



# Regeneration in South West Birmingham



A report from Overview & Scrutiny







# Regeneration in South West Birmingham

## Foreword

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Chairman, Regeneration O&S Committee



As Members will recall from earlier reports I have presented to the City Council, I believe there is a great deal of value in Overview and Scrutiny presenting not just Scrutiny Review reports with recommendations, but also Overview reports with more of an emphasis on boosting awareness and stimulating debate. This particular Overview resulted from reflection on the various regeneration bodies and funding streams we consider regularly as part of our work programme, and the question this stimulated: can an area prosper in regeneration without the impetus of an over-arching government programme or regeneration zone board?

We chose to examine this question with reference to South West Birmingham: an area of the city that has seen a decline in a major industry but where there are excellent opportunities and extensive private sector investment. The area has pockets of deprivation and related social problems but has not previously qualified for Regeneration Zone or other Government-funded area programmes. South West Birmingham has clear potential to support economic regeneration and the City Council's ambitions for growth in the city – is this being achieved?

We therefore set out to assess whether there was a vision for the area, how that was promoted and how it was shared with the key stakeholders and partners. What we found was that there was a clear vision for the area, set out in the Area Investment Plan. This had only recently been published, nevertheless our investigation has provided the City Council with a lot of useful information on the extent to which the vision has been shared thus far. We found a great deal of willingness amongst key stakeholders to work more closely with the City Council and each other to achieve success in regenerating the area.

It is important to remember that this is not about the City Council coming up with a vision and asking others to sign up, rather it is an iterative process that requires continuing exchange of ideas and adjustment in response to changing circumstances.

It is perhaps too early to tell if this model is successful, but we do believe that, in the South West, the lack of a board has not hindered progress; rather it has facilitated flexibility in approach. However, there are downsides, and in the case of South West Birmingham, more regular meetings with partners at a strategic level to share and refine the vision would benefit the area.

We have therefore suggested that the Cabinet Member for Regeneration leads on the development of mechanisms to bring partners and stakeholders together on a regular basis, to give weight and confidence to the vision. This could include an annual event bringing together partners involved in delivering regeneration goals across South West Birmingham. This would be supported by regular meetings with Ward Councillors in the South West, and an officer/partner planning group, to ensure the visions are shared and actions are taken forward in full consultation.



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## 1 Introduction

### Background

- 1.1 The Council Plan (2007+) sets out an approach to regeneration across the city with a renewed emphasis on all areas of the city, not just the city centre:

The radical regeneration of the city will continue through a city centre master-planning process and the development of three area prospectuses stimulating investment in key locations. This will encourage further international investment, achieve business growth and provide employment for people from all communities within the city. Birmingham will evolve into a truly international city and all its citizens will benefit from its place in the world economy.<sup>1</sup>

- 1.2 Whereas previous Council Plans had concentrated on working with specific developments and regeneration areas, greater prominence was given to an holistic approach to regeneration, even where there were no area-based schemes or large developments.

- 1.3 This approach is being led by the development of the three Area Investment Prospectuses, which set out a vision for Birmingham over three areas: East Birmingham, South Birmingham and North West Birmingham. These prospectuses form a suite of documents supporting and facilitating regeneration. They explain what the City Council has to offer, in expectation of developer and investor commitment to "bring about real change and long term sustainable development for the benefit of Birmingham's residents".<sup>2</sup>

### The Overview

- 1.4 With a view to taking this approach forward, the Regeneration O&S Committee wished to do a piece of work looking at how this works on the ground, in particular how these ideas are shared with partners and how the City Council can best meet the opportunities and challenges created.

- 1.5 It was decided to focus on the South West of the city – an area that has seen a decline in a major industry but where there are excellent opportunities and extensive private sector investment. The area has pockets of deprivation and related social problems, but has not previously qualified for Regeneration Zone or other Government-funded area programmes and yet has the potential to support economic regeneration and the City Council's ambitions for growth in the city. Indeed, there are clear links here to the work being undertaken by the Co-ordinating O&S Committee on the Growth Agenda – the proposal that the city's population should grow by up to 100,000 over the next twenty years.

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<sup>1</sup> The Council Plan 2007+, Birmingham City Council, page 43

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/>



1.6 Whilst South West Birmingham is an area that most residents would broadly recognise, it is not an actual administrative or political entity. However, one common thread in regeneration work is that different organisations will define areas of the city differently, whilst others cross Local Authority boundaries. Therefore, being too wedded to our own definitions is not always the most helpful approach and therefore we have not attempted to define it too closely. However, a map is provided at the back of this report to show the area under discussion.

## Terms of Reference

1.7 The key question we posed was:

“What is the vision for regeneration in the South West of the city and how is this being promoted?”

1.8 Our evidence gathering took place over six committee meetings between July and December 2007. We spoke to a number of witnesses, and the full list is contained in Appendix 1. The terms of reference for the Overview set out the following objectives:

- To examine the extent to which there is a **shared vision** for the area and how this should be communicated.
- To understand the current position regarding **development planning and regeneration activity** in South West Birmingham.
- To understand the particular **opportunities and challenges** in the area and how these are being met, particularly:
  - Levering funding to support regeneration and physical transformation (from both the private sector and public funding agencies);
  - Availability of suitable housing;
  - Capacity of transportation links and infrastructure;
  - Supporting wider Council objectives for sustainability through this;
  - Availability of suitably skilled workers.
- To examine the extent to which **stakeholders** could work together better:
  - Between directorates of the City Council;
  - Connecting constituencies to the vision;
  - External partner agencies;
  - Private partners.
- Assess how the work will bring benefits to the city as a whole.

1.9 This report sets out our consideration of each of these points, with more detailed evidence contained in the appendices.



## 2 A Shared Vision

- 2.1 The key question we addressed in this Overview concerned whether a vision existed for South West Birmingham and how this was being communicated to both public and private partners.
- 2.2 During our evidence gathering, Birmingham's three Area Investment Prospectuses (AIPs) were published.<sup>3</sup> The South Birmingham prospectus sets out a vision for that area (see Table 1). Given this also covers our area of the South West, it provided a good starting point.

### The Vision

- 2.3 The vision for South Birmingham emphasises forthcoming change in the area, resulting in a more diverse economy with an increase in both jobs and new houses. The AIP goes on to set out the current situation with regard to the economy, housing and transport and details the areas of growth, which are concentrated in four areas – and the key areas fall within the South West:
- **Selly Oak:** including the University of Birmingham, Pebble Mill, the new University Hospital;
  - **Northfield, Frankley and Longbridge:** including the former MG Rover site and two local centres;
  - **Stirchley:** including a local centre plus several housing, industrial and retail opportunities;
  - **Druids Heath / Kings Norton:** including the Maypole Centre, the "Three Estates" New Deal for Communities area.
- 2.4 In summary, the AIP sets out the key elements of regeneration in South Birmingham:
- There is a changing industrial base, from automotive and manufacturing to an employment market dominated by health and education;
  - This will be developed further with a move to focus on high technology industries as a significant chunk of the Central Technology Belt falls within the South of the city;
  - There is currently investment from Government, Birmingham City Council, the Health and private sectors. A large proportion of this is currently focused on Selly Oak and Longbridge;
  - The area has a key part to play in the City's Growth Agenda, in providing more housing and jobs as well as being an area that is likely to see an increase in population;
  - There are links with education and health outcomes, both in terms of how these affect the ability of the South to meet the demand of increased economic activity, and how regeneration schemes can have a positive impact on these outcomes.
- 2.5 The AIP goes on to state that the city looks to South Birmingham as "exemplar of how to achieve high quality sustainable development and lifestyles".<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> September 2007

<sup>4</sup> South Birmingham AIP, page 12



- 2.6 The purpose of the AIP is to assist in achieving greater diversification to deliver growth and a dynamic economy and to bring about better choice for residents in South Birmingham and Birmingham generally.

**Table 1: Vision for South Birmingham**

### **Vision for South Birmingham**

The South Birmingham of the future will see a major transformation of the area's economic, social and physical fabric.

This change will help diversify the economy, offer new job opportunities in the public and private sectors, and deliver a range of good-quality new homes. It will bring investment in education, leisure and retailing that collectively will provide more choice for local communities.

Real growth and long-term prosperity will enable the benefits of this improved quality of life to be open to all.

We will:

- Work in partnership with private- and public-sector agencies to bring sites forward through joint action and investment.
- Develop and nurture new businesses, industry and other employment-generating uses of local and regional importance.
- Ensure that local people can take up the jobs created.
- Set a clear investment framework for local, citywide and national developers.

