasis on "Smarter Choices" and the recognition of the benefits to be secured by embracing and promoting the advantages of new technologies, such as broadband, video conferencing and internet shopping, assists in achieving this outcome. Against this background it is acknowledged that some hotspots will exist and that they will be mitigated through the Transport Assessment process as development comes forward.
- 2.38 The strategic outcomes within the transport strategy will be achieved by implementing the following measures:
- Development and promotion of high quality, reliable public transport (including rapid transit), improving connectivity between centres, residential and employment land.
 - Promotion of sustainable, viable modes of travel (public transport, walking and cycling) to support reducing congestion, improving air quality and addressing climate change.
 - Improving strategic traffic management (active traffic management and hard shoulder running on motorways) and the strategic highway network (junction improvements at key transition points on the network and urban traffic control) to relieve congestion and improve accessibility.
 - Improving road safety through auditing of proposals and promotion of road safety education.
 - Creating a secure environment.
- 2.39 These outcomes for transport underpin the overall focus on regeneration and job creation in the Black Country. The regeneration of the Black Country will make a very significant contribution to improving equality of opportunity in the Region as incomes are currently well below the regional average. Planning land use and transport in an integrated way was a key theme of the Black Country Study with the aim of locating employment, retail and new housing in the locations most accessible by sustainable means of travel, particularly the strategic centres. The pattern of land use proposed in the Core Strategy will be the most sustainable possible by maximising use of new and improved public transport facilities and services. Increased public transport usage, and overall modal share for sustainable transport modes will support additional improvements to the public transport network, further strengthening the accessibility of the Strategic Centres.
- 2.40 The transport strategy and policies in the Core Strategy reflect the approach in the West Midlands Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 (LTP2), and whilst the LTP covers a much shorter period than the Core Strategy, the underlying principles and its shared vision will remain valid over the longer period. The shared vision is for:
- i. a thriving sustainable and vibrant community where people want to live and where business can develop and grow.
 - ii. city, town and local centres that are attractive and vibrant, where high quality public transport is the norm and walking and cycling are common-place.
 - iii. cleaner air and less congested traffic conditions.
 - iv. a safer community with fewer road accidents and with environments in which people feel secure.
 - v. equal opportunities for everyone to gain access to services and facilities and enjoy a better quality of life, with travel choices that are attractive, viable and sustainable.
- 2.41 It is anticipated that the new Local Transport Plan for the West Midlands (LTP3) will continue to be based on these enduring principles, with schemes and interventions being considered in terms of their impact and effectiveness.
- 2.42 Improving the environment and quality of life in the Black Country are considered essential in making the area an attractive place to live. The overall transport strategy proposed for the Black Country is to upgrade public transport and promote "Smarter Choices" initiatives while maximising the capacity of the highway network through strategic traffic management initiatives while improving capacity and operation at key junctions. Transport Assessments and Travel Plans will help to fund some infrastructure.
- 2.43 The Highways Agency plans for Active Traffic Management and hard shoulder running on the M6 integrate well with this approach. There is a need to improve Junctions 1 and 2 of the M5 and Junctions 9 and 10 on the M6 in the longer term. The nature of these improvements and their timing will be dependent on further studies that include the DaSTS (Delivering a Sustainable Transport System) Access to Birmingham study, investigation of the impacts of strategic development proposals and associated Area Action Plans and future Regional Funding Allocations considerations. Uncommitted transport infrastructure will be subject to detailed investment appraisal and funding opportunity.
- 2.44 New highway construction, as opposed to improving existing routes, will generally be limited to schemes supporting regeneration by allowing new development to take place or enhancing access from development areas to the principal highway network.

- 2.45 Black Country long distance walking and cycling networks have been identified and will be integrated with plans for Environmental Infrastructure. The land use pattern and transport networks set out in the Core Strategy will encourage healthy and active lifestyles.
- 2.46 The Core Strategy land use and development proposals were tested using the PRISM land use and transport model, which demonstrated a reduction in the amount of road traffic generated compared to other options tested.
- 2.47 The Transport Strategy is aimed at managing down and then accommodating the residual traffic demand generated by increases in car ownership, population and the transformational regeneration of the strategic centres. The strategy relies on attracting development to these four centres and this will require the careful phasing of parking supply to allow the management of demand to be adjusted to the availability of better quality public transport.

Primary Evidence

The transport policies respond to the transport objectives and outcomes referred to above and are founded on a robust evidence base derived from transport modelling undertaken as part of the Black Country Study, the Regional Spatial Strategy Phase 2 review of housing proposals and a transport strategy review of the Black Country. These studies have included investigation of a number of land use and transport scenarios for the wider Black Country and West Midlands area.

The development of the transport strategy has also been informed by a number of local transport studies, preparation of transport Major Scheme Business Cases and on-going monitoring of transport trends and performance of the transport networks in the area in conjunction with the West Midland Local Transport Plan.

The Black Country Study 2006
 Review of Transport Strategy 2009 – Mott MacDonald
 PRISM Model testing the Black Country Strategy – 2006
 PRISM Black Country Core Strategy Transport Technical Document – July 2009
 West Midlands TIF Study

Major Scheme Business Cases:

- West Midlands Red Routes Package 1
- West Midlands Urban Traffic control
- A41 Expressway

CSP5 will be delivered and monitored through arrangements set out within the Transport Policies of the Core Strategy.

2e. DELIVERING OUR VISION

- 2.48 A key role of the Core Strategy is to provide a framework for the integrated and co-ordinated regeneration of the Black Country. Ensuring effective delivery of this framework on the ground will require strong collaborative working both between the local authorities and, jointly, with our public, private and third sector partners and a robust process of infrastructure planning and delivery.

Delivery Constraints

- 2.49 The Core Strategy is supported by a Delivery Plan, which draws upon the results of an Infrastructure Study and a Viability Study. The findings of these studies underpin the Strategy, by identifying any potential infrastructure and viability constraints to delivery. The Delivery Plan sets out in some detail the mechanisms, investment and infrastructure needed to overcome constraints and deliver the Core Strategy.
- 2.50 Poor ground conditions, a legacy of the Black Country's mining and industrial past, affect much of the Growth Network. The remediation works necessary to deliver development are the main constraint to development identified in the Infrastructure and Viability Studies, in terms of both extent and cost. As ground conditions are a major constraint on delivery, land remediation should be a priority for delivery intervention. Where valuable mineral resources are present and it is viable to extract them as part of the remediation scheme, this may also help offset the costs.
- 2.51 Parts of the Black Country's existing highway infrastructure, principally the motorway network, suffer from considerable congestion. Motorway junctions M5 J1 and J2 and M6 J9 and J10 have been identified as potentially needing improvement and a joint study is being undertaken to assess this constraint. However, it is not anticipated that the development of new housing and employment land will have a significant additional impact, assuming that proposals for improved public transport, walking and cycling are delivered. This is principally because the housing demand within the sub-region is driven by the desire to live in smaller family units, rather than by population growth. In addition, most new housing development will have good access, including sustainable transport access, to centres of employment. This should help to reduce the requirement for travel and mitigate the impact of development.
- 2.52 Other infrastructure requirements are relatively limited in terms of both cost and extent, and are unlikely to prevent development from going ahead. These include flood mitigation works, waste water system capacity increases, provision for on-site waste management and enhancements in access to residential services. Where gaps in service provision exist, service providers are aware of these gaps and are actively working to address them.

Delivery Mechanisms

Plan Making

- 2.53 The detailed spatial aspects of implementation and delivery will be set out within the additional Development Plan Documents (DPD's) identified in each authority's Local Development Scheme. A detailed programme for DPD delivery is set out in the four Local Development Schemes.
- 2.54 Using the Core Strategy as a framework, the four authorities have already begun to prepare Area Action Plans (AAPs) and Site Allocation Documents (SADs) where necessary to define in more detail which sites are to be retained for employment and which are to be redeveloped for housing and other associated uses. The Black Country Authorities are prioritising this work, to provide certainty to landowners, firms, developers and communities as soon as possible.
- 2.55 SADs for Sandwell and Dudley and AAPs covering Brierley Hill, West Bromwich and Wolverhampton Strategic Centres and parts of the Regeneration Corridor network in Tipton, Smethwick, Stafford Road Corridor, Stourbridge, Halesowen and Willenhall, are due to be adopted by 2012. These documents will cover significant parts of the Growth Network, providing allocations up to 2026.

2.56 It is important that housing allocations are made in accordance with up to date Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments (SHLAAs) for each authority area, which include an assessment of the deliverability and developability of each site. Given the complexity of delivery issues affecting housing sites in the Black Country, it is particularly important that detailed technical work, local consultation, master planning and local phasing programmes are in place to inform allocations.

Delivery Partners

2.57 Regeneration in the Black Country is supported by the activity of a number of working partnerships. At the time of writing (Autumn 2010) these were subject to review following the Comprehensive Spending Review.

2.58 Advantage West Midlands (AWM), the Regional Development Agency, has promoted the economic development of the Black Country as a key priority in the region. In developing the Regional Economic Strategy, AWM has established Regeneration Zones in the Black Country, targeting funding to areas where regeneration needs and opportunities are most aligned. AWM has also established the Wolverhampton/Telford Technology Corridor, which supports projects to boost innovation, knowledge transfer and enterprise. AWM has supported delivery in the Black Country through Impact Investment Locations in the Regional Funding Advice and Allocations, and Gap Funding Programmes.

2.59 The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) is another key Black Country partner, supporting a range of projects, including Growth Points and grant funding for affordable housing. "Single conversations" with the Black Country authorities have resulted in the identification of investment priorities.

2.60 Local Delivery Partners are working across the sub-region making strategic interventions and bringing forward sites and projects. The four Local Strategic Partnerships are also promoting cross boundary working. Other partners who have a key role in delivering transport proposals include the Integrated Transport Authority, Highways Agency and Network Rail.

2.61 The Black Country is also working proactively with partners at the city region and regional level on promoting innovative and co-ordinated approaches to delivery such as Accelerated Development Zones to accelerate bringing forward land for housing development and creating strategic high quality employment areas.

Funding Sources

2.62 The local authorities make significant investment in regeneration every year. This investment ranges from public realm improvements in Strategic Centres to housing renewal activity.

2.63 The Black Country was awarded Growth Point Status in 2008 to support the accelerated growth of 32,000 new dwellings up to 2017. This programme will speed delivery of new homes and quality environments by assisting with land assembly, relocations and remediation to create sustainable development areas.

2.64 Additional public sector funding is provided by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). Funding can also be allocated from transport funding sources, such as The Community Infrastructure Fund, Transport Innovation Fund and the Local Transport Plan

2.65 Planning obligations currently deliver local infrastructure improvements necessary to mitigate the impact of development on the local area. Examples include affordable housing provision, access improvements, open space and residential services. Financial viability has always impacted on the extent of planning obligations which can be secured in the Black Country, particularly in areas suffering from poor ground conditions. Viability impacts can be expected to increase in the future as market conditions fluctuate and requirements for sustainable design are introduced and increased over time.

2.66 The Community Infrastructure Levy, introduced in 2010, together with modifications to the role and extent of planning obligations will provide opportunities for Local Authorities to generate contributions for local and sub-regional infrastructure through a levy on a wide range of developments. This set within the context of an effective infrastructure planning and delivery regime may provide opportunities to provide a range of infrastructure currently beyond the scope of planning obligations.

DEL1 Infrastructure Provision

Strategic Objectives

The provision of appropriate infrastructure in a timely manner underpins the whole transformational and regeneration strategy and this policy is intended to ensure the delivery of Spatial Objectives 6, 7, 8 and 9.

Policy

All new developments should be supported by the necessary on and off-site infrastructure to serve the development, mitigate its impacts on the environment, and ensure that the development is sustainable and contributes to the proper planning of the wider area.

Unless material circumstances or considerations indicate otherwise, development proposals will only be permitted if all necessary infrastructure improvements, mitigation measures and sustainable design requirements and proposals are provided. These will be secured through planning obligations, the Community Infrastructure Levy, planning conditions or other relevant means or mechanisms, to an appropriate timetable that is prioritised, resourced, managed, delivered and co-ordinated across the sub region as a whole where appropriate.

To deliver and monitor the implementation of the development across the Black Country in Local Development Documents, the relevant Black Country Authorities will jointly set out:

- **The range of infrastructure to be provided or supported;**
- **The prioritisation of and resource for infrastructure provision;**
- **The scale and form of obligation or levy to be applied to each type of infrastructure,**
- **Guidance for integration with adjoining Local Authority areas;**
- **Including maintenance payments and charges for preparing agreements;**
- **The defined circumstances and procedure for negotiation regarding infrastructure provision, where viability is at issue.**

Policy Justification

- 2.67 The scale of growth proposed in the Core Strategy will have significant impacts on the local environment and the capacity of a range of infrastructure and facilities. Without appropriate investment, future development will be neither sustainable nor acceptable. The definition of infrastructure in this context is wide, including affordable housing, renewable energy, publicly accessible open space, sustainable drainage, sport and recreational facilities, air quality mitigation measures and residential services, for which overall targets and standards are set in the Core Strategy, but also locally specified requirements, such as crime prevention measures and public art, and cross boundary requirements, such as waste water management. Impacts on the environment can include loss of open space or wildlife habitat which must be mitigated.
- 2.68 Each development proposal, therefore, must address its own impacts through on-site and off-site provision or enhancements, secured through planning obligations or other relevant means. Where the combined impact of a number of developments creates the need for infrastructure, it may be necessary for developer contributions to be pooled to allow the infrastructure to be secured in a fair and equitable way. Pooling may take place both between developments and between local authorities where there is a cross-authority impact.

Primary Evidence

Black Country Infrastructure Study (2009)
 Black Country Viability Study (2009)

Delivery

- Through DPDs and SPDs for various types of infrastructure and planning obligations.
- Investment will be sought through negotiations as part of the Development Management process.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI DEL1 - Adoption of Local Development Documents setting out details of the full range of infrastructure to be provided or supported	100% by 2016

DEL2 Managing the Balance between Employment Land and Housing

Spatial Objectives

Delivery and phasing are fundamental to the Vision and the achievement of the agenda for change. Policy DEL2 is intended to ensure the delivery of Spatial Objectives 2 and 3 supported by Objectives 5, 6 and 7 by providing a clear framework for a continuous supply of housing and employment land to meet the needs of the Black Country to 2026.

Without intervention, the Black Country is forecast to contain a surplus of employment land by 2026 of 1,003ha. Policy DEL2 manages the release of the poorest quality employment land which is not protected by Policies EMP1, EMP2 EMP3 and EMP4.

Policy

The Economy Key Diagram and Appendix 2 show the broad locations we propose to retain in employment use. Detailed boundaries for protected employment areas will be defined in Area Action Plans and Site Allocations Documents. These documents will also manage the release of surplus sites to alternative uses.

Before releasing any employment land in the Black Country we will first ensure the retention of an adequate supply of occupied and available employment land to meet defined needs as set out in Policies EMP2, EMP3 and EMP4. We will take into account the availability of employment land within the area, the quality of the site and its geographical market.

In areas identified for new housing we will positively plan to facilitate housing growth by:

- **Encouraging any existing operation which by virtue of the scale and nature of operations, traffic generation and other amenity considerations may restrict the regeneration of the area to relocate. This relocation will be facilitated with the full support of the local authority concerned, provided that suitable alternative sites and premises are available.**
- **Resist new development where this may restrict the regeneration of the area by virtue of the scale and nature of operations, traffic generation and other amenity considerations. Existing businesses who may wish to redevelop or extend their premises will be encouraged to relocate with the full support of the local authority concerned, provided that suitable alternative sites and premises are available.**

Before considering the release of employment land elsewhere we will:

- **Ensure satisfactory arrangements for the relocation of existing occupiers to safeguard the existing employment base;**
- **Ensure that the development does not adversely affect the operation of existing or proposed employment uses;**
- **Ensure that the site is no longer viable and required either for employment use, including relocation of businesses displaced from sites released to other uses, or for other employment-generating uses.**

The indicative phasing of housing development on surplus employment land is summarised for each local authority in Table 4. A more detailed illustration of this distribution is shown in Appendix 2. This distribution should be used as the starting point for AAPs and SADs. Where local documents propose an alternative distribution the local authority must consider the implication this may have on the need to meet local authority targets in EMP 1 – 4 and HOU1 and make alternative provision where necessary.

Any proposals resulting in the loss of employment land submitted in advance of the adoption of AAPs or SADs should demonstrate a comprehensive approach, making best use of available land and infrastructure and not prejudicing existing and neighbouring uses. Incremental development will only be allowed where it would not prejudice master planning of the wider area. Proposals should also consider the distribution of land shown in Appendix 2.

Policy Justification

- 2.69 The Core strategy is based on a balance of housing and employment. Policies EMP1, EMP2 and EMP3 and EMP4 set out the approach to maintaining a sufficient stock of land for employment, and Policy HOU1 details how the Strategy will accommodate housing needs. The Plan proposes that 1,003 ha of our poorest quality employment land will be redeveloped to meet a significant proportion of our housing requirement, while still providing a sufficient stock of retained land to accommodate forecast levels of jobs. Policy DEL2 provides the mechanism to manage the release of this surplus employment land.
- 2.70 The phased release of employment land for housing must be managed carefully to avoid both unnecessary blight of employment land and harm to the amenity of new residents. While there may be scope for some businesses to remain within areas identified for housing growth, those operations which detract from the regeneration of the area will be encouraged to relocate. The process of transition needs to be managed to allow important businesses and employment uses to relocate to more competitive locations within the Black Country. Relocation can be supported by regeneration through increased land values and will often benefit the long term ambitions of the companies themselves. Locations will be made available for these businesses within protected employment land in the Black Country as far as possible.
- 2.71 Proposals for new employment development in areas of housing growth will be resisted where it is not consistent with the housing led regeneration of the area. The majority of new employment development will be accommodated within the identified Strategic High Quality and Local Employment areas. However it will be particularly important not to undermine viable businesses on land proposed for housing.
- 2.72 The first phase of Area Action Plans (AAPs) and Site Allocation Documents (SADs), will deliver sufficient phased housing allocations up to 2026, in line with Table 4. However, where developers are putting forward proposals in advance of AAPs or SADs, masterplans linked to planning applications could be an appropriate mechanism to trigger a site's release. In such cases, proposals would be expected to adopt a comprehensive approach, making best use of available land and infrastructure and not prejudicing existing and neighbouring uses.
- 2.73 It will be necessary to rely on existing housing commitments and identified SHLAA sites during the early years to enable an appropriate lead in time for larger housing sites. The delivery of new housing will be timed in such a way to ensure that supporting infrastructure is in place. Phasing programmes should guide resource allocation to particular areas and should be designed to ensure that the delivery of major new developments will not cause unacceptable disruption for new and existing residents and businesses.

Table 4 - Phasing of Employment Land and Housing

Hectares	Dudley	Sandwell	Walsall	W'hampton	S Staffs	Total
Gross Employment Land 2009	827	1251	735	752	21	3586
Additions to Employment Land ⁽¹⁾	7	30	28	24	34	123
Employment land redeveloped to housing	57	67	105	33	0	262
Gross Employment Land 2016	777	1214	658	743	55	3447
Additions to Employment Land (1)	12	40	39	34	49	174
Employment land redeveloped to housing	141	392	86	132	0	751
Gross Employment Land 2026	648	850 ⁽²⁾	611	645	104	2858

⁽¹⁾ Gross new employment land brought forward through additions to stock, as set out in GVA Grimley 2009 Assessment of Employment Sites report Table 3.4. Based on bringing forward of RELS sites.

⁽²⁾ Excludes 12 hectares deducted for employment land being promoted for office use near to Junction1 of the M5.

Primary Evidence

Black Country Employment Land Review (2008)
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments (2009)

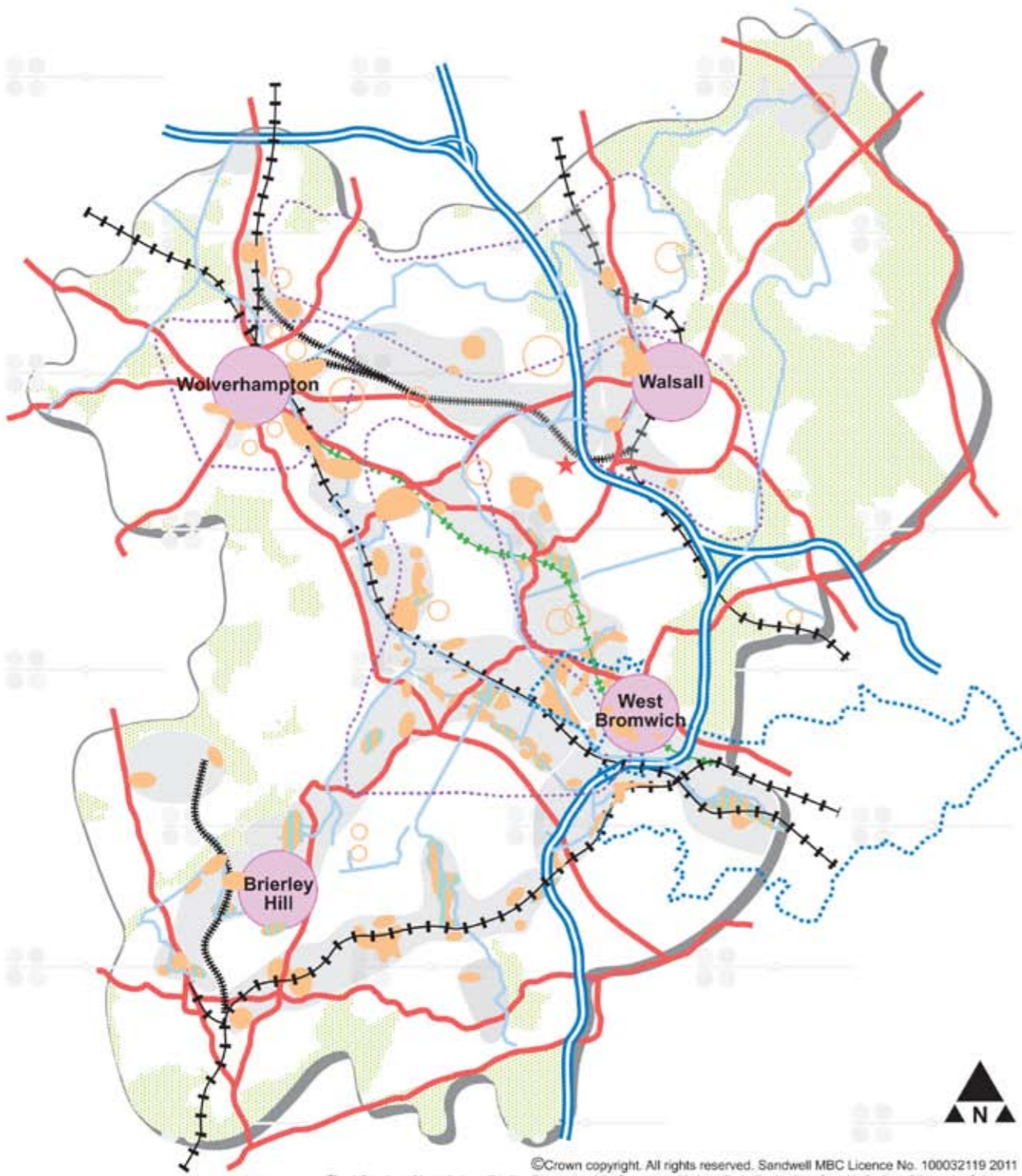
Delivery

- Planning Permissions.
- Area Action Plans.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI DEL2a - Adoption of Site Allocation Documents and Area Action Plans covering the whole of the Black Country as per each LA LDS	By 2016
LOI DEL2b – Employment land completions by Local Authority (ha)	As set out in table 4
LOI DEL2c – Loss of employment land by Local Authority area (ha) by type	As set out in table 4

Black Country Core Strategy Housing Key Diagram



3. Creating Sustainable Communities

HOU1 Delivering Sustainable Housing Growth

Strategic Objectives

The creation of a network of cohesive, healthy and prosperous communities across the Black Country is a fundamental element of the Vision. The provision of sufficient land to provide for sustainable housing growth is a corner stone in the achievement of this Vision and the policy ensures the delivery of Spatial Objectives 3, 4 and 5.



Policy

Sufficient land will be provided to deliver at least 63,000 net new homes over the period 2006 – 2026. The majority of the requirement will be met through committed sites and the phased allocation of sites within the Regeneration Corridors, Strategic Centres, appropriate Free-Standing Employment Sites and housing renewal areas as detailed in Tables 5, 6, & 7, the Housing Key Diagram and Appendices 2 and 3.

Additional housing capacity will also be sought elsewhere in the Black Country through allocations and planning permissions on suitable sites. The estimated net effect of housing redevelopment up to 2026 will be reviewed annually and taken into account in the calculation of housing land supply.

At least 95% of new housing (gross) will be built on previously developed land.

Table 5 - Black Country Housing Land Supply 2006-26

Current Supply	Gross Completions 2006-9	8589
	Committed Sites April 2009 ¹	23808
New Supply in Growth Network	Regeneration Corridors ^{2 3}	23771
	Strategic Centres	4039
New Supply Outside Growth Network	Free-standing Employment Sites ²	2044
	Housing Demolition Sites	3548
	Other Capacity outside the Growth Network	6650
Total Gross Dwellings		72450
	Demolitions 2006-9	-2563
	Estimated Housing Demolitions 2009-26	-6887
Total Net Dwellings		63000

¹ discounted by 10%

² discounted by 15%

³ including West Bromwich Strategic Centre

Table 6 - Indicative Housing Land Supply by Phase (2009-26)*

Source of Capacity	2009-16	2016-26	2009-26
Committed Sites April 2009 ¹	16821	6987	23808
New Supply (excluding commitments) in Corridors and Strategic Centres			
RC 1	0	0	0
RC 2	0	873	873
RC 3	0	563	563
RC 4	66	2030	2096
RC5	0	0	0
RC 6	359	1339	1698
RC 7	911	104	1015
RC 8	0	4242	4242
RC 9	0	5320	5320
RC 10	355	315	670
RC 11	590	2000	2590
RC 12 ³	0	2591	2591
RC 13	0	4113	4113
RC 14	0	295	295
RC 15	0	455	455
RC 16	120	1326	1446
Regeneration Corridor Total ^{2 3}	2041	21731	23772
Wolverhampton Strategic Centre	0	1100	1100
Brierley Hill Strategic Centre	2306	633	2939
Strategic Centre Total	2306	1733	4039
New Supply on Free-Standing Employment Sites ²	0	2044	2044
Estimated Housing Demolitions (2009-26)	-3199	-3688	-6887
Estimated Capacity of Housing Demolition Sites	858	2690	3548
Estimated net change on Housing Demolition Sites	-2341	-998	-3339
Other Capacity Outside the Growth Network	1409	5241	6650
Total Net Dwellings	20236	36738	56974

* The Phasing figures are indicative to allow for sustainable brownfield sites to come forward for development earlier in the plan period.

Footnotes 1, 2 and 3: see below Table 5

Table 7 - Housing Land Supply by Local Authority (2006-26)

Source of Capacity	Dudley	Sandwell	Walsall	Wolverhampton	Total
Net Completions 2006-9	1937	2741	254	1094	6026
Committed capacity¹ April 2009	3654	6998	6038	7118	23808
New Supply (excluding commitments)					
RC 1				0	0
RC 2				873	873
RC 3				563	563
RC 4				2096	2096
RC 5			0		0
RC 6			1698		1698
RC 7			1015		1015
RC 8		3910	332		4242
RC 9		5320			5320
RC 10	670				670
RC 11	2590				2590
RC 12 ³		2591			2591
RC 13	980	3133			4113
RC 14	295				295
RC 15			455		455
RC 16	910	536			1446
Regeneration Corridor Total^{2,3}	4628	13166	2975	3002	23772
Strategic Centre Total	2939	-	0	1100	4039
Free-Standing Employment Sites²	310	714	714	306	2044
Estimated net change on Housing Demolition Sites (2009-26)	102	-3031	765	-1175	-3339
Other Capacity outside the Growth Network	2556	901	1227	1966	6650
Total Net Dwellings (2006-26)	16127	21489	11973	13411	63000
Estimated Gross Dwellings (2006-26)	16527	26217	14184	15522	72450

Indicative Phased Net Targets					
2006-16	8112	7421	5067	5662	26262
2016-21	2670	4690	2300	2580	12120
2021-26	5345	9378	4606	5169	24618

Footnotes 1, 2 and 3: see below Table 5

Justification

- 3.1 The Core Strategy identifies sufficient land to achieve 63,000 additional dwellings by 2026. This will deliver a 13% increase in housing stock and accommodate projected household increases within the Black Country. The strategic elements of housing land supply are shown on the Housing Key Diagram. Housing capacity has been identified on the basis of the following information:
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments (SHLAAs).
 - Employment Studies – identifying surplus land.
 - An estimate of the likely scale of housing renewal up to 2026.
- 3.2 The housing supply on surplus employment land has been discounted by 15% in order to take account of delivery constraints that particularly affect larger areas. Delivery constraints include poor ground conditions and the need for large scale masterplanning, land assembly and residential service access improvements. This discount means that land will be allocated over and above that required to meet targets. Supply on committed sites has also been discounted by 10% to allow for non-implementation. Together, these discounts will provide sufficient flexibility in the housing land supply to meet any unforeseen circumstances.
- 3.3 Additional capacity will come forward within Strategic Centres and also outside the Growth Network, on housing renewal sites and on other sites identified in SHLAAs. Specific sites will be allocated in Site Allocation Documents and Area Action Plans. These other sites are likely to include surplus public land, small non-conforming employment uses, sites in non-strategic centres and residential intensification sites, subject to policy, sustainability and detailed site considerations.
- 3.4 Large areas in the central core of the Black Country have been identified as in need of some kind of housing market intervention. Selective housing renewal of the Black Country's existing housing stock and the surrounding residential environment will help to create more sustainable communities and support regeneration within the Growth Network. A combination of renovation, improvement, refurbishment or redevelopment will take place, to be determined on a site-by-site basis having regard to the most sustainable approach. The likely amount of redevelopment following demolition on housing renewal sites has been estimated (see Table 6) and current housing renewal hubs are shown on the Housing Key Diagram.
- 3.5 The Plan period has been divided into two phases. The housing figures set out in Table 6 for 2009-16 are minimum targets. Given the poor housing market conditions and the economic uncertainty at the beginning of the Plan period, and the lead in time to bring forward many of the housing sites in the Growth Network, housing capacity has been concentrated in the second phase. Indicative net housing targets by local authority, for the periods 2006-16, 2016-21 and 2021-26, are provided in Table 7. These reflect evidence provided through the SHLAAs. The Black Country housing trajectory is set out in Appendix 4.

Primary Evidence

Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton SHLAAs (2009)
 2008 Employment Land Study (GVA Grimley)
 2009 Employment Sites Study (GVA Grimley)

Delivery

- Through Site Allocations Documents and Area Action Plans.
- Annual update of SHLAAs.
- Housing renewal will be delivered through local authority intervention and the Urban Living and Evolve projects, but also through mechanisms for specific areas, such as the Greets Green and ABCD (All Saints and Blakenhall) New Deal for Communities areas.
- Securing funding to facilitate delivery, such as Growth Point and affordable housing grant
- Working with key partners and delivery agencies.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
COI HOU1a - Housing Trajectory indicators	In accordance with housing trajectory set out in Appendix 4
LOI HOU1 - Net housing completions for each Regeneration Corridor and Strategic Centre, and for free-standing employment sites and sites outside the Growth Network by Local Authority	Targets set out in tables 6 and 7(annualised)
COI HOU1b – New and converted dwellings on previously developed land	95%

HOU2 Housing Density, Type and Accessibility

Strategic Objectives

The creation of a network of cohesive, healthy and prosperous communities across the Black Country is a fundamental element of the Vision. This requires a range of housing types, tenures and densities to provide choice and create sustainable communities and to ensure the delivery of Spatial Objectives 3, 4 and 5.



Policy

The density and type of new housing provided on each site will be informed by:

- **The need for a range of types and sizes of accommodation to meet identified sub regional and local needs;**
- **The level of accessibility by sustainable transport to residential services, including any improvements to be secured through development;**
- **The need to achieve high quality design and minimise amenity impacts, taking into account the characteristics and mix of uses in the area where the proposal is located.**

Each authority will aim to provide an overall mix of house types over the plan period, tailored to best meet local and sub-regional needs.

Developments of 15 dwellings or more should provide a range of house types and sizes that will meet the accommodation needs of both existing and future residents, in line with information available from the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and Housing Needs Surveys and with reference to the standards in Table 8 overleaf.

All developments will aim to achieve a minimum net density of 35 dwellings per hectare, except where higher densities would prejudice historic character and local distinctiveness as defined in Policy ENV2.

All site allocations made in Local Development Documents will indicate the density and house type mix to be sought. Detailed guidance on the application of this policy in local areas will be provided in Site Allocation Documents and Area Action Plans, and through individual local authority Supplementary Planning Documents.

Justification

- 3.6 Achieving an appropriate density and house type mix is crucial both to the success of each new housing development and also the overall sustainability of the Spatial Strategy. It is important that even small sites, of 15 dwellings or more, in line with the affordable housing threshold, contribute to providing an appropriate house type mix and density.
- 3.7 The accessibility of all housing developments to a range of residential services by walking, cycling or public transport is key to achieving sustainable communities. As higher density developments tend to accommodate more people, they should generally be located in the areas with best access to services. The highest densities should be located in areas with the best access to public transport and services, but also where a high proportion of flats will provide design solutions that best reflect historic character and local distinctiveness. Therefore, such densities will only be acceptable within Strategic Centres and Town Centres. Conversely, lower density developments, accommodating more families should have best access to schools.

- 3.8 Table 8 provides access standards for differing house type mixes / densities, in relation to four priority residential services: employment, health, fresh food and education. These services have been identified in Government research on social inclusion and guidance on Accessibility Planning and Local Transport Plans (LTPs), and were used to assess accessibility in the West Midlands LTP 2006. Proxies have been selected for each service e.g. employment is represented by Strategic Centres and retained employment areas. The proxy used for fresh food is a Centre, which should include an anchor foodstore, or a foodstore outside a Centre that currently provides a range and choice of fresh food. The access standards have been developed based on survey evidence regarding the distance people are prepared to travel to each service by foot and public transport.
- 3.9 Housing developments of 15 dwellings or more will be expected to meet the accessibility standards set out in Table 8, which vary according to density and likely house type mix. Where there is an identified gap in service provision against one or more of these standards, investment will be sought to improve either service provision or access to existing services or service provision sufficient to ensure standards are met. New provision should be located in accordance with CEN6 and HOU5.

Table 8 - Accessibility Standards

Density / House Type Mix			
Density (dwellings per hectare net)	Very High: 60 + Only appropriate within a Strategic Centre or Town Centre	High: 45 – 60	Moderate: 35 – 45
Indicative proportion of flats	50%+	25-50%	0 – 25%
Indicative amount of housing suited to families	low	medium	high
Accessibility (by either walking or public transport, unless stated)			
Employment - Strategic Centre or other employment area	20 mins	20 mins	30 mins
Health - Doctor's surgery or Walk-in Centre	10 mins	10 mins	15 mins
Fresh Food - Centre or foodstore	Na	10 mins	15 mins
Education - Primary School (walking distance only)	Na	15 mins	10 mins
Education - Secondary School	Na	25 mins	20 mins

- 3.10 Current accessibility across the Black Country has been modelled using Accession software, which shows the high levels of accessibility achieved by the Spatial Strategy. This does however show that there are some gaps in service provision which will need to be filled through service or access improvements. The model will be updated on a regular basis to reflect changes in service provision and public transport services. Local circumstances, such as planned changes to service provision, will be taken into account when assessing accessibility on a site by site basis.

- 3.11 Household projections indicate that 60% of new households the Black Country will need to accommodate by 2026 will be 1 or 2 person, and many of these will include older people. Across the sub-region, there is a need for a mix of dwellings suitable to accommodate the following proportions of household types: 1 person 20%; 2 person 40%; 3+ person 40%. It is important that new housing reflects the needs of these new households, allowing for at least one bedroom per person.
- 3.12 The Black Country suffers from a lack of housing choice, which limits its ability to attract more households in Social Groups A and B. At present, one quarter of new market housing built in the Black Country is occupied by A and B households who are new to the area or who would otherwise have left. If the equivalent national level of A and B households in 2033 were to be achieved in the Black Country this would require all new market housing built over the Plan period to be occupied by A and B households. Factors most likely to attract A and B households are proximity to professional and managerial jobs, the appearance of the surrounding area and good schools. It will be important, therefore, that the various elements of the Core Strategy work together to achieve a level of transformation necessary to attract A and B households at the required levels.
- 3.13 The local authorities will work with partners to meet identified needs to accommodate older people, people with disabilities and those with other special needs.

Primary Evidence

C3 Housing Market Area Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2008)
 Black Country Infrastructure Study (2009)
 Black Country Viability Study (2009)
 AB Social Group Research (2007)

Delivery

- Through Local Development Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents.
- Through the Development Management process.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI HOU2a - % of housing completions on sites meeting accessibility standards	100% (excluding sites under 35 dph meeting HOU1 criteria)
LOI HOU2b - Proportion of 1, 2 and 3+ bedroom properties completed by type	20% 1 bedroom; 40% 2 bedroom; 40% 3+ bedroom

HOU3 Delivering Affordable Housing

Strategic Objectives

The creation of a network of cohesive, healthy and prosperous communities across the Black Country is a fundamental element of the Vision. This requires a range of housing types, tenures, densities and affordability to create sustainable communities and to ensure the delivery of Strategic Objectives 3, 4 and 5.

Policy

The Local Authorities will aim to provide a minimum 11,000 new affordable dwellings between 2006 and 2026, in partnership with developers and the Homes and Communities Agency.

Local Planning Authorities will seek to secure 25% affordable housing on all sites of 15 dwellings or more where this is financially viable. The tenure and type of affordable units sought will be determined on a site by site basis, based on best available information regarding housing need, site surroundings and viability considerations.

On sites where 25% affordable housing is proven not to be viable, the maximum proportion of affordable housing will be sought which will not undermine the development’s viability, subject to achieving optimum tenure mix and securing other planning obligations necessary for the development to gain planning permission. Financial viability assessments conforming to an agreed methodology will be required and, where necessary, independently appraised by the local planning authority at the cost of the applicant. Claw back and other flexible arrangements will be sought through planning agreements, wherever possible, to allow for changing market conditions in future years.

Justification

3.14 Whilst the current economic situation has impacted on house prices in recent times rising house prices and low average incomes over a long period have made market housing increasingly unaffordable for many Black Country households. The C3 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2008¹ identified a significant need for affordable housing in the Black Country up to 2011 amounting to 3,125 units per year. To meet this level of need over the Plan period, 80% of new housing would have to be affordable. This is neither practical nor would it deliver the required increase in A and B households.

