



# A41 (Soho Road) Framework

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# Foreword

The A41 Soho Road corridor is an important transport route connecting north west Birmingham to the City Centre. It contains Soho Road District Local Centre, the core employment areas of Middlemore and Park Road/Gib Heath and Hockley Circus. To capitalise on the success of Soho Road, the framework outlines proposals for growth and expansion of the centre, as well as measures to enhance its public realm and support a healthy business environment. Development guidance is provided on the key opportunities identified in the framework, with the aim of promoting high quality development and good design.

The framework also identifies opportunities to improve linkages to public transport and provide safer routes for pedestrians and cyclists along and across the A41. The area has a wealth of cultural, historical and economic assets including the Lozells and Soho Hill Conservation Area and Middlemore and Park Road/Gib Heath employment areas, which the framework seeks to promote, enhance and protect.

The centre is also supported by the Soho Road Business Improvement District (BID) which was established in 2013 to improve and promote the centre.

The overall aim of the framework is the creation of sustainable and mixed communities and high quality places that provide the right range of uses to support the local community and wider area.

The Council is committed to working with the BID, local residents, businesses and community groups to achieve the goals set out in this framework.

## **Councillor Tahir Ali**

Cabinet Member for Development,  
Transport and the Economy  
Birmingham City Council

# Introduction

Soho Road is a vibrant and successful centre, well connected to surrounding residential and employment areas, and close to Birmingham City Centre. Development opportunities will arise through expansion of Soho Road District Centre, regeneration of the core employment areas and enhancement of Hockley Circus.

## What the framework does

This document provides a framework to guide development and regeneration in the A41 corridor by:

- Developing proposals for expansion of the centre and identifying the key development opportunities in the corridor.
- Addressing the issues of traffic congestion and parking in the centre, alongside enhancement of its public realm and future maintenance.
- Identifying opportunities to improve linkages and connectivity to public transport and enhance the pedestrian environment along and across the A41.
- Supporting the protection and regeneration of Middlemore and Park Road/Gib Heath Core Employment Areas.
- Identifying opportunities to enhance the built environment, recognising the importance of heritage assets and local character.
- Promoting the corridor as a place to invest and to capitalise on the success of Soho Road District Centre.

## Status of the document

The A41 Framework has been prepared within the context of the National Planning Policy Framework, the Birmingham Unitary Development Plan and the Submission Birmingham Development Plan (See Appendix 1). Following public consultation, the A41 Framework is formally endorsed by the City Council's Cabinet Member for Development, Jobs and Skills.

## Location

The framework area lies immediately north of Birmingham City Centre. It extends north-west from the A4540 Ring Road to include Hockley Circus, the industrial area of Park Road/Gib Heath, Soho Hill, (which forms part of the Lozells and Soho Hill Conservation Area), Soho Road District Shopping Centre, Holyhead Road and Middlemore industrial area.

It is adjacent to strategic regeneration initiatives such as the Greater Icknield Masterplan and the Big City Plan, where significant housing and employment growth will take place.

## Community

The area has one of the most diverse populations in the country. Its cultural richness is strongly reflected in the unique retail offer and community/religious facilities provided in Soho Road, making it renowned on a national and international level.

There is a strong network of community, voluntary and religious organisations located in and working with people in the area, including Nishkam and Kajans. Such organisations are active in providing education, training and business support and have been key to supporting regeneration in the area.

Low employment rates and a low skilled workforce have been persistent issues, however, educational attainment has been steadily improving. There is a strong spirit of entrepreneurship and a healthy business environment in the area.

Household sizes tend to be larger than the City as a whole giving rise to issues of over-crowding, in part reflecting the tendency of some ethnic groups to live with extended family. This is compounded by the low proportion of detached and semi-detached housing available in the area.

## Place

The area has excellent transport connections with good access to public transport and motorway links. The Midland Metro runs approximately 500m parallel to Soho Road. There are currently no heavy rail stops to serve the area but the Wolverhampton and Walsall Line which cuts across at the southern end of the shopping centre has potential to accommodate this.

There are a number of historic and environmental assets such as the Lozells and Soho Hill Conservation Area, which contains a number of historic buildings such as Grade II\* listed Soho House and Villa Road Methodist Church. The historical development of Soho Road points to the growth of a middle class enclave starting with the Soho area and developing into Handsworth as an affluent Victorian and Edwardian suburb.

Other key landmark buildings include the Gurdwara Nishkam Sewak Jatha Sikh temple, Handsworth Library and the Hawthorns Football Stadium (which falls in Sandwell).



Plan 1 Context Plan

# Development principles

## Growth

### Local Centre

Soho Road is a vibrant and relatively stable centre providing a range of shops and services. It plays an important role as a destination for ethnic retailing and has a wide catchment area extending outside of Birmingham. It is important not only for shopping but also for educational, health, community and cultural facilities.

The Soho Road Shopping Centre boundary is defined in the Shopping and Local Centres SPD (2012), and supersedes the Soho Road Local Action Plan (1999), extending the centre to the east to include Soho Hill and to the west to include part of Holyhead Road. This is where new development and additional local centre uses will be particularly encouraged.

Appropriate local centres uses include retail, services, leisure, community, and office uses. Proposals which improve the diversity of uses, quality of retail offer and range of other local centre uses will be supported. Independent and niche retailers, which form an important part of Soho Road Shopping Centre, will continue to be promoted and encouraged.

Development/redevelopment of sites and buildings within the centre will be encouraged, together with sensitive refurbishment of buildings of historic and townscape value. All development must be of a high quality and based on sustainable development principles and good design.

### Housing

With Birmingham's population projected to grow by 150,000 people by 2031, the City faces a huge challenge in meeting its future housing and job needs.

There is limited scope in the plan area for large amounts of additional housing. A number of small-scale sites have been identified.

The area is also located in close proximity to strategic proposals providing a range of residential accommodation, such as Greater Icknield, which are well connected to the centre by public transport.

In the light of limited housing opportunities within the Framework area, it is important to enhance and maintain the existing dwelling stock and provide the right level of complementary facilities and employment opportunities to cater for the growing population.

To either side of Soho Road are large housing areas comprising mainly Victorian terraced properties in private ownership. Many of these streets, have an attractive residential character with houses that have retained many of their original features. Housing improvements should be sensitively designed so that they do not detract from the quality of the residential environment.

Many larger dwellings around Soho Hill have been converted into hostels, flats or are in multi-occupation. The high concentration of these uses is affecting the character of the area. Proposals to bring these back into family accommodation and 'living above the shop' will be encouraged.

Proposals for new housing should take account of creating sustainable and balanced communities and meeting local housing needs, in particular, the need for larger family accommodation. Proposals should provide a range of house types, sizes, and tenures including affordable housing, in line with the

citywide policy. New housing must comply with the design principles set out in the 'Places for Living' SPG.

