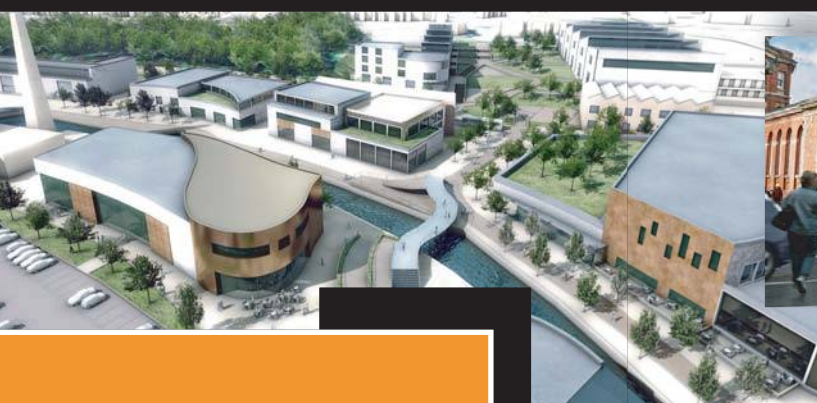


**Wyre Forest District Council**

# KIDDERMINSTER CENTRAL AREA ACTION PLAN 2006 - 2026

ADOPTED JULY 2013



**Wyre Forest District Council**



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**Wyre Forest** District Council



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## 1 Introduction and Context

**1.1** The District's Adopted Local Plan (January 2004) is being replaced with a portfolio of documents which combine to provide the framework for the future development of the District. These documents are collectively known as the Development Plan and will be used to determine planning applications within the District in the future.

**1.2** The first document to be prepared was the Core Strategy, which was adopted in December 2010. The Adopted Core Strategy sets out the strategy and vision that will influence planning and related initiatives up to 2026. The Adopted Core Strategy provides the development strategy which will guide the future decisions on where to locate new homes, businesses and leisure facilities. Although setting out the future plan for development, the Adopted Core Strategy did not specifically identify any particular sites where development would occur. The documents that identify and allocate the sites where new development will occur are this document, Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan (KCAAP), and the Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan.

**1.3** Kidderminster is highlighted through the Adopted Core Strategy as the strategic centre of the District with significant redevelopment and regeneration potential. However, it is also a town undergoing major economic restructuring and faces acute economic, social and environmental challenges.

**1.4** It is therefore considered important for Kidderminster to have a specific Area Action Plan to identify areas for change and help stimulate and deliver these regeneration opportunities. This will also help to highlight specific and detailed site-based issues and provide a wider vision and concepts that look beyond individual sites.

### The Role of the Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan

**1.5** Kidderminster is the main service centre for Wyre Forest District and the surrounding areas and was recognised by the former emerging West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy as one of 25 strategic centres within the West Midlands region.

**1.6** Kidderminster is a town with significant opportunities for regeneration and redevelopment. Since 2009, the District Council, in partnership with key regeneration bodies such as Worcestershire County Council, the Homes and Communities Agency and British Waterways, has been progressing the ReWyre Initiative. The focus of ReWyre is to promote and improve Kidderminster and it was launched with a Regeneration Prospectus which highlights the town's opportunities and constraints. ReWyre has helped to fund and facilitate several projects and events that have contributed positively to the town. The ReWyre Initiative highlights the potential of the town; however, these opportunities need to be planned and managed to ensure that any subsequent development benefits the whole of Kidderminster as well as the wider District.

Adopted Core Strategy



**1.7** The role of the KCAAP is to provide a detailed planning policy framework which sets out the strategy and policies for the development of the town's central area. It is important that it promotes sustainable growth for the town and encourages investment in the economic, social and environmental development needed to make Kidderminster a prosperous and quality place.

**1.8** In order to do this, the KCAAP sets out area-wide development management policies that provide the general principles for sustainable development and highlights the ambitions for the town. In addition to this, the KCAAP also contains site-based policies for certain parts of the town that will provide a detailed policy framework to deliver existing development opportunities. The document also reflects the needs set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy through providing appropriate facilities to meet the needs of the local community.

**1.9** The KCAAP is also considered to be in conformity with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) by pro-actively planning for sustainable development and taking a positive approach to growth. It provides the strategic priorities for the town and indicates key locations to target development.

**1.10** The plan provides the clear and firm guidance needed to encourage investment and stimulate regeneration by giving confidence to potential investors. It also provides the basis for co-ordinating the actions of a range of public and private sector partners that have the ability to deliver key projects. However, the KCAAP also allows for the flexibility needed to deal with a variety of possible scenarios for the town's development and to take advantage of wider opportunities for growth that may present themselves.

## **Links to Adopted Core Strategy and Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan**

**1.11** The KCAAP has strong links to both the Adopted Core Strategy and Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan and they are mutually reinforcing documents providing a complete package of policy guidance. Together with the Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan, the KCAAP provides the necessary information to implement the strategic objectives and Development Strategy set out within the Adopted Core Strategy. For sites within the KCAAP area, the reader should also refer to the relevant policies contained within the Core Strategy and SALPP as they provide more generic policy guidance which applies to sites throughout the District. Links to these other policies are highlighted within the Monitoring and Implementation Framework section of the KCAAP.

## **How has the Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan been developed?**

**1.12** This plan has been developed and consulted on over a number of years, involving discussion and collaboration with key infrastructure providers, delivery agents, stakeholders and local communities.

**1.13** A number of stages of consultation have also been carried out, as follows:

- Issues and Options
- Preferred Options
- Pre-submission consultation

**1.14** The plan has also been informed by the following essential elements of work:

- The Sustainability Appraisal process

- Evidence Base – this has included new studies and updates of previous work
- Engagement with developers and landowners
- The recent adoption of the Core Strategy (December 2010)
- Sustainable Community Strategy and other plans and strategies

### **Sustainability Appraisal and Evidence Base**

**1.15** A key requirement of ensuring that we provide a robust and appropriate plan is basing decisions on allocations and the policies provided on credible and reliable evidence.

**1.16** Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is the process which has been used to test the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the policies and sites considered as the KCAAP has developed. All plans are required to undergo this process which incorporates the requirements of the EU Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive. Sustainable Development lies at the heart of the planning system and the SA is required to perform a key role in providing a sound evidence base for the plan and form an integrated part of the plan preparation process. Sustainability Appraisal should inform the evaluation of alternatives and should demonstrate that the plan is the most appropriate given reasonable alternatives. The Sustainability Appraisal has been used to inform the policies and site allocations within this plan and has also identified mitigation measures which have been incorporated within the general and site specific policies.

**1.17** Numerous background studies and technical reports have been produced to inform the decisions made regarding sites in this plan. All of the studies are available to view on the Council's website. Some of the main studies produced to inform the site selection process include:

- Sustainability Appraisal
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) (December 2009) updated April 2010
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) Level 1 (January 2008)
- SFRA Level 2 (February 2010)
- Water Cycle Strategy (February 2010)
- Retail and Commercial Leisure Study (December 2006) Updated February 2010
- Open Space, Sport and Recreation Assessment (October 2008)
- Worcestershire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (February 2012)
- Green Infrastructure Study (January 2010)
- Community Facilities Audit (2009) updated 2012
- Churchfields Masterplan SPD (September 2011)
- Bromsgrove Street Site Concept Feasibility Study (October 2011)
- Conservation Area Character Appraisals & Management Plans
- Historic Environment Record
- Wyre Forest Local Heritage List
- Employment Land Review Update (April 2011)
- Assessment of Potential Sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople (August 2011)
- Green Infrastructure Strategy (October 2012)
- Urban Design Advice (May 2011)
- Viability Advice (including Community Infrastructure Levy and Worcestershire County Council Infrastructure Plan)

- Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)
- Infrastructure Delivery Plan (October 2012)
- Sequential Testing (Flooding) (October 2012)
- Wyre Forest Playing Pitch Strategy (March 2012)

## Policy Context

**1.18** The KCAAP must be in accordance with national planning policy as set out in the NPPF. In addition to this, the plan must be in accordance with the Development Strategy and core policies set out within the Adopted Core Strategy.

**1.19** In addition to the KCAAP, the Wyre Forest District Development Plan contains a number of other documents. These documents provide a package of policy guidance and are mutually reinforcing. The documents that comprise the Development Plan for the Wyre Forest include this Plan along with the following:

- **Adopted Core Strategy** – the Core Strategy sets the vision and development strategy for the District. It also sets out a number of strategic development objectives and a series of policies for delivering the vision and the strategy. The Core Strategy was adopted on the 9<sup>th</sup> December 2010. All other documents must be in conformity with the Adopted Core Strategy.
- **Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan** - The Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan allocates sites for specific types of development and sets more detailed planning policies for the determination of planning applications. It is essential that this plan is read in conjunction with the KCAAP as it provides generic policy guidance that is equally applicable to the KCAAP area. The relevant Site Allocations and Policies guidance is highlighted in each section of the KCAAP. Furthermore, a table is included in the Monitoring and Implementation Framework section showing the policy links between the 3 documents (Core Strategy, Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan and the KCAAP)
- **Policies Map** – the Policies Map has been published alongside the Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan and Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan and provides a spatial expression of the policies and allocations set out within these documents.
- **Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)** – the Council will produce SPDs where it considers them necessary to provide more details on the policies set out within other parts of the plan. SPDs are not part of the statutory development plan and do not have the same weight as the documents listed above although they do provide significant considerations for determining planning applications.
- **Neighbourhood Plans** - once adopted, Neighbourhood Plans become part of the statutory Development Plan.

## Approach to Site Selection in KCAAP

**1.20** The Adopted Core Strategy has established the strategic policy framework within which the site allocations in the KCAAP must sit. This includes details on the amount of development and the broad locations for it. Therefore, the policies within the Adopted Core Strategy have meant that some sites have been eliminated as potential sites for new development. The Adopted Core Strategy directs the majority of new development to sites on previously developed land within Kidderminster and therefore this plan is considered to be in direct conformity with the Adopted Core Strategy.



**1.21** The site selection has also been influenced by the Sustainability Appraisal process which has involved undertaking a detailed assessment of each of the potential development sites against a set of criteria called the Sustainability Appraisal framework. The criteria look at social, economic and environmental issues. Each site has then been ranked to determine which sites are the most appropriate to bring forward in terms of their implications for sustainability.

**1.22** Additionally, the representations received from stakeholders and members of the public during the previous consultation stages have been used to inform the final selection of sites. Information received from key stakeholders, infrastructure providers and delivery agents relating to the deliverability of the sites has been particularly important in developing the strategy and this is set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

Aerial view of Kidderminster





### 2 A Sustainable Future - Development Strategy

#### Development Context

**2.1** The overarching decisions regarding the amount of development and the types of location for development within the District have already been made through the Adopted Core Strategy. The headline figures for this are identified below. For a more detailed understanding of the strategic direction for future development, please consult the Adopted Core Strategy (December 2010).

#### Quantum of Development

**2.2** The Adopted Core Strategy identifies the following quantum of development that Wyre Forest District Council needs to plan for from 2006 – 2026:

- Residential: 4,000 dwellings (District wide)
- Employment Land: 44ha (District wide)
- Comparison Retail Space: 25,000sqm (Kidderminster)
- Office Space: 40,000sqm (Kidderminster)

Weavers Wharf, Kidderminster



**2.3** These numbers provide the steer for the amount of land that has been allocated within the site specific plans. There is not a specific target for the Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan (KCAAP), rather a focus for development to be targeted here in the first instance.

**2.4** The Adopted Core Strategy identifies that a sequential approach will be taken when considering future development. The approach to site selection identifies that key regeneration sites within the KCAAP boundary (detailed boundary set out in Appendix C) as highlighted in the Kidderminster Regeneration Prospectus should be the primary area of focus. The KCAAP also seeks to ensure that previously developed land is maximised, with an emphasis on sustainable regeneration.

## Vision Statement

**2.5** The vision below sets out the aspirations about the type of place the KCAAP area will be in 2026. It complements and enhances the vision and priorities set out within the Adopted Core Strategy.

### Vision

In 2026 Kidderminster will have benefited from a significant programme of sustainable regeneration on previously developed land and economic investment to create a prosperous town. The town will contain a successful mix of complimentary uses that adds vitality, including an increased residential population.

The town will have built on its position as a major employment provider in the District, diversifying its economy and welcoming new economic opportunities. It will have increased and improved its retail offer and become a tourism hub for the District.

The town centre will be a vibrant, attractive, safe and crime free environment in which people wish to spend their time at all times of the day and night, taking advantage of a variety of retail, leisure, learning and employment opportunities. New public open spaces will provide pleasant and dynamic breathing spaces for people and play host to a variety of events and activities.

The quality of the urban environment will have been greatly improved with good urban design practice being integral to new development. Streets will be designed to welcome multi-modal users and function as spaces for people too. Streets and spaces will be overlooked by buildings, providing vital activity and natural surveillance.

Kidderminster town centre will be a well-connected and accessible place with easy access to the surrounding neighbourhoods. It will be pedestrian and cycle friendly, providing simple and direct routes that link up key areas of the town, reducing the desire to visit via motorised transport. The barrier effect of the ring road will be reduced with its transformation into an urban boulevard and the inclusion of surface level pedestrian crossings.

The River Stour and the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal will provide important natural and pedestrian movement corridors through the town and make an important contribution towards a vital green infrastructure network through the urban area.

Development will help to alleviate the flood risk and the waterways will be flanked by attractive waterside developments that make the most of these assets and bring them more into focus.

### Strategic Objectives

**2.6** The following objectives provide the broad strategic points that will help to address the key challenges in the town and deliver the vision set out above. These objectives form the basis of the Development Strategy.

#### Strategic Objectives

1. Develop Kidderminster as the strategic centre of the District and beyond.
2. Deliver the growth of residential, retail, and employment development.
3. Deliver the regeneration of key town centre sites, re-using previously developed land and buildings.
4. Drive up the quality of urban design and architecture.
5. Conserve and enhance the town's heritage assets.
6. Develop and enhance the blue and green infrastructure provision within the town, particularly along the canal and river, recognising its contribution towards the wider green infrastructure network.
7. Safeguard and replenish the town's biodiversity and geodiversity contribution.
8. Ensure the town is equipped to adapt to and mitigate against the impacts of climate change.
9. Improve the resilience of Kidderminster by reducing and managing flood risk and taking account of the impacts of climate change by ensuring good water management.
10. Improve air quality around the town, with a particular focus on the Horsefair AQMA.
11. Increase the provision and use of sustainable modes of transport and create a walkable environment.
12. Ensure the town is safe, crime free and enjoyable for all users.

### 3 A Proactive Approach to Sustainable Development

#### Policy KCA.PFSD1

##### Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

The District Council will view development proposals which accord with the overarching Development Strategy and reflect the principles of sustainable development positively. It will continue to work pro-actively with developers and stakeholders through the pre-application process to ensure that such proposals can be approved wherever possible to help secure development that contributes to the economic, social and environmental well-being of Kidderminster's central area.

Planning applications that accord with the policies and objectives in the Development Plan (and, where relevant, with policies in Neighbourhood Plans) will be approved as soon as possible, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Where there are no policies relevant to the specific application then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise, taking into account whether any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF.

#### Reasoned Justification

**3.1** The NPPF states that Local Planning Authorities should positively seek opportunities to meet development needs in their area and that proposed development that accords with an up-to-date Local Plan should be approved. The Area Action plan provides a positive platform for new development to be brought forward within the central area of Kidderminster and enables the strategic priorities of the NPPF to be met.





### 4 A Desirable Place to Live

**4.1** The Adopted Core Strategy sets out that 4,000 new dwellings are to be delivered in the District over the plan period. The KCAAP area has a significant role in providing sites for this new housing development and will contribute greatly to the regeneration objectives for the town. This section of the plan provides generic policies relating to residential development in the KCAAP area with more detailed site specific information provided in Part B.

**4.2** This section also includes a policy on mixed-use developments as providing a mix of uses is an important part of adding vibrancy to the town. Including residential development as part of mixed use schemes is a particular aspiration within the KCAAP especially as many potential development sites are located within the town centre. Including residential schemes as part of a mix of use increases activity throughout the day and night and improves natural surveillance.

Canalside Apartments under construction, Churchfields





## Housing

### Housing Objectives

The overall housing objectives for the KCAAP area are to:

- Increase the amount of people living within the town centre.
- Regenerate Churchfields as a housing-led urban village.
- Create a sustainable and balanced community meeting a variety of needs.
- Create a safe environment which reduces opportunities for crime.

**4.3** Developments which contribute to increasing the residential population within the KCAAP area will generally be encouraged. The District Council's aim is to protect and improve existing residential environments and residents' quality of life and create new living environments of lasting quality.

**4.4** Sites allocated for housing are identified in the site specific policies in Part B. However, residential development on non-allocated sites will generally be supported providing they are in line with the vision and objectives of the KCAAP and other Development Plan policies.

### Policy KCA.DPL1

#### Sites for Housing

Residential development will be encouraged within the KCAAP area and the District Council will seek to provide at least 900 dwellings within the plan period.

Within the Primary Shopping Area of the town residential development will be allowed within the Primary Shopping Frontage but only above ground floor. However, within the Secondary Shopping Frontage and the rest of the Primary Shopping Area, residential development at ground floor may be considered acceptable where vitality and viability is particularly weak.

Elsewhere, development for residential uses will be acceptable throughout the KCAAP subject to the provisions of site specific policies, and on previously developed land not subject to site specific policies providing that proposals are in accordance with all other relevant policies in the Development Plan.

Applicants should consider innovative ways of securing mixed tenures and types of housing within town centre residential schemes that deliver amenity space and car parking preferably on-site. Proposals that rely on off-site provision will need to secure improvements to that provision and improved pedestrian connectivity to these facilities.

Subject to details, the Council will be particularly supportive of mixed use developments that secure housing and commercial opportunities within the town centre.

### Reasoned Justification

#### Housing in the KCAAP Area

**4.5** At the moment, apart from Churchfields and Park Lane, there is very little residential accommodation within the KCAAP area. The existing dwellings that are in the town centre mainly consist of isolated apartment blocks that have come from chance conversion schemes.

**4.6** However, within the KCAAP area there are a number of significant regeneration sites that could provide the opportunity to include residential accommodation as part of any new development.

**4.7** A key aspiration for the District Council is to increase the amount of people living within the town centre in order to increase vibrancy. Currently, the centre of Kidderminster is very quiet during the evening and the introduction of housing into the area is seen as a key way of promoting activity throughout the day. It is also hoped that an increased residential population will help to boost the town's evening economy as operators look to capitalise on the opportunity of having potential customers on their doorstep.

Castle Locks: Residential Development within Kidderminster Town Centre



#### Churchfields Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document

**4.8** The KCAAP (in Part B) sets out the future vision for the Churchfields area of Kidderminster for it to be regenerated as a new urban village on the edge of the town centre. It is expected that this area will provide a significant amount of new housing, together with opportunities for new office, small-scale retail and leisure development. Churchfields is the largest regeneration site in the town and is a key priority for the District Council.

**4.9** In addition to the guidance in the KCAAP, the District Council has also produced the Churchfields Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document. The Masterplan provides a detailed design framework to help guide future development in this area. The Masterplan sets out 9 key design principles to be followed that will be fundamental in creating a well designed and successful place. The Masterplan also identifies individual geographical 'character areas' within Churchfields and provides more detailed design considerations for each.

**4.10** The Masterplan SPD is detailed further within the Churchfields character area section in Part B of this document.

### **Housing Mix**

**4.11** The District Council is committed to delivering mixed communities which meet the accommodation needs of both existing and future residents. Therefore, new housing should be provided in accordance with the Adopted Core Strategy and other policies in the Development Plan in regard to density and the mix of dwelling types and tenures.

**4.12** Residential development, as part of mixed use schemes, will be supported providing that the neighbouring uses are complimentary and would not affect residential amenity. The re-use of the upper-floors of buildings in the town centre for residential use will also generally be encouraged.

**4.13** To avoid a potential conflict with alternative uses in the town centre, measures to maximise the mitigation of potential noise and disturbance should be built into the design.

### **Affordable Housing**

**4.14** Affordable housing provision will be required to be in accordance with the Adopted Core Strategy and other Development Plan policies. However, within the KCAAP area it is recognised that the economic challenges and constraints of regenerating town centre sites can make this cost prohibitive. Therefore a case may be made for altering the level of affordable housing required on a development subject to this being in line with the requirements of policy SAL.DPL3: Financial Viability in the Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan.

**4.15** Furthermore, the levels of affordable housing required could also be reduced when contributions towards other important site improvements are being made. This is particularly relevant to potential infrastructure improvements needed to make a site deliverable.

## **Mixed Use Development**

### **Mixed Use Development Objectives**

The overall mixed use objectives for the KCAAP area are to:

- Provide mixed use developments and areas within the town centre to add to its vibrancy.
- Create a mix of activity throughout different parts of the day and the night to maximise the town's commercial potential.
- Create a safe and secure environment which reduces opportunities for crime.

**4.16** Providing a mix of uses within the KCAAP area is an important way of achieving the vitality and viability that will help make Kidderminster a success. A good mixed use area or development should provide a range of uses that appeal to a variety of different users and encourage a variety of different activities. This should also promote activity at different times throughout the day and night and encourage natural surveillance.

### Policy KCA.DPL2

#### Mixed Use Development

A mix of uses, including residential development, should be sought on development sites within the KCAAP area where consistent with other Development Plan policies.

As part of mixed-use schemes the District Council will support uses that contribute to vitality and viability of the town centre. This will include:

- Retail (A1-A5)
- Offices (B1(a))
- Hotel (C3)
- Residential Institutions (C2)
- Dwelling Houses (C3)
- Non-residential Institutions (D1)
- Assembly and Leisure (D2)
- Community Uses (including medical and the emergency services)

The uses included in new mixed development should be complimentary to each other and to neighbouring uses.

#### Reasoned Justification

**4.17** Creating activity and footfall throughout the day and night will help to improve the vibrancy of the area. Areas of the town which only provide a single use should generally be avoided as they will reduce vitality and viability at different times and this could limit the commercial potential of the centre. The District Council will support an area approach whereby mixed uses can be secured across several sites as well as encourage mixed use development within a single site. This can be achieved through both a horizontal mix (i.e. a mix of uses along a street frontage) and a vertical mix (i.e. a mix of uses within different levels of the same development). These various opportunities to achieve a mixed use approach have guided the development of site specific policies in Part B.

## 5 A Good Place to do Business

**5.1** The KCAAP area is the single biggest area of employment in the District containing over 7,000 jobs in retail, offices, professional services, community facilities, education and leisure. This shows the importance that this area has for the overall economy of the Wyre Forest District.

**5.2** The District Council will encourage further job creation in Kidderminster and will encourage new development that helps to not only diversify the economy of the town, but also the skills base of the people who work within it.

**5.3** The economic success of Kidderminster is important for the town's future and has a major influence on its popularity as a desirable place to live, work and visit. Therefore, developing and reinforcing the economy must be a priority.

**5.4** A key aim for the KCAAP is to enhance the vibrancy of the town to drive forward its economy. As such the District Council will look to strengthen and diversify the economic base of the town. Allowing a range of activities in the town centre will help to create vibrancy. In particular, new economic development incorporated as part of mixed use sites would work to provide a range of activity throughout different parts of the day.

**5.5** Proposals for economic development that would contribute to the vitality and viability of the town will generally be encouraged, providing that they meet the objectives and policies set out within the rest of the KCAAP.

**5.6** Through the NPPF, the Government looks to secure sustainable economic growth, and a key objective of doing this is to promote the vitality and viability of town centres. Therefore, the District Council will take a positive and flexible approach to proposals for economic development and will seek out new opportunities that will help grow and diversify Kidderminster's economy. New opportunities in retail, education, health care, tourism, leisure, sport and office-based business are all present in the town and will be promoted.

Retail and Commercial Leisure Development, Weavers Wharf





## Retailing

### Retail Objectives

The overall retail objectives for the KCAAP area are to:

- Maintain and enhance Kidderminster's role as the primary retail centre.
- Seek a new retail anchor for the Worcester Street/Bromsgrove Street area.
- Provide a flexible approach to uses within the Primary Shopping Area, particularly within the secondary shopping frontage.

**5.7** A key objective of the KCAAP is to maintain and enhance Kidderminster town centre as the primary retail centre within the Wyre Forest District. Proposals which broaden the range of Kidderminster's retail offer and improve the vitality and viability of the town centre will generally be encouraged.

**5.8** In line with the NPPF, as well as Adopted Core Strategy policy DS01: Development Locations, any new retail development will need to follow a sequential test with Kidderminster's Primary Shopping Area being the preferred location. Policy SAL.GPB2: Town Centre Retail in the Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan provides more detailed guidance on the sequential test which will enable the District Council to help to meet the Government's aims to promote competitive town centres.

### Policy KCA.GPB1

#### Retail Development

Retail growth will be targeted within the Primary Shopping Area and should contribute to strengthening the retail dumbbell. Therefore the focus for new retail development will be in the following areas:

- Western Gateway (Weavers Wharf)
- Eastern Gateway (Bromsgrove Street)

Limited retail growth, consisting of individual units of no larger than 280sqm, will also be allowed within the Horsefair and Comberton Hill neighbourhood centres and the Mill Street mixed use area to enhance their role as community and specialist shopping areas.

### Reasoned Justification

#### Retail Dumbbell

**5.9** The Weavers Wharf retail park is a major shopping attraction within the town centre and has shifted the retail focus of the town towards the west. This has resulted in the vitality and viability of the areas around Worcester Street deteriorating, with noticeably high vacancy levels, and the creation of an imbalance within the town centre. The eastern side of the town centre appears to be in decline and facing an uncertain future.

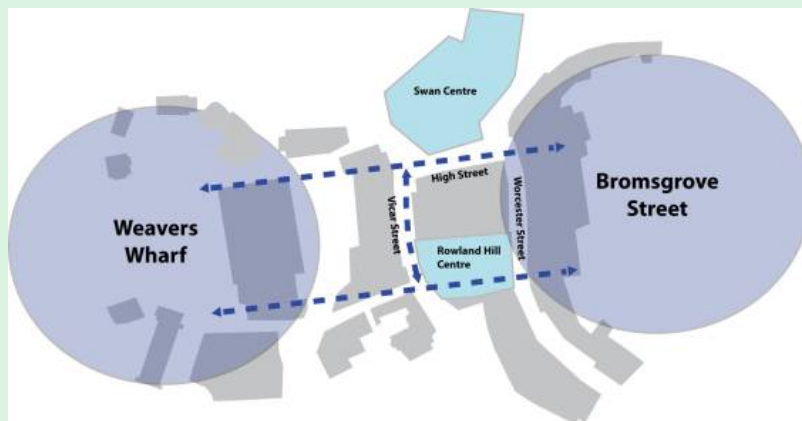
**5.10** To address this, the District Council will actively seek to encourage new retail development in the Worcester Street/Bromsgrove Street area (Eastern Gateway) that will help to increase pedestrian footfall to the eastern side of the town and reinvigorate this area. It is envisaged that this could involve a major new retail store in Bromsgrove Street leading to Worcester Street via the former Magistrate's Court site, Step Entry and/or premises fronting Worcester Street.

**5.11** At the same time, the District Council is also looking at the opportunity to redefine the Worcester Street area with a more flexible approach to a mix of uses, including mixed commercial and the introduction of residential communities.

**5.12** It is important to recognise that Weavers Wharf is an asset for the town. Proposals to enhance this shopping area will be supported where they coincide with progress on the Eastern Gateway.

**5.13** The overall vision is to create a retail dumbbell anchored at one end (west) by Weavers Wharf and at the other (east) by new development on Bromsgrove Street with the key shopping streets of Worcester Street, High Street and Vicar Street connecting them together. Therefore, the Primary Shopping Area extends to areas including Weavers Wharf and Bromsgrove Street to maximise opportunities for new retail development in line with the Adopted Core Strategy.

Kidderminster's Retail Dumbbell



**Primary Shopping Area**

**5.14** The District Council has set out the area which it considers to be the Primary Shopping Area for Kidderminster on the Policies Map.

**5.15** Retail development and activity in the town will be concentrated within this area and the expansion and diversity of the retail offer here will be actively encouraged. Consolidating the retail facilities within a tighter geographical area of the town will help to concentrate footfall and contribute to creating a more viable centre and improve its attractiveness as a shopping destination.

**Other Retail Areas**

**5.16** While the town centre will firmly remain the focus for retail, it is recognised that there are a number of areas on the periphery of the town centre that have a very mixed use function which includes a retail offer. These include the two neighbourhood centres at Comberton Hill and the Horsefair, and the mixed use area along Mill Street.

**5.17** These areas provide an important local function and their protection and enhancement will be supported. Therefore, within these areas, new retail development will be acceptable providing that it does not have an adverse impact on the Primary Shopping Area or the vitality of the neighbourhood centre itself. More detailed area-specific policies are contained within Part B of the document.

### Traditional Town Centre

**5.18** The traditional town centre area is the core of the town's Primary Shopping Area and its civic heart. Kidderminster is the primary retail centre of the District and the role of the traditional town centre as a retail destination should be safeguarded and enhanced.

### Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontages

#### Policy KCA.GPB2

##### Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontages

Within the Primary Shopping Frontages the following uses will be encouraged:

- i. A1 Retail at ground floor level.
- ii. A2-A5 uses at ground floor subject to them not creating an over-concentration of non-A1.
- iii. On upper floors - C3 Dwelling Houses and mixed commercial such as B1(a) Offices.

Within the Secondary Shopping Frontages the following will be supported:

- a. A1-A5 Retail; and
- b. General town centre uses that contribute to the vitality and viability of the area; including C1 Hotel; C3 Dwelling Houses; B1(a) Offices and D1 Non-residential Institutions.

### Reasoned Justification

**5.19** As mentioned above, A1 retail will be the focus for the Primary Shopping Frontages. However limited A2-A5 retail uses may be acceptable providing that they do not lead to an over-concentration of non-A1 uses.

**5.20** In assessing whether a proposal will result in an over-concentration of non-A1 uses, regard will be had to the use of three units either side of the proposed development. Where a proposal would result in more than two units of the seven being for non-A1 uses it will not be permitted. In order to prevent the fragmentation of the shopping frontage, no more than two non-A1 uses should be adjacent to each other.

**5.21** The Primary Shopping Area is split into two separately defined areas:

- Primary Shopping Frontage
- Secondary Shopping Frontage

## Primary Shopping Frontage

**5.22** The primary shopping frontage, as defined on the Policies Map, is focussed on the main shopping streets which comprise the areas around WeaversWharf, Vicar Street, High Street and Worcester Street.

**5.23** This is considered to be the prime retail location of the town where A1 retail development will be concentrated and other uses will be restricted in order to maintain the retail experience.

## Secondary Shopping Frontage

**5.24** The secondary shopping frontage, as defined on the Policies Map, is focussed around Blackwell Street, Coventry Street, the lower section of Worcester Street, New Road and Oxford Street. These secondary areas are, by definition, on the periphery of the centre within areas with lower levels of shopper footfall.

**5.25** The focus here is towards a more mixed commercial offer comprising A1-A5 retail uses together with other uses that promote economic growth and vitality, including the incorporation of residential communities. A flexible approach will be taken to proposals for uses where they would contribute to the vitality and viability of the town centre.

## Outside of the Shopping Frontages

### Policy KCA.GPB3

#### Outside of the Shopping Frontages

In other areas not designated as a primary or secondary shopping frontage, but within the Primary Shopping Area, a flexible approach to uses will be encouraged, including:

- C1 Hotel
- C2 Residential Institutions
- C3 Dwelling Houses
- B1(a) Offices
- D1 Non-residential Institutions
- D2 Assembly and Leisure

## Reasoned Justification

**5.26** Outside of the Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontages a flexible approach to uses will be encouraged. The key will be to allow development that adds to the vitality and viability of the town centre.

## Edge-of-Centre and Out-of-Centre Retailing

**5.27** Major retail areas also exist outside of the Primary Shopping Area. These consist of the town's supermarkets, the B&Q store, and Crossley Retail Park.

**5.28** Although the role of these retail areas needs to be recognised, it is also important that their future development is carefully managed to ensure that there is no harm to the viability of the Primary Shopping Area - which will be the focus for new retail development.

**5.29** Major stores including Tesco, Morrisons and Aldi are defined as 'edge-of-centre' for the purposes of retail planning set out with the NPPF as they lie within 300 metres of the Primary Shopping Area.

**5.30** Crossley Retail Park and B&Q are classified as 'out of centre' locations for the purposes of retail planning. Both sites are restricted to bulky goods retailing determined through a combination of planning conditions and S.106 agreements. The District Council will look to further control the type of retailing on these sites to ensure that they do not have a detrimental impact on the town centre.

B&Q is a large retail unit in an 'out-of-centre' location



### Policy KCA.GPB4

#### Edge-of-Centre and Out-of-Centre Retailing

Proposals for further retail expansion, in excess of 280sq.m, in edge-of-centre and out-of-centre locations will only be acceptable if a sequential approach to development is taken and it can be demonstrated that there will be no significant adverse impact on the vitality and viability of the Primary Shopping Area.

Before out-of-centre sites are considered, the sequential approach must demonstrate why there are no suitable or available sites within the Primary Shopping Area in the first instance, and edge-of-centre sites in the second.

#### Reasoned Justification

**5.31** New retail development at edge-of-centre or out-of-centre locations will be required to follow a sequential approach in line with the guidance set out in the NPPF and the Adopted Core Strategy. Before edge-of-centre and then out-of-centre sites are considered, it must be demonstrated that no suitable sites exist within the Primary Shopping Area.

**5.32** Policy SAL.GPB2: Town Centre Retail in the Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan provides more detailed guide on the sequential test.



## Employment

### Employment Objectives

The overall employment objectives for the KCAAP area are to:

- Strengthen and diversify the economic base of the town.
- Encourage new job creation.
- Increase the amount of office floorspace.
- Retain some existing industrial areas.

### Business Development

**5.33** Business activity within the KCAAP area is an essential part of its vitality and the growth of employment and wealth generating uses will be encouraged.

**5.34** It needs to be recognised that business does not just mean traditional office and industrial activities. Business extends to a wide variety of uses that all need to employ people to function, create an output, and contribute to the economy of the town. Therefore, retail and tourism are two other important employment generators which the District Council will look to grow. Furthermore, increasingly diverse opportunities for businesses located within the town will be sought to increase the variety and strength of the town's economy.

### New Economic Opportunities

**5.35** Within the KCAAP area the District Council will actively encourage new opportunities for economic development that help to diversify the town's economy.

**5.36** New opportunities for tourism and leisure development will be a particular focus for Kidderminster as a key aim for the town is to improve its status as a tourism hub for the District and establish a successful evening economy. These opportunities are dealt with in more detail below.

**5.37** Opportunities around community infrastructure, such as medical and education facilities, will also be looked at favourably. This could include the provision of extra-care development.

## Policy KCA.GPB5

### Employment Development

#### Offices

Subject to site specific policies, the following areas will be the focus for B1(a) office development within the KCAAP area:

- Traditional Town Centre
- Eastern Gateway

- Heritage Processions
- Churchfields

### Industrial

The following sites will be suitable for B1(b) and (c) and B2 industrial development:

- Long Meadow Mills Industrial Estate
- Park Lane Industrial Estate

Proposals for industrial development should have regard to amenity of neighbouring uses and not cause an unacceptable disturbance.

