

Black Country Core Strategy

PREFERRED OPTIONS LAUNCH EVENT REPORT

Wednesday 9TH April 2008
The Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

Back Ground/Context:

This event was used to launch the Preferred Options consultation on the Black Country Core Strategy. Its purpose was to introduce stakeholders to the work the four Black Country authorities had produced and the questions and involvement we needed from them to help shape the strategy.

The event commenced with a presentation of the key information emerging in the Preferred Options document. A panel of the planning leads allowed for a question and answer session, the results of this are contained in this report. The event concluded with a 'meet the planners' session where attendees were able to discuss specific issues on either a theme or corridor-centre basis. The event was attended by 66 people.

Contents:

1. Introduction and Welcome
2. Issues and Option Presentation
3. Questions and Answers Session

2. The Issues and Options – presentation by Annette Roberts

 A Joint Core Strategy for the Black Country

Black Country Joint Core Strategy
Consulting on Preferred Options

Annette Roberts Planning Policy Manager
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

 Dudley Walsall Council Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council Wolverhampton City Council

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 A Joint Core Strategy for the Black Country

Event Objective

To ensure that stakeholders are aware of Preferred Strategy document

To allow opportunity for stakeholders to talk to Planners about the preferred strategy

To tell the story so far

To let you what you can expect next

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 A Joint Core Strategy for the Black Country

Where we started

- In 2006 we took our basic principles from the Black Country Study
- Since then, we have been undertaking a number of evidence based studies to influence the JCS
- We talked to a range of stakeholders with interests to determine the issues

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What we did next

- By mid 2007 we had produced an issues and options document which set out what we thought the issues and options were and set broad spatial options across the Black Country
- We set out a number of methods of delivering the objectives
- Consulted widely on this document
- We had 1700 responses from over 130 respondents

Since then...

- We have firmed up the preferred option document
- Set out Core Policy Areas to deliver the strategy
- Identified 16 regeneration corridors and Strategic Centres

CORRIDORS

SC1	Wolverhampton City Centre
SC2	Walsall Town Centre
SC3	Brierley Hill Town Centre
RC1	Pendeford - Fordhouses
RC2	Stafford Road
RC3	South of Wolverhampton City Centre
RC4	Wolverhampton – Bilston
RC5	Loxdale - Moxley
RC6	Wednesfield – Willenhall - Darlaston
RC7	Bloxwich – Birchills - Bescot
RC8	Hill Top
RC9	Tipton – Dudley Port – Brades Village
RC10	Pensnett - Kingswinford
RC11	Dudley – Brierley Hill - Stourbridge
RC12	Oldbury – West Bromwich - Smethwick
RC13	Rowley Regis – Jewellery Line
RC14	Coombs Wood - Halesowen
RC15	Brownhills
RC16	Coseley – Tipton – Princes End

THE STRATEGY

- **3 Directions of Change**
- Sustainable Communities
- Environmental Transformation
- Economic Prosperity
- **43 Core Policy Areas**

What we will do next...

- Consider your responses
- Continue to look at delivery issues
- Continue to engage across all sectors
- Prepare the final document for submission

What we want you to do

- **Talk to our officers here this morning**
- **Consider what it means for you in the long term**
- **Respond before the end of the consultation period 29TH April.**

3. Record of Questions & Answers session

Keith Homer – National Express

Which questions are we seeking responses to?

We're focusing primarily on all the questions in the document, as other planning issues are established through RSS Phase 1 and the other subsequent reviews.

Unknown Representative

How is the Metro proposal progressing within the Black Country?

Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro is expected – we're still awaiting the outcome of the funding bid to central government.

Unknown Representative

How is the Joint Core Strategy's vision aligned with Advantage West Midlands and the Black Country Study's?

We've worked with them to develop the vision and objectives.

Unknown Representative

There is a need to ensure that skills and transport are recognised as key issues to be addressed.

This is recognised –the Black Country Study has been used as a key building block to develop the Joint Core Strategy. The skills agenda is a key aspect of the approach set out in the study.

Sam Holder – Advantage West Midlands

There's a lot of synergy with the aims and objectives of Advantage West Midlands's delivery plan, especially the need to concentrate on strategic centres.

Ensuring that the key aspects of the Joint Core Strategy's policy areas have the ability to be delivered will be fundamental to ensuring the success of the Joint Core Strategy.

Steve Spencer – South Staffs Ramblers Association

Procedures – There is a lack of detailed policies in the document - is this a result of a lack of work or consultation?

There are no detailed policies at this stage. The consultation and technical work process will help develop detailed policy; in addition the prescribed process of developing a Core Strategy leads us to not including detailed policies at the Preferred Option stage.

John Deegan – Town & Country Planning Association

Housing numbers – are you consistent with the Regional Spatial Strategy and are able to accommodate the increase as suggested in the recent publication?