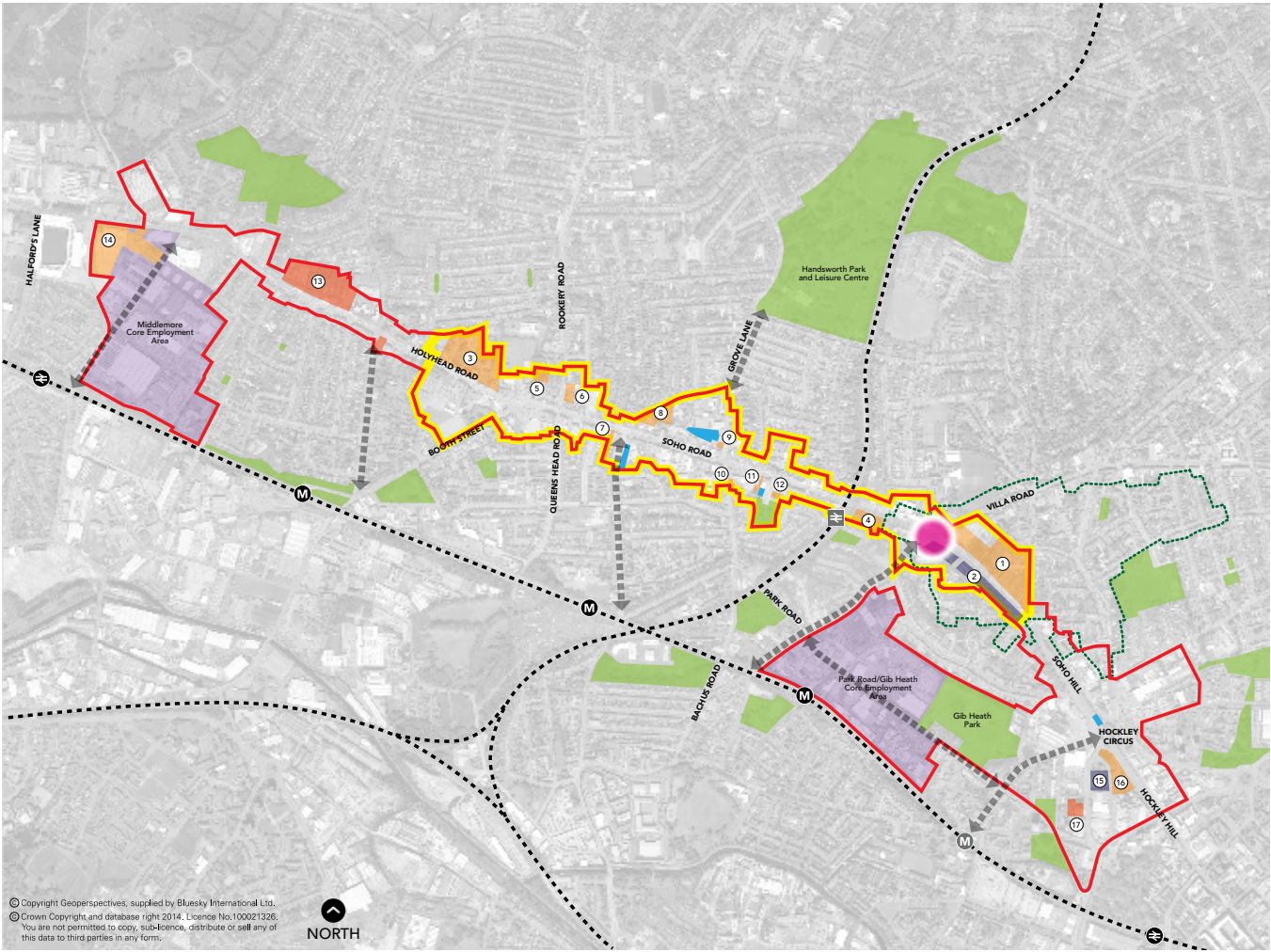
### Employment

Core employment areas are identified in the emerging Birmingham Development Plan and will be retained in employment use. They will be the focus of economic regeneration activities and additional development opportunities. Measures to improve the quality and attractiveness of these areas to investment in new employment will be supported.

The two core employment areas at Middlemore and Park Road/Gib Heath are an important source of local employment, as are the industrial uses around Hockley Circus. Sites within these areas should be retained for industrial use. Business activities fall mainly in the general and light industrial use classes. All three areas have a mix of, modern and older buildings, some well-maintained but others that are run-down and out-dated.

With worklessness being persistently high in the Aston, Soho and Lozells and East Handsworth Wards, it is essential that the creation of new jobs in the area is supported by initiatives to help local people access them. The Council will seek to secure training and learning opportunities for local people through planning obligations/Section 106 agreements. Linkages and partnerships between education institutions, local businesses and employment agencies will be encouraged.





**KEY**

- Framework boundary
- Development opportunity
- Residential development opportunity
- Refurbishment/re-use
- 3 Site reference
- Soho Road Local Centre

- Lozells and Soho Hill Conservation Area
- Public open space
- Core employment areas
- BCC car parks
- Gateway
- Improve linkages

- Rail line
- M Metro stations
- M Proposed Metro station
- ↔ Combined Metro and rail stations
- ↔ Proposed rail station

**Plan 2 A41 Soho Road Framework**

## Connectivity

The City Council's Draft Mobility Action Plan (Birmingham Connected) presents a 20 year vision for improving transport in the City by providing a transformational public transport system and an efficient road network. It also promotes improving safety and easing congestion through traffic management and parking measures.

The A41 is an important and busy arterial route, forming a key movement corridor and gateway to the City Centre. Current bus provision is excellent along Soho Road and further work by Centro to understand future demand and provision may be undertaken. Metro services are also excellent with the Birmingham Snow Hill to Wolverhampton Metro line running about 500m parallel to Soho Road. However, visibility and accessibility of the Metro stations from Soho Road could be enhanced through better signage and improved walking routes. An additional station at All Saints would be supported. There are currently no heavy rail stops which serve the area. A new railway station to serve Soho Road giving access to the Birmingham to Walsall Line will also be supported.

Birmingham Connected also recognises the importance of an efficient road network to support the local economy the need for key schemes as part of a holistic transport strategy. Proposals to upgrade the A457 Dudley Road will assist in diverting through traffic away from the A41 and support its re-designation as a primary road. This could potentially have a positive impact on the A41 corridor and Soho Road Local Centre by reducing traffic congestion and improving the environment for residents and users of the centre.

The City has secured £17 million from the Department for Transport's Cycle City Ambition Grant, topped up by its own funding to deliver cycling improvements worth £24.3 million. This money will help to

make it easier and safer for people to cycle in the City and enable the first phase of the Birmingham Cycle Revolution to be implemented. Soho Road is one of the corridors identified as a main cycling route where measures will be developed to improve cycle facilities. Cycling provision is currently very limited on Soho Road and the busy footways and roads create an unattractive cycling environment. Provision of cycle facilities and improvement of pedestrian facilities along and across the corridor will be supported.

The City Council is considering the widespread use of 20mph speed limits as there is clear evidence that reducing traffic speeds reduces collisions and casualties. This includes the majority of local centres across the City. Consultation on 20mph zones has taken place as part of the Birmingham Cycle Revolution proposals.

Off-street parking facilities serving the centre have recently been improved. Short-stay, on-street parking will be reviewed with the potential introduction of parking meters in the core of the centre.