3.15 The RSS Phase 2 Revision suggested a minimum affordable housing target of 29% of gross completions for authorities in the Central Housing Market Area. However, this is not achievable in the Black Country as, even when residential land values were at their peak, it has only been possible to secure, on average, half of the target affordable housing on eligible sites through developer subsidy, due to viability issues. If the full target of 25% (30% in Dudley’s case) required in adopted UDPs had not been secured on some sites, this average would have been far lower. Given that housing land values are unlikely to return to recent levels in the short term and that viability issues will therefore continue to affect many sites, it is reasonable to assume that a similar average rate will be achieved over the Plan period.



- 3.16 To achieve this rate, it is vital that 25% affordable housing is initially sought on all eligible sites, that viability is assessed on a site by site basis, and that claw back is employed wherever possible to allow for changing market conditions. The authorities are working towards a common approach to assessing the viability of affordable housing on development sites.
- 3.17 Claw back is the arrangement put into place when the Local Planning Authority, in granting planning permission, agrees to mitigate the affordable housing requirement for viability reasons but when, subsequently, the completed housing development (or phase) generates more profit than expected. In such cases, the Local Planning Authority would therefore claw back an appropriate proportion of the additional profit for the provision of affordable housing, up to the amount originally sought on the site.
- 3.18 In the absence of any other information, it is also reasonable to assume that housing grant levels continue to provide the same number of affordable dwellings annually as achieved since 2006. Using these assumptions, 11,000 affordable homes would be built between 2006 and 2026, 15% of estimated gross completions (72,450).
- 3.19 The tenure of affordable housing required over the Plan period will vary according to local housing need and market conditions.

Primary Evidence

- C3 Housing Market Area Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2008)
- Black Country Infrastructure Study (2009)
- Black Country Viability Study (2009)
- Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton Housing Strategies
- Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton SHLAA’s (2009)

Delivery

- Site Allocations Documents , Area Action Plans and negotiations with developers through the Development Management process.
- Implementation of Housing Strategies and close co-ordination and partnership with the Homes and Communities Agency.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
COI HOU3 – Gross affordable housing completions	11000 by 2026 (15% of target gross housing completions between 2006 and current year)

HOU4 Accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

Strategic Objectives

The creation of sustainable communities, which is at the heart of the Spatial Strategy, requires accommodation to meet the needs of all sectors of society and cater for their particular requirements. Making proper provision for gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople helps to meet the requirements of Spatial Objectives 3 and 4.

¹The C3 area includes the Black Country, Telford & Wrekin, Soth Staffordshire and Cannock

Policy

Indicative targets for new gypsy and traveller pitches and travelling showpeople plots up to 2018 for each local authority are set out in Table 9. These targets are based on needs identified in the Black Country Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) 2008. When necessary, the GTAA will be reviewed and targets rolled forward to cover the whole plan period.

To ensure that these targets are met, the local authorities will allocate sites through Site Allocation Documents and Area Action Plans, and will pursue funding, where necessary, to ensure pitches and plots are delivered.

The location of transit pitches to serve the Black Country as a whole will be determined by the local authorities in partnership.

The Black Country Authorities will assess proposals against the criteria below where there is demonstrable need not met through allocated sites.

Gypsy and traveller permanent residential pitches and travelling showpeople plots:

- The site should be suitable as a place to live, particularly with regard to health and safety, and the development should be designed to provide adequate levels of privacy and amenity for both occupants and neighbouring uses;
- The site should meet moderate standards of access to residential services set out in Policy HOU2;
- The site should be located and designed to facilitate integration with neighbouring communities;
- The site should be suitable to allow for the planned number of pitches, an amenity block, a play area, access roads, parking and an area set aside for work purposes where appropriate, including in the case of travelling showpeople sufficient level space for outdoor storage and maintenance of equipment;
- The site is served or capable of being served by adequate on-site services for water supply, power, drainage, sewage and waste disposal (storage and collection).

Gypsy and traveller transit pitches

- The site should provide safe and convenient access to road networks and be located so as to cause minimum disruption to surrounding communities;
- The site should be suitable as a place to live, particularly with regard to health and safety.

The precise location, design and facilities provided on any new sites will be determined in consultation with local gypsies and travellers and travelling showpeople, and take into account any available national guidance.

Table 9 - Indicative Black Country Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Targets: 2008-2018

	Dudley	Sandwell	Walsall	Wolverhampton	Black Country
Permanent Residential Pitches	21	2	39	36	98
Transit Pitches	10-12 Pitches				10-12
Plots for Travelling Showpeople	6	12	35	3	56

Source: Black Country GTAA 2008

Justification

- 3.20 The Black Country GTAA, in accordance with national guidance, has identified local need where it arises for gypsy and traveller and travelling showpeople accommodation up to 2018.
- 3.21 Permanent gypsy and traveller pitches, and travelling showpeople plots, have a permanent structure with all the normal residential amenities, and are used as a base to travel from. They are intended to allow gypsies and travellers to obtain good access to education, health and other services. Transit pitches are designed to temporarily accommodate gypsies and travellers whilst moving between permanent sites or visiting the area, and provide basic amenities including, as a minimum, water supply and rubbish disposal.
- 3.22 The GTAA identified that gypsies and travellers prefer small, family sized sites with approximately 10-15 pitches, but will accept larger sites if carefully planned and designed in consultation with the gypsy community. Local authorities may assist gypsies and travellers living on their own land without planning permission to obtain retrospective planning permission where this is deemed appropriate. However, many of the participants in the GTAA did not think they would be able to afford to buy their own land. Therefore, Council owned or operated sites are likely to make up the majority of future pitch requirements in the Black Country, although Site Allocation Documents and Area Action Plans may specify small sites that could viably be bought and developed privately by gypsies and travellers. Any consultation on DPDs concerning gypsy and traveller and travelling showpeople accommodation will fully involve gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople.
- 3.23 There is an identified need for a transit site or sites in the Black Country to meet the needs of travellers and help prevent the occurrence of unauthorised encampments. The GTAA did not identify any particular preferred location within the Black Country. Therefore, the local authorities and stakeholders will work together to identify the most appropriate location or locations in accordance with the criteria in Policy HOU4.
- 3.24 Travelling Showpeople have different accommodation requirements to those of gypsies and travellers and form part of a different community. They require large plots capable of accommodating lorries and equipment, which are more suited to mixed use areas.

Primary Evidence

Black Country Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (2008)

Delivery

- Allocations in Local Development Documents and bids for Government funding where required.
- Planning applications determined through the Development Management process.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
COI HOU4 – Net additional pitches (permanent residential pitches, transit pitches and plots for travelling showpeople) provided up to 2018	Targets for each authority as set out in Table 9

HOU5 Education and Health Care Facilities

Strategic Objectives

Education and health care are fundamental to achieving the Vision for sustainable communities and economic prosperity. In particular the provision of a sustainable network of education and health care facilities is key to delivery of Spatial Objective 8.



Policy

New health care facilities and pre-school, school and further and higher education facilities should be:

- Well designed and well related to neighbourhood services and amenities;
- Well related to public transport infrastructure and directed to a Centre appropriate in role and scale to the proposed development and its intended catchment area. Proposals located outside Centres must be justified in terms of relevant national policy;
- Wherever possible, best located to address accessibility gaps in terms of the standards set out in Policy HOU2, particularly where a significant amount of new housing is proposed;
- Where possible, incorporate a mix of compatible community service uses on a single site.

New and improved facilities will be secured through a range of funding measures. Where a development would increase the need for education and health care facilities to the extent that new or improved facilities would be required, planning obligations or levies will be secured as detailed in Site Allocation Documents, Area Action Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents.

Where housing site allocations are proposed through Site Allocations Documents or Area Action Plans which would require new or improved facilities, sites and potential funding mechanisms will be identified to deliver these.

New and redeveloped education facilities should include maximum provision for community use of sports and other facilities.

The existing network of education and health care facilities will be protected and enhanced. The physical enhancement and expansion of higher and further educational facilities and related business and research will be supported where it helps to realise the educational training and research potential of the Black Country. Proposals involving the loss of an education or health care facility will be permitted only where adequate alternative provision is available to meet the needs of the community served by the facility.



Justification

- 3.25 Poor health, low sports participation and low educational attainment are key issues for the Black Country. Improvements to provision of education and health facilities will help to address these issues and also retain and attract A and B households. A great deal of investment is currently underway, for example through Building Schools for the Future (in Wolverhampton). It is important that this investment, including contributions from development, is focussed to support Centres, address accessibility gaps, generate maximum service improvements and secure community benefits. In particular, increasing community use of school sports facilities would make a major contribution towards meeting open space, sport and recreation standards and improving health through increased sports participation.
- 3.26 Whilst the preferred location for education and health care facilities is the network of identified Centres, there may be cases where a development is isolated from a Centre or provision within a Centre may not be possible. In such cases the priority, when selecting a location, should be addressing accessibility gaps in accordance with access standards set out in Policy HOU2, to maximise sustainable access to the facility.
- 3.27 Higher and further education institutions and research facilities, particularly the University of Wolverhampton, play a major role in the Black Country economy and have a key role to help deliver economic and social transformation. Retaining graduates within and attracting them to the Black Country is also key to securing a knowledge-based economy. The Higher and Further education sector is a major driver of economic, social and cultural regeneration and ongoing investment in the existing network of this sector is supported. Initiatives which strengthen linkages between the sector and the wider economy will also be supported.

Primary Evidence

Black Country Infrastructure Study (2009)
 Primary Care Trust Strategic Services Development Plans

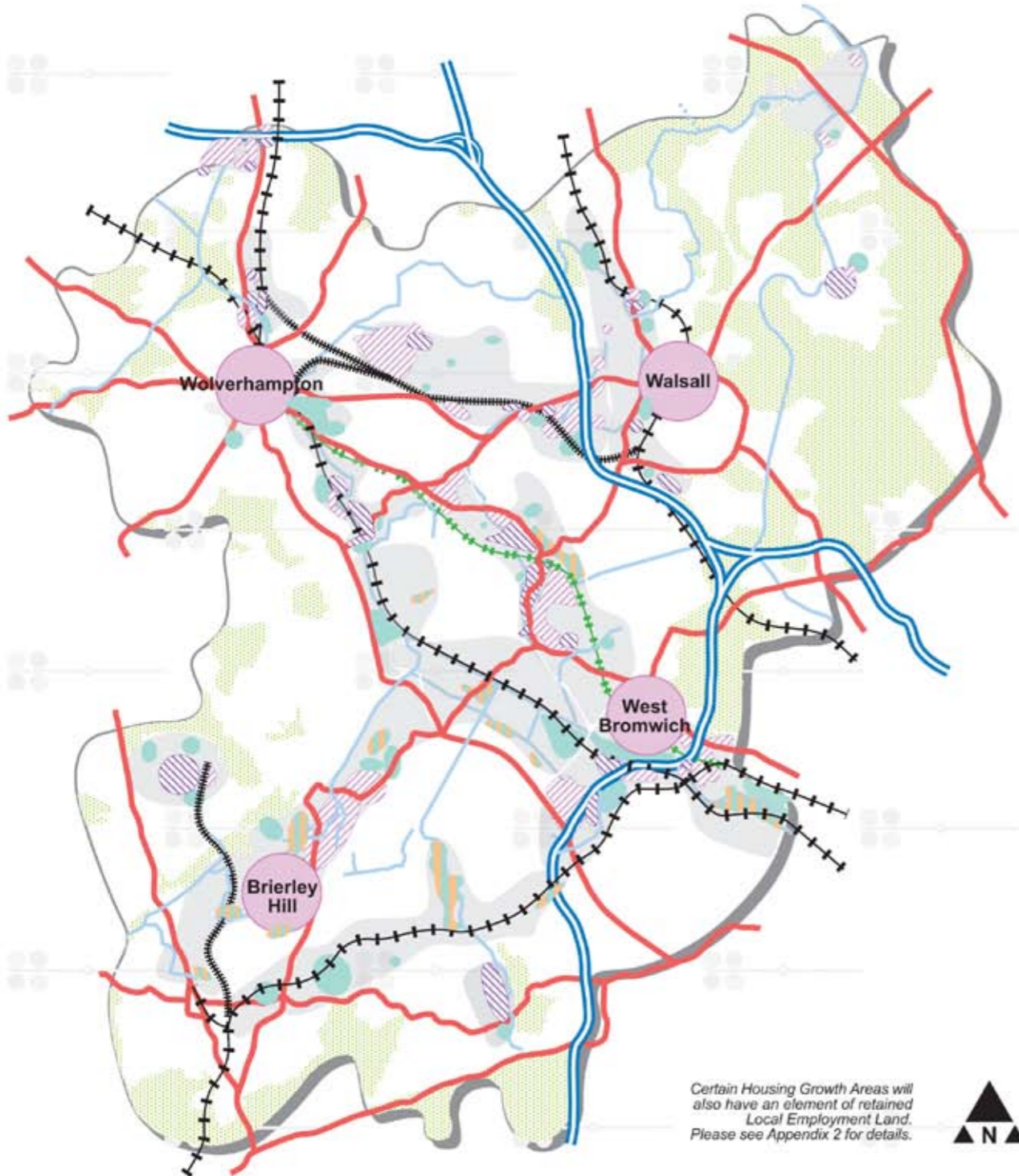
Delivery

- Building Schools for the Future and Primary School Programme.
- LIFT initiative, GP-led initiatives and other health care development initiatives.
- Identify sites to support implementation of established programmes and to meet identified needs through Site Allocations Documents and Area Action Plans.
- Use of planning obligations or other funding mechanisms to address the impact of development on the need for health and education facilities.
- Identify sites to support implementation of university and college estate strategies through site allocation documents and Area Action Plans.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI HOU5 - Loss of Education and Health Care capacity during the plan period	None

Black Country Core Strategy Economy Key Diagram



KEY

- Existing Strategic High Quality Employment
- Potential Strategic High Quality Employment
- Local Employment
- Proposed Housing/Local Employment Mixed Area
- Strategic Centres
- Major Road Network
- Regeneration Corridors
- Motorway
- Canal
- Disused Hatherton Branch Canal
- Passenger Rail
- Freight Rail
- Midland Metro
- Green Belt

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The delineation of boundaries within the diagrams and the figures provided are illustrative to give a broad indication of the scale of change.

4. THE ECONOMY, EMPLOYMENT AND CENTRES

- 4.1 The evidence base for our employment land policies is a series of employment land studies by GVA Grimley. The first – the Black Country Employment Land review was undertaken in 2008 followed by the Assessment of Employment Sites Report in 2009. These studies set out the economic vision for the Black Country and translate it into a set of employment forecasts, which in turn are translated into demand for employment land. They show how the economy will change if the vision is to be realised, and how much employment land, of what kinds, will be needed to accommodate that change.
- 4.2 Policies EMP1-4 are concerned with employment in manufacturing (Use Class B1(b), B1(c) and B2), warehousing (Use Class B8) and other uses which are typically located in employment areas. We refer to these uses as ‘employment’. Offices are not classed as an employment use; they are covered by policies CEN1-7, which cover uses that are more appropriately located in town centres, also including retail.

EMP1 Providing for Economic Growth and Jobs

Spatial Objective

Policy EMP1 seeks to ensure a sufficient stock of employment land to meet demand and support the growth and diversification of the economy. This Policy supports Spatial Objectives 2 and 9.

Policy

We aim to provide land for at least 75,000 industrial and warehouse jobs in the Black Country in 2026. For this, to protect jobs and support economic growth and allow for market flexibility and uncertainty, we will plan for a target of 2,900 ha of employment land. We will ensure that the stock does not fall below the quantity set out in Table 10.

Table 10 – Proposed Employment Land Stock to 2026

Local authority	Employment land stock 2009 (ha) (1)	Proposed employment land stock 2016 (1)	Proposed employment land stock 2026 (1)
Dudley	827	777	648
Sandwell	1251	1214	850
Walsall	735	658	611
Wolverhampton	752	743	645
Black Country	3565	3392	2754
South Staffordshire*	21	55	104
Total	3586	3447	2858

Source: GVA Grimley Assessment of Employment Sites Report, 2009 Table 3.8.

(1) Proposed stock figure refers to gross stock including allowance for non-class B uses and for areas of vacant land. **The 2009 figure excludes vacant sites under 0.4ha. These are assumed to be gradually built out by 2026. By 2026 however, there are envisaged to be further redevelopment opportunities as illustrated in the GVA Grimley Assessment of Employment Sites Report tables 3.6 and 3.7.**

* includes allowance for i54, Hilton and Featherstone sites adjacent to Black Country within South Staffordshire District.

Policy Justification



4.3 The transformation of the Black Country’s economy aims to create strong and prosperous communities. The Black Country is well placed to attract knowledge based, high technology manufacturing and warehousing employment. The evidence base, which as noted earlier is based on fulfilment of the Black Country vision, forecasts that employment in the logistics / warehousing sector will grow. It forecasts that manufacturing employment will fall, but envisages that the Black Country will continue to play a large role in manufacturing/industry and attract inward investment in that sector. The economy as a whole and manufacturing in particular will need to diversify into growth sectors, which will be identified locally following completion of statutory Local Economic Impact Assessments.

Examples of priority market sectors for development now identified include:

- Diversified manufacturing, including high value added, advanced engineering, specifically, aerospace, food production, offsite construction and health products.
- Business, financial and customer services.
- Green industries; including environmental technologies, waste management and research.

Transformational growth sectors can be identified in a number of ways. These include ability to generate employment for residents, vulnerability to recession, comparative advantage and potential to help close the output/earnings gap with the UK.

4.4 The land requirement will be met by the protection and improvement of existing employment areas as set out in Policies EMP2 and EMP3 and by the bringing forward of sites for development as detailed in Policy EMP4.

4.5 The stock of employment land proposed in the Core Strategy is considered to be sufficient to meet the anticipated level of demand, including a safety margin to cover risk. To ensure that the forecast demand for land is met in full, it is essential that this stock be maintained. If the stock becomes too low, because too much employment land is released for housing, or not enough land is developed/ redeveloped for employment, there is a danger that economic development may be constrained and the Black Country may not provide enough jobs.

4.6 The release of surplus employment land to other uses is managed by Policy EMP3 and DEL2.

Primary Evidence

- Regional Employment Land Study (2009)
- 2008 Employment Land Study (GVA Grimley)
- 2009 Employment Sites Study (GVA Grimley)

Delivery

- Through the Development Management process.
- Through interventions included within the economic development plans of partners in promoting development opportunities to make land available, bringing forward development, support for enterprise growth and workforce skilling.
- Through monitoring of gains and losses of employment land, which will inform planning decisions and policy interventions.
- Through Multi-Area Agreements which will frame future action in relation to market intervention at local authority level and aim to close gaps between wards with the greatest worklessness and deprivation.

Monitoring

The land requirements shown above are based on assumptions made in the 2008 GVA Grimley Employment Land Review. These assumptions include job densities, vacancy and proportion of non-class B uses in employment area. It will not be possible to monitor all these assumptions in AMRs. Therefore, to measure progress towards the targets set out for 2016, in 2015 we will commission a review of the employment land evidence which will see how far key assumptions have come true and suggest remedies to rectify any shortfall in meeting the targets.

Indicator	Target
LOI EMP1a – Employment land completions by Local Authority (ha)	To reflect gross employment land stock as set out in Table EMP1
LOI EMP1b – Loss of employment land by Local Authority area (ha)	To reflect gross employment land stock as set out in Table DEL2

EMP2 Actual and Potential Strategic High Quality Employment Areas

Spatial Objectives

Policy EMP1 has set out the overall quantity of employment land that we aim to provide by 2026. The existing portfolio of land is not of sufficient quality to deliver our aspirations. Policy EMP2 provides for a portfolio of Strategic High Quality Employment Land suitable for a growing and diversified economy. This Policy supports Spatial Objectives 2 and 10.



Policy

The Strategic High Quality Employment Areas will be characterised by excellent accessibility, high quality environment and clusters of high technology knowledge based sectors. The Black Country currently provides 526 ha of high quality land and we will safeguard them for manufacturing and logistics uses within Use Classes B1 (b) (c), B2 and B8.

The Black Country needs an additional 1,031 ha of Strategic High Quality Employment Land. Targets for each Local Authority area including parts of South Staffordshire north of Wolverhampton are set out in Table 11.

Some employment generating non Class B uses will also be permitted in actual and potential strategic high quality employment areas, where they can be shown to support, maintain or enhance the business and employment function of the area.

We will encourage high quality development / redevelopment and discourage development that prejudices quality, dilutes employment uses or deters investment. We will also seek public intervention to support development, improvement and marketing of these sites.

These sites will be protected from redevelopment for other non-employment uses.

Table 11 - Strategic High Quality Employment Land Targets to 2026

Local authority	Existing High Quality Employment Land (2009) (ha)	Proposed Strategic High Quality Employment Land 2016 (ha)	Proposed Strategic High Quality Employment Land target 2026 (ha)
Dudley	158	197	274
Sandwell	192	289	466 ¹
Walsall	53	149	317
Wolverhampton	123	224	417
South Staffordshire	7	41	90
TOTAL	533	901	1564

Proposed stock refers to gross stock including allowance for non-class B uses and for areas of vacant land. The 2009 figure excludes vacant sites under 0.4ha. These are assumed to be gradually built out by 2026. By 2026 however, there are envisaged to be further redevelopment opportunities as illustrated in the GVA Grimley 2009 Assessment of Employment Sites Report table 3.6 and 3.7.

¹ Excludes 12 hectares of employment land being promoted for office use near to Junction 1 of M5.

An indicative breakdown by regeneration corridor to illustrate how this target will be achieved is set out in Appendices 2 and 3. This is illustrative, based on the strategic evidence we have which shows how we may expect our targets to be delivered. But to allow for flexibility as local documents are progressed our targets are presented at the local authority level.

The broad location of the existing and potential Strategic High Quality Employment Areas is shown on the Key Diagram and Regeneration Corridor Plans, and detailed boundaries will be confirmed in Area Action Plans, Allocations Development Plan Documents and Proposals Maps.

Policy Justification

4.7 The key characteristics of strategic high quality employment areas are set out in the 2008 Employment Land Review as follows:

- To be well located to a large skilled workforce.
- To be well located to the motorway network to provide good accessibility to international, national and regional markets and supply chains.
- To have good public transport accessibility.
- To have a critical mass of active industrial and logistics land and premises that are well suited to the needs of modern industry.
- To have good proximity to an existing or proposed knowledge cluster.
- To have high existing or potential environmental quality including high quality greenspace, good quality built environment and linkages to walking and cycling routes.
- To be attractive or potentially attractive to national or international investment.

- 4.8 Existing high quality employment areas satisfy most of these characteristics, and those areas identified as potential strategic high quality employment areas are considered capable of acquiring them. But to attract high-quality development and occupiers it is not necessary for a site to display all the characteristics listed. For example in the Pensnett area of Dudley and parts of Aldridge in Walsall the market has delivered high quality investment, despite the sites being some distance from the strategic highway network.
- 4.9 Of the 1,564 ha requirement for 2026, in 2009 only 533 ha was assessed in the 2009 GVA Grimley Assessment of Employment Sites Report to be existing strategic high quality land (to include South Staffordshire land). Over the lifetime of the Plan we need to secure 1,031 ha of additional strategic high quality land. The GVA Grimley Assessment of Employment Sites anticipates that some 410 ha may come forward from the development of new sites and 640 ha from improvements. We have set out how we plan to achieve this change for each regeneration Corridor as set out in Appendix 2. This is based on the strategic evidence we have which shows how we may expect our targets to be delivered. We recognise there may need to be some flexibility as local documents are progressed.
- 4.10 Achieving the remaining requirement represents a huge challenge to the Black Country. Many sites are subject to development constraints and a large number will require public sector intervention over the course of the Plan to achieve the step change. In some cases however, the 2009 Assessment of Employment Sites study shows that the scope of works required for such improvements on many sites will be relatively small.
- 4.11 Our approach to potential strategic high quality employment land recognises an urgent demand to renew many existing employment areas in the Black Country. The improvement of the employment land stock and the provision of strategic high quality employment land will also contribute to the aims and objectives of the Core Strategy and towards a balanced portfolio of land. The anticipated supply of land within the Strategic High Quality Employment Areas is set out in the 2009 GVA Grimley Assessment of Employment Sites Report.
- 4.12 The Core Strategy Delivery Plan identifies the role of the Land Transformation Programme to implement the phased programme of improvements that will be required to achieve this step change in the quality of retained employment areas.
- 4.13 Sites within Strategic High Quality Employment Areas may also be appropriate for small scale uses which are ancillary to the needs of businesses and employees working in the area, such as food and drink outlets or child care facilities. Any such uses should be of a scale, nature and location to serve the needs of the employment area, where existing facilities are inadequate, and where the requirements of Policy CEN6 can be met.

Primary Evidence

2008 Employment Land Study (GVA Grimley)
2009 Employment Sites Study (GVA Grimley)

Delivery

- Through the Development Management process.
- Through Partnership with Economic Development Partners in promoting development opportunities and improvement programmes.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI EMP2a – Employment land completions by Local Authority by Strategic High Quality and Potential Strategic High Quality Employment Area as defined in Policy EMP2 and broad locations shown in Appendix 3 (ha)	To reflect gross Strategic High Quality employment land stock as set out in table 11
LOI EMP2b – Additions made to Strategic High Quality Employment Land stock as defined in Policy EMP2 through improvement programmes	To reflect gross Strategic High Quality employment land stock as set out in table 11
LOI EMP2c – Loss of employment land by Local Authority area (ha) by Strategic High Quality and Potential Strategic High Quality Employment Area as defined in Policy EMP2 and broad locations shown in Appendix 3 (ha)	0

EMP3 Local Quality Employment Areas

Spatial Objectives

In order to achieve the appropriate balance and underpin the local economy it is essential to make provision for those types of industrial, logistics and commercial activity that do not require Strategic High Quality Employment Areas and are not appropriate for town centres or residential locations. Policy EMP3 seeks to provide for a portfolio of local quality employment land. This Policy supports Spatial Objectives 2, 3 and 10.



Policy

By 2026, we will provide 1,294 ha of local quality employment land.

Local quality employment areas are characterised by a critical mass of industrial, warehousing and service activity in fit for purpose accommodation with good access to local markets and employees. These areas will provide for the needs of locally based investment and will be safeguarded for the following uses:

- Industry and warehousing
- Motor trade, including car showrooms, garages and vehicle repair
- Haulage and transfer depots
- Trade wholesale retailing and builders merchants
- Scrap metal, timber, construction premises and yards
- Waste collection, transfer and recycling uses as set out in Policy WM4

Not all areas will be suitable for all uses and Local Development Documents may provide further detail to limit the scope of uses which are acceptable.

Targets for the quantity of Local Quality Employment Land for each Local Authority Area are set out in Table 12:

Table 12 – Local Quality Employment Land Targets to 2026

Local authority	Existing Local Quality Employment Land (2009) (ha)	Proposed Local Quality Employment Land 2016 (ha)	Proposed Local Quality Employment Target 2026 (ha)
Dudley	669	580	374
Sandwell	1059	923	384
Walsall	682	519	294
Wolverhampton	629	526	228
South Staffordshire	14	14	14
TOTAL	3053	2562	1294

Proposed stock refers to gross stock including allowance for non-class B uses and for areas of vacant land. The 2009 figure excludes vacant sites under 0.4ha. These are assumed to be gradually built out by 2026. By 2026 however, there are envisaged to be further redevelopment opportunities as illustrated in the GVA Grimley 2009 Assessment of Employment Sites Report table 3.6 and 3.7.

An indicative breakdown by regeneration corridor to illustrate how this target will be achieved is set out in Appendices 2 and 3.

The broad location of these local employment areas is shown on the Key Diagram and Regeneration Corridor Plans, and detailed boundaries will be confirmed in Area Action Plans, Allocations Development Plan Documents and Proposals Maps.

Policy Justification

4.14 Local Quality Employment Areas will be identified on the basis of the following criteria:

- A critical mass of active industrial and service uses and premises that are fit for purpose.
- To have good access to local markets, suppliers and employees.
- The existing or potential use and/or the traffic generated by the use does not have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of surrounding land uses or on the highway network.
- To have good public transport accessibility.

4.15 Local Quality Employment Areas are particularly prevalent in the Black Country and play an important role. They provide a valuable source of low cost accommodation which is vital in providing for local employment and a balanced portfolio of different sizes and quality of sites. The technical evidence predicts that the demand for local quality employment land will fall over the Plan period. To accommodate this change and avoid a surplus of such land, the Strategy proposes that some of our existing employment land be upgraded to Strategic High Quality as defined in Policy EMP2. It also proposes phased redevelopment for housing and other uses of the remaining surplus, comprising up to 1,003 ha of the poorest performing land which does not meet the characteristics of local quality (or strategic high quality) employment land over the Plan period. This redevelopment will be managed by Core Strategy Policy DEL2. At least 1,294 ha needs to be retained as local quality to 2026.

4.16 Local Employment Areas are often most vulnerable to pressure for redevelopment to other uses such as housing. However, the loss of too much local employment land will compromise the Strategy. It would inhibit economic development, endanger the viability of businesses and affect the balance of jobs and workers, so workers would have to travel increased distances to work and the viability of firms would be put at risk. In many instances, these areas will also be appropriate to accommodate firms who wish to relocate from housing growth areas, or from the strategic high quality employment areas as a result of redevelopment or rising land values. The Strategy anticipates that land will come forward for development within local employment areas as part of the recycling process. The 2009 GVA Grimley Assessment of Employment Sites Report sets out the anticipated supply of land within the Local Quality Employment Areas.

4.17 Sites within Local Employment Areas may also be appropriate for uses which serve the needs of businesses and employees working in the area. Such uses include food and drink or child care facilities. Such uses should be of a scale, nature and location to serve the needs of the employment area, where existing facilities are inadequate, and where the requirements of Policy CEN5 can be met.

The detailed boundaries of Local Quality Employment Areas will be confirmed in Area Action Plans, Allocations Development Plan Documents and Proposals Maps.

Primary Evidence

2008 Employment Land Study (GVA Grimley)
2009 Employment Sites Study (GVA Grimley)

Delivery

- Development Management process.
- Partnership with Economic Development Partners in promoting development opportunities.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI EMP3a – Employment land completions by Local Authority by Local Quality Employment Area as defined in Policy EMP3 and broad locations shown in Appendix 3 (ha)	To reflect gross Local Quality Employment Land stock as set out in table 12
LOI EMP3b – Loss of employment land by Local Authority area (ha) by Local Quality Employment Area as defined in Policy EMP3 and broad locations shown in Appendix 3 (ha)	To reflect gross Local Quality Employment Land stock as set out in table DEL2

EMP4 Maintaining a Supply of Readily Available Employment Land

Spatial Objectives

In addition to the stock figures identified in Policies EMP2 and EMP3, the Local Authorities will aim to provide a reservoir of land in line with RSS Policy PA6A. This Policy supports Spatial Objective 2.

Policy

We aim to have 185 ha (five years supply) of land readily available at any one time. This will comprise the following minimum provision of such land for each local authority to form part of the proposed employment land stock set out for 2016 and 2026 in Table 10:

- Dudley – 28ha
- Sandwell – 70ha
- Walsall – 46ha
- Wolverhampton – 41ha

Policy Justification

- 4.18 Policy EMP4 reflects the approach set out in the emerging RSS Phase 2 Revision which requires the Black Country to maintain a rolling five year supply of readily available (minimum reservoir) of employment land of 185 ha for those uses falling within Use Classes B1(b)(c), B2, B8 and some sui generis waste activities which are normally found in employment areas at all times. This requirement is in addition to the stock requirement identified in Policy EMP1. The definition of 'readily available' is set out in the Glossary (Appendix 9).
- 4.19 Policy EMP2 sets out the need to improve the employment land offer through the provision of additional high quality land. We would anticipate the majority of the reservoir of 185ha of readily available land to become strategic high quality.

- 4.20 The 2009 Black Country Employment Sites Study, based on the 2008 Regional Employment Land Survey (RELS) and updated by the local authorities, has shown that the Black Country can provide a five year supply of 46ha. There will also be some readily available employment sites coming forward in housing growth areas which are nevertheless retained for industry, as well as some smaller sites below 0.4 ha. The supply of potential readily available land in 2009 is up to 80ha. The RELS survey identifies a further 205 ha of employment land with planning permission or identified for development but has constraints in the short to medium term. The 2009 Employment Sites Study identifies a further 437 ha of employment land which may come forward for development through recycling of existing sites over the Core Strategy period. This has informed the figures in Appendix 2 which set out the anticipated supply of land brought forward through recycling for each Regeneration Corridor.
- 4.21 While the Black Country contains a significant quantity of available employment land, not enough of this is currently being offered to the market. This is partly understandable given the current severe recession, and, it is expected that as the Strategy progresses, the balance of rolling supply will shift away from being provided entirely by RELS, to be provided through a mix of RELS sites and redevelopment opportunities as they come forward. Through a combination of public sector interventions, new development and improved economic conditions we will seek to ensure that the requirements of Policy EMP4 are met. The Land Transformation Programme summarised in the Core Strategy Delivery Plan sets out the key steps that will be required to bring this land forward for development. The Land Transformation Programme will also form the basis for a phasing programme for the redevelopment opportunities in Area Action Plans, Site Allocation Documents and Proposals Maps.

Primary Evidence

Regional Employment Land Study (2008)
 2008 Employment Land Study (GVA Grimley)
 2009 Employment Sites Study (GVA Grimley)

Delivery

- Through the Development Management process.
- Through monitoring of the policy and interventions to make land available.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI EMP4 – Readily available Employment Land	As defined in Policy EMP4

EMP5 Improving Access to the Labour Market

Spatial Objectives

Restructuring the Black Country's economy is one of the key principles of the Vision, but the provision of land and premises alone will not deliver the economic transformation without new skills and training to meet the challenges of changing work requirements. This Policy is intended to support Spatial Objective 2 and contribute to the up-skilling and restructuring of the sub-regional economy.

Policy

Planning obligations will be negotiated with the developers and occupiers of major new job creating development to secure initiatives and/or contributions towards the recruitment and training of local people. The training schemes should offer help particularly to disadvantaged groups, so that they may obtain the necessary skills to increase their access to job opportunities.

Policy Justification

- 4.22 In attracting new employers to the Black Country and with the expansion of indigenous companies it is accepted that people commuting from the rest of the region will take up some of the new jobs. It is important however, that the jobs created in the new and existing sectors of the economy can be made available to as many existing residents as possible.
- 4.23 There are existing support structures and facilities available to help ensure that local people receive the appropriate training and develop the necessary skills to compete successfully for jobs. These are generally aligned with locally determined priorities.
- 4.24 To assist with this where major new job creating development is proposed the Councils will negotiate with the company to devise suitable bespoke training and recruitment programmes that can benefit local people. In some cases this may include the provision of childcare facilities.
- 4.25 Retaining graduates within and attracting them to the Black Country will also be key to securing a knowledge based economy. The Higher and Further Education sector is a major driver of economic, social and cultural regeneration and ongoing investment in this sector is supported. We will also support initiatives which strengthen linkages between the sector and the wider economy.

Primary Evidence

Delivery

Through the Development Management process and negotiations on planning obligations. Through recruitment programmes and partnership working between economic and employment organisations.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI EMP5 - Proportion of major planning permissions making provision for targeted recruitment or training secured through s106 Agreements	50%

EMP6 Cultural Facilities and the Visitor Economy

Spatial Objective

The Vision for the Black Country involves transformational change whilst respecting and promoting its unique heritage. The protection, promotion and expansion of existing cultural facilities, visitor attractions and associated businesses will ensure their enhanced role as key economic drivers in stimulating and regenerating the local economy in line with Spatial Objective 1.



Policy

In order to help deliver economic, social and environmental transformation, sub-regionally important cultural facilities within the Black Country (including tourist attractions, leisure facilities, museums, theatres & art galleries as identified on the Economy Theme Diagram) will be protected and, where necessary enhanced, promoted and expanded in partnership with key agencies and delivery partners.

A) The Visitor Economy

Visitor attractions will be developed and enhanced at key destinations to ensure that accessibility is maximised and to continue to raise the quality of the visitor experience throughout the Black Country. The key destinations in the Black Country are:

- Dudley Town Centre (including the Zoo and Castle, The Black Country Living Museum and Wren’s Nest National Nature Reserve and Limestone Caverns);
- Walsall Strategic Centre and the Waterfront (including Walsall Art Gallery and heritage attractions centred on the leather industry);
- Wolverhampton Strategic Centre (including an extensive shopping centre,

- **Wolverhampton Art Gallery and a thriving evening economy, including The Grand Theatre and regionally significant concert venues);**
- **Nationally renowned Dunstall Park Race Course in Wolverhampton;**
- **West Bromwich Strategic Centre (including 'The Public' Art Gallery and a growing Learning and cultural Quarter);**
- **Brierley Hill Strategic Centre (including the Merry Hill Shopping Centre, the Waterfront and growing leisure facilities);**
- **Sandwell Valley and Park Farm,(a working farm and Country Park with archaeological interest);**

Other areas where attractions and facilities are clustered due to their industrial heritage or cultural value (e.g. the Glass Quarter at Stourbridge).

The canal network is also a significant visitor attraction, providing links to Birmingham, Staffordshire, Worcestershire and beyond. Facilities adjoining and serving the canal network should be maintained and expanded to help provide a network of linked facilities and visitor hubs in particular locations, including:

- **Walsall Waterfront and Strategic Centre;**
- **Wolverhampton Strategic Centre Canalside Quarter;**
- **Brierley Hill Waterfront and Canal corridor;**
- **Galton Valley Canal Heritage Area, Smethwick;**
- **Bumble Hole and Warrens Hall Park on the Sandwell/Dudley border at Netherton/Tividale;**
- **Dudley Canal Tunnels, limestone caverns and the Black Country Living Museum;**
- **Stourbridge Arm and Wharf area.**

In order to maximise the potential of the visitor economy in the Black Country, physical and promotional links to visitor attractions close to the Black Country will be enhanced and promoted particularly links to Birmingham as a Global City and a business economy destination.

Additional facilities which support the visitor economy and the business tourism sector will also be encouraged and promoted, focussed within Centres (Policies CEN 1-5), including the development of a network of hotels and other accommodation with strong links to key destinations and associated conference facilities.

