



## **Black Country Core Strategy**

**Publication Launch 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2009**

**The Public, West Bromwich**

**Event Report**

## **Back Ground/Context:**

The event was used to launch the Publication stage of the Black Country Core Strategy. Its purpose was to introduce stakeholders to the work the four Black Country authorities had produced that had culminated in the Publication Stage.

The format of the event was informal with a short presentation and a question and answer session at the end of the event. The event was attended by 34 Stakeholders

## **Format of the Event**

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

### **1. Introduction and Welcome – Councillor Bob Badham, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council, Chair of Black Country Joint Advisory Group**

Councillor Bob Badham gave a welcome and introduction to the event, setting out some of the main issues that the Core Strategy is addressing.

“Welcome to the Launch event of the publication of Black Country Core Strategy.

This launch event marks the beginning of an important stage of the development of this key document.

The Core Strategy is the biggest in the Country, covering the biggest land area and affecting the greatest population and dealing with significant challenges.

This document takes its strategy and its ethos from the ground breaking Black Country Study transforming the Black Country, making it a revitalised and energised sub region and today we are launching its publication.

That means that we are now at an advanced stage. It means that we have already done a vast amount of work, both behind the scenes and with our business, community and public sector partners to make sure we have the strategy right.

The strategy will deliver 60,000 new homes.

It will deliver a quarter of a million square metres of retail development in Brierley Hill, Walsall, West Bromwich and Wolverhampton.

It will create the framework for a new improved employment land portfolio capable of attracting inward and indigenous investment bringing with it new jobs.

It will also prepare the ground for a greener more environmentally sound Sub Region through a sophisticated green infrastructure plan

It has set the framework to improve transport links and offer opportunities and alternatives to the private car as a means of access.

Today we have a strategy that we believe works.

We believe it is based on what our partners want and what is right to make a better Black Country, most of all we believe it is deliverable”.

**2. Black Country Core Strategy Publication Launch – Presentation by Ian Culley Planning Policy and Urban Design, Wolverhampton City Council**



**Joint Core Strategy**

**PUBLICATION LAUNCH**

**2<sup>nd</sup> DECEMBER 2009**

**THE PUBLIC**

**WEST BROMWICH**



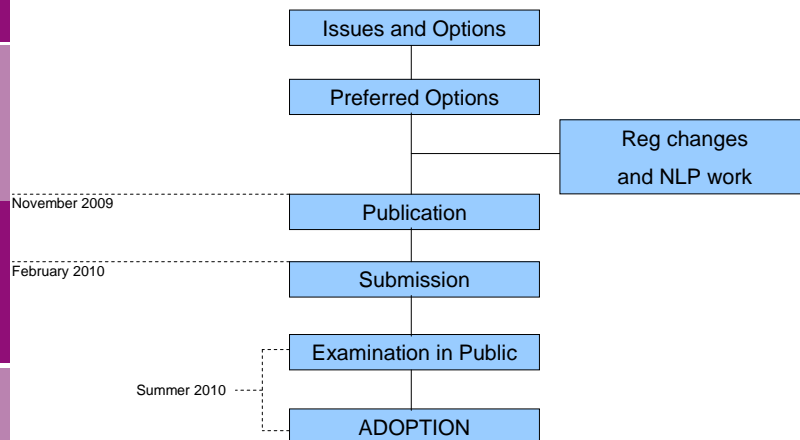


## Progress to Publication

- Issues and Options – June 2007
- Preferred Options – March 2008
- Community, Stakeholder and Business Sector Consultation
- Responding to the downturn
- Additional Evidence gathering



## Where Are We Now?



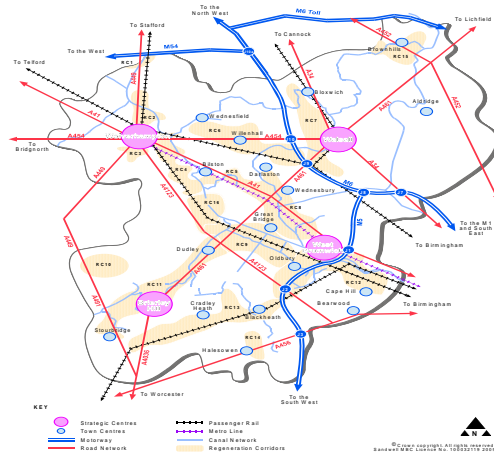


## What is the Strategy About?

- Delivering regional corridors and key centres
- Creating 60,000 new homes
- Delivering new jobs
- Securing retail floorspace across 4 strategic centres
- Improving and enhancing environmental networks and corridors
- Managing land use change
- Ensuring delivery mechanism is in place



Black Country Joint Core Strategy - Key Diagram



## THE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

- **New Housing**
- 12% in Strategic Centres
- 52% in Regen Corridors
- **63,000 in total**
- **Revitalised and Regenerated Employment Land**
- 93% in Regen Corridors
- **680 ha in total**
- **New Comparison Retail**
- 345,000 sqm in Strategic Centres
- **New Office Floorspace**
- 95% in Strategic Centres
- 5% in Regen Corridors
- **980,000 sqm in total**