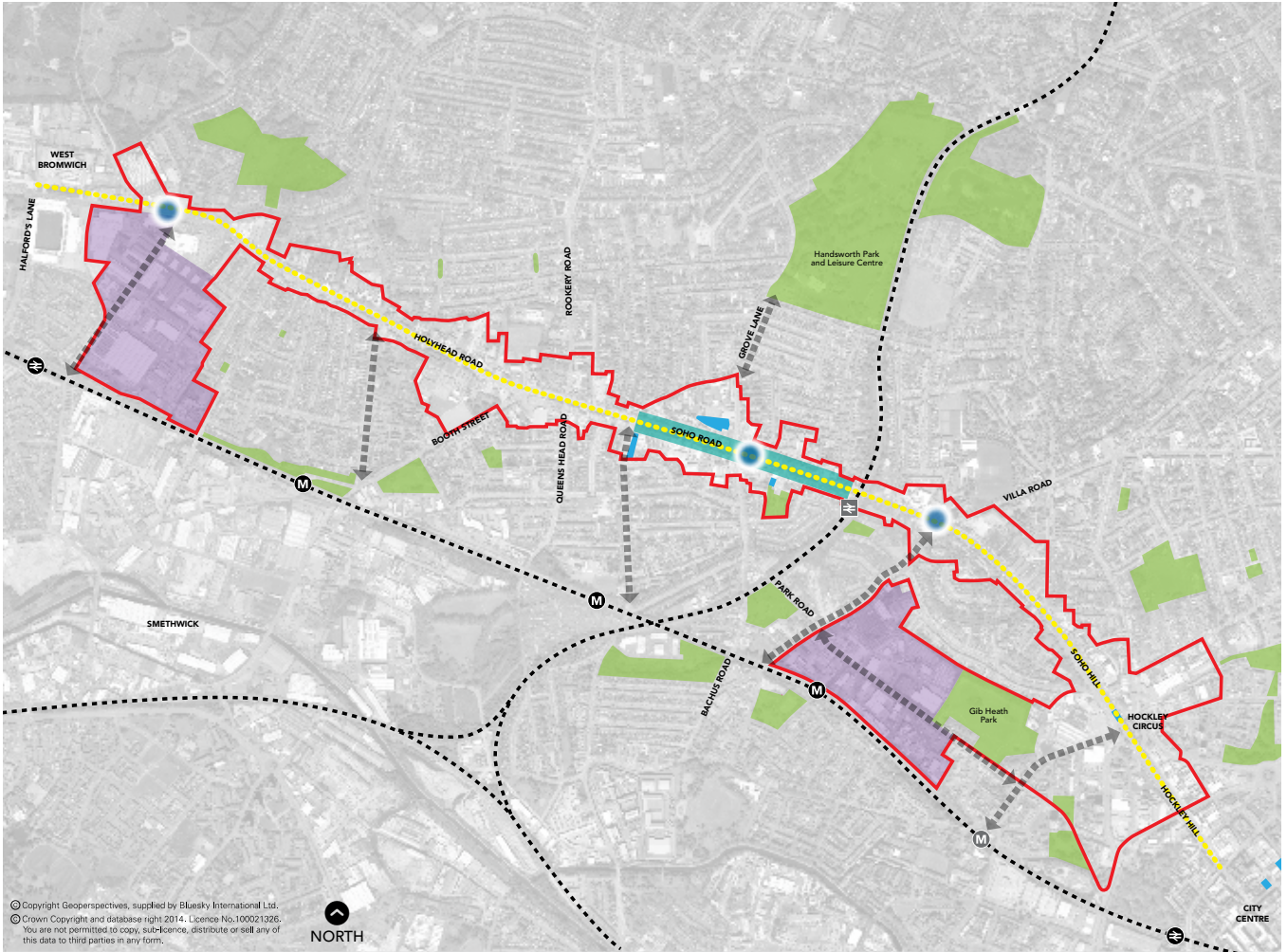
Provision for pedestrians along the corridor is reasonable, but there are a number of key areas which would benefit from improvements, namely the Hockley Circus and the core of the shopping centre. The Hockley Flyover is a significant barrier for pedestrians, and although there are pedestrian/cyclist subways, these are unattractive and perceived as unsafe. The infilling of the subways and provision of level crossings at Hockley Circus, subject to available funding, is supported.

There are currently three Highway Improvement Lines in the framework area which will be protected for highway and public transport schemes. These are shown on the Connectivity Plan 3.



Soho Road District Local Centre





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**KEY**

- Framework boundary
- Highway improvement line
- BCC car parks
- Proposed parking meters zone
- Main cycling route
- Core employment areas
- Public open space
- Improve linkages
- Rail line
- M Metro stations
- M Proposed Metro station
- M Combined Metro and rail stations
- M Proposed rail station

**Plan 3** Connectivity

## Design and heritage

There is a wealth of architectural and historic assets in the plan area, which point to the importance of Soho as a fashionable residential suburb in the early nineteenth century. The framework includes part of the Lozells and Soho Hill Conservation Area and a number of listed and locally listed buildings, as well as other buildings and neighbourhoods that have heritage and streetscape value. Lozells and Soho Hill Conservation Area is registered as 'at risk' by English Heritage due to the cumulative affect that further loss of traditional built fabric, unsympathetic developments and attrition of special features has had on the overall integrity, character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

The framework therefore seeks to protect, conserve and enhance the special local character and heritage of the area. A Character Appraisal and Management Plan for Lozells and Soho Hill Conservation Area is also being prepared by the Council and will be adopted as Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

Any proposed development should consider the setting of heritage assets and their significance in terms of local character and distinctiveness. A significant number of heritage assets in the plan area are vacant or suffering from varying degrees of neglect and lack of maintenance. Adaptation or conversion of existing buildings in a sensitive and sympathetic manner will be encouraged. Any new development or conversion of existing buildings needs to complement and enhance local character and must be consistent with the adopted design guidance 'Places for Living' and 'Places for All' SPG.

The Conservation Area was designated in July 1979 and extends from Nishkam on Soho Road in the west to Burbury/Wills Street junction in the east

and from Villa Road in the north to the Carnegie Institute at the junction of Hunters Road/Nursery Road. A large number of buildings survive from the late eighteenth to early nineteenth century period, generally in the west of the Conservation Area. It evolved into a fashionable residential suburb of Birmingham incorporating numerous churches, community buildings, commercial facilities, shops and public houses. Of particular importance from this early development is Soho House, the former home of Matthew Boulton, an important figure in the industrial revolution.

There are 19 statutorily listed buildings in the framework area, the majority of which are Grade II Listed and 4 which are Grade II\* Listed. Notable examples include the Red Lion Public House, Handsworth Library and Icknield Street School. There are also 4 Locally Listed Buildings. These are all shown on Plan 4 Historic Environment and listed in Appendix 3.

## Flood risk and sustainable drainage

The Hockley Brook runs through the southern end of the plan area and almost parallel to the west side of Soho Road. It is entirely culverted through Hockley Circus, but becomes open through Gib Heath Park. The Hockley Brook is identified in the Birmingham Brooks Report as currently suffering from environmental degradation, pollution and poor access. Improvements along the river corridor will be encouraged, including flood risk management, improved access for maintenance, enhancement as a wildlife corridor, improvement of water quality and opening up of culverted watercourses where feasible.

The entire length of the Hockley Brook falls within Flood Zones 2 and 3. Site specific flood risk assessments will be required when considering proposals to develop

within flood zones and mitigation measures, including easements from culverts will be agreed with the Council/Environment Agency prior to any development.

To minimise flood risk, improve water quality and enhance biodiversity and amenity, development proposals will be required to manage surface water through Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs).

Other opportunities to increase biodiversity through ecologically sensitive design and landscaping will be supported.