## **A Shared Vision**

- 2.7 The AIP has only recently been published, and perhaps it is a little early to be passing judgement, however our investigation has provided the City Council with a lot of useful information on the extent to which the vision has been shared thus far.
- 2.8 As will be seen from the evidence set out in this report, the picture is varied. Some partners felt that the City Council was providing a clear lead whereas others felt they were getting different messages from different departments. It was also apparent that whilst some parts of some organisations were aware of the vision, it was not always communicated across those organisations. However, our investigation led us to conclude that this sharing of visions is an on-going process, and subject to evolution and change. The reasons behind this are set out in the remainder of this report.

## **3 Development Planning and Regeneration Activity**

- 3.1 In order to fully understand the vision, we examined the current position regarding development planning and regeneration activity in South West Birmingham. The AIP describes the major growth areas in South Birmingham, which includes those in the South West and these are described in more detail in Appendix 2.





# Regeneration in South West Birmingham

- 3.2 In summary, these focus on the A38 Central Technology Belt, including:
- The Longbridge site: designated as a Regional Investment Site (RIS), plans for the 140 hectare former MG Rover site include proposals for a Technology Park, alongside developments leading to 10,000 new jobs, a new local centre and 1,500 new homes – a lot of work was involved in producing the Longbridge Area Action Plan, which provides a vision for a small, but significant part of South Birmingham.
  - The new University Hospital: Birmingham's first new acute hospital for 70 years. The new development will be a £450 million acute hospital and new mental health facilities for Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health Trust. The new hospital will replace Selly Oak Hospital and the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, and will include 1,213 beds and 30 theatres.
- 3.3 There are to be new retail sites in Selly Oak, Longbridge and Stirchley. There are also opportunities to develop and improve local centres, including Selly Oak, Stirchley, Maypole and Northfield. There are plans to invest in each of these, as well as develop a new local centre in Longbridge. The City Council provides some capital investment to support these, with local Members involvement in determining what improvements are to be made.
- 3.4 Kings Norton New Deal for Communities (NDC) is the only major Government regeneration scheme in the South West. The focus has been on increasing job prospects, reducing crime, improving educational achievement and health outcomes within the Three Estates. However, as the project nears conclusion, the emphasis has shifted to redeveloping the housing estates. Around 800 properties (both local authority and private) will be cleared in order to provide in the region of 1400 new dwellings.
- 3.5 This regeneration activity was not originally centred around a single plan or framework initiating this activity. Kings Norton NDC area was identified by the City Council and its partners and funded by Government as an area of deprivation. The impetus for the High Technology Corridor is regional and advanced by Advantage West Midlands (AWM). The retail and industrial opportunities have arisen through both need – to replace employment lost through the closure of MG Rover, for example – and opportunity – the re-location of Sainsbury's and expansion of the retail park in Selly Oak, for example. Linked to this is the Council's aspiration to see local, vibrant, urban centres throughout the city.



3.6 However, these component parts are increasingly being co-ordinated, through Planning and Regeneration's South Area Team, which works with businesses, developers and community groups involved in regeneration activity, as well as playing a leading role on the development of the strategy on the High Technology Corridor. Crucially, the Team gives the City Council the ability and capacity to co-ordinate activity, not only with external and private partners, but with Constituency and Ward Committees. This in turn signals to external and private partners that there is one route in to working with the City Council and so reduces the likelihood of mixed messages. Along with the inception of the Area Investment Prospectus, the City Council is now in a strong position to project a clear vision and to work with partners in refining that vision in iterative discussions to reflect progress made and changing priorities.

## 4 Opportunities and Challenges

4.1 The number and variety of regeneration and development activities described in Appendix 2 represent significant opportunities for South West Birmingham and a number of challenges – ones that have started to be tackled but require further work with our partners. Both opportunities and challenges have arisen from the way that activity has been initiated and managed, most notably the lack of a single regeneration board or similar to co-ordinate activity.

4.2 These opportunities and challenges largely centre around:

- The availability of suitably skilled workers;
- The capacity of transportation links and infrastructure;
- The availability of suitable housing to meet both current needs and, crucially, future opportunities.

4.3 The following sections examine these in more detail, and consider how the challenges are being met.

### Availability of Suitably Skilled Workers

4.4 The report has thus far emphasised physical regeneration but people also need support to access the available opportunities. It is critical that as many Birmingham residents as possible take advantage of the employment options on offer to ensure the potential benefits are fully realised for both the city and residents as a whole.



# Regeneration in South West Birmingham

- 4.5 Worklessness can be an issue in the South West; however it is focused in small pockets of deprivation across the South West. The work being done as part of the Kings Norton NDC is one example of a geographically targeted approach. The Longbridge Working for Jobs Team is another – set up to help those formerly employed by MG Rover. Other assistance schemes are linked either to employers: such as the Learning Hub at the University Hospital, or providers such as Connexions. The latter are particularly focused on those young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs), which is a clear issue here with a higher than the city average proportion of young people falling into this category. Whilst we found some co-ordinated work is being done to tackle this, there is scope to do more.
- 4.6 In addition, the Planning and Regeneration – South Area Team leads the development of the Access to Employment Group in the South West.<sup>5</sup> We were also encouraged to hear of work being undertaken in schools to link with employers – in particular the University Hospital – however, it is clear that these links could be strengthened. The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) is also very active in the South West, for example working with partners to contribute to the Longbridge Area Action Plan.
- 4.7 However, the opportunities in the South West are not just there for residents of the South West. The scale of regeneration and development is on a unique scale in the city and therefore has the capacity to provide employment beyond the South West. Our evidence gathering clearly showed that better links – physical and operational – are needed to open these opportunities out.

## Transport

- 4.8 Transport links were a critical concern raised by almost all our witnesses over a range of issues:
- The ability of people both within the South West and from other parts of the city to physically access employment opportunities is critical to ensure that all Birmingham residents have the opportunity to benefit;
  - Linking pupils to different education and training opportunities supports this further, and is particularly important when aiming to encourage those young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs) to look for work beyond the immediate neighbourhood;
  - Ensuring patients can access healthcare has real implications for the NHS: research has shown that poor transport links can reduce people's propensity to turn up for appointments; furthermore, as patient choice is increasingly encouraged, patients' choice of hospital is influenced by transport links;
  - Good transport infrastructure contributes to the success of Local Centres and attracts new businesses to an area.

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<sup>5</sup> Access to Employment Groups (AEGs) were established by the Employment Strategy Group, a sub-group of the Birmingham Strategic Partnership, and aim to co-ordinate and improve access to employment across the city at a local level.



- 4.9 The first of these is an acknowledged issue in the South West: evidence gathered raised the point that it is easier for people from areas such as Redditch and Bromsgrove to travel to this part of the City, than from some parts of Birmingham. Rail links south from Longbridge into Worcestershire (e.g. to Bromsgrove and Redditch) do need strengthening, but a key concern is how Birmingham residents access opportunities in the South West.
- 4.10 Given that the South West plays an important role in the economy of the city as a whole, the links with those inner-city wards with higher worklessness to ensure residents in those wards were able to benefit from opportunities in the South West is critical. There is also room for improvement within the South West: for example, improved and extra orbital routes are required to peripheral estates such as Ley Hill and Nimmings Farm.
- 4.11 Part of the issue is that, whilst there are good bus and rail links in the South West, these are largely focused on radial routes, reflecting the economic heat of the city centre and getting people to and from jobs there. However, to maximise the opportunities in the South West, better orbital bus routes are needed. The focus at the moment seems to be on significant investment in infrastructure, as for example at Longbridge, which is welcome, but not on its own enough.
- 4.12 This brings us back to the vision and the importance of that vision being shared: Centro work in a regional context and it is vital that the City Council and other stakeholders understand that picture, as well as communicating the local needs. Bus routes are determined by the bus companies so they too need to be brought in to understand what is being proposed, how they can support it and how it can benefit them.
- 4.13 Involvement with the private sector in transportation is already happening in the South West, to ease congestion in certain areas, for example with Sainsbury's in Selly Oak and the improved connectivity provided by the Northfield Relief Road. Efficient transport attracts business to an area, and private companies are willing to invest in enhancing transport links. The same discussions should be taking place with bus companies.
- 4.14 Public sector partners have a role to play in promoting and experimenting with new ideas. For example, Members were informed of a new bus link between University Hospital and the Three Estates area (started in January 2008) for which Centro were funding 50% of the costs. This idea was initiated by University Hospital as research showed that the high proportion of missed appointments from the Three Estates was related to poor public transport links. The new link is a year long experiment, to be evaluated later this year.
- 4.15 In a city the size of Birmingham, geographical distance and transport links can be real barriers to the sharing of economic prosperity, and there is still some way to go to fully exploit the opportunities available in the South West. There is still much to do to ensure we meet demand both in terms of capacity and preference of mode, to meet changing needs and to provide sustainable transport.