### Health and Education

Subject to site specific policies, the following areas will be the focus for health and education development falling under the C2 and D1 uses:

- Traditional Town Centre
- Eastern Gateway
- Heritage Processions
- Churchfields
- Western Gateway

## Reasoned Justification

### Office Development

**5.38** The KCAAP area will be the focus for substantial new office floor space within the District. It is the most sustainable location in the District with the strongest public transport links and the main rail station. It is therefore felt that Kidderminster is best placed to accommodate new office development. Targeting new office development in the KCAAP area will also contribute strongly to the Council's aim to promote and secure the vitality and viability of its town centres.

**5.39** The NPPF sets out that new office developments will need to follow a sequential test, focussing on town centres first, edge-of-centre sites second, and then, only if suitable sites are not available, should out-of-centre sites be considered. This is expanded upon by Adopted Core Strategy policy DS01: Development Locations which looks to key regeneration sites within the KCAAP as the sequentially preferable sites.

**5.40** Individual sites preferred for new office development are identified within the site specific policies.

### Industrial Development

**5.41** Within the KCAAP area there are several areas which contain light industrial activity. The Long Meadow Mills Industrial Estate, Park Lane and Green Street (Mortons Works) are the most significant clusters of this type of quasi-industrial use in the KCAAP area. Other areas currently in light industrial use including Churchfields, Park Street and Cheshires are subject to site specific policies promoting regeneration for alternative uses.

**5.42** The KCAAP area is not a favoured location for new industrial development in the District. The preferred location is the South Kidderminster Enterprise Park including the Stourport Road Employment Corridor as set out in the Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan. As such, the District Council has brought forward a Local Development Order to help stimulate business development and growth in this area.

**5.43** It is recognised, however, that the existing industrial areas make an important contribution to the economy of the town. Therefore, small scale B1(b) and (c) and B2 industrial development on existing sites not subject to site specific policies will be acceptable subject to detailed considerations. On sites earmarked for redevelopment, temporary permissions for light industrial may be permissible, particularly where they are consistent with the phased release of key sites.

**5.44** Any new industrial development will need to consider the potential impact on ground water protection in the area. Types of activities, drainage and building design should be in line with the Environment Agency's Groundwater protection: Principles and practice (GP3). Tighter controls are likely to be required in line with this guidance, as the sites overlie a principal aquifer with a relatively shallow water table. The aquifer is of regional strategic importance in terms of water supply and the sites fall within close proximity (Inner, Outer and Total Source Protection Zone) of a public water supply source.

## Health and Education Development

**5.45** There is recognition that health and education facilities are industries in their own right; they employ a significant number of people and can make an important contribution to the economy. The visitors that these facilities attract can also add footfall and vitality to the areas in which they are located. It is therefore considered important to allow for the development of these facilities in the town centre, not only to add vibrancy to the town, but also in the interests of providing them in the most sustainable location.

Kidderminster's Piano Building has been converted for Educational Use



## Tourism

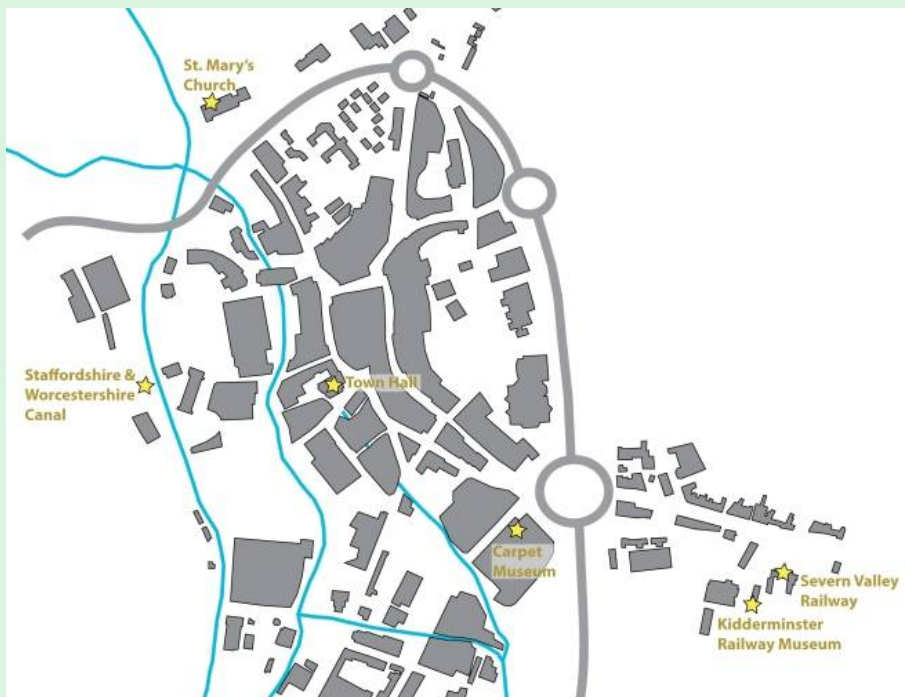
### Tourism Objectives

The overall tourism objectives for the KCAAP area are to:

- Promote Kidderminster as a tourism hub for the District.
- Encourage tourist attractions, accommodation and facilities.
- Capitalise on the potential of current visitors to the area.

**5.46** Tourism already plays an important role in the economy of Wyre Forest District and the area contains a number of regionally important tourist attractions. The KCAAP area itself contains several existing tourist attractions and also has the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal running through it which brings its own tourism opportunities.

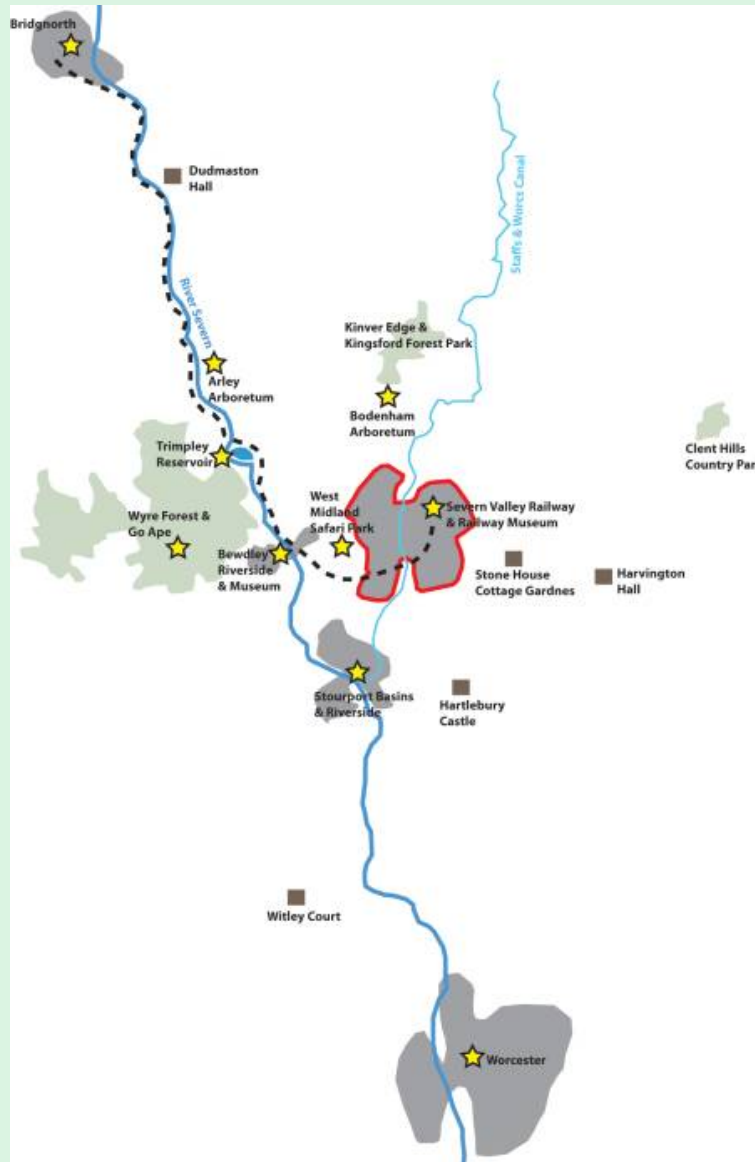
Tourist Attractions in Kidderminster



**5.47** Kidderminster town centre itself has not traditionally been a strong visitor destination in its own right and has not capitalised on its location within such a popular tourist area. With the West Midlands Safari and Leisure Park and the Severn Valley Railway, the town has two major tourist attractions on its doorstep that attract approximately 1 million visitors a year. Added to that is the Kidderminster Carpet Museum in the town centre itself which opened in autumn 2012. However, it is apparent that the vast majority of these visitors pass through or near the town but do not visit the centre itself. A key aim for the KCAAP, therefore, is to strengthen the tourism offer of the town and promote it as a 'tourism hub' in order for the District to capitalise and build upon the visitors coming into the area.

**5.48** The town centre is the most sustainable location in the District with the strongest public transport links and the District's main rail station. It is easily accessible from the Birmingham, Worcester and the Black Country areas. This makes it an excellent 'gateway' to the numerous tourist attractions in the District. However, the town is currently deficient in providing the facilities required to attract visitors.

**Kidderminster at the centre of many tourist attractions**



**5.49** The tourism objectives set out in this chapter highlight the priority actions relating to tourism in the town. These objectives are put into a more detailed and spatial context within the Site Specific Policies contained within Part B.

**5.50** In relation to the Severn Valley Railway, Policy SAL.GBP5: Supporting Major Tourist Attractions contained within the Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan is applicable.



## Policy KCA.GPB6

### Tourism Development

The following areas will be the focus for tourism-related D1 and D2 uses:

- i. Eastern Gateway
- ii. Western Gateway
- iii. Traditional Town Centre

Within these areas, development which is demonstrated to create a safe, enjoyable and crime free environment will be supported. Development for the following uses will be specifically encouraged:

- a. Museums
- b. Art galleries and exhibition space
- c. Live performance venues

The development of mooring spaces and facilities on the canalside will be supported.

### Reasoned Justification

#### Tourist Infrastructure

**5.51** The District Council will seek to expand and enhance facilities that will contribute to making Kidderminster a tourism hub for the District. In line with the Leisure and Cultural Economy section, the District Council will actively encourage the enhancement of the town's cultural entertainment offer and an improved evening economy. More specifically, the provision of bars, cafés, restaurants and commercial leisure uses will be promoted within the town.

**5.52** The quality of the urban environment is also an important factor in making the town an attractive place for visitors. The District Council will seek to improve this in line with policies contained within the A Unique Place section of the KCAAP.

#### Hotels

**5.53** The range and amount of hotel accommodation in Kidderminster has a major impact on the town's ability to attract tourists. Therefore, if the KCAAP is to be a hub for tourist activity, then the area should be the primary location for new hotel development in the District. Proposals that increase the amount and range of tourist accommodation in the town will generally be encouraged. The site specific policies detail where the preferred opportunity sites for hotel development are located.

#### Tourism Attractions

**5.54** Although Kidderminster is being promoted as a hub for the District's tourist attractions, the KCAAP area does already contain a number of tourist attractions itself. The District Council will seek to maintain and promote these attractions. Furthermore, any proposals that would enhance and add to these attractions will be welcomed.

## Canal Tourism

**5.55** One of the key aims of the KCAAP is to enhance and promote the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal and the canalside areas within the town centre. A significant step in achieving this aim is to encourage canal-based tourism and particularly to get boaters to moor up in the town centre and stay for longer periods.

**5.56** Kidderminster is on a busy section of the canal and lies on the line of the Stourport Ring which is a popular tourist cruising route and is only a few miles from the Stourport basin which is an already well established and popular boating destination. Plenty of boats travel through Kidderminster and it is a popular stopping place due to the location of two supermarkets immediately accessed from the canalside. However, the vast majority of these stops are short-stay to replenish provisions before quickly moving on; a very small number actually stop overnight.

**5.57** Kidderminster suffers from a negative reputation amongst the boating community, with the consensus being not to stop in the town overnight due to problems of anti-social behaviour and vandalism. This is not helped by the fact that the canal is a drastically under-used asset with little footfall, and the town generally turns its back on the water. This means there is no natural surveillance on the canal and anti-social behaviour can occur undisturbed.

**5.58** The District Council's vision for the future of the canal in the town is set out broadly in the Adopted Core Strategy. It is developed in more detail within the Unique Place section of the KCAAP. Proposals that help to promote canal-based tourism, including both boaters and other canal users, will be supported. Development along the canal in the town centre should also contribute to the facilitation and/or development of mooring facilities along the towpath which encourage boaters to stay in the town. Associated facilities such as waste disposal, water and electricity points will also encourage longer stays and will be promoted.



## Leisure and Cultural Economy

### Leisure Objectives

The overall leisure objectives for the KCAAP area are to :

- Develop the entertainment and cultural offer.
- Improve the evening economy.
- Encourage the number and variety of events and performances.
- Attract a major leisure development (i.e. cinema, bowling alley).

There is a desire to develop the cafe and restaurant opportunities in the town.



**5.59** A key aim for the KCAAP is to continue to develop the leisure and cultural offer of the town. This is also essential if the aspiration for Kidderminster to become the tourism hub of the District is to be realised. The District Council will promote and encourage the provision, enhancement, and diversification of Kidderminster's leisure and cultural facilities. Particular encouragement will be given to expanding the town's evening offer.

**5.60** The diversification of the entertainment attractions that enhance

the vitality of Kidderminster Town Centre will be improved by:

- Promoting a street café culture in the town centre's pedestrianised areas, public realm spaces, and along the river and canalsides.
- Encouraging the provision of new restaurants, bars, music venues, and other licensed premises.
- Promoting the creation and use of multi-purpose public spaces for public entertainment.
- Encouraging the holding of events within the town centre, particularly in the evening.

### Policy KCA.GPB7

#### Leisure Development

Major new D2 leisure and multiple-unit A3 and A4 food and drink developments will be concentrated towards the waterside environments of the Western Gateway area.

Other leisure developments will be supported throughout the Primary Shopping Area subject to these being in line with the site specific policies in Part B and the relevant policies in the Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan. Elsewhere in the KCCAP area, smaller scale proposals will be considered favourably subject to them meeting the broad objectives of the KCAAP.

The enhancement of the Town Hall and its use as a multi-functional venue for the arts will be encouraged.

### **Evening Economy**

The District Council will encourage developments that enhance the evening and night-time leisure offer of the town centre. A balanced mix of uses will be specifically encouraged, including late-night shopping, cafes, restaurants, bars, take-aways, clubs and cultural activities.

No development should on its own, or cumulatively with other uses, create an unacceptable impact on neighbouring uses or the surrounding area by reasons of noise pollution, light pollution, anti-social behaviour, crime, disturbance or traffic.

Developments should seek to ensure activity during the daytime to avoid the clustering of 'dead' frontages.

Developments linked to the evening economy will be required to contribute towards public realm and infrastructure improvements in order to improve the sense of well being, safety and security within the town. Contributions to improving the public transport for the benefit of the evening economy will be particularly encouraged.

Working in partnership with the Council and other stakeholders, owners and operators of evening economy related development will be expected to take part in active management measures to help the public and support the emergency services.

Developments linked to the evening economy should also have specific regard to Policy KCA.UP1 and ensure that development incorporates 'Secured by Design Principles'.

## **Reasoned Justification**

### **Cultural Economy**

**5.61** The idea of a cultural economy is closely associated with the KCAAP aim to improve Kidderminster's status as a tourism destination. The existing Severn Valley Railway and Railway Museum, as well as the newly established Carpet Museum, already play a big part in the town's cultural economy by virtue that they celebrate its heritage. Similarly, the conservation of the town's historic buildings and the enhancement of its waterways also have an important contribution to make.



**5.62** The Town Hall is at the heart of the town centre and has an important role in the improvement of Kidderminster's cultural offer. The Town Hall already plays host to numerous events and shows and is a real asset to the town. The enhancement of the Town Hall and its use as a multi-functional venue for the arts will be encouraged. This will help to promote its reputation as a quality performance venue and seek to increase the diversity of shows that will contribute to the town's cultural and visitor economy.

Multifunctional event space is important to develop the leisure and cultural economy.



**5.63** A number of town centre areas have been identified as future important public spaces. These spaces will also be expected to be multi-functional and be able to host outdoor events and performances. Free public events make an important contribution to the quality of life in the town and the District Council will continue to promote and encourage them.

### Commercial Leisure

**5.64** Kidderminster has a lack of leisure facilities, particularly those that would appeal to the more family-orientated market. As an example, there is demand in the town for a multiplex cinema, and residents currently need to travel to either Merry Hill, Telford or Worcester.

**5.65** The District Council will encourage the provision of leisure facilities to help to improve and diversify Kidderminster's leisure offer and add to the vitality of the town centre. The focus for these uses will be towards the canalside areas of town and the site specific policies in Part B set out suitable locations in more detail.

### Evening Economy

**5.66** Despite being the strategic centre of the District, Kidderminster has traditionally had a less successful evening economy than Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley. The town has a real deficiency in this respect and its evening offer is limited in terms of both quantity and variety. In particular, the town lacks facilities such as restaurants, bars, music venues and other licensed premises that would usually provide life to a town during the night. There is also a distinct lack of family-orientated evening uses and the town currently only appeals to a very narrow sector of society.

**5.67** The result of this lack of activity is that the town centre is very quiet in the evening and becomes an unwelcoming place which provides opportunities for anti-social behaviour. This is especially true for the canalside area which is currently an underutilised cultural asset.



**5.68** The ambition is to increase the diversity of the entertainment offer in order to increase the number of people in town during the evening and improving natural surveillance and vibrancy.

**5.69** A safe, balanced and socially responsible evening and night-time economy is needed to create a leisure and cultural experience which will continue throughout the day-time, evening and into the night. These different periods of activity will complement each other, yet provide a different experience for people at different times of the day. Therefore a balanced mix of cafés, restaurants, bars, clubs, live music venues and other cultural activities will be sought. Proposals that will help to improve the offer of family orientated leisure will be a particular target.

**5.70** The District Council will support proposals to make the most of the waterside leisure environment as a particular area in which to enhance the evening economy of the town centre. The site specific policies highlight the areas in which it is felt that this development should be targeted. The areas around the canal will be particularly suitable in order to stimulate activity here during the evening.

**5.71** Although the District Council wishes to enhance the evening economy of the town centre, it is important to ensure that new developments do not cause an unacceptable nuisance to neighbouring uses and the surrounding environment. Increased activity in the evening provides important additional natural surveillance and vitality to streets and spaces in the town. However, consideration must also be given for the potential of these uses to generate issues of anti-social behaviour, particularly but not exclusively in respect to pubs and bars. The District Council will look to work with West Mercia Police and the Wyre Forest Community Safety Partnership (WFCSP), as well as other town centre stakeholders, to tackle any issues of crime and anti-social behaviour that may arise from an increase in evening activity through public realm improvements, active management measures or new security infrastructure.

**5.72** The Kidderminster Town Team, established as a result of a recommendation from the Government commissioned Mary Portas's High Street Review, is a partnership of public and private sector stakeholders who work together and aim to produce innovative ideas about how to improve the town. Working with the Police and the Community Safety Partnership, the Town Team will have a role in bringing forward anti-social behaviour initiatives such as 'Pubwatch' and 'Best Bar None' schemes to help tackle anti-social behaviour.

**5.73** The District Council will encourage the existing and new operators of evening orientated uses such as cafés, restaurants, bars, take-aways, clubs and other cultural activities to work with the Town Team, WFCSP and the Police in managing the evening economy.

### 6 Adapting to and Mitigating Against Climate Change

**6.1** Many of the issues around adapting to and mitigating against climate change are dealt with in the Adopted Core Strategy and through the Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan.

**6.2** The Adopted Core Strategy contains general policies dealing with sustainable development, including contamination, Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) and renewable energy. The Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan also includes more detailed policies on sustainable development, renewable energy, water management, transport, parking and infrastructure. These policies apply equally to the KCAAP area and therefore have not been included specifically in this document. The Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan should also be referred to when considering development within the KCAAP area.

**6.3** This section does, however, include policies regarding sustainable transport that are specific to Kidderminster town centre. This includes major projects and ambitions that are identified within the KCAAP area which will aid connectivity around the town.

**6.4** Furthermore, Worcestershire County Council has recently adopted the Waste Core Strategy for Worcestershire. This document forms part of the Development Plan for the District and therefore all proposals will need to have regard to its contents, and particularly Policy WCS17: Making provision for waste in all new development.

#### Water Management

**6.5** Flood Risk is an important issue that affects the central area of Kidderminster. The Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, undertaken by Royal Haskoning, identified that although the flood risk within the central area of Kidderminster has been reduced by the Kidderminster Flood Alleviation Scheme (FAS), should the FAS be breached or its design capacity exceeded, then the flood hazard to the town is likely to be significant, due to its low lying nature. In order to understand this risk further, the Level 2 SFRA undertook an assessment of potential breaches and overtopping of the FAS and concluded that this needs to be factored into decision making when considering the future development of the central area of Kidderminster. It is therefore considered important that a targeted flood risk policy is included within the Area Action Plan to help guide future development decisions.

**6.6** The former industrial nature of parts of the town centre means that there is high potential for contamination issues to arise. Disturbance of any such contamination during re-development can mobilise pollutants and adversely impact on the groundwater and the wider water environment, including the rivers, canals and wetlands. The KCAAP area overlies a principal aquifer which is of strategic importance for water supply and the area falls within the Source Protection Zone of a public water supply borehole. The water table is relatively shallow, particularly within the Stour valley. It is therefore essential that ground and water contamination be addressed as part of any redevelopment and suitable remediation measures taken. Part B of this document identifies sites where this risk is known to be particularly apparent; however a desk study will be required for most sites to assess this potential. New development should be in line the Environment Agency's Groundwater protection: Principles and practice (GP3).

## Policy KCA.CC1

### Water Management

All development that is considered to be at risk of flooding should demonstrate that it is safe by ensuring that:

- i. Floor levels are situated above the 1% predicted plus climate change design flood level, incorporating an allowance for freeboard. Development should also consider in the design the risk from more extreme events. In certain instances, where it is not feasible or practicable to set the floor levels, other forms of flood resilience and resistance techniques may be considered as a suitable alternative;
- ii. All development that includes overnight accommodation, or an educational institution, demonstrates a safe pedestrian access route is available during a 1% plus climate change design flood event, with regard to hazard risk assessment. In considering this, regard should be given to the evidence in the Level 2 SFRA, including breach scenarios. All other development should clarify available access and appropriate mitigation as part of a flood management plan;
- iii. Developments assess the availability of safe vehicular access during a flood event, its necessity for the development type and appropriate mitigation as part of a flood management plan;
- iv. Developments implement a flood management plan to manage the risk to the development itself and future users/occupiers during all flood events along with any remaining residual risks;
- v. Developments are avoided within areas subject to Rapid Inundation from a dam breach as identified by the Level 2 SFRA;
- vi. SUDS are included in all developments and are appropriate to the sensitive hydrological setting of Kidderminster; and
- vii. Developments have regard to, and are in conformity with, the emerging Local Flood Risk Management Plan being prepared by Worcestershire County Council.

### Reasoned Justification

**6.7** This policy should be read in conjunction with Core Strategy Policy CP02, Site Allocations and Policies Policy SAL.CC7 and Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan Policy KCA.UP6.

**6.8** Kidderminster town centre is affected by flood risk. The town is protected by a flood alleviation scheme (FAS) located upstream of the town centre, which consists of an earth dam and a concrete culvert which help form a flood storage area. However, the residual risk associated with any failure of this scheme needs to be understood and factored in to new development decisions. This policy, therefore, provides criteria for developers to consider when proposing development within areas identified as being at risk of flooding within the KCAAP.

**6.9** The policy identifies the need for development proposed within flood risk areas to take account of a number of measures to ensure that the development is safe, and remains safe, in times of flood. This includes building protection, such as setting appropriate floor levels, providing flood resilience and resistance techniques, as well as ensuring that there is access and a flood management plan for people using these sites.

**6.10** The policy requires developers to provide a flood management plan so that information is available for the users/occupiers of a proposed development to ensure that they are aware of appropriate procedure in times of flood.

**6.11** When producing a Flood Management Plan for any development, the following information should be included:

- An identification of likely flood risk areas and sources
- Details of evacuation routes
- Important contacts, including floodline, emergency services, local authority information
- Basic strategies for protecting property and assisting recovery
- Details of key service cut off points (Electricity/Gas/Water)

**6.12** Further information on producing a flood management plan can be found on the Environment Agency's website ([www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk)). Furthermore, in order to assist developers in considering flood risk within Kidderminster, the Environment Agency and Wyre Forest District Council are proposing to produce a developer guidance note. This will include information on flood risk within the area and a pro-forma to assist developers in producing a Flood Risk Assessment that meets the policy requirements. The guidance note will be based primarily on the information within the Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, which should be considered in the first instance when looking at developing within the central area.

Flood Alleviation Scheme at Puxton



**6.13** Many of the potential redevelopment sites identified in Part B of this document are adjacent to or within flood zones 2 and 3 as identified by the Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. Therefore, the issue of flood risk is particularly pertinent in the KCAAP area and new development must consider the location of more vulnerable uses (e.g. housing) within the lowest risk areas.

**6.14** In addition to flood risk, the former industrial nature of parts of the town centre means that there is high potential for contamination issues to arise. Where appropriate, ground and water contamination must be addressed as part of any redevelopment and suitable remediation measures taken. Part B of this document identifies sites where the risk is known to be particularly apparent and new development should be in line with the Environment Agency's Groundwater protection: Principles and practice. The nature of the ground conditions and hydrogeological setting does not remove the requirement for SUDS. However, developers will need to give careful consideration to the type of SUDS techniques used and their design in protecting the water environment.

## Sustainable Transport

### Sustainable Transport Objectives

The overall objectives for Sustainable Transport in the KCAAP area are to:

- Improve transport choice, reducing the dependency on private cars.
- Improve pedestrian and cycle connectivity around the town.
- Downgrade the ring road.
- Improve links between the town centre and the railway station.
- Improve links between the town centre and Churchfields.

**6.15** Providing a sustainable and efficient transport network in Kidderminster that makes it easy to get around via a number of means is a key objective of the KCAAP. An efficient transport system is a crucial factor in encouraging new business and economic growth. It is also an important element in providing a good quality environment for people and in achieving a more sustainable and greener town.

**6.16** The transport network around Kidderminster at the moment is car-orientated and discourages pedestrian and cycle movement. In many areas this leads to problems of air pollution caused by vehicle emissions and in the Horsefair this has risen to dangerous levels which has triggered its designation as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). The ring road and its connecting routes are heavily congested at peak times.

Kidderminster Ring Road



**6.17** There is a danger that these problems will be exacerbated by further

development in the town that will add more cars and therefore increase the amount of car-based trips. The ambition in regard to transport, is to provide a variety of public transport options that gives people a realistic choice of how to reach their destination. The focus of this is to reduce the amount of shorter journeys in and around the town and District that are taken by private car.

**6.18** Worcestershire County Council's Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3) was published in 2011 and provides the policy and strategy context for major transport projects in the County up until 2026. The document includes transport priorities for the District and includes a specific Kidderminster Urban Package of priority transport schemes. The Urban Package includes the



improvements to the ring road, upgrading of the railway station and enhancing the public realm of the town centre. The major sustainable transport projects in the KCAAP reflect those identified in the LTP3.

**6.19** The Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan contains Policy SAL.CC1: Sustainable Transport Infrastructure which provides further guidance on transport matters.

### Policy KCA.CC2

#### Sustainable Transport

All developments should contribute towards the creation of a well-connected and accessible town centre that provides safe and easy access to the surrounding neighbourhoods. Where practicable and appropriate, proposals should contribute towards one of the following major projects:

- i. Improving and enhancing the multi-modal use of the ring road
- ii. New Railway Interchange
- iii. Bus Station reappraisal
- iv. Pedestrianisation, streets, squares and spaces
- v. Improving access to Churchfields and Crossley Park

New development must assist in managing the flow of traffic and offering convenient movement choices for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.

New developments must take into account the need to provide for pedestrian movement, within, to and through sites, and contribute to the enhancement of the cycle network and improved public transport facilities.

Proposals that prejudice the delivery of a network of new strategic routes through the town centre will not be permitted.

#### Reasoned Justification

##### Public Transport

**6.20** Reducing dependency on the car requires the provision of a good public transport network that allows easy access to other parts of the District and beyond. A good bus service is particularly important to improving public transport accessibility to other parts of the District. Access via bus to the town centre, as a focal point for key services, is vital and has a big role to play in reducing the volume of trips taken by car. New developments, and residential development in particular, should therefore be well connected to bus routes that provide access to the town.

**6.21** Kidderminster has the District's main railway station which provides a good and regular service towards Birmingham and Worcester. Although the station is located outside of the town centre, it is only a short walk. However, the visual and physical links are poor so it is not an attractive option for many. An important aim is to improve this link and increase the amount of people reaching the station by foot or bicycle. This link is also crucial in attracting visitors via

this mode of transport into the town centre. Conversely, it is also important to provide residents with greater access to the services and facilities available regionally, including employment and education opportunities. Improvements to this route will be sought as a priority.

**6.22** A new transport interchange is planned for the existing railway station area that will also incorporate bus stops and a taxi rank. This will help to improve public transport links to and from the town. This scheme will be supported by the District Council and has its own site specific policy in Part B of this document.

## **Multi-modal use of the Ring Road**

**6.23** The ring road is currently a big barrier to pedestrian and cycle movement from the town centre to its surrounding neighbourhoods. It is also an inhospitable and unwelcoming environment for anyone not in a motor vehicle.

**6.24** A major ambition of the KCAAP is to encourage the multi-modal use of the ring road, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists. This could be achieved by 'downgrading' the ring road to make it feel more like an urban street rather than just a dual-carriageway road that passes through the middle of the town, while at the same time retaining its importance and capacity as an 'A' road. Key to achieving this is reducing vehicle dominance, making it a more pedestrian-friendly environment and ensuring that adjacent buildings have a positive relationship with the highway. Appropriate landscaping and tree planting could also be implemented to help to 'soften' the ring road environment.

**6.25** The Ring Road Framework policy deals with this in more detail (see Section 7).

## **Pedestrian and Cycle Links**

**6.26** Another important part of transport choice is about providing attractive pedestrian and cycle links around the town that help discourage people from using their car. These links can play a big part in providing a real alternative to getting into the town centre from the surrounding neighbourhoods by more sustainable means.

**6.27** At the moment, pedestrian links into the town are not good and, for the vast majority of journeys, pedestrians are required to cross the ring road via the subway system. This provides an unattractive route into the town which makes many people feel unsafe. Pedestrian links are also not very visible or clear and do not encourage people to walk or cycle into the town centre.

**6.28** The creation and improvement of accessible pedestrian and cycle links into the town from the surrounding neighbourhoods will be sought. This will include pedestrian crossings over the ring road and the removal of the existing subways. Routes should be well signposted and leave people with no confusion about where they are heading. Routes should also follow the most direct lines possible and incorporate pedestrian desire lines where appropriate. There is an opportunity to link pedestrian routes with green infrastructure provision in the town, particularly along the canal and the river corridors.

**6.29** To achieve these objectives, new links should be designed in accordance with policy CP11 (Quality Design & Local Distinctiveness) of the Adopted Core Strategy and policy KCA.UP1 (Urban Design Key Principles) of the KCAAP.

## Walkable Town

### Policy KCA.CC3

#### Walkable Town

New developments should contribute to the aspiration for a walkable town centre by providing simple and direct routes that are visually and physically well-connected.

New development should also, where appropriate, provide links through the site itself to aid the connectivity of the town.

New connections should be as direct as possible and should take into account pedestrian desire lines and ease of movement.

Developments which would reduce or block pedestrian movement both through a site and the wider town will not be acceptable.

As a priority, links between the town centre and the railway station will be improved to encourage the use of public transport and improve the relationship between the town and the station.

Proposals should maximise the width of footways within the commercial streets of the town centre and where practicable incorporate shared surface streets and spaces.

## Reasoned Justification

### Walkable Town

**6.30** Kidderminster will be promoted as a 'walkable town' which is well-connected throughout and provides clear and easy routes through the town centre and beyond.

**6.31** The town centre is relatively compact and, in terms of distance, does not require people to walk far to reach the key services that it provides. However, in reality the visual and physical links are not good and do not promote ease of movement. Therefore the town can feel like a fairly inaccessible place. A high quality public realm can aid this by giving order and indicating a hierarchy of streets. It can also include signposting to make sure people are left in no doubt about which way they need to go.

**6.32** Providing these links can have several benefits. Primarily, it can provide local residents with a more attractive alternative to motorised transport by encouraging them to walk or cycle into town. It also has several social benefits including promoting a healthier lifestyle and providing opportunities for social interaction, potentially resulting in greater community cohesion.

**6.33** There are several possible development sites in the town which have the potential to provide new and improved routes as part of their redevelopment. The specific details will be highlighted within the site specific policies in Part B of this document. However, all new development should make a contribution to improving pedestrian access around the town.

## 7 A Unique Place

**7.1** Creating well designed and distinctive places will play a big part in the future success of Kidderminster. Providing good places where people want to spend their time can be a huge influence in drawing people into the town whether to live, work or visit. Kidderminster, and in particular the town centre, is currently deficient in quality places and spaces that encourage social interaction.

**7.2** Kidderminster has many good assets, particularly those with heritage value, which contribute to the uniqueness of the town and its sense of place. There are a number of Statutory Listed Buildings and Local Heritage List assets, some of which have been successfully converted, which add to the distinctiveness of the town. The water based assets of the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal and the River Stour that run through the town centre together with Kidderminster's countryside setting and position in the Stour Valley are also positive elements that make the town special.

**7.3** The large scale industrial legacy, post-war redevelopment, town centre ring road and more recent car-orientated commercial developments, however, have served to undermine the sense of place. There is a lack of coherence and co-ordination between the assets and it is crucial that future developments strive to deliver a step change in design for the town. This is a key aim for the KCAAP and the District Council will strive to improve the quality of the environment in Kidderminster through promoting good urban design that makes the most of existing assets that differentiate the town from other places

View across Puxton Marsh, part of the Stour Valley



## Urban Design and Place Making

### Urban Design and Place Making Objectives

The overall objectives for Urban Design & Place Making in the KCAAP area are to:

- Increase the quality of urban design in Kidderminster.
- Repair the urban fabric.
- Reduce the amount of surface car parking.
- Improve the connectivity of the town.
- Improve the public realm, particularly in key areas.
- Create new and improved civic spaces.
- Create a safe and secure environment which reduces opportunities for crime and anti social behaviour

### Urban Design Key Principles

**7.4** The legacy of past development in Kidderminster has not created a well designed place and the town is fragmented. It does not have a very strong sense of place despite the presence of some key assets, such as its canal and river. The town is in need of new well integrated neighbourhoods that demonstrate exemplary standards of design.

**7.5** The Urban Design Compendium, a key influence in urban design practice, states that urban design is the art of making places for people. It is not just about creating places that look good, but also places that function effectively day to day. Urban design is about the connection between people and places and involves the careful consideration of layouts, movement choices, block structures, building orientation, architectural style, development economics, landscape, environmental sustainability and place identity to create a vision for an area.