The City Council will work with the Environment Agency to reduce flood risk in line with the River Trent Catchment Flood Management Plan. Site specific flood risk assessments will be required in accordance with the requirements of the relevant national planning policy and guidance outlined in the Birmingham Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

## Green infrastructure

Green infrastructure includes the natural environment, open spaces, waterways and green roofs/walls and their connection with the surrounding built environment. Green infrastructure is critical to reducing flood risk, supporting biodiversity, contributing to the quality of the environment and enhancing quality of life. A strategy for managing and enhancing green infrastructure in the City is provided in the Green Living Spaces Plan. The City Council will seek to maintain and expand the green infrastructure network throughout Birmingham.

Natural environments within the A41 corridor will be protected and enhanced in line with the principles of the Birmingham and Black Country Nature Improvement Area (NIA) and take account of the Cannock Chase and Cank Wood National Character Area identified by Natural England.

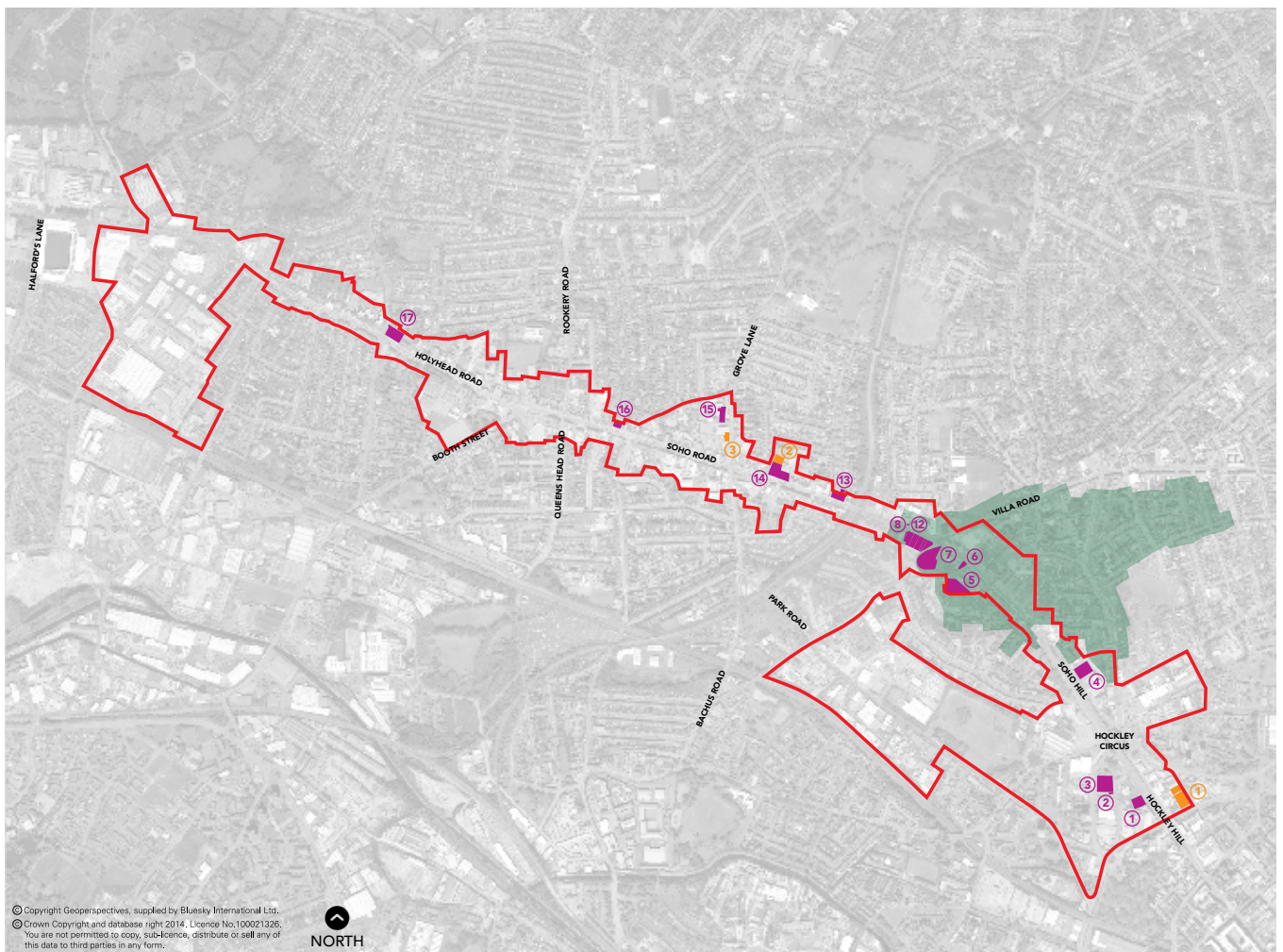


The main area of open space in the framework is Gib Heath Park with Hockley Brook running along its northern edge. Proposals to improve linkages to the park from the surrounding industrial and residential areas will be supported.

Handsworth Park falls outside the framework area but is a major community asset only five minutes' walk from the local centre. At the western end of the corridor, also outside the framework area, Handsworth Cemetery is an

important green space with views out to Sandwell Country Park. Improved connections to these open spaces will be encouraged.

As it is difficult to increase open space provision within the densely built up area opportunities to improve green infrastructure in urban environments through green roofs/walls and new tree planting/landscaping will be encouraged, including features to benefit wildlife.



#### KEY

- Framework boundary
- Statutorily Listed Building
- Locally Listed Building
- Lozells and Soho Hill Conservation Area



# 12 The opportunity

Expansion of the centre will allow opportunities to increase retail, leisure, and community activity, in order to cater for the growing population. Sites for new housing and regeneration of employment areas will also help to secure a sustainable and successful future for the area.

Soho Hill will act as a new and exciting mixed use gateway into Soho Road, while Hockley Circus will be enhanced to assist the re-connection of communities and unlock development potential.

The core employment areas of Middlemore and Park Road/Gib Heath will become the focus of industrial regeneration where business growth and modernisation will be supported.

## A sequence of places

The framework builds upon the distinct areas within the A41 corridor and proposes a sequence of places that are integrated and well connected to the wider area. It highlights the key principles and development opportunities within each of the following places:

- Holyhead Road South (Centre Extension West).
  - Soho Road District Local Centre.
  - Holyhead Road North.
  - Middlemore Core Employment Area.
  - Park Road/Gib Heath Core Employment Area.
  - Hockley Circus and surrounds.
- Soho Hill (Centre Extension East).



Plan 5 Sequence of places

## Soho Hill (Centre Extension East)

The Soho Road Shopping Centre boundary is extended to the east to include Soho Hill, which is where new development and additional local centre uses will be encouraged. The vision is to see Soho Hill transformed into an active and exciting gateway into the main thoroughfare of Soho Road, while retaining and enhancing its special local and historic character

This section of the centre forms part of the Lozells and Soho Hill Conservation Area and contains an eclectic mix of historic buildings including early 19th century classical villas, coach houses and public houses (Roebuck and Bee Hive). This is interspersed by the introduction of early to mid-20th century commercial and works buildings such as Bill House and the Telephone Exchange as well as other light engineering and industrial uses. The introduction of more recent unsympathetic buildings and alterations to buildings has led to the erosion of the historic grain and is inconsistent with the prevailing character of the area.

There are a number of buildings which are considered inappropriate additions and detract from the character of the Conservation Area. The majority of these are vacant or underutilised allowing opportunity for redevelopment. New development should carefully consider the impact on the local character and the setting of any heritage assets within the area.