B) Other cultural facilities and events

The promotion and protection of other cultural attractions and events which represent and celebrate the wide range of cultural and ethnic diversity across the Black Country will also be encouraged including spectator sports such as football and other stadia. This includes the protection of valuable cultural and religious buildings and the promotion of cultural, religious and community festivals on a Black Country wide basis in a range of locations including key outdoor venues such as:

- **West Park, Wolverhampton**
- **Sandwell Valley**
- **Walsall Arboretum**

Policy Justification

- 4.26 The Black Country has a unique past, being at the forefront of the Industrial Revolution, which has left a rich and varied industrial and cultural legacy as well as an extensive and historically significant canal network. These assets have attracted an increasing number of visitors to the sub-region and the visitor economy is now a key growth sector. Business tourism is also a growing sector particularly in terms of high quality hotel and conferencing facilities and the proximity of the Black Country to Birmingham as a global business destination.
- 4.27 The sensitive development of heritage and cultural facilities appealing to the very diverse range of local communities will also contribute to social inclusion and the improvement in the quality of life for all sectors of the local population. Culture is also recognised by national government as making a significant contribution to 'place making' and delivering sustainable communities.

Primary Evidence

West Midlands Visitor Economy Strategy
 West Midlands Regional Economic Strategy
 The Black Country Visitor Economy – Vision and Strategic Framework (2004)

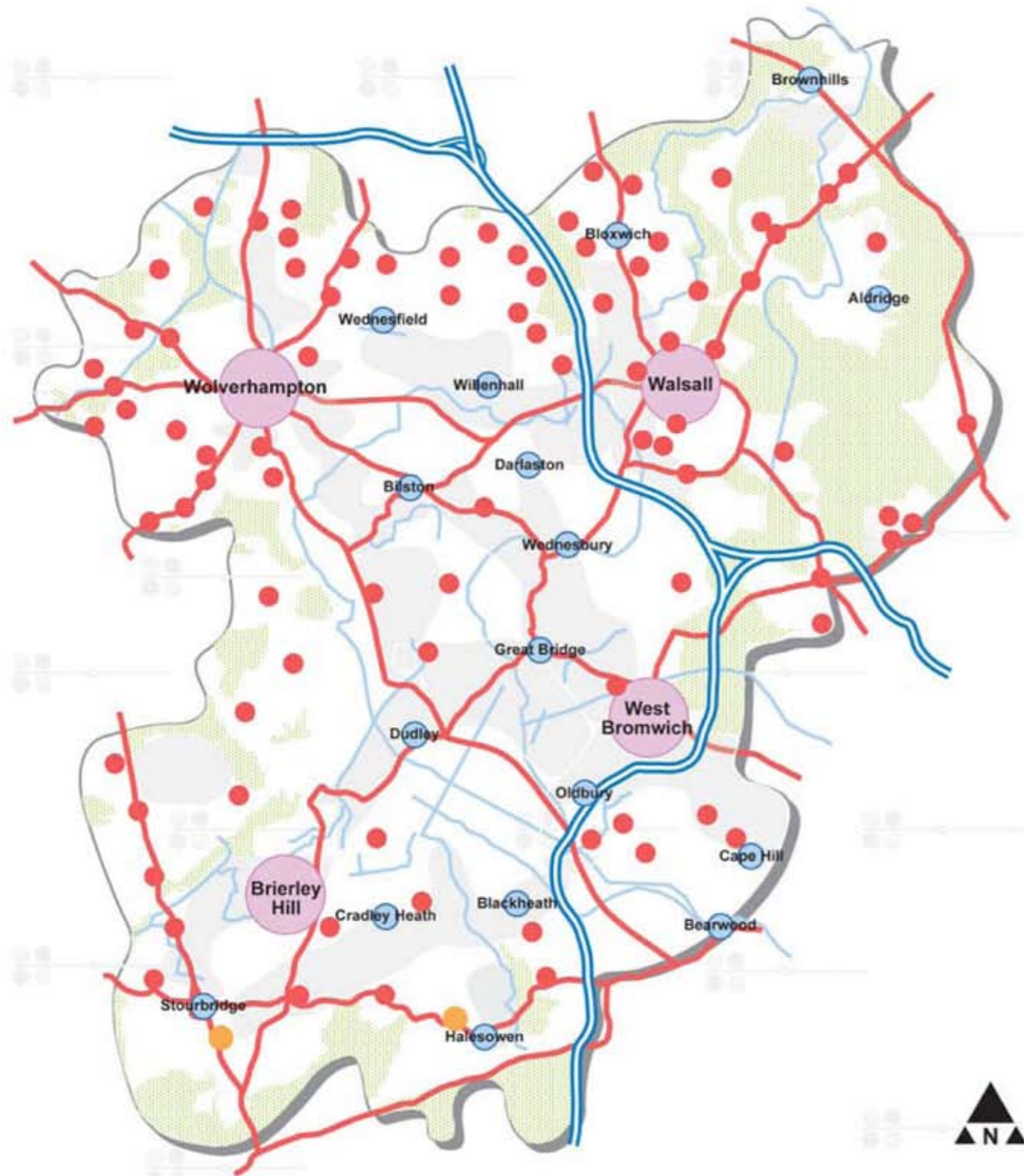
Delivery

- Planning Permissions.
- Area Action Plans.
- Development Plan Documents.
- Promotion of visitor attractions in association with Economic Development Partners in the Black Country, Birmingham and surrounding areas to promote and link cultural and tourism assets in the Black Country.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI EMP6 - Loss of sub-regionally significant visitor and cultural facilities	0

Black Country Core Strategy Centres Key Diagram



Centres Key Diagram

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- | | |
|---|---|
|  Strategic Centres |  Canal |
|  Town Centres
(inc. Walsall's District Centres) |  Regeneration Corridor |
|  District and Local Centres |  Green Belt |
|  New Local Centres |  Motorway |
| |  Major Road Network |

Spatial Objectives for Policies CEN1-8

The unique character of the Black Country is largely defined by its network of centres and the relationships between them. This provides the basic spatial structure for the sub-region and is reflected in the 3 elements of the Vision. The Policies for Centres will ensure the network of Black Country Centres are consolidated, maintained and enhanced and will contribute to the delivery of Spatial Objectives 1, 2, 5, 7 and 8.

CEN1 The Importance of the Black Country Centres for the Regeneration Strategy

Spatial Objectives

The Black Country's centres are the focus for retail, leisure, commercial and civic uses and it is the strategy of this document to maintain and enhance these centres appropriate to their role and function. They have a vital role in the economy of the Black Country.

It is critical that they maintain and enhance their offer in order to underpin economic growth and sustainably deliver a vital and viable network of centres to meet the current and future needs of the Black Country residents.

Policy

The Strategic Centres of Brierley Hill, Walsall, West Bromwich and Wolverhampton will provide the main focus for higher order sub-regional retail, office, leisure, cultural and service activities, balanced by a network of Town, District and Local Centres, providing for town centre uses including meeting day-to-day shopping needs (particularly convenience shopping). Support will be given for appropriate complementary uses to enhance the evening economy.

Proposals that undermine this strategy will be resisted.

To strengthen the Black Country's centres, mixed-use developments that are well integrated with existing provision will be encouraged, including the use of upper floors.

Policy Justification

- 4.28 Centres are well placed to achieve regeneration and to serve their communities' needs. The concentration of investment and growth within the centres is the basis to achieve regeneration, to make the fullest possible use of existing infrastructure and to deliver regeneration. Similarly, they will provide the best accessibility to a range of opportunities for residents, workers and visitors particularly by public transport, walking and cycling.
- 4.29 For the purpose of the Core Strategy, "town centre uses" are regarded as those uses contained in national policy guidance and "sui generis" uses which are considered appropriate for centres.

Primary Evidence

Back Country Centres Study : GVA Grimley 2009

Delivery

- Through preparation of Development Plan Documents.
- Through the appropriate consideration of planning applications.
- Through working with delivery agents/developers.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI CEN1 - Amount of floorspace for town centre uses completed and amount permitted within an appropriate centre, as a proportion of all completions and planning permissions for such uses	100% of development to be in accordance with policies CEN1 to CEN7, or justified by another development plan policy

Detailed definitions of floorspace and town centre uses for the indicators under policies CEN1 to CEN7 are given in the Glossary in Appendix 9.

CEN2 Hierarchy of Centres

Spatial Objectives

The Core Strategy sets out a hierarchy of centres where investment in retail and town centre uses of an appropriate scale to meet its position in the hierarchy will be promoted, and existing provision enhanced, to facilitate sustainable development in line with Spatial Objectives 1, 2, 5, 7 & 8.

Policy

The defined centres are shown in the hierarchy (as set out in Table 13) and identified on the centres key diagram.

To maximise regeneration to protect the identified centres and ensure the appropriate distribution of investment, a hierarchy of centres, consisting of three levels, has been identified across the Black Country:

- **Strategic Centres**
- **Town Centres**
- **District and Local Centres**

Each level in the hierarchy will have a specific policy approach. In making decisions about development proposals and in preparation of Local Development Documents, consideration will be given to the centre's position in the hierarchy which reflects their scale and function.

Table 13 – The Hierarchy of Centres in the Black Country

Local Authority	Dudley	Sandwell	Walsall	Wolverhampton
Strategic Centres	- Brierley Hill	- West Bromwich	- Walsall	- Wolverhampton
Town Centres	- Dudley - Stourbridge - Halesowen	- Blackheath - Cradley Heath - Great Bridge - Oldbury - Wednesbury - Cape Hill - Bearwood	- Bloxwich - Brownhills - Aldridge - Willenhall - Darlaston	- Bilston - Wednesfield
District and Local Centres	- Kingswinford - Lye - Sedgley - Amblecote - Cradley / Windmill Hill - Gornal Wood - Netherton - Pensnett - Quarry Bank - Roseville - Shell Corner - The Stag - Upper Gornal - Wall Heath - Wollaston - Wordsley - Hawne - Oldswinford	- Smethwick High Street - Owen Street, Tipton - Scott Arms - Carter's Green - Quinton - Princes End - Old Hill - Stone Cross - Langley - Hamstead - Rood End - Queens Head – Bristnall - Smethwick High Street (Lower)	- Caldmore - Stafford Street - Pleck - Pelsall - Leamore - Palfrey - High St Walsall Wood - Rushall - Blakenall - Lane Head - Streetly - Queslett - Lazy Hill - New Invention - Bentley - Park Hall - Moxley - Fullbrook - Collingwood Dr, Pheasey - Birchills - Coalpool / Ryecroft - Beechdale - The Butts - Spring Lane, Shelfield - Beacon Road, Pheasey - Brackendale - Woodlands - Shelfield - South Mossley - Dudley Fields - Streets Corner - Buxton Road, Bloxwich - Coppice Farm - Turnberry Road, Bloxwich	- Stafford Road (Three Tuns) - Cannock Road (Scotlands) - Tettenhall Village - Whitmore Reans / Avion Centre - Broadway - Bushbury Lane - Showell Circus - Wood End - Stubby Lane - Heath Town - Parkfield - Spring Hill - Penn Manor - Upper Penn - Penn Fields - Bradmore - Merry Hill - Castlecroft - Finchfield - Tettenhall Wood - Newbridge - Aldersley - Pendeford Park - Fallings Park - Ashmore Park - Compton Village - Warstones Road - Dudley Road (Blakenhall)

Policy Justification

- 4.30 The status of Brierley Hill (including Merry Hill, the Waterfront and Brierley Hill High Street) as a Strategic Centre within the Regional Strategic Network along with Walsall, West Bromwich and Wolverhampton, has been confirmed. Alongside this, Dudley Town Centre has been re-designated as a Town Centre focusing on its leisure, heritage and tourism role.
- 4.31 The Strategic Centres in the Black Country will provide the main focus for high level retail and office, cultural and service activities. The Black Country Town Centres will complement the Strategic Centres and perform a more reduced shopping and business role but remain an important focus for day-to-day shopping (particularly convenience), leisure, community and cultural activity. The Town Centres will be characterised by having at least one anchor supermarket. The District Centres provide a reasonable range and choice of goods and services at the local level. All will benefit from good public transport, walking and cycling links and car parking provision. They traditionally function as day-to-day shopping destinations. The Local Centres in the Black Country generally have a small supermarket present and a range of mostly convenience based outlets. Most have a minimum of 10 units present and are recognised because of the important role that they perform.
- 4.32 There are significant variations of features between the centres in the Black Country. Within this diversity there are identifiable common roles, functions and future aspirations. The hierarchies set out in the four Unitary Development Plans (UDPs) for the Boroughs have been re-assessed through the Black Country Centres Study 2009 by GVA Grimley. This has enabled centres to be grouped into a hierarchy of three levels. In particular, the process has resulted in the identification of two new Local Centres within Dudley (Hawne and Oldswinford). The process has also led to the removal of Darlaston Green within Walsall from the hierarchy.
- 4.33 Currently there is no evidence to justify additions or changes to this hierarchy except for potentially the designation of new local centres over the plan period which would be brought forward through the Local Development Documents prepared by Local Authorities.
- 4.34 Each level of the hierarchy will have a specific policy approach reflecting its scale and function, although it is recognised that within the hierarchy there is a need for the different characteristics of individual centres to be acknowledged. This policy approach is valuable in helping to ensure that developments are located in the type of centre that will be most appropriate to their scale, nature and catchment area.
- 4.35 The second level in the hierarchy of Town Centres carries forward the Town Centres identified in Dudley, Wolverhampton and Sandwell UDPs and those centres in Walsall which the Walsall UDP identified as District Centres but which carry out the same role and function as the Town Centres within the other Boroughs and are comparable in scale and function.
- 4.36 These centres are those which portray characteristics that serve a local service function particularly in terms of convenience shopping. They are also important in meeting the needs of their areas for comparison shopping and a range of other town centre uses such as office, leisure and cultural facilities appropriate to their scale and function.

- 4.37 The third level of District and Local Centres carry forward the District Centres identified in the UDPs of Dudley (Kingswinford, Sedgley and Lye), Wolverhampton (Stafford Road (Three Tuns), Cannock Road (Scotlands), Tettenhall Village and Whitmore Reans/Avion Centre) and Sandwell (Smethwick High Street, Tipton (Owen Street), Carter's Green, Quinton and Scott Arms); Local Centres identified in Dudley (with the addition of Hawne and Oldswinford), Wolverhampton and Sandwell UDPs and those centres in Walsall which the Walsall UDP identified as Local Centres (with the removal of Darlaston Green).
- 4.38 These Centres range in scale but all portray characteristics that provide for day-to-day convenience shopping and services which meet local needs. These centres often have special importance for sections of the community such as ethnic minorities and the elderly.
- 4.39 In addition to this hierarchy there is an extensive network of small parades and small local shops meeting essential day-to-day needs of communities within walking distance. This is covered in Policy CEN6.
- 4.40 The Core Strategy does not alter the existing centre boundaries currently set out in the four local authorities' proposals maps. As a new Strategic Centre, Brierley Hill's boundary and primary shopping area will be identified through its Area Action Plan. Detailed boundaries for the two new Local Centres and any adjustments made to existing centre boundaries and primary shopping areas will be delivered through local development documents prepared by individual local planning authorities.
- 4.41 The Core Strategy seeks to protect and enhance distinctive assets in different centres, for example the canal side setting of Brierley Hill, the Edwardian heritage of Walsall West Bromwich and Wolverhampton, the markets in Walsall, Wednesbury and other centres, and the traditional Black Country character in Dudley, Stourbridge, Bilston and Willenhall.

Primary Evidence

Back Country Centres Study: GVA Grimley 2009
Black Country Authority Unitary Development Plans

Delivery

- Through preparation of development plan documents.
- Through the appropriate consideration of planning applications.
- Through working with delivery agents/developers.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI CEN2 - Amount of floorspace for town centre uses completed and amount permitted within an appropriate centre, as a proportion of all completions and planning permissions for such uses	100% of development to be in accordance with policies CEN1 to CEN7, or justified by another development plan policy

CEN3 Growth in the Strategic Centres

Spatial Objectives

The Black Country Strategic Centres provide the focus for comparison shopping, office employment, leisure and culture in the Black Country. The policy for growth in the Strategic Centres will contribute to the delivery of Spatial Objectives 1 and 8.



Policy

The Strategic Centres of Brierley Hill, Walsall, West Bromwich and Wolverhampton will seek to secure an appropriate share of comparison and convenience retail and office development in order to ensure that investment to regenerate the Black Country will not be lost.

Comparison Shopping Provision

Table 14 sets out the additional quantum of floorspace to be planned for in each Strategic Centre over the plan period, prior to commitments.

Table 14 – Additional Comparison Shopping Provision

Strategic Centre	Delivery of additional comparison floorspace (sqm gross)	
	2006-2021	2021-2026
Wolverhampton	70,000sqm	30,000sqm
Brierley Hill	65,000sqm	30,000sqm
Walsall	60,000sqm	25,000sqm
West Bromwich	45,000sqm	20,000sqm

Between 2021 and 2026 there could be further comparison provision as identified in the table above in each of the Strategic Centres.

Planning permission for development to meet the requirements arising after 2021 should not be granted before 2016.

This quantum of floorspace will be delivered through existing commitments, planning permissions and allocations within individual Local Development Documents.

New comparison retail development within Merry Hill (part of Brierley Hill Strategic Centre) will be carefully controlled so that no additional comparison retail floorspace is brought into operation until all the following conditions are met:

- a) Adoption by the Local Planning Authority of the Area Action Plan for Brierley Hill;
- b) Implementation of improvements to public transport, including completion of initiatives of equivalent quality and attractiveness to the proposed Metro extension from Wednesbury to Brierley Hill, and improvements to bus services connecting the centre with other locations in the Black Country and beyond, and other measures to improve accessibility to and circulation within the centre by non-car modes; and
- c) Introduction of a car parking management regime including the use of parking charges compatible with those in the region’s network of major centres.

Any proposed development exceeding 500 square metres gross floorspace - whether brought forward through a Local Development Document or planning application, that would lead to the amount of floorspace in an individual Strategic Centre exceeding the figures set out above, will only be considered favourably if the retail impact assessments contained in the most recent national guidance on retail planning are satisfied.

Any proposed development in an edge-of-centre location exceeding 500 square metres gross floorspace will only be considered favourably if the retail impact assessments contained in the most recent national guidance on retail planning are satisfied. However, if it is considered that development below this threshold is likely to have a significant impact on centres, then those proposals will be required to carry out an impact assessment.

Convenience Shopping Provision

Between 2009 and 2026 each Local Authority will plan for convenience floorspace.

Convenience provision in Brierley Hill will be limited to 5,000 square metres net to ensure the delivery of convenience provision in Dudley Town Centre (see policy CEN4).

The final amounts of convenience retail development in each of the other SCs will be examined in the relevant AAPs where the majority of convenience floorspace is expected to be delivered by existing commitments.

Any proposal exceeding 500 square metres net floorspace – whether brought forward through a Local Development Document or planning application – in an individual strategic centre will be considered favourably if the retail impact assessments contained in the most recent national guidance are satisfied.

Any proposed development in an edge-of-centre location exceeding 500 square metres net floorspace will only be considered favourably if the retail impact assessments contained in the most recent national guidance on retail planning are satisfied. However, if it is considered that development below this threshold is likely to have a significant impact on other centres, then those proposals will be required to carry out an impact assessment.

Offices

Each Strategic Centre will accommodate up to a maximum of an additional 220,000 square metres gross B1(a) floorspace between 2006 and 2026. Delivery of this floorspace will be planned for within, or on the edge of the Strategic Centres (and taking into consideration the particular characteristics of each Strategic Centre) through predominately mixed-use allocations or developments through the following mechanisms, (particularly as much of the demand for B1(a) floorspace is expected to occur after 2016):

- **Brierley Hill Area Action Plan**
- **West Bromwich Area Action Plan – Offices will be focused within the defined Strategic Centre outside of the Primary Shopping Area, on the edge of the centre and within the office growth corridor linking the strategic centre with Junction 1 of the M5**
- **Wolverhampton City Centre Area Action Plan**
- **Walsall Strategic Centre Area Action Plan and commitments at the Gigaport development and Walsall Waterfront North**

Other Centre Uses

The Strategic Centres should be the principal locations for major leisure, commercial leisure, entertainment, cultural facilities and services, such as hotels which meet the needs of the sub region and beyond. Policy EMP6 deals with cultural facilities and the visitor economy. Walsall, Wolverhampton and West Bromwich are identified as priorities for cinema provision.

Policy Justification

- 4.42 The comparison floorspace figures have been subject to a capacity analysis and will give the Black Country Authorities the certainty to deliver strategic regeneration. Convenience capacity has been derived from the evidence commissioned to underpin the strategy. This was undertaken by GVA Grimley and included a current and robust household survey of the Black Country. This evidence led to policy recommendations which have been reflected in the policy and ensures there is not an over concentration of convenience provision in Strategic Centres. This policy approach ensures regeneration of the non-Strategic Centres which are dependant on their convenience role for their vitality and viability.
- 4.43 The policy framework for the Black Country Strategic Centres is based upon a proactive development strategy recognising the current economic circumstances however planning for the long term growth in the sub region.
- 4.44 The Core Strategy has not set out figures for particular kinds of leisure, entertainment and cultural development as these are predominately market led. However, it is clear the Strategic Centres as the most accessible locations should be the principal focus for major leisure, entertainment and cultural facilities. Existing hotel provision in the Black Country is largely out of centre. The policy approach is to improve the quality and quantity of in centre hotel provision in the Black Country to cater for tourism needs.

Primary Evidence

Black Country Centres Study : GVA Grimley 2009

Delivery

- Through preparation of Development Plan Documents in particular the production of Area Action Plans for the Strategic Centres.
- Through the appropriate consideration of planning applications.
- Through working with delivery agents/developers.
- Local Strategies and Regeneration Plans.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI CEN3 - Amount of additional floorspace for town centre uses within or on the edge of each Strategic Centre in accordance with policy CEN3	In accordance with the targets set out in the policy

CEN4 Regeneration of Town Centres

Spatial Objectives

The network of Town Centres provide for convenience shopping as well local comparison shopping opportunities, local services and local leisure facilities. The policy for the regeneration of Town Centres will contribute to the delivery of Spatial Objectives 5 and 8.



Policy

The Black Country's town centres are a distinctive and valued part of the Black Country's character. The network of centres will help to meet needs in the most accessible and sustainable way. Development for retail, office, entertainment and leisure will be permitted, subject to other Policies in the Core Strategy, where they are of an appropriate scale that reflects the size and role of the town centres.

Dudley Town Centre has a particular function as a heritage and leisure focus for regeneration.

Of particular importance is to encourage new convenience development in Town Centres and support proposals to extend or refurbish existing stores where they are well integrated and to serve to anchor the centre as a whole. Individual retail developments of up to 650 square metres net for convenience goods and 500 square metres gross for comparison goods will be considered appropriate in these centres. For Dudley, up to a total of an additional 5,000 square metres net of convenience and an additional 15,000 square metres gross of comparison retail floorspace would be acceptable.

Any proposed development above these thresholds and any development above Dudley's totals, whether brought forward through an Local Development Document or planning application, will only be considered favourably if evidence demonstrates that they are of an appropriate scale to the function of the centre and which would not undermine the vitality and viability of other centres.

Any proposed development in an edge-of-centre location exceeding these thresholds, whether brought forward through an Local Development Document or planning application, will only be considered favourably if the retail impact assessments contained in the most recent national guidance on retail planning are satisfied. However, if it is considered that development below these thresholds is likely to have a significant impact on centres, then those proposals will be required to carry out an impact assessment.

Should there be insufficient physical capacity to accommodate floorspace requirements in, or on the edge of a Town Centre any new floorspace should be directed to nearby centres as set out in Policy CEN7.

Retail capacity in Town Centres will largely be met by existing commitments, planning permissions and allocations, and any redistribution of floorspace between Centres to meet strategic priorities.

Up to an additional 5,000 square metres gross of office B1(a) development will be allowed in each of the Town Centres up to 2026 to meet their local service function. Any development exceeding this figure will only be considered favourably if the impact assessments contained in the most recent national guidance are satisfied.

It will also be suitable for the town centres to provide entertainment, leisure and cultural facilities of an appropriate scale and kind to serve their roles and catchments. The use of upper floors will be encouraged to accommodate relevant town centre uses. It will be important to recognise the special role of Dudley Town Centre, as well as the distinctive assets offered by individual centres in the provision of other town centre uses.

Policy Justification

- 4.45 The large number of Town Centres across the Black Country are important to the area's character and community identity. However, the comparison shopping roles of these centres has declined over recent decades, and many of the centres do not offer the space for major development, or find it difficult to attract significant comparison retail investment. Nevertheless, the Town Centres do play a localised comparison shopping role and there are some retailers who do continue to trade and invest in Town Centres. This policy approach seeks to protect the vitality and viability of these centres.
- 4.46 The threshold approach requires consideration of the appropriate scale and impact of proposals in order to deliver regeneration within a balanced network of Town Centres. There has long been a commitment to provide convenience shopping provision in the order of 5,000 square metres net in Dudley Town Centre and 15,000 square metres gross of comparison retail to bolster its centre and this will be planned for by the Local Authority. Similarly, planning permissions for convenience provision have been granted in some of the other centres in the Black Country for example in Stourbridge and Willenhall.
- 4.47 The network of Town Centres across the Black Country also provides opportunities for convenience shopping and each of the Town Centres supports or is proposed to accommodate at least one foodstore (either within or on the edge of the centre). The Core Strategy's plans for housing growth may lead to a need for further convenience shopping in particular centres once the housing locations are determined through Area Action Plans or Site Allocation Documents.
- 4.48 In terms of leisure, entertainment and culture the policy takes forward the recognition of Dudley Town Centre but it also recognises that other centres have particular assets, such as live music in Bilston, the library theatre at Bloxwich, or commitments, such as The Junction development at Oldbury. It is appropriate to recognise these facilities which contribute to the overall culture of the Black Country, provided they do not detract from the strategy for the strategic centres to be the 'flagships' in terms of the provision of major facilities serving extensive catchment areas.

Primary Evidence

Black Country Centres Study : GVA Grimley 2009

Delivery

- Through preparation of Development Plan Documents.
- Through the appropriate consideration of planning applications.
- Through working with delivery agents/developers.
- Local Strategies and Regeneration Plans.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI CEN4 - Amount of additional floorspace for town centre uses within or on the edge of each Town Centre in accordance with policy CEN4	In accordance with the targets set out in the policy

CEN5 District and Local Centres

Spatial Objectives

A network of vibrant District and Local Centres provide particularly for day-to-day convenience shopping and local service needs. The policy for District and Local Centres will contribute to the delivery of Spatial Objectives 7 and 8.

Policy

Within the District and Local Centres, individual convenience retail developments of up to 500 square metres net and developments for comparison retail, offices or leisure uses of up to 200 square metres gross will be permitted where they satisfy local requirements and are appropriate to the scale and function of that particular centre.

Any proposed development above these thresholds, whether brought forward through a Local Development Document or planning application, will only be considered favourably if evidence demonstrates that they are of an appropriate scale to the function of the centre and which would not undermine the vitality and viability of other centres.

Any proposed development in an edge-of-centre location exceeding these thresholds, whether brought forward through a Local Development Document or planning application, will only be considered favourably if the retail impact assessments contained in the most recent national guidance on retail planning are satisfied. However, if it is considered that development below these thresholds is likely to have a significant impact on centres, then those proposals will be required to carry out an impact assessment.

For District and Local Centres in the Black Country, town centre uses adjoining the centre will be defined as edge-of-centre.

These criteria will also be used when considering the designation of new local centres, through Local Development Documents, where required.

Lye in Dudley Borough has been identified as a priority to provide convenience floorspace of up to an additional 650 square metres net to strengthen its role as a District Centre to meet the needs of its local population.

Policy Justification

- 4.49 The Centres Key Diagram and Table 13 'Hierarchy of Centres' indicates that a large number of locations across the Black Country are designated as District and Local Centres. The main functions of these centres are to meet the day-to-day convenience shopping and local service needs of their local areas and they often have a special importance for certain sections of the community, such as elderly people or for ethnic minorities (for example at Smethwick High Street in Sandwell, Caldmore in Walsall and Blakenhall (Dudley Road) in Wolverhampton).
- 4.50 The threshold approach ensures that new developments should be of a scale and nature to serve the centres and their catchments. Convenience shopping developments should be in scale with the centre in which it is located.

- 4.51 There is a need for the smaller centres to be flexible to respond to particular circumstances such as a defined local need or a special local role or opportunity such as to support a regeneration scheme.

Evidence

Black Country Centres Study : GVA Grimley 2009
Black Country Local Authority Unitary Development Plans

Delivery

- Through preparation of Development Plan Documents.
- Through the appropriate consideration of planning applications.
- Through working with delivery agents/developers.
- Local Strategies and Regeneration Plans.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI CEN5 - Amount of additional floorspace for town centre uses within or on the edge of each District and Local Centre in accordance with policy CEN5	In accordance with the target set out in the policy

CEN6 Meeting Local Needs for Shopping and Services

Strategic Objectives

Within the Black Country there are a significant number of small local shops either individually or in small parades of shops serving a very local need.

Recognising this, the Black Country Joint Core Strategy seeks to ensure the provision and retention of local shops and other centre uses to meet essential day-to-day needs within reasonable walking distance of people's homes thereby contributing to Spatial Objective 8.

Policy

New small-scale local facilities outside defined centres of up to 200 square metres gross, or extensions to existing facilities which would create a unit of up to 200 square metres gross will be permitted if it can be shown that all of the following requirements are met:

The proposal is of an appropriate scale and nature to meet a specific day-to-day need of a population within convenient, safe walking distance for new or improved facilities; Local provision could not be better met by investment in a nearby centre; Existing facilities that meet day-to-day needs will not be undermined.

Access to facilities by means other than by car would be improved and, in particular, will be within convenient, safe walking distance of the community it is intended to serve;

Where new local facilities are to meet the specific needs of new housing development, particularly food provision, then proposals need to meet the requirements of Policy HOU2.

These considerations will apply to proposals for non ancillary retailing at petrol filling stations outside of defined centres.

Any larger scale proposals will have to meet the requirements of Policy CEN7.

Shops that provide an important service to a local area, whether they are in a defined centre or in a free standing location will wherever possible be protected.

Development involving the loss of a convenience shop, pharmacy or post office will be resisted where this would result in an increase in the number of people living more than a convenient, safe walking distance from alternative provision.

Policy Justification

- 4.52 This policy acknowledges the role of existing local shopping, service, leisure community and other facilities. The approach of the Black Country Authorities is to encourage existing centres to continue to meet as many of the day-to-day needs of residents, workers and visitors in their immediate localities as possible. As such the policy protects such facilities unless it can be convincingly demonstrated these are no longer viable.
- 4.53 Elsewhere it is considered there is likely to be a need to provide for more / improved local facilities – for convenience shopping, local services, eating and drinking places, and health, community and local education facilities – to meet existing deficiencies, to serve housing growth or to make the best use of existing premises and /or combine uses. This should be the subject of strict criteria, to complement the regeneration strategy for centres. Developments for town centre uses which fail to meet all of the requirements listed above should be assessed against CEN7 and the relevant tests for out-of-centre development in the most recent government advice on retail and town centres.

Primary Evidence

Black Country Centres Study: GVA Grimley 2009

Delivery

- Through preparation of Development Plan Documents.
- Through the appropriate consideration of planning applications and resisting development in inappropriate locations.
- Through working with delivery agents/developers.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI CEN6 - Number of developments of up to 200 square metres gross floorspace for town centre uses permitted outside of centres, that meet the requirements of policy CEN6, as a proportion of all such permissions	100%

CEN7 Controlling Out-of-Centre Development

Spatial Objectives

The Centres Strategy for the Black Country is a centres first strategy. Its success relies upon directing growth into the network of centres within the Black Country to facilitate regeneration. This will deliver growth in the centres and ensure the vitality and viability of centres as the most accessible and sustainable locations. Furthermore it promotes social inclusion across the Black Country.

Development in inappropriate locations risk undermining the Black Country Strategy, the Core Strategy therefore requires a strong policy to resist this. The policy for controlling out of centre development will contribute to Spatial Objectives 1, 5 and 8.

Policy

There is a clear presumption in favour of focusing development in centres.

Proposals for out-of-centre development will have to demonstrate that development cannot be provided in-centre or at edge-of-centre locations of existing Centres appropriate to the hierarchy. For retail purposes, a location that is well connected and within easy walking distance (i.e. up to 300 metres) of the primary shopping area of Strategic and Town Centres will be regarded as edge-of-centre. For all other main town centre uses a location that is well connected and within easy walking distance (i.e. up to 300 metres) of the centre boundary of Strategic and Town Centres will be regarded as edge-of-centre, unless otherwise defined in relevant saved UDP policies.

For District and Local Centres in the Black Country, town centre uses adjoining the centre will be defined as edge-of-centre.

Any proposal for a town centre use in an out of centre location, whether brought forward through a Local Development Document or planning application, will only be considered favourably if the impact assessments contained in the most recent national guidance are satisfied, or the requirements of Policy CEN6 are satisfied. Any out-of-centre proposal which is considered to fall within the catchment area of a relevant centre will be required to include that centre in any sequential test.

It will be important to ensure developments are accessible by a choice of means of transport, in particular public transport, walking and cycling, and support both social inclusion and the need to sustain strategic transport links.

It will be important to acknowledge the issues raised by particular proposals. However, the strategy is to accommodate investment (except where justified in terms of Policy CEN6) in centres and to expand centres where necessary. In this context, it will be important to recognise strong justification would be required for out-of-centre schemes that could otherwise be contrary to the strategy for the regeneration of the Black Country.

It is not accepted that specific classes of goods cannot be sold from in-centre locations. Developments will need to demonstrate flexibility in their operational requirements in terms of format.

This policy also applies to applications for extensions and variation of conditions.

The effective use of planning conditions will be applied, such as controlling types of goods to be sold, removing permitted development rights for mezzanine floors, future sub-division and defining unit sizes and sales areas to minimise the impacts of edge-of-centre and out-of-centre development.

Policy Justification

- 4.54 The Spatial Strategy is based upon major investment in the Strategic Centres whilst recognising that there are a large number of other centres across the Black Country, (Town Centres, and District and Local Centres). All of these centres are considered in need of regeneration and are vulnerable to the diversion of trade and investment away from these centres. Yet these centres serve a population that is relatively deprived and needs access to an increased range of opportunities. The success of the regeneration strategy depends on major housing growth and providing for investment in industry and distribution. This will inevitably put pressure on land outside of centres.
- 4.55 Apart from developments to meet specific local 'day-to-day' needs within walking distance, development outside of centres will need to show there is a clear requirement that cannot be accommodated within or failing that, on the edge of any appropriate centre, and that there would not be an adverse impact on the strategy to expand and strengthen the Black Country's centres. National policy and the other policies of this plan ensure such developments would be accessible to all sections of the community.

- 4.56 Due to the multi-centred nature of the Black Country it is considered that justification will be required for development outside of the network of existing centres and that, whilst centres are to be expanded where necessary, out-of-centre developments will be rare. The assumptions of the GVA Grimley study of Black Country Centres 2009 are based upon the redirection of any of out-of-centre notional capacity to centres to complement the overall strategy.
- 4.57 Where edge-of-centre or out-of-centre developments are suggested as the only way of meeting particular needs, the location of such proposals should be considered in relation to the centres' catchment areas within which the proposals fall, irrespective of local authority boundaries, and locations should be sought in or on the edge of centres of an appropriate scale to accommodate those proposals.
- 4.58 It will be important to ensure that such developments are accessible by a choice of means of transport and support both social inclusion and the need to sustain strategic transport links. The potential impacts on centres will also need to be assessed within the context of the strategy to regenerate centres.

Primary Evidence

Black Country Centres Study: GVA Grimley 2009

Delivery

- Through preparation of Development Plan Documents in particular Area Action Plans for centres.
- Through the appropriate consideration of planning applications and resisting development in inappropriate locations.
- Through working with delivery agents/developers.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI CEN7 - Number and floorspace of new developments for town centre uses permitted, and number and floorspace completed, outside of Strategic, Town, District or Local Centres that do not accord with policy CEN7 requirements	None

CEN8 Car Parking in Centres

Spatial Objectives

The management of the demand for road space and car parking, together with influencing travel choices, is fundamental to achieving the Vision for sustainable communities. The policy managing car parking in centres will also ensure the network of Black Country Centres are maintained and enhanced and will contribute to the delivery of Spatial Objectives 1, 2, 5, and 7.

Policy

(a) Pricing

The pricing of parking will not be used as a tool for competition between Strategic Centres.

A lower pricing regime may be identified for Town Centres and District and Local Centres.

(b) Type of Parking

The amount and charging of publicly available long stay parking in centres will be managed to ensure a balance between provision of long stay parking and encouraging commuters to use more sustainable modes.

Except where there is an accepted need for secure dedicated provision, car parking within or on the edge of Strategic Centres, Town centres and District and Local Centres will generally be required to be available to the public to serve the centre as a whole.

Adequate provision will be made in centres as a whole and in new parking facilities for all types of users, including those with reduced mobility, cyclists and users of powered two wheelers.

(c) Maximum Parking Standards

The application of maximum parking standards will be consistent with PPG 13 and any subsequent government guidance, which, in the case of long stay provision, will encourage reduced levels of provision where public transport accessibility is highest.

A lower maximum standard for off street parking will be identified for development within Town Centres and District and Local Centres where the parking provision is to serve the centre as a whole.

Policy Justification

- 4.59 Policy CSP5 Strategic Transport priority (h) indicates that demand management and the promotion of sustainable transport will play a key part in achieving a shift in favour of these modes of transport. This policy supports this priority and will assist in reducing congestion, greenhouse gas emissions, improve road safety, promote social cohesion and improve the attractiveness of centres as places to visit and invest in.
- 4.60 A number of measures are available to help manage travel demand but their potential impact on economic regeneration needs to be considered. In particular, the correct balance needs to be found between managing and pricing regimes to maximise the use of sustainable travel to centres and avoiding the situation where new development is deterred. The JCS Spatial Strategy aims to promote centres as sustainable locations for investment while making centres as attractive and accessible as possible by sustainable modes.
- 4.61 Non-Strategic Centres have increasingly struggled to compete with the more dominant higher order centres and out-of-centre shopping provision. These non strategic centres are generally less well served by good quality off street parking.

Primary Evidence

Black Country Centres Study 2009 GVA Grimley
Dudley Parking Strategy 2007
Walsall Parking Strategy
Review of Parking Policy 2009, AECOM

Delivery

- The provision of parking in new developments within centres will be managed through Development Plan Documents, Supplementary Planning Documents, Town Centre Strategies and other non statutory documents, and through "Network Management Duty Strategies" which Local Authorities are obliged to publish by the Traffic Management Act 2004 and monitored through West Midlands LTP monitoring.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI CEN8a - Mandatory Indicator Target LTP6	No increase in morning peak traffic flows into the nine LTP centres between 2005/6 and 2010/11
LOI CEN8b - Mandatory Indicator Target LTP6 – Additional target at Local Authorities' discretion	Increase in the morning peak proportion of trips by public transport into the nine LTP centres as a whole to 33.8% by 2009/10 from the 2005/6 forecast baseline of 32.7%

Black Country Core Strategy Transport Key Diagram



5. TRANSPORT AND ACCESSIBILITY

TRAN1 Priorities for the Development of the Transport Network

Spatial Objectives

The delivery of an improved and integrated transport network both within the Black Country and in links with regional and national networks is fundamental to achieving the Vision and in helping to transform the area, deliver housing growth and improve economic performance, and achieving Spatial Objective 7.