**7.6** Land use and transportation planning have a key role to play in delivering the urban design agenda. In the past, sites have too often been considered in a piecemeal way but the emphasis in this plan is very much focused on the bigger picture and shaping places that respond well to their surroundings. This includes responding to the combined opportunities presented by the Stour Valley Corridor stretching from Stourport-on Severn in the south to Lea Castle in the north and running through the KCAAP area. This will require the establishment of a clear set of principles to guide development. Many of these are embedded in the District Design Quality SPG.

**7.7** More specific urban design considerations will be dealt with on a site specific basis and are included within the policies in Part B of this document.



## Policy KCA.UP1

### Urban Design Key Principles

The emphasis on quality design is set out in policy CP11 of the Adopted Core Strategy and this reflects a number of key provisions in the Design Quality SPG. New development will be expected to be consistent with principles and guidance set out in these documents.

The following core design principles will specifically apply within the KCAAP in addition to the Adopted Core Strategy policies. Development proposals should:

- a. Avoid being prejudicial to the comprehensive development of a larger area.
- b. Create positive built frontages that provide enclosure and natural surveillance onto adjacent streets, spaces, natural features and water features.
- c. Concentrate active uses and entrances onto main thoroughfares and focal points.
- d. Create perimeter blocks of development with public frontages and private backs.
- e. Contribute to the creation of a quality public realm that is attractive, safe, uncluttered and accessible to all.
- f. Improve accessibility and permeability within and around the site, improving pedestrian and cycle priority and following desire lines.
- g. Contribute to creating a network of well connected streets and spaces by opening up movement opportunities beyond individual sites.
- h. Improve legibility by providing developments that create recognisable routes and landmarks.
- i. Include high quality architecture, which enhances local character and distinctiveness, that will stand scrutiny as part of a design review process.
- j. Create a safe and secure environment that minimises opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour incorporating Secured by Design principles and consider the incorporation of fire safety measures.
- k. Reduce the amount of surface car parking to help repair the urban fabric - however, this should not lead to a significant reduction in the overall number of spaces.
- l. Respect and enhance the blue and green infrastructure and heritage assets of the town centre including the River Stour valley, watercourses and canal, topography, biodiversity and habitat corridors.

### Reasoned Justification

#### Town Centre Design Framework

**7.8** The above policy will provide the underlying principles to guide the development of a Town Centre Design Framework. This Framework will provide an over-arching design masterplan for the town to help guide future development and to fulfil the objective to make Kidderminster a well designed and functioning place. Developing the Framework will allow the District Council to identify the specific measures and areas for improvement and design interventions needed to allow future urban design improvements to contribute towards a 'bigger picture' for the town as a whole. It is also important to consider how any proposals will take account of and promote the surviving historic character of the townscape.

### Urban Design Challenges

**7.9** There are a number of specific urban design issues that are especially prevalent in Kidderminster that should be addressed as a priority:

#### *Repairing the Urban Fabric*

**7.10** A particular problem in Kidderminster is the fragmented nature of its urban fabric. There are many areas which lack a sense of enclosure or definition and as a result feel very disjointed and confused. A big cause of this is the amount of surface car parking (see below).

**7.11** The above principles are key to transforming the town centre. Areas such as Bromsgrove Street are a prime example where the urban fabric is in need of repair. This street runs through large areas of surface car parking which provide no enclosure to the highway. The low rise 1960s architecture coupled with the industrial style of the Glades Leisure Centre serves to further undermine the quality of the area. Although topography serves to screen some of the Worcester Street premises, the most prominent and architecturally unattractive back elevations of multi-storey shops are also highly visible. Finally there is little visual relief in the form of landscaping. As a result, this area lacks coherence and presents a poor urban environment that is defined by one of the town centre's main surface car parks and the unwelcoming Step Entry pedestrian link from the car park to the retail premises on Worcester Street. A key urban design aim is to repair this urban fabric and bring definition to streets and spaces. The area is subject to a site specific policy in Part B as part of the Eastern Gateway.

Aerial photo of Bromsgrove Street showing the fragmented urban fabric



## Surface Car Parking

Surface car parks dominate the town centre

**7.12** The town centre has a vast amount of land dedicated to surface car parking and it is currently having a detrimental impact on the quality of the urban environment. These car parks present an inefficient use of land in the middle of the town centre. These sites have development potential and could be much better utilised subject to compensatory provision of parking. This may be achieved through decked car parking solutions.



**7.13** The car parks serve to fragment the urban form of the town and their lack of built edges create large open spaces which provide no sense of enclosure and no active frontages. This creates sterile environments which are not enjoyable places to visit.

**7.14** The District Council will look to control the further development of surface car parking that would be detrimental to the townscape. For new developments, alternative parking solutions should be explored before resorting to surface car parks. On existing surface car parks the District Council will support proposals that would reduce the ground surface area taken up by parking.

## Connectivity

**7.15** For a relatively small area, the town is not a very legible and connected place. Movement around the centre is hindered by visual and physical barriers. The 'Walkable Town' policy in the Sustainable Transport section deals with this issue more specifically.

**7.16** The ring road is the largest barrier to pedestrian movement and requires people to use subways to cross it. The ring road is discussed in more detail in the Ring Road Framework section and policy.

**7.17** Although a fantastic asset for the town, the canal is also a barrier to movement and there are disproportionately few crossing points. The creation of more bridging points at key development locations would help to improve this.

**7.18** The connections between the town centre and the railway station are also a priority for improvement. This is important from the perspective of providing a sense of arrival and legibility for visitors.

**7.19** The implementation of measures that would help to improve connectivity throughout the town will generally be supported.



## Public Realm

**7.20** An important part of making Kidderminster a good place to be is the treatment of the public realm on its streets and spaces. A good public realm enhances the experience for its users and improves the perception and enjoyment of the town. A more attractive environment is more likely to encourage people to come and spend their time in the town.

**7.21** Good quality public realm will be expected to be implemented as part of any new development to ensure the creation of a successful urban environment.

### Policy KCA.UP2

#### Public Realm

Within the Kidderminster Central Area, the District Council will work to facilitate the enhancement of the public streets and spaces to improve the appearance and accessibility of the town centre.

The priorities will be:

- Primary Shopping Frontages of Vicar Street, High Street and Worcester Street
- Key pedestrian route from the Town Hall to Kidderminster Railway Station

Proposals within the Primary and Secondary Shopping Area will be expected to contribute towards the improvement of key spaces within the town centre including the pedestrianised streets, Town Hall Square and Bull Ring to make these spaces more effective as places of exchange and interaction.

The creation of new neighbourhoods and development involving new streets will incorporate a range of multi-functional spaces that support and encourage a range of different activities.

Proposals for new and/or improved public streets and spaces should:

- a. Incorporate high quality, durable and sustainable designs and materials.
- b. Use imaginative designs that enhance the character and identity of the town.
- c. Create a simple and uncluttered environment.
- d. Incorporate street furniture that is unobtrusive and integral to the landscape.
- e. Incorporate street trees and planting where practicable.
- f. Facilitate ease of movement and legibility through the town for pedestrians and cyclists.
- g. Incorporate SUDS to improve surface water drainage.
- h. Where appropriate, incorporate on-street parking and servicing arrangements in a flexible and sensitive manner.
- i. Provide well integrated good quality public art and lighting.

#### Civic Spaces

A number of places in the KCAAP area have been identified as having an important future role as civic spaces. Developments adjacent to these spaces will make a positive contribution towards the relevant project and development proposals that would prejudice the implementation of these civic spaces will not be supported.

These civic spaces have been identified as being located in the following places:

- Town Hall Square (in front of the Town Hall)
- Bull Ring (around the Bull Ring traffic island)
- Church Square (in front of St. Mary's Church)
- Comberton Island
- Kidderminster Railway Station

## Reasoned Justification

### Public Realm Improvements

**7.22** The issue of public realm is particularly pertinent to the town centre areas around the Primary Shopping Area which experience the highest footfall. It is apparent that there has been little investment in the public realm in this area. Maintenance and repair work has been carried out on a piecemeal basis and has not been completed to a high quality. This has left a patchwork of tired public realm with infill repairs. It is also important to consider how any proposals will take account of and promote the surviving historic character of the townscape.

Tired looking public realm in the town centre



**7.23** An ambition of the ReWyre Initiative, therefore, is to seek improvements to the public streets and spaces. The priority for these improvements will be centred around the Vicar Street, High Street and Worcester Street areas as primary shopping frontage locations and a sequence of interconnected spaces including Town Hall Square and Bull Ring. As the central locations within the Primary Shopping Area, it is important that these areas have the highest quality public realm which defines them as being at the centre of the town.

**7.24** A further focus for improvements to the public realm will be the links through the Eastern Gateway where a greater sense of arrival should be created to welcome people to the town from the rail interchange. This should include high quality space at the rail interchange and the connecting streets as well as key spaces including Town Hall Square. Currently the route is complicated by the subway network and it is not legible or well signposted.

**7.25** Improvements will help to encourage more people to use this route and use sustainable travel methods linking the railway interchange, Severn Valley Railway and Kidderminster Railway Museum to the Museum of Carpets and the town centre. In this sense, it has a key role to play in promoting the tourism economy.

The route from the railway station to the town centre is confusing





**Civic Spaces**

**7.26** A key part of a good public realm includes the provision of high quality public open spaces. At the moment, the town centre lacks meaningful public space that offers the chance for people to stop and rest and encourages people to stay in the town longer.

**7.27** The Primary Shopping Area is an area of the town which is particularly devoid of public spaces. The affect of this is a series of streets that provide few attractive opportunities for people to stop and therefore people are encouraged to keep moving. This creates a more unwelcoming environment and gives the impression that visitors are to only stay in the town for a short amount of time.

**7.28** An ambition for the KCAAP and the ReWyre Initiative is to create new and improved civic spaces that are linked by high quality streets. These spaces should be attractive to different users in order to encourage exchange and interaction, vitality and viability and a range of functions including events and markets. This includes the creation of a new civic 'heart' in the form of a Town Hall Square that would be the central focus for the town.

Map showing the potential location of new and improved public spaces



**7.29** The design policies contained in this section are consistent with the adopted Design Quality SPG and follow contemporary urban design thinking.

## Ring Road Framework

### Ring Road Framework Objectives

The overall objectives for the Ring Road Framework are to:

- Improve the environment of the ring road by transforming it into an urban boulevard.
- Improve pedestrian and cycle accessibility across the ring road by incorporating surface-level crossings.

### Movement

**7.30** The ring road is an important piece of transport infrastructure for the town and is a key movement corridor that handles a significant amount of traffic each day.

**7.31** However, for a pedestrian the ring road is a significant barrier to movement between the neighbouring communities and the town centre. Pedestrians are sent underground through subways to cross the ring road at all but one point along its entire length. The pedestrian environment along the ring road is also poor and vehicles have priority with traffic dominating.

**7.32** A key ambition of the KCAAP is to improve the connections across the ring road and allow pedestrians better access into the town centre. This would involve installing at-grade crossings over the ring road to replace the existing subways. Visual links are also an important part of connectivity and contribute to the ease of movement.

**7.33** The re-designing of the ring road as detailed below is a major ambition for the town and could require significant changes to the highway network. However, all proposals that affect the movement of traffic will need to be fully tested and be supported by technical evidence to show their impacts on the wider highway network.

## Policy KCA.UP3

### Ring Road Framework

#### General Design Principles

New development in the town centre and adjacent to the ring road will need to contribute to, and not prejudice, the enhancement of the environment of the ring road. Developments affecting the ring road should:

- a. Where practicable front on to the ring road and provide a sense of enclosure.
- b. Provide definition and enclosure through a memorable feature or landmark building at key junctions currently lacking these qualities.
- c. Contribute towards transforming the ring road to reduce the negative impact of traffic on the pedestrian environment by creating an urban boulevard.
- d. Contribute towards surface level pedestrian crossings over the ring road to create links between the town centre and adjacent neighbourhoods along primary desire lines and routes.

- e. Fully consider the introduction of traffic signals as a means of facilitating surface level pedestrian connections and managing traffic flows.
- f. Soften the ring road by using quality materials and promoting the planting of street trees and other landscaping treatments to an agreed specification.
- g. Consider the removal of barriers including pedestrian guard rails.
- h. Create facilities that give equal priority to cyclists, pedestrians and vehicular traffic.

### Reasoned Justification

#### Urban Design

**7.34** Currently the ring road feels like a road solely for vehicles rather than a street for a variety of users. This has led to it being a very unattractive and inhospitable environment for anyone other than vehicle users and increases its status as a barrier to movement.

**7.35** The ring road, despite running very close to the town centre, comprises of four wide (and in places six) lanes with fast moving traffic. The pedestrian footpaths either side of the carriageway are relatively narrow. The road is characterised by pedestrian guard rails and barriers to movement, whilst surrounding buildings back on to the road with little or no natural surveillance. This creates a poor experience for those walking along the road and this main route around the town is not a welcoming place for people. The vision emerging through ReWyre and through this KCAAP is to transform the ring road from an urban expressway to a town centre boulevard.

**7.36** Options to naturally reduce the speed of traffic and alter the speed limit may help. However, the challenge is clearly deeper than this. It is also suggested that new development adjacent to the ring road should also have a much more positive relationship with it and, where possible, create an active frontage to encourage pedestrian movement.

**7.37** The landscaping along much of the ring road is also very 'hard' with railings and concrete and little in the way of softer landscaping. Even where St. George's Park adjoins the ring road, it is characterised by security fencing. This further weakens the pedestrian environment. The inclusion of softer landscaping, such as tree planting, and improved surfaces, could help to further soften and transform the street.

The current ring road environment is unattractive and acts as a barrier to movement



## Ring Road Character Areas

**7.38** Several distinct areas have been identified along the ring road. The environments along these individual sections of the road are quite different and help determine the opportunities and ambitions for each. An annotated map of the different character areas can be found at Appendix C.

### Policy KCA.UP4

#### Ring Road Character Areas

Within each character area, schemes should meet the following expectations:

##### 1) Aggborough Parkway

- i. The woodland parkway environment of this section will be maintained and enhanced.
- ii. The pedestrian path network should be enhanced and extended to improve recreation and connectivity.
- iii. Full consideration should be given to replacing Comberton Hill Island with surface level crossings including traffic signals.

##### 2) Urban Boulevard

- i. Adjacent development must have a positive relationship to the ring road, fronting onto the highway, where practicable, and providing an active frontage and sense of enclosure.
- ii. Surface-level pedestrian crossings will be created to provide alternatives to the subways on the Blackwell Street and Coventry Street traffic islands.
- iii. Carriageway widths to be narrowed and pavement widths increased to improve the pedestrian environment.
- iv. Railings to be removed from pavement edge and central reservation.

##### 3) St. Mary's

- i. Physical and visual link between Church Street and St. Mary's Church to be re-established – including a surface level pedestrian crossing.
- ii. Carriageway widths to be narrowed and pavement widths increased to improve the pedestrian environment.

##### 4) Park Butts Parkway

- i. Contribute towards measures to rationalise the Crossley Park/Weavers Wharf junction to make it more user-friendly and allow for easier pedestrian movement.



## Reasoned Justification

### Aggborough Parkway

**7.39** This section stretches from the Worcester Road Island to the environment around Comberton Island. It is characterised by the significant densely wooded embankment/ cutting through which the road has been constructed. It has the feel of an urban parkway that gives a false semi-rural illusion.

**7.40** The ambition for this section of the road would be to maintain and enhance the woodland around the road. There may also be opportunities to improve and extend pedestrian and cycling facilities through the area.

### Urban Boulevard

**7.41** This section of the road has a very urban feel to it with development on either side. However, this existing development has a poor relationship with the road and in most cases turns its back on it. The pedestrian environment is unwelcoming and vehicles have clear priority. Links to adjoining streets such as George Street and Lion Street are severed.

**7.42** The ambition is for development to front the road to create a positive relationship. The improvement and, in some instances, introduction of pedestrian footways will also be encouraged. Means of reducing speeds and providing pedestrian priority will be encouraged. Pedestrian crossings should also be sought to remove the reliance on subways and the introduction of signals may provide a means of better managing the flow of traffic. This will be investigated early during the plan period and/or subject to development proposals emerging.

**7.43** The overall aim would be to make this part of the road feel more like an urban street or boulevard.

### St. Mary's

**7.44** This section also has an urban feel but is more closely defined by open space. It lacks enclosure and definition as the buildings on the site adjacent are setback from the road and there are areas of surface car parking and open space fronting onto it. Despite benefiting from the presence of the Grade I Listed St Mary's Church and adjacent green space by the canal, the area lacks definition and is heavily dominated by traffic noise. The ring road has also severed the Church and Church Street and a potentially important route to Churchfields.

Aggborough Parkway





**7.45** The ambition here is to improve the pedestrian environment and improve the relationship to the adjacent open spaces. The reconnection of the physical and visual link between Church Street and St. Mary's Church/Churchfields will also be sought.

### **Park Butts Parkway**

**7.46** This section of the ring road is a mix of urban development and woodland. Its major feature is the traffic junction for Crossley Retail Park and Weavers Wharf. This junction is widely regarded as being confusing for motorists and gets very congested at peak times. The junction is the only at-grade pedestrian crossing along the entire ring road, but the link is tedious and can take a long time.

**7.47** The ambition here would be to improve both vehicle and pedestrian access through this junction. Offering movement choices through Churchfields may assist in achieving this ambition in addition to improvements within the St Mary's character area.

**Park Butts Parkway**



## River and Canal

### River and Canal Objectives

The overall objectives for the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal and the River Stour in the KCAAP area are to:

- Enhance the waterside environment
- Increase activity and natural surveillance
- Improve green infrastructure and wildlife corridor links

**7.48** The Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal and the River Stour are two important assets for Kidderminster. However, they have been underutilised and there have been many missed opportunities to help re-establish these two waterways as key features of the town's environment. The ambition is now to turn these waterways from backwaters to key features within the central area.

**7.49** Elsewhere, waterside settings provide valuable regeneration opportunities. There are a number of sites adjacent to the river and/or canal with the potential for redevelopment that provide a realistic prospect to make this happen in Kidderminster.

### Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal

**7.50** The canal runs along the entire western side of the KCAAP area passing through major regeneration opportunity sites including the Churchfields area. A key aim is to realise the potential of development sites adjacent to the canal and revitalise it as an important feature for the town. Canals are versatile and multi-functional spaces and the District Council aspires to encourage the use of the canal for a variety of activities at different times of the day and night.

**7.51** Despite its running the length of the town, the canal remains underutilised and most developments turn their back on the waterway. There is very little active frontage facing the canal and therefore little vibrancy. The relative lack of activity on the canal means that there is very little natural surveillance and a knock-on effect of this has been persistent problems of anti-social behaviour.

**7.52** Nowhere is this more apparent than in the area around Weavers Wharf and Tesco where large surface car parks have created an extensive inactive edge in the centre of town. However, the same problem is persistent along the vast majority of the canal. Despite this, Round Hill Wharf to the south of the town centre provides a positive relationship with the canal. There are many opportunities to improve the canalside.

## Policy KCA.UP5

### Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal

New development on sites adjacent to the canal should:

- i. Create a safe, secure and crime free environment through providing active frontages, natural surveillance, incorporation of Secured by Design principles and supporting security infrastructure where necessary.
- ii. Improve pedestrian links to the canalside.
- iii. Provide opportunities for promenading to enliven the waterside environment for both human interaction and biodiversity.
- iv. Where there is an identified need, deliver new bridges to provide greater connectivity.
- v. Preserve existing canal infrastructure and boat movements.
- vi. Provide a high quality design that respects the Canal Conservation Area.
- vii. Contribute to the improvement of the canalside public realm.
- viii. Where appropriate, enhance the canal's water environment and role as part of the green infrastructure and biodiversity network.

## Reasoned Justification

### Canal Linkages

**7.53** The canal and its towpath provide a key strategic pedestrian, cycling and boating link throughout the KCAAP area which joins together important regeneration sites and existing key facilities. The canal also has a role to play in providing an important part of the town's green infrastructure, as well as improving its biodiversity and tourism potential. The towpath and soft edges of the canal should be maintained and enhanced where appropriate. New development should aim to increase the use and encourage social activity along the canalside.

The canal towpath provides a walking and cycling route



### Canalside Developments

**7.54** Development adjacent to the canal will be expected to provide an active frontage facing onto the water that provides natural surveillance. This is especially important in areas currently lacking active edges. New development should also promote the use of the canal and, where appropriate, encourage high levels of activity along the towpath, especially adjacent to the town centre. Here, mixed use development on the waterside will be encouraged to assist vitality and viability.

**7.55** Development should be of a high quality design that enhances the quality of the Canal Conservation Area. Where appropriate, development should also contribute towards the enhancement of public realm on the waterside.

### 7.56 Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity

**7.57** It is recognised that the canal currently plays a role in providing part of the vital green infrastructure for the town as well as acting as an important biodiversity habitat. As the canal is a direct link between the Puxton Marsh SSSI to the north of the town, and the Wilden Marsh and Meadows SSSI to the south of the town, it will be important to maintain and enhance this role.

**7.58** Key regeneration sites are present on the canalside, however, and this provides opportunities to enhance the use of the canal and make them safer places to be. Therefore, biodiversity and green infrastructure improvements must be balanced with the need to enhance the vitality and vibrancy of the canal and the town centre. It is also important to recognise the industrial heritage of the canal and that, in the KCAAP area, it is located within an urban environment.

### Boating Infrastructure

**7.59** The Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal is a busy route for boaters and Kidderminster is a stop on the Stourport Ring cruising route. However, the town centre does not have a good reputation amongst boaters and they only tend to stay on a very short term basis. The District Council will continue to work with the Canal and River Trust to improve the canal environment and provide facilities that encourage boaters to moor in the town centre for longer periods.

**7.60** New development on the canalside should preserve the existing canal infrastructure and structures. Features such as winding holes assist with the navigation of the canal and will be retained. Any proposals that would be detrimental to the movement of boats along the canal will not be acceptable.

### River Stour

#### Policy KCA.UP6

##### River Stour

New developments adjacent to the River Stour should contribute to the improvement of the water environment by:

- i. Providing a positive relationship to the water's edge.
- ii. Making on-site improvements to the green infrastructure links.
- iii. Enhancing the biodiversity value of the river and riverside areas as part of a wildlife corridor.
- iv. Improving the morphology of modified sections of the river, where appropriate, to recreate more natural conditions and better habitat (i.e. de-culverting, re-profiling and buffer strips).
- v. Putting in place measures to protect and improve water quality (including groundwater)
- vi. Providing flood risk betterment measures where practical.
- vii. Providing opportunities for promenading and interaction with the environment of the River Stour.



## Reasoned Justification

**7.61** Like the canal, the River Stour runs along the entire western edge of the KCAAP area. However, the river also splits off from the main watercourse into several different channels that flow right through the heart of the town. In the past, much of the river, particularly the smaller arms, were culverted and built over and have been hidden from view for decades. In more recent times the redevelopment of some major sites in the town centre has provided the opportunity to open-up these watercourses once again. The development of the Tesco site is perhaps the most notable example of where this has brought vast improvements to the riverside environment.

**7.62** As with the canal, a lot of development has turned its back on the river, turning it into a forgotten backwater. Other than in a few places where the river has been opened up, there are not many opportunities where the river can be seen. There are a number of sites adjacent to the river that have been identified as having redevelopment potential. On these sites, improvements to the riverside environment will be sought as part of any new scheme. New development should aim to improve the use of the riverside and encourage social activity along it.

**7.63** The River Stour also has an important role to play in providing an important green infrastructure link through the town and is inherently a more natural environment than the canal and offers much greater scope as a wildlife corridor. Its many channels increase the opportunities to do this over a wide area.

The river is a particularly important green corridor as it provides a vital link between the Wilden Marsh and Meadows SSSI and the Puxton Marsh SSSI at either ends of the town and is a Local Wildlife Site in itself. Furthermore, maintaining and, where possible, enhancing water quality is a vital part of enhancing the river's biodiversity value. Therefore, new developments should not reduce water quality as a minimum and should ideally look to contribute to improving it.

**7.64** The River Stour is currently classified as poor ecological status and failing good chemical status, as reported in the Severn River Basin Management Plan. Two of the objectives of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) are: to prevent deterioration in the status of aquatic ecosystems, protect them and improve the ecological condition of waters; and to achieve at least good status for all waters by 2015. Where this is not possible, and subject to the criteria set out in the Directive, aim to achieve good status by 2021 or 2027. New development should contribute towards improving the River Stour to assist the UK in meeting its objectives of the WFD.

Wildlife shelter on River Stour, Kidderminster





## Green Infrastructure

### Green Infrastructure

The overall objectives for green infrastructure in the KCAAP area are to:

- Improve the biodiversity value of the town.
- Enhance the role of the town centre in providing a green infrastructure link along the Stour Valley.
- Use green infrastructure to deliver attractive walking and cycling routes.
- Enhance the role of green infrastructure in adapting to and mitigating against the effects of climate change, particularly flood risk.

**7.65** Providing a green infrastructure network throughout the town is an important part of creating a successful urban landscape. Green spaces can provide much needed recreation and rest space which sits in sharp contrast to the 'harder' urban environments found in the rest of the town. Within the town centre itself, there is not much green provision, although the surrounding areas extending out to the countryside are of a high quality. Kidderminster offers tantalising glimpses of the countryside beyond the town. However, whilst there are watercourses and important parks and green spaces on the edge of the KCAAP, the town centre is largely devoid of green infrastructure. Providing additional green infrastructure throughout the town is important to place making. Opportunities are provided through the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal and the River Stour. In addition to the human interaction and amenity, green infrastructure also has a key role in enhancing the biodiversity value of localities.

**7.66** Further guidance regarding Green Infrastructure is provided through the Adopted Core Strategy policy CP13: Providing a Green Infrastructure Network and policy SAL.UP3: Providing a Green Infrastructure Network in the Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan. These policies should also be referred to for developments in the KCAAP area.

### Policy KCA.UP7

#### Green Infrastructure

All schemes within the KCAAP will need to provide green infrastructure through their design, including well integrated landscaping, tree planting and SUDS as part of the public realm. Where possible this should be linked into the wider green infrastructure network.

Sites adjacent to the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal and the River Stour should:

- i. Enhance the contribution of the river and canal to the green infrastructure network within the town.
- ii. Enhance the biodiversity value of the river and canal where appropriate.

## Reasoned Justification

### Existing Green Infrastructure

**7.67** The KCAAP area does have existing sections of green infrastructure, particularly in the form of its parks and the river and canal environments. However, it is important that these spaces are not isolated and form part of a wider network.

### Stour Valley Corridor

**7.68** As part of the larger Stour Valley Corridor, which stretches across the length of the District, the river and canal have a big role to play in providing vital pieces of blue and green infrastructure as well as a wildlife corridor. Both features have been recognised in the Green Infrastructure Strategy as key corridors.

**7.69** Both waterways are a vital connection between the Wilden Marsh and Meadows SSSI to the south of the town next to the former British Sugar Site and the Puxton Marsh SSSI adjacent to the Churchfields area in the north. It is important to develop this green link between these two key ecological areas. The links also offer promenading opportunities to link the British Sugar and Churchfields sites as well as offering opportunities to address the impacts of climate change including flood risk and the urban heat island effect, as well as promoting opportunities for sustainable transport. Developments along the Stour Valley will also provide opportunities to enhance the landscape and townscape along this corridor.

**7.70** Kidderminster town centre is an area where the green link and/or stepping stones need to be enhanced. The main routes follow the western edge of KCAAP, although the channels of the River Stour open this link and opportunity to the rest of the town centre e.g. the Morrisons development.

### Green Infrastructure Opportunities

**7.71** Opportunities to provide significant green infrastructure in the town are fairly limited, but the waterways provide a good chance to do this. However, this needs to be balanced with the need to recognise the role of Kidderminster Town Centre as the main commercial centre of the District. A combination of approaches and habitats including corridors and stepping stones and appropriate urban nature conservation measures will be encouraged. There are a number of potential development sites in the KCAAP area adjacent to the river and/or canal that provide a good opportunity to develop the green infrastructure. It is also important to recognise that green infrastructure provision isn't just constrained to green/natural spaces and that urban/built environments can also make a valuable contribution. Implementing measures such as street trees, green roofs and SUDS can provide visual enhancement as well as benefits such as flood mitigation and amenity greenspace.

**7.72** The area's existing parks and open green spaces are also an important part of the wider green infrastructure network. They provide vital urban biodiversity habitats as well as recreational space, whilst helping to reduce the urban heat island effect. These spaces, together with the linear parts of the green infrastructure network provide important walking and cycling routes. These spaces should be maintained and connected where appropriate to enhance the green infrastructure network within the town.

**7.73** New development on sites adjacent to the river and canal will be expected to enhance the wildlife habitat and encourage human interaction. The redevelopment of certain sites has already seen culverted sections of the river re-opened and the waterside environment improved. This programme of improving the river and softening the edges of the watercourses will be further encouraged.

Development of Green Infrastructure adjacent to the Canal in Kidderminster



### Heritage

#### Heritage Objectives

The overall objective for heritage in the KCAAP area is to:

- Ensure that heritage assets are maintained, enhanced and integrated into the urban environment.

**7.74** The KCAAP area contains a number of heritage assets, including Statutory Listed Buildings and Local Heritage List assets, which make a vital contribution to the quality of the urban environment and its local distinctiveness and identity. It is essential that these assets are maintained and enhanced and are successfully integrated into the future urban landscape.

**7.75** The Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan provides detailed guidance on heritage matters in policy SAL.UP6: Safeguarding the Historic Environment. This policy is also relevant to the KCAAP area. Adopted Core Strategy policy CP11: Quality Design and Local Distinctiveness provides more general guidance.

**7.76** The District Council will seek to retain and enhance buildings of historic merit and those which contribute to the quality of the overall townscape and will also work to secure the re-use and appropriate adaptation of disused historic buildings. Schemes and proposals that protect, preserve and enhance the historic, cultural and architectural character and heritage of Kidderminster will be supported.

**7.77** The underlying archaeology of development sites should also be a consideration. As such, Worcestershire County Council's Historic Environment Record should, as a minimum, be consulted to help identify any archaeological remains associated with sites.

### Conservation Areas

**7.78** Conservation Areas are designated to recognise areas of special architectural or historic interest which are considered important to preserve or enhance. The emphasis for Conservation Areas is recognising the importance of conserving the wider townscape and its setting, rather than just individual buildings.

**7.79** The KCAAP area contains four areas, as defined on the Policies Map, which have already been deemed of sufficient quality to be designated as Conservation Areas:

- Church Street
- Vicar Street and Exchange Street
- Green Street
- Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal

**7.80** New development in Conservation Areas must preserve and enhance the special character and appearance of these areas. This would appear to be particularly pertinent for the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal where a number of key potential regeneration sites have been identified adjacent to it. However, new development will not necessarily have to be designed to reflect the existing styles found in the area. Providing that they make a positive contribution to the architectural quality of the area, buildings of differing and modern designs will also be acceptable. Applicants must refer to the relevant Character Appraisal and Management Plan.

**7.81** General heritage policies are contained within the Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan and apply equally to the KCAAP area. The site specific policies within Part B detail specific heritage considerations at a more detailed scale.

Green Street Conservation Area





## 8 Introduction to Part B

**8.1** While Part A of this document dealt with the general over-arching principles for development within the KCAAP area, Part B looks at site specific policies for the key development and regeneration opportunities.

**8.2** Part B is split into different character areas that have their own distinct issues and opportunities and have different roles to play in providing future development in Kidderminster. These character areas are:

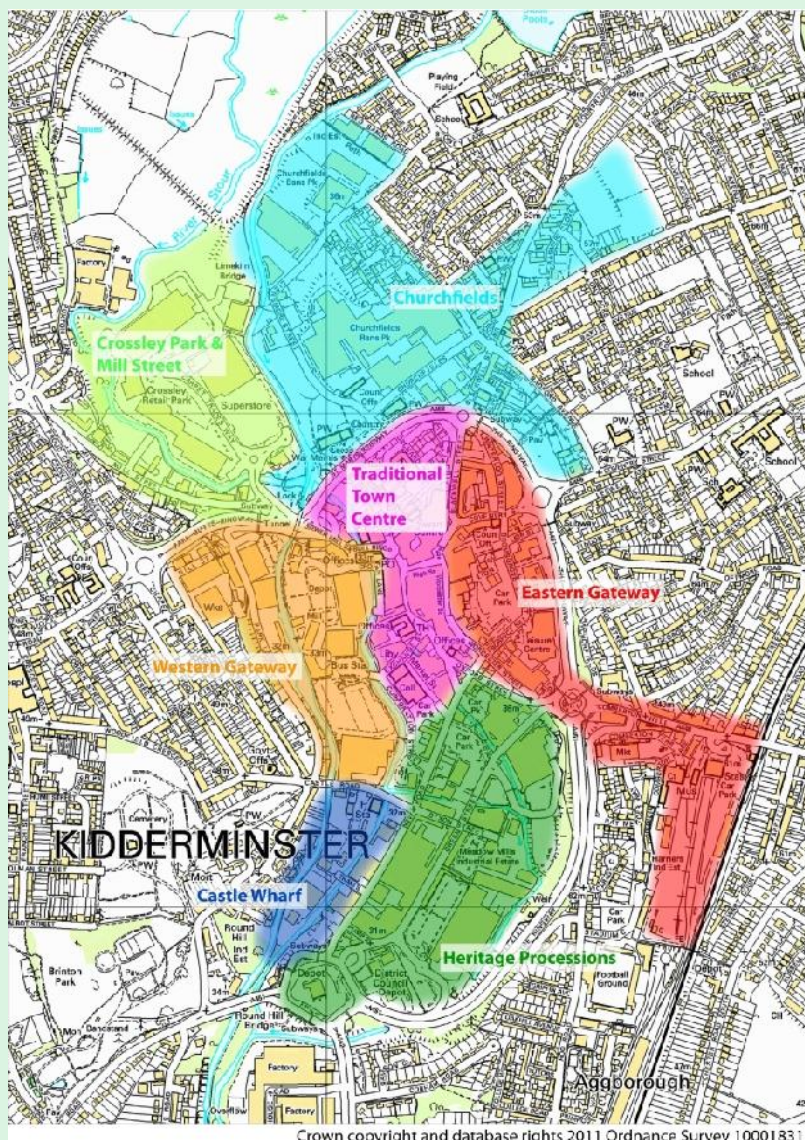
- Churchfields
- Eastern Gateway
- Western Gateway
- Castle Wharf
- Crossley Park and Mill Street
- Traditional Town Centre
- Heritage Processions

**8.3** A map indicating the location of the Character Areas is included to the right and at Appendix C.

**8.4** Within these character areas individual development sites and areas are identified. Each of these sites has its own specific policy which sets out future ambitions and expectations. Appropriate uses are also identified for each site as well as any specific design issues.

**8.5** For some sites the policy is supported by a conceptual map which highlights the key urban design principles that the site will be expected to deliver as well as establishing the quantum of development.