### Key principles

- High quality development of vacant and under-used buildings/land that will add to the vitality and vibrancy of Soho Road District Shopping Centre.
- Creation of an exciting gateway into Soho Road.
- Improvement of public realm, environmental design and quality.
- Protection, conservation and enhancement of key heritage assets.

### Development opportunities

#### 1. Nos.130-160 and 184-232 Soho Hill and land at rear (Bill House Development) and Nos.5-19 Hamstead Road

Size: 2.95ha.

Existing uses: Bulky goods retail, gym, vacant public houses, vacant nightclub, vacant retail, vacant industrial, warehouse, offices, vacant offices, industrial.

Appropriate uses: Retail, leisure, residential, offices, health, education and community uses.

The site represents one of the few opportunities in the Conservation Area to intervene in a major positive manner to bring about regeneration. The prominent and sensitive location of this site necessitates a development of quality and distinctiveness with creation of a gateway development to Soho Road District Centre.

The site comprises a mixture of various commercial and industrial uses, the majority of which are vacant or underutilised and in a poor state of repair. The buildings which are late additions do not contribute to the character of the Conservation Area.

The western part of the site is dominated by Bill House, a commercial building constructed in the 1950s, but also contains Victorian terraced properties at Nos.188 to 198, a vacant works at No.184 and the corner properties at Nos.226 to 230 Soho Hill. The eastern part comprises the vacant early 19th Century Roebuck Public House on the prominent corner and junction of Hamstead Road/ Soho Hill, adjoined by a pair of terraced properties and a vacant warehouse in poor condition. A further two warehouse premises are located at Nos.152-160 Soho Hill, although these are occupied. The site on Hamstead Road is dominated by the blank frontage of the vacant warehouse and adjoined by a small vacant retail unit, an open air car wash, a vacant office at No.19 Hamstead Road and joinery workshop.

The site falls within the Lozells and Soho Hill Conservation Area and is surrounded by several buildings of historical interest including St. Michael's Church, Villa Road Methodist Church, King Edwards VI School and Soho House.

Applicants will need to carry out an assessment of the area to describe and assess the significance of any heritage assets

and their settings affected. This will inform future development proposals. Development should protect, conserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Consent to demolish a building in a Conservation Area will be granted only where its removal would be in line with advice provided in the NPPF.

The design principles set out on page 8 will apply. In addition, development proposals must recognize and enhance the historic environment and respect the character of the area in terms of scale, height, massing and materials. New buildings should provide a well-designed frontage to Soho Hill, Villa Road and Hamstead Road. Uses at the ground floor level should be active and add to the viability and vitality of Soho Road District Centre. Upper floors may be suitable for residential, offices or other uses. The prominent and sensitive location of this site necessitates a development of quality and distinctiveness.

Subject to resources the area will benefit from a masterplan being prepared to provide detailed design guidance and help deliver comprehensive development.

## 2. Properties on the South side of Soho Hill

Site: Nos.91 to 133 Soho Hill (odds).

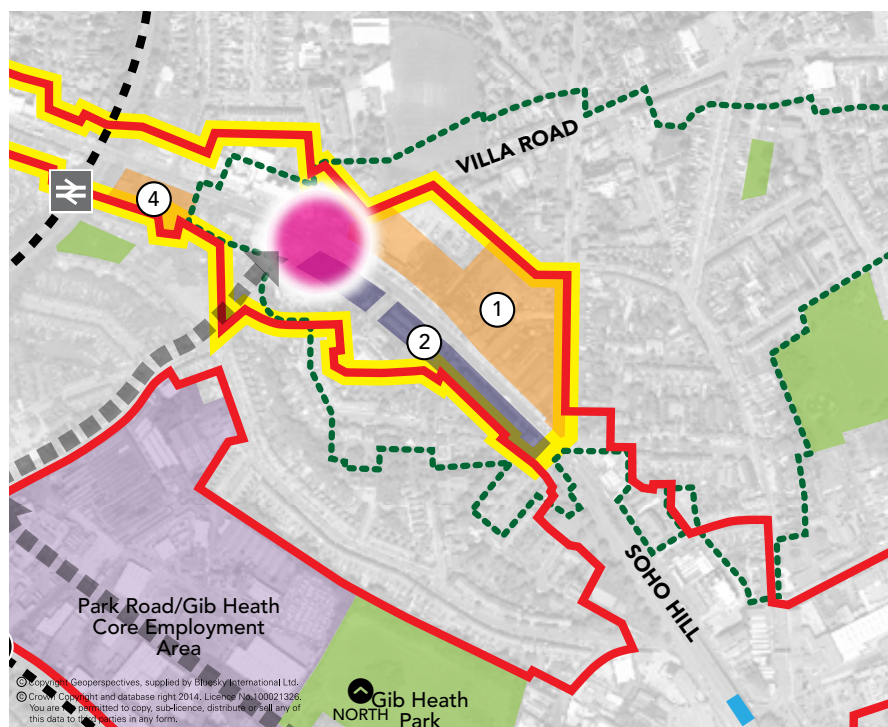
Existing uses: Offices, retail, light industrial, residential, training, educational uses.

Appropriate uses: Retail, leisure, residential, offices, health and community uses.

These properties fall within the Lozells and Soho Hill Conservation Area and were originally built for occupation by single families. Many of these large villas, dating around 1830-1900, have since

been converted to commercial and institutional uses. No.127 Soho Hill and the Church of St. Michael's on St. Michael's Road are Grade II Listed buildings, while Soho House, located on Soho Avenue is Grade II\*. Unsympathetic alterations and signage have eroded the character of the buildings.

The aim is to encourage re-use and sensitive refurbishment that retains the character and appearance of the buildings and where unsympathetic alterations have occurred, encourage restoration, for example, by removal of roller shutters and reinstatement of original boundary treatments.



### KEY

- Framework boundary
- Development opportunity
- Core employment areas
- BCC car parks
- 3 Site reference
- Soho Road Local Centre
- Lozells and Soho Hill Conservation Area
- Public open space
- Gateway
- Improve linkages
- Rail line
- ⇌ Proposed rail station

Plan 6 Centre Extension East



## Holyhead Road South (Centre Extension West)

To the west the centre includes the area between Rookery Road and Farcroft Road which currently comprises a mix of uses. In particular the land and property on the north side of Holyhead Road between (and including) Holyhead Way to No.8 Holyhead Road provides potential for significant new development.

### Key principles

- Creation of a sense of place and a mix of uses that will complement and add to the vitality and vibrancy of Soho Road District Centre.
- Redevelopment of poor quality and under-utilised land/buildings for local centre uses.
- Improvement of public realm and seamless connection with Soho Road.
- Improvement of environmental quality and design.

### Development opportunities

#### 3. Area between Holyhead Way and No.8 Holyhead Road

Size: 2.95ha.

Existing uses: Industrial, offices, retail, cash and carry, motor hire, vehicle repairs, vacant retail and restaurant.

Appropriate uses: Retail, leisure, residential, offices, health and community uses will generally be on the ground floor. Other uses such as residential and offices will be encouraged on upper floors.



Characterised by poor quality buildings, under-utilised land, and fragmented frontages, this area can be transformed by comprehensive redevelopment to provide new retail and other local centre uses in order to capitalise on the success of Soho Road District Centre. The

industrial uses which interject in this block would be more suitably located in the core employment areas of Middlemore or Park Road/ Gib Heath.