Policy

The development of transport networks in the Black Country is focused on a step change in public transport provision serving and linking centres, improving sustainable transport facilities and services across the area, improving connectivity to national networks and improving the efficiency of strategic highway routes. Land needed for the implementation of priority transport projects will be safeguarded in order to assist in their future implementation. All new developments will address the transport network and provide adequate access for all modes, including walking, cycling and public transport. Residential development will be expected to meet the accessibility standards set out in Policy HOU2.

Given uncertainty over the availability of future funding for major transport infrastructure over the longer term, continuing priority will be given to improving transport in key corridors through the roll out of the Smarter Routes initiative that embraces a range of techniques for improving public transport, traffic management (including localised junction improvements), road safety and facilities for cyclists and pedestrians.

The improvements needed to deliver the transport strategy are shown on the Transport Key Diagram.

The key transport priorities are:

- Providing rapid transit extensions to the Midland Metro to connect the Black Country Strategic Centres to each other and to Birmingham – first priority being within the Walsall to Stourbridge corridor, providing high quality access to Merry Hill and Brierley Hill;
- Improving Junctions 1 and 2 of M5;
- Improving Junctions 9 and 10 of M6;
- Active Traffic Management and Hard Shoulder Running on M6;
- Delivering a Quality Bus Network across the Black Country, particularly Brierley Hill;
- Improving access from the Black Country to Birmingham International Airport;
- New freight railways between Stourbridge and Walsall and Walsall to Lichfield;
- Burnt Tree Junction;
- A41 Expressway / A4031 All Saints junction;
- Wolverhampton Interchange;
- Metro Line 1 Improvements and Wolverhampton Strategic Centre Extension;
- West Bromwich Regeneration Road;
- I54 link;
- Red Routes Package 1 and 2;
- Darlaston SDA access scheme.

Priority will also be given to the implementation of the priority public transport projects identified in the West Midlands Local Transport Plan, particularly Smart Routes, local rail improvements, transport interchanges and Park and Ride sites, including:

- Improved Rail Passenger Services;
- Walsall to Wolverhampton passenger rail;
- Walsall to Cannock rail line;
- New railway stations at Aldridge and Willenhall.

Other corridors where the public transport demand would support rapid transit include:

- Stourbridge to Brierley Hill;
- A456 Hagley Road from Birmingham to Quinton;
- A449 Stafford Road from Wolverhampton to I54;
- A34 Walsall to Birmingham.

Justification



- 5.1 Good connectivity to the wider region national transport networks and Birmingham International Airport for both passengers and freight has been identified as being necessary to support the regeneration of the Black Country. The economic growth will be supported by improved access to major global economies.
- 5.2 A strategic public transport “spine” comprising high quality, reliable, fast and high capacity rapid transit between the strategic centres - Brierley Hill, Walsall, West Bromwich, Wolverhampton and Birmingham is considered as a crucial element of the Strategy and is necessary to support the expansion of these centres as a focus for employment, shopping and leisure. The Black Country Public Transport Spine has been identified as one of the 9 Regional Transport Priorities. Currently Metro line 1 provides the required standard of link between Wolverhampton, West Bromwich and Birmingham but it is important that the public transport modes of rail, metro and bus are better integrated to ensure that people can use them to travel where and when they need to.
- 5.3 It is vital that new development has access to high quality public transport facilities and services from the outset as this will ensure that people travelling to and from these areas do not establish unsustainable travel patterns due to the initial absence of good public transport.
- 5.4 The Core Strategy supports the delivery of an enhanced transport network for the Black Country to ensure a seamless integration of land-use and transport planning and to demonstrate the strong interdependency of future land-use decisions and adequate servicing by a variety of travel modes. The exact mode of public transport should reflect existing demand and also take account of potential future economic or housing growth points to ensure an integrated approach to sustainable development and travel patterns. This is essential to support the scale of growth proposed for the regeneration corridors and strategic centres and to create an effective transportation system to support sustainable communities. This transport network will provide communities with access to employment, leisure, education and health care and will facilitate improved access to employment sites. Public Transport will be at the heart of these proposals with a Black Country rapid transit spine connecting the centres of Brierley Hill, Walsall, West Bromwich, Wolverhampton and Birmingham as well as delivering greatly improved accessibility to the Regeneration Corridors as shown on the Transport Key Diagram.

- 5.5 International, national and regional rail connectivity is the subject of continuous improvement but needs to be enhanced as set out in the West Midlands Rail Utilisation Strategy (RUS) and Rail Network Development Plan. As Brierley Hill is not served directly by the national rail network and West Bromwich is linked to the national rail network only by Metro there are significant gaps in the Black Country's connectivity which are priorities for public transport investment.



- 5.6 The operation of the highway network needs to be improved to support the growth and long term viability of the Black Country's economy whilst limiting the environmental effect of excessive congestion. The West Midlands Local Transport Plan 2006-11 (LTP2) sets out a strategy of making the best of the existing highway network in a coordinated way through a programme of route based traffic management, improvements to traffic signal control and low cost measures to tackle particular problems. It is anticipated that this strategy will continue in LTP3 due to be adopted in 2011.
- 5.7 New highway building within the Black Country will be mainly in support of regeneration, but some key junctions on the Principal and Trunk Road network on important links to the motorway network for freight and public transport will be improved by major construction schemes. Highway improvements will be expected to address the needs of all users especially pedestrians and cyclists
- 5.8 Strategic High Quality Employment Areas are defined in terms of good access standards to the motorway network. As no new motorways are planned within the lifetime of this plan the M6, M5 and M54 motorways will remain vital transport links for Black Country business and freight. The Highways Agency has announced plans to allow hard shoulder running and Active Traffic Management (ATM) to be delivered in order to deal with regular and severe congestion.

- 5.9 Buses will continue to dominate local public transport provision in the Black Country throughout the life of the plan period, delivering 85 % of passenger miles by 2026. Bus priority will be delivered through the 'Smart Routes Initiative', where a comprehensive approach to building in bus priority together with walking and cycling measures at the same time as general traffic management measures will be pursued to reduce congestion on the highway network and improve accessibility by walking and cycling and road safety. Specific local measures to help buses will be delivered in other locations where appropriate. Coaches have a role to play in providing affordable long distance connectivity and access facilities to major Black Country destinations and will be encouraged.
- 5.10 Centro in partnership with the local authorities will continue to develop and roll out the Transforming Bus Travel initiative, including Bus Showcase and Partnership Routes, with operators, which will result in a step change in the provision of bus service quality across the West Midlands.
- 5.11 The concentration of new employment, leisure, retail and housing in the four strategic centres of Brierley Hill, Walsall, West Bromwich and Wolverhampton will increase the demand for travel to these centres. The strategy calls for this extra demand at peak travel times to be met primarily by use of public transport, cycling, walking and increased car sharing. This will require more buses to serve these centres than at present and this in turn will put pressure on existing bus stations and stops. This requires extra bus stand capacity in the strategic centres will need to be provided.
- 5.12 While improvement of accessibility to bus services will be a priority, some people will have little choice but to make the first part of their journey by car. The success of Park and Ride in contributing to a sustainable travel pattern will depend on minimising the distance driven before transferring to public transport. Well located Park and Ride facilities can provide a realistic alternative for many car drivers and contribute to environmental improvement by reducing congestion on radial routes into centres at peak times and by improving public transport patronage. A new strategic Park and Ride site is proposed at Brinsford, adjacent to Wolverhampton in Southern Staffordshire and opportunities will be taken to expand existing local park and ride sites at rail stations and Metro stops. Local provision will also be created as rail and Metro proposals are implemented.
- 5.13 As transport projects reach the design stage there will be a need to safeguard the land needed for the implementation of schemes. When projects are sufficiently advanced, improvement lines or land will be safeguarded in the appropriate Local Development Documents such as Site Allocations Documents or Area Action Plans.

Primary Evidence

Black Country Study 2006
 Review of Transport Strategy 2009 – Mott MacDonald
 PRISM model testing the Black Country Strategy – 2006
 PRISM Black Country Core Strategy Transport Technical Document - July 2009
 West Midlands Local Transport Plan 2006
 Highways Agency 2009
 West Midlands Rail Utilisation Strategy
 West Midlands Rail Development Plan 2009
 Walsall Rail Services and Facilities Improvement Plan
 Integrated Transport Authority's Integrated Public Transport Prospectus 2009

Delivery

- Regional Funding Advice and Allocation process.
- LTP 2 and 3.
- Safeguarded land will be defined for particular projects as schemes are designed and will be included in appropriate documents in the Local Development Schemes.
- Safeguarding will be implemented through the Development Management process.
- Transport Assessments & Travel Plans will help to fund some infrastructure.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI TRAN1 - % of Development Plan Documents identifying and safeguarding land to meet transport requirements	100% of Development Plan Documents

TRAN2 Managing Transport Impacts of New Development

Spatial Objectives

In order to ensure that the transport elements of the Spatial Strategy are deliverable it is essential that new developments and existing facilities demonstrate their travel and transportation impacts together with proposals for mitigation. It is important that accessibility by a choice of sustainable modes of transport is maximised at all developments. Transport Assessments and Travel Plans produced by developers, employers, schools and facility operators, are essential to bring about sustainable travel solutions and help deliver Spatial Objective 7.

Policy

Planning permission will not be granted for development proposals that are likely to have significant transport implications unless applications are accompanied by proposals to provide an acceptable level of accessibility and safety by all modes of transport to and from all parts of a development including, in particular, access by walking, cycling, public transport and car sharing. These proposals should be in accordance with an agreed Transport Assessment, where required, and include implementation of measures to promote and improve such sustainable transport facilities through agreed Travel Plans and similar measures.

Justification

- 5.14 All developments will be assessed both in terms of their impact on the transport network and the opportunities that could be available to ensure that the site is accessible by sustainable modes of transport. The supporting documentation will either take the form of a full Transport Assessment (TA) or a less detailed Transport Statement (TS) and will generally be determined by the size and scale of development or land use. This will be based on Appendix B of the DfT Guidance on Transport Assessment, although a TA may be required instead of a TS for a range of other reasons (for example road safety concerns, existing congestion problems, air quality problems, concerns over community severance or likelihood of off-site parking being generated). Where a development is considered to have a potential significant effect on the Primary Route Network then the Highways Agency will be involved.

- 5.15 Depending on the size, nature and location of the development the TA will need to make recommendations for a range of Travel Plan (TP) measures that are capable of achieving either significantly lower than average traffic levels or reduced levels of car use. A Travel Plan is a long term management strategy for an occupier or site that seeks to deliver sustainable transport objectives through positive action and is set out in a document that is regularly reviewed and up-dated. Travel Plans will normally be secured as planning obligations and/or planning conditions along with any remedial transport measures required due to the potential impact of the development.

- 5.16 The scope of the Travel Plan will be determined by the size, scale and nature of the development, the findings of the Transport Assessment or Statement and through pre-application discussions. This will include developer funded mitigation measures which may need to be delivered.

Primary Evidence

The Preparation of Transport Assessments and Travel Plans, Sandwell MBC (October 2006)

Delivery

- Through the Development Management process and via Planning Obligations or other legal and funding mechanisms.
- Set out in appropriate Supplementary Planning Guidance.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI TRAN2 - Appropriate provision or contributions towards transport works and Travel Plans measures by all relevant permissions based on best practice. Targets and measures contained in Travel Plans and agreements will be monitored and reviewed	Travel Plans to be produced and monitored for 100% of all planning applications that are required to submit a Transport Assessment or a Transport Statement

TRAN3 The Efficient Movement of Freight

Spatial Objectives

New freight railways and rail sidings will present an economic opportunity for Black Country businesses. Improved journey times on the highway network will further aid economic prosperity and switching traffic to rail or inland waterways will relieve the highway network of traffic, reducing congestion and improving air quality and the environment. The location of businesses producing heavy flows of freight vehicles in locations with good access to the principal highway network will also assist with environmental improvement. Improvements to the freight network are fundamental to achieving the Vision for sustainable communities, environmental transformation and economic prosperity and in particular to delivering Spatial Objectives 2, 5 and 7.

Policy

The movement of freight by sustainable modes such as rail and waterways will be encouraged. Road based freight will be encouraged to use the Primary Route Network whenever this is practicable. Junction improvements and routing strategies will be focussed on those parts of the highway network particularly important for freight access to employment sites and to the motorway network.

Proposals which generate significant freight movements will be directed to sites with satisfactory access to the principal road network.

Existing and disused railway lines as shown on the Transport Key Diagram will be safeguarded for rail related uses. Sites with existing and potential access to the rail network for freight will be safeguarded for rail related uses.

Justification

- 5.17 Within the Black Country, freight traffic has always been particularly important reflecting the area's past level of manufacturing and it remains significant today with industry, distribution and logistics giving rise to much freight traffic. This is reflected in both the M5 and M6 motorways, where the proportion of heavy goods vehicles can be 30% of total traffic, and the local road network where the traffic on many main routes has an exceptionally high percentage of heavy goods vehicles.
- 5.18 Much of the primary route network in the Black Country was never designed to cope with modern heavy goods vehicles and this gives rise to problems of reliability and with deliveries and servicing. The Black Country Authorities are members of the West Midlands Freight Quality Partnership, as are freight operators and their national representative bodies.
- 5.19 The Regional Freight Strategy sets a context for planning for freight within the Black Country. Removal of freight from the road to rail or canal will reduce congestion, and support investment in rail and canals.
- 5.20 The railway network serving the Black Country suffers from capacity problems during the day when there is high demand for passenger services and this has shifted much freight traffic to night time operation.
- 5.21 Of the disused lines the most important is Stourbridge-Walsall-Lichfield which has been identified in the Regional Freight Strategy and the Region Rail Development Plan as being an important link for freight moving between the South West and North East regions. Locally, four sites have been identified as being suitable for rail connection if rail freight services are reinstated. Within the West Midlands conurbation the Stourbridge to Lichfield link would act as a bypass for the rail network around Birmingham which has severe capacity constraints. The capacity released by the reopening of Stourbridge, Walsall, Lichfield, as well as benefiting the freight network, would allow extra passenger services to operate to and through Birmingham to the benefit of the West Midlands region.

- 5.22 The Regional Freight Strategy notes a shortage of private sidings in the West Midlands Region. Sites with existing or potential rail access along existing and proposed freight routes particularly Stourbridge - Walsall and Walsall - Lichfield will be protected for rail related uses. Sites which will be examined for such potential include:

- Tansey Green, Dudley.
- Albright and Wilson, Trinity Street Oldbury, Sandwell.
- Gulf Oil Site Union Road Sandwell.
- Bilport Lane/Smiths Road, Wednesbury, Sandwell.
- Middlemore Road Industrial Estate, Sandwell.
- Bescot Sidings, Bescot. Sandwell/ Walsall.
- Neachells, Wolverhampton.
- Bentley Road South, Walsall.
- Dumblederry Lane/Middlemore Lane, Aldridge Walsall.
- Engineering Sidings off Corporation Street, Caldmore, Walsall.

Primary Evidence

Regional Freight Strategy
Regional Rail Action Plan
DfT Strategic Rail Freight Network: Longer Term Development

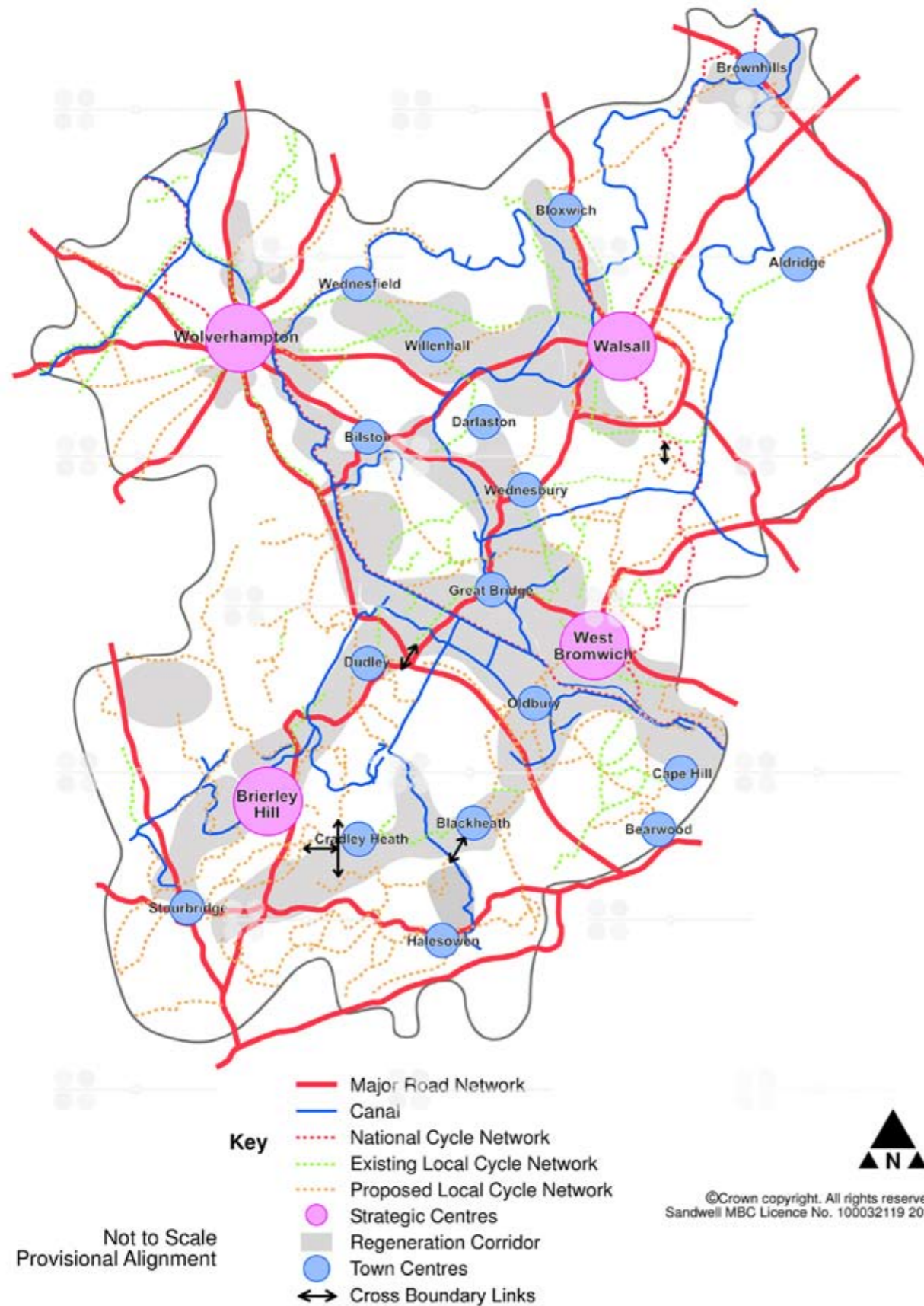
Delivery

- Signing strategies for road based freight will be enhanced.
- Development generating significant amounts of freight traffic will be directed to sites with satisfactory access to the Principal Road Network by allocations in other Local Development Framework Documents and through development control.
- Safeguarding of land and facilities through allocations in Local Development Framework documents and through development management.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI TRAN3a - The safeguarding of key existing and disused railway lines identified on the Transport Key Diagram	No loss of safeguarded lines
LOI TRAN3b - Protection of sites with existing or potential rail access identified in TRANS3	No loss of protected sites

Black Country Core Strategy Cycle Network Diagram



TRAN4 Creating Coherent Networks for Cycling and for Walking

Spatial Objectives

The development of sustainable modes and encouraging people out of their cars, particularly for short and commuter journeys is an important element of Spatial Objectives 3, 5 and 7. Places need to be well connected with attractive, convenient, direct and safe routes available to users and providing real choice.



Policy

Joint working between the four local authorities will ensure that the Black Country has a comprehensive cycle network based on integrating the four local cycle networks, including common cycle infrastructure design standards

Creating an environment that encourages sustainable travel requires new developments to link to existing walking and cycling networks. The links should be safe, direct and not impeded by infrastructure provided for other forms of transport. Where possible, existing links including the canal network should be enhanced and the networks extended to serve new developments. New developments should have good walking and cycling links to public transport nodes and interchanges.

Cycle parking facilities should be provided at all new developments and should be located in a convenient location with good natural surveillance, e.g. in close proximity of main front entrances for short stay visitors or under shelter for long stay visitors. The number of cycle parking spaces required will be determined by local standards in supplementary planning documents.

Justification

- 5.23 It is essential that the development of walking and cycling facilities are an integral part of the transport system both on the highway network, canal corridors, Public Rights of Way and on other paths. Comprehensive cycle and walking networks within the Black Country will enable communities to access employment, public transport interchanges, services and facilities in a sustainable way. A transport network that facilitates car use and disadvantages walking and cycling can adversely affect the health and well being of its communities. Identifying and overcoming barriers to walking and cycling during development processes will encourage a renaissance of walking and cycling within the Black Country and help improve the health and well being of local communities by reducing the incidence of obesity, coronary heart disease, strokes, and diabetes. Both walking and cycling are active modes of travel with clear health benefits. The implementation recognises the specific requirements of each with cycling provision mainly on carriageway and a comprehensive network of walking opportunities available both on highway and off road.
- 5.24 Walking and Cycling Strategies are incorporated within the West Midlands Local Transport Plan (LTP2) with a target to increase cycling by 1% by 2010/11. The four Black Country local authorities have their own walking and cycling strategies and use funding allocated through LTP2 to make infrastructure improvements.
- 5.25 A Black Country Cycle Network map has been developed to identify missing links and barriers between borough boundaries and authorities adjoining the Black Country.
- 5.26 In order to achieve a coherent Black Country cycle network the four local authorities have agreed to follow common cycle infrastructure design standards by adhering to Department for Transport publication 'Local Transport Note 2/08 Cycle Infrastructure Design'.

Primary Evidence

The cycling strategies for Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton.

Delivery

- The four local authorities have cycling strategies that identify proposed routes and facilities within their local cycle networks, which serve centres, public transport interchanges, local employment and facilities. These cycle infrastructure proposals will be funded through LTP allocations, which may attract match funding from other sources.
- New cycle facilities will be provided through the development control process, either through direct provision by applicants in carrying out works or through making appropriate contributions as part of a Section 106 agreement made in line with Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance on Planning Obligations or an updated Supplementary Planning Document.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI TRAN4a - Increase in cycle use of monitored routes	1% increase in cycling by 2026
LOI TRAN4b - Implementation of Proposed Local Cycle Network identified in the Cycle Network Diagram	Increase % length implemented

TRAN5 Influencing the Demand for Travel and Travel Choices

Spatial Objectives

The management of the demand for road space and car parking, together with influencing travel choices, is fundamental to achieving the Vision for sustainable communities, environmental transformation and economic prosperity and in particular to delivering Spatial Objectives 1, 2, 5 and 7.

Policy

The Black Country Local Authorities are committed to considering all aspects of traffic management in the centres and wider area in accordance with the Traffic Management Act 2004.

The priorities for traffic management in the Black Country are:

- **The pricing of parking - ensuring that it is not used as a tool for competition between centres;**
- **The type of parking – ensuring that where appropriate long stay parking is removed near to town centres to support parking for leisure and retail customers and encourage commuters to use more sustainable means and reduce peak hour traffic flows;**
- **Maximum parking standards – ensuring that a consistent approach to maximum parking standards is enforced in new developments as set out in supplementary planning documents;**
- **The location of parking – by reviewing the location of town centre car parks through the “Network Management Duty Strategy” to ensure that the flow of traffic around the town centres is as efficient as possible;**
- **Identifying appropriate strategic and local Park and Ride sites on current public transport routes to ease traffic flows into centres;**
- **Working together with the rest of the region to manage region-wide traffic flows through the West Midlands Metropolitan Area Urban Traffic Control (UTC) scheme and further joint working;**
- **Promoting and implementing Smarter Choices measures that will help to reduce the need to travel and facilitate a shift towards using sustainable modes of transport (walking, cycling, public transport, car sharing).**

Justification

- 5.27 The correct balance needs to be found between managing and pricing parking to maximise the use of sustainable travel means to enter town and city centres, whilst avoiding restricting parking to the extent that consumers are dissuaded from using town centres and that new development is deterred. The Spatial Strategy aims at making the network of town and city centres as attractive and accessible as possible to encourage use the most sustainable modes.
- 5.28 Other important aspects of demand management are the prioritisation of allocation of road space towards sustainable methods of travel such as walking, cycling and buses by using schemes such as traffic calming measures and full or time limited pedestrianisation so making these modes more attractive to people visiting the centres.

- 5.29 Other important elements include the promotion and marketing of sustainable transport through travel plans (refer to Policy TRAN2), planning conditions / obligations and other associated Smarter Choices / TravelWise initiatives, including the promotion of schemes and opportunities for walking, cycling, public transport and car sharing.
- 5.30 These policies will reduce road traffic congestion and pollution, improve road safety, promote social inclusion and accessibility, therefore encouraging consumers to access the four strategic centres using sustainable transport.

Primary Evidence

Black Country Centres Study 2009, GVA Grimley
 Review of Parking Policy 2009, Faber Maunsell

Delivery

The policy will be delivered through local authorities 'Network Management Duty Strategies' under the Traffic Management Act 2004, which places new network management duties on local highway authorities. The main duty is to secure the expeditious movement of people and goods, inclusive of cyclists and pedestrians, on the road network and on adjacent road networks for which another authority is the traffic authority.'

- Mandatory Indicator Target LTP2 – no more than a 7% increase in road traffic mileage between 2004 and 2010.
- Mandatory Indicator Target LTP6 – no increase in morning peak traffic flows into the nine LTP centres between 2005/06 and 2010/11.
- Mandatory Indicator Target LTP6 – additional target at authorities' discretion: increase the morning peak proportion of trips by public transport into the nine LTP centres as a whole to 33.8% by 2009/10 from the 2005/06 forecast baseline of 32.7%.
- Mandatory Indicator Target LTP7 – target to be determined in accordance with DfT PSA Guidance based upon average journey times.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI TRAN5a - Number of publically available long stay parking places in Strategic Centres	Decrease the number of long stay parking spaces in centres over baseline for each centre by 2026
LOI TRAN5b - All new publically owned long stay parking spaces in Strategic Centres to be located in peripheral locations	100%

Black Country Core Strategy Environment Key Diagram



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 The delineation of boundaries within the diagrams and the figures provided are illustrative to give a broad indication of the scale of change.

KEY

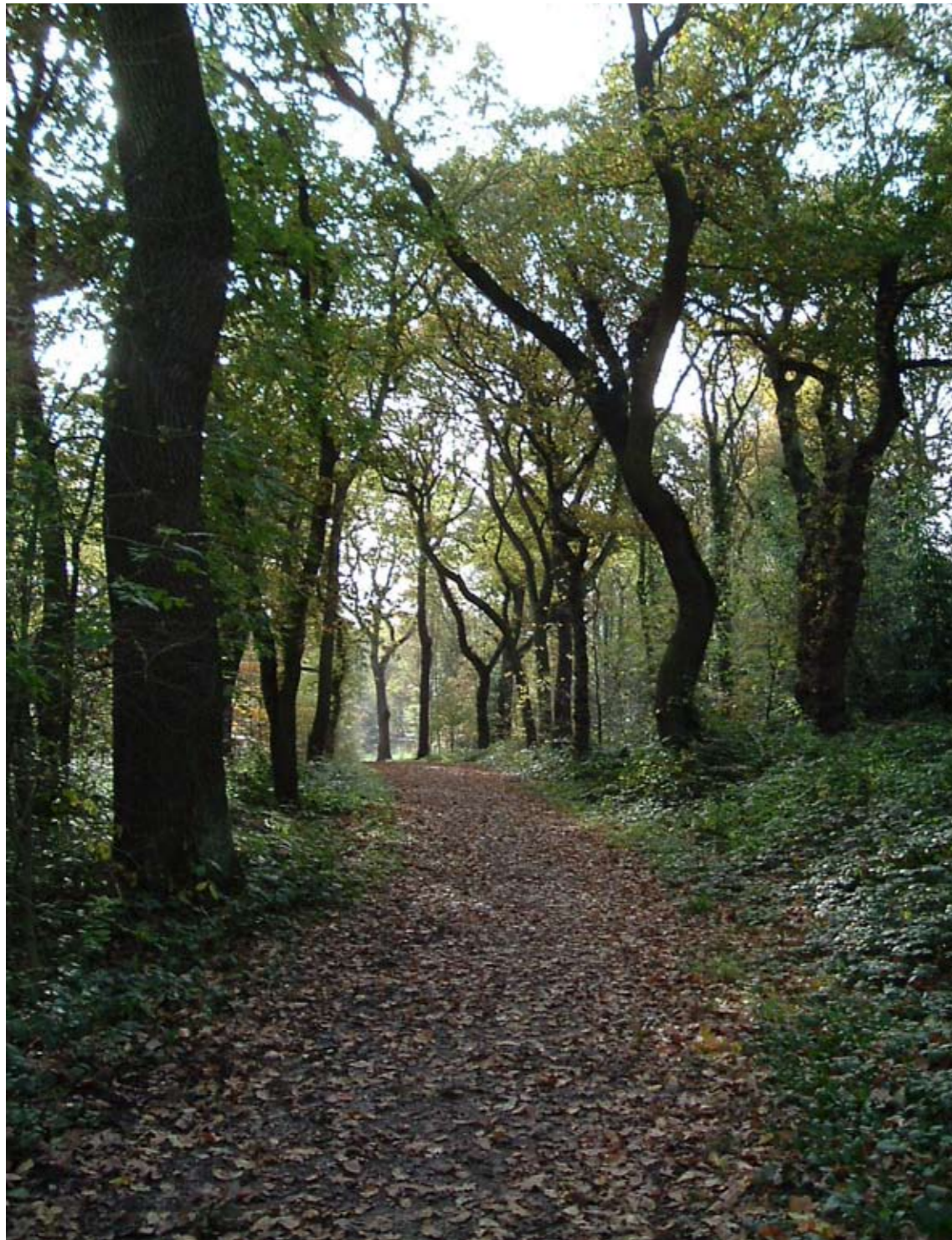
- Strategic Centres
- Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- National Nature Reserve (NNR)
- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Local Nature Reserve (LNR)
- Major Road Network
- Regeneration Corridors
- Motorway
- Flood Zones 2 & 3 (see SFRA/EA website for detailed boundaries)
- Green Belt
- Canal
- Black Country Landscape Beacons
- Strategic Parks
- Disused Hatherton Branch Canal

6. ENVIRONMENTAL INFRASTRUCTURE

ENV1 Nature Conservation

Spatial Objectives

The protection and improvement of the Black Country's biodiversity and geodiversity will improve the attractiveness of the area for people to live, work, study and visit while at the same time improving the physical and natural sustainability of the conurbation in the face of climate change. This will directly contribute to achieving Spatial Objectives 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 and particularly 6 "A High Quality Environment".



Policy

Development within the Black Country will safeguard nature conservation, inside and outside its boundaries by ensuring that:

- Development is not permitted where it would harm internationally (Special Areas of Conservation), nationally (Sites of Special Scientific Interest and National Nature Reserves) or regionally (Local Nature Reserve and Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation) designated nature conservation sites;
- Locally designated nature conservation sites (Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation), important habitats and geological features are protected from development proposals which could negatively impact upon them;
- The movement of wildlife within the Black Country and its adjoining areas, through both linear habitats (e.g. wildlife corridors) and the wider urban matrix (e.g. stepping stone sites) is not impeded by development;
- Species which are legally protected, in decline, are rare within the Black Country or which are covered by national, regional or local Biodiversity Action Plans will not be harmed by development.

Adequate information must be submitted with planning applications for proposals which may affect any designated site or any important habitat, species or geological feature to ensure that the likely impacts of the proposal can be fully assessed. Without this there will be a presumption against granting permission.

Where, exceptionally, the strategic benefits of a development clearly outweigh the importance of a local nature conservation site, species, habitat or geological feature, damage must be minimised. Any remaining impacts, including any reduction in area, must be fully mitigated. Compensation will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances. A mitigation strategy must accompany relevant planning applications.

Current designated nature conservation sites including Local Nature Reserves will be carried forward from existing Proposals Maps, subject to additions and changes arising from further studies. Local Authorities will look to designate additional nature conservation sites as necessary in conjunction with the Local Sites Partnership and consequently sites may receive new, or increased, protection over the Plan period.

All appropriate development should positively contribute to the natural environment of the Black Country by:

- Extending nature conservation sites;
- Improving wildlife movement; and/or
- Restoring or creating habitats / geological features which actively contribute to the implementation of Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) and/or Geodiversity Action Plans (GAPs) at a national, regional or local level.

Details of how improvements (which are appropriate to the location and scale) will contribute to the natural environment, and their ongoing management for the benefit of biodiversity and geodiversity will be expected to accompany planning applications. Local authorities will provide additional guidance on this in Local Development Documents.

Justification

- 6.1 The past development and redevelopment of the Black Country, along with Birmingham, has led to it being referred to as an “endless village”, which very well describes well the interlinked settlements and patches of encapsulated countryside present today. The Black Country is home to internationally and nationally designated nature conservation sites and it has the most diverse geology, for its size, of any area on Earth. Many rare and protected species are found thriving within the matrix of greenspace and built environment.
- 6.2 The Black Country lies at the heart of the British mainland and therefore can play an important role in helping species migrate and adapt to climate change as it renders their existing habitats unsuitable. It is therefore very important to increase the ability of landscapes and their ecosystems to adapt in response to changes in the climate by increasing the range, extent and connectivity of habitats. In order to protect vulnerable species isolated nature conservation sites will be protected, buffered, improved and joined with others. Species dispersal will be aided by extending, widening and improving the habitats of wildlife corridors. Conversely, fragmentation and weakening of wildlife sites and wildlife corridors by development will be opposed.
- 6.3 Development offers an opportunity to improve the local environment and this is especially so in an urban area. The Black Country’s Local Authorities are committed to meeting their “Biodiversity Duty” under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) and to deliver the principles of PPS9 by proactively protecting, restoring and creating a richer and more sustainable wildlife and geology.
- 6.4 The development of housing with its associated population growth may lead to indirect adverse impacts on Cannock Chase SAC. This is likely to be caused by increased visitor activities on Cannock Chase and is the subject of ongoing research. Depending on the outcome of this research, development plans and proposals may be required to demonstrate appropriate and proportionate measures sufficient to avoid or mitigate significant identified adverse impacts. Guidance may be given through subsequent local development plan documents.
- 6.5 The local Biodiversity Partnership, Geodiversity Partnership and Local Sites’ Partnership will identify, map and regularly review the priorities for protection and improvement throughout the Black Country. These will be used to inform planning decisions.

Primary Evidence

Biodiversity Action Plan for Birmingham and the Black Country (2009)
 Geodiversity Action Plan for the Black Country (2005)
 EIG Phase 1 (2009)
 Current UDP Proposals Maps

Delivery

- Biodiversity and Geodiversity Action Plans.
- Preparation of Local Development Documents.
- Development Management process.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI ENV1 - Change in areas of biodiversity importance	No net reduction in the area of designated nature conservation sites through development

ENV2 Historic Character and Local Distinctiveness

Spatial Objectives

Environmental transformation is one of the underpinning themes of the Vision which requires a co-ordinated approach to the protection and enhancement of the built and natural environment. The protection and promotion of the historic character and the areas local distinctiveness is a key element of transformation and in particular helps to deliver Spatial Objectives 3, 4, 5 and 6.



Policy

All development should aim to protect and promote the special qualities, historic character and local distinctiveness of the Black Country in order to help maintain its cultural identity and strong sense of place. Development proposals will be required to preserve and, where appropriate, enhance local character and those aspects of the historic environment together with their settings which are recognised as being of special historic, archaeological, architectural, landscape or townscape quality.

All proposals should aim to sustain and reinforce special character and conserve the historic aspects of the following locally distinctive elements of the Black Country:

- a) **The network of now coalesced but nevertheless distinct small industrial settlements of the former South Staffordshire Coalfield, such as Darlaston & Netherton;**
- b) **The civic, religious and commercial cores of the principal settlements of medieval origin such as Wolverhampton, Dudley, Wednesbury & Walsall;**
- c) **Surviving pre-industrial settlement centres of medieval origin such as Tettenhall, Aldridge, Oldbury and Kingswinford;**
- d) **Areas of Victorian and Edwardian higher density development which survive with a high degree of integrity including terraced housing and its associated amenities;**
- e) **Areas of extensive lower density suburban development of the mid 20th century including public housing and private developments of semi-detached and detached housing;**
- f) **Public open spaces, including Victorian and Edwardian municipal parks, often created upon and retaining elements of relict industrial landscape features;**
- g) **The canal network and its associated infrastructure, surviving canal-side pre-1939 buildings and structures together with archaeological evidence of the development of canal-side industries and former canal routes (see also Policy ENV4);**
- h) **Buildings, structures and archaeological remains of the traditional manufacturing and extractive industries of the Black Country including glass making, metal trades (such as lock making), manufacture of leather goods, brick making, coal mining and limestone quarrying;**
- i) **The Beacons shown on the Environment Key Diagram and other largely undeveloped high prominences lying along:**
 - **the Sedgley to Northfield Ridge, including Sedgley Beacon, Wrens Nest, Castle Hill and the Rowley Hills (Turner's Hill);**
 - **the Queslett to Shire Oak Ridge (including Barr Beacon);**
 - **including views to and from these locations.**

In addition to statutorily designated and protected historic assets particular attention should be paid to the preservation and enhancement of:

- **locally listed historic buildings and archaeological sites;**
- **historic parks and gardens including their settings;**
- **locally designated special landscape areas and other heritage based site allocations.**

Development proposals that would potentially have an impact on any of the above distinctive elements should be supported by evidence included in Design and Access Statements which demonstrates that all aspects of the historic character and distinctiveness of the locality have been fully assessed and used to inform proposals. In some instances local authorities may require developers to undertake detailed Historic Landscape Characterisation studies to support their proposals.

Justification

- 6.6 The Black Country has a rich and diverse historic environment which is evident in the survival of individual historic assets and in the local character and distinctiveness of the broader landscape. The geodiversity of the Black Country underpins much of the subsequent development of the area. The exploitation of abundant natural mineral resources, particularly those of the South Staffordshire coalfield, together with the early development of the canal network, gave rise to rapid industrialisation and the distinctive settlement patterns which characterise the area.