KCAAP Character Areas





## 9 Churchfields

**9.1** Churchfields sits just north of the town centre and is one of the District's biggest housing-led regeneration opportunities and was identified as one of four priority areas within the Kidderminster Regeneration Prospectus. It is envisaged that this area could provide up to 600 new homes. It is made up of several self-contained sites that are all interlinked and form the wider Churchfields area:

- Churchfields Business Park
- Former Georgian Carpets/Stoney Lane
- Limekiln Bridge
- Crossley Park
- Horsefair
- Former Sladen School
- Grasmere Close Estate

**9.2** It is absolutely crucial that individual sites within the defined 'Churchfields Masterplan' area are linked through a comprehensive approach to layout, transport infrastructure, green infrastructure, land use mix, quantum, types and tenures of development, and design ambitions. In doing so, proposals must also have full regard to the wider ambitions of the KCAAP, specifically the rejuvenation of the town centre which is the key economic regeneration driver for the action plan area, complemented by the proposed 'urban village' at Churchfields as the focus for housing-led regeneration.

### Churchfields Masterplan

#### Background

**9.3** Such is the scale of opportunity presented by Churchfields that the District Council, working with partners including the Homes and Communities Agency, highlighted the area as a housing priority through the ReWyre Initiative. The majority of the potential redevelopment area is a once bustling industrial area, formerly the site of two carpet factories. This area is no longer able to meet modern requirements for industry and the site is currently in temporary use. It is surrounded by existing residential communities to the north and east, Crossley Retail Park to the west and the town centre to the south.

**9.4** This series of previously developed sites represents a sustainable residential location where a number of key community, heritage and environmental assets can be enhanced. Particular challenges include balancing the needs for a vibrant canalside benefiting from natural surveillance with nature conservation of the Stour Valley, addressing the ring road and canal as barriers to movement, working with the topography, addressing public transport permeability and improving air quality.

**9.5** While the role of the KCAAP will be to provide planning policies and allocate sites for land uses that will help to transform Churchfields, it was deemed necessary to create a specific masterplan to set out a detail design framework and wider vision to guide future development in the area and ensure a holistic approach is taken.

## Developing the Masterplan

**9.6** The District Council worked with the Homes and Communities Agency and Midlands Architecture for the Designed Environment (MADE) to develop the Masterplan. MADE provided expert advice regarding urban design, and transport and viability studies have also been undertaken to make sure that the Masterplan is deliverable.

**9.7** The Masterplan was taken through two stages of public consultation, including a series of workshops and roadshow events with the local community, in order to develop a draft plan. This also included continuous engagement with public and private sector stakeholders, including local councillors and professional officers. This consultation enabled the masterplanning team to identify the key issues and opportunities for the area.

**9.8** A draft version of the Masterplan was then taken through a formal six week consultation period and included staffed exhibitions around the District. The feedback from this consultation was then fed into the production of the final document. The Masterplan was adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document by the District Council in September 2011.

## Guiding Principles for Churchfields

Churchfields Masterplan

**9.9** As described above, the purpose of the Masterplan is to set out a detailed design framework to guide new development in the area. This can then be used to guide, challenge and inform proposals for development and the subsequent determination of planning applications. The Masterplan will also provide added certainty for investors and developers while at the time being flexible enough to enable the delivery of sites.



**9.10** To deliver this guidance, the Masterplan provides nine key design principles that deal with important themes to be addressed within Churchfields and are applicable throughout the masterplan area. Each design principle provides detailed points and requirements that will ultimately help deliver each of the main principles. In addition to this, the Masterplan splits Churchfields into five individual character areas and provides more detailed design points for each locality. Finally, this guidance is pulled together to provide an overall visual masterplan for the whole of the Churchfields area.

## Policy KCA.Ch1

### Churchfields Masterplan

New development within the Churchfields area, as defined on the Policies Map, will be expected to conform to the overall aims of the Churchfields Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) including the established Design Principles and Character Area Objectives. Proposals must be guided by the Masterplan and should demonstrate how they have met the expectations for the site.

In considering the guidance set out in the SPD, the District Council will take into account the viability, deliverability and phasing of the regeneration proposals. Any deviations from the core principles of the Masterplan must be justified through a full viability assessment.

Proposals that would prejudice the comprehensive development of the wider Masterplan area, including any necessary infrastructure, will not be acceptable.

The priorities in regard to Planning Obligations are also set out in the SPD and contributions should be made in line with this guidance.

New development will be required to provide for new infrastructure and movement choices within the area including new and improved highway connections to Crossley Retail Park and the ring road.

### Reasoned Justification

**9.11** It is envisaged that the Masterplan area could contain a mix of uses, accommodating in excess of 600 new homes in addition to new offices, community facilities, small scale retail (of no larger than 280sqm per unit) and food and drink premises. It is the largest single housing growth opportunity in Wyre Forest District in what is one of Worcestershire's most deprived neighbourhoods. Consequently, the potential for major transformational impact exists and it is crucial that not only housing numbers are achieved but that there are added benefits in terms of place and community that are consistent with the focus on jobs and economic activity in the town centre.

### Highways Infrastructure

**9.12** The policy highlights the crucial need to address the poor quality infrastructure of the area which has created significant air quality management issues. At present all vehicle movements through the area are focussed on the Horsefair junction of Stourbridge Road, Broad Street, Blackwell Street and Radford Avenue and this creates a significant bottleneck. As part of the Masterplan exercise, research has been undertaken to explore opening up new choices including making Blackwell Street one-way and introducing a new access to Churchfields from the ring road. Another option includes a new multi-modal bridge to Crossley Park, which could offer further scope for public transport permeability through the area. This is in addition to improved pedestrian and cycle connectivity through the site and especially to the canal and Puxton Marsh to the north and the town centre to the south.

**9.13** The proposed highway changes contained in the Masterplan have been worked up using specialist transport advice and are considered to be the preferred option. This highway layout is the preferred starting point and proposals that deviate from this will be expected to fully justify their approach to the satisfaction of the District Council. Furthermore, transport proposals across the Churchfields area, including those outlined in the Masterplan, will also need to be supported by technical evidence to demonstrate their impacts on the wider traffic network.

### Design Considerations

**9.14** The Masterplan sets out design principles that illustrate a clear approach to urban design in the area. The District Council will be looking for a high quality of architectural treatment with the design of buildings and also the spaces around them. Not only does this include the

fundamental design layout of new developments, but also the approach to materials and styles that compliment and enhance the individual character areas. New developments will be expected to demonstrate consistency with the design principles.

### Developer Contributions

**9.15** In considering individual proposals, the District Council will have regard to the overall quantum of development planned for the area and its cumulative impact and will look for an appropriate and proportionate contribution towards infrastructure as a key priority for the neighbourhood. In assessing proposals, the authority will give full and due consideration to financial viability. Developers will be expected to provide an open book approach (subject to commercial confidence).

**9.16** The Churchfields Masterplan sets out the priority areas for development contributions which includes off-site highways works, public transport, and affordable housing. However, contributions will also be sought for other important infrastructure including education, drainage infrastructure, emergency services and community facilities, where appropriate.

**9.17** The principles outlined in this policy establish the regeneration priorities for the area and supplement (but do not replace) the requirements of other policies and Supplementary Planning Documents addressing Planning Obligations and/or Community Infrastructure Levy. The District Council is supportive of regeneration and would like to see a start on-site early in the plan period (2012-2016) and the authority will look to balance the expectations of the policy with commercial reality. Proposals that fall short of the provisions set out in the policy will need to be accompanied by a robust justification and financial appraisal to justify a departure. This should be consistent with the requirements of policy SAL.DPL3: Financial Viability in the Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan.

### Water Management and Contamination

**9.18** Most of the Churchfields Masterplan area falls outside of the River Stour floodplain with only a small proportion of land (within the Former Georgian Carpets/Stoney Lane Industrial Estate site) falling within Flood Zone 2. Any new development in this area will be expected to produce a flood risk assessment where appropriate. Nevertheless, the District Council will still look for appropriate water management measures to be delivered through new development across the area, including the incorporation of SUDS, in line with Adopted Core Strategy policy CP02: Water Management.

**9.19** The Churchfields area also overlies a principal aquifer of regional strategic importance and is therefore a hydrologically sensitive setting. The industrial past of the area means that there is likely to be contamination present. New development should ensure that contamination is appropriately addressed and appropriate remediation measures taken in line with Adopted Core Strategy policy CP01: Delivering Sustainable Development Standards.



## Phase 1 - Grasmere Close (2.27ha)

**9.20** Grasmere Close is an existing residential site which consisted of a series of maisonette blocks (which have now been demolished) and three high rise tower blocks. The design of the site, particularly in relation to the former maisonette blocks, was considered to be poor in terms of urban design and in providing natural surveillance.

### Policy KCA.Ch2

#### Phase 1 - Grasmere Close

The redevelopment of this area will be expected to include:

- C3 Dwelling Houses
- Community Uses (D1, including Police Post)

Any new development on this site should:

- a. Provide a strong frontage along Stourbridge Road and Hurcott Road.
- b. Provide active frontages and sense of enclosure to all roads within the site.
- c. Have regard to Policy SAL.DPL11 when considering any redevelopment involving the existing Police Post.

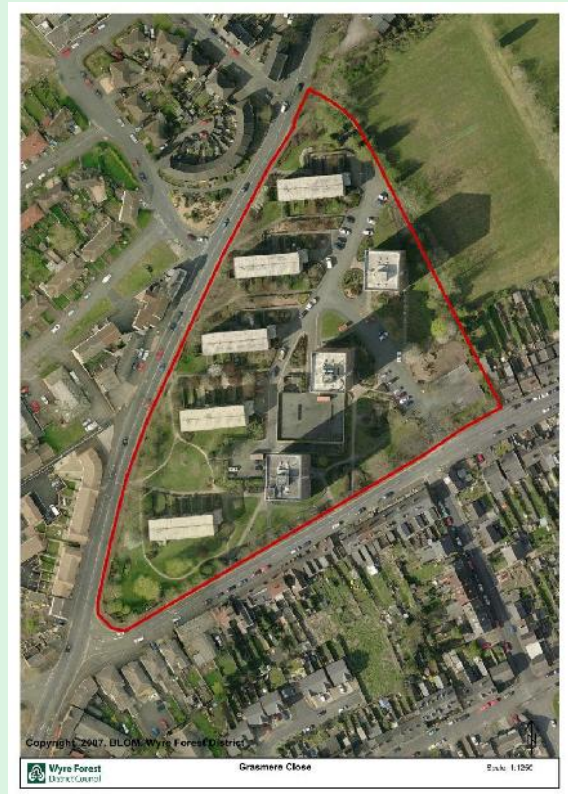
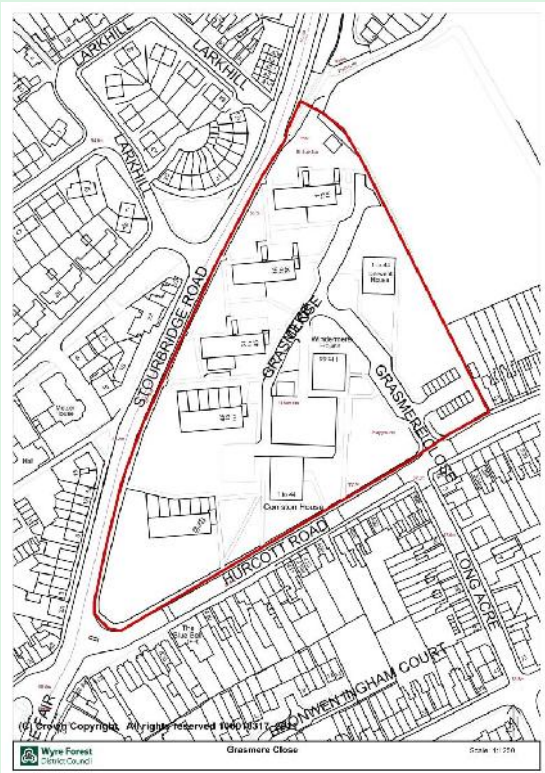
## Reasoned Justification

**9.21** The Community Housing Group owns the site and is redeveloping the site of the former maisonette blocks with a scheme for more traditional houses. The redevelopment of the maisonettes will provide up to 100 dwellings and a more attractive environment. However, the tower blocks and the police post will be retained.

The first phase of the site is currently under construction



Site Location



## Phase 2a - Former Georgian Carpets/Stoney Lane Industrial Estate (5.39ha)

**9.22** The former Georgian carpet factory closed around 2002 and has since been subdivided and let to individual businesses. Some of the existing uses on-site are not complementary to surrounding housing and the site is not making the most of its setting overlooking the Stour Valley and the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal. Poor levels of natural surveillance are known to be inhibiting canal users and therefore failing to make the most of this valuable asset.

### Policy KCA.Ch3

#### Phase 2a - Former Georgian Carpets/Stoney Lane Industrial Estate

The redevelopment of this area will be expected to include:

- C3 Dwelling Houses

Any new development on this site should:

- i. Appropriately connect to surrounding streets and spaces.
- ii. Provide a clear block structure including fully connected streets and internal functional spaces/squares.
- iii. Provide a positive relationship including opportunities for natural surveillance to the canal including good levels of public access.
- iv. Avoid the creation of cul-de-sacs, allowing movement throughout the site.
- v. Maximise the extent of active frontages to all public streets and spaces.
- vi. Be compliant with the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Conservation Area Character Appraisal.
- vii. Make provision for a new pedestrian link over the canal to the Puxton Marsh SSSI.

### Reasoned Justification

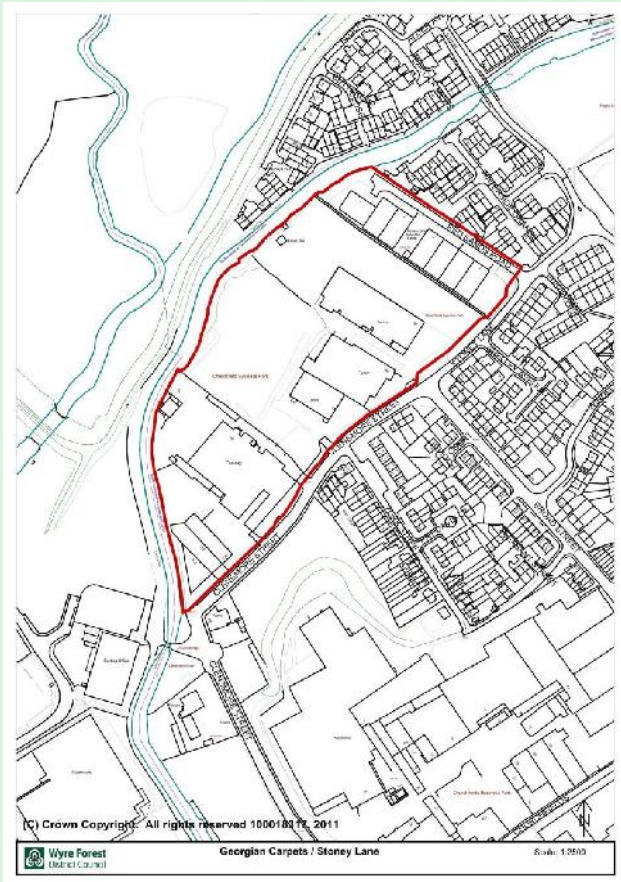
**9.23** The area, despite being so close to the town centre, also has little activity, especially during the evening and at weekends. Furthermore, many of the existing buildings have fallen into disrepair and some are empty.

**9.24** The site also presents a significant opportunity to provide a development that has a positive relationship with the canal and provides some natural surveillance onto it. With fewer obstacles to delivery, it is considered that the site offers scope for phasing in the early part of the plan period (2012-2016) to follow Phase 1 at Hurcott Road where plans are advanced to replace the maisonette blocks at Grasmere Close with a scheme involving 100% affordable housing.

**9.25** It is envisaged that this site will comprise entirely of residential uses and its redevelopment as such could provide approximately 220 new homes.



Site Location



The first phase of development is currently under construction





## Phase 2b - Former Sladen School (2.59ha)

**9.26** The Sladen School was deemed surplus to requirements by Worcestershire County Council and has been demolished. The site is now identified as being suitable for redevelopment. The site includes the site of the building itself and the associated playing fields.

### Policy KCA.Ch4

#### Phase 2b - Former Sladen School

The redevelopment of this area will be expected to include:

- C3 Dwelling Houses
- C2 Residential Institutions

D2 Leisure developments for indoor and outdoor sports facilities may also be acceptable on this site.

Any new development on this site should:

- i. Provide an active frontage onto Hurcott Road.
- ii. Provide compensation for the loss of existing playing fields.
- iii. Provide links through the area i.e. linking to Grasmere Close.

### Reasoned Justification

**9.27** This site offers the opportunity for housing development within an existing residential setting and could provide approximately 20 new homes. However, a community development of some kind is also desirable for this site and would be best placed adjacent to Hurcott Road.

**9.28** The Wyre Forest Playing Pitch Strategy identifies providing replacement sports pitches for those lost through the closure of the school. Therefore, any new development will be expected to contribute towards the compensation for this provision. This may be on- or off-site provision depending on the nature of the development that is ultimately provided on the site.

Sladen Site



Site Location



### Phase 3a: Churchfields Business Park (8.09ha)

**9.29** The Churchfields Business Park is the former site of the Tomkinsons carpet factory which has closed and the buildings are now let out to individual businesses. It is considered that this area is not the most appropriate setting for these businesses. Along with the former Georgian Carpets site, the land is in the ownership of Kidderminster Property Investments (KPI).

#### Policy KCA.Ch5

##### Phase 3a - Churchfields Business Park

The redevelopment of this area will be expected to include:

- C3 Dwelling Houses
- B1 - Offices and workshops
- D1 Non-residential Institutions
- Small Scale A1-A3 Retail
- C1 Hotel

Any new development on this site should:

- i. Address Clensmore Street as a key movement corridor through the area.
- ii. Open up new streets into and through the site having regard to the historic street pattern including reopening Duke Street making use of the Local Heritage List buildings for enclosure.
- iii. Create a block structure and layout that connects with surrounding structures with a more suburban pattern to the north of the site giving way to urban character in the south towards the ring road and Horsefair Neighbourhood Centre.
- iv. Take advantage of topography to open up views and vistas from the site and create recognisable landmark features within the site.
- v. Provide an active edge to Churchfields and Clensmore Street and a sense of enclosure.
- vi. Contribute to solving the problems of the Horsefair AQMA.

The District Council will safeguard opportunities to open up access to the ring road and improve access to Blackwell Street from within the area. Development proposals must provide appropriate means of access to facilitate the scale of development proposed without having a detrimental impact on the Air Quality Management Area of Blackwell Street.

#### Reasoned Justification

**9.30** The area, despite being so close to the town centre, has little activity, especially during the evening and at weekends. Furthermore, several of the existing buildings have fallen into disrepair and many are empty. It is felt that a residential-led redevelopment, that links in with the town centre and existing Horsefair community, will help to bring life back to Churchfields. It is envisaged that the redevelopment of this site could provide approximately 200 new homes.

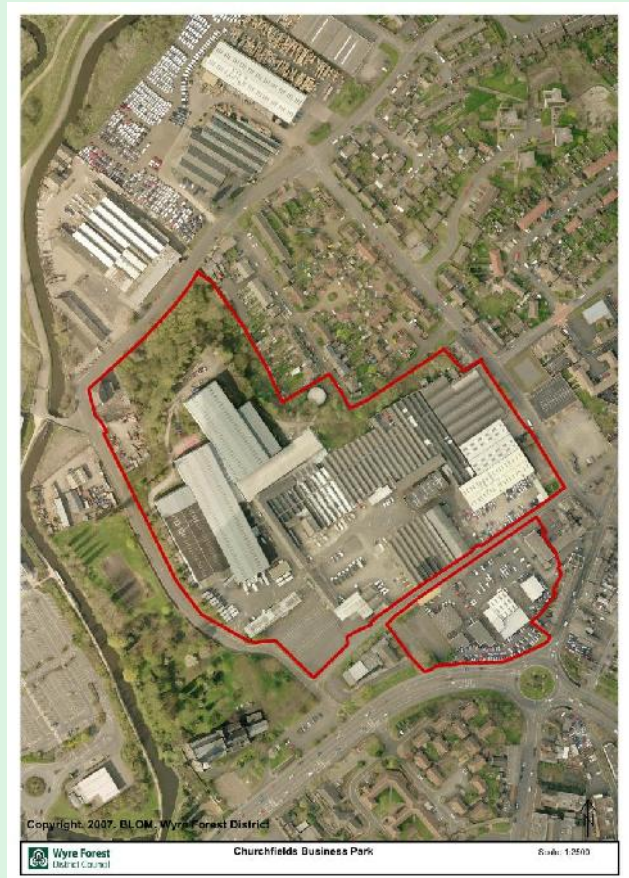
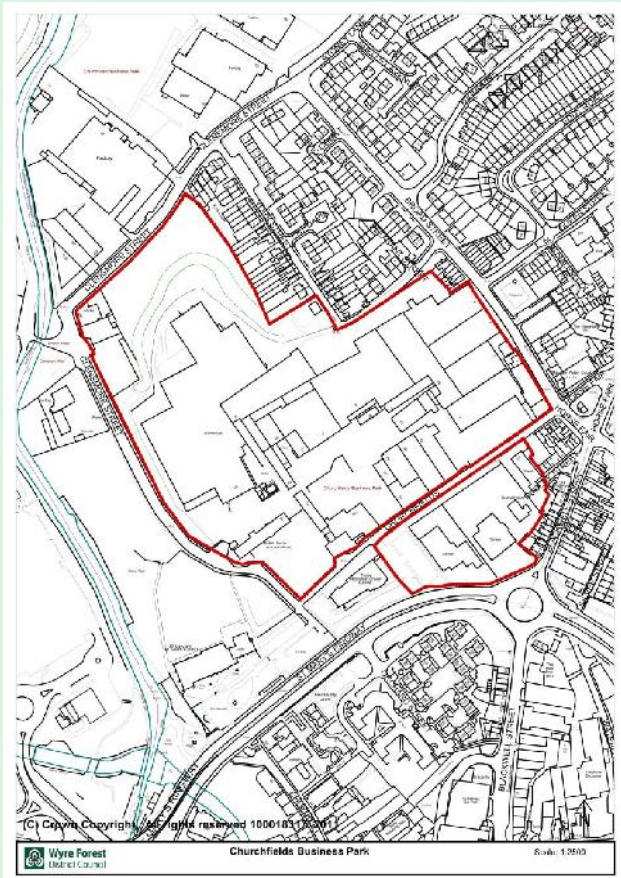


**9.31** However, this area should also contain a mix of uses especially closer to the existing Horsefair Neighbourhood Centre and the ring road. There is a particular opportunity for office and retail development that will help to enhance the neighbourhood centre, as well as a community use for the surrounding residential area. In regard to retail development, it should be small scale (no larger than 280sqm floorspace). The opportunity for a hotel development adjacent to the ring road has also been identified through the masterplanning process.

**9.32** This site also includes the CMS car garage on the ring road which provides a significant opportunity to provide another vehicular route through the area and help relieve the congestion on Blackwell Street and in the AQMA. This piece of infrastructure is key to the successful regeneration of the entire masterplanning area.

**9.33** The Churchfields Business Park site is in many ways the most complicated site within the Masterplan area with a range of occupiers albeit with a common landlord in KPI. The site holds the key to opening up transport options in the area that may alleviate traffic congestion and air quality management challenges in the Horsefair.

**Site Location**





### Phase 3b - Limekiln Bridge (1.16ha)

**9.34** This site comprises a privately owned engineering works and a District Council owned parcel of open space. The open space is essentially redundant with very few people using it. The site has an important position on the canalside and provides an opportunity to create an active frontage that allows natural surveillance onto the canalside.

#### Policy KCA.Ch6

##### Phase 3b - Limekiln Bridge

The redevelopment of this area will be expected to included:

- C3 Dwelling Houses
- A3 Retail

Any new development on this site should:

- i. Provide an active frontage onto the canal and Clensmore Street.
- ii. Provide good pedestrian connections through the site to link Clensmore Street to Crossley Park via a new bridge over the canal.
- iii. Be sympathetic to the character of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Conservation Area.
- iv. Contribute to the creation of a new multi-modal bridge over the canal.
- v. Safeguard the line of the Churchfields/Crossley Park bridge link.
- vi. Compensate for the loss of existing open space.

#### Reasoned Justification

**9.35** The masterplanning process has identified this site as being suitable for significant residential development. Due to the constraints and size of the site, the development would lend itself to apartments. This would allow for the development to provide an active frontage onto both the canal and Clensmore Street. It is envisaged that redevelopment of this site could provide up 120 apartments.

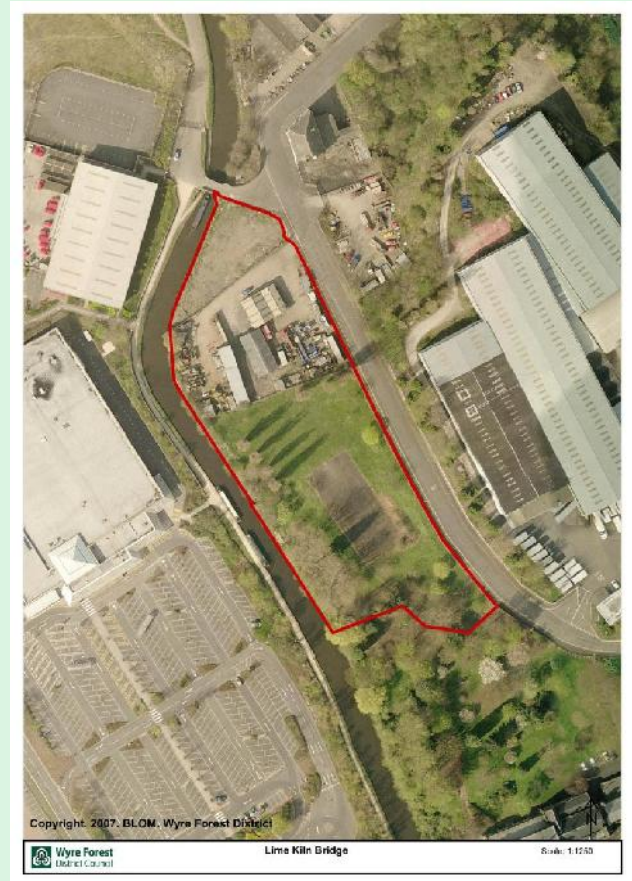
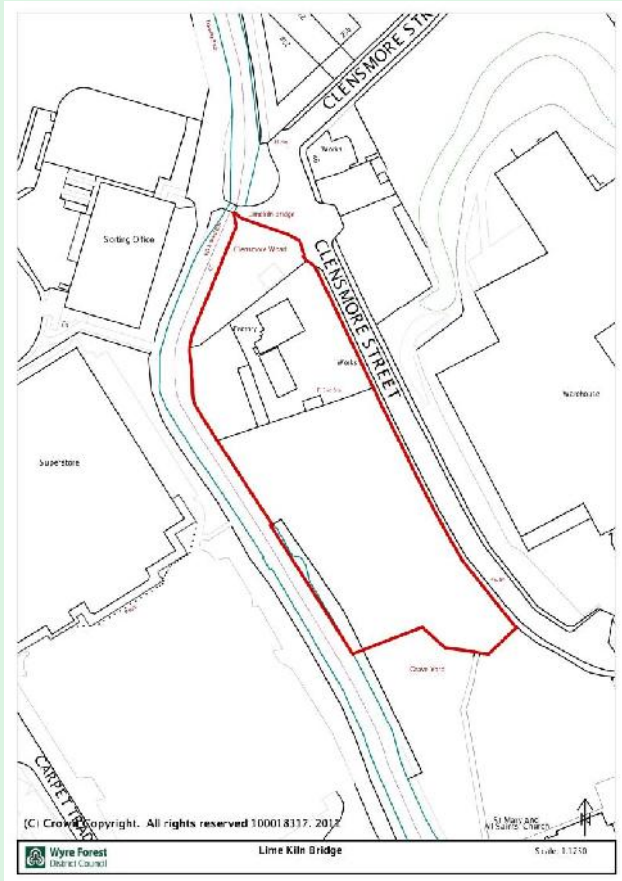
**9.36** Due to the canalside location of this site and its potential future link to Crossley Retail Park, the masterplanning process has identified the opportunity for some small scale (around 300sqm) restaurant/café use.

**9.37** There is a significant opportunity to provide a new pedestrian and vehicle bridge over the canal in this area to provide a link through to Crossley Retail Park. This new route would provide a vital alternative route out of the area and help to relieve congestion in the Horsefair area.

**9.38** While the existing piece of open space is redundant, it is its location that makes it so, rather than a lack of need or desire for open space. Therefore, compensatory space will be required, such as a contribution towards alternative provision within the Churchfields area, and any new development on this site will be required to make a contribution towards this.

**9.39** The previous industrial use of the site and its locations means there is potential for contamination issues. The site is also located adjacent to a historical landfill site (Phase 4 - Crossley Park). Consequently any development will need to demonstrate that any contamination issues can be adequately addressed.

**Site Location**



## Phase 4 - Crossley Park (2.78ha)

**9.40** This site is part of the Churchfields Masterplan but is located on the opposite side of the canal behind Crossley Retail Park. The site is owned by the District Council.

### Policy KCA.Ch7

#### Phase 4 - Crossley Park

The redevelopment of this area will be expected to include:

- B1(a) Office

Any new development on this site should:

- i. Provide an active frontage onto the canal.
- ii. Contribute to the creation of a new multi-modal bridge link over the canal to Crossley Park.
- iii. Safeguard the line of the Churchfields/Crossley Park bridge link.
- iv. Demonstrate appropriate remediation, building and drainage design in order to deal with any contaminated land and to protect the water environment.

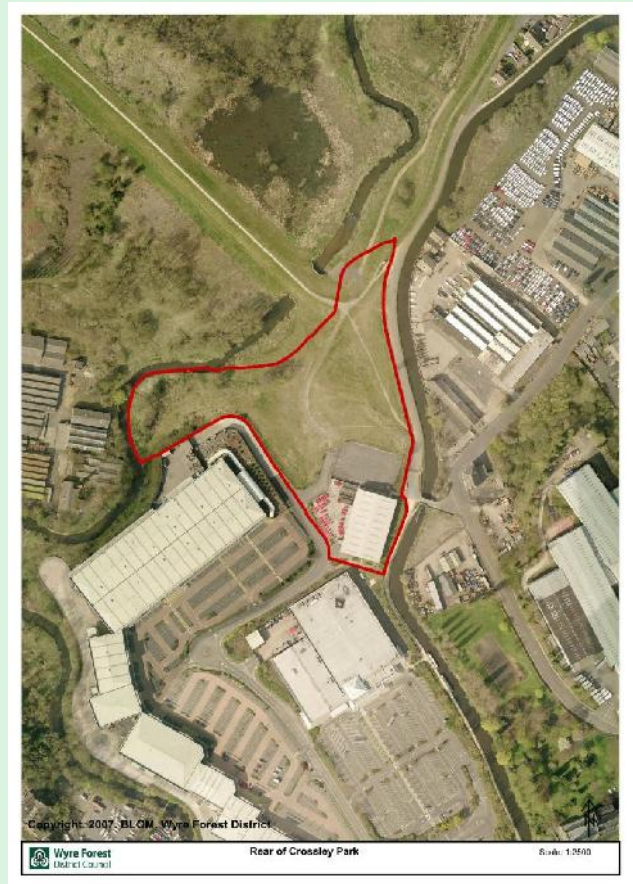
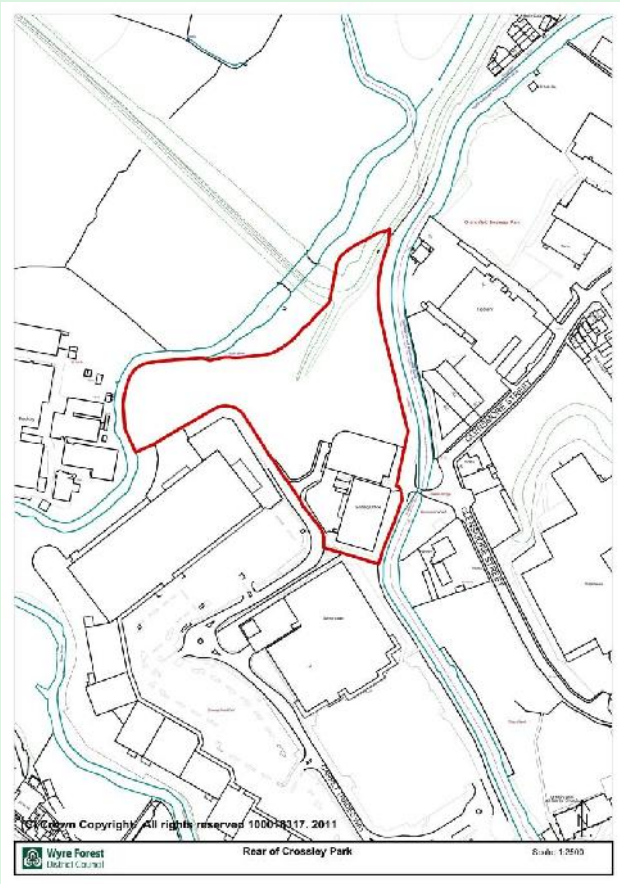
### Reasoned Justification

**9.41** The masterplanning process has identified the site as being suitable for office development. This site would need to be linked into the existing road infrastructure of the retail park to provide access.

**9.42** There is an identified flood risk on part of the site and any development would need to be designed in a way that would alleviate any risk. The development would need to be positioned on the eastern edge of the site, fronting onto the canal. The use of on-site mitigation measures will also be crucial on this site.

**9.43** This site is also noted as being a historic landfill site and consequently any development will need to demonstrate that contamination issues can be adequately addressed.

Site Location





## Horsefair

**9.44** The Horsefair is an historic area of Kidderminster which contains several Statutory Listed Buildings and buildings on the Local Heritage List. The narrow, enclosed route along Blackwell Street is an important street and the building frontages which create this should be retained.

**9.45** The Horsefair, however, has been somewhat neglected and many of the buildings are in need of refurbishment, repair and/or redecoration. The District Council will look to improve the built environment of this area and aim to create a neighbourhood centre that people can be proud of.

### Policy KCA.Ch8

#### Horsefair

In the Horsefair:

- i. Support will be given to new retail development which enhances its function as a neighbourhood centre, providing that:
  - a. The development does not exceed 280sqm.
- ii. Support will be given to new office development.
- iii. The historic street frontage along Blackwell Street and Dudley Street will be retained and repaired where appropriate. This includes Listed Buildings and Local Heritage List Assets.
- iv. An improved public realm will be sought along Blackwell Street, including a new public space and car parking.
- v. Residential development will be supported above ground level.

## Reasoned Justification

**9.46** The Horsefair is an important local service centre and has a diverse mix of retail units along the Blackwell Street area. The ambition for this area is to maintain and enhance its role as a service centre for the local community and also for niche and specialist retailing. However, new retail development in this area must not have a negative affect on the viability of the town centre.