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## Housing

- 4.16 The availability of suitable housing has a critical role in attracting and retaining people to the South West. There are a great number of opportunities: with thriving local centres, good transport links to the City Centre and a range of educational establishments. There are urban centres and areas bordering the countryside to attract people.
- 4.17 Therefore, central to the success of regeneration in the South West is an appropriate mix of social, affordable, aspirational, family and smaller homes to meet existing and future needs. Achieving this means the vision for South West Birmingham must be shared with social and private providers, and the Government.
- 4.18 Members were particularly concerned about the importance of getting new housing right in terms of family housing. There was recognition that developers were following national trends but local needs must be taken into account. We were assured that there was on-going work with the City Council and developers to move towards family homes.
- 4.19 Also critical is the issue of sustainability in housing: ensuring existing and new housing meets the city's ambitious targets on carbon emissions. Members were informed that there were plans to adapting existing stock to meet new carbon emission standards and that the use of Combined Heat and Power (CHP) was about developing critical mass and infrastructure to ensure it was feasible. We learned that it is proposed that Longbridge be one of the five eco towns to be developed. It was acknowledged that the City Council has huge influence in this area.
- 4.20 We have heard evidence of refurbishment of existing estates – Kings Norton Three Estates being the obvious example, and proposed new dwellings across the South West, including Longbridge and Selly Oak.
- 4.21 Both an opportunity and a challenge is the Government's proposed national house building programme. Currently we know that this translates to an estimated net increase in the city of 50,600 dwellings (over and above demolitions). Work is underway to determine where the opportunities exist across the city to accommodate this growth, however it is clear that Longbridge will make a substantial contribution towards the housing targets.

## 5 Stakeholders

- 5.1 From the City Council's perspective, with the AIP setting out a clear vision for the area from the City Council for the first time, there was both opportunity and challenge to share this with partners and stakeholders. The opportunities lay in the discussions with partners and stakeholders, to share the City Council's vision and to hear what their vision was. The challenge is to hear those views, incorporate them and continue to share on a rolling basis.



- 5.2 External partners were on the whole positive about the lead the City Council was setting in the South West. There are clearly still gaps – the Universities were unable to give an opinion on the vision as they had only recently received the prospectus. There is also a balancing act between regional and local demands: Centro flagged this, which points to the importance of representation on bodies such as the Passenger Transport Authority (PTA) and also the need to ensure that these representatives are fully engaged with the vision for the South West.
- 5.3 Therefore, we have to make sure our own house is in order – ensuring the vision is shared and understood across the City Council, including Elected Members is critical. Some Constituency Chair(men) we contacted did not feel that they had been sufficiently in the process of putting the vision together and Member engagement generally remains an issue.
- 5.4 In addition, some witnesses felt that they got mixed messages from different departments of the City Council, and this should be addressed. We need to look to how we communicate the vision across our own organisation and engage with all departments.
- 5.5 A number of witnesses also stated that they wanted to see stronger partnership working with others, both sectorally and locally. It was clear from our discussions that partners were not purely focusing on their own “silo” but engaging in wider debates and using their influence and authority not just to further their business aims but wider social aims. All partners have an interest in the image of Birmingham as a whole and this too is an opportunity.

## 6 Conclusions and Suggested Actions

### Regeneration Activity

- 6.1 The question behind this Overview was centred around whether an area without a regeneration zone board or similar – i.e. without the apparatus of a state-run programme – could or would prosper in regeneration. It is currently too early to tell if this model is successful, but we do believe that, in the South West, the lack of a board or administration has not hindered progress; rather it has facilitated flexibility in approach.
- 6.2 Whilst we have not undertaken a forensic examination of why this is the case, our investigation has highlighted some possible explanations. Firstly stakeholders are not tied to a set vision which may be out of date in three or four years – the vision can evolve to take account of changing circumstances. There is also less of a bureaucracy governing activity, allowing more focus on delivery. This also means there are fewer artificial constraints, for example spending does not have to take place within a specified timescale. It is also pertinent to note that the funding should not lead the activity. Instead it should work to encourage stakeholders to bring ideas and resources to the table.



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- 6.3 However, the lack of a single structure is not without its downsides. In the case of South West Birmingham, more regular meetings with partners at a strategic level to share and refine the vision would benefit the area. Currently, there are regular cross-agency officer contact at practitioner level, through fora such as the South West Access to Employment Group, Employment Hub, Longbridge Skills and Employment partnership, where actions plans are jointly planned, developed and implemented at local level. Within this model, local practitioners, working together, were also able to respond quickly and effectively to the MG Rover collapse in 2005.
- 6.4 However, these are not mandatory and it is important that these take place at a political and officer level on a regular basis.
- 6.5 As has already been stated, these are early days, and there is still much to do in sharing this vision. The key tool in this approach is clearly the Area Investment Prospectus, setting out areas of growth facilitating early contact with developers and other partners. However, it is not a case of the City Council laying out a vision and expecting others to join in. The idea of having a vision is that it is shared, discussed and developed. Involving partners in preparing and communicating this is vital to creating new jobs, new transport links, and a quality environment
- 6.6 However, the lack of regular meetings with partners should be addressed. We therefore propose that the Cabinet Member for Regeneration considers setting up mechanisms to bring partners and stakeholders together on a regular basis, to give weight and confidence to the vision. This could include:
- An annual event bringing together partners involved in delivering regeneration goals across South West Birmingham, including Be Birmingham (the Birmingham Strategic Partnership), private developers and community groups;
  - Regular meetings with Ward Councillors in the South West, in consultation with other relevant Cabinet Members as appropriate;
  - An officer/partner planning group, to ensure the visions are shared and actions are taken forward in full consultation.
- 6.7 One of the early tasks of the officer/partner planning group could be to draw up some broad outcomes, against which progress could be assessed. The annual event would be the forum for an annual review of progress – allowing the City Council and partners to set up what has been achieved and explore blockages and next steps.
- 6.8 Members and officers (not just City Council officers, but those from all stakeholder organisations throughout the city) can act as ambassadors. A communications strategy with a simple message and a plan to ensure we maximise local, regional, national and international opportunities.
- 6.9 Participation in these meetings should be used to encourage the sharing of information across agencies – according to an agreed protocol – to facilitate greater co-operation.



- 6.10 We accept that there may be reasons, in other areas and other circumstances, where a more formal mechanism would be the preferred option, to guarantee the commitment of some stakeholders or to ensure that we are able to draw down national funding. However, there may be lessons to be learned from this approach that could be extended to other areas of the city.

### **Suggested Actions**

1. **That the Cabinet Member for Regeneration considers setting up mechanisms to bring partners and stakeholders together on a regular basis to further regeneration activity in the South West. These mechanisms could include:**
  - a. **An annual event bringing together partners involved in delivering regeneration goals across South West Birmingham, including Be Birmingham (the Birmingham Strategic Partnership), private developers and community groups;**
  - b. **Regular meetings with Ward Councillors in the South West, in consultation with other relevant Cabinet Members as appropriate;**
  - c. **An officer/partner planning group, to ensure the visions are shared and actions are taken forward in full consultation.**
2. **That the Cabinet Member for Regeneration reflect on these new arrangements after 12 months, and, if found to be successful, consider the same approach for other areas of the city bearing in mind that each area has its own characteristics and prevailing conditions.**

### **South West Birmingham**

- 6.11 Whilst our Overview was concerned with assessing how regeneration activity has come together without a single regeneration framework, we have in the process identified other issues specific to South West Birmingham. The evidence collated during this Overview shows the breadth of regeneration activity in South West Birmingham. The opportunities presented by this activity are manifold: the quantity and size of regeneration activity provides economic and social opportunities for residents of both the South West and Birmingham as a whole. Private and public organisations see this as a profitable area to invest in, and without the constraints of a single regeneration programme, private and public sector organisations are getting on with delivering innovative and substantial economic opportunities.
- 6.12 A lot of the challenges relate to linkages – linkages that ensure the opportunities outlined above are available to Birmingham residents. These include:
- Transport links;
  - Linking people to education and skills training, ensuring all residents are able to take advantage of new jobs;





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- Ensuring both the private sector and the Government are linked into the vision for South West Birmingham in relation to new housing.
- 6.13 Getting that right in the South West is critical because of the importance that area of the city will play in the Growth agenda. It is not the area of highest worklessness in the city, but the area can and will enhance the employment and economic opportunities of the city generally.
- 6.14 As stated at the beginning of this report, there are links with this piece of work to the work being undertaken by the Co-ordinating O&S Committee on the growth agenda. Whilst the prime focus of their review is to look at the proposals from a strategic viewpoint: essentially giving the proposals a 'healthcheck' to ensure that all relevant factors have been considered, are being tackled in a coherent fashion and considering any gaps which need addressing; this Overview has focused on how the proposals are working on the ground. This report will therefore be submitted to the Co-ordinating O&S Committee to be used as evidence to inform that work.
- 6.15 We therefore request that the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, along with the Cabinet Members for Housing and Transportation and Street Services, report back to the Regeneration O&S Committee on progress against:
- The provision of appropriate housing to meet the needs of South West Birmingham;
  - The development of transport links within and outside South West Birmingham, particularly in linking areas of deprivation to job opportunities.
- 6.16 These reports should come to the committee every six months.