We have identified enough housing to deliver targets in submitted RSS Phase 2 – discounted it by 15% to take into account different sites not brought forward and identified a buffer of local employment land to accommodate housing if required, but first figures have not been firmed up.

Sandwell resident

There are concerns about housing and employment being shown as closely interlinked, and therefore do transport infrastructure and education need to be delivered before final plans are put forward?

The Preferred Options addresses such issues head on with a balance between housing and employment uses, whilst not separating the two. There is emphasis on accessible jobs and infrastructure built into the process.

Caroline Crolley – Black Country Urban Industrial Mission

The document doesn't take into consideration servicing of new industries by transport, i.e. facilities for heavy goods vehicles – deliveries and overnight parking.

The Joint Core Strategy is a growth strategy planning for more jobs and due to a shortfall in high quality land, there is a need to deliver high quality employment land transformation. It needs more work to bottom out infrastructure requirements – this will be undertaken before submission. We need to engage more with businesses about what shortcomings need identifying and delivering in the submission document. Overnight parking requirements need to be mentioned in it, but role of other DPD's will give more detail.

Lakhvir Sahota - Play England – West Midlands

There is an increase in funding children's play areas – how will the Joint Core Strategy ensure safe and accessible spaces for young people? There is guidance being provided for planners.

Community facilities need to be provided and are being delivered between 4 local authorities.

Gerald Kells – Campaign to Protect Rural England

Ensuring the balance of population – There needs to be an increase in high earning population in the Black Country, and the quality of environment and housing needs to be sufficient to attract people in and raise aspirations of the Black Country overall.

Part of the mission for the Black Country is to make a step change through the Joint Core Strategy radically overhaul the environment, setting out how we address this need through working with the Black Country Consortium to produce the Environment Transformation Plan.

Steve Spencer – South Staffs Ramblers Association

Congestion charging is a key issue – is there a one line, over arching statement about transport policy, especially in dealing with congestion?

Congestion charging will be a long term consideration, but this has been rejected in the West Midlands conurbation in the short term. There is a requirement to reduce the need to travel and increase the quality of public transport. It covers demand management, and this will need to be looked at in other documents.

John Hale – JPE Holdings Ltd

The directions of change proposed have complex relationships to individuals in the community – we have to ensure they feel valued.

An aspiration issue of the Joint Core Strategy is recognising the Black Country as the place to be and focus for investment, delivered through job opportunities, environmental improvements and to ensure the place is where people want to live. We need to deliver changes in a sustainable way and

recognise local character that maximises a greater range of opportunities for facilities and jobs to deliver social inclusion. We need to ensure new investment is put in the right place to benefit both existing and new people. Local involvement is required to get communities on board. The Urban Park is an example of bringing people together around a greater aspiration of what can be achieved in the Black Country.

Christine Hemming – British Waterways

How does the Joint Core Strategy cover Community Infrastructure Levy for Section 106 monies to realise investment objectives?

It is referred to in the Joint Core Strategy; however it is still early days for the Community Infrastructure levy posed questions on whether we work jointly on collecting monies.

Julia Holding – NHS West Midlands

Health is not featured – changes in health and its delivery, plus changes in demographics and changing location needs, i.e. housing mean needs will change. How do you ensure future proofing of accommodation is being proposed?

The Joint Core Strategy is a strategic document and some issues are local and will be left to individual local authorities to address in future documents.

Unknown representative

Is there a need for supported housing in Dudley?

Dudley has an ambitious programme to build 5 extra care housing schemes – 3/400 units for a range of people who require it. There is a local response. Extra care housing is seen as regionally important.

Unknown representative

In terms of figures for housing – Sandwell's figures are higher?

Housing figures reflect the change from employment land to housing. Some, i.e. Sandwell, will have higher figures. There's not an equal share between the four authorities.

Clive Wright – Walsall Borough Strategic Partnership

Need to ensure link with Sustainable Community Strategies.

The linkages have been identified and are set out in the Joint Core Strategy – Appendix 1

Chris Greave – FOE

We recognise that Eco towns should be better placed within existing urban fabric, but how are you working with new build and existing build to ensure they are fit for purpose to deliver climate change initiatives and low carbon economy?

Eco towns not pursued or supported as the Black Country is pursuing sustainable housing. The growth point status puts it on the agenda with an emphasis on providing sustainable new homes.

There remains an issue with what we can do with existing housing and development – this is subject to a wider debate and is dependent upon government funding to improve the energy efficiency of existing construction.

Unknown Representative

There is an issue with tribalism in the Black Country and it is improvement to develop a vision of a Black Country identity across the issues.

The Joint Core Strategy can be part of the agenda for moving forward and progress moving forward jointly between the 4 local authorities, but structure and balance between the Black Country and local authorities and neighbourhood land.

Councillor Bob Badham – Sandwell MBC

The level of member involvement and the fact that members represent communities across the Black Country will ensure working across communities will happen in future.