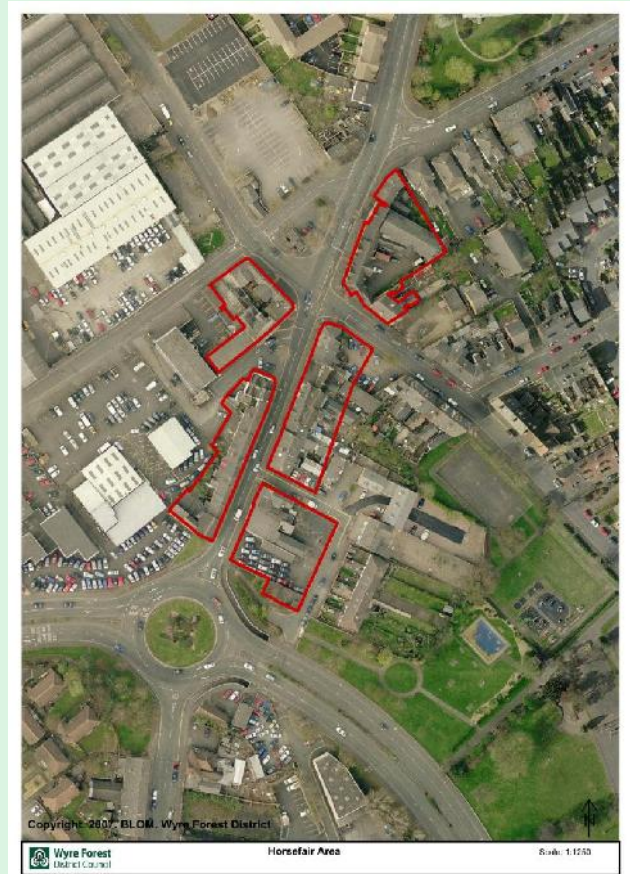
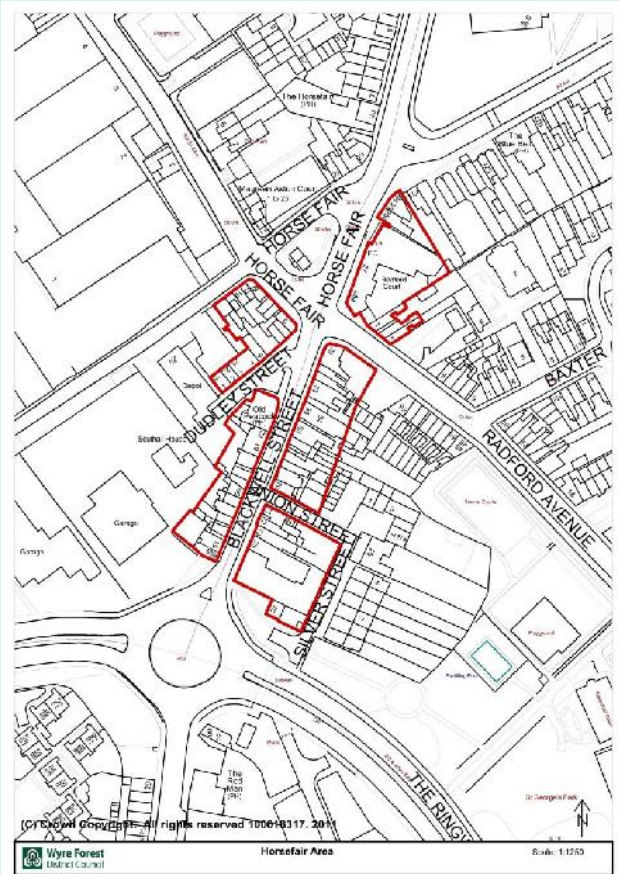
**9.47** The role as a neighbourhood centre should be enhanced as part of a high density mixed use area that includes other commercial and residential uses. This would include parts of the Churchfields Business Park area in the Masterplan.

Horsefair Neighbourhood Centre



**9.48** The Horsefair is also a key gateway into the town centre, particularly for vehicles, and suffers from congestion and pollution. As a result it has been designated an Air Quality Management Area. A key ambition for the Masterplan was to find a solution to this problem and improve the environment along Blackwell Street. Therefore, new development in the Churchfields area will be expected to contribute to an improved transport system that helps to reduce congestion and pollution.

**Site Location**

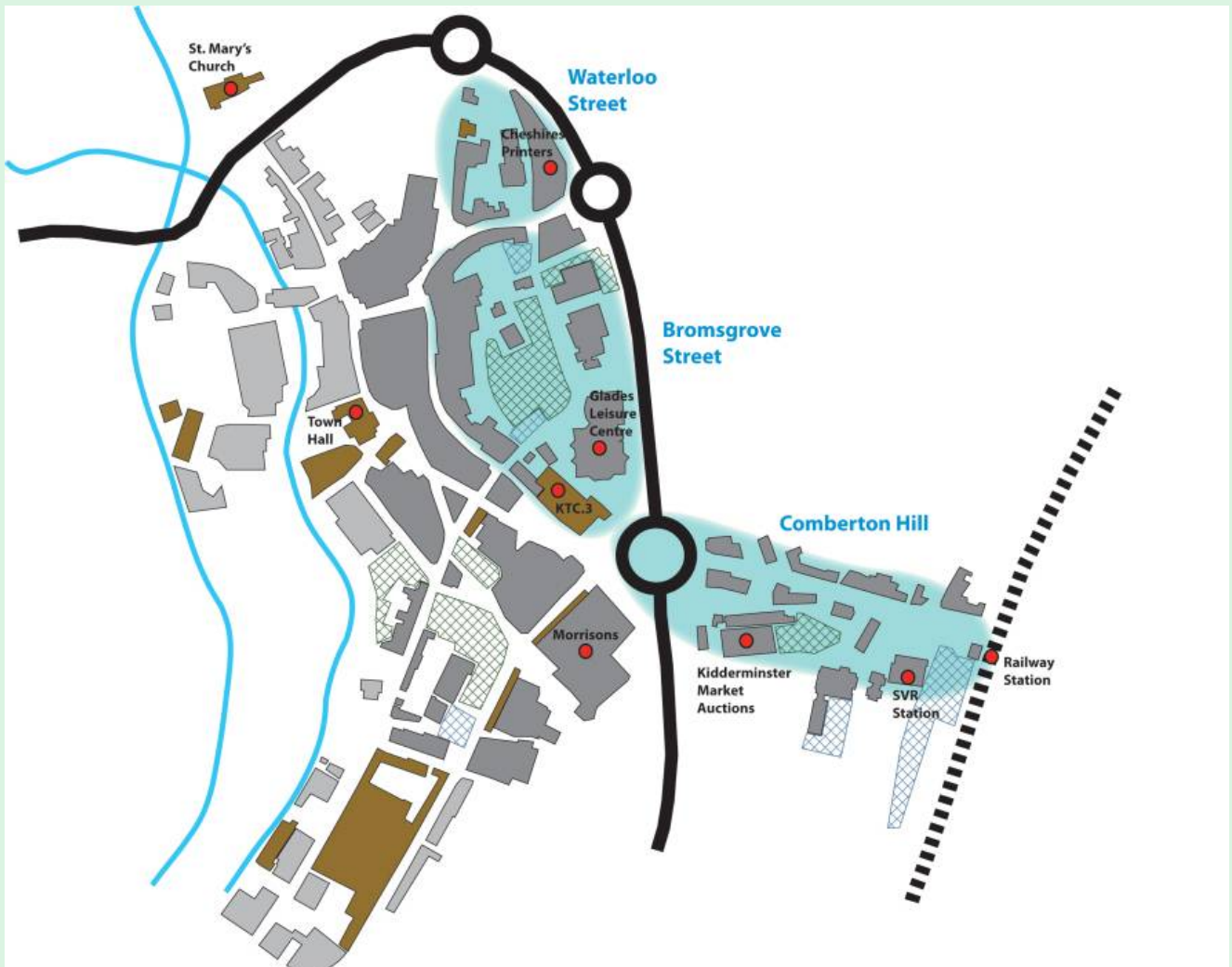


## 10 Eastern Gateway

**10.1** Kidderminster's Eastern Gateway is a large area that stretches from the Railway Station on Comberton Hill, into the town centre including the former Magistrates' Court and the site of the Carpet Museum, along Bromsgrove Street, before finishing at Waterloo Street.

**10.2** The Eastern Gateway represents a series of significant development and investment opportunities and projects along a key gateway into the town.

Development areas within the Eastern Gateway





## Comberton Hill Area

**10.3** The Comberton Hill Area stretches from the mainline railway and Severn Valley Railway stations to the Comberton Island traffic junction heading towards the town centre. This area functions both as an important neighbourhood retail centre and also an important gateway into the town centre. However, its urban environment currently detracts from these functions, particularly from the pedestrian perspective.

### Policy KCA.EG1

#### Comberton Hill Area

Within the Comberton Hill area there are a number of potential development and environmental improvement sites:

- Kidderminster Railway Station
- Comberton Place including Kidderminster Market Auctions Site
- Comberton Hill Island

The presumption will be in favour of retail use classes (A1-A5) at the ground floor within the main road shopping frontage on Comberton Hill.

Elsewhere within the area, and including upper floors on Comberton Hill, proposals involving the following uses will be supported on their merits:

- i. Small scale retail (up to 280sqm)
- ii. B1 Office and workshops
- iii. C1 Hotel
- iv. C3 Dwelling Houses
- v. D1 Non-Residential Institutions
- vi. D2 Assembly and Leisure
- vii. Tourism and Leisure Proposals

Some of the key principles for development within this area include:

- a. Improving streets and spaces through the quality of the public realm including enhanced hard and soft landscaping themed to connect the railway station and town centre.
- b. Sensitively incorporating car parking within the overall design solution to create multi-functional streets and spaces including treatment of Comberton Hill itself.
- c. Taking advantage of the site's prominent location, views and vistas.
- d. Establishing physical connections with surrounding developments including recent residential development.
- e. Retaining and enhancing any local heritage assets within the site boundaries in accordance with SAL.UP6: Safeguarding the Historic Environment.



## Reasoned Justification

**10.4** In retail planning terms the Comberton Hill area includes an established neighbourhood centre that serves local convenience needs and provides a diverse mix of retail uses along the road. The ambition for this area is to maintain and enhance its role as a service centre for the local community and also for niche and specialist retailing. However, care will be taken to ensure that new retail development does not adversely affect the viability of the town centre.

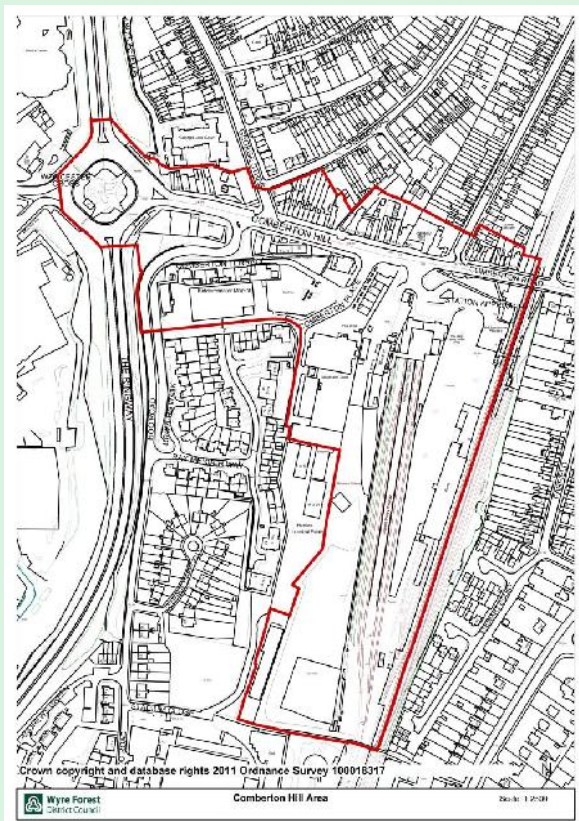
**10.5** This is also a significant arrival point in the town as it includes the mainline railway station as well as the Severn Valley Railway station. The future investment in the railway station forecourt to improve its role as a transport interchange will further enhance this area's status as a gateway in and out of the town.

**10.6** The key issue for this area is improving the pedestrian environment and creating a pleasant and clear route to and from the town centre. As well as improving conditions for existing users, the aim is to encourage visitors to the Severn Valley Railway and Kidderminster Railway Museum into the town.

**10.7** A key part of this enhancement, will be the removal of the subway underneath the ring road at Comberton Island as this presents a major barrier for pedestrians walking into the town centre. This route is very well used but is extremely unpopular. The ambition would be to see the subway system removed and replaced with ground-level crossings.

**10.8** The Comberton Hill area is currently mixed in character and support will be given to proposals that serve to strengthen that mix of uses.

## Site Location



## Kidderminster Railway Station

**10.9** Kidderminster's mainline railway station is a key gateway into and out of the town. However, the environment of both the station building and the associated forecourt and car park is outdated and does not work efficiently for all modes of transport. The District Council are therefore looking to work with partners to update and improve this important piece of transport infrastructure.

### Policy KCA.EG2

#### Kidderminster Railway Station

Proposals for the redevelopment and re-organisation of the existing railway station to create a new transport interchange will be supported.

Proposals should incorporate a high quality public realm and include a new civic space around the forecourt, incorporating quality materials and appropriate landscaping.

Upgrades to the station should also contribute to improving the connectivity between the station and the town centre.

Links between the commercial railway and the Severn Valley Railway should be promoted and enhanced.

## Reasoned Justification

**10.10** There are plans in place through a partnership involving London Midland, Network Rail, Worcestershire County Council and Wyre Forest District Council for a major investment in the existing railway station. This would include the redevelopment of the station building itself and the re-organisation of its forecourt to create a new multi-modal transport interchange.

**10.11** As one of the main arrival points into the town, it is crucial that visitors get a good welcome to Kidderminster when travelling by rail, bus and from the Severn Valley Railway. Therefore, the public realm should be of a high quality and should also encourage movement into the town centre. An improved civic space would be highly desirable as part of the station area also.

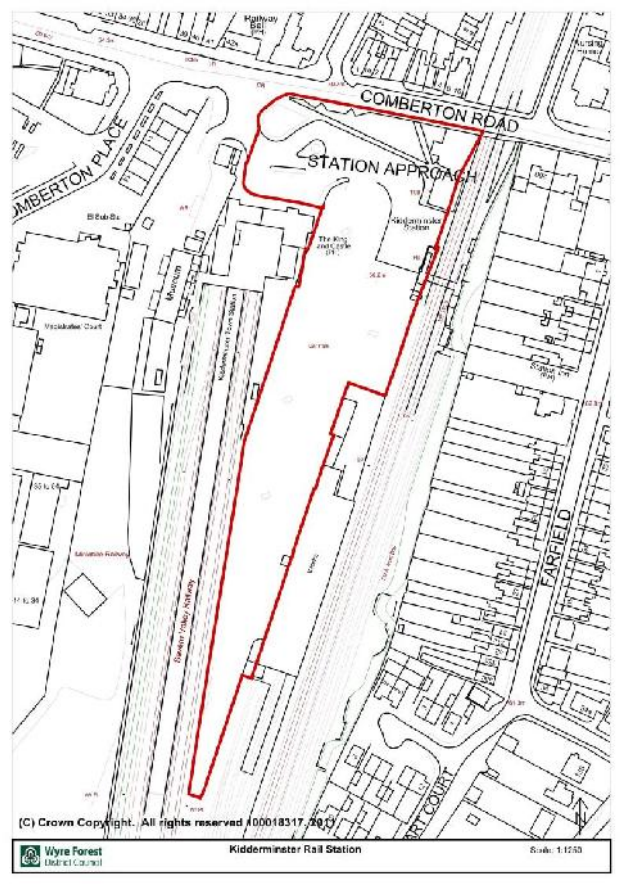
**10.12** Policy SAL.CC1: Sustainable Transport Infrastructure in the Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan provides further guidance on development at the railway station. Additionally, policy SAL.GBP5: Supporting Major Tourist Attractions provides further policy guidance in relation to the Severn Valley Railway.

Kidderminster Rail Station





Site Location



## Comberton Place

**10.13** The Comberton Place area includes two sites: the Kidderminster Market Auctions site and the former County Court/parade of shops at the corner with Comberton Hill.

### Policy KCA.EG3

#### Comberton Place

Within this area a mix of uses will be considered including:

- A1-A5 small scale retail that would enhance the neighbourhood centre (up to 280sqm)
- B1 Office, workshops and art studios
- C1 Hotel
- C3 Dwelling Houses
- D1 Non-Residential Institutions
- D2 Assembly and Leisure - including tourism development

The Kidderminster Market Auctions site may be more suitable for primarily residential use, although the above uses would also be considered on their merits. Development proposals for the market auction site that involve the adjacent public car park may be considered favourably, subject to appropriate car parking being provided as part of the overall design solution.

Development proposals within this area should:

- i. Provide a positive relationship to surrounding development, including the railway interchange.
- ii. Ensure appropriate design taking into account the prominent and/or elevated position of the sites and the need for positive relationships to be created.
- iii. Seek to improve the townscape by removing existing buildings which are currently considered to be of poor quality.
- iv. Provide natural surveillance opportunities and a sense of enclosure to the railway interchange and Comberton Place.
- v. For the Kidderminster Market Auctions site, fully consider the distant views of the site on the ridge line above the town centre.

## Reasoned Justification

**10.14** The area has been identified for redevelopment for a mix of possible uses including residential, commercial, and tourism. However, the market auctions site potentially offers better use as a residential location, as the former cattle market, immediately south of this site, has already been developed for housing and the redevelopment of this site for housing would be complimentary to that.

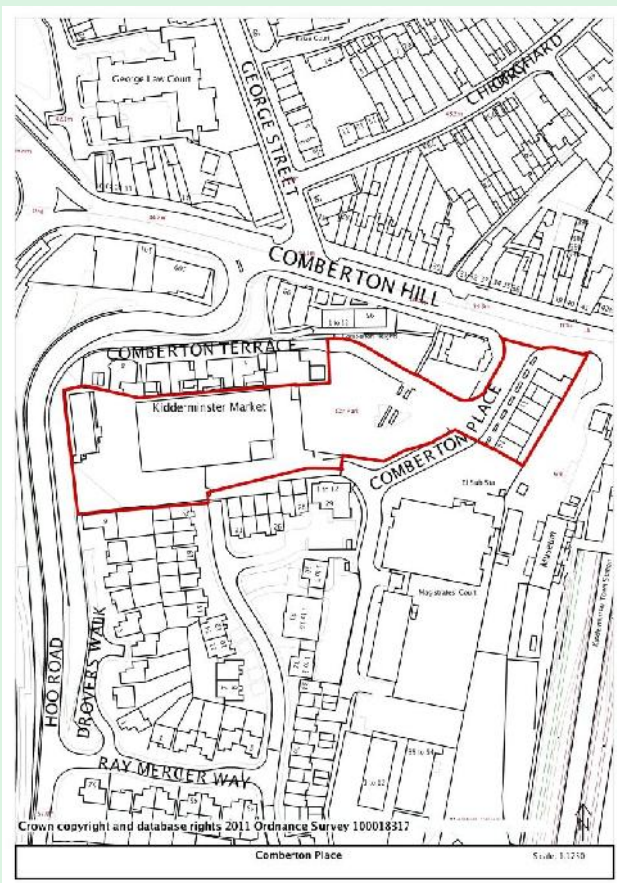
**10.15** Both of these groups of buildings are defined in the Adopted Design SPG as "*Buildings where improvements in townscape quality could be achieved.*" Improvements to the design of the buildings could therefore provide a better townscape and design of this part of the town.



With regard to the Comberton Place row of shops, one of the key principles will be to ensure that it relates positively to the rail interchange, given its proximate location. With regard to the Kidderminster Market Auctions site, the Design SPG also identifies that it is a *"Highly visible ugly building...Consider long term future and potential removal"*. Therefore, the opportunity exists to improve the current outlook from the site as well as improving the vista to this site, which sits on an elevated ridge above the town centre. Design proposals will need to respond positively to this prominent location as well as linking into the existing surrounding development.

**10.16** Regarding the County Court site, a mix of uses, including small scale retail and office uses that would enhance the offer of this neighbourhood centre, would be acceptable. Tourism related activity could be particularly appropriate as it is adjacent to the Severn Valley Railway and Railway Museum. New development here should provide a building that would enhance the street and provide a strong relationship to Comberton Place. Furthermore, each of the site's four aspects is also visible from the public realm so new development should seek to provide a more positive relationship to each.

**Site Location**



## Comberton Hill Island

**10.17** Comberton Hill Island presents a major barrier to pedestrian movement as it requires people to go underground through the subway system. This issue is made even more pertinent as the island lies on the key movement route between the railway station and the town centre.

### Policy KCA.EG4

#### Comberton Hill Island

The infilling of the pedestrian subway system underneath Comberton Hill Island and its replacement with surface level pedestrian and cycle crossings will be promoted in line with the Kidderminster Regeneration Prospectus.

Development proposals involving sites within the Comberton Hill and Bromsgrove Street parts of the Eastern Gateway will be expected to contribute towards the improvement of the island.

## Reasoned Justification

**10.18** This subway system presents both a significant physical and visual barrier for pedestrians. A key ambition for the area is to encourage and increase pedestrian movement into the town centre, particularly taking advantage of the many visitors that go to the Severn Valley Railway. This island forms a key piece of the route and improving pedestrian connectivity across it is one of most important changes that could be made to make this a more attractive option.

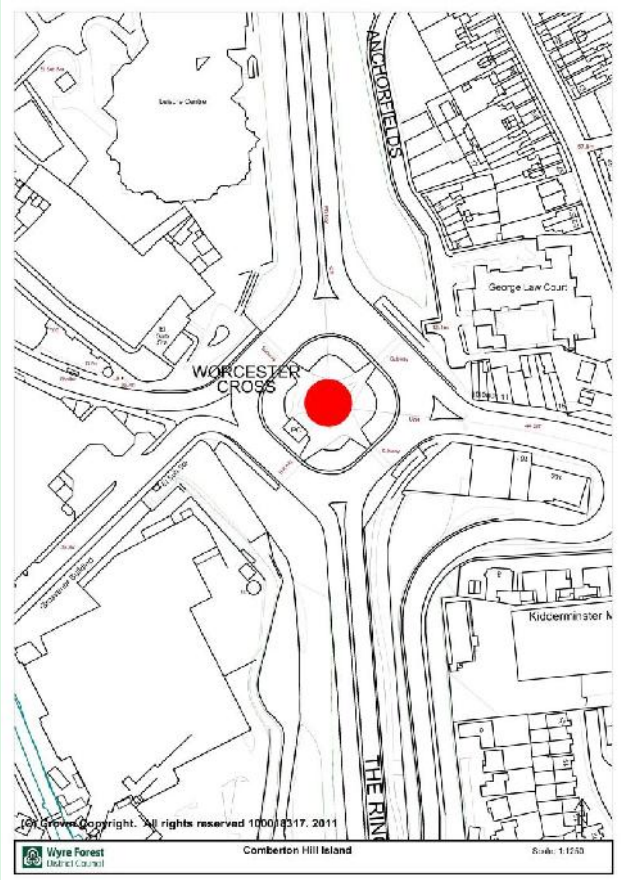
**10.19** Modern urban design practice, such as is set out in the Urban Design Compendium, suggests that sending people underground to cross highways is an unacceptable solution to pedestrian movement. Therefore, the District Council, as supported by Policy KCA.UP3 - Ring Road Framework, will look to incorporate surface level crossings across the Comberton Island.

3D model of how a pedestrian crossing could replace the Comberton Island subway





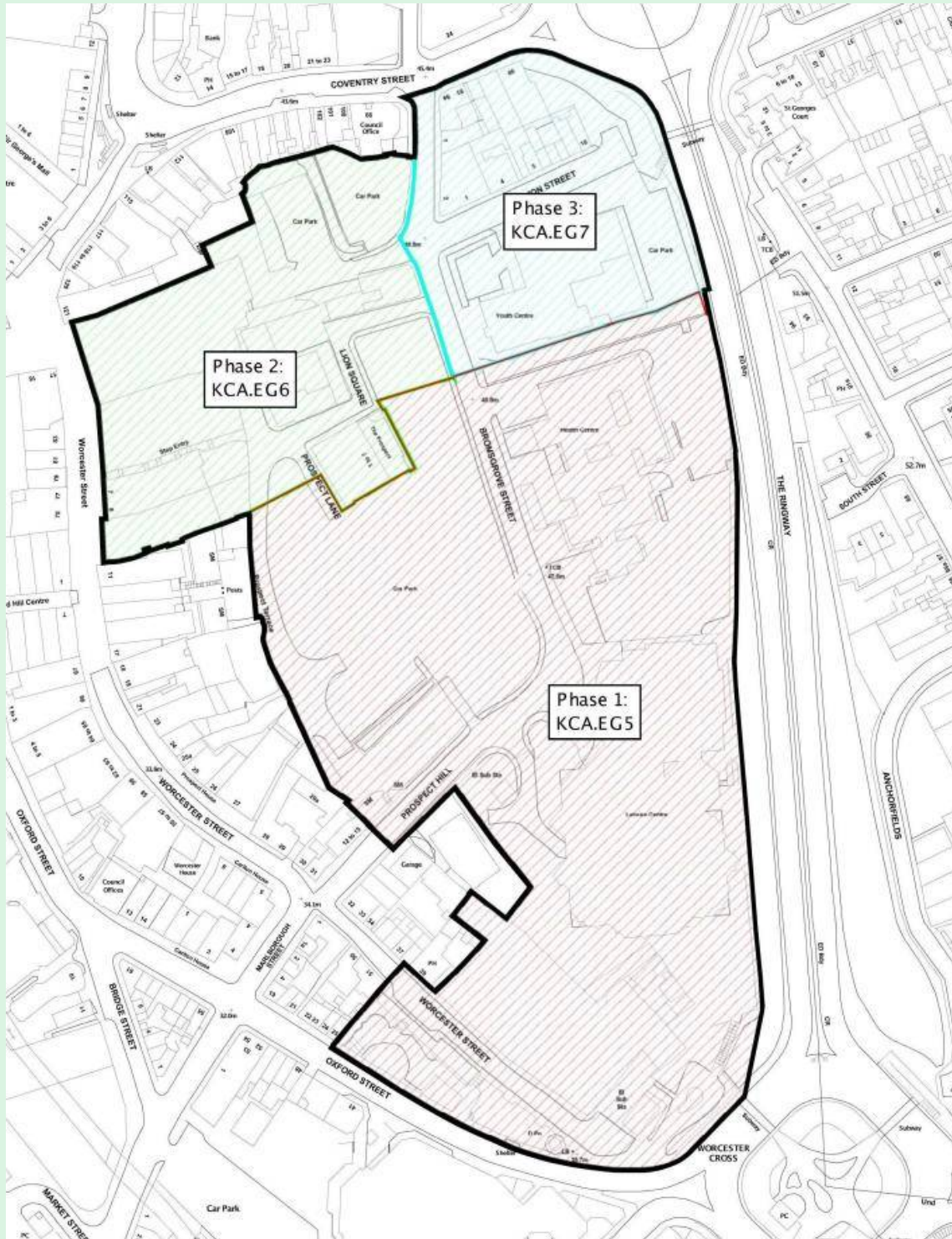
Site Location



**Bromsgrove Street/Worcester Street/Lion Street**

The following policies in the Plan (EG5, EG6 and EG7) all form part of a wider regeneration area located within the Eastern Gateway. The map below identifies this regeneration area and depicts the three phases included within the boundary.

Eastern Gateway - Combined Sites





## Phase 1- Bromsgrove Street Area (3.6ha)

**10.20** This is a large site that includes the existing public car park, medical centre, former Magistrates' Court (previously known as KTC.3) and Glades Leisure Centre. This collection of sites provides a significant opportunity to regenerate this part of the town and provide a significant retail development to give additional footfall to Worcester Street and improve the quality of the built environment.

### Policy KCA.EG5

#### Phase 1 - Bromsgrove Street Area

The District Council will aim to secure the comprehensive redevelopment of the Bromsgrove Street area as defined within this policy and the plan on page 90.

The area falls within the Primary Shopping Area and the following land uses will be acceptable:

- A1 Retail
- A3-A4 Retail
- B1a Office
- C1 Hotel
- C3 Dwelling Houses
- D1 Non-Residential Institutions
- Community uses (sport and medical)

Any new development on this site should:

- i. Retain and enhance the former Magistrates' Court frontage and Worcester Cross fountain.
- ii. Provide direct and/or enhanced links to Worcester Street via Prospect Hill to the former Magistrates' Court building, Step Entry or retail developments to the north.
- iii. Create a high quality public realm including enhanced public spaces.
- iv. Provide new and improved access to the ring road with new direct access to Bromsgrove Street to be explored.
- v. Create a positive and active frontage to Comberton Hill Island.
- vi. Where practicable front onto public streets and spaces.
- vii. Enhance the quality of public car parking.

### Reasoned Justification

**10.21** The Bromsgrove Street area experiences poor footfall with the majority of traffic coming from the car park and walking directly into the town centre. The ambition for an improved retail offer on Worcester Street and improved links to Bromsgrove Street will help to bring people further into this site. However, there is a need for uses in this area that will further help to increase footfall and bring vibrancy back to this area. This area is located within the Primary Shopping Area to reflect the ambition for a major retail development on the eastern side of the town.

**10.22** As set out in the 'A Good Place to do Business' section of this document, the ambition is to attract a major new retail store in this area that will help to drive footfall over to this side of the town. This will require major redevelopment of existing buildings within the site and links to Worcester Street will need to be improved.

**10.23** New development on this site will be expected to improve connections both within the site and to surrounding parts of the town by creating new vehicular and pedestrian routes. A series of new streets and spaces that enhance the public role and sense of place should be integral to plans for the area. The District Council will also be seeking to implement a surface level pedestrian crossing across the ring road along the site's boundary.

**10.24** The former Magistrates' Court site is a vacant site owned by the District Council. The building has a prominent and attractive frontage (included on the Local Heritage List) that is a landmark feature for this entrance into the town. However, the surrounding areas are an unattractive and untidy mix of redundant buildings and vacant space.

**10.25** Therefore, it is important that new development creates an attractive welcome for people coming into the town. The retention of the frontage of the Magistrates' Court will be required on this site and should be incorporated into any new development. There is also the opportunity for an important enhanced public space within the development.

**10.26** This site would be suitable for mixed use development and a flexible approach to uses will be taken providing that they are complementary to each other and that of neighbouring sites. It is envisaged that residential, office and business uses would be most acceptable. Whilst a major retail store may be possible to the rear, the frontage building might lend itself to a community use such as a medical centre or offices.

**10.27** To conclude, the Bromsgrove Street area is currently a disjointed urban environment with a mixture of surface car parking and generally unattractive buildings that create a confused sense of place. Development within the area will need to significantly improve the urban form and provide a sense of enclosure to streets and provide an active frontage where possible. However, as the ring road adjacent to the Glades is in a cutting, active frontages may not be deliverable in this particular location. Pedestrian and multi-modal links need to be carefully considered to assist with legibility.

### Leisure Review

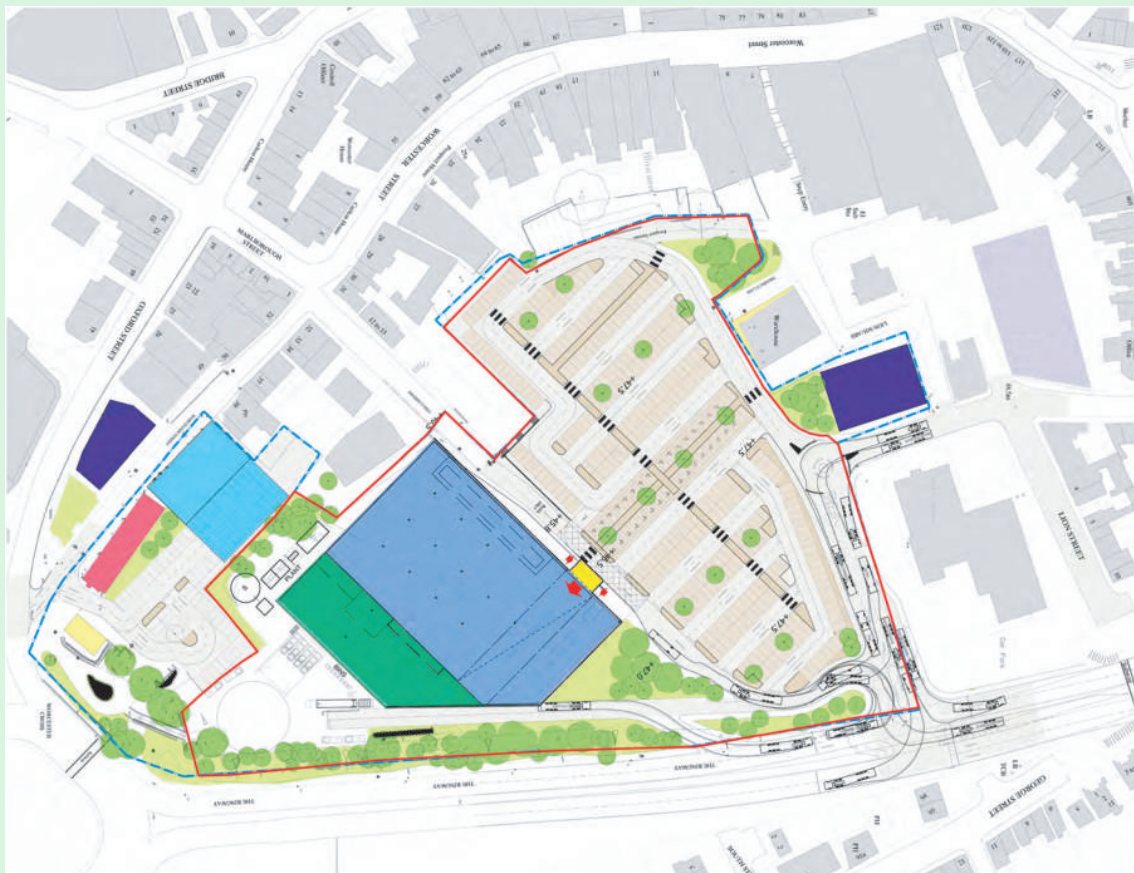
**10.28** The District Council has undertaken a review of its sport and leisure provision within the District. The future of the Glades Leisure Centre was looked at as part of this review and it was decided that it is neither effective nor efficient in providing modern leisure facilities and therefore should be closed. The closure of The Glades would provide a significant redevelopment site in this area and could assist with the ambition for the comprehensive regeneration of Bromsgrove Street. In terms a timescale for closure, it is anticipated that the Glades will be open until March 2016 at the latest. However, the site could be vacated earlier if new leisure facilities are developed sooner or if the site needs to be brought forward for development.

## Supermarket Feasibility Study

**10.29** The District Council has produced a study that explores the feasibility of a major supermarket development within the Phase 1: Bromsgrove Street Area site. The study follows on from emerging policies being developed through previous stages of the KCAAP as well as the consultation responses received. The KCAAP Preferred Options Paper set out the idea of a major new retail store in this area and it was felt that a feasibility study was necessary to see if this was a deliverable and realistic concept.