- 6.7 Towns and villages with medieval origins survive throughout the area and remain distinct in character from the later 19th century industrial settlements which typify the coalfield and gave rise to the description of the area as an 'endless village' of communities each boasting a particular manufacturing skill for which many were internationally renowned.
- 6.8 Beyond its industrial heartland, the character of the Black Country can be quite different and varied. The green borderland, most prominent in parts of Dudley, Walsall and the Sandwell Valley, is a largely rural landscape containing fragile remnants of the ancient past. Undeveloped ridges of high ground punctuate the urban landscape providing important views and points of reference which define the character of the many communities. Other parts of the Black Country are characterised by attractive well treed suburbs with large houses in substantial gardens and extensive mid 20th century housing estates designed on garden city principles.
- 6.9 This diverse character is under constant threat of erosion from modern development, some small scale and incremental and some large scale and fundamental, and as a result some of the distinctiveness of historic settlements has already been lost to development of a "homogenising" character. In many ways the Black Country is characterised by its ability to embrace change, but future changes will be greater and more intense than any sustained in the past. Whilst a legislative framework supported by national guidance exists to provide for the protection of statutorily designated historic assets the key challenge for the future is to manage change in a way that realizes the regeneration potential of the proud local heritage and distinctive character of the Black Country.

- 6.10 To ensure that historic assets make a positive contribution towards the wider economic, social and environmental regeneration of the Black Country it is important that they are not considered in isolation but are conserved and enhanced within their wider context. An holistic approach to the built and natural environment maximises opportunities to improve the overall image and quality of life in the Black Country by ensuring that historic context informs planning decisions and provides opportunities to link with other environmental infrastructure initiatives.
- 6.11 Considerable progress has been made towards achieving a fuller analysis and understanding of the local character and distinctiveness of the area using historic landscape characterization (HLC) principles. Much data is already available at sub-regional level, in the context of the Black Country Historic Landscape Characterization and from other local and more detailed HLC studies. Locally distinctive elements of the Black Country have been defined, including Beacon sites – characteristic, elevated landmarks which divide and help define individual communities.

Primary Evidence

The Black Country: An Historic Landscape Characterisation – First Report (2009)
A Landscape Character Framework for the Black Country Regeneration Corridors (2009)

Delivery

- Development Management process including Design and Access Statements.
- Area Action Plans, Site Allocation Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI ENV2 - Proportion of planning permissions granted in accordance with Conservation / Historic Environment Section or Advisor recommendations	100%

ENV3 Design Quality

Spatial Objectives

Achieving sustainable development is fundamental to the Vision for transforming the Black Country environmentally and economically. High quality design is an essential element of place-making and reflecting the distinctive character of the area and will help deliver all of the Spatial Objectives by setting challenging but appropriate standards.

Policy

Each place in the Black Country is distinct and successful place-making will depend on understanding and responding to the identity of each place with high quality design proposals. Development proposals across the Black Country will deliver a successful urban renaissance through high quality design that stimulates economic, social and environmental benefits by demonstrating that the following aspects of design have been addressed through Design and Access Statements reflecting their particular Black Country and local context:

- 1. Implementation of the principles of “By Design” to ensure the provision of a high quality network of streets, buildings and spaces;**
- 2. Implementation of the principles of “Manual for Streets” to ensure urban streets and spaces are designed to provide a high quality public realm and an attractive, safe and permeable movement network;**
- 3. Use of the Building for Life criteria for new housing developments, to demonstrate a commitment to strive for the highest possible design standards, good place making and sustainable development, given local circumstances;**
- 4. Meeting Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 or above for residential development and Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) Very Good or above for other development, or the national requirement at the time of submitting the proposal for planning permission, to demonstrate a commitment to achieving high quality sustainable design;**
- 5. Consideration of crime prevention measures and Secured By Design principles.**
- 6. Including design features to reduce the urban heat island effect such as tree cover, green roofs and the inclusion of green space in development.**

Justification

- 6.12 The Black Country Local Authorities support urban renaissance by ensuring all new development demonstrates a high quality of design. The Black Country Study has highlighted that the ideas and principles behind successful place-making and urban design will be a key factor in the urban renaissance of the sub-region. A high quality environment has also been identified through the Core Strategy preparation process as an essential prerequisite for economic competitiveness and housing choice.
- 6.13 Great opportunities exist across the Black Country to transform areas, such as the Regeneration Corridors, into high quality places for people to live, work and invest in and to reinforce or reinvent where necessary, a sense of place and local identity within the Black Country, in accordance with the Government’s strategy for improving quality of place, “World Class Places”. The Black Country needs a collective commitment to high quality design if it is to seize the opportunities offered by transformation on this scale.

6.14 This Policy therefore seeks to ensure that all new development has regard to key design principles but which need to interpret and reflect both the overall character of the Black Country and local distinctiveness. High quality design relates to buildings and architecture, but also the spaces within which buildings sit, the quality of the public realm within streets and spaces and the relationship between the development and the surrounding area. To ensure that development proposals accord with the policy requirements, the Design and Access Statements accompanying planning applications should follow Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) guidance on Design and Access Statements.

6.15 A key objective for new developments should be that they create safe and accessible environments where crime, anti-social behaviour or fear of crime does not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion. It is accepted that good design, layout and spatial relationships can make a positive contribution towards improving community safety in the area. It is the intention of the local authorities and the Police to work jointly towards the reduction of crime, anti-social behaviour and fear of crime across the Black Country area. This will be a material consideration in all planning initiatives.

Primary Evidence

Broadening Horizons – A Vision of the Black Country Urban Park, Lovejoy (2004)
 Dudley New Housing Development SPD (2007)
 Wolverhampton Planning for Sustainable Communities SPD (2008)
 Walsall Design Guide SPD (2008)
 Sandwell Residential Design Guide (2005)
 Housing Audit: Assessing the Design Quality of New Housing in the East Midlands, West Midlands and the South West, CABE (2007)

Delivery

- Development Management process including Design and Access Statements.
- Through AAPs, SADs and SPDs.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI ENV3a - Proportion of major planning permissions adequately addressing By Design and Manual for Streets guidance as appropriate	100%
COI ENV3 – Housing Quality Building for Life assessment	Move towards 100% with a rating of good or very good by 2026
LOI ENV3b - Proportion of major planning permissions meeting at least Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 or BREEAM very good standard	100%

ENV4 Canals

Spatial Objectives

The Black Country's canal network is one of its most defining historical and environmental assets and its preservation and enhancement is a major objective in the Vision for environmental transformation and the delivery of Spatial Objective 6.



Policy

The Black Country canal network comprises the canals and their surrounding landscape corridors, designated and undesignated historic assets, character, settings, views and interrelationships.

The canal network can provide a focus for future development through the potential to provide a high quality environment and accessibility. All development proposals likely to affect the canal network must:

- safeguard the operation of a navigable and functional waterway;
- protect and enhance its special historic, architectural, archaeological and cultural interest (including potential to record, preserve and restore such features);
- protect and enhance its nature conservation value;
- protect and enhance its visual amenity;
- protect and enhance water quality in the canal.

Where opportunities exist, all development proposals within the canal network must:

- enhance and promote its leisure, recreation and tourism value;
- improve and promote walking, cycling and boating access, including for freight;
- promote beneficial and multifunctional use of the canal network.

Such development proposals must be fully supported by evidence that the above factors have been fully considered and properly incorporated into their design and layout.

Where proposed development overlays part of the extensive network of disused canal features, the potential to record, preserve and restore such features must be fully explored. Development will not be permitted which would sever the route of a disused canal or prevent the restoration of a canal link where there is a realistic possibility of restoration, wholly or in part.

Justification

- 6.16 The development of the Black Country's canal network had a decisive impact on the evolution of industry and settlement during the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. It was a major feat of engineering and illustrates a significant stage in human history - development of mercantile inland transport systems in Britain's industrial revolution during the pre-railway age. As such, the Black Country recognises the aspiration for World Heritage Site status for the Black Country canal network, and the preparation of a Canal Management Plan. Although the pursuit of a bid for inclusion of the Black Country canal network on the UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites is a longer term aspiration, the outstanding universal values of the Black Country's canal network today should still be acknowledged, promoted, protected and enhanced.
- 6.17 The canal network is a major unifying characteristic of the Black Country's historic landscape. The routes of the canals that make up the network have created landscape corridors with distinctive character and identity based on the industries and activities that these transport routes served and encouraged. The network also has significant value for nature conservation, tourism and recreation and potential to make an important contribution to economic regeneration through the provision of high quality environments for new developments and a network of pedestrian, cycle and water transport routes.
- 6.18 It is also important for development in the Black Country to take account of disused canal features, both above and below ground. Only 54% of the historic canal network has survived in use to the present day and a network of tramways also served the canals. In particular, proposals should consider the potential for the restoration of disused sections of canal.
- 6.19 Proposals to restore the disused Hatherton Branch Canal are well established. This scheme is largely outside the Black Country but would link the Wyrley and Essington Canal in Pelsall with the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal west of Cannock. This scheme is supported as an important strategic addition to the region's canal network.
- 6.20 Although it is clear from the West Midlands Canal Freight Study that economic conditions are not right at the moment for the transport of bulk goods and recyclable material on the canal network in the Black Country, it is important for the navigation to be maintained and improved to facilitate such developments when conditions are more favourable.

Primary Evidence

The Representation of Canals in the Black Country Historic Landscape Characterisation: An Analysis of Change in the Landscape, Black Country Archaeology Service (2009)
Developing Waterside Investment Opportunities in the Black Country Urban Park, GHK (2009)
Birmingham and Wolverhampton Canal Freight Feasibility Study, West Midlands Canal Forum (2009)

Delivery

- Development Management Process in consultation with British Waterways.
- Through Local Development Documents, including Area Action Plans.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI ENV4a - Proportion of planning permissions granted in accordance with Conservation Section's recommendations	100%
LOI ENV4b - Proportion of planning permissions granted in accordance with British Waterways' planning related advice	100%

ENV5 Flood Risk, Sustainable Drainage Systems and Urban Heat Island

Spatial Objectives

Facing up to climate change and promoting sustainable development are key principles which underpin the Vision. Robust, locally specific policies on Flood Risk, Sustainable Drainage Systems and Urban Heat Island are required to help deliver Spatial Objectives 3, 4, and 6.

Policy

The Black Country Authorities will seek to minimize the probability and consequences of flood risk by adopting a strong risk-based approach in line with PPS25. Development will be steered to areas with a low probability of flooding first through the application of the sequential test. The Exception test will then be required for certain vulnerable uses in medium and high probability flood areas.

Proposals for development must demonstrate that the level of flood risk associated with the site is acceptable in terms of the Black Country Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and its planning and development management recommendations as well as PPS25 depending on which flood zone the site falls into and the type of development that is proposed (see PPS25, table D1: Flood Zones to explain appropriate uses in flood zones).

To assist in both reducing the extent and impact of flooding and also reducing potential urban heat island effects, all developments should:

- a) Incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDs), unless it would be impractical to do so, in order to significantly reduce surface water run-off and improve water quality. The type of SUDs used will be dependent on ground conditions;**
- b) Open up culverted watercourses where feasible and ensure development does not occur over existing culverts where there are deliverable strategies in place to implement this;**
- c) Take every opportunity, where appropriate development lies adjacent to the river corridors, or their tributaries or the functional floodplain, to benefit the river by reinstating a natural, sinuous river channel and restoring the functional floodplain within the valley where it has been lost previously;**
- d) On sites requiring a Flood Risk Assessment, reduce surface water flows back to equivalent greenfield rates;**
- e) Create new green space, increase tree cover and/or provide green roofs;**

No development will be permitted within a groundwater Source Protection Zone 1 which would physically disturb an aquifer, and no permission will be granted without a risk assessment demonstrating there would be no adverse effect on water resources.

Justification

- 6.21 Flooding poses a costly risk to property and also can pose a risk to life and livelihoods. It is essential that future development is planned carefully so that areas most at risk from flooding are avoided where possible, ensuring that known flooding issues are not exacerbated. Future flood waters can be accommodated without harm to the built environment by creating natural flood water sinks such as ponds, wet woodlands, reedbeds and low lying grasslands in flood risk areas. This both helps to prevent flooding and creates a wider range of natural habitats.
- 6.22 Climate change is likely to increase the risk of flooding in the future. The topography of the Black Country is relatively well defined, with steep sided valleys and narrow waterway corridors, and therefore the likely impact of an increase in the peak design flow is unlikely to affect vast areas currently not at risk. Localised intense storms are likely to occur more frequently, however, and therefore the many culverted watercourses in the Black Country may be subject to more regular surcharging, resulting in localised flooding.
- 6.23 Development Management recommendations contained within the Black Country Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) assist in providing a robust and sustainable approach to the potential impacts that climate change may have upon the sub region over the next 100 years, ensuring that future development is considered in light of the possible increases in flood risk over time. Attention should be paid to these when considering proposals for development. The requirements for Flood Risk Assessments (FRAs) within each delineated flood zone are set out in the Black Country SFRA and Annex E and F of PPS25. Level 2 SFRA's will be produced for all sites proposed for allocation within Site Allocations Documents or Area Action Plans where the Level 1 SFRA has identified that the site is subject to flood risk.

- 6.24 Water quality within the Black Country is fairly poor, but compliant with current targets. The most significant cause of poor water quality is surface water systems, which can be affected by increases in effluent discharges from Waste Water Treatment Works (WwTWs) and additional runoff as a result of development within the catchment. The use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDs) in new developments will significantly help to reduce the risks both of flooding and of impact on surface water quality at times of high rainfall. As the vast majority of development over the Plan period will be on brownfield land, surface water flows will be greatly reduced through development, therefore reducing pressures on WwTWs, the sewerage system and water quality. The Scoping Black Country Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) illustrates how the complex geology of the Black Country is likely to affect the types of SUDs appropriate in different areas. More detailed work on SWMPs will be required to evidence Development Plan Documents.
- 6.25 The Outline Black Country Water Cycle Study (WCS) concludes that there will be a shortfall in water supply over the Plan period in areas supplied by Severn Trent Water, and that this will be addressed through their Water Resources Management Plan. The WCS also found that there is a good coverage of existing strategic sewers across the Black Country, but that more detailed work is required to assess capacity in the network, in the light of proposed levels of new housing in certain Regeneration Corridors and Strategic Centres (as detailed in Appendix 2). Therefore, more detailed Water Cycle Study work will be required to evidence Development Plan Documents.
- 6.26 Impact on hydrology is an important consideration and developers and mineral operators are encouraged to consult with the EA prior to submitting a planning application. They should address the area of influence of their activities and take account of groundwater uses and dependent eco-systems within this area during planning, construction and operation. Applications should include a detailed risk based assessment of any proposed activities that may impact on groundwater resources and should comply with any relevant statutory codes of good practice. Where such an assessment is considered inadequate or where the potential consequences of a development are serious or irreversible a precautionary approach to the management and protection of groundwater will be adopted.

Primary Evidence

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for the Black Country (Level 1), Jacobs (2009)
 Black Country Outline Water Cycle Study and Scoping Surface Water Management Plan, Scott Wilson (2009)
 Humber and Severn River Basin Management Plans, Environment Agency (emerging)

Delivery

- Through the Development Management process in consultation with the Environment Agency.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
COI ENV5 – Number of planning permissions granted contrary to EA advice on flooding and water quality grounds	0%
LOI ENV5 - Proportion of major planning permissions including appropriate SUDs	100%

ENV6 Open Space, Sport and Recreation

Spatial Objectives

The principles of national policy on open space, sport and recreation need to be applied in a Black Country context to support the Vision for urban renaissance and environmental transformation and in particular to deliver Spatial Objective 6.



Policy

In addition to the values and functions of open space set out in Government Policy and Guidance, development proposals should recognise the following roles that are of particular importance in the Black Country:

1. Improving the image and environmental quality of the Black Country;
2. Defining and enhancing local distinctiveness;
3. Reducing potential urban heat island effects;
4. Preserving and enhancing diversity in the natural and built environment;
5. Preserving and enhancing industrial, archaeological and architectural heritage, including canals;
6. Providing components of a high quality, multifunctional green space network or "Urban Park";
7. Enhancing people's mental and physical well-being;
8. Strengthening (through extension, increased access and enhanced value) the existing greenway network.

Development that would reduce the overall value of the open space, sport and recreation network in the Black Country will be resisted. Development that would increase the overall value of the open space, sport and recreation network will be encouraged, especially in areas of deficiency.

Each Local Authority will set out, in Local Development Documents and on Proposals Maps, policies and proposals for specific open space, sport and recreation facilities and planning requirements for open space, sport and recreation, in order to:

- Move towards the most up-to-date local open space, sport and recreation standards for each Local Authority. In order to balance achievement of these standards, in some cases a loss in quantity of open space or facilities may be acceptable if compensatory gains in quality and / or accessibility which are of a greater value can be secured in the local area;
- Deliver the broad open space, sport and recreation proposals for each Regeneration Corridor and Strategic Centre set out in Appendix 2;
- Address the priorities set out in Black Country Environmental Infrastructure Guidance;

Make more efficient use of urban land by:

- creating more multifunctional open spaces;
- significantly expanding community use of open space, sport and recreation facilities provided at places of education (see Policy HOU5);
- providing opportunities to increase appropriate open space, sport and recreation use of the Green Belt;
- making creative use of land exchanges and disposing of surplus assets to generate resources for investment; and
- increasing access to open space, sport and recreation facilities, including for people with disabilities;
- where there is a cross boundary impact, identifying the most appropriate location to maximise community access and use of new facilities.

Justification

- 6.27 All open spaces and sport and recreation facilities in the Black Country, both existing and proposed, are subject to the policies and requirements of national planning guidance (currently PPG17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation). These policies apply to existing sites which have an open space, sport or recreation function, regardless of whether they are currently designated on local authorities' Proposals Maps.
- 6.28 Separate local standards for different types of open space, sport and recreation facilities are being developed for Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton, based on robust audits and needs assessments. These standards will form the basis for the application of national planning guidance in each local authority area. Open space, sport and recreation standards will be set out in SPDs and will be subject to review during the Plan period, to ensure that a full range of up-to-date standards is provided across the Black Country.

- 6.29 Publicly accessible urban open space, play and sports facilities all have a vital role to play in helping to promote more healthy lifestyles. As sports participation rates in the Black Country are particularly low, standards set for sports facilities will take into account the need to increase sports participation as well as meet existing needs. Existing and potential cross-boundary effects will also be taken into account when setting standards and when developing proposals which would affect sports facility provision. Cross-boundary issues particularly affect facilities with large catchment areas, such as swimming pools.
- 6.30 Some common themes regarding open space, sport and recreation have emerged through audits and needs assessments. Communities greatly value local open spaces and the Black Country as a whole is close to combined open space quantity standards. However, quantity and accessibility for each type of open space and facility varies considerably from area to area, and increasing population in particular areas over the Plan period will further affect these imbalances. In general terms, prosperous areas have low levels of provision but of a higher quality, whereas deprived areas may have sufficient open space but of limited quality and function. Low quality is a particular issue for playing pitch sites across the Black Country, which would benefit from improved changing facilities and a shift towards more small pitches. Increasing community access to school sports facilities would also help to address shortfalls in some areas.
- 6.31 The provision of high quality open space to serve new residential developments and the improvement of existing open spaces is critical to the overall aims of urban renaissance and environmental transformation across the Black Country. The protection, enhancement and provision of open spaces is therefore essential to support key aspects of the Vision and Spatial Objectives for the Black Country. Policy ENV6 therefore identifies the roles of open space that are of particular importance to the Black Country, in addition to those set out in PPG17.
- 6.32 Appendix 2 sets out broad, strategic open space, sport and recreation proposals for each Regeneration Corridor and Strategic Centre. These proposals aim to address existing deficiencies against existing local standards and meet the needs of new development, whilst taking into account cross-boundary issues and strategic priorities established through the RSS Phase 1 Revision process and Black Country Environmental Infrastructure Guidance. The proposals are more detailed in some areas (e.g. where an AAP has been prepared) than in others. However, the provision of a network of high quality open space, sport and recreation facilities is a recognised cornerstone of environmental transformation and will be progressed in detail through Local Development Documents.
- 6.33 The provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities within new development will not be sufficient alone to fully address gaps in open space, sport and recreation provision. Consequently, the Policy sets out a number of ways Local Authorities should seek to make more efficient use of scarce land resources within the urban area to help meet quantity, quality and access standards.
- 6.34 Greenways are defined as linear features of mostly open character, including paths through green spaces, canal corridors and disused railway lines (although some of these could be brought back into rail use in the future), which act as wild life corridors and provide attractive and safe off-road links for pedestrians and cyclists. They form an important network throughout the Black Country but in some cases are of poor quality or are severed by other infrastructure or barriers. The restoration of towpaths, bridges, public rights of way and the creation of cycle and pedestrian links to enhance the greenway network will be sought via LTP funding, Safer Routes to School, British Waterways, Groundwork, Sustrans and planning obligations.

Primary Evidence

PPG17 Studies for the Black Country Authorities
Playing Pitch Strategies for the Black Country Authorities

Delivery

- Black Country Authorities' Greenspace Strategies and Playing Pitch Strategies, in partnership with Sport England.
- Local Transport Plan.
- Through the Development Management process.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI ENV6a - Hectares accessible open space per 1,000 population	Dudley: 5.08 (2009 Baseline: 4.51) Sandwell: 4.42 (2007 Baseline: 3.42) Walsall: 5.00 (2006 Baseline: 5.00) Wolverhampton: 4.74 (2007 Baseline: 4.63)
LOI ENV6b - Delivery through Local Development Documents of broad open space, sport and recreation proposals for each Regeneration Corridor and Strategic Centre set out in Appendix 2	100% by 2026

ENV7 Renewable Energy

Spatial Objectives

Facing up to climate change and promoting sustainable development are key principles which underpin the Vision. The use of renewable and low carbon energy has an increasingly important part to play in meeting these principles and in particular in helping to deliver Strategic Objectives 3, 4 and 6.

Policy

Proposals involving the development of renewable energy sources will be permitted where the proposal accords with local, regional and national guidance and would not significantly harm the natural, historic or built environment or have a significant adverse effect on the amenity of those living or working nearby, in terms of visual, noise, odour, air pollution or other effects.

All non-residential developments of more than 1,000 square metres floor space and all residential developments of 10 units or more gross (whether new build or conversion) must incorporate generation of energy from renewable sources sufficient to off-set at least 10% of the estimated residual energy demand of the development on completion. The use of on-site sources, off-site sources or a combination of both should be considered. The use of combined heat and power facilities should be explored for larger development schemes. An energy assessment must be submitted with the planning application to demonstrate that these requirements have been met.

The renewable energy target may be reduced, or a commuted sum accepted in lieu of part or all of the requirement, only if it can be demonstrated that:

- a variety of renewable energy sources and generation methods have been assessed and costed;
- achievement of the target would make the proposal unviable (through submission of an independently assessed financial viability appraisal); and
- the development proposal would contribute to achievement of the objectives, strategy and policies of the Core Strategy.

Justification

- 6.35 There are various sources of renewable and low carbon energy that can be applied in the Black Country. These include passive solar energy, solar thermal panels, photovoltaic panels, wind power, and ground source heat pumps, combined heat and power (CHP) plants and bio energy. Bio energy in particular provides opportunities for carbon neutral energy generation through micro-generation, biomass schemes using locally sourced waste wood, anaerobic digestion of food and garden waste, and the reuse of waste oil. Controlled use of landfill gas can remove danger of fires and explosions and supplement gas supplies or generate heat and electricity. The canal system can also be used for heating and cooling buildings. There is no evidence that any particular type of renewable energy technology would not be appropriate in any part of the Black Country. Therefore, any renewable energy proposal will be treated on its merits in accordance with Policies ENV7 and WM4, regional and national guidance, and any specific guidance which may be adopted in local authority specific local development documents.
- 6.36 Renewable energy sources currently account for only 1% of total energy consumption in the West Midlands. The West Midlands Regional Energy Strategy (2004) aims to increase renewable energy generation to 5% of total energy generation by 2010 and 10% by 2020. Currently there is very little renewable energy generation in the Black Country. Therefore, it is important that all new developments of a reasonable size should reduce their carbon emissions through contributing to renewable energy generation. The Black Country local authorities and Housing Associations will lead by example by seeking to maximise energy efficiency and incorporation of renewable energy generation through the refurbishment and redevelopment of land and buildings in their ownership. The use of Combined Heat and Power is currently being promoted and the potential for wind power and anaerobic digestion are also being explored.
- 6.37 All development in the Black Country must accord with national and regional standards and targets for sustainable design and construction, including Code for Sustainable Homes levels.

Primary Evidence

West Midlands Regional Energy Strategy (2004) and Monitoring Report (2006)

Delivery

- Development management process.
- Local authority Climate Change Strategies and Waste Strategies.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI ENV7 - Proportion of eligible developments delivering measures sufficient to off-set at least 10% of estimated residual energy demand	100%
COI ENV7 - Renewable Energy Generation	To be developed through future monitoring

ENV8 Air Quality

Spatial Objectives

Promoting healthy living is a key element of the Sustainable Communities direction of change which underpins the Vision. Reducing exposure to poor air quality will improve the health and quality of life of the population, and support Spatial Objectives 3, 6, 7 and 8.

Policy

New residential or other sensitive development, such as schools, hospitals and care facilities, should, wherever possible, be located where air quality meets national air quality objectives.

Where development is proposed in areas where air quality does not meet (or is unlikely to meet) air quality objectives or where significant air quality impacts are likely to be generated by the development, an appropriate air quality assessment will be required. The assessment must take into account any potential cumulative impacts as a result of known proposals in the vicinity of the proposed development site, and should consider pollutant emissions generated by the development.

If an assessment which is acceptable to the local authority indicates that a proposal will result in exposure to pollutant concentrations that exceed national air quality objectives, adequate and satisfactory mitigation measures which are capable of implementation must be secured before planning permission is granted.

Justification

- 6.38 The Rogers Review (2007) recommended six national enforcement priorities for local authority regulatory services, one of which is air quality. Within the review it is stated that: "Air quality is a high national political priority and action taken to improve it will also contribute to tackling climate change. Local authorities have a vital role to play in delivering better outcomes. Air quality is a national enforcement priority because it impacts on whole populations, particularly the elderly and those more susceptible to air pollution and its trans-boundary nature means that local action contributes to national outcomes." The planning system has a key role to play in limiting exposure to poor air quality.

6.39 All the Black Country local authorities have declared their areas as air quality management areas to address the government's national air quality objectives which have been set in order to provide protection for human health. The main cause of poor air quality in the Black Country is traffic and there are a number of air quality hotspots where on-going monitoring is required. The Black Country local authorities are working to reduce pollutant concentrations and to minimise exposure to air quality that does not meet with national objectives.

6.40 For some developments a basic screening assessment of air quality is all that will be required, whereas for other developments a full air quality assessment will need to be carried out, using advanced dispersion modelling software. An appropriate methodology should be agreed with the relevant Environmental Health / Environmental Protection Officer on a case by case basis.

6.41 Where a problem is identified mitigation measures might include:

- Increasing the distance between the development façade and the pollution source;
- Using ventilation systems to draw cleaner air into a property;
- Improving public transport access to a development;
- Implementing a travel plan to reduce the number of trips generated;
- Implementing Low Emission Strategies.

Primary Evidence

Detailed Assessment of Air Quality (2004) and Annual Progress Reports (2008) for each of the Black Country local authorities

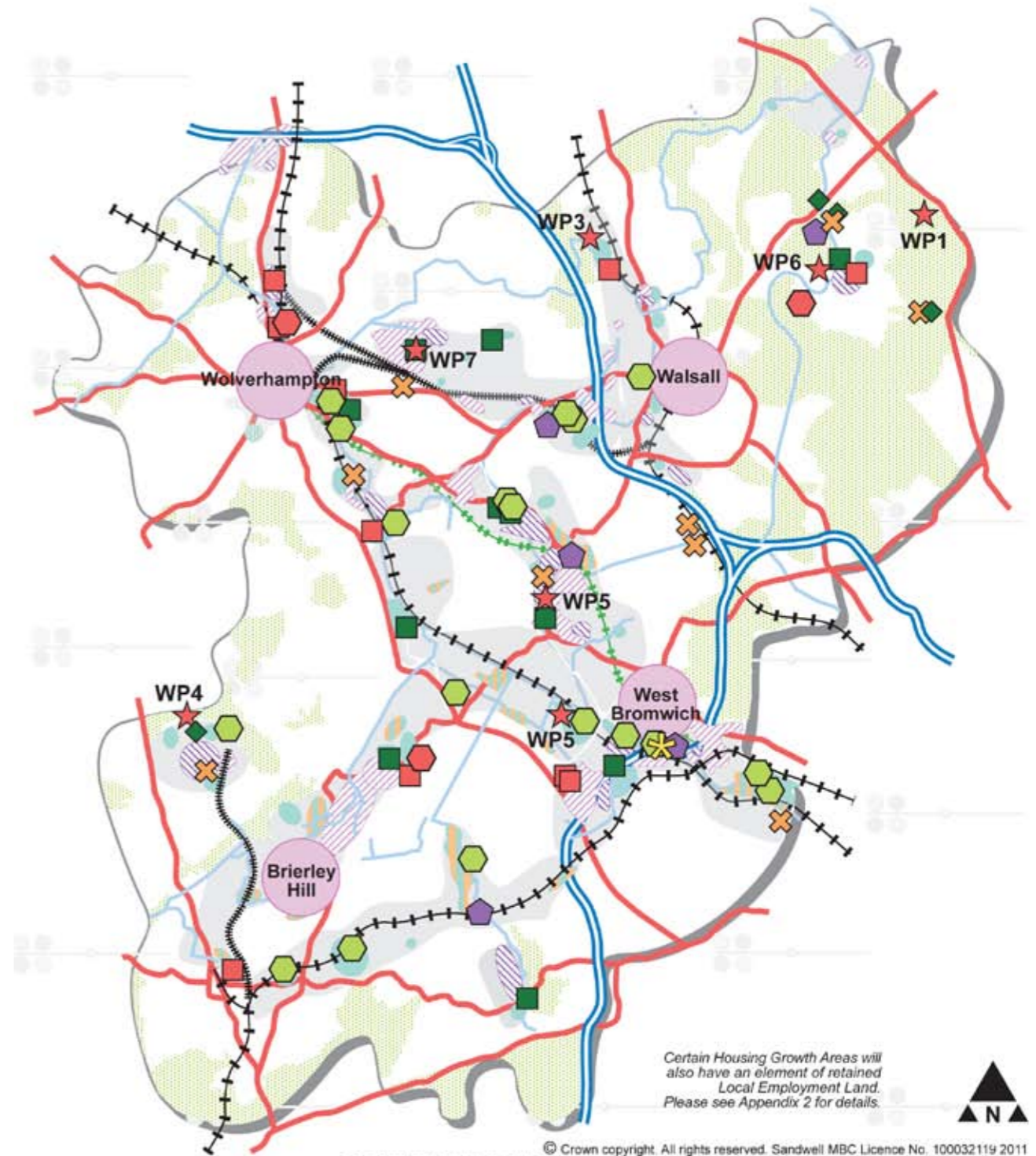
Delivery

- Development Management process.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI ENV8 - Proportion of planning permissions granted in accordance with Air Quality/Environmental Protection Section's recommendations	100%

Black Country Core Strategy Waste Key Diagram



Waste Key Diagram

- Transfer - Municipal Waste
- Transfer - C&I Waste
- Transfer - Hazardous Waste
- Treatment - Municipal Waste
- Treatment - C&I Waste
- Treatment - Hazardous Waste
- CD&EW Recycling/Treatment
- Landfill Site
- Proposed New Strategic Waste Management Infrastructure
- Existing Strategic High Quality Employment
- Potential Strategic High Quality Employment
- Local Employment
- Proposed Housing/Local Employment Mixed Area
- Strategic Centres
- Major Road Network
- Regeneration Corridors
- Motorway
- Green Belt
- Canal
- Disused Hatherton Branch Canal
- Passenger Rail
- Freight Rail
- Midland Metro

7. WASTE

WM1 Sustainable Waste and Resource Management

Strategic Objectives

Managing waste in a responsible way is an important element of sustainable development. Addressing waste as a resource, minimising waste, managing unavoidable waste in ways that will minimise harmful effects and providing sufficient waste management capacity to meet current and future requirements will support Sustainability Principles A and B and Spatial Objective 9.



Policy

Achieving Sustainable Waste Management

The Black Country will aim to achieve zero waste growth by 2026. Sustainable waste management will be delivered through the following measures:

1. Requiring new developments to address waste as a resource and take responsibility for the unavoidable waste they generate through on-site management where possible;
2. Setting targets for landfill diversion and encouraging provision of recovery, recycling and composting facilities to reduce reliance on landfill and move waste up the “waste hierarchy”;
3. Providing guidance on the number, type and capacity of new waste management facilities needed by 2026, for the Black Country to achieve “equivalent self-sufficiency” and minimise the export of wastes that can be managed locally;
4. Protecting existing strategic waste management capacity and enabling existing waste management infrastructure to expand or relocate where appropriate;
5. Supporting the implementation of the strategic waste management infrastructure identified on the Waste Key Diagram and in Policy WM3;
6. Providing general guidance on the types of location suitable for different types of waste management facilities;
7. Supporting proposals which involve optimum uses for waste materials, and the production of waste derived products to standards which meet agreed quality protocols.

Landfill Diversion Targets

The Black Country will aim to achieve the following landfill diversion targets.

Table 15 - Landfill Diversion Targets

Waste Stream	Minimum Diversion from Landfill			
	2010/11	2015/16	2020/21	2025/26
MSW	74%	80%	84%	84%
C&I	65%	70%	75%	75%

New Waste Capacity Requirements

To meet the above targets and achieve “equivalent self-sufficiency” across the Black Country, the following new waste management capacity will need to be provided by 2026:

Table 16 - Indicative New Waste Capacity Requirements

Waste Management Types	Total Additional Capacity Required by 2026 (tonnes per annum)	Typical Average Capacity per Facility (tonnes per annum)	Typical Average Land Take per Facility (ha)	Equivalent No of Facilities Required
Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) Treatment				
Material Recovery	124,000	50,000	1.7	2 - 3
Composting/ Organic Waste Treatment	84,000	40,000	1.3	2
Treatment/Energy Recovery	95,000	150,000	2.5	1
Commercial and Industrial Waste (C&I) Treatment				
Non-metal waste treatment and recovery	1,000,000	50,000 - 100,000	1.5	10 - 20
Construction, Demolition and Excavation Waste (CD&EW) / Hazardous Waste Treatment				
CD&EW Recovery/ Urban Quarry	Not possible to quantify	Not possible to quantify	Not possible to quantify	At least 1
Contaminated Soils (storage, treatment, remediation)	Not possible to quantify	Not possible to quantify	Not possible to quantify	Temporary “hub” sites to serve regeneration corridors as required

Transfer, Handling, Bulking and Ancillary				
2 HWRCs (to serve Dudley and Walsall)	Dudley 30,000 Walsall 10-15,000	20,000	1.0	2
2 MSW Depots (to serve Dudley and Walsall, one with transfer / bulking)	Up to 10,000 (Dudley only)	Not possible to quantify	1.0 – 3.0	2
Commercial Waste Transfer Facilities	150,000	25,000 – 50,000	0.7	3 - 6
Final Disposal				
Non-Hazardous Landfill	Total additional capacity required = 1,169,000	Average max. MSW and C&I allowance = 747,000	Mostly former mineral working sites	Capacity depends on void space
Inert Landfill	Total additional capacity required = 1,825,000	Estimated annual CD&EW requirement = 125,000	Mostly former mineral working sites	Capacity depends on void space

These requirements assume that existing capacity will be maintained in line with Policy WM2, and that the Black Country’s future waste requirements will be in line with the updated RSS apportionments in Appendix 6 (Tables WM1d and WM1e). To discourage further waste growth, Policy WM5 sets out waste and resource management requirements for new developments.

Some of the Black Country’s waste infrastructure requirements will be addressed through the Strategic Site Allocations in this plan (Policy WM3). The remaining gaps will be addressed through future municipal waste management strategies, Site Allocations in other DPDs, and market driven proposals for the expansion of existing facilities and for new facilities, brought forward in accordance with Policy WM2 and WM4.

Justification

Sustainable Waste Management – General Principles

- 7.1 The strategic objectives for waste management in the Black Country reflect the requirements and aspirations of the emerging regional waste strategy, the National Waste Strategy (2007), national policy guidance, and local municipal waste management strategies and sustainable community strategies.
- 7.2 The National Waste Strategy has established the concept of the “waste hierarchy,” which ranks methods of managing waste in order of preference. At the top sits waste prevention, followed by re-use, recycling and composting, energy recovery, and at the bottom, disposal of waste to landfill. The strategy has also set national targets for reducing the amounts of waste sent to landfill. Waste planning policies are expected to support the waste hierarchy and contribute towards achieving the national targets.

- 7.3 Moving waste up the hierarchy also involves encouraging high standards of re-use and recovery of raw materials from waste and the production of good quality waste derived products which are able to compete effectively with similar products made from virgin materials. Agreed quality standards for waste derived products are being developed through the Waste Protocols Project, a joint venture between the Environment Agency and the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP). So far, quality protocols have been developed for 12 different products including compost, aggregates and biodiesel. Proposals which involve the production of waste derived products to standards which meet such protocols will be supported in principle through Policies WM1 and WM4.
- 7.4 Policies WM1 – WM5 require new developments to address waste as a resource (thus discouraging further waste growth), and include targets and proposals aimed at achieving “equivalent self-sufficiency” in waste treatment by 2026.
- 7.5 The targets and requirements in Policy WM1 will also contribute towards the landfill diversion targets in the National Waste Strategy and local diversion targets for municipal and household waste, and will address significant gaps in existing waste management capacity. The future requirements in Table 16 are set at a level which will achieve equivalent self sufficiency across all waste streams in the Black Country. They also reflect proposed housing growth, capacity likely to be lost as a result of proposals for change within the Growth Network, and the need to diversify the range of recovery and treatment capacity currently available in the Black Country.
- 7.6 The “equivalent self sufficiency” principle means that by 2026 the Black Country as a whole, and each of the authorities individually, should have in place the capacity needed to manage a tonnage of waste equivalent to that arising within the area. Although this does not mean that all of the waste arising in the Black Country will necessarily be managed in the Black Country, if the area has more waste facilities which can manage a wider range of wastes, this should give local communities and businesses more opportunities to manage their waste locally rather than having to export it to other areas. Minimising the distance waste needs to travel will also indirectly reduce the impact of waste on the highway network, air quality and greenhouse gas emissions.