- **Centres and Retail**
- 3 level hierarchy
- Strategic Centres
- Town Centres
- District and Local Centres
- Approach for local parades/shops



## STRATEGIC CENTRES

- |                        | 2006-21    | 21-26      |
|------------------------|------------|------------|
| • <b>Wolverhampton</b> | 70,000 sqm | 30,000 sqm |
| • <b>Brierley Hill</b> | 65,000 sqm | 30,000 sqm |
| • <b>Walsall</b>       | 60,000 sqm | 25,000 sqm |
| • <b>West Bromwich</b> | 45,000 sqm | 20,000 sqm |
- **Policy approach re Brierley Hill In line with RSS**



- **Employment Land supported by suite of policies to balance employment land and housing**
- **Employment capacity testing to ensure short/medium and long term needs catered for**
- **25% Affordable Housing – tested on viability and deliverability needs**
- **Supported by deliverability study and Infrastructure Plan and testing**
- **Complementary holistic approach to Green Infrastructure**





## The Publication Document

- It's a series of Documents
- Main Publication Document
- Series of Appendices including detailed proposals for Regeneration Corridors and Strategic Centres (Appendix 2)
- Sustainability Appraisal
- Consultation Report
- Evidence base



## The Publication Stage

- The Core Strategy has been published, for a period of 7 weeks
- This is NOT an additional stage of public participation or consultation
- The purpose of the publication stage is to gather representations on the soundness of the Core Strategy before it is submitted to the Secretary of State







## The Tests of Soundness

The four local authorities are inviting representations on the soundness of the Core Strategy. The Tests of Soundness are as follows:

- The Strategy is not justified by a robust, credible evidence base and/or is not considered to be the most appropriate strategy
- The document is not deliverable, flexible or suitable for monitoring
- The document is not consistent with national policy



## How to Respond

Response forms are available from:

- <http://blackcountrycorestrategy2009.co.uk>
- The four Council Planning offices
- Libraries and other public areas

Responses need to be returned to the address on the form or online at the address above by 5pm on the 15<sup>th</sup> January 2010



## What Next?

- Publication stage closes on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2010
- Full Council approval to submit document
- Consideration of issues raised
- Submit document ready for examination in February / March 2010
- Examination In Public June/July 2010
- Late 2010/early 2011 JCS adopted as a framework for regeneration

### 3. Questions & Answers session

#### **Mark Middleton - West Midlands Regional Assembly**

Q – Welcome progress of Core Strategy, Phase 1 RSS gave priority to the Black Country. What is your take on RSS Phase 2 Panel Report which gives emphasis to the urban regeneration strategy but raises issues regards housing policy and employment land supply?

A – Regard was given to the Panel Report in the development of the policies and phasing is still a key issue. A flexible approach has had to be taken due to further potential changes by Government. Overall the emerging RSS is supportive of the centres and corridors approach in the Black Country.

#### **Derek Greedy – Warwickshire County Council**

Q – Three of the strategic waste management sites for allocation do not have full delivery information. How will they come forward without this?

A – Some of these sites are planning committed and the operators have been spoken to and they have given conformation that they will be delivered. We feel that the information provided does demonstrate these sites are deliverable.

#### **Nick Bird – Walsall Regeneration Co**

Q – What material weight is given to the Core Strategy before its adoption?

A – The RSS provides a certain amount of certainty already given the Phase 1 review. The key issue is probably the balance between retention and release of employment land for housing. The Core Strategy will gain more weight as it goes through the examination process.

#### **Tim Williams – West Midlands Regional Assembly**

Q – Will there be an overlap between the Core Strategy Publication Appendix 2 and other Development Plan Documents?

A – The Core Strategy is the tip of the iceberg, and will be supported by other DPDs which will deal with site specific matters and will look at areas in more detail than Appendix 2. Each Local Authority will be approaching this in their own way, e.g. Wolverhampton is having a number of AAPs covering the key regeneration corridors in the City.

**Andy Johnson – South Staffordshire District Council**

Q – What is the policy approach on affordable housing – has the Core Strategy tested viability or will this be done on a case by case basis?

A – A viability study has informed the policies in the Publication document and this justifies the 25% figure in the affordable housing policy. Planning applications will need to submit viability reports to inform decisions on the applications in accordance with policy.

## List of Organisations in Attendance

Advantage West Midlands
Birmingham City Council
Black Country Geodiversity Partnership
British Waterways
Centro
Coventry City Council
Esprit Estates
Highways Agency
I D Architects (Midlands) Limited
National Express
National Housing Federation
Natural England
RPS
Sandwell Ramblers/Local Access Forum
South Staffordshire District Council
Staffordshire County Council
Staffs RA Area
The Coal Authority
The Wildlife Trust For Birmingham and the Black Country
Turley Associates
Walsall Ramblers/Pelsall Community Association
Walsall Regeneration Company
Warwickshire County Council
West Midlands Regional Assembly
Wolverhampton Development Company