## **Suggested Action**

3. That the Cabinet Member for Regeneration report back to the Regeneration O&S Committee on progress against:
- a. The provision of appropriate housing to meet the needs of South West Birmingham;
  - b. The development of transport links within and outside South West Birmingham, particularly in linking areas of deprivation to job opportunities.

The first report should come to the October committee meeting.



## Summary of Suggested Actions

Suggested Action	Responsibility
<p>1. That the Cabinet Member for Regeneration considers setting up mechanisms to bring partners and stakeholders together on a regular basis to further regeneration activity in the South West. These mechanisms could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c. An annual event bringing together partners involved in delivering regeneration goals across South West Birmingham, including Be Birmingham (the Birmingham Strategic Partnership), private developers and community groups;</li> <li>d. Regular meetings with Ward Councillors in the South West, in consultation with other relevant Cabinet Members as appropriate;</li> <li>e. An officer/partner planning group, to ensure actions are taken forward in full consultation.</li> </ul>	<p>Cabinet Member for Regeneration</p>
<p>2. That the Cabinet Member for Regeneration reflect on these new arrangements after 12 months, and, if found to be successful, consider the same approach for other areas of the city, bearing in mind that each area has its own characteristics and prevailing conditions.</p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Regeneration</p>
<p>3. That the Cabinet Member for Regeneration report back to the Regeneration O&amp;S Committee on progress against:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The provision of appropriate housing to meet the needs of South West Birmingham;</li> <li>b. The development of transport links within and outside South West Birmingham, particularly in linking areas of deprivation to job opportunities.</li> </ul> <p>The first report should come to the October committee meeting.</p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Housing &amp; Cabinet Member for Regeneration</p> <hr/> <p>Cabinet Member for Transportation &amp; Street Services &amp; Cabinet Member for Regeneration</p>



## Appendix 1: Witnesses

We are grateful to the following for their contribution:

- Dave Beards, Oaks Network Cluster;
- David Bull, Assistant Director, Development Strategy, Birmingham City Council;
- Mark Foley, Partnerships Director for Birmingham and Solihull (Advantage West Midlands);
- Chris Haynes, Head of Transportation Strategy, Birmingham City Council;
- George Marsh, the Chairman of the West Midlands Centre for Constructing Excellence;
- Jake Thrush, Head of Policy and Strategy, Centro;
- Dr Chris Spencer-Jones, Director of Public Health from South Birmingham PCT;
- David Summersgill, Project Manager, Development and Ventures – Housing Strategy, Birmingham City Council;
- Dawn McCracken and Iris Flaum, Learning and Skills Council (LSC);
- David Taylor and Mike Farrell, University Hospital Birmingham Foundation NHS Trust;
- Valerie Taylor, Connexions, Birmingham and Solihull;
- Peter Vincent, Community Economic Development Manager, Birmingham City Council;
- Alan White, Chief Executive, Central Technology Belt;
- Peter Wright, South Team Leader, Development Planning and Regeneration, Birmingham City Council.
- Aston University; University of Birmingham, Birmingham City University.



## Appendix 2: Evidence File

This section of the report details the evidence we received during the course of the Overview. The appendix is divided into seven sections. The first describes the major growth areas and major developments in South West Birmingham as set out in the Area Investment Prospectus for South Birmingham. We have also included information on the one Government-funded regeneration programme in the South West – the Kings Norton “Three Estates” NDC.

However, as noted in the main body of the report, regeneration in South West Birmingham is not purely about physical regeneration, but the equally important matter of ensuring people are both able to and want to take advantage of these opportunities. If this is to happen, and the developments are to survive and attract more economic growth, then these need to be integrated with education and training, housing growth and transport links. The remaining sections consider these, as well as the role played by Local Centres and the Health Sector.

### A Development Planning and Regeneration Activity

#### The Central Technology Belt/A38 High Technology Corridor

- A.1 The Central Technology Belt/A38 High Technology Corridor is one of three geographical areas in the West Midlands identified by Advantage West Midlands where a mix of business activity, academic expertise, research capability, infrastructure and development opportunities exists to encourage the growth of high technology businesses.<sup>6</sup>
- A.2 The Belt runs from central Birmingham through Worcester, to Malvern along the A38. In Birmingham, this comprises areas of Edgbaston, Selly Oak, Northfield and Longbridge. The area has traditionally relied on motor manufacturing and related industries. However, these are now in decline, and the emphasis is shifting towards new sectors including medical technologies, nanotechnology and advanced materials, building on the strengths of Aston Science Park, Aston University, Birmingham University and University Hospital. Other significant sites in the Belt and the South West include Battery Park in Selly Oak and Pebble Mill. The latter will be home to the University Science Park, providing specialist laboratories and incubator space for new knowledge based businesses.
- A.3 There are three “offers” to businesses, depending on their status:
- Start up: seed corn funding via the Technology Transfer fund with incubator and office space, business support services and access to knowledge and research support via technology transfer;

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.advantagewm.co.uk/>



# Regeneration in South West Birmingham

- Small to Medium Enterprises: support for the “next stage of growth”<sup>7</sup> including: Venture Capital funding, office space, access to knowledge and research support via technology transfer and training and up-skilling programmes;
- Large established companies: access to new research thinking and new technologies from within the Universities and Research Centres, art, science and technology park locations, training and up-skilling programmes with easy access to rest of UK and into Europe.

A.4 Members received a presentation on the initiative and were assured that the work was being undertaken with key partners and the needs and demands of the local economy were taken into account. The objective of the Belt was to take stock of investment and address gaps and its success will be assessed on ten year outcomes.

## Selly Oak

A.5 Selly Oak is a key part of the vision for South West Birmingham, with “anticipated spending of over £1.3 billion” to “consolidate Selly Oak as the ‘Heart of the A38 Technology Corridor’ and the dynamic centre for the knowledge and medical excellence in Birmingham.”<sup>8</sup> There are two major developments taking place in Selly Oak at the present time:

- Birmingham Battery site;
- University Hospital.

A.6 The first is a site adjacent to an existing retail park and one which will become accessible from the Selly Oak New Road, bringing into use land of the former Birmingham Battery site. The 12 hectares are in private ownership, and the new development will consist of:

- A high technology business park;
- Retail, housing (between 1000 and 1600 new units), leisure uses;
- Environmental improvements including the canal arm, pedestrian plaza and improved allotments;
- A new road (to which private investors will contribute).

A.7 Also, as Sainsbury’s will re-locate there, the site of the existing store – “The Triangle” – will also be released for mixed use development. This will be a trigger for further investment in the Selly Oak local centre.

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.centraltechnologybelt.com/>

<sup>8</sup> South Birmingham AIP, page 21



- A.8 The new University Hospital consists of a £450 million acute hospital, located north of Vincent Drive (completion date 2010/11) and new mental health facilities on land south of Vincent Drive (completion 2008). The development is a major employment opportunity with jobs in the construction, health and medical technologies sectors. Links to technology industries have helped locate the National Leukaemia Centre here.
- A.9 The existing Selly Oak Hospital site will be released for development after the move is completed. The AIP states that the expectation is that around 500 “quality dwellings” will be built here, with associated community facilities.
- A.10 Overall the £1.3 billion of public and private investment going into Selly Oak will result in 1500 new dwellings, over 4000 jobs, improved transport and revitalised commercial opportunities and local centres.