Keith Homer – National Express

Core Policy 12 - Need to define the term used “adequately served.”

This will be picked up as policies are developed.

Resident

There is concern about the viability of the proposed schemes – how to remedy to ensure that individual people don't pay for it

One of the tests of soundness requires us to show we can deliver the Joint Core Strategy and need communities and developers etc to sign up to its delivery. Joint Core Strategy concentrates on the essentials to deliver – e.g. housing, employment, and transport to support the regeneration of the Black Country. We're competing for a share of future resources - Joint Core Strategy acts as a bid to government and developers for a share of the resources we need to improve the Black Country.

John Hale – JPE Holdings Ltd

John stressed the importance of involving industry in the Joint Core Strategy and the need to improve consultation with industries.

We will continue to work with Chambers and local businesses when formulating Joint Core Strategy policies.

This was confirmed by Tony Carroll – Black Country Chamber of Commerce – who stated that they have been involved with meetings

David Dunn – FSB

When factory closes they're replaced with housing – often good companies close and good wages disappear. How do we address this?

Work has identified quality of land. Joint Core Strategy needs to meet employment needs and such sites will be protected over the next 20 years.

What Happened Next?

This event was supplemented by other local events across the Black Country during the statutory 6 week consultation period.

The results of the question and answer session will be considered to help inform the work being carried out for the publication of the Joint Core Strategy.

Upon the end of the consultation, the results will be analysed and reported back to people. In addition ongoing engagement will continue to support the preparation of the next stage of the Core Strategy which will be the published version which will be available for further consultation in the near future.

List of Delegates attending event

First Name	Surname	Organisation
Jane	Alexander	Sandwell MBC
Councillor Bob	Badham	Sandwell MBC
Heather	Blakey	Barton Wilmore
Tony	Carrol	Black Country Chamber of Commerce
Michael	Cooke	Regional Council for Museums Libraries & Archives
Caroline	Crolley	Black Country Urban Industrial Mission
John	Deegan	Town & Country Planning Association
David	Dunn	FSB
Kevin	Durnell	West Midlands Amenity Societies Association
Martin	Eade	Birmingham City Council
Claire	Eggington	Cannock Chase District Council
Tim	Farley	King Sturge
Benita	Fernandes	
Paul	Fisher	West Midlands regional Assembly
Julia	Foster	David Lock Associates
John	Hale	JPE Holdings Ltd
Debbie	Hall	South Staffordshire Council
Matt	Hall	Persimmon Homes
Henry	Harbord	Sustrans
Dennis	Harper	
Carol	Harte	Birmingham Women's Advice & Information Centre
Andy	Haynes	Walsall Housing Group
Jon	Haywood	Centro
Richard	Heaven	Sandwell MBC
Christine	Hemming	British Waterways

Matthew	Hogan	West Midlands Ambulance Service
Sam	Holder	Advantage West Midlands
Julia	Holding	NHS West Midlands
Keith	Homer	National Express
Margaret	Hopkins	London & Cambridge Properties
John	Howard	Wolverhampton & Shrewsbury Methodist District
Eiryl	Jones	Barratt Homes West Midlands
Gerald	Kells	Campaign to Protect Rural England
Hugh	Lufton	Staffordshire County Council
Kate	Mann	Serco
John	Miller	Dudley MBC
David	Mobberley	Capita Lovejoy
John	Morgan	Cannock Chase District Council
Sean	Nethercott	GAVE Grimley Ltd
Pat	Nimmo	Black Country Urban Industrial Mission

First Name	Surname	Organisation
Gemma	Poxon	West Midlands Regional Assembly
Nick	Rawlings	RPS
Malcolm	Reid	West Midlands Planning Aid Service
Rachel	Riley	Planning Prospects
Shawn	Riley	DTZ
Mark	Rowlands	Wienerberger
Lachvir	Sahota	Play England – West Midlands
Brian	Shaw	Tarmac
Ron	Sims	Dudley MBC
Bhupinder	Singh	Walsall College
Tom	Slater	Brierley Hill Regeneration Partnership
Rev, Olwen	Smith	Black Country Urban Industrial Mission
Stephen	Spencer	South Staffordshire Ramblers Association
Margaret	Steele	Birmingham Women's Advice & Information Centre
Chris	Warren	Selbourne Homes Limited
Jeff	Webb	Transportation Planning (International) Ltd
Clive	Wright	Walsall Borough Strategic Partnership
Simon	Zargar	Drivas Jonas
Jim	Weston	Walsall CEN
Charlotte	Abbott	HBF

Chris	Creave	Friends of the Earth
Mike	Maher	Sandwell PCT
Councillor Malcolm	Knowles	Dudley MBC
Lee	White	JMP
Rob	Willoughby	GOWM
Geoff	Thomas	Dudley MBC