1. **Summary Statement**

1.1 The regeneration of West Bromwich is a key priority to the Council and its partners. A strategy for growth has been pursued over a number of years, which has proved successful in allocating significant levels of public and private investment. Many of the opportunities identified through this strategy, which are incorporated within the Council’s Development Plan, have been either developed or are now subject to detailed proposals. This Supplementary Planning Document focuses on two sites within the western part of the core of the town centre, adjacent to the Primary Shopping Area.

1.2 Due to the potential relocation of two major landowners in the Town Centre, a new opportunity exists to develop a planning and design brief in the form of a Supplementary Planning Document for the comprehensive redevelopment of a significant site where West Bromwich Building Society Headquarters and Sandwell College are currently located.

1.3 Site one is a key location at the gateway to the Town Centre, within the Conservation Area incorporating the West Bromwich Building Society Headquarters (which provides a strong focal point from approaches to the Town Centre) and the existing (1950s college block) Sandwell College: West Bromwich Campus. The Council will support the refurbishment or redevelopment of this area as part of an office led mixed use scheme.

1.4 Site two is also a key location, within the Conservation Area, which also incorporates a number of important heritage assets of a special architectural and historical interest, including the Town Hall, Central Library and Magistrates’ Courts. Other buildings within the site include outdated office accommodation (Adult Services and Health) and the site of the former Gala Baths, which is now a temporary public car park.
1.5 Both sites are identified within the West Bromwich AAP: Preferred Options (2008) as suitable for office led mixed-use development within the Office Sector Opportunity Area.

1.6 The West Bromwich Civic Quarter Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been prepared as part of Sandwell’s Local Development Framework.

1.7 The SPD sets out the planning policy and design context that will shape the future development of the Civic Quarter. The SPD also seeks to define the development sites, set out acceptable land uses and provide detailed design guidance for development.

1.8 On 15\textsuperscript{th} November 2010, the Cabinet Member for Jobs and Economy gave approval to the Draft SPD as the basis for consultation (see Decision No. 38/10).

1.9 The Draft SPD was consulted on for a six week period (seven week period between November 29\textsuperscript{th} and January 14\textsuperscript{th} including the Christmas holiday) in accordance with the Town and Country (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 and any associated amendments. Specific consultees, local organisations, local residents and Councillors and MPs were consulted on the Draft West Bromwich Civic Quarter SPD.

1.10 Following consultation, the representations received were considered and the Draft SPD amended as deemed appropriate prior. Attached is a consultation statement containing a summary of representations received during consultation period and the Council’s response.

1.11 Approval is now sought to the amendments to the West Bromwich Civic Quarter SPD arising from the consultation process. It is also recommended that Cabinet be requested to authorise the Area Director for Regeneration and Economy, in consultation with the Cabinet Member, to agree any subsequent changes to the SPD prior to consideration by Council and subject to this, recommend Council to approve and adopt the document.


Further details are attached for your information
2. **Recommendations**

2.1 That the amendments to the West Bromwich Civic Quarter Supplementary Planning Document arising from the consultation process, as now submitted, be approved.

2.2 That the Cabinet be requested to:-

(a) authorise the Area Director for Regeneration and Economy, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Jobs and Economy, to agree any subsequent changes to the West Bromwich Civic Quarter Supplementary Planning Document prior to consideration by Council;

(b) subject to (a) above, recommend Council to approve and adopt the West Bromwich Civic Quarter Supplementary Planning Document.

In accordance with the authority delegated to the Cabinet Member for Jobs and Economy, the following course of action has been agreed, which will be set out in the formal record of the decisions taken by the Member:

(1) the recommendation(s) above is/are approved.

(2) the recommendation(s) above is/are approved as now amended.

(3) the recommendations above are not approved.

_Cabinet Member for Jobs and Economy_

14th February 2011

_Nick Bubalo_

_Area Director of Regeneration and Economy_

Contact Officer
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3. **Strategic Resource Implications**

3.1 The West Bromwich Civic Quarter Supplementary Planning Document identifies those areas and sites which will benefit from intervention and improvement and subsequently attract investment into West Bromwich Town Centre.

3.2 The West Bromwich Civic Quarter comprises land currently in Council ownership, which will have implications for the Council’s asset Management Plan and Office Accommodation Strategy.