### Northfield, Frankley and Longbridge

- A.11 In **Longbridge**, the site of the former MG Rover site is undergoing huge change. Plans are well advanced to deliver 10,000 new jobs, a new local centre and 1,500 new homes. The 140 hectare site is the “biggest regeneration scheme in the West Midlands and one of the largest in England.”<sup>9</sup>
- A.12 The current proposals were reached after consultation in 2007, culminating in the Longbridge Area Action Plan (AAP), which was adopted at the City Council meeting on the 8th January 2008. The Plan will cover the period 2008-2023. The proposals are now subject to a public inquiry. The AAP was the work of a number of partners, including the City Council, Bromsgrove District Council, Worcestershire County Council, Advantage West Midlands and St. Modwen Properties PLC (the principal landowner). It was supported by the Longbridge Skills and Employment Partnership (including the Learning and Skills Council, Job Centre Plus, CEA).
- A.13 The development will include a Technology Park (the first phase of which has been completed) and a new local centre. The 10,000 jobs to be created will be across a range of skills types over a 15 year period. An Integrated Skills and Employment Strategy and Action Plan will be developed to sustain this.
- A.14 Part of the Longbridge plan is to develop a new local centre. There are already two local centres nearby at Northfield and Frankley. Already a significant local centre, **Northfield** Centre is a Regeneration Priority Area in the AIP, and the recent opening of the Relief Road is set to improve retail and business.
- A.15 **Frankley** Centre presents Strategic Investment Opportunity, with land adjacent to the current centre soon to be marketed. The current local centre is rated as “weak (in decline)” (see page 29) and the redevelopment is expected to contribute to a dynamic local centre with improved job opportunities and an enhanced environment.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Longbridge Area Action Plan 2008-2023, Part A – An Introduction

<sup>10</sup> South Birmingham AIP, September 2007, page 40



## Stirchley

A.16 **Stirchley** Centre is also currently rated as “in decline” – see page 29), however there are a number of proposed developments in the area. Ten Acres is a Strategic Investment Opportunity, currently in multiple-ownership and currently designated for housing. There are Strategic Business Opportunities at Fordhouse Lane and Hazelwell Lane, with the former to be an office development and the latter identified for retail development. There is also a Regeneration Priority Area at Dogpool Lane, allocated for industrial use under the Birmingham Plan.

## Kings Norton / Druids Heath

A.17 **Kings Norton** is home to the “Three Estates” New Deal for Communities, which aims to generate significant physical transformation and investment in community safety, reduced worklessness and reduced incidence of health issues.

A.18 The New Deal for Communities programme was set up to tackle multiple deprivation in the most deprived neighbourhoods in the country and to narrow the gap between the poorest neighbourhoods and the rest of the country. The Kings Norton 3 Estates NDC is a 10 year, £50m, programme, which finishes March 31st 2010. It includes the three Estates of Pool Farm, Primrose and Hawkesley. The focus is on:

- Job prospects;
- Levels of crime;
- Educational under-achievement;
- Health issues;
- Housing and the physical environment.

A.19 The Regeneration O&S Committee has received a number of reports on the progress of the NDC, the most recent being in September 2007. This reported that:

At the end of 2006/7 the NDC had spent just over £25m on activities to meet end of programme outcomes on education, employment and training, health, community safety and the environment. The remaining allocation reflects the major capital spend on housing transformation that will happen towards the end of the programme.

**Report of The Kings Norton 3 Estates NDC Programme Chief Executive, Planning & Regeneration; Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 25.09.07**

A.20 Summary of results so far can be found in Table A1.

A.21 The Kings Norton / Druids Heath area also includes the **Maypole Centre** – which has a number of private and Birmingham City Council owned sites and buildings with redevelopment potential for retail and mixed uses development.



**Table A1: Outcomes against Kings Norton NDC Key Priorities 2006/07**

Issue	Outcomes	Comments
<b>Job prospects</b>	<p>To reduce unemployment to the city average:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2000: 14.6% (3 Estates), 8.7% (city-wide).</li> <li>• 2005: 10.3% but rose following MG Rover.</li> <li>• 2006: Peaked at 14%; the rate is now down to 12.5% (city average of 8.5%).</li> </ul> <p>To reduce the number of Income Support claimants to 18.5% of working age population:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 50% in 2002, reduced to fewer than 30%.</li> </ul> <p>To increase proportion of working age residents qualified to NVQ2 or above from 57% to 75%.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MORI Household Survey for 2006 suggests that this outcome will not be achieved.</li> </ul>	<p>The Three Estates is a housing area (only employment areas are two small parades of shops and a small trading estate) therefore the basis of the NDC Work Theme has focused on residents and not employers. Main focus of activity has been the Workshop: a locally based employment resource centre where residents can access Jobcentre Plus, local colleges etc. Since April 2003 the Workshop has taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• over 1,000 client registrations;</li> <li>• over 500 residents into work;</li> <li>• over 250 into training.</li> </ul>
<b>Levels of crime</b>	<p>To reduce crime to the city average:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incidences of crime in 2000: 30 per 1,000 residents; fell to below average for city (53% in 2002).</li> </ul> <p>To increase the number of residents feeling safe walking alone in or around the 3 Estates after dark to 66% by 2010:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2002: 36%;</li> <li>• Mori Household Survey 2006: 46%</li> </ul> <p>To reduce drug and alcohol misuse:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• End of programme outcome will not be met. Evaluation of pilot drugs misuse project will inform future interventions and indicator.</li> </ul>	<p>A Police-led community safety tasking group attended by the key agencies, residents, City Council departments and the NDC Community Wardens was set up to address these issues. In addition there are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NDC Community;</li> <li>• NDC funded PCSOs (Police Community Support Officers);</li> <li>• Diversionary activities to reduce crime by young people delivered through the Youth Service with funding from the NDC and the national Positive Futures programme.</li> </ul>
<b>Educational under-achievement</b>	<p>Improving Maths and English at Key Stage 2 to LEA average: 2006 Key Stage 2 results showed an improvement from 58.7% to 65.2% and a small closing of gap with LEA.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kings Norton High School achieved end of programme target for 5 GCSEs or equivalent exceeding city average in 2006.</li> </ul>	<p>The key NDC intervention for improving educational attainment has been the Kings Norton High School Intensive Support project.</p>
<b>Health issues</b>	<p>Smoking Cessation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2006: 43% of respondents smoke, compared to the national average of 25%.</li> </ul>	<p>The Health Theme Strategy projects focus on activities to encourage residents to change lifestyle to increase life expectancy (for male residents of the 3 Estates this is significantly less than the city average). Includes healthy eating programme for adults and through schools.</p>
<b>Housing and the physical environment</b>	<p>2006 MORI Household Survey shows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 52% of residents in 2002 thought that litter and rubbish was a serious problem in the area, this had reduced to 38% in 2006.</li> <li>• In 2004, 31% of residents thought poor quality/lack of parks/open space was a problem in the area: fell to 15% in 2006.</li> </ul>	<p>In August 2007 the City Council and NDC led on a consultation on whether residents supported "The Big Change": the clearance of around 800 properties (both Local Authority and private) in order to provide in the region of 1400 new dwellings. Over 50% of households responded, of which over 90% supported "The Big Change."</p>





## B Employment and Worklessness

B.1 As well as the new opportunities outlined above, it is worth noting that there are already a number of major employers in the area:

- Birmingham University;
- University Hospital;
- Selly Oak Colleges;
- Woodgate Business Park;
- Kings Norton Business Centre;
- Birmingham Great Park;
- Cadbury's;
- Nanjing.

B.2 As the AIP notes: "Cadbury's are well established and have begun a 10-year investment programme" and "companies new to Birmingham have established themselves on business parks at Birmingham Great Park, Woodgate Valley and Kings Norton."

B.3 Table B1 shows the current distribution of jobs in the major employment sectors in the South West – although there is no indication on where these employees live.

**Table B1: Predominant Employment Sectors in South Birmingham**

	South Birmingham	Birmingham average
<b>Public Administration, education and health</b>	44.6%	30.8%
<b>Distribution, hotels and restaurants</b>	17.5%	21.0%
<b>Manufacturing</b>	13.5%	12.4%
<b>Banking, finance and insurance</b>	10.3%	21.5%
<b>Transport and communication</b>	5.2%	5%
<b>Construction</b>	3.2%	3.8%
<b>Other</b>	5.1%	5%

(Source: Birmingham City Council)

### Worklessness

B.4 Whilst figures indicate that South West Birmingham does not have the level of worklessness that some other areas of the city has, that is not to say worklessness is not an issue in the South West – rather it is not as concentrated as in as large quantities as in other parts of the city (ward figures and rankings is shown in Table B2). Members were assured that efforts were being made to access hard to reach groups and several millions of pounds had been targeted for this purpose. There are three key schemes described in the AIP:



- **Working for Jobs Team:** a dedicated and tailored job support and skills programme to ensure that those formerly employed by MG Rover, and those in the wider community, can gain work;
- **The Workshop, Kings Norton:** Kings Norton New Deal for Communities works in partnership with local providers to locate and secure job opportunities for local people (see Table A1 above);
- **The University Hospital Birmingham Learning Hub:** a learning and employment hub is being built as part of the new Hospital (see page 35 for more details).