Future Waste Arisings

- 7.7 A considerable body of technical work has been undertaken at a regional and local level to determine how much waste is likely to arise in the Black Country between now and 2026. A summary of existing and projected waste arisings can be found in Appendix 6 (Tables WM1a and WM1b).
- 7.8 The requirements in WM1 are based on current and future projected arisings. The waste arisings data underpinning the requirements is based on published regional technical studies and the results of the Black Country Waste Planning Study Final Version (May 2009) (BCWPS) undertaken on behalf of the authorities by Atkins Ltd. The MSW projections reflect the levels of housing growth proposed in Policy HOU1. The Waste Background Paper 2 (February 2010) (BCWBP2) provides further background information on this data, updating the information in the BCWPS, and outlines the sources of data which have informed the requirements in Table 16. A summary of estimated current arisings and projected arisings by 2026 can be found in the Waste Data Tables in Appendix 6.

Landfill Diversion Targets and Future Waste Management Requirements

- 7.9 Up to now, the Black Country has relied heavily on landfill as a means of managing waste, as it has been readily available and relatively cheap. The Black Country still has a number of operational landfill sites and most of its existing mineral working sites are subject to conditions requiring restoration by landfilling with waste. Landfill will therefore continue to play a role in managing waste in the Black Country in the foreseeable future. However, landfilling is a waste of potentially valuable resources and a potential threat to the environment - if untreated or not captured for energy, landfilled organic wastes can give off methane, a powerful greenhouse gas. It should therefore be regarded as a "last resort" to dispose of waste residues for which no viable use can be found.
- 7.10 At present it is estimated that there will be sufficient inert and non-hazardous landfill capacity available within existing sites and sites expected to come forward in the foreseeable future to meet requirements up to 2026 and beyond. However, the latest evidence suggests that landfill capacity at a regional level may not last until 2026. If landfill capacity reduces over time, waste producers will be forced to consider alternatives. There are a number of other drivers likely to reduce reliance on landfilling in the future, such as the Landfill Tax and the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme (LATS).
- 7.11 Regional technical studies commissioned by the former regional planning body and Regional Technical Advisory Body for Waste (RTAB) identified potential minimum landfill diversion targets for MSW and C&I waste for the Black Country up to 2026. These targets are expressed as minimum tonnages of waste to be diverted away from landfill, in other words, managed at facilities which can re-use, recycle, compost, recover or treat waste. This therefore tells us how much MSW and C&I capacity we need to have in place in the Black Country by 2026 to demonstrate "equivalent self-sufficiency."
- 7.12 The Black Country authorities have themselves set local targets for diversion of municipal waste, recycling of household waste and reduction of residual household waste through their municipal waste management strategies (MWMS) and Local Area Agreements (LAAs). Each authority is also subject to LATS targets, aimed at reducing the amount of biodegradable MSW sent to landfill. The targets for the Black Country identified in the regional technical work have been further developed and refined through the BCWPS, in consultation with the Waste Disposal Authorities, to provide diversion targets for each authority for MSW and C&I Waste (see Appendix 6, Tables WM1c, WM1d and WM1e).
- 7.13 In summary, this means that by 2026 the Black Country will need to have in place facilities to recover or treat the following tonnages of waste per annum (TPA):
- MSW – 560,000 TPA
C&I – 1,832,000 TPA
- 7.14 At the present time, no targets have been set for diversion of CD&EW and hazardous waste away from landfill. The available data does not support the development of a local target for CD&EW diversion at present, although the national target to halve the amount of CD&EW sent to landfill by 2012 (from a 2005 baseline), is reflected in the requirements for on-site management of CD&EW in new developments (see Policy W5). There is no need to identify additional hazardous waste treatment capacity, other than provision for contaminated soils, as the Black Country can already demonstrate "equivalent self sufficiency."

Existing Waste Management Capacity and Capacity Gaps

- 7.15 National policy guidance requires Core Strategies to demonstrate how waste treatment capacity equivalent to at least 10 years of the annual requirements for MSW and C&I waste can be provided. The Core Strategy must also consider future needs for other waste streams (CD&EW and hazardous waste) and for waste handling, bulking and transfer facilities and landfill.
- 7.16 The BCWPS indicates that the Black Country has significant waste management capacity and this is confirmed in the most recent capacity estimates (West Midlands Regional Waste Capacity Database, September 2009 – see BCWBP2 for details). However, there are gaps in waste treatment provision across all waste streams apart from C&I and hazardous waste – these are the "capacity gaps" that the Core Strategy must address if the Black Country is to achieve "equivalent self-sufficiency" by 2026. The existing and long-term capacity gaps are summarised in Appendix 6 (see Tables WM1f and WM1g). The gaps include allowances for existing capacity likely to be lost as a result of planned land-use changes in this strategy.
- 7.17 As well as highlighting the overall capacity gaps, the BCWPS also shows that the range of waste management facilities in the Black Country is limited and that there are gaps in the provision of facilities for managing certain types of waste. Existing MSW capacity is dominated by energy from waste, C&I capacity by metal recycling, and hazardous waste treatment by facilities treating liquids. There are only a few MRFs for recycling and recovering dry (non-biodegradable) waste, and there are no facilities for managing or treating organic wastes or hazardous waste final disposal facilities. There is also only one known facility based in the Black Country specialising in contaminated soil management. This suggests there must be significant movements of waste into and out of the area (in-flows of metals and hazardous waste and out-flows of organic wastes and contaminated soils and hazardous waste residues).
- 7.18 Although it has not been possible to carry out a survey of C&I waste arisings or review evidence on waste movements which has recently become available through the Environment Agency Waste Data Interrogator, there is enough evidence in the BCWPS to demonstrate a mismatch between the waste capacity available and the wastes that arise. Stakeholders have also stated that municipal waste infrastructure needs to be improved, and that the waste management needs of small businesses are not being fully catered for.
- 7.19 A recent study commissioned by Advantage West Midlands (AWM) (Waste – A Future Resource for Businesses March 2008), SLR Consulting) further highlights the potential costs to businesses of not having facilities to manage the wastes they produce. There is clearly a need to broaden the range of facilities available to provide local communities and businesses with more opportunities to manage their waste locally and cost-effectively, so that they will be less likely to resort to transporting waste elsewhere, sending it to landfill or fly-tipping.
- 7.20 The evidence base shows that the Black Country will be able to achieve an overall balance between its landfill diversion targets and waste recovery and treatment capacity by 2026, provided that there is no significant net loss in existing capacity, that the strategic site allocations in Policy WM3 are delivered, and that the balance – the residual requirements - will be provided through allocations in other DPDs, MWMS, and the development management process.

Primary Evidence

West Midlands Waste Facilities – Phase 2 Future Capacity Requirements (November 2004), Shropshire CC for WMRA
 Black Country Core Strategy - Waste Background Paper (March 2007), Black Country Authorities
 A Study into Future Landfill Capacity in the West Midlands Region (May 2007), Scott Wilson for WMRA
 Waste Treatment Facilities and Capacity Survey (May 2007), SLR for WMRA
 Waste – A Future Resource for Businesses (March 2008), SLR for AWM
 Black Country Waste Planning Study (May 2009), Atkins
 Black Country Core Strategy Waste Background Paper 2 (February 2010), Black Country Authorities
 Environment Agency Waste Data Interrogator and Hazardous Waste Interrogator 2007
 West Midlands Regional Waste Capacity Database (September 2009), WMRA

Delivery

- Waste diversion and new waste capacity targets will be delivered through maintaining and enhancing existing waste management capacity in accordance with Policy WM2, implementation of strategic waste management infrastructure identified in Policy WM3, and bringing forward of other facilities in accordance with Policy WM4, through allocations in DPDs, reviews of MWMS, development management process and engagement with relevant stakeholders.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI WM1a - Diversion of waste from landfill - a) % municipal waste diversion b) % commercial waste diversion.	Targets for the Black Country are set out in Table 15, and for individual authorities in Appendix 6 (Tables WM1d and WM1e).
LOI WM1b - % of new waste capacity granted permission / implemented as specified in WM1 (tonnes per annum) by 2026.	100% of requirements in Table 16.
COI WM1a - Capacity of new waste management facilities by waste planning authority.	Will be used to monitor waste capacity in accordance with above targets.
COI WM1b - Amount of municipal waste arising, and managed by management type.	Will be used to monitor new waste capacity indicator in accordance with above targets.
LOI WM1c - % of growth in tonnage of waste arising.	0% by 2026.

WM2 Protecting and Enhancing Existing Waste Management Capacity

Strategic Objectives

Protecting and retaining the capacity of existing strategic waste management facilities, and encouraging and facilitating enhancement of existing facilities will support Sustainability Principles A and B, as well as Spatial Objective 9.

Policy

Protecting Existing Waste Management Capacity

The existing strategic waste management sites in the Black Country are shown on the Waste Key Diagram and on the Regeneration Corridor Maps. They are also listed in Appendix 6. They include waste treatment, transfer and landfill facilities.

The maximum throughput capacity of existing strategic waste treatment sites (approximately 2.7 million TPA) and transfer sites (approximately 1.1 million TPA) will be protected as far as possible.

Development proposals which would result in the loss of a strategic waste management site to a non-waste management use must be accompanied by supporting information setting out how much waste management capacity would be lost as a result of the proposal, the impact on the Black Country's waste management capacity, and justification for any loss of capacity.

This policy will also apply to site allocations for waste management in adopted DPDs (including those in Policy WM3) and any other new strategic waste management sites which are implemented within the lifetime of the plan.

Existing Waste Management Facilities – General

Area Action Plans, planning frameworks and other plans addressing major change and transformation within the Growth Network should consider the impact of the proposed changes on waste management sites and the Black Country's overall waste management capacity. Where feasible, they should aim to replace or relocate any capacity likely to be lost as a result of redevelopment and/ or changes of use.

Changes of use from waste management to housing or community uses will be supported in principle if the waste management site is within an area proposed to change to housing in this Strategy (see DEL2). Such proposals should be accompanied by supporting information setting out how much waste management capacity will be lost as a result of the proposal.

Proposals for housing and other potentially sensitive uses will not be permitted near to or adjacent to an existing waste management site where there is potential for conflict between the uses. Such proposals must be accompanied by supporting information demonstrating that the existing and proposed uses would be compatible, and that the proposal has addressed any potential effects of the existing use on the amenity of the occupiers of the proposed development.

Proposals to expand or upgrade an existing waste management site, redevelop with a different waste management use, or relocate to a new site elsewhere within the Black Country will be supported in principle, subject to compliance with the locational guidance in Policy WM4. The following factors will be taken into account in assessing such proposals:

- Whether the proposal would help move waste further up the “waste hierarchy”;
- Whether the proposal would maintain or increase existing throughput capacity and / or improve operational efficiency;
- Whether the proposal would help diversify the range of facilities or waste management technologies currently available within the Black Country;
- Whether the proposal would support the relevant municipal waste management strategy and / or sustainable community strategy;
- Whether the proposal would result in improvements to the design of the buildings and / or layout of the site;
- Whether the proposal would help to address existing land use conflicts and improve the amenity of adjoining occupiers;
- In the case of relocation, whether this would support other elements of the Spatial Strategy.

Justification

Strategic Waste Management Sites

- 7.21 The existing pattern of waste management infrastructure is illustrated in the Black Country Waste Background Paper 2 (BCWBP2), which shows the location of all known waste management facilities in the Black Country. This shows a general correlation between the Spatial Strategy and current waste management infrastructure.
- 7.22 The existing strategic sites identified on the Waste Key Diagram and listed in Appendix 6 are the key waste management facilities operating within the Black Country. They have been identified through a detailed analysis of all known licensed and exempt facilities in each authority area. The definition of a “strategic waste management site” is:
- All facilities that form a vital part of the Black Country’s municipal waste management infrastructure, e.g. energy from waste plants, waste transfer facilities, HWRCs, depots;
 - All commercial waste management facilities that fulfil more than a local role, e.g. they are part of a nationwide or regional operation linked to other facilities elsewhere, and take in waste from all over the Black Country and/or beyond;
 - All commercial facilities specialising in a particular waste stream or waste management technology, of which there are no others, or very few others, of the same type operating elsewhere in the Black Country;
 - All existing or proposed open gate landfill facilities which are likely to fulfil more than a purely local role given the shortage of such facilities nationally;
 - All facilities likely to make a significant contribution towards existing waste management capacity, such as:
 - Recovery/ treatment/ processing facilities with an annual throughput capacity of more than 50,000 TPA.
 - Waste transfer/ ancillary facilities with an annual throughput capacity of more than 20,000 TPA.

- 7.23 Taken together, existing strategic waste management sites make up a very high proportion of the area’s waste treatment and transfer capacity - 100% of total licensed municipal waste treatment capacity, around 80% of Commercial & Industrial waste treatment capacity, and around 75% of commercial transfer capacity. A summary of total capacity and the estimated capacity of strategic sites can be found in the BCWBP2.

Potential Losses of Waste Management Capacity

- 7.24 The Spatial Strategy will result in modifications to the existing pattern of facilities, as some employment areas are proposed to change to housing, and some waste management facilities will be affected by this. A risk assessment of strategic sites has been carried out, and the estimated capacity of sites considered to be at “high risk” of loss through these proposals has been added to the new waste capacity requirements in Policy WM1.
- 7.25 The process of change will need to be managed carefully, so that as far as possible the residual waste management capacity/ capability of sites that are not at “high risk” is retained. The loss of further capacity over and above what is already identified as “high risk” will have a knock-on effect on the overall waste management requirements identified in Policy WM1 and could have a significant impact on the Black Country’s ability to achieve “equivalent self-sufficiency” in waste management. The potential loss of waste management capacity is therefore an important material consideration which should be taken into account when assessing new development proposals affecting these sites.
- 7.26 Some strategic sites are considered to be at “medium risk” of being lost. These are in areas where change is proposed, but it need not necessarily result in the loss of any waste management capacity. In these cases it is up to each individual authority to decide how to maintain capacity. For example, Area Action Plans, regeneration frameworks and other plans that will deliver change in particular areas will need to address potential losses in waste management capacity. Major changes should be managed sensitively and discussed with operators at the earliest possible stage.
- 7.27 In some cases, facilities may be lost for reasons other than new development/ change of use, and it may be more difficult to track these. The policy can also only influence impacts on existing capacity where planning permission is required for a proposed change of use.
- 7.28 The main objective of the policy is to protect existing waste management capacity / capabilities, rather than necessarily protecting existing waste management facilities on their existing sites. The policy recognises that in some cases, relocation of a facility will be beneficial in terms of resolving land use conflicts, increasing waste management capacity or moving towards better/ more sustainable waste management. Relocation of a facility will therefore be supported in such circumstances, subject to other planning considerations.
- 7.29 Effective implementation of the policy will be dependent on monitoring net gains/ losses in overall waste management capacity. Hence, there are requirements within the policy for proposals affecting waste management sites to provide information on losses or gains in capacity. If monitoring shows that significant losses in capacity have occurred or will occur as a result of future changes of use, the waste management requirements will need to be adjusted to compensate for this.

Primary Evidence

Black Country Waste Planning Study (May 2009), Atkins
 Black Country Core Strategy Waste Background Paper 2 (February 2010), Black Country Authorities
 West Midlands Regional Waste Capacity Database (September 2009), WMRA

Delivery

- Delivery will be through other DPDs/planning framework preparation and through development management process/pre application discussions. There will also be a need for engagement with local communities, businesses and any waste operators affected by regeneration proposals.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI WM2 - % protection* of capacity at existing / proposed strategic waste management sites, by waste planning authority	100% of capacity at sites in Tables WM2a - WM2d of Appendix 6
COI WM2 - Capacity of new waste management facilities by waste planning authority	Will be used to monitor new strategic capacity coming forward through expansion of existing facilities, but no target can be set

*Definition of "protection" = no net loss of waste management capacity at strategic sites identified in the Core Strategy (includes existing sites in WM2 and proposals in WM3). Capacity may be maintained either through retention of facilities on their existing sites, or through relocation of capacity elsewhere within the Black Country.

WM3 Strategic Waste Management Proposals

Strategic Objectives

Identifying sites and locations for new strategic waste management infrastructure will make a significant contribution towards meeting new capacity requirements set out in WM1 and will support Sustainability Principles B and E and Spatial Objective 9.

Policy

The following locations are proposed for new strategic waste management infrastructure which is expected to make a significant contribution towards the new capacity requirements in Policy WM1. Site-specific proposals are shown on the Waste Key Diagram, Regeneration Corridor Maps and Proposals Maps.

Table 17 – Proposed Locations for New Strategic Waste Management Infrastructure

Site / Location	Map Ref	Authority	Proposal	Waste Stream(s)	Estimated Throughput Capacity (TPA)	Timescale for Delivery
Aldridge Quarry, Birch Lane, Aldridge	WP1	Walsall	Inert Landfill	CD&EW	765,000 (total capacity)	By 2026
Dudley Borough	N/A	Dudley	Satellite Depot/ Depot/ Bulking Facility	MSW	10000	2015/16
Dudley Borough - north	N/A	Dudley	Additional HWRC	MSW	30000	2020/21
Former Gulf Oil Depot, Union Road, Smethwick	WP2	Sandwell	Waste Treatment	C&I	190000	Around 2014/15
Former Trident Alloys Site, Fryers Road, Bloxwich	WP3	Walsall	Resource Recovery Park (MRF and CHP)	C&I, CD&EW	240000	2010/11 - 2011/12
Oak Farm Clay Pit and Environs	WP4	Dudley	Non-Hazardous Landfill/ Waste Treatment (possibly)	MSW, C&I, CD&EW	Total capacity to be confirmed	By 2026
Pikehelve Eco-Park, Hill Top, Wednesbury	WP5	Sandwell	Resource Recovery Park (possibly MRF, MBT, IVC)	MSW	200000	By 2014/15

Table 17 - Proposed Locations for New Strategic Waste Management Infrastructure (continued)

Site / Location	Map Ref	Authority	Proposal	Waste Stream(s)	Estimated Throughput Capacity (TPA)	Timescale for Delivery
Sandown Quarry, Stubbers Green Road, Aldridge	WP6	Walsall	Non-Hazardous Landfill	MSW, C&I, CD&EW	3,000,000 (total capacity)	Post 2012/13
SITA Transfer Station, Neachells Lane, Willenhall	WP7	W'ton	Expansion of Existing Facility (various options)	C&I, CD&EW	Up to 60,000	Post 2016
Walsall Borough	N/A	Walsall	Replacement Depot	MSW	N/A	2015/16
Walsall Borough - Darlaston/ Willenhall	N/A	Walsall	Additional HWRC	MSW	10 - 15,000	To be confirmed

The above proposals will not meet all of the Black Country's waste management requirements up to 2026. The residual requirements (see Table 18) will be addressed through other DPDs, regeneration frameworks, municipal waste management strategies and planning applications, as appropriate. Such proposals must comply with the guidance in Policy WM4.

Justification

Background to the Strategic Proposals

- 7.30 National policy guidance requires Core Strategies for waste to demonstrate how at least 10 years' worth of the annual diversion requirements could be provided (PPS10, paragraph 18). The strategy must therefore identify the mechanisms which will deliver the new capacity targets in Policy WM1 by the end of the plan period, including strategic proposals which are likely to provide significant part of the capacity requirements.
- 7.31 Such proposals are listed in the table in this policy. Those which are site-specific have been shown on the Waste Key Diagram and Regeneration Corridor Maps (where relevant). It is not possible to do this for the HWRC and Depot proposals in Dudley and Walsall as only broad locations can be specified at the moment. The details of these proposals will be further developed at a later date through other DPDs and municipal waste management strategies.

7.32 The strategic proposals have been identified in liaison with the Waste Disposal Authorities and commercial waste operators, who have put forward proposals for consideration. The specific site proposals have been assessed for suitability using an assessment framework developed by the authorities. This has also informed the Policy WM4 assessment criteria. Further information about the strategic proposals, the waste site assessment framework and the results of the assessment are provided in the BCWBP2.

7.33 All of the proposals in Table 17 are expected to be delivered within the plan period. However, there is some uncertainty about the exact timescale for delivery of the planning obligated landfill proposals, as this depends on when mineral working ceases. Monitoring shows that new waste management capacity is continuing to come forward in the Black Country through the development management process and there will be further opportunities to identify and allocate waste management proposals through other DPDs. The delivery of the strategy is therefore not solely dependent on the strategic proposals identified in the Core Strategy.

Residual Capacity Requirements

7.34 The strategic proposals listed in Table 17 will provide about two-thirds (around 200,000 TPA) of the MSW treatment capacity and nearly half (around 490,000 TPA) of the non-MRS C&I waste treatment capacity requirements identified in Table 16 of Policy WM1. They will also address the specified requirements for MSW depots and HWRCs, and anticipated future requirements for landfill. However, not all of the capacity required by 2026 can be identified in the Core Strategy. Assuming the proposals in the policy are implemented, the following requirements remain to be identified through other DPDs or new planning permissions.

Table 18 - Indicative Residual Waste Management Capacity Requirements for the Black Country Authorities

Authority	MSW	C&I*	CD&EW	Hazardous	Transfer*
Dudley	To be determined through MWMS. Possible need for material recovery facilities and organic / composting facilities.	125000	Unable to quantify at present	Temporary "hub" sites for managing contaminated soils in appropriate locations in the growth network as appropriate	35000
Sandwell		160000	Unable to quantify at present		50000
Walsall		110000	Unable to quantify at present		35000
Wolverhampton		115000	Unable to quantify at present except replacement of 1 facility to be lost		35000
Black Country Total	74,000 (material recovery) 54,000 (organic/composting)	510000	At least 1 CD&EW recycling facility/ urban quarry		155000

* Based on pro-rata share of employment land across the authorities (Dudley 24%, Sandwell 31%, Walsall 22%, Wolverhampton 23%), rounded figures, therefore total transfer requirement is slightly higher than residual requirement.

7.35 There are further details of how residual requirements will be addressed in the BCWBP2.

Residual Requirements for MSW

7.36 As there is no Joint Waste Authority, each Black Country authority will continue to be responsible for addressing its own MSW requirements through future reviews of its municipal waste management strategy and where appropriate, through site allocations in other DPDs.

7.37 There is already significant new MSW capacity in the pipeline. As well as the proposal at Pikehelve Eco-Park, by 2012/13, Sandwell and Walsall will have access to around 110,000 TPA of capacity at the proposed W2R EFW plant to be developed at Four Ashes in South Staffordshire by Staffordshire County Council in partnership with Sandwell MBC, Walsall MBC and Warwickshire County Council. As this proposal is in another Authority area, it cannot be allocated in the Core Strategy although the capacity means there is no residual requirement for MSW treatment through energy recovery. This requirement has therefore been excluded from Table 18. Whilst the capacity at Four Ashes does not count towards the Black Country's equivalent self sufficiency, this is compensated for by existing and proposed provision across other waste streams. For example, Table WM1g of Appendix 6 indicates an overall surplus of C&I waste capacity which more than compensates for this proposal.

7.38 No other MSW proposals have been identified apart from the HWRCs and Depots required by Dudley and Walsall. Although residual capacity requirements have been identified for recycling and composting, the authorities are expected to continue with existing arrangements for managing dry recyclable waste and green waste through waste management contracts with commercial operators in the short to medium-term. The need for new infrastructure will be kept under review, and if further MSW recycling and composting capacity is needed this will be brought forward through individual authorities' municipal waste management strategies and Site Allocations DPDs or other DPDs as appropriate.

Residual Commercial Waste Management Capacity Requirements

7.39 Each Black Country authority will be responsible for bringing forward the capacity identified in Table 18 through site allocations in other DPDs (such as Site Allocations DPDs or Area Action Plans) and through the development management process. When planning to address the residual requirements through another DPD, the requirement may need to be adjusted to take into account significant net losses or net gains in capacity identified through monitoring. The suitability of all new proposals / sites should be assessed against the criteria in Policy WM4. When considering residual waste management requirements and potential sites for waste management allocations, other DPDs should also take into account capacity likely to be provided through long-term commitments for landfill expected to come forward beyond the plan period, and other permitted waste management proposals in the pipeline.

7.40 Monitoring shows that commercial waste management proposals are continuing to come forward in the Black Country despite the recession, although at a slower rate, and not all of them will necessarily be implemented. Some commercial waste management proposals may also be difficult to identify through monitoring if operators are able to find a site or building with an appropriate lawful use. In the absence of any evidence to the contrary, we expect market-led proposals to continue to come forward throughout the plan period at similar rates to the recent past.

7.41 The requirements for waste transfer specified in Policy WM1 are specifically to replace capacity likely to be lost as a result of the proposals in the growth network, as there is no evidence of future needs/ requirements for these types of facilities. The requirements for CD&EW in Policy WM1 also reflect the need to replace an existing recycling facility in Wolverhampton which is within a proposed housing area, and to provide additional facilities to manage the increased amounts of CD&EW likely to arise from redevelopment within the Growth Network. There is evidence that CD&EW will grow over the plan period (West Midlands Landfill Capacity Study – 2009 Update (June 2009), Scott Wilson). Furthermore, nearly all of the Black Country's requirements for construction aggregates are expected to be met from secondary and recycled materials (see MIN2), suggesting that more "urban quarries" are likely to be needed, although it is not clear exactly how many facilities will be required. Each Black Country authority will therefore need to consider future requirements for CD&EW recycling/ "urban quarries", and plan for these in other DPDs.

7.42 Temporary or permanent CD&EW facilities may be developed in conjunction with facilities for managing contaminated soils, for which a potential need has been identified through stakeholder engagement. The BCWPS found that there are currently no sites in the Black Country for the storage, treatment and remediation of contaminated soils. The Stage Two Infrastructure and Deliverability Study has also confirmed that contamination is a potential constraint in many parts of the Growth Network, suggesting that contaminated soil management should be addressed in the Core Strategy.

Provision for Managing Contaminated Soils

- 7.43 The authorities have given specific priority to identifying sites for managing contaminated soils, as this is recognised as an important issue for the Black Country. There is already one operator specialising in in-situ treatment based in the Black Country (Enviro-treat in Dudley), and their base has been identified as a strategic site (see Policy WM2 and Appendix 6).
- 7.44 Unfortunately, it is not possible to allocate a specific site or location in the Core Strategy for the storage, treatment or remediation of contaminated soils, for the following reasons. Firstly, no waste operator has come forward with a proposal for such a facility in the Black Country. Secondly, the evidence does not support the identification of any particular preferred location or area of search for such facilities at the present time. Thirdly, the BCWPS highlighted that approaches towards management of contaminated soils may vary according to the conditions and the circumstances, and we therefore cannot even identify which technologies may be most suitable.
- 7.45 The desk-top evidence presented in the Stage Two Infrastructure & Deliverability Study and Sample Sites Viability Study by Mott MacDonald do not identify where contaminated land is present in the Black Country as this can only be determined with certainty through site investigations. However, it does identify areas of made ground and worked ground where contamination may be present. This suggests that most of the Regeneration Corridors are likely to be affected to some extent. Thus, it is not possible to quantify the extent of the problem at a strategic level or identify the most suitable location for a treatment facility.
- 7.46 However, the Viability Study does identify contamination and land remediation as important issues likely to affect the cost of development and potential viability of particular sites. The Core Strategy therefore provides guidance on suitable locations for different types of facilities to store, treat and remediate contaminated soils (Policy WM4). It also sets out requirements for the management of contaminated soils where they occur within areas proposed for regeneration and growth (Policy WM5).

Future Landfill Requirements

- 7.47 The Black Country is expected to be self sufficient in non-hazardous landfill capacity if the three strategic waste management infrastructure proposals come forward within the plan period. However, Sandown Quarry and Oak Farm Clay Pit are likely to be medium to long-term proposals as there are still significant mineral reserves remaining within them. The void space likely to be available within these sites is also uncertain.

Primary Evidence

Black Country Waste Planning Study (May 2009), Atkins
 Black Country Employment Land Study (November 2009), GVA Grimley
 Black Country Stage Two Infrastructure & Deliverability Study - Technical Note 6: Ground Risk and Mineral Extraction (November 2009), Mott MacDonald
 Black Country Viability Study (November 2009), Mott MacDonald
 Black Country Core Strategy Waste Background Paper 2 (February 2010), Black Country Authorities
 West Midlands Regional Waste Capacity Database (September 2009), WMRA

Delivery

- Delivery of identified MSW requirements will be through competitive tender (being progressed by Sandwell MBC) in the case of Pikehelve Eco-Park, and through other DPDs/ MWMS and liaison with WDAs in the case of proposed HWRCs and depots. Delivery of identified commercial waste proposals will be through development management process/pre application discussions with the relevant operators. There will also be a need for engagement with local communities, and adjacent land users at the detailed planning stage.
- Where major change/ redevelopment is proposed within the Growth Network, the need for facilities to store, treat and remediate contaminated soils will be addressed at a local level through relevant DPDs and other mechanisms.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI WM3a - % and capacity of strategic waste management infrastructure proposals in Table 17 implemented by 2026, by authority.	100%
LOI WM3b - % and capacity of new waste management facilities contributing towards the residual requirements in Table 18 implemented by 2026, by waste stream and by authority.	100%
COI WM3 - Capacity of new waste management facilities by waste planning authority.	Will be used to monitor new strategic capacity coming forward.

WM4 Locational Considerations for New Waste Management Facilities

Strategic Objectives

Steering waste management facilities towards the most suitable locations where they are likely to generate maximum benefits in terms of co-location, provide supporting infrastructure for other uses, and minimise potentially harmful effects on the environment and local communities, will support the Vision, Sustainability Principles B, D and E, and Spatial Objectives 2 and 9.

Policy

Key Locational Considerations for All Waste Management Proposals

Proposals should demonstrate how they will contribute towards Spatial Objective 9 and the strategic objectives of Policy WM1, such as the contribution they will make towards landfill diversion, delivery of new waste management capacity and diversification of the range of facilities currently available. All proposals should include details of the proposed operations and the technologies involved, the types of waste to be managed, the maximum throughput capacity, the source of the wastes, and in the case of recycling, composting and recovery facilities, the recovery rate/ end products and whether the end products will be waste or usable raw materials, produced in accordance with agreed quality protocols.

Waste arising in the Black Country should be managed within the Black Country where feasible, and should be managed as close as possible to its source of origin. Proposals involving on-site management of waste will be supported where this would not have unacceptable impacts on neighbouring uses. To minimise impacts on the highway network, wherever possible, opportunities should be taken to transport waste by rail or inland waterway, particularly where freight opportunities have been identified (see TRAN3).

The development of “shared” municipal waste management facilities to be used by more than one waste planning authority/ waste disposal authority, and the co-location of municipal and commercial waste operations will be supported in principle, where this would generate benefits in terms of increased viability/ economies of scale, minimising the distance waste needs to travel, and improved access to facilities for local communities and businesses. The clustering of related or complementary waste treatment, transfer and disposal operations in a specific location will also be supported, where this would not have adverse cumulative impacts on neighbouring uses.

All proposals should minimise adverse visual impacts, potential detrimental effects on the environment and human health, and localised impacts on neighbouring uses from noise, emissions, odours, vermin and litter. To minimise such impacts, wherever possible, waste management operations should be contained within a building or other physical enclosure. The design of new buildings, other structures, boundaries and landscaping should also make a positive contribution to the area (see ENV3).

Preferred Locations for Enclosed Waste Management Facilities

The preferred locations for enclosed waste management facilities are the employment areas shown on the Waste Key Diagram, the Strategic Key Diagram and Regeneration Corridor Maps. Locations proposed for change to housing should be avoided (see DEL2). The following guidance defines the types of operation likely to be suitable on different types of employment land (see Policies EMP2 and EMP3).

Operations Likely to be Suitable on all Employment Land

- Any waste operations falling within Use Class B1 (b) or (c), B2 or B8;
- Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC);
- Material Recycling/ Recovery Facilities (MRF);
- Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT);
- In Vessel Composting (IVC);
- Anaerobic Digestion (AD);
- Thermal Treatment/ Energy Recovery (Incineration without Recovery, Energy from Waste (EfW), Combined Heat and Power (CHP), Pyrolysis, Gasification);
- Ancillary facilities linked to an existing employment use.

Operations Likely to be Suitable on Local Quality Employment Areas only

- Transfer stations / skip hire;
- Small scrap yards and open storage facilities;
- Hazardous waste treatment / processing facilities;
- Urban quarries (enclosed CD&EW processing/ aggregate recycling);
- Storage/ screening/ other treatment of contaminated soils.

All proposals should demonstrate compatibility with the uses already present within / adjacent to the area and with future aspirations for the area, for example, if it is a Strategic High Quality Employment Area (see EMP2). New waste management facilities will only be allowed on employment land which is predominantly office (Use Class B1 (a)) where it would complement the uses in that area. Proposals involving the management of hazardous wastes should demonstrate that the proposed use would not cause harm to the environment, human health or neighbouring uses.

Other Potentially Suitable Locations for Enclosed Operations

The following types of operation may be suitable for location within/ on the edge of centres or near to residential areas, particularly where they are linked to or providing a service to a neighbouring use, the local community or local businesses:

- Household Waste Recycling Facilities (HWRCs);
- Storage/ warehouse facilities;
- “Clean” Material Recycling/ Recovery Facilities (MRFs);
- Biomass/ Combined Heat and Power (CHP);
- Other operations whose impacts can be easily controlled.

Proposals should be compatible with adjoining uses and provide justification for the location chosen, such as demonstrating that they complement or provide a service to adjacent uses.

Preferred Locations for Open Air Facilities

Where feasible, operations in the open air should ideally be accommodated on Local Employment Land. However, a peripheral location may be the only viable option for certain operations. The following types of waste management operation will normally require an open air or outdoor site:

- Landfill/ land-raising operations;
- Disposal of inert wastes to land as part of land remediation/ engineering;
- Open windrow composting facilities;
- Large scrap yards and other large open storage facilities;
- CD&EW processing/ aggregate recycling associated with quarries and landfill sites;
- Bioremediation of contaminated soils.

Open air operations should include mitigation for visual impacts and other potentially harmful effects on adjoining uses through appropriately-designed landscaping, appropriate proximity boundaries and screening. Proposals in the Green Belt and/ or on a green field site should clearly demonstrate that there are no alternative options on previously-developed land and that the need for the proposal outweighs any harm to the environment.

Proposals for landfilling, land-raising or disposal of waste to land for restoration should include a suitable method of infilling and landscaping using materials appropriate to the proposed after-use and the underlying geology/ hydrology. They should aim to achieve the earliest practicable restoration of the site to a beneficial after-use appropriate to the location, and provision for after-care (see also MIN5). Proposals for re-working of deposited wastes or pre-treatment of wastes at a landfill site will not be permitted if this would result in restoration being significantly delayed. Where proposals for landfilling or land-raising with non-hazardous wastes are likely to generate significant amounts of gas, they should include provision for the monitoring, control and venting of gases and the treatment of leachate, and where feasible, provision to capture landfill gas for energy.

Assessment Criteria for New Waste Management Facilities

When considering new proposals involving waste management operations or for new waste management facilities, the Black Country Authorities will assess them against the following criteria:

- Whether the proposal supports national and local waste strategies, objectives and targets for waste (for example, Spatial Objective 9 and local municipal waste management strategies);
- Whether the proposal is well-located in relation to the sources of waste it will be managing (for example, will it be managing waste arising from Black Country communities and businesses?);
- Whether the location is suitable for the type of facility and operations proposed and capable of adapting to changing circumstances (for example, is the site/ premises capable of accommodating more than one type of technology or of handling different types of waste?);

- Whether the proposal would provide opportunities for co-location of related uses and/ or generate other benefits (for example, would it manage a range of waste types or streams, produce high quality aggregates or other useful raw materials, or supply heat and power or other forms of energy to adjacent uses?);
- Whether the proposal would involve re-use of previously-developed land (and if not, is it fully justified in terms of operational requirements and lack of suitable alternatives?);
- Whether the proposal contributes towards the positive environmental transformation of the Black Country (for example, is it designed to complement/ contribute towards environmental infrastructure and does it identify and adequately address potential harmful effects on the environment?);
- Whether the proposal is compatible with neighbouring uses (taking into account the nature of the wastes being managed, the technologies used, the hours of operation and cumulative effects), and if so, whether it identifies and adequately addresses potential harmful effects on amenity;
- Whether the proposal supports economic and growth objectives for the Black Country (for example, would it create or retain local jobs, provide a service to local businesses, produce material resources for local industries, or aggregates to supply construction projects within the Growth Network?);
- Whether the proposal would address impacts on the highway/ transport network (for example, has the potential to move waste by rail or inland waterway been fully considered, and does it identify and adequately address impacts on the local/ strategic highway and drainage network?).

The same criteria will be used to identify and select sites for inclusion in other DPDs and municipal waste management strategies as well as for assessing planning applications.

Justification

Policy Background

- 7.48 National policy guidance requires the Black Country Authorities to identify “suitable” sites and areas for waste management in development plan documents. When deciding which sites should be allocated, we are expected to assess their suitability against a range of criteria, including physical and environmental constraints, cumulative impacts, and transport impacts (PPS10, paragraphs 20 – 21).
- 7.49 A number of specific sites and locations suitable for the development of new waste management facilities have been identified in Policy WM3 and on the Waste Key Diagram. These proposals and sites have been assessed for suitability using an assessment framework developed by the authorities. This was developed having regard to the locational considerations in national policy guidance, feedback from stakeholders on the emerging Core Strategy waste policies, the BCWPS, the SA framework and the assessment framework developed for the Employment Land Study (2009).

- 7.50 The framework has also informed the locational considerations and assessment criteria in this policy, which should be taken into account when planning a new waste management facility, whether it will come forward through another DPD, a regeneration framework, a municipal waste management strategy or a planning application.
- 7.51 The strategic proposals in Policy WM3 will not provide sufficient capacity to meet the whole of the Black Country's waste management requirements up to 2026. The remaining capacity – the residual capacity identified in Table 18 - will be met from site allocations in other DPDs, regeneration frameworks, MWMS and / or planning applications.
- 7.52 The emerging findings of the Landfill Diversion Strategy being developed by Advantage West Midlands (AWM) (see The Regional Approach to Landfill Diversion Infrastructure (June 2009), DTZ and SLR Consulting) suggest that many of the retained employment areas in the Black Country have potential for the development of new infrastructure for organic waste (composting and anaerobic digestion), recycling of dry wastes (segregation and reprocessing) and recovery for energy. The locational analysis tool developed through this project did not become available in time to inform Policy WM4 of the Core Strategy, but may help operators to identify potential opportunities in the Black Country. It may also help individual authorities to refine the locational guidance in Policy WM4 and to identify employment locations in their area which are particularly suited to managing specific types of waste. This can then be reflected in the local guidance and site allocations brought forward in other DPDs.