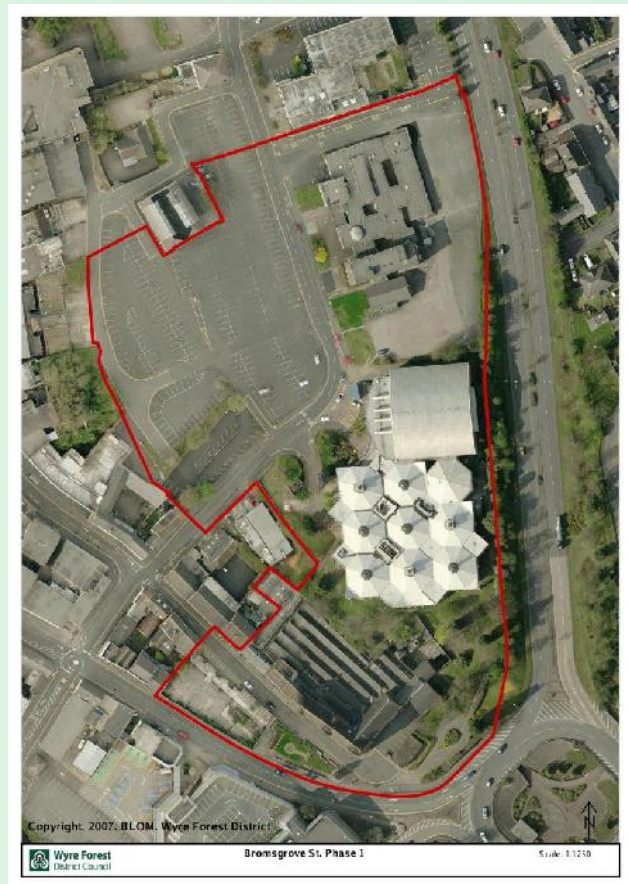
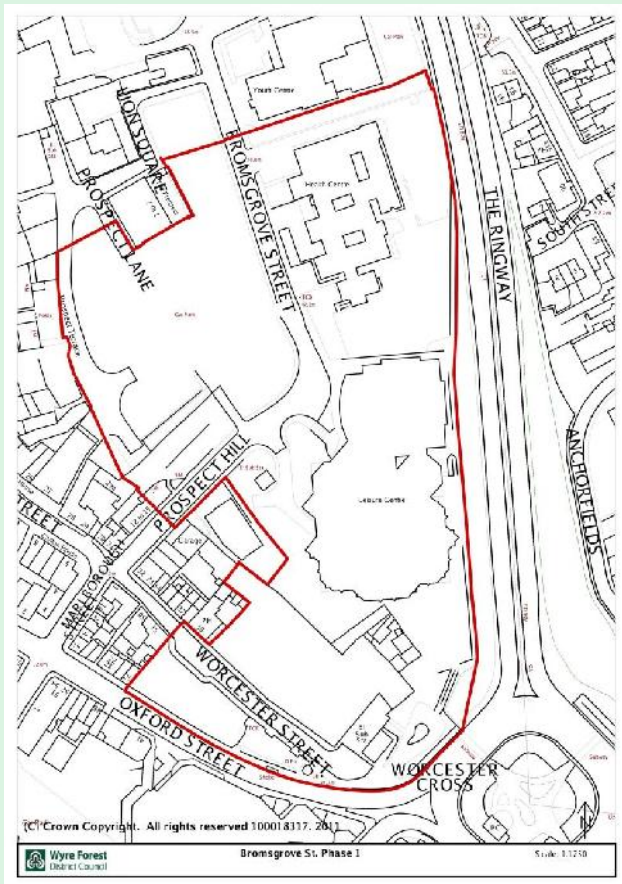
**10.30** The study, conducted by Chetwoods Architects, concluded that this area is capable of accommodating a 40,000sqft supermarket. This is seen as a means of increasing footfall within this area of the town. The study also provides greater certainty to potential developers.

Eastern Gateway Supermarket Concept Diagram





## Site Location



## Lower Worcester Street Area

**10.31** The lower part of Worcester Street, designated as Secondary Shopping Frontage, has experienced particular problems of viability and there are notably higher vacancy rates. This has been caused by the shifting of the retail centre west towards Weavers Wharf and because this area does not form part of the main retail circuit around the town. Therefore, there is an opportunity to redefine the role of this part of the town, with retail not necessarily being the focus.

**10.32** The retail policies in Part A of this document state that a flexible approach to uses will be taken within secondary shopping frontages, even at ground floor level. In this area the flexibility will be even greater to help to bring vitality back to this part of the town where retail uses may not be viable.

**10.33** Developments which create interest and activity will be encouraged. A number of different commercial uses will be considered as well as residential developments, even at ground floor level. Business uses, particularly small-scale incubator and start-up units, could also be an important way of improving vibrancy.



## Phase 2 - Worcester Street Development (1.15ha)

**10.34** This site is within the Primary Shopping Area and along with the Bromsgrove Street site will help to re-balance the retail offer of the town and bring footfall back to the eastern side of the town centre. The defined site will be considered comprehensively to incorporate the premises fronting Worcester Street and land to the rear and applicants will be expected to demonstrate that they have fully explored this potential to the satisfaction of the LPA. At the very least, proposals will be expected to maintain and enhance the existing links between Worcester Street and Bromsgrove Street. However, major challenges to delivery potentially earlier in the plan period include complicated land ownership and tenancy structures. These factors are likely to mean that delivery will come forward later in the plan period.

### Policy KCA.EG6

#### Phase 2 - Worcester Street Development

A mix of uses on this site will be supported including:

- A1, A2, A3, A4 and A5 retail
- B1a Office
- C3 Dwelling Houses

On sections of the site within the Primary Shopping Frontage any new development will be expected to provide an active commercial frontage at ground floor level to Worcester Street. In the east of the site, towards Bromsgrove Street, alternative uses may be appropriate at the ground floor. This is in line with policy KCA.GPB2 - Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontages.

Any new development on this site should:

- i. Create improved pedestrian links between Worcester Street and Bromsgrove Street.
- ii. Seek to provide a comprehensive approach to the redevelopment of the area.
- iii. Retain and enhance any local heritage assets within the site boundaries in accordance with SAL.UP6: Safeguarding the Historic Environment.
- iv. Provide a more residential environment in the east and commercial environment in the west.
- v. Create a high quality public realm including an enhanced public space.
- vi. Suitably address the differences in levels to deliver better pedestrian access.

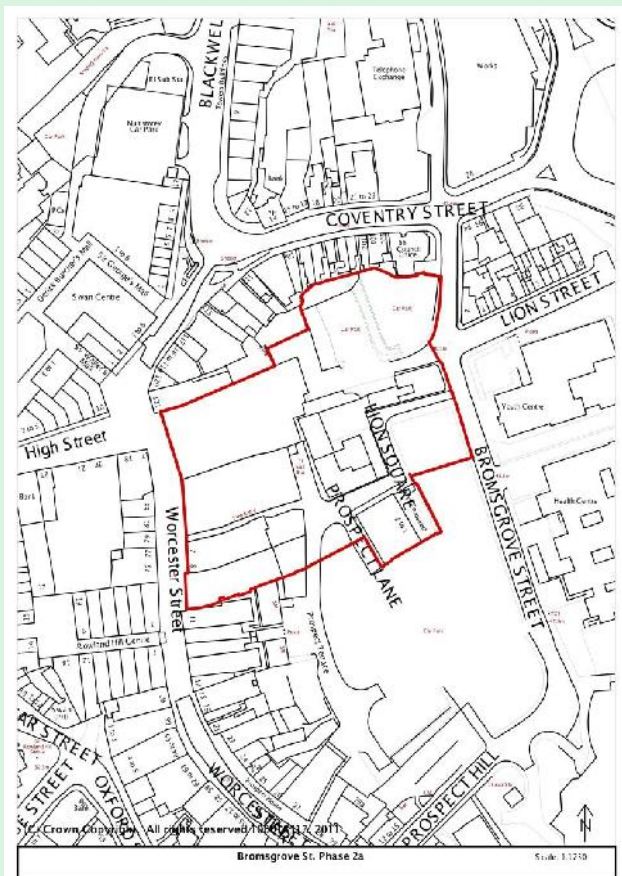
### Reasoned Justification

**10.35** The former Woolworths unit and the current Hooty's unit present significantly sized units that could provide a regeneration opportunity. However, this needs to be looked at in context with its rear service access and other land onto Bromsgrove Street which would be crucial for any redevelopment.

**10.36** A mixed-use development on this site would be acceptable; however the site will be expected to have a retail focus and provide a strong and active retail element fronting on to Worcester Street to maintain its status as a primary shopping frontage.

**10.37** This site is also important to improve both physical and visual links between Worcester Street and Bromsgrove Street. At the very least proposals will be expected to maintain and enhance the existing links between Worcester Street and Bromsgrove Street.

**Site Location**



### Phase 3 - Lion Street (0.76ha)

**10.38** Lion Street is a specialist area of shopping and services in a traditional architectural setting. However, the quality of the built environment is undermined by the ring road and the architecture of Youth House which is highlighted as a poor quality building in the Design Quality SPG. The Bromsgrove Street area experiences poor footfall with the majority of traffic coming from the car park and walking into the town centre. The ambition for an improved retail offer on Worcester Street and improved links to Bromsgrove Street will help to bring people further into the site. However, there is a need for uses in this area that will further help to drive footfall and bring vibrancy back. This is particularly important during the evening as this area is extremely quiet.

#### Policy KCA.EG7

##### Phase 3 - Lion Street

Development proposals in any part of the area will be expected to consider how the scheme relates positively to the wider setting of the Eastern Gateway.

Within the Primary Shopping Area the following land uses will be acceptable:

- A1, A2 and A3-A4 Retail
- B1a Office
- C1 Hotel
- C3 Dwelling Houses
- D1 Non-Residential Institutions

Any new development on this site should:

- i. Provide an active frontage to the ring road, Bromsgrove Street, Lion Street and any new access roads created to Bromsgrove Street.
- ii. Contribute towards improved pedestrian crossing arrangements over the ring road helping to link nearby residential neighbourhoods with the town centre.
- iii. Create a high quality public realm including an enhanced public space.
- iv. Provide new and improved access to the ring road with new direct access to Bromsgrove Street to be explored.
- v. Ensure an appropriate and high quality architectural approach to the south side of Lion Street to better complement the site and public frontages.
- vi. Retain and enhance any local heritage assets within the site boundaries in accordance with SAL.UP6: Safeguarding the Historic Environment.

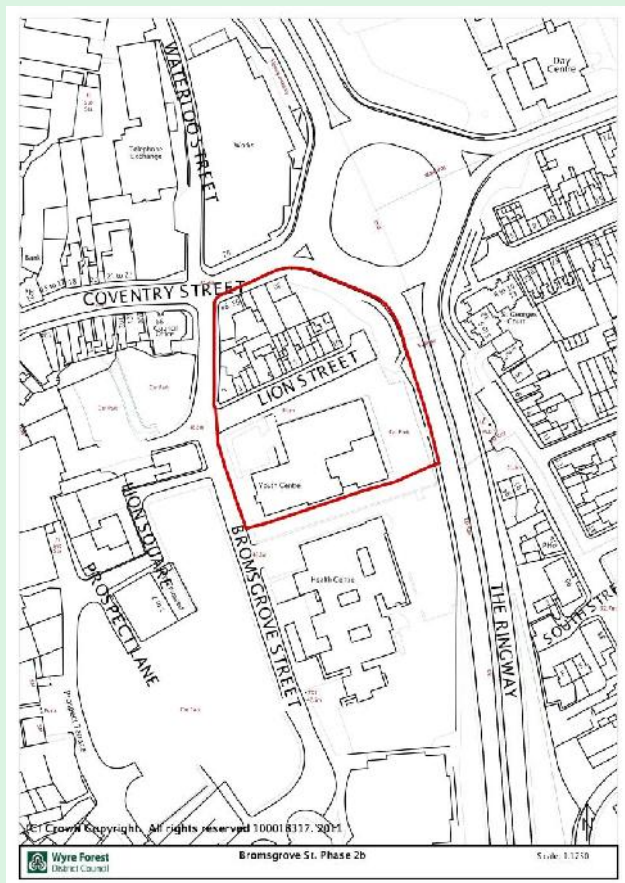
#### Reasoned Justification

**10.39** This area is located within the Primary Shopping Area to reflect the ambition for a major retail development on the eastern side of the town. However, a flexible approach will be taken to uses providing that they improve the vibrancy and vitality of the area. Office development could be particularly appropriate, as could residential development.



**10.40** This area is currently a disjointed urban environment with a mixture of surface car parking and unattractive buildings that create a confused sense of place. The site also has an important boundary with the ring road which the existing buildings currently turn their back on. Development within the area will need to significantly improve the urban form and provide a sense of enclosure to streets and provide an active frontage where possible. Development on sites adjacent to the ring road will be expected to provide an active frontage onto the highway and contribute to an improved pedestrian environment.

**Site Location**





## Waterloo Street Area

**10.41** This area is a well defined block which is bounded by Blackwell Street, Coventry Street and the ring road, with Waterloo Street running through the middle. The block has a number of opportunity sites that could help to transform this area. Therefore, the block should be considered in its entirety to ensure that comprehensive regeneration of the area can take place.

### Policy KCA.EG8

#### Waterloo Street Area

On the Waterloo Street Area site the following uses will be acceptable:

- A1-A5 Retail (not exceeding 280sqm)
- B1(a) Office
- C1 Hotel
- C2 Residential Institutions
- C3 Dwelling Houses

Any new development on this site should:

- i. Provide active frontages onto adjacent streets and spaces.
- ii. Improve the pedestrian environment along the ring road.
- iii. Contribute to improving pedestrian links across the ring road.
- iv. Contribute to improving pedestrian links through the site linking the ring road, Waterloo Street and Blackwell Street.
- v. Provide sufficient mass to ensure natural surveillance opportunities to St. George's Park and to provide enclosure to the ring road whilst screening the prominent BT exchange.
- vi. Provide active uses at the ground floor with a combination of uses on the upper floors providing a vertical mixing of uses.

## Reasoned Justification

**10.42** Blackwell Street and Coventry Street are designated as secondary shopping frontage. As with all Secondary Shopping Areas, a flexible approach to uses will be taken. However, extra flexibility will be taken on this site as it is peripheral to the main retail circuit of the town. Non-retail uses which will help to add vibrancy to this part of the town will be considered favourably. However, active ground floor frontages will be sought as part of any development.

**10.43** Waterloo Street is an extremely quiet road due the fact that it is a dead end and there are a very small number of active uses. Successful regeneration of the area will therefore need to include a mix of uses that bring activity and vibrancy back to the area.

**10.44** As with much of the ring road in the town, the buildings in this location do not have a good relationship with the road and the pedestrian environment is poor. This site provides a number of opportunities to address this. New development should also contribute to providing a sense of enclosure to the ring road by designing buildings with multiple storeys. New

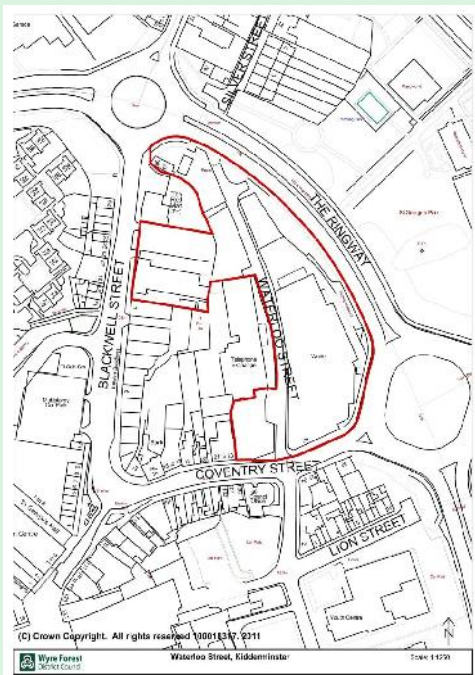
development should front onto the ring road to help create a good quality public realm. However, vehicular traffic and noise means that the ground floor is better suited to commerce rather than residential uses.

Waterloo Street Area analysis



**10.45** There are also poor links through the site and the number of opportunity sites provide a unique chance to create a link from the ring road, through Waterloo Street and onto Blackwell Street. This is important to improve connectivity through the town centre and to encourage footfall through this area.

**Site Location**



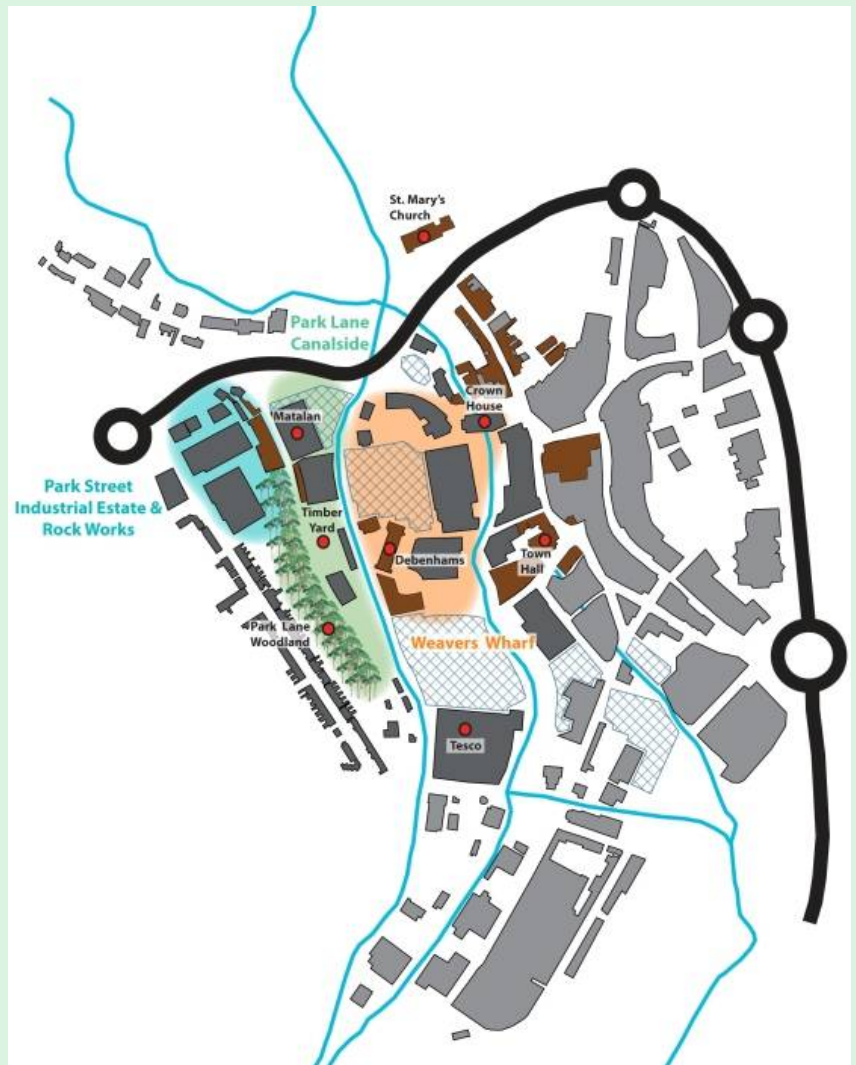
## 11 Western Gateway

**11.1** Focussed on Park Lane and Weavers Wharf, the Western Gateway is the main approach to the town from Bewdley and the west and Bridgnorth/Shropshire. It incorporates the existing major retail facilities in the Primary Shopping Area around Weavers Wharf as well as significant potential redevelopment sites adjacent to Park Lane and Park Street.

**11.2** The area includes the key assets of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal and the River Stour and therefore has great potential to improve these waterside environments to create a vibrant leisure and retail environment. However, the canal also serves as a barrier between the Park Lane area and the rest of the town centre as there are few crossing points. The links between this area and the residential community around Park Street are also difficult, particularly as the steep topography creates a significant barrier. However, development sites present opportunities to improve this and help to reconnect the town centre with nearby neighbourhoods.

**11.3** The former industrial nature of this area means that contamination is likely and will be an important consideration for any redevelopment proposals. The southern most part of the area also falls within the outer protection zone of a public water supply borehole and is therefore sensitive in terms of ground water protection. The District Council would expect new development to deliver adequate remediation and protection measures in line with Adopted Core Strategy policy CP01:Delivering Sustainable Development Standards.

Development areas within the Western Gateway





**Park Street Industrial Estate and Rock Works (2.16ha)**

**11.4** This area consists of the Industrial Estate located on Park Street and the former Rock Works factory and surrounding buildings located on Park Lane. The two 'halves' of the site are separated by a steep embankment with the only through access being in the form of steep pedestrian steps.

**Policy KCA.WG1****Park Street Industrial Estate and Rock Works**

The following uses will be acceptable:

- i. C2 Residential Institutions
- ii. C3 Dwelling Houses
- iii. B1 Office and workshops
- iv. D1 Non-Residential Institutions
- v. D2 Assembly and Leisure

Proposals that demonstrate a comprehensive masterplanning approach to the area will be viewed favourably. Any new development on this site should:

- a. Suitably incorporate the 'green on the hill' open space including pedestrian accessibility and links between Park Lane and Park Street where practicable.
- b. Where practicable retain the frontage of the Rock Works, a Local Heritage List building. Proposals involving the demolition of the works will need to be accompanied by robust justification including a viability assessment. Subject to this, any replacement building should present an active frontage to Park Lane with a similar scale and mass to the back of pavement development.
- c. Preferably provide on-site parking in undercroft locations or from the upper level in Park Street. Some on-street parking provision may be suitable in the context of Park Lane.
- d. Subject to a comprehensive and high quality landscape scheme for the 'green on the hill', the District Council may consider the release of a small area of land for additional off-street parking subject to design detailing.
- e. Complement the adjacent Statutory Listed Buildings and Local Heritage List assets and retain and enhance the step entry to Hill Street.
- f. Make the most of the site's prominent position on the escarpment fully integrating views and vistas and enhancing the visual aesthetic of the site from distant vantage points.
- g. Incorporate landscaping that accentuates the site's position in defining the River Stour valley.
- h. Contribute toward the 'green on the hill' open space for the recreational enjoyment of residents.



## Reasoned Justification

**11.5** The industrial estate is a large site within a residential setting; it is therefore considered that residential development would be most suitable here. However, although the existing community lies very close to the town centre, the links to the town are poor and barriers to movement make it difficult for residents to reach it very easily, particularly due to the steep topography between Park Street and Park Lane.

**11.6** The industrial estate provides a major opportunity to connect the communities around Park Street to the town. Any redevelopment would be expected to provide visual and physical links down to Park Lane. However, the steep incline between these two places provides a significant challenge. The 'green on the hill' concept ties in with the existing wooded area on Park Lane identified within the Park Lane Canalside policy (KCA.WG2) below and its refurbishment as a usable piece of public open space. However, in the context of this area, the 'green on the hill' concept provides the opportunity to provide this pedestrian link as an important part of the green infrastructure and link it to the existing woodland.

**11.7** The Rock Works is a redundant former factory building. It is on the Local Heritage List and is in a bad state of repair. First preference will be for the building to be retained and incorporated into any new development. However, its reuse may pose a significant viability issue and therefore it is important that it is considered as part of the future redevelopment of the wider Western Gateway area.

Initial ideas for the Park Street, Park Lane and Timber Yard sites



**11.8** A flexible approach to uses will be taken for the Rock Works, providing that it would be complimentary to neighbouring development. New development should provide an active frontage on to Park Street.

**Site Location**



## Park Lane Canalside (3.47ha)

**11.9** This area includes the existing Timber Yard and Matalan sites which hold an important location on the canalside and have a key role in delivering the KCAAP objective to enhance the canal in the town centre. This area provides the best opportunity in Kidderminster to bring the canal back into focus and help rejuvenate it.

### Policy KCA.WG2

#### Park Lane Canalside

Subject to satisfactory links being established to Weavers Wharf, the site offers considerable scope for a range of commercial opportunities and land uses including:

- C3 Dwelling Houses
- A3-A5 Retail
- B1a Offices
- D1 Non-residential Institutions
- D2 Assembly and Leisure

Replacement A1 retail floorspace proposals, involving the redevelopment and replacement of the large store (Matalan) in the north of the area, will also be considered favourably. Otherwise A1 uses should be concentrated within the Primary Shopping Area.

Any new development on this site should:

- i. Provide an active frontage onto the canal and Park Lane.
- ii. Create a high quality pedestrian canalside environment and public realm.
- iii. Where practicable, retain and incorporate the historic office building fronting onto Park Lane.
- iv. Deliver a new landmark pedestrian bridge across the canal to Weavers Wharf.
- v. Provide a comprehensive and high quality landscape scheme for the 'green on the hill'.
- vi. Open up public access to the 'green on the hill' in line with the Park Lane design concept and establish strong links to the neighbourhoods to the west.
- vii. Where practicable, incorporate additional mooring facilities on the canal.
- viii. Incorporate a usable area of open space immediately adjacent to the canal edge for the enjoyment of town centre visitors to act as a focal point.
- ix. Give full consideration to proposals to intensify the retailing and leisure environment of Weavers Wharf including providing ancillary facilities and services to complement that provision.
- x. Take into full account any potential flood risk issues on site and incorporate appropriate mitigation measures.



## Reasoned Justification

**11.10** The site provides the opportunity to create a high quality waterside destination that helps to bring activity and natural surveillance to the canal. The regeneration of this site, therefore, should deliver an active frontage facing onto the canal and also provide a good quality public realm on the waterfront. The development should also provide a much improved relationship to Park Lane that helps to revitalise this area and create additional footfall.

The Timber Yard site opposite Weavers Wharf is a significant regeneration opportunity



**11.11** Key to the success of this area is linking into Weavers Wharf and the rest of the town centre on the opposite side of the canal. This will require the creation of a new pedestrian bridge over the canal. The development should also provide good links through the site towards Park Lane to help provide a seamless link from Weavers Wharf through to Park Street.

**11.12** This area will be expected to contain a mix of uses in order to increase vibrancy at different times of the day. However, on the canalside, proposals will be expected to introduce some active ground floor commercial uses that help to increase footfall. Food and drink outlets would be particularly appropriate to make the most of its waterside location. Small scale retail opportunities may also be acceptable in addition to possible replacement retail floorspace should the existing major retail unit, currently occupied by Matalan, be relocated. Residential uses would also be expected as part of any redevelopment.



Indicative 3D model showing the potential of the canalside area

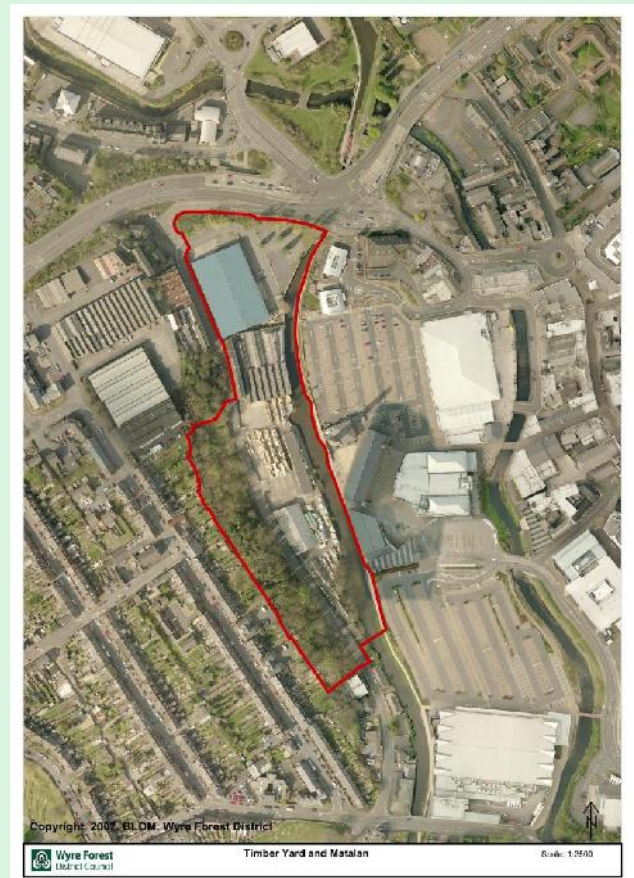
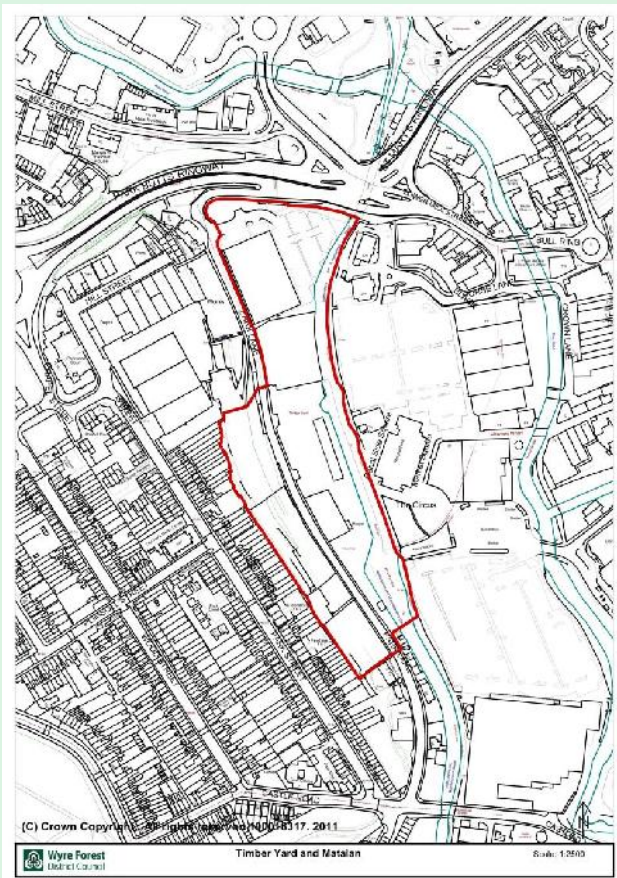
**11.13** The development of this site should also include mooring spaces for canal boats to encourage the number of visitors and the District Council will actively seek the provision of associated boating facilities. Heritage assets including the Canal Conservation Area and office frontage should be safeguarded and enhanced.



**11.14** This site also includes the District Council owned wooded area on Park Lane. The wooded area known as the 'green on the hill' will be retained as an important landscape feature in the town. However, it is currently inaccessible for the public and has problems of fly-tipping. The ambition is to create a woodland park that is publicly accessible and encourages people to use it. The Royal Terrace Gardens in Torquay provides a precedent for this type of approach.

**11.15** Proposals which fail to meet the above requirements will not be supported unless they are accompanied by a robust and compelling justification.

**Site Location**



**Weavers Wharf**

**11.16** This area is a large combined site that includes both the existing Weavers Wharf retail park and adjacent sites at the key access points to the park. The ambition is to transform the area from its current eclectic state of retail park and low grade urban environments including bus station, Crown House and poorly defined Lower Mill Street, into a fully integrated extension of the town centre to form a more traditional shopping centre. To achieve this ambition, detailed proposals may include the relocation of the bus station.

**Policy KCA.WG3****Weavers Wharf**

On the Weavers Wharf site the following uses will be acceptable:

- Use Classes A1 and A2-A5 (Retail)
- D2 Assembly and Leisure
- C1 Hotel
- B1(a) Offices
- C3 Residential (above ground floor)
- D1 Non-residential Institutions

Any new development on this site should:

- i. Provide an active frontage onto the canal and riverside and enhance their contribution to the green infrastructure and biodiversity network, improving the environment and quality of the waterways.
- ii. For development involving the existing bus station site, provide suitable alternative provision following a full review of bus infrastructure agreed by the District and County Councils.
- iii. Safeguard and enhance the statutory and local heritage assets and the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Conservation Area.
- iv. Consider options to reduce the visual impact of surface car parking.
- v. Subject to design quality, intensify the use of land incorporating development blocks with streets, public fronts and private servicing.
- vi. Incorporate high quality and well-connected streets and spaces within development proposals.
- vii. Enhance access to the town centre via Exchange Street and Bull Ring and contribute towards links across the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal.
- viii. Contribute towards improvements to the town centre public realm including public square proposals at Town Hall Square and Bull Ring (Crown House).
- ix. Improve access to the site.
- x. Create a positive frontage to the canal, ring road, links to the town centre and River Stour.
- xi. Take into full account any potential flood risk issues on site and incorporate appropriate mitigation measures.



## Reasoned Justification

### Weavers Wharf

#### Development Types

**11.17** Weavers Wharf has become the primary retail destination and footfall driver within Kidderminster Town Centre. As highlighted in Part A and the Eastern Gateway proposals within this document, there is a key ambition to counter balance the pull of Weavers Wharf in order to drive footfall to the less successful eastern side of the town centre. However, the fact is that Weavers Wharf is now a key asset that needs to be harnessed for the economic good of the town. The Adopted Core Strategy sets out the requirement for further retail floorspace in the town centre and some of this growth will be delivered at Weavers Wharf. The waterside environment also presents opportunities for leisure development complemented by a new hotel within Slingfield Mill and nearby eateries and coffee shops. These developments will be focussed around the bus station, Lower Mill Street and Crown House where links to the traditional town centre will be improved. Proposals adjacent to the River Stour should

Weavers Wharf and Tesco, with their large surface car parks, and waterways on either side



also complement the potential re-use of the Brintons office building and the arts and learning uses clustered around Kidderminster College, Library and Town Hall.

#### Surface Car Parks

**11.18** A significant feature of this site is the amount of surface car parking that has been created to serve the retail developments. For such central locations, this is an over-bearing land use and is not conducive to creating good urban environments. Therefore, measures such as decking that would reduce the amount of surface car parking would be encouraged. As a result, it is hoped that more built form can be accommodated in their place that will help to frame well designed streets and spaces.

#### Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal

**11.19** The Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal follows the entire western boundary of this site. The retail developments did not adequately address the relationship with the canal when they were created. Large amounts of surface car parking, which is walled off from the canal, have provided inactive frontages and a lack of natural surveillance. This has led to the town centre canalside becoming synonymous with anti-social behaviour. New developments on canalside locations will be expected to provide a positive relationship to the canal and have active frontages onto it.

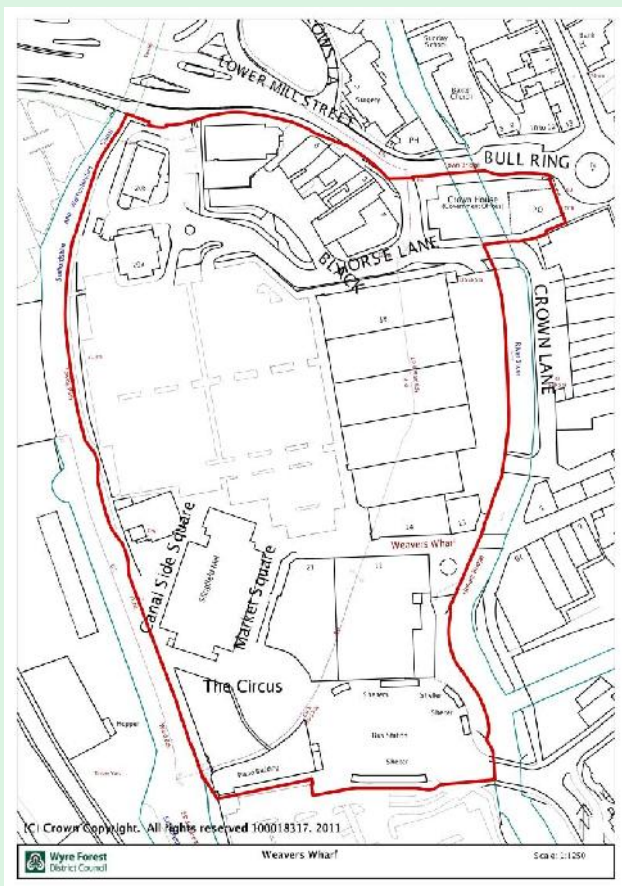
### River Stour

**11.20** The River Stour follows the vast majority of the eastern boundary of the site. As part of the Tesco development the river was opened up and the environment greatly improved. The river is now visible from the public realm and has increased its biodiversity value. However, the condition of the river behind Weavers Wharf is poor as it is surrounded by the service yards of retail units on either side.