B.5 In addition, two wards – Weoley and Bartley Green – are priority ward under the regions City Strategy focused on tackling worklessness.

**Table B2: Worklessness Rates in Wards in South West Birmingham (May 2007)**

Ward	Total Working Age Client Group Claimants	Working Age Client Group Rate	Ward Ranking
Kings Norton	3,474	25.2	12
Weoley	3,654	24.7	13
Bartley Green	3,778	24.6	14
Longbridge	3,514	22.7	21
Brandwood	3,118	22.7	22
Billesley	3,292	21.6	23
Quinton	2,893	20.6	24
Northfield	2,835	19.2	26
Moseley & Kings Heath	2,775	17.7	29
Bournville	2,450	15.5	30
Hall Green	2,045	13.8	33
Harborne	1,829	12.9	34
Edgbaston	1,699	11.4	36
Selly Oak	1,347	7.3	40



- B.6 The closure of MG Rover obviously had a huge impact – progress reports over recent years to this committee have shown that most former employees have now found jobs. However, it was noted by Members that many of those who had been made redundant and were now back in work could well have taken jobs that one would, normally, associate with being allocated to school leavers, and the true impact of this is difficult to gauge.
- B.7 We also looked at the role of employment in the South West to provide jobs for Birmingham residents from other parts of the city and found that whilst the capacity is certainly there, the transport links are generally not. This is discussed further on page 11.

## C Skills and Education

- C.1 Supporting people into work is critical and there is certainly a large amount of activity in that area. We took evidence from a range of providers – Schools, Universities, Connexions and the Learning Skills Council, and this is set out below.

### Schools

- C.2 Educational achievement in the South West is generally above the average for the city (for more detail see report to the Children and Education O&S Committee, November 2007, *Exam and Assessment Results 2007*). However, as we will set out later in this report, this area of the city does have above average levels of young people not in education, employment or training.
- C.3 In order to understand the opportunities and challenges facing schools in the South West, we spoke to a representative of the Oaks Collegiate (a cluster of 20 secondary schools, Bourneville College and Cadbury Sixth Form College). This is the largest network, or cluster, in the city. It has a strong ethos of partnership working as it works to improve standards and post-16 achievement.
- C.4 Part of the work undertaken in the collegiate is to work with pupils in relation to employment skills, in particular in relation to the new vocational based 14-19 diplomas, which are a vehicle for engaging with employers. However, there was uncertainty over the delivery, with lots of gaps in the South West at present. Whilst there are real changes being made, for example the new vocational facility promised at Bournville College, the development is piecemeal.
- C.5 The NHS have recently carried out a skills audit within the area focused on the understanding of the health service by children. One of the key developments stemming from that is the opening up of a number of employment and training opportunities for young people from within the area. In fact as many as 1 in 3 of children within the area could end up working at the hospital.
- C.6 There is also a new facility at Harborne Hill, Providing children with employment skills to take up jobs within the health service whilst at the same time encouraging them to take an interest in the science subjects at school.



- C.7 However, transport was an issue in getting pupils to and from these different opportunities as pupils could be required to travel long distances over a wide geographical area.
- C.8 Provision for those young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs), is also an issue. The schools have set up panels to deal with referrals and were dealing with 18 pupils at risk of becoming NEETs.
- C.9 This is being achieved by schools working in, but the competition over Academy schools had the potential to affect this negatively, as did the projected falling rolls and the resulting potential tension between schools that could cause.

### Connexions

- C.10 The evidence received from Connexions focused on the work being done with those young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs), providing information, advice and guidance.
- C.11 Analysis shows that there is a high level of NEETs in the South West although the Government target for the number of NEETs was surpassed: a target of 7.5% of young people classified as NEET was set in 2007, and 7.3% achieved (equating to 155 young people). However, this is above the city average of 4.7%.
- C.12 The highest levels of NEETs in the South West are found in Longbridge, Northfield and Bartley Green. Neighbourhoods particularly affected are: Bartley Green, Woodgate Valley, Frankley, Welsh House Farm and West Heath. The majority are male (around 67%).
- C.13 Connexions have undertaken some analysis of what lies behind these figures and found that these young people face multiple barriers. Within the cohort of NEETs there was a high proportion of teenage parents – particularly in Longbridge and Bartley Green. A large proportion lacked a range of life and employability skills, and a shortage of vocational training has been identified. Parenting skills and childcare help is also needed, as are better transport links – particularly important in helping those with learning difficulties to have the confidence to find work outside the immediate neighbourhood.
- C.14 However, it was encouraging to learn that the preferred occupations of NEETs in the South West are in construction, retail and administration – reflecting many of the opportunities coming forward. However, it is clear that more support is needed, in particular work with employers.
- C.15 Connexions are undertaking a range of locally based provision: including
- Vocational programmes in retail;
  - Programmes offering a mix of confidence, motivational and employability skills alongside short taster courses for construction, retail, clerical/administrative, child care/nursery, hotel and catering, and motor vehicle;
  - Employer engagement including Education Business Links, working with schools and employers; Connexions was also intending to offer to pay small employers half of a young person's salary for 6 months to enable more young people to be taken on by small employers.



# Regeneration in South West Birmingham

C.16 Connexions work with LSC, Job Centre Plus and there is an emphasis on strengthening these partnerships at present. Connexions are also linked to the City Strategy and Ward Development Plans.

## Universities

C.17 We sought views in writing from the Vice-Chancellors of:

- Aston University;
- University of Birmingham;
- Birmingham City University (BCU - formerly University of Central England / UCE).

C.18 Details on student numbers are shown in Table C1 below. This shows that each of the three universities has a very different student profile, with BCU having the greatest proportion of students from within both Birmingham and the West Midlands. University of Birmingham has the greatest proportion of UK students from outside Birmingham and Aston University has the greatest proportion of overseas students.

C.19 University of Birmingham also provided information for 2006/07, which shows a similar number of students to 2005/06 and a similar breakdown by origin.

**Table C1: Birmingham Students by University and Region, 2005/06**

	Aston University		University of Birmingham*		Birmingham City University		All	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
<b>From Birmingham</b>	1,534	17%	3,147	12%	9,256	38%	13,937	24%
<b>From other West Midlands</b>	1,944	22%	2,644	10%	7,795	32%	12,383	21%
<b>From UK outside West Midlands</b>	3,540	40%	16,479	64%	5,602	23%	25,621	43%
<b>From overseas</b>	1,899	21%	3,445	13%	1,705	7%	7,049	12%
<b>Students</b>	8,917	100%	25,715	100%	24,358	100%	58,990	100%

\* Details from University of Birmingham are based on full time equivalent numbers.

C.20 We asked for information on whether graduates / post-graduates remain in Birmingham following their studies. Aston was the only university able to provide some information on the destination of university leavers (under- and post-graduate): of those who left and gained employment (and who agreed to provide data) 20% remained in Birmingham. A further 23% stayed in other areas of the West Midlands.



- C.21 Research has been commissioned by Aston University through the West Midlands Regional Observatory on graduate retention. This is jointly funded by the LSC, Advantage West Midlands and Foundation Degree Forward (FDF). Results are expected to be available in March 2008.
- C.22 We also asked whether Vice-Chancellors thought that the City Council has set a clear lead in what it is looking to achieve in the South West and whether they could see how to contribute to this. UCE had only just received the investment prospectus for South Birmingham and were unable to comment at that time. University of Birmingham had no clear view about this as an institution.

### Learning Skills Council

- C.23 Representatives from the LSC explained their role in meeting the skills and education needs of the South West. This included:
- Working with Local Authorities, looking at predictors for skill levels to influence the planning of post-16 provision and identification and recruitment of local people to train to full Level 2;
  - Looking at the recruitment of local people and workforce development within companies in the area, including links with the Central Technology Belt, Longbridge, Pebble Mill, the Battery Site, and the University so that job entry levels could be predicted and fed through to curricula;
  - Working with Job Centre Plus on a Common Offer to employees and identifying where employers had 15 or more vacancies and working with them to make a joint offer.
- C.24 There were significant opportunities in South West Birmingham, not just to get people in to work, but to work with the long-term unemployed as it is easier to get a proportion of vacancies for the long-term unemployed if there was bulk recruitment.
- C.25 It was recognised that there was a mismatch between the level of skills easily available in Birmingham and the requirements of employers and this would particularly be the case where jobs in the high tech industry were on offer. It was reported to the committee that Birmingham was a net exporter of graduates.
- C.26 Overall the LSC were very positive that the City Council was setting a very clear lead regarding what it was trying to achieve in the South West.