General Locational Considerations

- 7.53 There are a number of spatial issues common to all waste management proposals which should be addressed in all cases. The relationship of a proposal to the strategy for waste as set out in Spatial Objective 9 and Policy WM1 is of paramount importance and all proposals should demonstrate how they will contribute towards this. They should also address other locational issues such as proximity to the source of waste, relationships to adjoining/ neighbouring uses, visual impacts and other potential effects on the surrounding area. Potentially harmful environmental/ amenity impacts will be minimised where operations are contained within a building or enclosure, so facilities should always be enclosed where feasible.
- 7.54 The quality of design will be important in all cases as well-designed facilities are crucial to improving the image and acceptability of waste management proposals. Particularly high standards will be expected in Strategic High Quality employment areas, sites in or near to centres and residential areas, and open locations. All waste management proposals will be expected to comply with Policy ENV3. Specific guidance on the design of waste management facilities has been published by Defra in association with CABE (Designing Waste Facilities: a guide to modern design in waste (2008)). Operators are also advised to have regard to this when designing new proposals.

Locations Suited to Different Types of Operations

- 7.55 As the strategy towards sustainable waste management involves broadening the range of waste management infrastructure available in the Black Country it is necessary to identify a range of opportunities that can accommodate different types of operation and technology. The Core Strategy has also responded to the views expressed by the waste industry that a variety of broad locations should be identified rather a limited number of site allocations.

- 7.56 Many waste management operations are similar to industrial processes and may be located in retained employment areas within the strategic centres and regeneration corridors, or in a free-standing employment area. There are employment locations across the Black Country suitable for most kinds of waste management operations. However, it is important to remember that not all employment areas will be retained long-term. Operators seeking a location for a new waste management facility should therefore be focusing their search on areas to be retained in employment use, and should avoid areas proposed to change to housing.
- 7.57 The retained employment areas fall into two broad categories: Strategic High Quality and Local Quality. Although most operations would be suited to a Local Quality employment area not every operation will be suited to a Strategic High Quality area. We have therefore listed the types of facility that are likely to be suitable in all employment areas and those which should be steered towards Local Quality employment areas only. The demand for new waste management facilities has been considered as part of the wider requirement for employment land in the Black Country through the Employment Sites Study (2009). There is enough supply of employment land identified in EMP1 to account for the demand for new waste management facilities identified in WM1.
- 7.58 The policy aims to guide policy makers and waste operators and is not meant to be applied rigidly, so we cannot rule out that some operations which would not normally be suitable could go into a Strategic High Quality employment area, where there are good reasons for this. However, the onus will be on those promoting the development to demonstrate that it is suitable for a Strategic High Quality employment location without compromising the future plans for the area.
- 7.59 The policy also lists other areas which could provide opportunities for location of enclosed waste management facilities. These are most likely to be suitable where they are linked to or associated with an existing development, or are providing a direct service to it, such as a waste collection service or combined heat and power from a biomass unit.
- 7.60 There are certain types of operation which usually require an open site and will therefore be difficult to accommodate within the built-up areas of the Black Country due to the lack of suitable sites. These are also highlighted in the policy.
- 7.61 For example, there are restrictions on the development of open windrow composting facilities. These types of operation are subject to strict regulation by the Environment Agency and must be located at least 250m away from sensitive receptors. The only realistic option for such facilities would be somewhere in the Green Belt. A number of potential locations have been considered, but no suitable sites or locations have been identified.
- 7.62 Poor air quality is a major concern in the Black Country. Waste management can impact on air quality through emissions from transportation of waste. Thermal treatment facilities are also subject to strict controls to prevent potentially harmful emissions. Proposals involving these types of operation will be expected to comply with Policy ENV7 which sets out specific requirements for renewable and low carbon energy developments including energy from waste technologies such as pyrolysis, gasification and combined heat and power.

Assessment Criteria

- 7.63 The last part of the policy sets out the criteria against which new waste management proposals will be assessed. This includes proposals being brought forward through Site Allocations DPDs, Area Action Plans, other regeneration frameworks and MWMS as well as those which come forward as planning applications. The BCWBP2 includes a summary of some of the key considerations which will be taken into account when assessing proposals against the criteria.

Primary Evidence

The Regional Approach to Landfill Diversion Infrastructure: Main Report (July 2009), DTZ and SLR for AWM
 Black Country Waste Planning Study (May 2009), Atkins
 Black Country Employment Land Study (November 2009), GVA Grimley
 Black Country Core Strategy Waste Background Paper 2 (February 2010), Black Country Authorities

Delivery

- Delivery of new facilities in accordance with the policy will be primarily through Site Allocations DPDs, Area Action Plans, other area regeneration frameworks, and planning applications. Whereas municipal waste facilities will be driven by the needs of the WDAs, which may be identified through future MWMS or other mechanisms. Commercial facilities will be brought forward as and when the market allows, in some cases through the LDF as site allocations, and in others through planning applications. Compliance with the locational criteria will be considered through the Development Management process including pre-application discussions with waste operators.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI WM4 - % of new waste management facilities proposed/ implemented that meet Policy WM4 locational requirements by waste planning authority.	100% of proposals approved/implemented to be in accordance with locational guidance in policy.
COI WM4 - Capacity of new waste management facilities by waste planning authority.	Will be used to monitor new waste capacity coming forward within the policy locations.

WM5 Resource Management and New Development

Strategic Objectives

Managing material resources - including "waste" -, in a responsible way is an important element of sustainable development and will support Sustainability Principle B and Spatial Objective 9.

Policy

Resource Efficiency and New Development – General Principles

All new developments should:

- address waste as a resource;
- minimise waste as far as possible;
- manage unavoidable waste in a sustainable and responsible manner, and
- maximise use of materials with low environmental impacts.

Where a proposal includes uses likely to generate significant amounts of waste, these should be managed either on-site or as close as possible to the source of the waste.

Resource and waste management requirements should also be reflected in the design and layout of new development schemes. Wherever possible, building, engineering and landscaping projects should use alternatives to primary aggregates such as secondary, and recycled materials, renewable and locally sourced products, and materials with low environmental impacts. Where redevelopment of existing buildings or structures and/ or remediation of derelict land is proposed, construction, demolition and excavation wastes (CD&EW) should be managed on-site where feasible and as much material as possible should be recovered and re-used for engineering or building either on-site or elsewhere (see MIN2). Consideration should also be given to how waste will be managed within the development once it is in use.

Major Development Proposals

Planning applications for major development (as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order) should include supporting information explaining what material resources will be used in the development, and how and where the waste generated by the development will be managed. This should cover the following, where applicable:

Construction waste management – resource efficiency targets, tonnages of CD&EW generated by type, methods of management, and what proportion will be managed on-site/ off-site;

Secondary and recycled aggregate production – tonnages of aggregate produced from re-used or recycled CD&EW generated by the development;

Responsible sourcing of building, engineering and landscaping materials – use of materials with low environmental impacts, use of alternatives to primary aggregates, renewable, and locally sourced materials;

Provision for on-site management of waste – details of the provision to be made for management of waste within the development once it is in use, such as waste management systems and storage of non-recyclable and recyclable waste.

Supporting information may include a site waste management plan (SWMP) where one has been prepared. Alternatively, information may be included within a waste audit, design and access statement, or planning statement.

Area Action Plans, regeneration frameworks, Masterplans linked to phased planning applications and other plans for areas of major change within the Growth Network should adopt a holistic approach towards resource management. They should include a resource management strategy for the area as a whole, and a strategy for managing the CD&EW generated by the proposals, including contaminated soils (where present) on site or as close to the site as possible (for example at temporary “hub” sites).

Plans should also adopt a “whole life” approach towards resource management and consider how waste generated by the end users of the proposed developments will be managed. Where new provision for waste management is needed, this should be integrated into the proposals for the area (see WM4).

Justification

General Principles

- 7.64 Achieving zero waste growth and driving waste up the “waste hierarchy” are important objectives of national policy guidance, the emerging regional waste strategy, and the strategy for waste in the Black Country (see Policy WM1). Stakeholders have also commented that the strategy should be seeking to minimise waste. Delivering the on-site management of waste and making better use of waste generated through development are critical to the delivery of these objectives as well as the Mineral policies (specifically MIN2). Waste also adds significant costs to the local economy - evidence cited in Waste – A Future Resource for Businesses suggests it accounts for up to 4% of annual turnover. Successfully addressing this through design and layout of new development is a way of reducing this avoidable cost.
- 7.65 However, achieving this will also require a step change in attitudes towards waste. The scale of development and change proposed in the Growth Network presents a major opportunity to influence decisions over how resources are managed, and develop a more integrated and holistic approach towards this at a local level. The policy therefore sets out minimum requirements for planning applications for “major” developments, as defined in the Development Management Procedure Order, and area regeneration plans to demonstrate how they have addressed waste and resource issues. This should ensure that opportunities to drive change and maximise resource efficiency are not missed.

Resource Management in Residential Developments

- 7.66 As a matter of course, residential developments should include adequate storage for recyclable and non-recyclable waste pending collection including storage for recyclable wastes, and access for waste collection vehicles. The Black Country is not a Joint Waste Authority at the moment, so approaches towards waste collection differ across the sub-region. Applicants for housing development should therefore liaise with the relevant Waste Disposal Authority at the earliest possible stage, to check the requirements for storage of recyclable and non-recyclable waste and the access requirements for waste collection vehicles.

- 7.67 Materials and Waste are specific categories within the Code for Sustainable Homes, attracting potential credits which contribute towards the overall Code Level of a development. There are credits available for house-builders able to demonstrate that they have made full provision for waste storage, construction waste management and provision for composting. Further credits may be obtained through use of building materials with very low environmental impacts, and materials which have been responsibly sourced.

Resource Management in Other Developments

- 7.68 The resource and waste management requirements of businesses and providers of community facilities will be an important consideration in projects to improve employment areas or town and district centres within the Growth Network. Where feasible, regeneration schemes should include provision for on-site waste management, or for shared “hub” facilities.
- 7.69 Where organisations are generating significant amounts of a particular type of waste which is not currently managed in the Black Country, consideration should be given towards providing a new facility for managing the waste through Area Action Plans and any other regeneration plans for the area. For example, in some cases there may be potential to generate energy from waste, which could help support local businesses by providing cheap and low carbon heat and power (see ENV7).
- 7.70 Opportunities for symbiosis – matching waste producers with organisations who might have a use for the “waste” - should also be explored. Businesses and organisations involved in regeneration of business areas should consider joining the National Industrial Symbiosis Project (NISP), which can help them find new uses for “waste” and bring them into contact with other organisations which may have a need for these materials.

Resource Management Tools and Guidance

- 7.71 The development and implementation of a Site Waste Management Plans (SWMP) is mandatory for all demolition, excavation and construction projects with a total cost of £300,000 or more. These are seen by Government as a major tool in helping to achieve the national target of reducing CD&EW to 50% of 2005 levels by 2012. Many demolition and construction companies are also now adopting “best practice” with regard to resource efficiency, waste reduction and sourcing of materials, and are using tools developed by various organisations to promote greater resource efficiency and achieve the national CD&EW reduction target, for example, the Demolition Protocol developed by the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE).
- 7.72 The developers of major schemes will therefore already be preparing SWMPs, and in many cases they will be able to provide them as a supporting document with a detailed planning application or reserved matters application (though not necessarily with an outline application). As part of the implementation of this policy the authorities will put in place mechanisms to monitor the provision of SWMPs and other supporting information which must be provided with planning applications. Free online tools and templates for preparing SWMPs, are available from the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) and Building Research Establishment (BRE).
- 7.73 BREEAM now includes benchmarking for waste recovery and use of recycled and locally sourced materials. WRAP has launched the “Halving Waste to Landfill” commitment which construction companies are invited to sign up to, and has recently produced a guide on designing out waste in association with RIBA (Designing out Waste: A design team guide for buildings (2009)). Developers, designers and architects are encouraged to make use of these resources at the earliest possible stage of the design of a new development, and to use them as supporting information with applications to demonstrate compliance with the policy.

7.74 Information on resource flows for various industrial and commercial sectors is also available from Mass Balance project by Biffaward. This is based on the concept that mass can neither be created nor destroyed. The project has tracked the mass of a variety of different resources through their life cycle, from inputs into a process, industry or area, through to outputs, emissions and wastes, and changes in stocks.

Primary Evidence

- The Code for Sustainable Homes: Setting the standard for sustainability for new homes (February 2008), CLG
- Demolition Protocol 2008, ICE
- Site Waste Management Plan Guidance and Template, WRAP
- SMART Waste Plan – Online SWMP and Waste Measurement Tool, BRE
- Designing out Waste: A design team guide for buildings (2009), WRAP/ RIBA
- Black Country Waste Planning Study (May 2009), Atkins
- Black Country Core Strategy Waste Background Paper 2 (February 2010), Black Country Authorities
- Black Country Core Strategy Minerals Background Paper 2 (Revised) (February 2010), Black Country Authorities

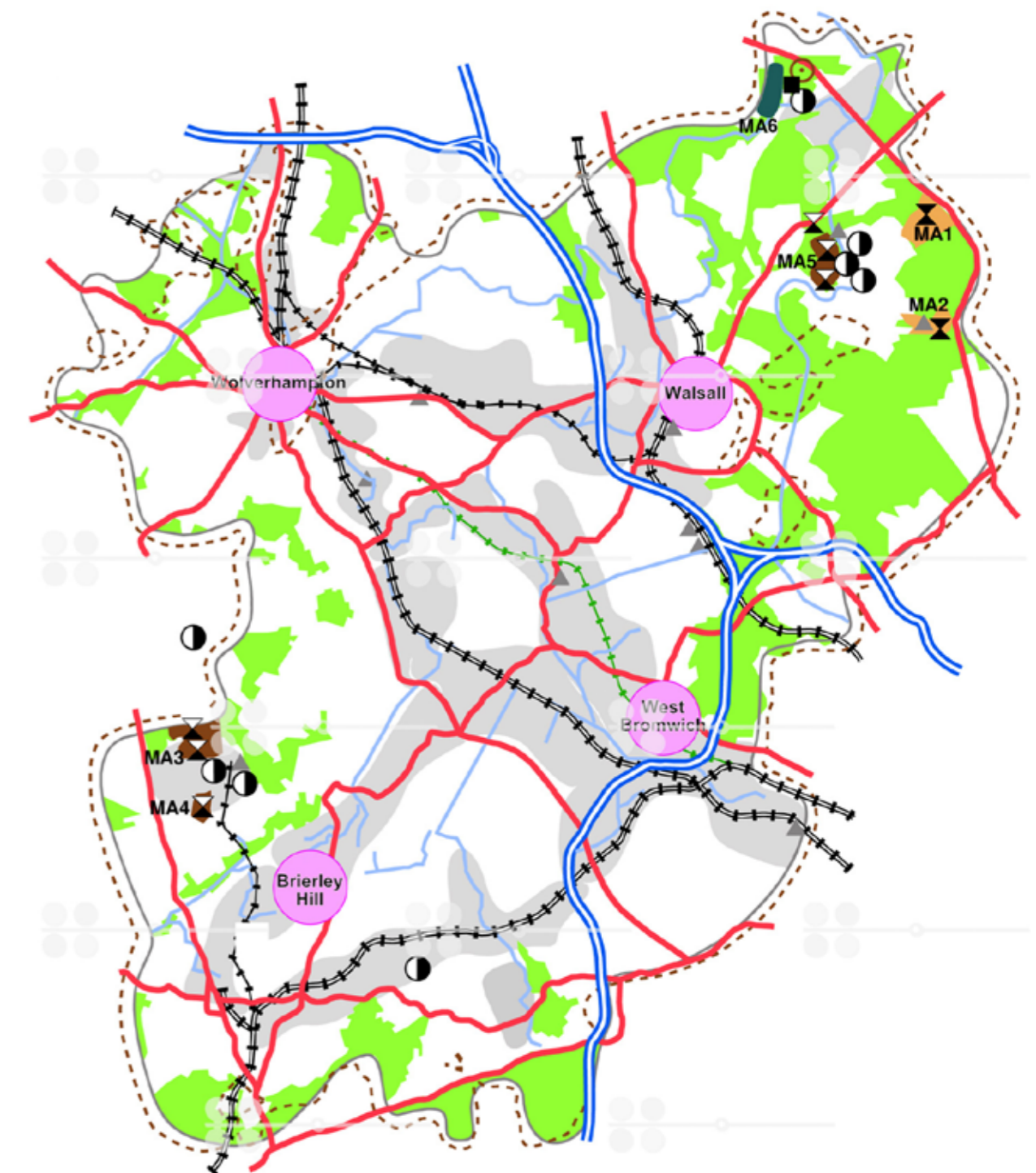
Delivery

- Sustainable resource management in new developments will be delivered through site specific DPDs / planning framework preparation and development control process including local validation checklists / pre-application discussions.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI WM5 - % of major planning applications granted to include supporting information on waste management to address WM5 requirements.	100%.
COI WM5 - Production of Secondary and Recycled Aggregates.	No target can be set for this at present, although this will be reviewed when information becomes available through monitoring the above indicator.

Black Country Core Strategy Minerals Key Diagram



Minerals Sub-Key Diagram

- Strategic Centres
- Etruria Marl Quarries
- Sand & Gravel Quarries
- Brickworks/Tileworks/Other Clay Users
- Fireclay Stockpile
- Mineral Related Infrastructure
- Dormant Mineral Permissions
- Mineral Safeguarding Area
- Major Road Network
- Areas of Search - Sand & Gravel
- Areas of Search - Etruria Marl
- Areas of Search - Fireclay
- Green Belt
- Regeneration Corridors
- Passenger Rail
- Freight Rail
- Midland Metro
- Motorway
- Canal



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 from The Coal Authority (2011).

8. MINERALS

MIN1 Managing and Safeguarding Mineral Resources

Spatial Objectives

The Black Country's mineral resources need to be managed carefully to provide the raw materials needed to support regeneration within the Growth Network, and to conserve the area's geological heritage. Identifying important mineral resources, providing guidance on where they are to be found, minimising waste of these resources and making provision for mineral production will support the Vision, Sustainability Principles B and D and most of the Spatial Objectives, in particular Objectives 6, 9 and 10.

Policy

A Strategy for Future Management of Mineral Resources

Sustainable management of the Black Country's mineral resources will be achieved through the following measures:

1. Requiring new mineral developments to minimise waste produced through the extraction process, and encouraging the re-use, reprocessing and recycling of secondary material;
2. Encouraging the production and use of alternatives to primary land won minerals;
3. Identifying and safeguarding potentially important mineral resources and mineral related infrastructure against needless loss or sterilisation by non-mineral development;
4. Identifying locations containing viable resources where mineral extraction can take place during the plan period at levels that will support national and regional objectives, the local economy and regeneration, without compromising key environmental objectives;
5. Providing guidance on other mineral resources which may be exploited in the future to provide energy, support the local economy and enable the repair and conservation of important cultural assets;
6. Highlighting issues which should be addressed in mineral applications to maximise the benefits and minimise the potential negative effects of mineral working and related activities.

Mineral Resources to be Safeguarded

The Black Country has the following mineral resources which are either currently of economic importance or have the potential to become important in the future:

- Aggregates (sand and gravel);
- Brick clays (Etruria Marl and fireclay);
- Coal;
- Limestone;
- Dolerite;
- Building stone.

The resources are very extensive and cover almost the whole of the Black Country. They will be protected by being included within the Mineral Safeguarding Area (MSA) shown on the Minerals Key Diagram. The MSA has been defined in detail on the Proposals Maps for each authority, and separate maps showing the extent of each mineral commodity are provided in Appendix 7. Mineral commodity areas may be further refined and developed in other DPDs.

Non-Mineral Development within the MSA

Proposals for non-mineral development within the Areas of Search (see MIN2 and MIN3) will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the development will not result in sterilisation of the resources within these areas. Proposals for non-mineral development close to an operational quarry should also demonstrate that the quarrying operation would not be compromised by the proposed development.

All non-mineral development proposals within the MSA will be encouraged to extract any viable mineral resources present in advance of construction where practicable, and where this would not have unacceptable impacts on neighbouring uses. Particular encouragement will be given to schemes involving the prior extraction of minerals for use on-site or for use/ stockpiling elsewhere for future use (such as brick clays or natural building stone), to support a land remediation or stabilisation scheme, and schemes which will help conserve features important to the Black Country's geological heritage.

The following types of development within the MSA (except for conversions/ changes of use which do not involve any new building or excavation works) should be accompanied by supporting information demonstrating that mineral resources will not be needlessly sterilised:

- All non-mineral development proposals relating to sites or areas of 0.5ha and over in the Green Belt;
- All non-mineral development proposals relating to sites or areas of 5ha and over in the urban areas (outside the Green Belt).

The supporting information to be provided with the above types of application should include details of a prior extraction scheme or, where this is not considered feasible, evidence that:

- **Mineral resources are either not present, are of no economic value or have already been extracted as a result of a previous site reclamation scheme or other development; or**
- **Extraction of minerals is not feasible, for example due to significant overburden or because mineral extraction would lead to or exacerbate ground instability; or**
- **Prior extraction of minerals would result in abnormal costs and / or delays which would jeopardise the viability of the development; or**
- **There is an overriding need for the development which outweighs the need to safeguard the mineral resources present; or**
- **Extraction of minerals would have unacceptable impacts on neighbouring uses, the amenity of local communities or other important environmental assets.**

Where prior extraction is proposed, conditions will be imposed on any grant of permission requiring applicants to provide details of the tonnages of minerals extracted, once the scheme has been completed.

Safeguarding of Mineral Related Infrastructure

Important mineral related infrastructure will also be safeguarded. Key mineral infrastructure sites are shown on the Minerals Key Diagram and listed in Appendix 7 (Table MIN1). These include storage, handling and processing facilities (including facilities processing waste into aggregates) and existing and potential rail heads (see also WM2 and TRAN3). Development proposals which would result in the loss of one of these sites to a non-mineral related use will be expected to demonstrate that the site has no realistic potential for the development of mineral related infrastructure or no longer meets the needs of the minerals industry.

Justification

Sustainable Management of Mineral Resources – General Principles

- 8.1 Minerals and mineral products are essential to the creation of sustainable communities, because they provide the raw materials needed for building and engineering projects. They are also an important part of the environmental infrastructure of the Black Country, having shaped the existing townscape and landscape (see CSP3). However, minerals are a finite resource, so we must make best use of them by avoiding unnecessary waste, safeguarding them from needless sterilisation by other uses, and making maximum use of alternatives such as secondary and recycled materials.
- 8.2 There are currently four “urban quarry” sites across the Black Country for recycling of quarry wastes and construction, demolition and excavation wastes (CD&EW) into aggregates (see Appendix 7, table MIN1). Temporary processing of CD&EW also happens on building sites. In the Black Country, more aggregates are produced from recycling than from quarrying, and this trend is expected to continue.

8.3 Although the Black Country is rich in mineral resources, active mineral working is now confined to the fringes of the area. The only minerals currently being extracted are sands and gravels and Etruria Marl, a type of clay used for brick and tile making. Policies MIN2 and MIN3 make provision to sustain production of sand and gravel and Etruria Marl at current rates, to support regional requirements for aggregates and to support the local brick-making industry. Policy MIN4 sets out guidance on extraction of coal and natural building stone, which have been exploited in the past and may be in the future. Policy MIN5 provides general criteria for considering new mineral-related applications.

8.4 Dealing with the legacy of previous mineral extraction (particularly coal mining and limestone working) is another important issue in the Black Country. Delivery of the scale of development proposed within the Growth Network will be dependent on addressing these issues in the areas affected.

Mineral Safeguarding and Mineral Safeguarding Areas

8.5 National policy guidance requires MPAs to safeguard mineral resources that are or may become of economic importance by including them in a mineral safeguarding area (MSA). The purpose of a MSA is to alert prospective developers to the existence of mineral resources, so that they can be taken into account at the earliest possible stage of the development project.

8.6 The Black Country Minerals Study (2008) (BCMS) has defined the extent of mineral resources in the Black Country in line with the BGS good practice guide “A Guide to Mineral Safeguarding in England (2007).” The primary sources used to develop the MSA are the mineral resource maps published by BGS and Coal Authority. Since the completion of the study, the MSA has been defined in consultation with relevant stakeholders.

8.7 The decision to have a single MSA for the Black Country is a result of the complexity of the mineral deposits within the area. Relative to its area, the Black Country has the most diverse geology of any area in the world. It is therefore not possible to show each mineral commodity separately on the Minerals Key Diagram or on the Proposals Maps alongside all the other designations and maintain an acceptable degree of clarity.

8.8 However, there is a need to give clear guidance to the development industry on where the different mineral commodities may be found within the Black Country, so that they can consider the likelihood of extracting value from them. The extent of each mineral commodity is shown in Appendix 7. There is scope to refine these further at a later stage, through other DPDs (such as Site Allocations DPDs), if necessary.

8.9 National policy guidance also requires mineral planning authorities to ensure that non-mineral development does not encroach on existing mineral operations (MPS2, paragraph 13), and appropriate guidance is therefore included in the policy. Where mineral resources underlie the urban areas, they are effectively already sterilised by built development. The Spatial Strategy proposes that the Growth Network will be the main focus for development in the Black Country, and in some cases this will involve large-scale redevelopment. There will therefore be opportunities to safeguard mineral resources through extraction in advance of development (“prior extraction”).

- 8.10 The available evidence suggests that prior extraction normally only happens in a very few development projects in urban areas, and that coal and sand and gravel are the main mineral resources exploited in this way. A Guide to Mineral Safeguarding in England (2007) acknowledges this and advises that minor developments may be excluded from safeguarding policies. Given the abnormal costs associated with many development sites in the Black Country (see 2e Delivering our Vision), it would be unreasonable – and disproportionate - to apply a mineral safeguarding requirement to all but the largest schemes within the built-up areas.
- 8.11 Hence, whilst prior extraction of minerals is encouraged in all urban developments where feasible and appropriate, the requirement to demonstrate that minerals have not needlessly been sterilised applies only to development proposals on sites of 5ha and over. A lower threshold will apply to non-mineral development within the Green Belt, as here opportunities to safeguard mineral resources are likely to be greater, because development is strictly controlled and there are fewer physical constraints.
- 8.12 Supporting evidence relating to the extent or quality of the mineral resource and geotechnical issues should be prepared by a qualified mineral surveyor or geologist, and should be informed by the most up-to-date mineral resource information available for the site or area. This could include published mineral resource maps, geological maps and other information available from the British Geological Survey (BGS), the Coal Authority (where appropriate) and the relevant Council's geotechnical section.
- 8.13 Prior extraction of sand and gravel has the potential to contribute towards meeting the Black Country's requirements for aggregates, although there is no hard evidence of the extent to which resources are exploited in this way. Effective monitoring will depend on the availability of information on the tonnages of material generated as a result of implementing the policy.
- 8.14 This approach may also potentially contribute towards needs for brick clays and natural building stones. Although the materials present may have no value to a developer, they may be of value to other users. For example, if good quality clays are present in sufficient quantities, local brick manufacturers may be interested in obtaining them. Similarly, if good quality building stone is present, there may be interest in stockpiling this for future use in future conservation projects.
- 8.15 There may also be opportunities to safeguard minerals when dealing with "legacy" issues. Where extensive redevelopment is taking place, prior extraction can sometimes be integrated into a land remediation or stabilisation scheme. The value of the minerals extracted may also help offset the cost of the works, as well as minimising further sterilisation of the mineral resource.

Safeguarding of Mineral Related Infrastructure

- 8.16 Key mineral related infrastructure such as "urban quarries" and other processing, handling, storage and transport facilities also need to be safeguarded, so that minerals can be processed into useable products and transported to where they are needed. Important mineral related infrastructure sites in the Black Country are shown on the Minerals Key Diagram. A number of CD&EW recycling facilities have been identified as strategic waste management sites whose throughput capacity will be protected (see WM2).
- 8.17 In the Black Country, the safeguarding of existing and potential rail heads which could be used to transport bulky goods such as minerals and mineral products is of particular importance given the impact of freight on the highway network. Sites with existing or potential rail access which are or may be used for the bulk transport of minerals and mineral products will be protected (see TRAN3).

Primary Evidence

Mineral Resource Information for Development Plans – West Midlands: Resources and Constraints (Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall and Wolverhampton) (1999), British Geological Survey
 Surface Mining and Coal Resource Areas (2008), Coal Authority
 The Black Country Geodiversity Action Plan (2006), Black Country Geodiversity Partnership
 A Guide to Mineral Safeguarding in England (December 2007), British Geological Survey
 Black Country Minerals Study (March 2008), RPS
 Surface Mining and Coal Resource Areas (2008), Coal Authority
 Black Country Core Strategy: Minerals Background Paper 2 (Revised) (February 2010), Black Country Authorities
 Black Country Viability Study (2009), Mott Macdonald

Delivery

- Delivery will be primarily through development management (possibly local validation requirements), through assessing planning applications falling within the thresholds and through pre-application discussions.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI MIN1 - % of non-mineral development proposals approved within the MSA (falling within the policy thresholds) which do not needlessly sterilise mineral resources.	100%

Information on the tonnages of minerals extracted through "prior extraction" can also contribute towards monitoring of Core Output Indicator M1 (production of primary land won aggregates) although no specific production targets can be set for prior extraction schemes.

MIN2 Production of Aggregate Minerals

Spatial Objectives

Aggregate minerals are essential raw materials needed for building and engineering, and the regeneration of the Black Country cannot take place without an adequate supply of these materials. Maximising use and production of alternatives to primary resources, and making provision for quarrying of primary sand and gravel at current levels supports the Vision, Sustainability Principles B and E and most of the Spatial Objectives, in particular, Spatial Objectives 9 and 10.

Policy

The main source of supply of aggregates in the Black Country will be from alternatives to primary aggregates such as secondary and recycled materials (see Policy WM5).

However, the Black Country is committed towards making an appropriate contribution towards the West Midlands Country sand and gravel apportionment. The Black Country will continue to produce primary land-won sand and gravel, and will aim to produce a minimum of 50,000 tonnes per annum throughout the plan period.

Suitable Locations for Sand and Gravel Working

The full extent of sand and gravel resources in the Black Country is shown on Map MC1 in Appendix 7. However, not all of these resources are likely to be viable or suitable for use as aggregates, and some are affected by significant constraints.

During the plan period, primary sand and gravel extraction will be concentrated within the following areas of search identified on the Minerals Key Diagram:

MA1: Birch Lane (Walsall)

MA2: Branton Hill (Walsall)

The resources within these areas of will enable the Black Country to maintain a minimum 7-year landbank of sand and gravel up to 2026 and beyond.

New sand and gravel quarries outside the areas of search may also be permitted, if there is evidence that extraction proposals are unlikely to come forward in the areas of search within the plan period, or that the production targets cannot otherwise be met. All new proposals for sand and gravel extraction will be subject to the general requirements in Policy MIN5.

Specific Requirements within the Areas of Search

All proposals for sand and gravel extraction within the areas of search will be expected to satisfy the following requirements:

- There should be clear evidence that the restoration of the areas already worked is being progressed or will be progressed in a timely manner;
- There should be no adverse impacts on water resources within the Bourne Vale and Shire Oak groundwater source protection zones;
- Extension to Branton Hill Quarry will be subject to implementation of the proposed access road (approved in March 2009);
- Potential adverse impacts of haulage routes on the local highway network (in particular Shire Oak junction (junction of A461 and A452)) should be minimised as far as possible.

Borrow Pits

Temporary “borrow pits” may also be permitted (either within or outside the areas of search) to provide sand, gravel and other aggregate materials required for specific construction or engineering projects.

Proposals for “borrow pits” should be well-related to the project they are serving and should demonstrate benefits in terms of safeguarding mineral resources and minimising the distance material needs to travel.

If permission is granted for a “borrow pit,” it will be a temporary permission, and will be subject to conditions limiting the duration of the operation and restricting the use of the material extracted to the specified project.

Justification

Use of Alternatives to Primary Aggregates

- 8.18 Like other minerals, aggregates are a finite resource and should not be needlessly wasted. Policy MIN5 requires mineral-related development to minimise the waste produced from quarrying and related processes. The use (where practicable) of alternatives to primary aggregates for building and engineering is also encouraged in Policy WM5. The Black Country focus towards sustainable development, urban regeneration and prioritising the use of previously developed land heightens demand for aggregates but also provides opportunity for their recovery and re-use.
- 8.19 A significant amount of aggregates processing is already happening in the Black Country. There are nine known facilities in the Black Country producing secondary/recycled aggregates, mostly from recycled construction, demolition and excavation wastes (CD&EW). One site in Wolverhampton is in an area proposed to change to housing, and will need to be relocated (see WM1). The other sites, which will be safeguarded through Policy MIN1, are included in the list of mineral infrastructure sites in Table MIN1. Recent research suggests that on-site recycling and recovery of CD&EW is also meeting some of the demand for aggregate materials in the West Midlands Metropolitan area, including the Black Country. However, growth in the use of alternatives to secondary and recycled materials is finite and will probably reach optimum levels by 2016 (The Sustainable Use of Resources for the Production of Aggregates in England (2006), WRAP).
- 8.20 The evidence suggests that more than 0.75 million tonnes of recycled aggregate and around 0.09 million tonnes of recycled soil is produced in the Black Country per annum (see BCWPS, Table 3.7), compared to around 0.05 million tonnes of primary aggregate. Thus, more than 90% of the aggregates produced in and the Black Country is from secondary or recycled sources.
- 8.21 Although this is the best available evidence, it is based on a national survey and is unlikely to be reliable enough to be able to support local or sub-regional targets for secondary and recycled aggregate production at the present time. Targets may be set in future once reliable local data becomes available. In the meantime, the recovery and recycling of waste for aggregates and the use of secondary and recycled aggregates in construction projects will be supported and encouraged through Policies WM3 - WM5.

Primary Aggregates – Regional and Sub-Regional Apportionments

- 8.22 Although secondary and recycled sources are expected to continue to be the Black Country’s main source of supply of aggregates, the area also has active sand and gravel quarries and it is anticipated that they will continue in production. The Core Strategy therefore aims to maintain primary sand and gravel production at current levels throughout the plan period. As well as supporting the development needed within the Growth Network, this will contribute towards regional requirements for aggregates.
- 8.23 Revised national and regional guidelines for aggregates provision were published in June 2009, covering the period 2005-2020. The guidelines propose that the West Midlands region (which includes the Black Country) will produce 165 million tonnes of primary land-won sand and gravel (i.e. sand and gravel extracted from quarries) between 2005 and 2020. This equates to 10.31 million tonnes per annum. It is assumed that the West Midlands will produce a further 100 million tonnes of alternative materials (secondary and recycled aggregates) over the same period. This equates to 6.25 million tonnes per annum.
- 8.24 Each mineral planning authority is expected to make provision for future aggregates supply in its Core Strategy, in accordance with agreed “apportionments” based on technical advice provided by Aggregates Working Parties, or alternatives based on robust evidence (MPS1, Annex 1 and advice to chief Planning Officers dated 6 July 2010). The previous aggregates apportionments for the West Midlands were reviewed following the publication of the national and regional guidelines and the results were published in March 2010. A number of options were developed through technical work undertaken by Land Use Consultants and the Aggregates Working Party. The majority of Aggregates Working Party representatives in the West Midlands (including the Black Country Authorities) supported apportionments based on a 10-year average (mean) of past sales.
- 8.25 There are no specific aggregates apportionments for the Black Country as for aggregates planning purposes it is part of the West Midlands County sub-region. The Black Country is therefore expected to contribute towards the West Midlands County apportionment for sand and gravel, which is currently 0.550 million tonnes per annum. To provide a minimum 7-year rolling land bank of sand and gravel to 2026 and beyond in line with the apportionment, as required by national policy guidance (MPS1, Annex 1), the West Midlands County needs to identify permitted reserves and additional resources equivalent to 8.54 million tonnes (see Table 19). The only authorities which currently contribute towards this apportionment are Solihull and Walsall. Historically, Solihull has contributed around 90% of the apportionment, and the balance has been met by Walsall.

Table 19: West Midlands County Sand and Gravel Land Bank - Current and Future Requirements 2008 - 2026

Total Apportionment 2005 – 2020 (million tonnes)	Annual Production Requirement (million tonnes)	Landbank Permitted Reserves @ 31.12.08 (million tonnes)	Permitted Reserves Required for 7-year Landbank @ 31.12.08 (million tonnes)	Permitted Reserves Required for Landbank 2008-2020 +7 Years (19 years) (million tonnes)	Shortfall Reserves Required to Provide Landbank to 2020 (million tonnes)	Permitted Reserves Required for Landbank 2008-2026 +7 Years (25 years) (million tonnes)	Shortfall Reserves Required to Provide Landbank to 2026 (million tonnes)
8.800	0.550	5.210	3.850	10.450	5.240	13.750	8.540

Source of Landbank Permitted Reserves Data (3rd column): 2008 West Midlands Regional Aggregates Working Party (WMRAWP) Annual Report.

Note: This apportionment relates to the West Midlands County which includes Birmingham, Coventry and Solihull as well as the Black Country. It is based on sub-regional apportionments which reflect the national and regional guidelines published in June 2009, and which were supported by the majority of Aggregates Working Party representatives (Option 1c - see Report to West Midlands Regional Assembly Board of Directors 17 March 2010: Sub-Regional Apportionment of Aggregates: 2005 – 2020, Appendix A)

- 8.26 The annual sand and gravel production target in the policy is based on the best and most up-to-date evidence available for what the Black Country can realistically contribute towards the sub-regional apportionment. This evidence was made available to Land Use Consultants and to the Aggregates Working Party for the technical work undertaken during the review of the sub-regional apportionments, and was reflected in the options which were developed.

Primary Aggregates Production in the Black Country

- 8.27 This will involve sand and gravel extraction only, as there is no longer any requirement for the West Midlands County Area to produce crushed rock. At present, Walsall is the only Black Country authority contributing to the sub-regional sand and gravel requirements. This position is not expected to change as there is no evidence that the other authorities have viable sand and gravel resources.
- 8.28 New proposals for large-scale primary sand and gravel extraction (as opposed to prior extraction proposals which are addressed in MIN1) are only expected to come forward within the Aldridge / Stonnall areas of Walsall, which are known to contain viable sand and gravel resources. These areas have been and remain the main focus of interest from quarry operators and are therefore the locations for the areas of search.
- 8.29 It is an objective of the mineral strategy for primary sand and gravel production to be maintained at the rates achieved in the recent past if possible, to help deliver the regeneration and growth proposed in the Spatial Strategy. Achieving this will of course depend on suitable sand and gravel extraction proposals coming forward and being approved within the plan period. Maintaining supplies at current levels will be a challenge, because the evidence shows that Walsall’s permitted reserves are running low.
- 8.30 The 50,000 tonnes per annum production target is based on evidence of the extent of the resource likely to be available in the areas of search and evidence of past rates of production. This is summarised in the table below. Further information can be found in the Minerals Background Paper 2 (BCMBP2).