New development must be of a high quality, fronting onto Holyhead Road and respecting the scale and massing of surrounding buildings. Section 106 requirements could include provision for training and local labour, town centre management and environmental enhancements in the area.



### KEY

- |   |                                     |   |                        |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|------------------------|
|  | Framework boundary                  |  | Soho Road Local Centre |
|  | Development opportunity             |  | Public open space      |
|  | Residential development opportunity |  | BCC car parks          |
|  | Site reference                      |  | Improve linkages       |

Plan 7 Centre Extension West

## Soho Road District Local Centre

Soho Road is a successful centre characterised by a low vacancy rate and relatively diverse uses. There is strong representation from small and independent ethnic retailers and a healthy business environment. Over the last 15 years the centre has undergone a programme of regeneration. The key aim is to continue to support and enhance the vitality and viability of the centre.

### Key principles

- Encourage appropriate new local centre development within the centre.
- Enhance the public realm and the pedestrian environment.
- Introduce traffic management and parking measures to ease congestion and improve safety.
- Support the established Business Improvement District (BID).

### Development opportunities

A range of small to medium sized development opportunities are available within the centre and these are listed in Appendix 2. It must be noted that this is not an exhaustive list but highlights a snapshot in time of current development opportunities (Site reference numbers 4-12).

### Public Realm Enhancements:

While the centre benefitted from environmental improvements in the past, daily wear-and-tear means that there is a need for refreshing some of that work. A range of measures, utilising Section 106 monies, will be undertaken to improve the public realm.

### Parking and Traffic Management:

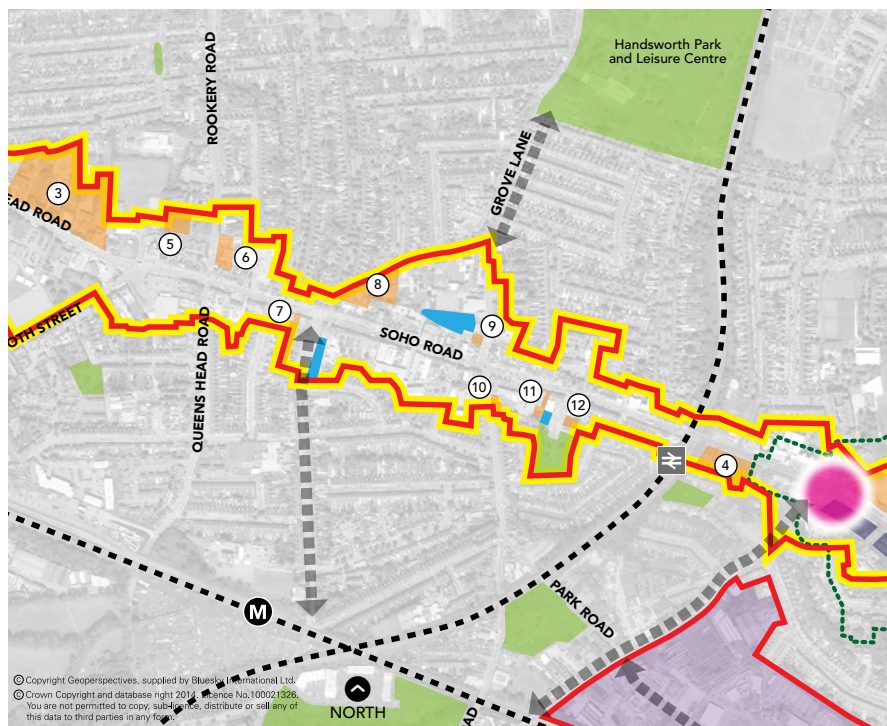
Whilst there is a supply of off-street car parking facilities, these are not necessarily situated where demand is highest. Short stay on-street parking on Soho Road is well utilised, whereas parking areas

at the extremities of the centre are underused, partly due to their poor perception and maintenance. Unauthorised parking detracts from the local centre. Proposals to improve the security and condition of Waverhill Road and Boulton Road will be undertaken. A Traffic Regulation Order to introduce parking meters in the core of the centre will also be considered. This will require a review of parking in the local centre and consultation

on a wider parking strategy for the centre.

### Business support

Soho Road is currently being supported by a Town Centre Manager. A Business Improvement District (BID) has been established which has the potential to help to provide additional resources for local centre improvements and initiatives.



### KEY

- |  |   |  |                       |
|--|---|--|-----------------------|
|  | Framework boundary                      |  | Core employment areas |
|  | Development opportunity                 |  | BCC car parks         |
|  | Refurbishment/re-use                    |  | Gateway               |
|  | Site reference                          |  | Improve linkages      |
|  | Soho Road Local Centre                  |  | Rail line             |
|  | Lozells and Soho Hill Conservation Area |  | Metro stations        |
|  | Public open space                       |  | Proposed rail station |

Plan 8 Soho Road District Local Centre



## Holyhead Road North

From where the local centre boundary ends to the west, Holyhead Road stretches north-west to the Sandwell boundary. The area contains a mix of uses including retail, residential, and industrial uses.

### Key principles

- Improvement of environmental quality and design.
- Encouragement of residential development/improvement/living over the shop.

### Development opportunities

#### 13. Area between Nos.56-86 Holyhead Road

Existing uses: Residential, offices, retail.

Appropriate uses: Residential improvement.

The approach here is to rationalise some of the existing land uses to encourage residential development and improve existing accommodation, subject to careful consideration of access arrangements.

#### 14. Former ECP Site

Size: 2.1ha.

Existing uses: Vacant industrial.

Appropriate uses: Employment, hotel, conferencing uses.

Development fronting Holyhead Road will need to consider its relationship with the Hawthorns Football Stadium and create a significant built presence through height and massing. Pedestrian and cycle access links to the site will be required. Section 106 requirements could include provision for training and local labour, and contributions to highway improvements and environmental enhancements in the area.



Holyhead Road



### KEY

- Framework boundary
- Development opportunity
- Residential development opportunity
- ③ Site reference
- Public open space
- Core employment areas
- ← Improve linkages
- - - Rail line
- Combined Metro and rail station

Plan 9 Holyhead Road North

## Core Employment Areas

The Core Employment Areas (CEA) of Middlemore and Park Road/Gib Heath provide a locally significant source of employment and industrial accommodation, which will be safeguarded for such use.

### Key principles

- Retention and expansion of the existing manufacturing base, especially where engineering skills, product development and technology transfer opportunities can be identified.
- Redevelopment or refurbishment of out-dated buildings.
- Provision of more accommodation for small businesses.
- Further diversification of the business base including attraction of inward investment.

The areas could also benefit from environmental improvements such as new street lighting, CCTV, landscaping and improved pedestrian and cycling facilities.

### Middlemore Core Employment Area

Middlemore Business Park forms the main body of the core employment area and contains mostly larger industrial premises of post-war construction operating in light and general industry and warehouse and distribution. The majority of the Hawthorns Industrial Estate is taken up by the former European and Commercial Pressings (ECP) complex now vacant, together with some older industrial accommodation. Its key assets are budget accommodation and proximity to the M5 motorway.

### Park Road/Gib Heath Core Employment Area

Park Road/Gib Heath lies north west of Hockley Circus and comprises around 30ha of employment land spread out from Gib Heath public open space to the Soho Benson Road Metro Station. The area contains a mix of small and medium size premises of mostly post-war construction, with some modern accommodation such as the Park Trading Estate and Benson Industrial Estate. The large occupiers include Samuel Groves Ltd on Radnor Road and

Castle Hardware Cash and Carry Warehouse. Lower grade yard and open storage uses tend to be focused on Factory Road.