## D Local Centres

- D.1 The revised Local Centres Strategy, adopted by Cabinet in July 2006, identified 68 local centres across the city, 11 in the South West. These were categorised by health (based on an assessment of 10-year turnover, changes in occupation and vacancy level) and type, as set out in Table D1.
- D.2 The City Council is keen to invest in local centres as a means of promoting:
- Social inclusion: through the provision of essential services;
  - Sustainability: as the need to travel further afield is reduced;



# Regeneration in South West Birmingham

- Neighbourhood renewal: supported through local identity;
- Economic growth: as centres of activity, employment and wealth creation.

**Table D1: Local Centres in the South West with Type and Health**

Type of Centre	Name	Health of Centre
<b>District Centres – major groups of shops with at least one superstore/supermarket and a range on non retail and public services</b>	Edgbaston/Five Ways	Stable
	Harborne	Stable
	Kings Heath	Stable
	Northfield	Strong
	Selly Oak	Weak
	Stirchley Centre	Weak (in decline)
<b>Large Neighbourhood Centres – significant group of retail shops and services with at least one smaller supermarket</b>	Cotteridge	Weak
	Maypole	Weak
	Moseley	Stable
	Weoley Castle	Strong
<b>Small Neighbourhood Centres – a smaller group of retail shops and services meeting local needs</b>	Frankley	Weak (in decline)
	Kings Norton	Stable
	Quinton	Stable
	Rednal	Strong
	West Heath	Stable

D.3 The Strategy is intended to lead to greater co-ordination, and although no formal cost benefit analysis has been completed, it is believed that funding for small local projects has tended to provide the local communities with greater confidence and is a vehicle for getting more funding into declining areas

D.4 The main source of investment comes from the private sector, but there is also money from the City Council's Capital Investment Fund to act as a catalyst (overall £2.75 million over 3 years). Section 106 money is also utilised. There is not a great deal of money going into the South West via this programme, certainly not enough to fully remedy declining local centres, but the work does support the wider aims of the South West Birmingham vision.

D.5 There are three identified "gaps" in the South West where there is no or very little local centres:



- Quinton – being addressed via a new supermarket;
- Longbridge – being addressed by the development as outlined on page 21;
- West Heath / Kings Norton – being considered as part of the NDC programme.

D.6 Additionally it was noted that Selly Oak would gain from investment (see page 20) to stabilise and strengthen it. Northfield and Maypole Centres also have investment in enhancements planned for the near future (£2m and £700,000 respectively). Improvements are also planned for Stirchley, but on a more modest scale and linked to the recently granted planning permission for a new Tesco store.

## E Housing

E.1 The availability and quality of housing in South West Birmingham is critical in terms of attracting people to the area and in retaining them through career progression. There are essentially three aspects to consider:

**Need:** Housing that can contribute to:

- Meeting anticipated city-wide population increase;
- Addressing lack of diversity in terms of choice and culture;
- Improving the quality of housing;
- Improving the balance of tenure mix and property types and size.

**Demand:** Housing to meet the need for:

- Better quality and choice;
- Family housing near to schools/ services/ employment prospects;
- Homes which meet growth challenge of increasing population size, but also include smaller households;
- Tackling low demand areas.

**Supply:** the situation in South West Birmingham is characterised by:

- Large proportion of monolithic estates built in 60s and 70s;
- Extensive Council ownership;
- Lack of accommodation for elderly that reflects future aspirations and needs.

E.2 Both public and private partners agree on the need to balance the market in terms of size, tenure and quality to meet changing demands.

E.3 There is, at the time of writing, a number of current and planned redevelopments:

- Nearly completed: Leyhill; Nimmings Farm





# Regeneration in South West Birmingham

- Part completed: Sunderton Road
- Started: Welsh House Farm
- Land sold to Developer: Egghill
- Not started: KNNDC, Wychall Farm, Druids Heath
- In discussion: Turves Green

E.4 In addition, a significant programme of demolition, new build and refurbishment is taking place in the Kings Norton Three Estates (see page 22).

E.5 The issue of sustainability in housing was also raised, including ensuring existing and new housing meets Government targets on carbon emissions. There are plans to adapting existing stock to meet new carbon emission standards. The use of Combined Heat and Power (CHP) was about developing critical mass and infrastructure to ensure it was feasible. We learned that it is proposed that Longbridge be one of the 5 eco towns to be developed. It was acknowledged that the City Council has huge influence in this area.

E.6 Working with the private sector is critically important, and was considered as part of our evidence gathering. Members were informed that the relationship between the City Council and private developers had been distant, with mixed messages coming from the Economic Development, Planning and Housing departments of the City Council. The example cited related to the value of land owned by the City Council: whilst planners might work with a developer to ensure that optimum value for money was extracted, once the proposal went to the property services arm, the emphasis changed to getting the highest price for that land.

E.7 Attwood Green (Optima) was cited as a good example of public/private collaboration but there are a few other proven examples in the city of effective large scale ventures. The Birmingham Construction Partnership is a good example of partners working together. Also, the City Housing Partnership, formed in 2006, to engage stakeholders from the public, private and third sectors in a common vision for housing, has resulted in dialogue between the Home Builders Federation (HBF) and city officers to understand their respective challenges. A key issue is the length of time it takes to agree developments: in Birmingham it is a lengthy process with most taking 6 to 12 months, compared to other Local Authorities which can take 2 to 3 months to agree developments.

## F Transportation Links and Infrastructure

F.1 A key part of enquiry was to consider whether enough is being done to ensure that development is supported (and not hindered) by transport links. Key to this is ensuring people within the area can access jobs, healthcare, shops and leisure activities. These are issues that cannot be addressed by the City Council alone, but in partnership, particularly with the Passenger Transport Executive, Centro, and Travel West Midlands, the main bus operator.



- F.2 It is also important to note the work with the private sector: for example in Selly Oak with the Selly Oak New Road, developed in partnership with Sainsbury's, due to be completed in 2010/11. Similar work has recently been completed in Northfield with the opening of the Northfield Relief Road.
- F.3 However, congestion is a problem, as it is all parts of the city, and there are a number of 'hot spots' in the area for junction delays. Particular problems are experienced on the A38, and we were informed that there was a proposal for a Red Route<sup>11</sup>, as there is for all key radial routes. However, it had been agreed that the operation of the Stratford Road Red Route was to be scrutinised before consideration was given to future schemes.
- F.4 Looking at public transport, the Cross City Line (10 minute service from Longbridge to the city centre) is a strong link into the city centre and to link some of the wards with particularly high worklessness to Longbridge. There are hopes of improving rail travel further as joint work continues with Centro and Network Rail on the options for re-opening the Camp Hill rail line and connections to the Tamworth line.
- F.5 There are two bus showcases<sup>12</sup> operating in the area (Outer Circle (11) and Alcester Road (50)). There are plans to build a Park and Ride at Longbridge whilst the future of the Frankley railway extension was still being debated at the time of writing.
- F.6 However, a critical issue is linking employment areas with peripheral estates, and are generally being addressed on an individual basis. The transport links to Hams Hall were being explored and talks taking place with BMW on the employee catchment area, start/finish times of plant operations and access to public transport.
- F.7 The committee learned that, with regards to Longbridge, a lot of effort was being put into travel plans and discussions were being held with Centro and public transport providers to make it significantly easier to get to Longbridge. There is to be a public transport interchange with access to the station, park and ride, and new buses funded by the development. This is in recognition of the extra demand that will be put on infrastructure once the development is up and running. The Longbridge Area Action Plan envisages extra travel demand of up to 11,000 trips / hour, requiring:
- Additional highway capacity;
  - New hub / interchange;
  - Improved walking / cycle links.
  - Restricted parking standards

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<sup>11</sup> Red Routes aim to keep traffic moving on major roads, on which stopping (even to load or unload a vehicle) is prohibited or only allowed during very restricted periods at times displayed on nearby signs. The routes are marked with continuous red lines painted along the road adjacent to the kerb.