Table 20 - Summary of Existing Sand and Gravel Reserves and Potential Sand and Gravel Supplies in the Black Country

Source of Supply	Location	Estimated Quantity of Sand and Gravel (million tonnes)	Source of Evidence
Permitted Reserves @ 31.12.08	Existing Branton Hill & Aldridge Quarries.	Around 0.2	2008 WMRAWP Annual survey.
Additional Permitted Reserves coming forward since December 2007 - New Planning Permissions.	-	0.0	2008 Walsall AMR
Potential Reserves in the Pipeline - Planning Applications.	MA2: Branton Hill Area of Search.	1.2	Current Planning Application - Branton Hill Lane.
Potential Resources identified in representations on emerging LDFs.	MA1: Birch Lane Area of Search.	2.6	Representation from Cemex - Black Country Core Strategy.
Other Potential Resources identified through emerging LDFs.	Aldridge/ Stonnall areas of Walsall.	Resources identified but not quantified.	Black Country Minerals Study 2008.
TOTAL		4.0	

8.31 At the end of December 2008, total permitted sand and gravel resources in the West Midlands County were estimated to have been around 5.21 million tonnes (data from the 2008 WMRAWP annual survey). The proportion of these reserves in the Black Country (Walsall) is very small (less than 5%). However, the Core Strategy identifies around 4.0 million tonnes of permitted reserves and other resources within the two Areas of Search in Walsall, equivalent to nearly half of the sub-regional land bank requirement (see Table 20). The Core Strategy therefore makes adequate provision for the Black Country to contribute appropriately towards sub-regional requirements.

8.32 Although there appear to be a significant amount of resources within the areas of search, the production target has to be cautious. Annual production rates are unlikely to increase significantly through exploitation of these resources because they are concentrated around the existing quarries. Whilst extending these quarries would undoubtedly allow production to continue for longer, there is no evidence that annual production would increase to any significant extent as a result. As far as we can see ahead, production is unlikely to increase significantly beyond the existing levels of around 50,000 – 60,000 tonnes per annum. This equates to less than 10% of the West Midlands Country apportionment. However, there is no presumption that Solihull will be able to contribute the remainder of the apportionment. The “share” of the sub-regional apportionment to be met from within Solihull Borough will be determined through the Solihull Core Strategy.

8.33 There is also no certainty that proposals for sand and gravel extraction will come forward and be approved within the areas of search during the plan period. The policy therefore allows flexibility for suitable extraction proposals to come forward outside the areas of search if monitoring shows that the identified resources are not being exploited and this is compromising landbanks and the ability to meet the production targets.

Areas of Search

8.34 The areas of search have been chosen because they are well-related to the existing quarries, contain viable sand and gravel resources, are of interest to operators, and are subject to fewer constraints than other potential resource areas. They are therefore considered the most appropriate locations for sand and gravel extraction during the plan period.

8.35 Although they are not as constrained as other potential resource areas, the resources within the areas of search are affected by some significant constraints, including groundwater source protection zones, nature conservation designations, and highway capacity/ drainage issues. The policy therefore highlights specific local issues which should be addressed in proposals for sand and gravel extraction within the areas of search. In addition, all proposals will be assessed against the general requirements and criteria in Policy MIN5.

Borrow Pits

8.36 The need for temporary “borrow pits” linked to specific construction or engineering projects has been considered. The main projects likely to generate a need for “borrow pits” are the M54 to M6/M6 (Toll) Link Road and the M6 Widening, if they go ahead. It is recognised that “borrow pits” can help prevent sterilisation of mineral resources and reduce the need to transport material long distances. The policy therefore allows for aggregates to be sourced from within the Black Country for specific construction or engineering projects through “borrow pits,” subject to appropriate safeguards.

Primary Evidence

The Sustainable Use of Resources for the Production of Aggregates in England (August 2006), WRAP Survey of Arisings and Use of Alternatives to Primary Aggregates in England, 2005 (February 2007), Capita Symonds/WRC plc
Black Country Minerals Study (March 2008), RPS
West Midlands Regional Aggregate Working Party Annual Report 2007 (July 2009), WMRAWP
Black Country Core Strategy: Minerals Background Paper 2 (Revised) (February 2010), Black Country Authorities

Delivery

- Delivery will be primarily through the Development Management process including pre-application discussions with mineral operators on new proposals for sand and gravel extraction. There will also be further liaison with adjoining authorities and WMRAWP on regional and sub-regional requirements. If evidence suggests the targets need to be revised, this will be done through a review of the Core Strategy or other DPDs.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
COI MIN2a - Production of Primary Land Won Aggregates.	2008 – 2026: Sand and gravel apportionment for West Midlands County = 0.550 million tonnes per annum – see Table 19. Indicative sand and gravel production target for the Black Country (Walsall) = 50,000 tonnes per annum.
COI MIN2b – Production of Secondary/ Recycled Aggregates.	To be developed through future monitoring.
LOI MIN2 - % Permissions for non-mineral related development in Sand & Gravel areas of search.	0%

MIN3 Maintaining Supplies of Brick Clay

Spatial Objectives

Bricks and tiles are essential building products needed for housing and other developments, and the regeneration of the Black Country cannot take place without an adequate supply of these materials. Making provision for supplies of locally produced clays (particularly Etruria Marl) to local brickworks and providing for stockpiling and importation of materials where this is essential will support the Vision, Sustainability Principles B and E and most of the Spatial Objectives, in particular, Spatial Objectives 9 and 10.

Policy

The Minerals Sub-Key Diagram shows the location of the existing brick and tile manufacturing plants which use Etruria Marl and existing Etruria Marl quarries. The Black Country will aim to provide a supply of Etruria Marl to each operational local brick and tile works in the Black Country for as long as possible, and will aim to provide a 25-year supply to each works where feasible.

Supply of Clays to Brickworks

The extent of Etruria Marl resources in the Black Country is shown on Map MC2 in Appendix 7. Fireclay resources are also present in the Black Country, associated with surface coal deposits. However, not all of the clay resources in the Black Country are likely to be of sufficient quality for use in brick and tile making, and some are affected by significant environmental constraints.

Suitable Locations for Working of Etruria Marl

The extraction of Etruria Marl is expected to be focused in the following areas of search shown on the Minerals Key Diagram:

MA3: Himley/ Oak Farm (Dudley)

MA4: Ketley (Dudley)

MA5: Stubbers Green (Walsall)

Resources have been identified within these areas which will allow production to continue at each of the Black Country's brick / tile works until the end of the plan period. The extraction of clay will not be permitted outside the areas of search unless there is clear evidence of a deficiency in supply. All new proposals for extraction of Etruria Marl and other brick clays will be subject to the general requirements in Policy MIN5.

The pooling or sharing of resources between more than one works will be supported where this will help maintain supplies for longer, provided that the haulage of material will not have unacceptable effects on the local highway network or on other uses along the route.

Proposals for the extraction of Etruria Marl within the areas of search should satisfy the following requirements:

- They should form part of a phased programme which secures restoration of existing workings by the earliest possible date;
- Proposals within the Flood Zone 3a along the Holbeache Brook in Dudley and to the south of Stubbers Green Road in Walsall should assess the risk of flooding and include details of how this will be addressed in line with ENV4;
- Harmful impacts on designated biodiversity / geodiversity sites should be assessed and full details of proposed mitigation / compensation for potential losses should be provided in line with ENV1;
- Haulage routes passing through the Stubbers Green area of Walsall should avoid the Shelfield junction (junction of A461, Spring Road and Mill Road).

Working of Fireclay

Fireclays are known to occur within the area west of Brownhills in Walsall in association with surface coal resources. They are not currently being extracted but are worked from long-term stockpiles for use in brick, pottery and other ceramic manufacture. Local demand for fireclay for brick manufacture is currently being met mainly from imports. Opportunities to produce fireclay through surface coal working should be exploited where feasible (see Policy MIN4) and environmentally acceptable.

The extraction of fireclay is expected to be focused in the following area of search shown on the Minerals Key Diagram:

MA6: Yorks Bridge (Walsall).

Stockpiling of Clays

There is an existing stockpile of fireclay at Birch Coppice to the west of Brownhills in Walsall, which is shown on the Minerals Key Diagram. Further stockpiling of fireclay and other clays used for brick, pottery and other ceramic manufacture will be permitted within the curtilage of existing works where they comply with the requirements of MIN5.

Proposals for “strategic” stockpiles of fireclay (to be used by more than one manufacturer or supplier) should satisfy the following criteria:

- **They should be supported by evidence demonstrating a need for fireclay, and that stockpiling is the most appropriate method of securing long-term supplies;**
- **They should be located as close as possible to the source of the material and to the proposed end-users;**
- **There should be good accessibility by road and / or rail between the site, the source of the material and the proposed end-users;**
- **In the interests of minimising visual impacts, the height of the stockpile should be kept to a minimum, its design and form should reflect the surrounding landscape, and appropriate screening/ landscaping should be included (see ENV2).**

Importation of Clays

Importation of material may be permitted in the case of clays that do not occur locally, and/ or where this will allow supplies of Etruria Marl or fireclay to be maintained for longer than would otherwise be the case, provided that this will not result in unacceptable impacts on the local highway network or on local communities. Applications to allow or increase importation of clay will be expected to be supported by evidence to this effect.

Where an agreement is in place to pool or share the resources, the movement of clay from the Stubbers Green area of search to any of the three brickworks in Walsall will not be regarded as “importation.”

Justification

The Brick Industry and other Clay Users

- 8.37 Brick manufacturing has a long history in the Black Country and it still has a presence within the area. The proposals within growth network are likely to generate a continuing demand for bricks and tiles for house building and commercial building projects. The Core Strategy should therefore support the local industry as much as possible subject to not compromising other important objectives, in the interests of minimising the distance that materials need to travel.
- 8.38 The table below lists the existing brick manufacturing plants in the Black Country, plus one other plant just outside the area which is supplied by a clay pit in Dudley. One works (Dreadnought) produces tiles as well as bricks. All but one of the works uses clays sourced from within the Black Country, and in four cases the works are using material from an adjacent clay pit. A local pottery clay supplier also uses stockpiles of locally sourced fireclay for a variety of uses including export. Most brick manufacturers use a variety of clays which they blend to produce different colours and textures of bricks. Materials which cannot be obtained locally are imported from elsewhere.

- 8.39 Unlike aggregates, there is limited scope to use recycled and alternative materials for brick-making, although clays can be recovered for engineering uses, such as lining and capping of landfill sites, and bricks themselves can be recycled if they are of sufficient quality. Discussions with local brick manufacturers indicate that they are already re-using waste and using recycled materials where possible, and that achieving much more than 10% use of secondary and recycled materials is likely to be a challenge. Future proposals for brick and tile manufacture, clay extraction and related uses will be expected to comply with Policy MIN5 concerning waste minimisation, re-use and recycling.

Brick Clay Supply Requirements

- 8.40 MPS1 requires MPAs to provide a stock of permitted reserves sufficient to provide for 25 years of production at each brick manufacturing plant. As a general rule, brick clay should be extracted as close as practicable to the works it supplies, rather than being imported. However, where local resources are limited or do not include the full range of clays required, this may not be possible, and most of the Black Country works rely on imports to some extent.
- 8.41 The only clay currently extracted in the Black Country is Etruria Marl, which is a nationally scarce resource. The supply requirements for each works for the period 2009/10 – 2025/26 have been established (as far as possible) through discussions with operators and are summarised in the table below. It is estimated that there are (at April 2010) around 2 million tonnes of permitted reserves and other resources of Etruria Marl within Areas of Search MA3 and MA4 in Dudley, and around 4.5 million tonnes within Area of Search MA5 in Walsall. Taking into account the potential for imports where mineral permissions allow them, it is estimated that the resources within the areas of search will be sufficient to supply each works except for Cradley Special Brick, therefore all other works should be at least in Category 2 (15 – 24 years’ supply). However, a 25 year supply cannot be guaranteed in every case. The situation will be kept under review, and if necessary/ feasible, the relevant authorities will consider identifying additional resources in other DPDs.
- 8.42 In Walsall there are three works in very close proximity to the Stubbers Green area of search, so if agreement can be reached to “share” resources in the area between these works, the haulage of material from within the area to the works will not be regarded as “importation, and will not count towards the percentage of imported material allowed under existing permissions.

Table 21 - Supplies of Etruria Marl to Black Country Brickworks - Current Supply Situation (@ April 2009) and Potential Future Supply

Works	Authority	Operator	Current Status	Source of Supply	Current Supply Category	Future Potential Supply Category
Aldridge	Walsall	Ibstock	Operational	Highfields South (Walsall)	4	4
Atlas	Walsall	Ibstock	Operational	Dumblederry Farm (Atlas) Quarry (Walsall)	2	1
Cradley	Sandwell	Cradley Special Brick	Operational	Imports Only	4	4
Dreadnought	Dudley	Hinton, Perry & Davenhill	Operational	Ketley Quarry (Dudley)	2	2
Sedgley*	South Staffs.	Wienerberger	Mothballed	Oak Farm Clay Pit (Dudley)	2	2
Sandown	Walsall	Wienerberger	Operational	Sandown Quarry, Highfields South (Walsall)	3	2
Stourbridge	Dudley	Ibstock	Mothballed	Himley Quarry (Dudley)	3	2

* Works is located just outside the Black Country (in South Staffordshire)

Key to Categories in Table: Category 1 = 25 years + supply, Category 2 = 15 – 24 years' supply, Category 3 = less than 15 years' supply, Category 4 = no local supplies - supplied entirely by imports or stockpiles.

Areas of Search

8.43 The Etruria Marl areas of search have been defined to show where further working may take place primarily to increase supplies to the two works which have a particularly deficiency in supply. The relevant authorities will give due weight to the national policy requirement when considering applications for the extension of existing quarries or for new clay quarries, so appropriate provision can be made. However, the release of resources outside the areas of search will not be at the expense of compromising other important policy objectives

8.44 Where extraction takes place, detrimental impacts on the local environment, the highway network and local communities should be avoided. The areas of search identified have been chosen because they are well-related to the existing brick and tile works, contain viable resources, are of interest to operators, and are subject to fewer constraints than other potential resource areas. It is therefore intended that these will provide the main source of supply within the plan period. The policy also highlights a number of specific local issues which should be addressed in applications for the extraction of Etruria Marl within the areas of search, to address potentially harmful effects.

8.45 In addition to Etruria Marl, the Brownhills area of Walsall, which forms part of the South Staffordshire Coalfield, has fireclay resources associated with the coal. However, it is not clear whether these resources are of sufficient quality for making bricks. There may be opportunities to extract fireclay in association with the working of coal in the future. Requirements for fireclay and coal working are set out in Policy MIN4. It is estimated that there are around 1.63 million tonnes of fireclay resources in the Brownhills area of Walsall.

Stockpiling of Clays

8.46 As there is a local demand for fireclay both from brick manufacturers and from a local supplier of pottery clay blends, the policy allows for the stockpiling of fireclay either at existing brickworks (where feasible) or as "strategic" stockpiles in other suitable locations. This would allow long-term supplies of fireclay to be maintained if extraction takes place. This may not be feasible otherwise, given the usual method of surface coal working, which tends to be of much shorter duration than other mineral operations.

8.47 The policy also recognises that a certain amount of on-site stockpiling of clays at brick and tile works is necessary, both to allow the material to "weather" before it can be used, and to allow for the convenient storage of a range of locally excavated and imported materials. However, it is acknowledged that most Black Country works do not have sufficient space within their curtilage to provide a "strategic" stockpile which could provide long-term supplies.

8.48 Nearly all of the Black Country brick and tile works rely on imports of clay from outside the area to some extent. Most use a range of different clays, not all of which occur locally. In addition, supplies at some quarries are nearly exhausted, creating a deficiency in supply. The quality of the clay is also important, and in some cases, local resources may not be of sufficient quality to be used. Imports are therefore likely to continue to play a role in the supply of clay to local brickworks where suitable sources can be found, and this is allowed for within the policy.

Primary Evidence

Black Country Minerals Study (March 2008), RPS
Black Country Core Strategy: Minerals Background Paper 2 (Revised) (February 2010), Black Country Authorities

Delivery

- Delivery will be primarily through the Development Management process including pre-application discussions with mineral operators on new proposals for Etruria Marl and/ or coal and fireclay extraction. There may also be further liaison with adjoining authorities on cross-boundary issues such as imports. If future monitoring shows that there are critical deficiencies in supply, this may trigger a review of the supply requirement.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI MIN3a - % of Black Country brick and tile works with maintained supply of Etruria Marl and Fireclay to 2026.*	100%
LOI MIN3b - % Permissions for non-mineral related development in Etruria Marl and Fireclay areas of search.	0%

*Supply to include imported material where permitted/ available.

MIN4 Exploitation of Other Mineral Resources

Spatial Objectives

There is potential for the working of coal/ ironstone/ fireclay, the exploitation of coal bed methane, and the working of natural building stone in the Black Country. Allowing for possible surface coal/ fireclay working and prospecting/ exploitation of coal bed methane for energy whilst minimising greenhouse gas emissions, and allowing for the exploitation of natural building stone where this can contribute towards maintaining the character of historic buildings and places supports the Vision, Sustainability Principles B and E and most of the Spatial Objectives, in particular, Spatial Objectives 6 and 10.

Policy

Apart from aggregates and brick clay, there are other mineral resources present within the Black Country which may become of economic value in the future. They are included in the Mineral Safeguarding Area identified in MIN1 and on the Minerals Key Diagram.

The main resources present which could be exploited some time within the plan period are coal and associated fireclay, and natural building stone. The following policy will apply to new proposals for the working of these minerals, other than as part of a “prior extraction” scheme (see MIN1). All proposals will also be subject to the general requirements in Policy MIN5.

Coal and Fireclay Working

Surface coal resources occur across much of the Black Country, and their location is shown on Map MC3 in Appendix 7. Fireclay, which is of importance for brick making and pottery making, may also occur in association with these deposits.

There is a general presumption against deep mining of coal, surface coal working and colliery spoil disposal in the Black Country, unless the proposal would meet the tests of environmental acceptability set out in national policy guidance. Any such proposals will be expected to be fully justified in terms of the economic and energy benefits they will generate. Proposals for the working of coal will also be expected to extract maximum value from other mineral resources associated with coal deposits.

Where surface working is proposed, brick manufacturers and other potential end-users should be involved at the earliest possible stage, to determine whether there is fireclay or other clay present, and whether it is of sufficient quality to be used for brick manufacture or for other beneficial uses. Where suitable quality fireclay is present and extraction is feasible, the working plan and restoration programme should enable this to be extracted and stockpiled in a usable and accessible way (see MIN3).

The location of a “dormant” permission for the winning and working of clay and coal by underground and surface mining is shown on the Minerals Key Diagram. The permitted site is within Brownhills Common and the Slough SINC. Working can only commence when a modern scheme of conditions has been submitted to and approved by the mineral planning authority (Walsall Council). Such conditions must minimise harm to the SINC and maximise the benefits and quality of final restoration. Restoration should be to the highest possible standard to ensure that no future legacy problems are created and that the restored site is at least equivalent to its current quality and value for nature conservation and recreation. Any approval of coal and fireclay working in the Brownhills Common area will be subject to conditions requiring restoration to an appropriate nature conservation/ recreational after-use, which will make a contribution towards the implementation of the proposed Local Nature Reserve.

Coal Bed Methane

The potential for exploitation of Coal Bed Methane (CBM) will be considered if a Petroleum Exploration Development Licence (PEDL) is issued in the Black Country, and at that stage appropriate guidance will be incorporated into LDFs either through a review of this plan or through another DPD. Proposals coming forward in advance of this will be assessed against the guidance in Policy MIN5 and the following conditions will apply.

Any permission granted for the extraction of CBM will be temporary, and subject to conditions limiting the duration of the operation. Proposals should include details of the area covered by the PEDL, the scale and type of operation, the drilling apparatus to be used (including the height of the rig or wellhead), and the site where the wellhead will be stationed. A separate application may be required to relocate a wellhead. Drilling apparatus should be appropriately screened and sited to minimise noise and potentially harmful visual impacts (see ENV2 and MIN5).

Working of Natural Building Stone

The location of natural building stone resources is shown on Maps MC1 and MC2 in Appendix 7. Proposals for the working of natural building stone on a small scale, and on a time-limited basis, may be supported where this would assist the conservation and repair of historic buildings or structures built of the same or similar materials. Proposals should be supported by evidence that the stone to be worked will be used in a specific conservation project, that this material makes a significant positive contribution to the character of the building, structure or area, and that the working process would not have unacceptable impacts on neighbouring uses.

Justification

Potential for Future Clay and Coal Working

- 8.49 There is no policy requirement for the working of coal, however surface coal working has taken place in the Black Country in the recent past. The last site to be worked was Ryders Hayes in Walsall (1998-2001). Demand for coal could increase in the future, in the face of dwindling gas resources and concerns about energy security, so we cannot rule out the possibility that proposals will come forward in the plan period.
- 8.50 Large-scale surface coal and fireclay working (as opposed to prior extraction which is covered in MIN1) is only likely to take place in the Brownhills area of Walsall, where viable resources are known to exist. For example, there is an existing “dormant” permission for coal and clay extraction at Brownhills Common in Walsall dating back to the 1950s which could be activated at any time, on the submission of a suitable schedule of modern conditions.
- 8.51 There has also been recent interest in the working of coal and fireclay at a site called Yorks Bridge to the west of Brownhills, straddling the boundary between Walsall Borough and Cannock Chase District. Any proposal for fireclay working at Yorks Bridge must satisfactorily address potential impacts on the nearby Cannock Extension Canal SAC, Brownhills Common and the Slough SINC, Wyrley and Essington Canal SLINC, local communities and businesses, and the local highway and canal networks. Significant weight will be given towards the permanent revocation of the “dormant” permission at Brownhills Common where this forms part of an application for working at Yorks Bridge. If either proposal is pursued, this will be subject to restoration of the land to an equivalent habitat quality and an appropriate nature conservation/recreational end use, resulting in the declaration of the proposed Local Nature Reserve.

Potential for Coal Bed Methane and Underground Gas Storage

- 8.52 The potential of these has been considered in accordance with national policy guidance (MPS1, Annex 4). The Black Country Minerals Study has also highlighted the potential for these technologies.
- 8.53 The Coal Authority has also advised that underground gas storage (UGS) technologies are at a very early stage of development so no potential for this can be identified at present. However, there may be potential for coal bed methane (CBM) exploitation at some point during the plan period. As well as providing a new source of energy, exploitation of CBM minimises the potential for this potent greenhouse gas to escape into the atmosphere.
- 8.54 Planning permission is required for the extraction of CBM and for the pumping apparatus, although licensing falls under a separate regulatory regime. The first stage is for a Petroleum Exploration Development Licence (PEDL) to be granted to an operator by the Department for Energy and Climate Change. This allows exploration to take place to find out if a viable resource is present. If the results are favourable, the operator must then obtain planning permission for extraction of CBM before a Coal Access Agreement can be issued by the Coal Authority.

- 8.55 So far no PEDL has been granted for CBM exploration in the Black Country and the current coal resource maps for the area only cover surface coal resources. It is therefore not possible to identify the extent of potential CBM resources in the Core Strategy. However, as has been noted in the Spatial Portrait above, the Black Country forms part of the South Staffordshire Coalfield, and it is understood that there is potential for CBM exploration in adjacent areas of the coalfield in Staffordshire. This suggests there may also be potential in the Black Country. We have therefore included appropriate interim guidance in the Core Strategy, which will apply until more detailed spatial guidance can be provided.
- 8.56 Extraction of CBM is not like a normal quarrying operation and is more akin to drilling for oil. The main issues are likely to be noise and visual impact from the pumping apparatus. Like oil, the gas is pumped from underground and transported via pipes, and therefore does not require transport by road or rail. The pumping apparatus is in the form of a small wellhead or rig around 8 – 18m tall which occupies a site of around 0.3 ha. There is flexibility over where the rigs can be located and therefore scope to minimise their visual impact. As the infrastructure must follow the source of gas, drilling is a temporary activity and the rigs must move around the site to exploit the resources fully.
- 8.57 The policy reflects these requirements and seeks to control matters such as the duration of operations, the siting and potential relocation of the apparatus, and visual impacts.

Potential for Working of Natural Building Stone

- 8.58 Whilst there is also no specific requirement to provide for extracting natural building stone, national policy guidance encourages this on a small scale where feasible and where this will contribute towards the conservation of historic buildings or monuments and / or geodiversity (MPS1, Annex 3). The inclusion of such policy guidance is supported by English Heritage.
- 8.59 Although there is no evidence of a demand for natural building stone in the Black Country at present, there is growing interest in this field at a national level. For example, the BGS and English Heritage are currently working with geologists and conservation experts on a Strategic Stone Study for each county, which will identify and catalogue the most important stones used in local historic buildings and potential sources of supply. The Black Country Minerals Study (2008) has shown that such resources do exist in the Black Country, mainly in parts of Dudley and Walsall. The main resources of historic importance to the Black Country are likely to be limestone (e.g. “Gornal Stone” used in the construction of a number of buildings in Dudley) and dolerite (otherwise known as “Rowley Rag,” mainly used to make stone setts and kerb stones, but also occasionally used as a construction material).
- 8.60 Extraction of natural building stone on a small-scale will be supported in principle, where there is evidence that such materials are needed for the repair and conservation of historic buildings and other structures. Such evidence could include a listed building description which refers to the type of stone in question, or a conservation area character appraisal indicating that the stone makes an important contribution to the character and appearance of the area.
- 8.61 There may also be opportunities to extract and safeguard natural building stone for future use, through “prior extraction” of minerals in advance of redevelopment schemes. This is addressed in Policy MIN1.

Primary Evidence

Surface Mining and Coal Resource Areas (2008), Coal Authority
Mineral Extraction and the Historic Environment (January 2008), English Heritage
Black Country Minerals Study (March 2008), RPS
Black Country Core Strategy: Minerals Background Paper 2 (Revised) (February 2010),
Black Country Authorities

Delivery

- Through the Development management process including pre-application discussions with applicants, mineral operators, conservation officers, and other relevant bodies such as English Heritage, the Coal Authority and the Black Country Geodiversity Partnership.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI MIN4 - % of applications for coal and fireclay working, coal bed methane or natural building stone which satisfy the requirements of the policy.	100%

MIN5 New Proposals for Mineral Development

Spatial Objectives

Steering mineral working and mineral-related infrastructure towards the most suitable locations and providing clear guidance on requirements for mineral related developments supports the Vision, Sustainability Principles B and D and most of the Spatial Objectives, in particular Objectives 6, 9 and 10.

Policy

General Requirements for Mineral Developments

All new development proposals involving mineral working or mineral related developments should demonstrate how they will contribute towards Spatial Objective 10 and the strategic objectives of Policy MIN1, such as the contribution they will make towards the long-term conservation and safeguarding of mineral resources. The benefits of the proposal should clearly outweigh any potential detrimental impacts. Conditions attached to new mineral permissions will reflect the latest standards of good practice in the control of such operations.

Proposals should minimise waste as far as possible and where feasible, provision should be made for the extraction, re-use or recycling of potentially useable materials produced as a by-product of the operation. All proposals should set out the contribution they will make towards the mineral production and supply targets in Policies MIN2 and MIN3 (such as the extent of reserves and anticipated annual production rates), and the contribution that final restoration will make towards waste disposal requirements (see WM1 and WM3). Working plans and restoration proposals should include measures to maintain the stability of the working face, the site and surrounding area prior to and during restoration. When working ceases, all plant and equipment should be removed and sites should be restored to a stable condition and to a standard fit for the agreed after-use within a short a timescale as possible.

Environmental and Amenity Issues

The working or processing of minerals or extraction of coal bed methane will not be permitted in residential areas unless it can be demonstrated that the operations will not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of local communities. Proposals in or near to the Growth Network and Free-Standing Sites should be compatible with the existing/ proposed uses. Locations within or near to sites of importance for biodiversity, geodiversity or cultural heritage, should be avoided unless there are no viable alternatives (see ENV1). A hydrological report should be provided with proposals in areas at risk of flooding and proposals in or near to aquifers, demonstrating that any potential impacts have been addressed (see ENV5).

To minimise potential impacts from dust and noise, where feasible, mineral processing operations should be enclosed and screened by well-designed boundary treatments (such as fencing, bunds, hedges, tree planting and landscaping). In areas already affected by mineral working or related activities, the cumulative impact of the proposal on the environment, transport network, and neighbouring uses will be considered, as will the timescale and duration of the operations. Over-intensification of mineral working activity in any one area should be avoided where this would have adverse impacts on neighbouring uses.

New buildings, structures, plant and equipment, boundaries, noise bunds and landscaping should be designed and sited to minimise visual impacts (see ENV3). Restoration programmes and after-uses for former mineral workings should address the environmental quality objective of the Spatial Strategy and reflect local character and should include provision for after care. Where appropriate, they should make a positive contribution towards the Black Country's environmental infrastructure (policy CSP3). Suitable after-uses for sites in the Green Belt will could include agriculture, forestry, nature conservation, flood alleviation and outdoor sports or recreational uses.

Transport Issues

Minerals should be worked or processed as close as possible to the development or communities that will use them. Proposals should address the impact of transporting minerals and mineral products on the highway network and if they generate a significant number of additional heavy goods vehicle movements they should be accompanied by a Transport Assessment (see TRAN2). Where there is no realistic alternative to the bulk transport of minerals and mineral products by road, impacts will be minimised by identifying agreed haulage routes from the production site to the Principal Road Network and Primary route Network. Where feasible, the potential for transporting material by rail or inland waterways should be explored, particularly in locations identified as having potential for rail freight transport (see TRAN3). Long-distance transport or haulage of material should be avoided wherever possible. Where a proposal involves cross-boundary movements of minerals or mineral products and/ or is part of a wider network or "hub" of facilities or workings, the views of the relevant highway and mineral planning authorities will be taken into account.

Assessment Criteria for Mineral Development Proposals

Proposals for mineral working or mineral-related infrastructure will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Whether the proposal supports national and local strategies and objectives for minerals (for example, Spatial Objective 10);
- Whether the proposal supports the local economy and regeneration objectives for the Black Country (for example, would it create or retain local jobs, provide raw material and mineral products for local businesses, or help to supply construction projects within the Growth Network?);
- Whether the proposal contributes towards the positive environmental transformation of the Black Country (for example, is it designed to complement/ contribute towards environmental infrastructure, does it identify and adequately address potential harmful effects on the environment, and is it capable of being implemented without creating or exacerbating geotechnical or environmental problems?);
- Whether the proposal would provide opportunities for co-location of related uses and/ or generate other benefits (for example, would it produce aggregates as secondary materials, involve re-use, recovery and recycling of aggregates from waste, or recovery of landfill gas for energy?);
- Whether the proposal is compatible with neighbouring uses (taking into account the nature of the operations, the hours of working, the timing and duration of the operations and cumulative effects), and if so, whether it identifies and adequately addresses potential harmful effects on amenity;
- Whether the proposal would address impacts on the highway/ transport network (for example, for example, has the potential to move minerals and mineral products by rail or inland waterway been fully considered, and does it identify and adequately address impacts on the local/ strategic highway and drainage network?).

The same criteria will be used to identify and select sites for inclusion in other DPDs (where appropriate), as well as for assessing planning applications.

Justification

General Requirements for Mineral Related Proposals

- 8.62 This policy sets out the general requirements which will apply to all proposals involving development of mineral infrastructure and mineral working.
- 8.63 Mineral infrastructure proposals are defined as storage, handling and processing facilities (such as depots and recycling facilities) and transportation facilities (such as rail sidings, rail heads and canal wharves). Mineral working proposals include all the types of working referred to in Policies MIN1 – MIN4, such as prior extraction in advance of a redevelopment scheme, extensions to existing quarries, new quarries, borrow pits, stockpiles and exploitation of coal bed methane.
- 8.64 Mineral applications can be very complex. However, each proposal is different and it is recognised that not all of the issues covered in the policy will apply in every case. Early discussion with the mineral planning authority is recommended, to clarify the scope and level of detail of information required with an application. The most important thing will be to demonstrate that the proposal is consistent with national policy guidance and the overall Spatial Strategy.

8.65 In the first instance, proposals should demonstrate compliance with the “hierarchical” approach set out in MPS1. This involves demonstrating that the proposals make best use of the minerals being handled or extracted, that mineral infrastructure and resources are not needlessly lost or sterilised by non-mineral development, and that the operations proposed will minimise waste as far as possible.

8.66 In the Black Country, it is important for mineral related proposals to complement, rather than conflict with the strategic objectives of the Core Strategy. Like all other proposals, they should be consistent with the vision, sustainability principles and spatial objectives of the strategy. There are a number of ways in which they might do this, for example:

- Supporting economic objectives by providing or retaining jobs;
- Generating the raw materials and mineral products needed to support the development and growth proposed in the strategy;
- Contributing towards the mineral supply and production targets set out in Policies MIN2 and MIN3 of the Core Strategy;
- Supporting positive environmental transformation through well-designed restoration schemes and complementary end-uses;
- Providing locally-sourced materials thereby minimising the distance they need to travel.

8.67 The requirement to monitor the implementation of policies means that we must collect data on mineral supplies and production rates on a regular basis, to establish whether the targets and supply requirements are being met. It is vital that mineral operators contribute towards this by providing information with applications. All proposals involving the production of minerals or extraction of coal bed methane should therefore include information on the extent of the reserves (where relevant), and anticipated annual production/ usage rates. Where regular updates are required for monitoring purposes, conditions may be imposed requiring operators to provide this information.

Locational Considerations

8.68 Quarrying tends to be concentrated in particular places where good quality minerals can be found and working is feasible. This is the case in the Black Country, where sand and gravel working is concentrated around Aldridge (Walsall) and Etruria Marl working around Kingswinford/ Pensnett (Dudley) and Stubbers Green (Walsall). However, the viability of the resource is not the only issue and the policy sets out other considerations which should be taken into account in mineral proposals, and areas which should be avoided wherever possible. There is likely to be greater flexibility over where ancillary infrastructure can be located.

Environmental, Amenity and Transport Impacts

8.69 Although quarrying is a temporary activity, while it is taking place it can have negative impacts on the areas affected. Such impacts need to be carefully managed, to maintain environmental quality and amenity of neighbouring uses. For example, proposals should consider the potential:

- impacts on air quality arising from the transportation of material or dust and particles from excavation and processing;
- impacts on important environmental assets such as sites designated for their importance for biodiversity/ geodiversity, historic buildings, conservation areas, and important archaeological remains;
- visual impacts on the local landscape, particularly on prominent and highly visible sites;
- impacts on local communities near to mineral handling or production sites.

8.70 The cumulative impact on the amenity of local communities already affected by quarrying is also an important issue. One of the main sources of complaint is noise and dust from heavy goods vehicles, so haulage routes should minimise these impacts where possible. Without proper management and mitigation, a concentration of quarries and related activities may make particular areas less attractive to live in, thus undermining the objective of enhancing existing residential areas. Quarries close to the boundary may also affect communities in adjoining mineral planning authority areas.

8.71 There is little scope for the transportation of minerals by modes other than road in the Black Country, as the rail network does not reach the main mineral resource areas, and the canal network is not considered suitable for transporting minerals other than on a short-term temporary basis. Nevertheless, in the interests of moving towards more sustainable transport, proposals should consider the potential for moving mineral products by rail or inland waterways, where feasible. It is also important to consider the impact of long-distance transport of minerals and cross-boundary movements which may affect other areas. Where this is the case, applicants will be expected to liaise with the relevant highway and mineral planning authorities.

8.72 Finally, monitoring is an important issue, particularly in the case of sand and gravel production and brick clay production. The Black Country authorities have a statutory duty to monitor aggregates production, and will also need to monitor brick clay production if they are to establish whether the targets in the strategy are being met. Where relevant, applicants should show how proposals will contribute towards these targets by providing information on the extent of reserves, and the quantities of material likely to be produced and used per annum.

Assessment Criteria

8.73 The last part of the policy sets out the criteria against which new mineral related proposals will be assessed. This includes proposals being brought forward through Site Allocations DPDs, Area Action Plans and regeneration frameworks, as well as those which come forward as planning applications. The BCWBP2 includes a summary of some of the key considerations which will be taken into account when assessing proposals against the criteria

Primary Evidence

Black Country Minerals Study (March 2008), RPS
Black Country Core Strategy: Minerals Background Paper 2 (Revised) (February 2010), Black Country Authorities

Delivery

- Mainly through the Development Management process such as pre-application discussions with mineral operators, and engagement with applicants/ local communities on planning applications. Also through the DPD process in the case of proposals being brought forward through Site Allocations DPDs, Area Action Plans etc.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
LOI MIN5 - % of applications for mineral related development satisfying the criteria in the policy.	100%

9. MONITORING FRAMEWORK

9.1 Monitoring is about measuring progress on our journey towards achieving the Core Strategy Vision and Spatial Objectives. Government guidance suggests that performance of the Local Development Framework should be monitored through a series of indicators. These consist of:

Core output indicators (COI) - a set of nationally defined indicators recommended by the Government (Regional Spatial Strategy and Local Development Framework – Core Output Indicators – Update 02/02/2008, CLG), which measure physical activities directly related to, or a consequence of, the implementation of planning policies.

Local output indicators (LOI) - identified by the four Black Country authorities to address the outputs of policies not covered by core output indicators.

Significant effects indicators - assess the significant social, environmental and economic effects of policies. These indicators are linked to the sustainability appraisal objectives and indicators.

Contextual indicators - measure changes in the wider social, economic and environmental context within which the Core Strategy operates. These indicators help to give a description of the Black Country and to identify particular issues. These will be developed and set out in the Annual Monitoring Report for the Core Strategy.

9.2 For each of the Core Strategy policies, one or more output indicators have been selected and targets have been set for each indicator. Significant effects indicators are listed in the Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal. The purpose of the monitoring framework is to assess performance of each indicator and therefore the achievement, or otherwise, of the aims of the policy. The Core Spatial Policies do not have specific indicators and targets, however they will be monitored through indicators identified for Core Policies within the document.

9.3 The four Black Country authorities will assess the performance of development against Core Strategy indicators through the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) process. The Black Country authorities will continue to produce separate AMRs. The AMRs will all have a common section on the Black Country Core Strategy, covering Core Strategy indicators and policies, as well as sections monitoring individual Local Authority policies, such as Saved Policies from Unitary Development Plans and those coming forward through Site Allocation Documents or Area Action Plans specific to their area. The AMRs will be published on each of the Black Country Authorities' websites and also on the Black Country Core Strategy website.

9.4 Where targets are not met, the relevant AMR will set out the actions or interventions that the Black Country authorities will make to address underperformance. In a limited number of cases, underperformance will trigger a process which may lead to partial or full review of the Core Strategy.