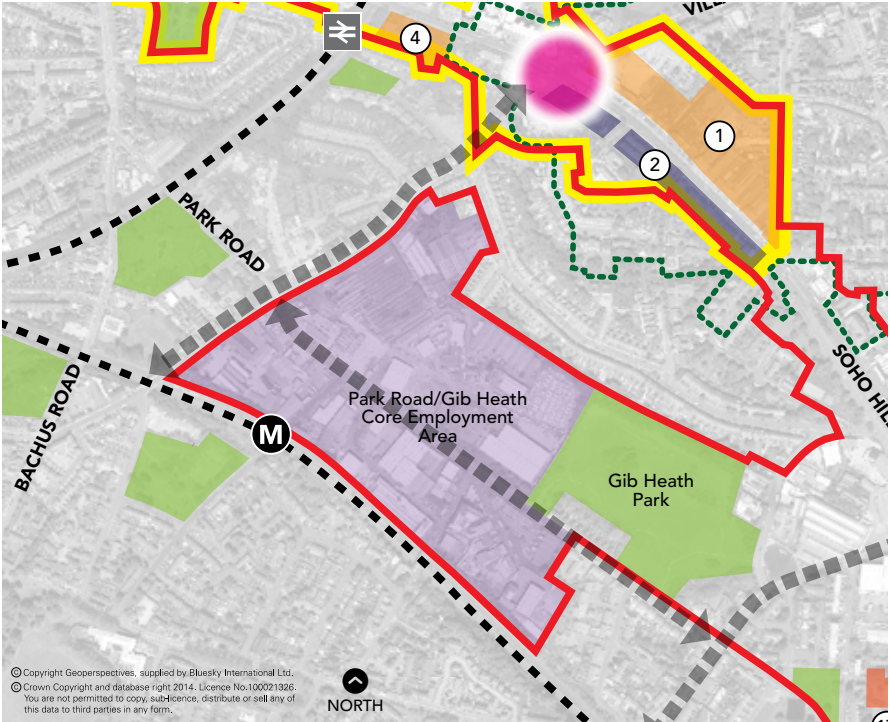
The principal land use is general industrial (B2 Class) with little mix of other uses. Vacancy rates are fairly low and the area contains approximately 30 businesses employing around 500 people. It clearly plays an important role in providing accommodation and is a local source of employment. While there is a Metro Station on Benson Road, no bus services run along Park Road.



### KEY

- Framework boundary
- Development opportunity
- Residential development opportunity
- 3 Site reference
- Public open space
- Core employment areas
- Improve linkages
- Rail line
- ⊕ Combined Metro and rail station

**Plan 10** Middlemore CEA area



**KEY**

- Framework boundary
- Development opportunity
- Core employment areas
- Gateway
- Improve linkages
- Rail line
- Site reference
- Public open space
- Lozells and Soho Hill Conservation Area
- M Metro stations
- ⇌ Proposed rail station

**Plan 11** Park Road/Gib Heath CEA area



Middlemore Business Park



## Hockley Circus and Surrounds

The Hockley Circus presents a significant physical and visual barrier to pedestrian movement in the area. The aspiration is to fill in the subways and provide level crossings on the roundabout arms subject to traffic capacity implications. This would provide safer and more direct routes for pedestrians/cyclists within an improved public realm. There is also opportunity for public art, creative lighting, and new public space within the roundabout itself.

The surrounding area contains a mix of uses focusing predominantly on industrial uses with residential dwellings on the western fringes. The New Bingley Hall occupies a large site on Whitmore Street providing a premier banqueting, conference and exhibition venue. Employment uses are located near all the arms of the roundabout varying in quality and size of premises.

### Key principles

- Safer and more direct routes for pedestrians/cyclists within an improved public realm.
- Introduction of creative lighting, public art, and public space.
- High quality development of opportunity sites.

### Development opportunities

#### 15. Icknield Street School

Size: 0.26ha.

Part vacant, part used for religious/educational uses.

Appropriate uses: Education, offices, community uses.

Icknield Street School is an impressive Grade II\* Listed Building located on the south west corner of the Hockley roundabout. Part of the former school is currently being used for religious/educational

purposes but the majority is under-utilised. Conversion to offices or community use would be considered appropriate.

#### 16. Former Muhammad Ali Centre

Size: 0.29ha.

Existing uses: Vacant former community use.

Appropriate uses: Community, leisure, employment, training, and educational uses.

The Muhammad Ali Centre is owned by Birmingham City Council and let on a long leasehold to Kajans. The building has been derelict for several years and has been subject to fires and anti-social behaviour leaving it in a poor state of repair. A high quality

development which addresses Hockley Hill with a strong built presence, but at the same time protecting the setting of the Grade II Listed Icknield Street School will be expected. Pedestrian and cycle access links will be required as part of any development proposal.

#### 17. Cornwall Tower

Size: 0.22ha.

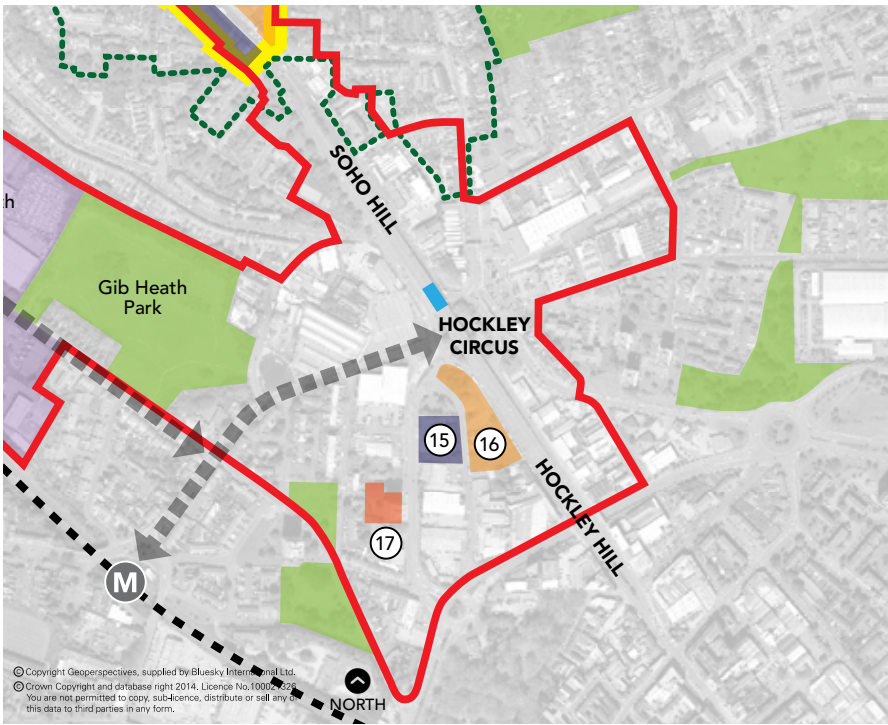
Existing uses: Residential flats.

Appropriate uses: Residential.

Cornwall Tower is a 1960s residential block which is scheduled for demolition by the City Council in 2014. Residents are currently being re-housed and the site will be developed for new housing.