<sup>12</sup> The *Bus Showcase* initiative is a partnership between the West Midlands district councils, Centro and bus operators and is an approach based on the transformation of bus routes through comprehensive quality improvements of vehicles and infrastructure. For more details see <http://www.birmingham.gov.uk>



# Regeneration in South West Birmingham

- F.8 Generally, however, there is a gap in terms of orbital route issues – particularly east to west – including services between Longbridge, Frankley, the Three Estates in Kings Norton, Druids Heath, Solihull and Blythe Valley Business Park, which were important and should be strengthened. There are plans to expand the No. 1 bus route and connect Routes 1, 8 and 11. Reliability of orbital routes is also an issue. Discussions will take place between the City Council and Centro on which bus routes might benefit from bus priority and influence on traffic signals – including a bid for funding of around £25m for an urban traffic control system.
- F.9 During our evidence gathering, we heard from representatives from Centro who emphasised the need for viewing transport in South West Birmingham in the wider context of the city region. The starting point for this is Centro's 20 year public transport strategy and work being undertaken at city region level. There was a need to relate the strategy to current developments within the city and Centro was of the view that the City Council was establishing a lead on that. However, it was acknowledged that the issues were complex and involved many key players.
- F.10 Partnership working at all levels would be critical, and this would be supported by the commissioning of a comprehensive bus network review with a view to upgrading and modernising the network (at the informal consultation stage at the time of writing).

## G Health Links

- G.1 As part of our Overview, we took evidence from representatives of the South Birmingham PCT. Our interest in involving health centred on two questions. Firstly, there are the public health issues that must be taken into account when considering regeneration – both in terms of how health issues affect economic regeneration, and in understanding how regeneration can ameliorate or reduce some health problems.
- G.2 We found that particular health issues in the South West were substance misuse and very high levels of smoking and alcohol consumption (48% of adults in Kings Norton smoked compared to a national average of 26%). Low educational attainment was a public health issue as it was linked with lower life expectancy. Furthermore, wherever there was large-scale unemployment, life expectancy fell. Redundancy had an impact on health with an increase in stomach ulcers, heart attacks and cancers.
- G.3 Secondly, there is the contribution the health sector makes to regeneration – in terms of physical regeneration and employment. The PCT is the funding body for University Hospital Birmingham (UHB) and other hospitals, covering approximately 90 sites across Birmingham and the employment of 4,000 people.
- G.4 Concepts such as the A38 Central Technology Belt allowed the PCT to understand and link into regeneration work. A full time Regeneration Manager from UHB links into the regeneration corridor with regard to health because of the high-tech work of the hospital and its links with the University.



- G.5 The links with high technology industries and medical technologies enable UHB to maximise its move into transactional research (the link between new technologies and drugs and patient care). It has also contributed to the location of a new Leukaemia Centre at the Hospital, as AWM part funded it because of the impact this will have in attracting more highly skilled growth jobs into the area.
- G.6 The new hospital also makes a significant contribution to physical regeneration: the new building will dominate landscape and be a "Hospital Birmingham people can be proud of."
- G.7 The PCT and UHB also support skills training to meet their business needs, requiring extra entry level staff – up to 800 (e.g. auxiliary nurses and support staff) and they are targeting BME as labour supply falling and workforce not representative. Programmes include:
- Skills Escalators to allow people with a low level of education to enter employment: although there were a number of quite low skilled jobs within the NHS, it was a large employer and its highly developed functions allowed individuals to make progress. Ethnic monitoring showed that recruitment for Skills Escalators was extremely good for all groups except for black African-Caribbean;
  - Assisting Communities to Identify Vocational Areas of Training and Employment (ACTIVATE): a seven week job preparation programme for unemployed clients, providing a gateway to vacancies in the health sector and the public service sector and at the time of writing had got 370 people into work;
  - Building Health: advice, support and placements from a multi-agency team including secondees from Jobcentre Plus, Birmingham City Council, LSC, Colleges and Balfour Beatty, offering employment opportunities in healthcare and construction;
  - The new purpose-built Learning Hub next to the New Hospital is to open in March 2008 and will be dedicated to training and brokering employment for disadvantaged groups in health and social care; provide basic skills training for the unemployed and low skilled employed and be a focal point for working with our local communities and schools.
- G.8 In summary, UHB aims to give employment support to 5000 people and get 1000 people into jobs over the next four years. By working with the LSC, Job Centre Plus, the Trust has already got 59 people into work and 256 across the city.





**Table G1: Outcomes of UHB work with LSC, JCP and Developers**

	<b>South West</b>	<b>City-wide</b>
<b>People given advice and guidance</b>	455	3,400
<b>People into training</b>	161	850
<b>People into jobs</b>	59	256

# Planning and Regeneration - South Area Team


## Key


### Area Investment Prospectus Sites

-  Regeneration Priority
-  Strategic Business Opportunity
-  Strategic Investment Site
-  Additional Housing Sites

### Local Centres

-  Regional Centre
-  Sub Regional Centre
-  District Centre
-  Large Local Centre
-  Small Local Centre

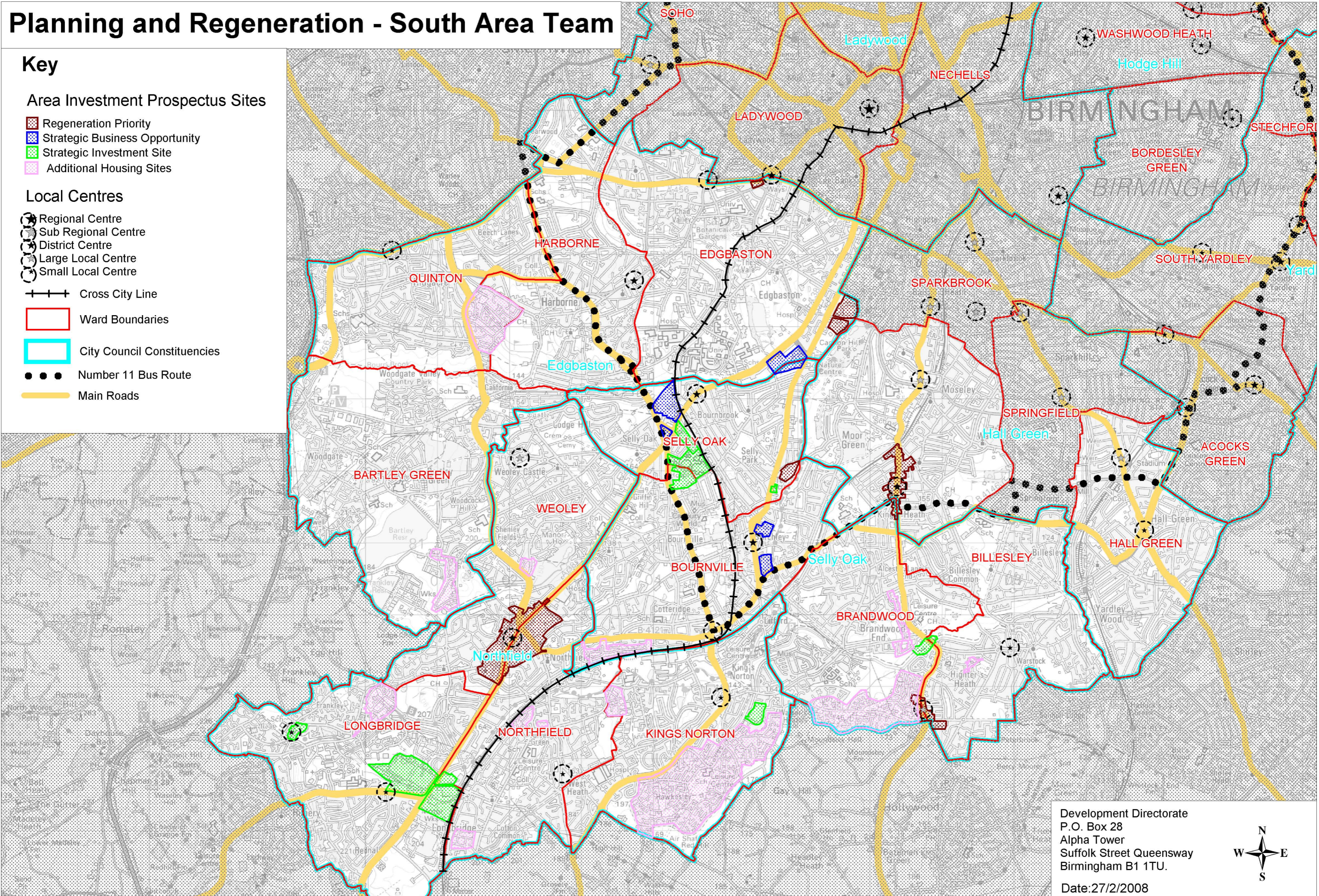
 Cross City Line

 Ward Boundaries

 City Council Constituencies

 Number 11 Bus Route

 Main Roads



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