**11.21** Any new developments on sites adjacent to the river will be expected to contribute to the improvement of the riverside environment. As an important green corridor, developments should also improve the green infrastructure along the river.

**11.22** In the absence of significant multi-functional public spaces and seating areas, contributions will be sought towards on-site and off-site infrastructure proportionate to the scale of the project. This may be subject to viability testing.

### Site Location



### Crown House

**11.23** Crown House is a multi-storey office block and includes the town's main Post Office on the ground floor. Much of the space within this building is now vacant and the building itself has not been well maintained. Crown House is a much maligned feature of the town and there is a desire from the general public to see it removed.



**11.24** The redevelopment of this site would generally be supported and a mix of uses would be acceptable. However, any new development should retain an active frontage onto the surrounding streets and spaces, including the Bull Ring, and complement the adjacent listed buildings. The site should be considered in the context of the wider Western Gateway and be integrated as part of a comprehensive approach to development in this area.

**11.25** Crown House has a strong relationship to the Bull Ring area which has been highlighted as being a potential improved piece of public space. Any redevelopment of this site should be considered in this context and contribute to the creation of a high quality public realm. The site's setting adjacent to the Statutory Listed Baxter Church will also be an important consideration.

**11.26** The site is also on top of the culverted River Stour and the redevelopment of the site could provide the opportunity to remove this culvert and improve the environment of the river.

Crown House

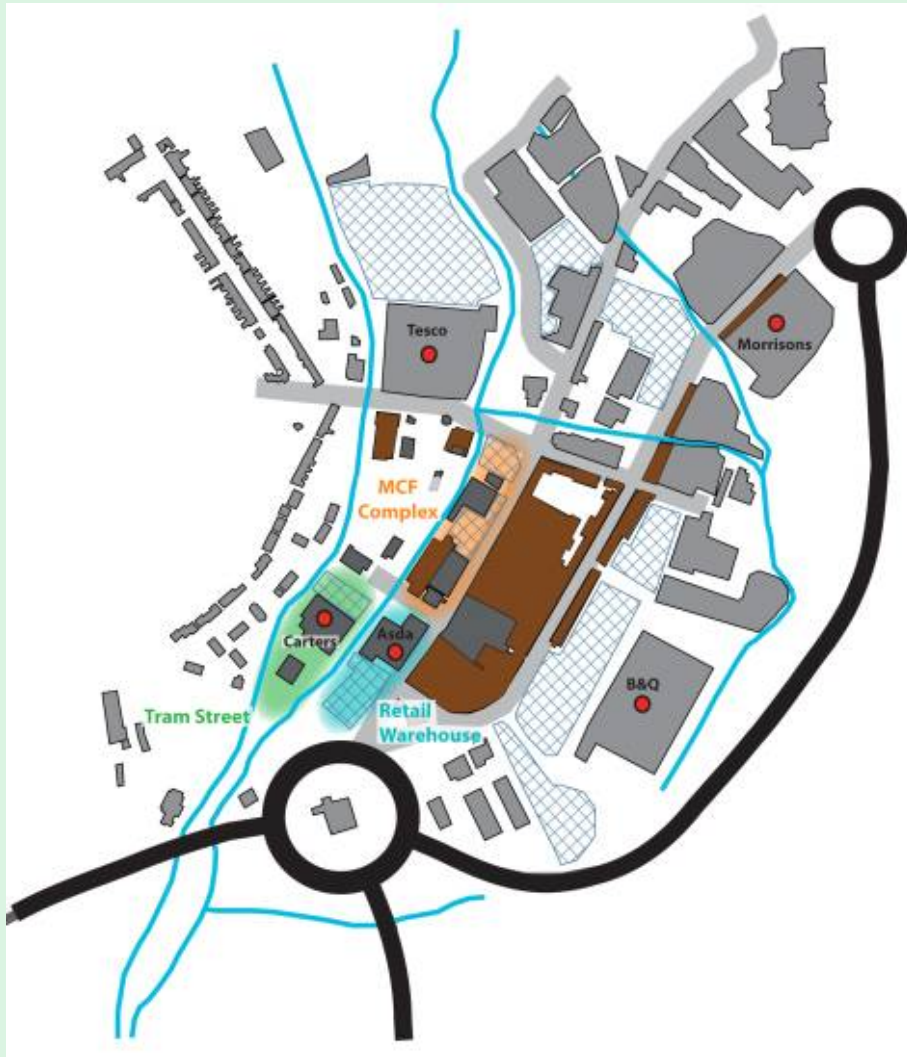


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## 12 Castle Wharf

**12.1** The Castle Wharf area is a collection of relatively narrow sites that are adjacent to the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal and/or the River Stour. These sites provide a significant opportunity to create a high quality waterside development and improve the environment of the waterways.

Development sites within the Castle Wharf area



**12.2** The sites that front New Road also have a very close relationship to the Heritage Processions character area and are partly within the Green Street Conservation Area boundary. Therefore, new development within or adjacent to this Conservation Area will need to take full account of the detail contained within the associated Character Appraisal and Management Plan.

**12.3** The overall ambition for this area is to maintain and repair the strong frontage onto the processional route of New Road and increase activity onto the street. The redevelopment of these sites provides the opportunity to do this.

**12.4** Due to the area's industrial history it is likely that there will be high potential for ground/water contamination issues. Therefore, new development, including the refurbishment of existing buildings, should ensure that contamination is appropriately addressed and appropriate

remediation measures taken. This should be in line with Adopted Core Strategy policy CP01: Delivering Sustainable Development Standards and the Environment Agency's Groundwater protection: Principles and practice (GP3) document.

Initial sketch ideas for the Castle Wharf area



## Policy KCA.CW1

### Castle Wharf

The following uses will be acceptable within the area:

- C3 Residential
- B1 Office and/or workshops

Limited A1 specialist retail floorspace may also be acceptable to complement the existing furniture and carpet sales present in the wider area. This makes provision for possible replacement of existing stores but is subject to greater vertical and/or horizontal mixing of uses.

Resulting development should lead to the creation of a new predominantly residential neighbourhood with significant business opportunities. As a guide this would be in a ratio of approximately 60% residential to 40% business uses.

Any new development on this site should:



- i. Provide a positive relationship with the river and/or canal, where possible fronting onto the canal, whilst providing a mixed approach to the river incorporating opportunities for promenading where practicable.
- ii. More generally contribute to the improvement of the riverside environment and the enhancement of the green infrastructure network.
- iii. Take into full account any potential flood risk issues on site and incorporate appropriate mitigation measures.
- iv. Create a strong and active frontage onto New Road.
- v. Strengthen the heritage procession through appropriate use of rhythm and massing.
- vi. Incorporate quality public realm.
- vii. Protect and enhance the Green Street Conservation Area, taking into consideration the Character Appraisal and Management Plan.
- viii. Safeguard and enhance the Statutory Listed Buildings and Local Heritage List assets and their settings.
- ix. Provide an understated landmark at the junction of New Road and Castle Road to help define and provide enclosure to the junction without competing with the Italianate tower of the adjacent Listed Morton's Works (Paddington House).
- x. Take full account of the Groundwater Source Protection Zone that exists within this area, in safeguarding groundwater supply.

### Reasoned Justification

**12.5** The Castle Wharf area is split into three main development sites: the MCF Complex, Tram Street and New Road Retail Warehouse. These 'sub areas' are all considered in more detail below.

#### MCF Complex (0.8ha)

**12.6** This site contains a number of furniture retail/warehouse units as well as car parking fronting on to New Road. The northern most part of the site is a public car park that is owned by the District Council.

**12.7** The site has the River Stour running up against its entire western edge, but currently there is no active relationship to the water. Although a positive feature of the site, the river does pose a flood risk and any development would need to address this.

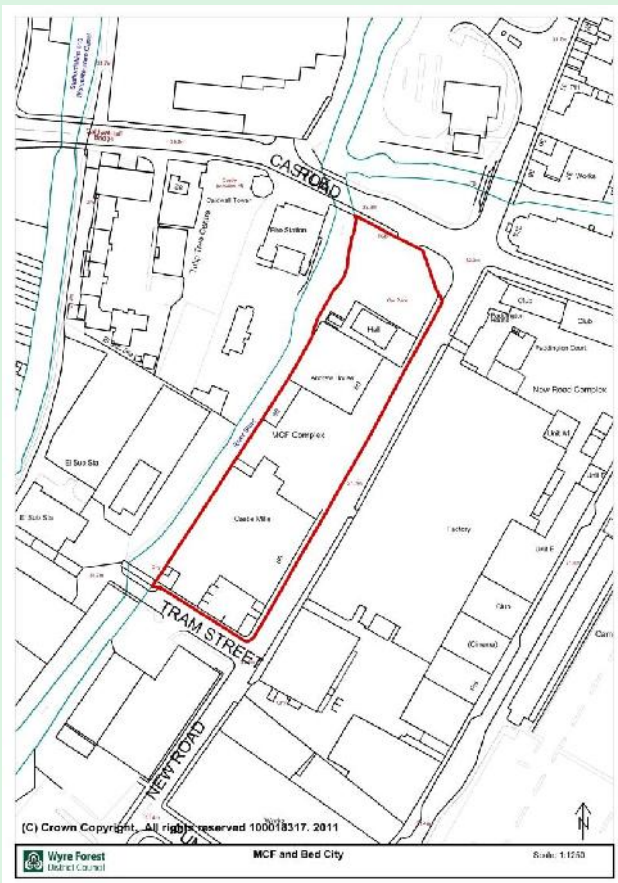
**12.8** The vision for this area is for a mixed use development that contains mainly residential and commercial uses. New development would be expected to contribute to the improvement of the riverside and help to develop its role in providing a vital green infrastructure link into the town centre.

**12.9** Where appropriate, new development will also be required to provide a strong frontage onto New Road to continue the processional route along this road. Any development should address the corner of the site at the junction of New Road and Castle Road.

**12.10** The site also contains the Castle Mills building which has been identified in the Green Street Conservation Area Character Appraisal as being of sufficient quality to be on the Local Heritage List. The building is a significant landmark feature and is highly attractive. Therefore, any new development will be expected to retain and enhance this building and promote its reuse.

**12.11** The site sits on a Groundwater Source Protection Area (SPZ1 and 2). SPZ1 is the inner zone and is highly sensitive to land use/contamination. Therefore the type of development and activities that can take place within this zone need to have full regard to the Environment Agency's Groundwater protection: Principles and practice (GP3) document. In addition to the control of land use, drainage and building design (i.e. foundations), tight control of the investigation and remediation of any land contamination issues would also be required in this location.

**Site Location**





**Tram Street (0.77ha)**

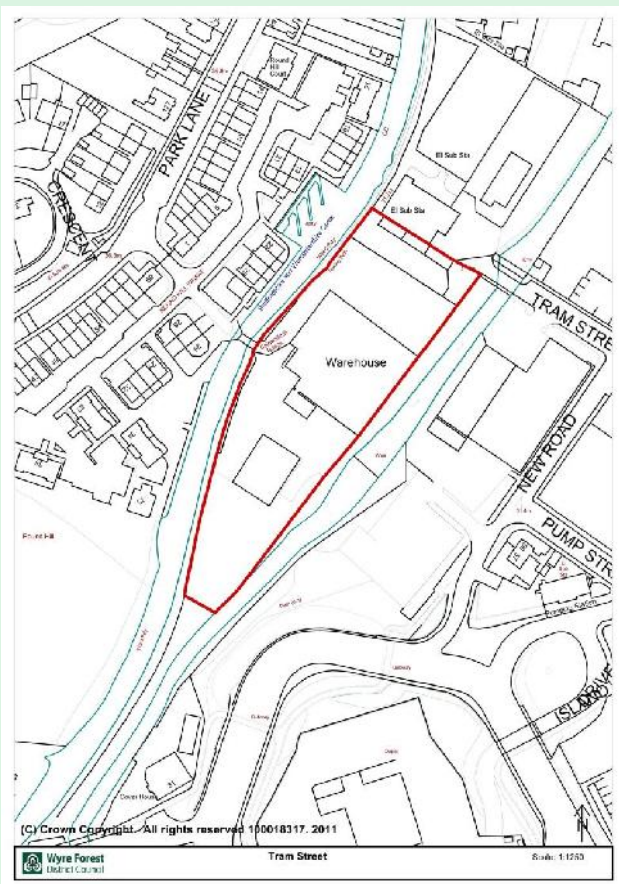
**12.12** This site contains a large retail/warehouse unit with associated car parking. It is bounded entirely by the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal and the River Stour on its western and eastern sides respectively.

**12.13** The site provides the opportunity to create positive frontages to both waterways and enhance the waterside environment. The River Stour does pose a flood risk, so this would need to be taken into account by any new development proposals. The regeneration of the site is expected to be residential led and should reflect the existing Round Hill Wharf development on the opposite side of the canal.

Tram Street and Round Hill Wharf opposite



**Site Location**





**New Road Retail Warehouse (0.68ha)**

**12.14** This site is currently occupied by a small supermarket and pet store with associated surface car parking.

**12.15** Although the building and car park front close up to New Road they provide unbroken inactive frontage which is detrimental to the streetscene. They also present a poor service yard frontage to Tram Street. New development on this site should provide a much more active outlook to this road while maintaining the position of the current frontage.

**12.16** The site has the River Stour running up against its entire western edge, but currently there is no active relationship to the water. Although a positive feature of the site, the river does pose a flood risk and any development would need to address this. New development would be expected to contribute to the improvement of the riverside and help to develop its role in providing a vital green infrastructure link into the town centre. The vision for this area is for a mixed use development that contains mainly residential and commercial developments.

**Site Location**



## 13 Crossley Park and Mill Street

**13.1** This area consists of two neighbouring, but distinctly different, important retail areas in Kidderminster, namely Crossley Retail Park and Mill Street.

### Crossley Retail Park

**13.2** Crossley Retail Park is a significant 'out-of-centre' retail park which contains large retail units selling larger, 'bulky' comparison goods. It is also home to the Sainsburys supermarket and is dominated by significant amounts of surface car parking. As it is 'out-of-centre', a condition of the planning permission for this site has always been to limit the sale of comparison goods to larger items only. This is to avoid the retail park being detrimental to the viability of the town centre.

**13.3** Proposals for new development must take a sequential approach and be in line with the other Development Plan policies concerning retail, namely Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan policy SAL.GBP2: Town Centre Retail and KCAAP policy KCA.GBP4: Edge-of-Centre and Out-of-Centre Retailing.

**13.4** Proposals for new development that would be deemed to be detrimental to the vitality of the Primary Retail Area will not be supported.

### Mill Street

**13.5** The Mill Street area is a mixed use area that currently comprises a wide range of retail units combined with residential, office and leisure uses too.

#### Policy KCA.MS1

##### Mill Street Mixed Use Area

Support will be given to new A1-A5 retail development which enhances the Mill Street mixed use area providing that:

1. The development does not exceed 280sqm.

Support will be given to a mix of uses in this area including:

- B1a Offices
- C3 Dwelling Houses
- D1 Non-Residential Institutions
- D2 Assembly and Leisure

New development in this area should:

- a. Provide an active frontage onto Mill Street.
- b. Continue the strong line of development along the street.
- c. Enhance the green infrastructure and biodiversity network where appropriate.



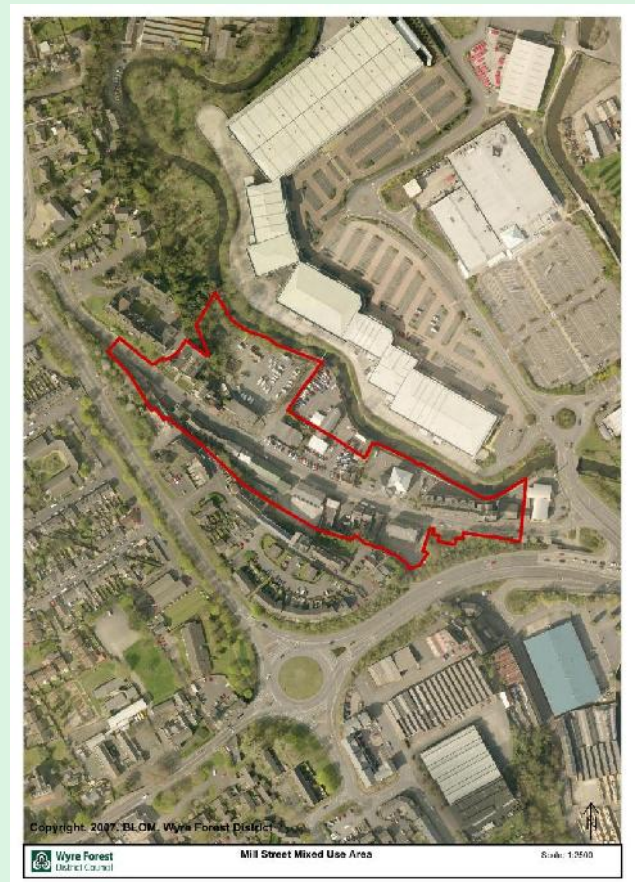
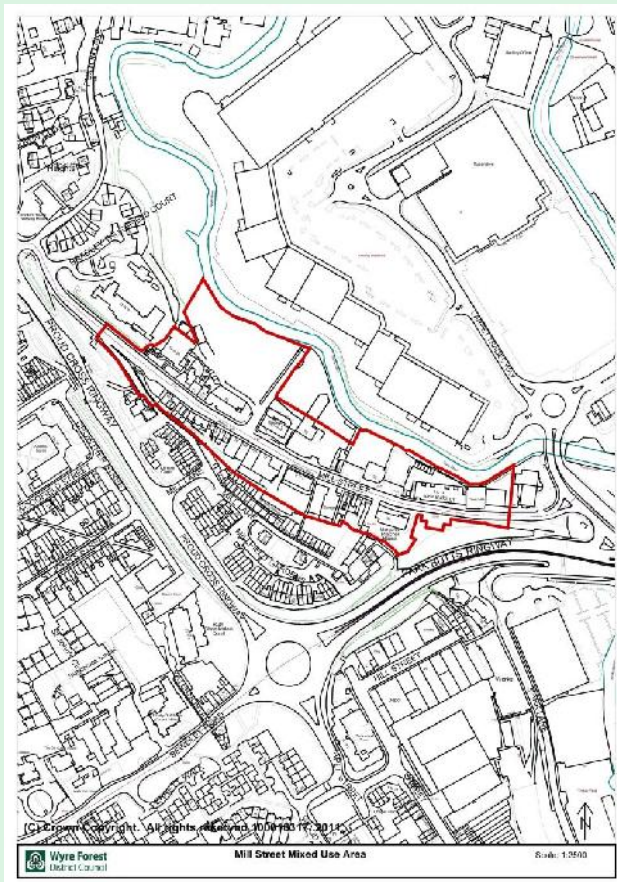
- d. Take into full account any potential flood risk issues on site and incorporate appropriate mitigation measures.
- e. Retain and enhance any local heritage assets within the site boundaries and have regard to the impact on adjacent Listed Buildings in accordance with SAL.UP6: Safeguarding the Historic Environment.

### Reasoned Justification

**13.6** Mill Street is a vibrant area and the ambition is to enhance its mixed use function and maintain it as an important service centre for the local community. Further retail development here would be supported, particularly for niche and specialist retailing. However, this should be limited to small-scale units and they must not have a negative impact on the viability of the town centre.

**13.7** To the rear of buildings on the northern side of Mill Street, there is a boundary with the River Stour. Whilst further upstream the river is set in a very green corridor leading up to Puxton Marsh, around Mill Street there are definite gaps in this habitat. Therefore, future opportunities should be taken to enhance the green infrastructure provision along the River Stour where possible.

### Site Location





## 14 Traditional Town Centre

**14.1** The Traditional Town Centre area is made up of the streets and spaces that historically formed the heart of Kidderminster and contained the Primary Shopping Area. Although the retail focus has somewhat shifted away from this area due to the development of Weavers Wharf, it still performs an important retail function as part of the Primary Shopping Area of the town. This area also contains the Swan and Rowland Hill shopping centres. However, there is also recognition that there is a need to be more flexible regarding uses and activities in this area to add vitality back into the town. This approach is set out in more detail in the retail sections of the 'A Good Place to do Business' section.

**14.2** This area also contains some clusters of specialised uses and facilities. The Church Street area is a designated Conservation Area which is a vibrant street containing a number of professional services including legal and medical practices. The Market Street and Exchange Street area contains a cluster of learning/cultural facilities in the form of the Kidderminster College, Library, and Town Hall.

**14.3** It is also recognised that there has been a lack of investment in this area, particularly in terms of public realm. There is also a lack of public open space for people to sit and to be used as performance/event areas. As the traditional and geographic centre of the town, it is the ambition of the District Council to improve the aesthetic quality of this area and bring it back into focus.

### Public Realm Improvements

**14.4** The public realm environment within the town centre is old and untidy and is in need of upgrading. The original block paving and street furniture is now around 30 years old and has fallen into disrepair. There is a strong desire to see the public realm enhanced to improve the quality of the town centre and make Kidderminster more attractive as a destination for visitors and residents.

**14.5** The focus for these improvements should be centred around the main retail dumbbell areas and the primary shopping frontages where the main footfall takes place.

Therefore, the concentration for improvements should be along Vicar Street, High Street, and Worcester Street. This would also contribute to connecting the potential Town Hall Square and Bull Ring spaces.

**14.6** Street furniture and surface treatments as part of any improvements should be designed in a way that allows for a flexible use of the space. Events such as Kidderminster's regular street market, for example, should be able to successfully operate within the streets.

**14.7** Further detail on public realm improvements is set out in Policy KCA.UP2: Public Realm.

Artist's Impression of an improved public realm along Worcester Street



## Civic Spaces

**14.8** The traditional town centre should have an important role as the civic heart of Kidderminster. However, identifying the 'centre' of town is hard and there is no primary focus for public space. In fact, there is a major issue regarding the lack of public open space throughout the town centre.

**14.9** Two spaces in this area have been identified as having high potential to provide good public space in the town: the space outside the Town Hall and the Bull Ring.

### Policy KCA.TTC1

#### Civic Spaces

##### Town Hall Square

The District Council has the aspiration for the area outside the Town Hall to become the new civic 'heart' of the town and become a high quality public space. The Town Hall Square will be the priority in terms of providing a new public space in the town centre.

This new space should also be versatile and multi-functional and capable of being used for outdoor events.

Any new space should be designed to protect and enhance the Vicar Street and Exchange Street Conservation Area and have regard to its Character Appraisal and Management Plan.

##### The Bull Ring

The District Council will promote the improvement of the Bull Ring as a new town centre square with landmark feature.

This new space is envisaged to partially comprise of a shared-space. It will also be important to continue to provide vehicular access onto Church Street.

Any new space should be designed to protect and enhance the setting of the surrounding Listed Buildings, Local Heritage List assets, and the Church Street Conservation Area.

## Reasoned Justification

### Town Hall Square

**14.10** The existing Town Hall is a Grade II Listed Building and performs an important civic function and holds a variety of paid and free events throughout the year. The existing space outside the hall is already a piece of public space and it is used for events such as the Kidderminster Arts Festival and the Christmas lights switch-on. However, this public space is limited and not very well used.



**14.11** With the proposed Heritage Lottery Fund bid to revamp the Town Hall and its organ to create a multi-purpose events venue, an opportunity has been identified to create a new Town Hall Square in the space outside.

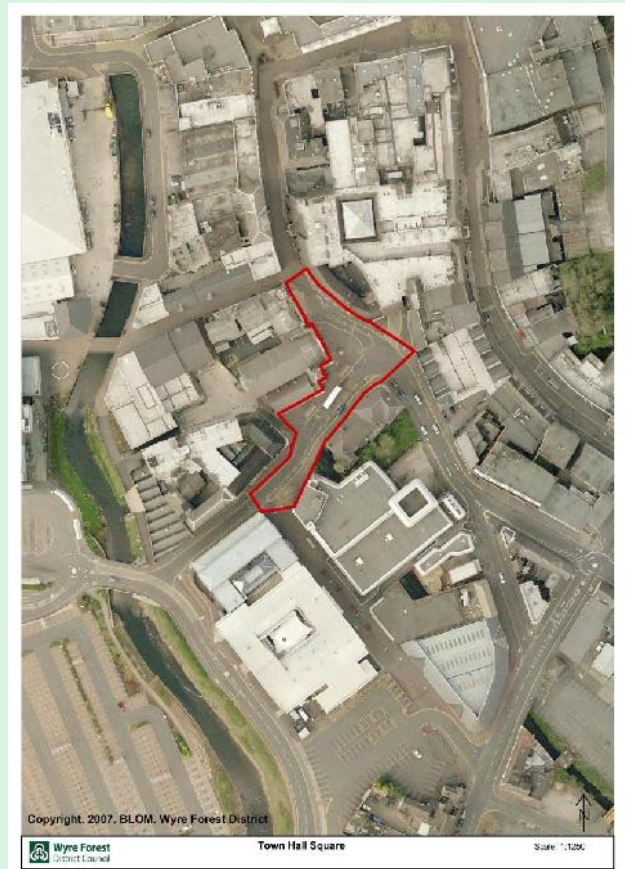
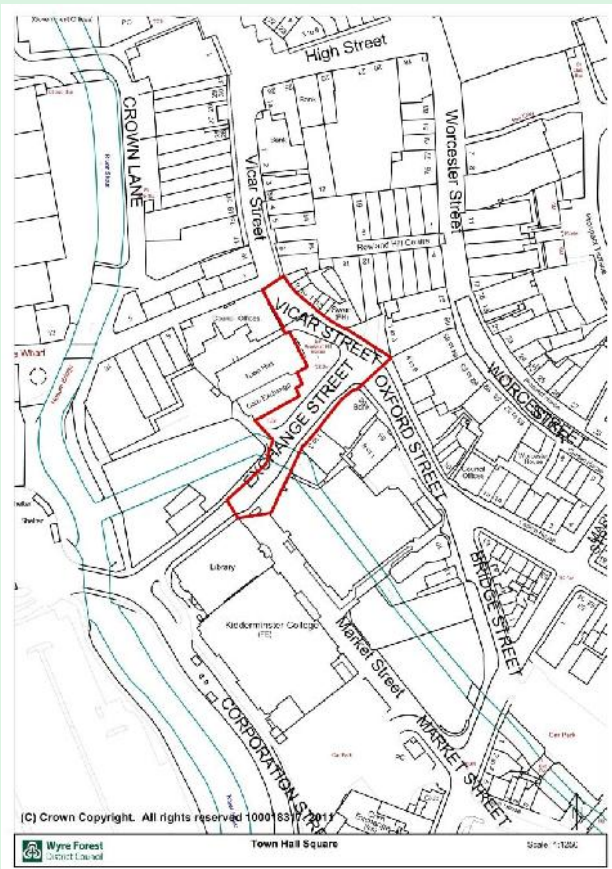
**14.12** The ambition for this new space, together with the Town Hall, is to make it the civic heart and focal point of the town centre. This new space should be a high quality piece of public realm and should be designed as a multi-functional area that enables it to be used for a variety of events.

**14.13** This site is located within the Vicar Street and Exchange Street Conservation Area and is surrounded by a number of Grade II Listed Buildings. It is therefore important to consider the impact of any scheme for a new public space on the historic landscape. New development will be expected to be of a high quality and maintain and enhance the character of the Conservation Area.

Artist's Impression of how a new Town Hall Square could look



**Site Location**





## The Bull Ring

**14.14** The Bull Ring area is currently a small traffic island that allows access to Church Street, which is a dead end, and to a number of on-street disabled parking spaces. It presents another opportunity to provide additional public space in the town centre.

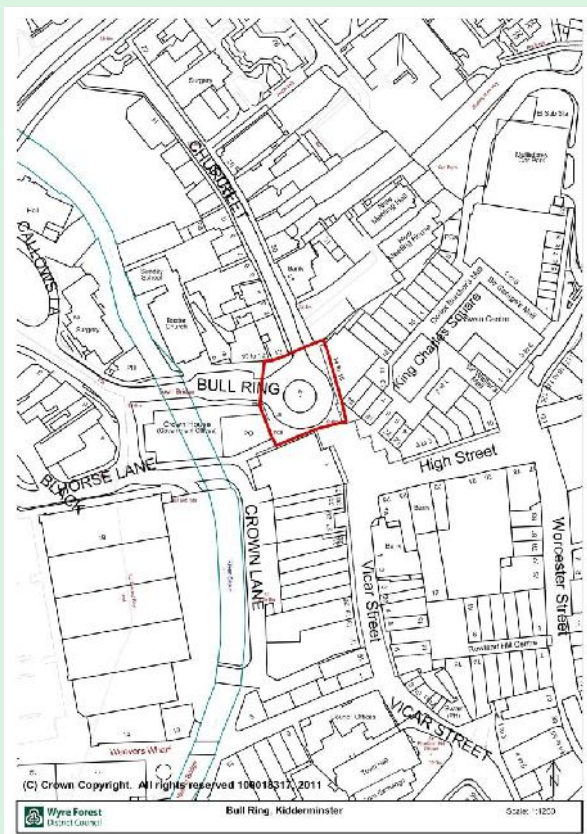
**14.15** The Bull Ring would appear to lend itself well to being a public space as it is within the Primary Shopping Area, is adjacent to Primary Shopping Frontages, and is already surrounded on all sides by buildings with active uses which give it a good sense of enclosure. This area was also historically a key space containing the Richard Baxter memorial statue. The potential redevelopment of the adjacent Crown House provides the opportunity to help create this new piece of public space.

**14.16** Although not of heritage value itself, this space is in close proximity to a number of Statutory Listed Buildings, including the Grade II Baxter Church and the New Meeting House, Local Heritage List assets and the Church Street Conservation Area. Therefore, development in this area would impact on the setting of these heritage assets. It is important that any new public space is of a high quality and will protect and enhance the heritage landscape.

Artist's Impression of how a new public space in the Bull Ring could look



## Site Location



## Brintons' Offices

**14.17** This Listed Building contains the former offices of the Brintons' carpet factory. It is of a high quality design which is worthy of retention and also has cultural significance due to its association with the carpet industry. The building has previously been granted permission for conversion, with extensions, to an extra-care facility.

**14.18** The site has an important riverside frontage and it will be crucial for any new development to provide an active frontage onto the riverside. It should also have an active frontage onto Exchange Street as this aspect is very prominent from the surrounding streets.

Brintons' Offices

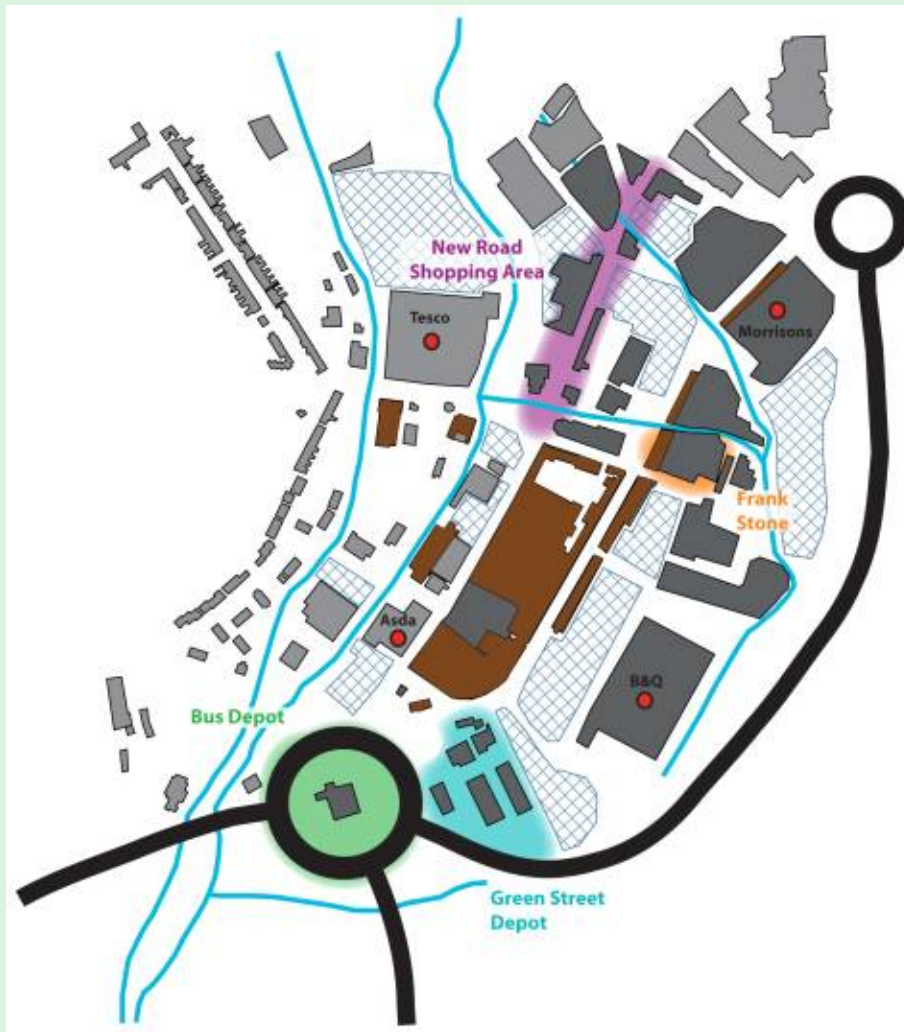




## 15 Heritage Processions

**15.1** The Heritage Processions area is formed by the two processional routes along Green Street and New Road that contain buildings which provide strong frontages close up to the highway. There are few identified development sites in the area but the primary ambition is to provide a mix of uses in the area, increase vibrancy and retain and create strong building frontages.

Picture 15.1 Development areas within the Heritage Processions Area



### Policy KCA.HP1

#### Heritage Processions Area

A mix of uses in this area will be promoted, including:

- C1 Hotel
- C2 Residential Institutions
- C3 Residential
- B1(a) Office



- B1(c) Light Industrial
- D1 Non-Residential Institutions

The historic linear, processional routes along Green Street, New Road, and Dixon Street will be protected and, where possible, enhanced in line with the Design Quality SPG.

New development should protect and enhance the Green Street Conservation Area, having regard to the Character Appraisal and Management Plan.

As a means of achieving this, the District Council will expect the retention and reuse of Statutory Listed Buildings and Local Heritage List assets, as well as other important landmark buildings.

New development on sites adjoining these roads will be expected to provide a strong and active frontage and be of high quality design to enhance the Conservation Area.

New development should take into full account any potential flood risk issues on site and incorporate appropriate mitigation measures.

New development should incorporate appropriate remediation, building and drainage design in order to deal with any contaminated land and to protect the water environment.

## Reasoned Justification

**15.2** The idea of the heritage processions has already been established within the Design Quality SPG which recognises their importance to the character of the town.