Hockley Circus



**KEY**

- Framework boundary
- Development opportunity
- Residential development opportunity
- Refurbishment/re-use
- 3 Site reference
- Soho Road Local Centre
- Lozells and Soho Hill Conservation Area
- Public open space
- Core employment areas
- BCC car parks
- Improve linkages
- Rail line
- M Proposed Metro station

**Plan 12** Hockley Circus and surrounds



# Delivery

Delivery of the proposals within this Framework is a long-term process and will require working in partnership with key stakeholders including the wider community.

The Framework provides a mechanism for promoting the area and attracting investment. It also provides a framework for co-ordinating future public and private sector investment decisions. To achieve the vision for the A41 Soho Road Corridor, partnership working with the BID and public and private sector interests will be essential.

## Community building

Successful delivery of the proposals will also be dependent on community support and stewardship. Encouraging and fostering community groups will help strengthen community cohesion, as well as supporting the process of Community Asset Transfers and Community Right to Build Initiatives.

## Funding and planning obligations

The City Council will seek to secure funding from a variety of sources to enable implementation of proposals and aspirations within the Framework.

It will also seek to negotiate planning obligations to ensure that development makes a positive contribution to the communities within which it is located and to address/mitigate any negative impacts of the development. The type of obligations identified are listed below.

The City Council is currently consulting on its draft Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) which it plans to introduce in 2015. CIL will replace elements of the Section 106 agreements and will be used to support the delivery of key infrastructure.

## Section 106 Requirements:

- Transport/physical infrastructure e.g. highway improvements, traffic management, public transport improvements (Sections 278 and 106).
- Travel planning and associated smarter choice measures.
- Enhancing the built and natural environment e.g. environmental enhancement in Soho Road District Centre, measures to reduce flood risk and improve water quality of the Hockley Brook.
- Measures to offset impact on the environment, climate change and loss of/impact on amenity/resource on site or nearby e.g. open space contributions or provision.
- Provision of facilities/services to support development e.g. education and sports facilities.
- Training and local labour initiatives for construction and operational phases of development.
- Contributions to town centre management e.g. BID.
- Affordable housing, in line with the Affordable Housing Policies of the City Council.



**Waheed Nazir**

Director of Planning and Regeneration



# Appendix 1

## **Birmingham Unitary Development Plan (2005)**

The main planning policies in the adopted plan relevant to this framework are summarised below. It:

- Identifies the Dudley Road (A457) as a transport improvement priority to improve access to the City Centre from the Black Country, and to channel traffic away from residential/shopping areas of Handsworth/Soho Road.
- Requires the protection of strategic highway improvement lines, which includes Holyhead Road-Island Road to Middlemore Road.
- Seeks to improve public transport provision within the Soho Road area, and proposes a new railway station to serve Soho Road on the Soho Loop, giving access to the Birmingham to Walsall Line.
- Recognises the important function of Soho Road Shopping Centre and seeks to maintain its vibrancy and viability.
- Seeks opportunities to meet local housing needs and other community needs such as the provision of open space.
- Identifies Middlemore Trading Estate as an opportunity for redevelopment and refurbishment of industrial uses.
- Proposes industrial development on part of Soho Pool Wharf on Park Road.

## **Birmingham Development Plan Pre-submission (2013)**

The Birmingham Development Plan will set out the statutory planning framework to guide decisions on development and regeneration in Birmingham until 2031, by which time its population is projected to grow by 150,000. Policies relating to the A41 (Soho Road) include:

- Policy TP18 - Core employment areas.
- Policy TP20 - The network and hierarchy of centres.
- Policy TP21 - Convenience retail provision.
- Policy TP22 - Small shops and independent retailing.
- Policy TP23 - Promotion of diversity of uses within centres.
- Policy TP40 - Public transport.

## **Shopping and Local Centres Supplementary Planning Document (2012)**

The document defines the boundary of centres and sets out detailed policies to encourage investment and to protect and enhance their vibrancy and vitality.

## **Green Living Spaces Plan (2013)**

The plan aims to secure, enhance and ensure the effective long term maintenance of the City's natural green and water spaces.

## **The Birmingham Connected White Paper (2014)**

The draft Plan presents a twenty year vision for improving transport in the City. Future transportation proposals in this framework will be informed by this plan.

## **Regeneration context**

The area has benefited from public sector funding in recent years including Single Regeneration Budget 6, which funded (approximately £40 million) a programme of regeneration projects from 2000-2007 throughout North West Birmingham, targeting Soho ward, and parts of Aston, Handsworth, Ladywood and Sandwell wards.

North West Birmingham has also benefited from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). The current programme will provide €400 million of investment to create jobs and assist small and medium sized enterprises from now until 2015. The wards selected for funding comprise Aston, Nechells, Washwood Heath, Bordesley Green, Sparkbrook, and parts of Ladywood, Springfield and South Yardley.

The plan area also fell under Urban Living (the Birmingham-Sandwell Housing Market Renewal Area) which operated from 2003-2011 and aimed to deal with the whole range of problems that affect homes and neighbourhoods. The diverse range of projects undertaken by Urban Living included masterplanning, community building and land assembly.

Appropriate local centre uses include retail, leisure, offices, residential, health and community uses.

**4. Temple Row, Nos.25-40 Soho Road**

Size: 0.54ha.

Existing uses: Offices.

Appropriate uses: Retail, offices, residential, leisure, health, education and community uses.

**5. Land at Trafalgar Road**

Size: 0.09ha.

Existing uses: Cleared former housing land and private car park.

**6. No.36 Rookery Road**

Size: 0.23ha.

Existing uses: Vacant industrial.

**7. Site at 321 Soho Road**

Size: 0.2ha.

Existing uses: Vacant retail to Soho Road frontage and cleared land at the rear.

**8. Site at Dawson Road**

Size: 0.4ha.

Existing uses: Builders yard.

**9. Land adjacent to No.3 Grove Lane**

Size: 0.03ha.

Existing uses: Vacant land.

**10. Land adjacent to No.23 Nineveh Road**

Size: 0.07ha.

Existing uses: Cleared land.

**11. Land at No.163 Soho Road**

Size: 0.07ha.

Existing uses: Cleared land.

**12. Land at Waverhill Road**

Size: 0.05ha.

Existing uses: Cleared land.



# Appendix 3

## Statutorily Listed Buildings

- 1 Nos.51-51, Hockley Hill - Grade II
- 2 Ickniel Street School - Grade II\*
- 3 No.303, Ickniel Street - Grade II\*
- 4 Nos.68-82 (even), Soho Hill - Grade II
- 5 Nos.5-11 (odd), Soho House - Grade II\*
- 6 No.127, Soho Hill - Grade II
- 7 Church of St. Michael - Grade II
- 8 No.1, Soho Road - Grade II
- 9 No.3, Soho Road - Grade II
- 10 No.5&7, Soho Road - Grade II
- 11 No.9&11, Soho Road - Grade II
- 12 Nos.13-19 (odd), Soho Road - Grade II
- 13 Nos.80-86 (even), Soho Road - Grade II
- 14 Handsworth Library - Grade II
- 15 Handsworth Grammar School - Grade II
- 16 Red Lion Public House - Grade II\*
- 17 Former New Inn Public House - Grade II

## Locally Listed Buildings

- 1 Nos.236-244 (even), Barr Street - Grade A
- 2 Handsworth Fire Station, Stafford Road - Grade B
- 3 Nos.23-31, Grove Lane - Grade B