3.3 The costs for consultation were met from within existing spatial planning budgets and resources. Consultation was undertaken as cost effectively as possible and once adopted the SPD will be circulated as cost effectively as possible.

3.4 The Corporate Risk Management Strategy has been undertaken in relation to the West Bromwich Civic Quarter SPD to identify and assess the significant risks associated. This includes (but is not limited to) political, legislative, financial, environmental and reputation risks.

3.5 Based on the information provided, it is the officer’s opinion that sufficient mitigation measures are in place where significant risks have been identified.

3.6 This assessment has identified that there are no ‘red’ risks that need to be reported.

4. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

4.1 The production of the West Bromwich Civic Quarter SPD has been undertaken by the Spatial Planning Division under the Town and Country (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 and any associated amendments.

5. **Implications for the Shared Partnership Priorities**

5.1 The Supplementary Planning Document will contribute to each of the Council’s priorities; Active and well people, A safe and clean place to live and Educated and skilled people in employment, though most notably assisting in the transformation of the physical environment, the creation of jobs and the identification of potential additional housing.
6. **Background Details**

6.1 The planning framework seeks to strengthen West Bromwich Town Centre as the principal centre of Sandwell and as a strategic centre for growth within the Black Country. Although the sites are not allocated in the Unitary Development Plan (UDP, 2004), they are identified for office led mixed use development within the West Bromwich Area Action Plan (WBAAP): Preferred Options (2008). The West Bromwich AAP which is under preparation will provide the policy framework for the area when adopted, replacing the existing UDP policies (saved) and proposals. The West Bromwich AAP is scheduled to undergo consultation on the changes to the Preferred Options (January, 2011), Publication (August, 2011) and Submission (October, 2011).

6.2 Though the sites are not currently allocated (as the West Bromwich AAP is not yet adopted) the existing uses set a precedent for future use in accordance with national policy guidance as there are no contradicting UDP (2004) policies or allocations. The SPD will provide supplementary guidance to UDP Policy C3: Conservation Areas, Black Country Joint Core Strategy policies ENV2: Historic Character and Local distinctiveness and CEN3: Growth in the Strategic Centres.

6.3 The regeneration of West Bromwich is seen by the Council and its partners as a key priority. A strategy for growth has been pursued for a number of years, which has proved successful in attracting significant levels of public and private sector investment. Together with the Joint Core Strategy for the Black Country, the West Bromwich AAP will provide the new statutory land use planning framework for the area and the basis upon which planning decisions will be made.

6.4 It is considered that there will be a need to prepare further, more detailed supplementary planning documents or masterplans for some of the sites proposed within the West Bromwich AAP in order to establish the principle and vision and to bring forward growth in a planned manner.

6.5 The Civic Quarter focuses on the western part of the core of the town centre, adjacent to the Primary Shopping Area. The area comprises the Conservation Area and subsequently a number of listed buildings including the Town Hall and Library, which provide a civic and administrative function for the town. When adopted, the West Bromwich AAP will aim to reinforce the function of the offices and professional services and develop the area as a new civic quarter that will deliver high quality employment opportunities in the town centre, whilst complementing and supporting the town’s retail offer.
6.6 Ongoing development coupled with development potential has provided the catalyst for the production of the Draft West Bromwich Civic Quarter SPD, which has been prepared with a view to influencing development of the whole area as part of a co-ordinated approach.

6.7 The existing Sandwell College site will be surplus to requirements when all campuses are consolidated on the West Bromwich Ringway site in 2012. It is also understood that the West Bromwich Building Society Headquarters are considering relocating from their current offices to the new All Saints office development.

6.8 The Magistrates’ Court (Lombard Street West) is due to be decommissioned, which will incur the need to identify suitable future uses in order to maintain the vitality that a building in use provides. The Council temporary car park and outdated offices of the Adult Services and Health Department (though this is dependent on the Council’s Office Accommodation Strategy) provide further opportunities for comprehensive redevelopment of the locality, with a view to maximising the historic assets, linkages and public realm.

6.9 It is considered that an area exhibiting such opportunity for change and within such a sensitive location (conservation area, listed buildings and gateway to the town centre) does require the intervention of guidance and principles in order to ensure that all disparate issues are reconciled and a high quality environment can be forged.

Source Documents

Draft West Bromwich Civic Quarter Supplementary Planning Document (2010)