**15.3** The area will be promoted as a mixed use area to add to the vibrancy and vitality of this part of the town. Residential and office developments will be especially encouraged. However, small business units may also be acceptable, particularly in suitably converted heritage buildings, providing that there is no harm to the amenity of existing or potential future identified uses.

### Green Street processional route



**15.4** Due to the area's industrial history, the potential for ground/water contamination issues is high. Therefore, new development, including the refurbishment of existing buildings, should ensure that contamination is addressed and appropriate remediation measures taken. This should be in line with Adopted Core Strategy policy CP01: Delivering Sustainable Development Standards and the Environment Agency's Groundwater protection: Principles and practice (GP3) document.

## Green Street Conservation Area

**15.5** Much of the Heritage Processions area is included within the Green Street Conservation Area. The area contains a number of Statutory Listed Buildings and Local Heritage List assets and is characterised by its strong processional routes created by large buildings built close to the highway edge.

**15.6** New development in this area must have regard to the Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan in order to preserve and enhance its historic integrity and quality.

## Green Street Depot and First Bus Depot

**15.7** Although the District Council's Green Street offices and the bus depot have separate policies, it is important to consider these sites in the wider context of the Heritage Processions and the impact that their complete redevelopment could deliver. These sites are seen as key regeneration opportunities that could continue the processional routes further south and create a better urban environment and highway network. This could include alterations to the layout of the existing ring road to create a more efficient and better designed highway that would also become more of an urban boulevard in line with KCAAP policy KCA.UP3: Ring Road Framework.

**15.8** Their comprehensive redevelopment, taking a wider masterplanning approach to this area, will therefore be vital for the full scale of the opportunity to be realised.

Indicative 3D model of how the Green Street and Bus Depots could be redeveloped to transform this area



## New Road Shopping Area

**15.9** This northern part of the Heritage Processions area is the only place within the boundary of the Primary Shopping Area and New Road is designated as Secondary Shopping Frontage. As with all Secondary Shopping Frontages, a flexible approach to uses will be taken. However, extra flexibility will be taken within this area as it is peripheral to the main retail circuit of the town. Non-retail uses which will help to add vibrancy to this part of the town will be considered favourably.

**15.10** As with much of this area, the road forms a processional route which should be retained and enhanced. However, the existing Pike Mills car park provides a significant break in these frontages and allows views of blank elevations and the backs of properties. A key ambition in this area is to repair the urban fabric by providing a buildings along the edge of this car park and thus continuing the built frontage of the street.

## Frank Stone (0.32ha)

**15.11** This former factory unit has been vacant for a significant period and provides an opportunity for reuse and redevelopment.

### Policy KCA.HP2

#### Frank Stone

On the Frank Stone site the following uses will be acceptable:

- C3 Residential
- B1a Office
- B1c Light Industrial
- D1 Non-Residential Institutions

Any new development on this site should:

- i. Provide a positive relationship with the river.
- ii. Contribute to the improvement of the riverside environment and enhancement of the green infrastructure.
- iii. Retain the existing building frontage in line with the Design Quality SPG and the Green Street Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan.
- iv. Be of high quality design to enhance the character of the Conservation Area.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the wider Heritage Processions Area policy KCA.HP1.



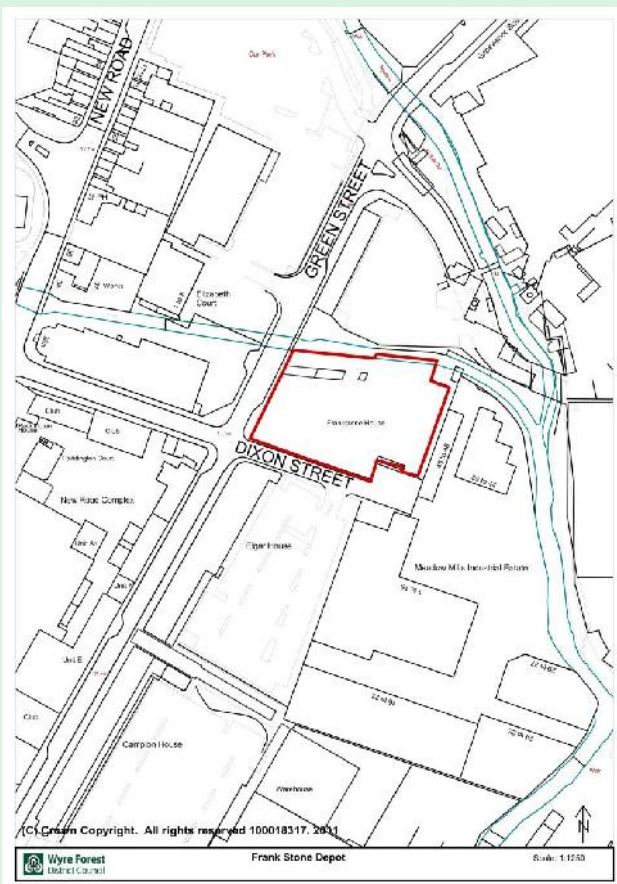
## Reasoned Justification

**15.12** The building has been identified in the Green Street Conservation Area Character Appraisal as being of sufficient quality to be on the Local Heritage List. The front of the building facing onto Green Street is attractive, forms a strong frontage and sense of enclosure, and contributes to the processional route along the road. Therefore, the frontage will be expected to be retained as part of any new development.

**15.13** The site is also adjacent to a branch of the River Stour and the development provides the opportunity to improve the riverside environment and enhance the green infrastructure in the town.

**15.14** This site could be suitable for a range of uses, including residential, offices or other employment uses.

## Site Location



## Green Street Depot (1.26ha)

**15.15** This site is owned by the District Council and is currently used as offices and a service depot for the Council's operations.

### Policy KCA.HP3

#### Green Street Depot

The redevelopment of this site should:

- i. Provide a new street layout, taking into account historic street patterns and buildings.
- ii. Incorporate the former Pump House and Sewage Works buildings into a well-designed modern development that actively enhances the Green Street Conservation Area.
- iii. Provide a strong and active frontage onto adjacent streets and spaces.
- iv. Have a positive relationship with the ring road.
- v. Have regard to the future road infrastructure of the ring road.
- vi. Take full account of the Groundwater Source Protection Zone that exists within this area, in safeguarding groundwater supply.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the wider Heritage Processions Area policy KCA.HP1.

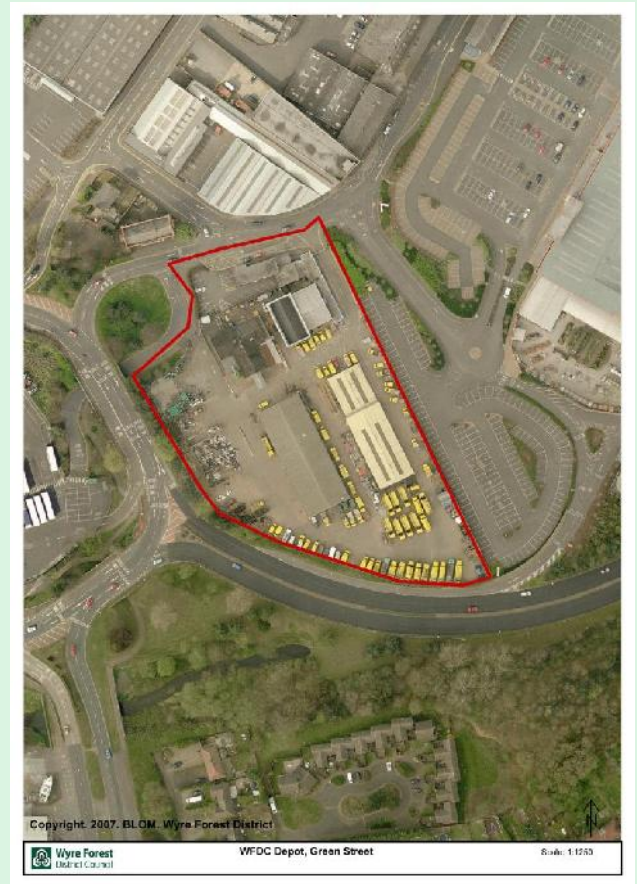
### Reasoned Justification

**15.16** Most of the buildings on the site are of a poor quality that detract from the Green Street Conservation Area. However, the Character Appraisal has identified the former Pumping Station and Sewage Works buildings on this site as being of sufficient quality to be on the Local Heritage List. Therefore, any new development would be expected to retain these two buildings and promote their reuse.

**15.17** The long term ambition for this area is to continue the processional route of Green Street further south, providing a strong built frontage onto the highway. In addition to this, there is also an ambition to remodel the existing Worcester Road ring road junction. This site could be key in contributing to these objectives. As this site is close to the ring road anyway it will be important for any new development to provide a positive relationship with the road and provide an active frontage upon it.

**15.18** The majority of this site sits on a Groundwater Source Protection Area (SPZ1). A SPZ1 is the inner zone and is highly sensitive to land use/contamination. Therefore, the type of development and activities that can take place within this zone need to have full regard to the Environment Agency's Groundwater protection: Principles and practice (GP3) document. In addition to the control of land use, drainage and building design (i.e. foundations), tight control of the investigation and remediation of any land contamination issues would also be required within this location.

### Site Location





## Bus Depot (2ha)

**15.19** The bus depot sits within the centre of a large traffic island that forms part of the Kidderminster ring road.

### Policy KCA.HP4

#### Bus Depot

The redevelopment of this site should:

- i. Provide a strong and active frontage onto adjacent streets and spaces.
- ii. Have a positive relationship with the ring road.
- iii. Have regard to the future road infrastructure of the ring road.
- iv. Take full account of the Groundwater Source Protection Zone that exists within this area, in safeguarding groundwater supply.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the wider Heritage Processions Area policy KCA.HP1.

## Reasoned Justification

**15.20** As mentioned above, the long term ambition for this area is to continue the processional routes further south and remodel the junction of the ring road. This site is absolutely vital to enabling the transformation of the road infrastructure in this area.

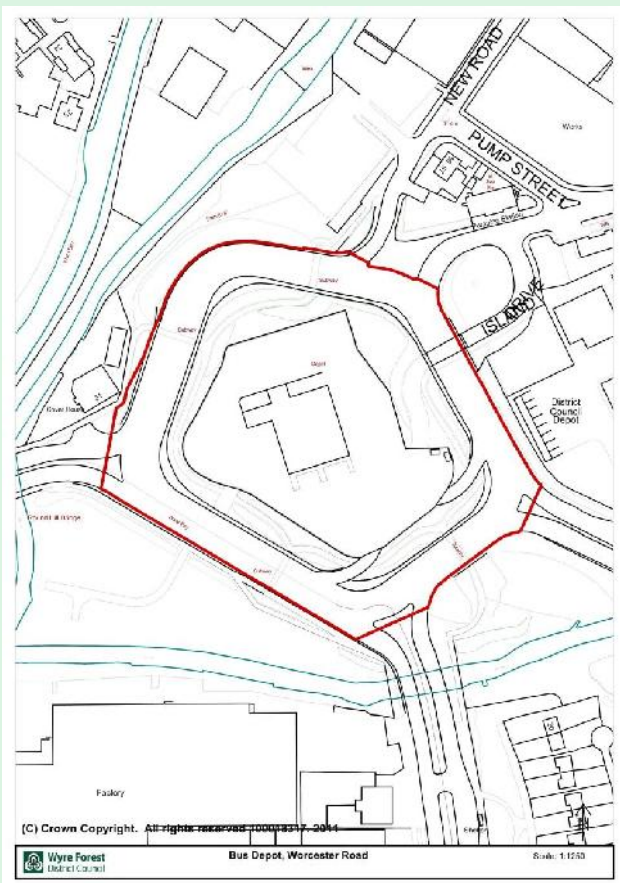
**15.21** The removal of the depot and the ring road could allow for the extension of town centre roads and the continuation of the processional routes. It also would free up additional development land as a result. Any new development in the area, regardless of the form of the future road infrastructure, will need to ensure that it provides strong frontages onto the highways.

**15.22** The site sits on a Groundwater Source Protection Area (SPZ1 and 2). SPZ1 is the inner zone and is highly sensitive to land use/contamination. Therefore the type of development and activities that can take place within this zone need to have full regard to the Environment Agency's Groundwater protection: Principles and practice (GP3) document. In addition to the control of land use, drainage and building design (i.e. Foundations), tight control of the investigation and remediation of any land contamination issues would also be required within this location.

Green Street and Bus Depots surrounded by the ring road



Site Location



## 16 Monitoring and Implementation Framework

**16.1** This Plan sets out the policies which contain the criteria against which planning applications for the development and use of land and buildings in the central area of Kidderminster will be considered. These policies will ensure that development accords with the spatial vision and objectives which are set out in the Adopted Core Strategy.

**16.2** It is important that the development policies are kept up to date and that their effectiveness is closely monitored. Monitoring will be undertaken in two key ways:

- Using the indicators which have been developed to provide a basis for monitoring the performance of the Adopted Core Strategy and for the specific site allocation policies. Indicators have been chosen to help guide overall progress of the implementation of the spatial strategy.
- Through the monitoring of planning application decisions, including planning appeals, and the extent to which development control policies have been supported.

**16.3** An Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) will be prepared to indicate the extent to which the various policy targets set out in the Adopted Core Strategy and this document are being met throughout the plan period to 2026. As part of this process the role of these development control policies will be closely examined in order to assess whether any adjustment is needed.

**16.4** This document is accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal report which considers the social, environmental and economic effects of the policies and measures their contribution towards achieving sustainable development. The Sustainability Appraisal sets out a number of indicators which will be used to monitor the effects of this plan.

**16.5** The following table cross references the development management policies against the relevant Adopted Core Strategy Policies. The relevant monitoring indicators for each of the Core Strategy Policies are set out in further detail in the table in the Adopted Core Strategy at Chapter 10.

Relevant Core Strategy Policies

Policy Name	DS01	DS02	DS03	DS04	DS05	CP01	CP02	CP03	CP04	CP05	CP06	CP07	CP08	CP09	CP10	CP11	CP12	CP13	CP14	CP15
KCA.DPL1-2	x	x			x				x	x										
KCA.GPB1-4	x	x			x								x	x						
KCA.GPB5	x	x			x								x	x						
KCA.GPB6	x	x			x			x					x	x						x
KCA.GPB7	x	x			x								x	x						x
KCA.CC1-3						x	x	x								x				
KCA.UP1-2																x	x			
KCA.UP3-4								x								x				
KCA.UP5-6	x						x									x		x	x	x
KCA.UP7																		x	x	x



**16.6** Policies found in the Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan are also relevant to the KCAAP development management policies as shown in the following table.

Relevant policies from Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan

KCAAP Policies	SALP Policies
KCA.DPL1 & 2	SAL.DPL1, 3, 4, 5 & 12
KCA.GPB1, 2, 3 & 4	SAL.GPB2, 3 & 4
KCA.GPB6	SAL.GPB5
KCA.CC1, 2 & 3	SAL.CC1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7
KCA.UP1 & 2	SAL.UP7, 8 & 9
KCA.UP3 & 4	SAL.UP7 & 9
KCA.UP5 & 6	SAL.UP3, 4 & 6
KCA.UP7	SAL.UP3, 5 & 7

**16.7** The following table shows the indicative timetable for the implementation of the site specific policies.

Implementation Schedule for Site Specific Policies

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
KCA.Ch2 Grasmere Close																
KCA.Ch3 Former Georgian Carpets/Stoney Lane																
KCA.Ch4 Former Sladen School																
KCA.Ch5 Churchfields Business Park																
KCA.Ch6 Limekiln Bridge																
KCA Ch7 Crossley Park																
KCA Ch8 Horsefair																
KCA.EG2 Kidderminster Railway Station																
KCA .EG3 Comberton Place																
KCA.EG4 Comberton Hill Island																
KCA.EG5 Bromsgrove Street Area																
KCA.EG6 Worcester Street Retail Development																
KCA.EG7 Lion Street																
KCA.EG8 Waterloo Street																
KCA.WG1 Park Street Industrial Estate and Rock Works																
KCA.WG2 Park Lane Canalside																
KCA.WG3 Weavers Wharf																
KCA.CW1 Castle Wharf																
KCA.MS Mill Street Mixed Use Area																

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
KCA.TTC1 Civic Spaces																
KCA.HP1 Heritage Processions Area																
KCA.HP2 Frank Stone																
KCA.HP3 Green Street Depot																
KCA.HP4 Bus Depot																

## A Jargon Guide

**Adopted Core Strategy (2010)** - this is the strategic level document within the District's Development Plan. It sets out the broad locations for delivering housing and other major development needs in the District such as employment, retail and transport. It guides the site specific policies within the Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan and the Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan.

**Adopted Local Plan (2004)** - the existing planning policy document for the Wyre Forest District, this was adopted in 2004 to guide future development within the District until 2011. Along with the Worcestershire County Structure Plan 1996-2011 and the Hereford and Worcester County Minerals Local Plan (1997) it constituted the Development Plan for the Wyre Forest District and has been replaced by the Core Strategy, the Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan and the Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan.

**Affordable Housing** - the District Council has adopted the definition of Affordable Housing as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework:

"Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.

Social rented housing is owned by local authorities and private registered providers (as defined in section 80 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008), for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime. It may also be owned by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with the Homes and Communities Agency.

Affordable rented housing is let by local authorities or private registered providers of social housing to households who are eligible for social rented housing. Affordable Rent is subject to rent controls that require a rent of no more than 80% of the local market rent (including service charges, where applicable).

Intermediate housing is homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market rent levels subject to the criteria in the Affordable Housing definition above. These can include shared equity (shared ownership and equity loans), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent, but not affordable rented housing.

Homes that do not meet the above definition of affordable housing, such as 'low cost market' housing, may not be considered as affordable housing for planning purposes."

**Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)** - Areas designated by Wyre Forest District Council where the level of pollutant concentrations in the atmosphere results in the air quality not meeting the objectives set out by central government in 2005.

**Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)** - An annually produced document which sets out the progress made in achieving the timetable set out in the Local Development Scheme as well as measuring the effectiveness of the development plan policies.



**Blue Infrastructure** - refers specifically to waterways, i.e. the River Stour and the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal.

**Climate Change** - Long-term changes in temperature, precipitation, wind and all other aspects of the Earth's climate. Often regarded as a result of human activity and fossil fuel consumption.

**Community Facilities** - Facilities which provide for the health, welfare, social, educational, spiritual, recreational, leisure and cultural needs of the community.

**Comparison Retail Floorspace** - refers to the floorspace for comparison goods, which are items that are not obtained on a frequent basis. These include clothing, footwear, household and recreational goods.

**Conservation Area** - Area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

**Developer Contributions** - developer contributions are often required for major developments to ensure sufficient provision is made for infrastructure and services such as roads, schools, healthcare and other facilities. Contributions are usually secured through planning conditions or legal agreements (often referred to as planning obligations or Section 106 agreements).

**Development Plan** - the Development Plan for the District comprises of the Core Strategy, the Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan and the Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan. Neighbourhood Plans will also form part of the Development Plan, once adopted.

**Evidence Base** - The information and data gathered by local authorities to justify the 'soundness' of the policy approach set out in Local Development Documents, including the physical, economic and social characteristics of an area.

**Flood Risk Assessment** - an assessment of the likelihood of flooding in a particular area so that development need and mitigation measures can be carefully considered.

**Geodiversity** - the range of rocks, fossils, minerals, soils, landforms and natural processes that go to make up the Earth's landscape and structure.

**Green Infrastructure** - The living network of green spaces, water and environmental systems in, around and beyond urban areas.

**Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)** - tests the impacts of a proposal on nature conservation sites of European importance, and is a requirement under EU legislation for land use plans and projects.

**Heritage** - A general term used to refer to historical and archaeological features, buildings and monuments which are of local, regional or national interest.

**Heritage Asset** - A heritage asset can be any building, monument, site, place, area or landscape which is a valued component of the historic environment. It may be designated and have statutory protection or it may be included on a Local Heritage List.

**Infrastructure** - Basic services necessary for development to take place, for example, roads, electricity, sewerage, water, education and health facilities.

**Listed Building** - A building of special architectural or historic interest. Listed buildings are graded I, II\* or II, with grade I being the highest. Listing includes the interior as well as the exterior of the building and any buildings or permanent structures within its curtilage.

**Local Heritage List** - The Local Heritage List identifies those heritage assets that are not protected by statutory designations. Their local interest could be related to the social and economic history of the area, individuals of local importance. The Local Heritage List is not restricted to buildings. It may comprise sites, places or areas such as village greens or ponds.

**Local Plans**- The collective term given to the statutory documents that form the Development Plan for the District. These comprise of the Core Strategy, Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan and Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan and a Policies Map.

**Mary Portas' High Street Review** - On 17 May 2011 the Prime Minister announced that he had asked Mary Portas, leading retail marketing consultant, to undertake a review of the English high street. The purpose of the Portas review was to identify what the Government, local authorities, businesses and others can do together to promote the development of new models of prosperous and diverse high streets. The final report was published on 13 December 2011.

**National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** - the document which sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It provides a framework within which local people and their accountable councils can produce their own distinctive local and neighbourhood plans, which reflect the needs and priorities of their communities. The NPPF must be taken into account in the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans, and is a material consideration in decisions on planning applications.

**Open Space** - All space of public value, which can offer opportunities for sport and recreation or can also act as a visual amenity and a haven for wildlife. Areas of open space include public landscaped areas, playing fields, parks and play areas, and also areas of water such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs.

**Previously Developed Land (PDL)** - Land which is, or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures; land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time.

**ReWyre Initiative/Regeneration Prospectus** - The prospectus aims to highlight Kidderminster's challenges and opportunities in order to attract support and investment into the town.

**Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)** - a specifically defined area within which protection is afforded to ecological or geological features. Sites are officially notified by Natural England.

**Stourport Road Employment Corridor (SREC)** - This is the main focus for employment within the District. This corridor runs south out of Kidderminster towards Stourport-on-Severn, is well established and contains a number of modern high quality premises together with significant redevelopment opportunities. Underused and derelict sites along this corridor include the former British Sugar site, which at 24 hectares is one of the largest sites in the region.

**Strategic Centres** - There are 25 town centres in the West Midlands region that are defined as in the Regional Spatial Strategy as 'Strategic Centres' and recognised for their crucial role in meeting the shopping and commercial needs of the region. Kidderminster is one of only three Worcestershire centres recognised in this way (together with Worcester City and Redditch).

**Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)** - collates information on all known sources of flooding that may affect existing or future development within the District. Such sources include river, surface water (local drainage), sewers and groundwater. In collecting this information, the SFRA identifies and maps areas that have a 'low', 'medium' and 'high' probability of flooding within the Wyre Forest, in accordance with National Policy. This information is used in the site selection process and also informs the Sustainability Appraisal.

**Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)** - The primary role of the SHLAA is to identify sites with potential for housing; assess their housing potential; and assess when they are likely to be developed.

**Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)** - The SHMA is an assessment of housing market influences, current and future housing demand issues, impacts of past and planned housing supply and the impacts of economic and demographic changes.

**Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)** - provide additional information to guide and support Development Plan.

**Sustainable Community Strategy** - The Sustainability Community Strategy 2008-2014 brings together the concerns of Wyre Forest communities under six main themes which, as a partnership, the Council and its partners needs to focus its efforts on in order to improve the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the District. These are:- Communities that are safe and feel safe; A Better Environment for Today And Tomorrow; Economic Success Shared By All; Improving Health & Wellbeing; Meeting the Needs of Children and Young People and Stronger Communities. These themes are addressed through the Adopted Core Strategy.

**Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS)** - An environmentally friendly way of dealing with surface water run-off which increases the time taken for surface water to reach watercourses, thereby reducing flash flooding.

**Sustainability Appraisal (SA)** - The purpose of SA is to ensure that all Local Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) conform to the Government principles of Sustainable Development, which are;

- Living within environmental limits
- Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society
- Achieving a sustainable economy
- Promoting good governance
- Using sound science responsibly



**Water Cycle Strategy** - The Water Cycle Strategy assesses the constraints and requirements that may arise from the scale of the proposed development on the water infrastructure in the District. The report focuses on potential development sites and assesses the flood risk, water supply, sewerage infrastructure, wastewater treatment, river quality and demand management measures. These are discussed in more general terms.

**Waterways** - navigable watercourses encompassing canals, navigable rivers and reservoirs.

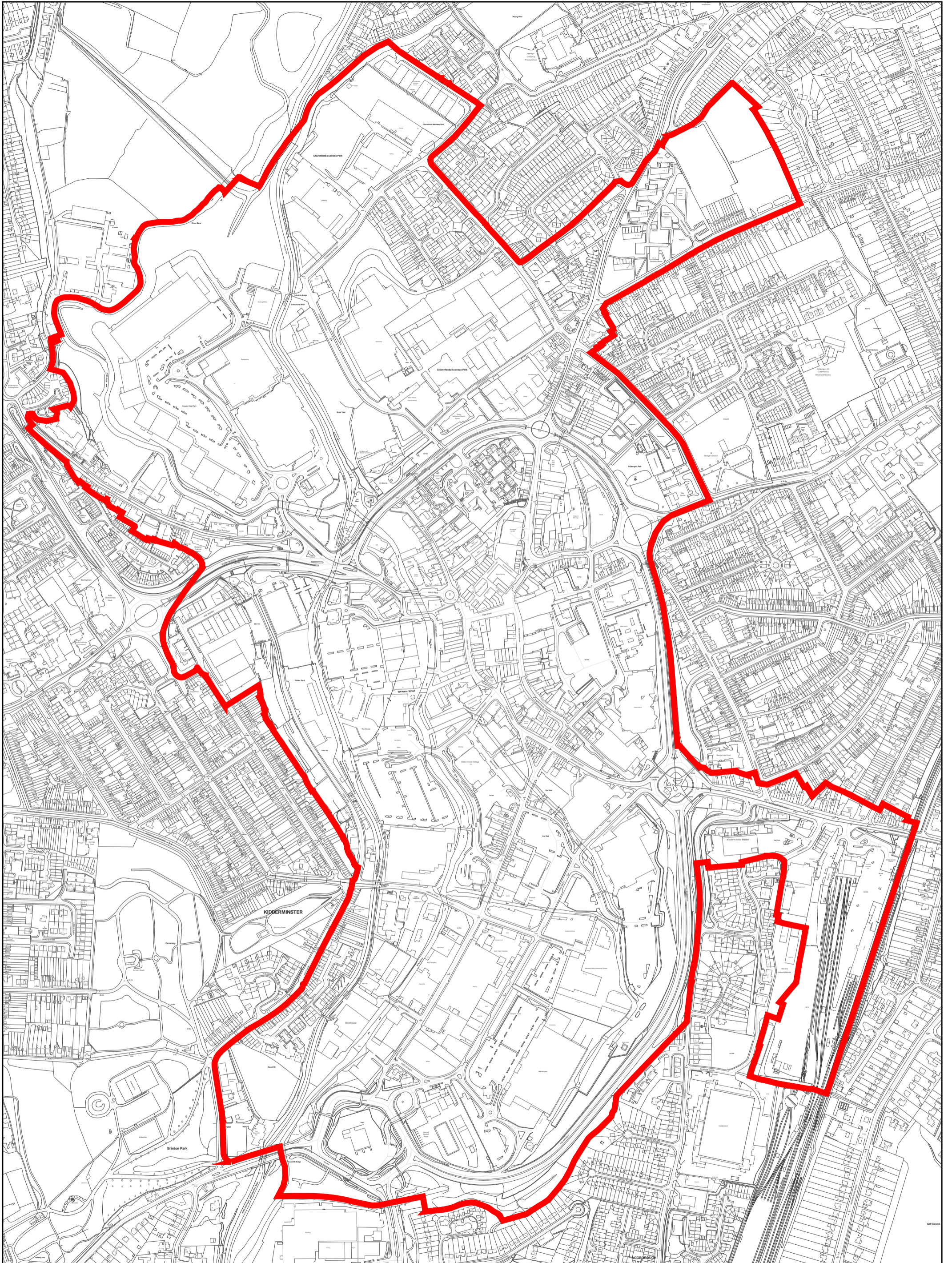
## B Policies to be Replaced

**B.1** A list of those policies within the Adopted Local Plan (2004) which are now replaced by this plan are set out below:

Adopted Local Plan Policy	Replaced By
H.2 Residential Locations	KCA.DPL1: Sites for Housing
H.13 Residential Homes	KCA.DPL2: Mixed Use Development
D.10 Boundary Treatment	KCA.UP1: Urban Design Key Principles
D.11 Design of Landscaping Schemes	KCA.UP1: Urban Design Key Principles
D.12 Public Art	KCA.UP2: Public Realm
D.15 Car Park Design	KCA.UP1: Urban Design Key Principles
RT.2 Primary Shopping Areas: Ground Floor Uses	KCA.GPB1: Retail Development
RT.4 Edge-of-Centre Retail Proposals	KCA.GPB4: Edge-of-Centre and Out-of-Centre Retailing
RT.5 Retail Parks and Major Stores	KCA.GPB4: Edge-of-Centre and Out-of-Centre Retailing
RT.6 Local Centres and Other Groups of Shops	KCA.GPB1: Retail Development
RT.13 Food and Drink	KCA.GPB4: Edge-of-Centre and Out-of-Centre Retailing
TC.2 Town Centre Uses	KCA.GPB2: Primary & Secondary Shopping Frontages KCA.GPB3: Outside of the Shopping Frontages
TC.3 Commercial Leisure Facilities	KCA.GPB7: Leisure Development
TC.5 Town Centre Car Parking Areas	Site specific policies
KTC.1 Kidderminster Town Centre Redevelopment Area	KCA.WG3: Weavers Wharf
KTC.2 Bromsgrove Street	KCA.EG5: Bromsgrove Street Area
KTC.3 Worcester Street Enhancement Area	KCA.EG5: Bromsgrove Street Area
KTC.4 Green Street Mixed Use Area	KCA.HP1: Heritage Processions Area; and subsequent site specific policies

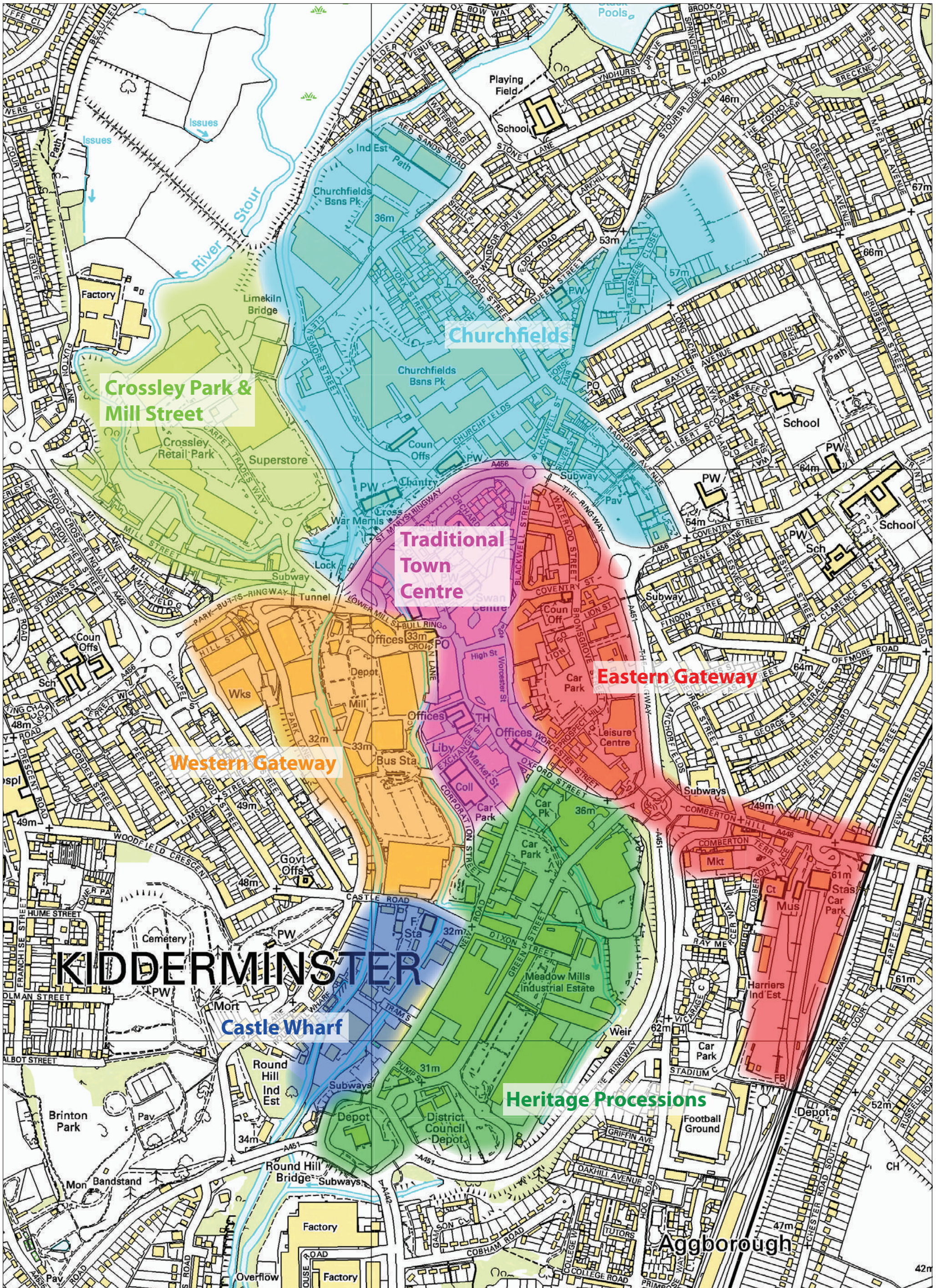
## C Maps







# Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan Character Areas





## St. Mary's Section

The ring road borders key public spaces in the town

Spaces to be enhanced and potential realised

Surface level crossings provided to improve access between these spaces and the town centre

Visual, as well as physical, linkages also improved

On the western side the road is urban with built development either side - but has a poor relationship with the road.

On the eastern side the ring road is a cutting through the landscape with fairly dense informal greenery either side.

Its a gateway to Bewdley, Wyre Forest and Safari Park for those coming from the West Midlands.

There is a need to rationalise the currently complicated junction serving Crossley Park and Weavers Wharf

## Park Butts Parkway Section

## Urban Section

Buildings front road and provide an active frontage

Junctions are key gateways with 'landmark' buildings

Street trees and appropriate planting prevalent

Road widths narrowed and pavement widths increased to improve pedestrian environment

Surface level pedestrian crossings provide greater connectivity

Physical traffic control barriers are softened and, where appropriate, the use of textured surfacing separates traffic lanes from each other as well as pavements

Ring road is bordered by two sections of woodland that form an embankment around the town centre

Woodland is maintained and enhanced to increase the parkway feel to the road

Tree cover and diversity is increased – particularly in the central reservation

Woodland Walk enhanced on the western side of the road providing a link from Comberton Island to Worcester Island


Central reservation widened and softened with planting


Traffic lanes narrowed or reduced to encourage lower speeds


## Aggborough Parkway Section

### KEY

Improved pedestrian links 

Important public space 

Development opportunity sites 

Improve relationship to ring road 

A456 Corridor

Western Gateway

TOWN CENTRE

Churchfields

A456 Corridor

Eastern Gateway

A448 Corridor

A449 Corridor

