

# Hello & Welcome...

The Solihull Town Centre Masterplan aims to provide a blueprint for future investment and development which maximises the opportunities for Solihull, capitalises on its existing assets, and sets out a clear vision for Solihull 2036; as a vibrant, sustainable, aspirational and diverse 21st century town.

Solihull is already a successful and popular town, with excellent shopping, cultural facilities and employment opportunities in an attractive setting.

Solihull Town Centre is a key part of the UK Central – the West Midlands' principal international gateway and strongest performing economy. When HS2 is constructed, UK Central will be brought within a 40 minute journey of London, providing significant opportunities for growth and investment.

These changes present the opportunity to enhance Solihull's existing economic base at a regional and national scale. The Masterplan will provide a framework for future development, which aims to balance the sometimes conflicting needs for growth and infrastructure investment with quality of place. This will ensure 'managed' growth and retain the character which makes Solihull so popular.

In order to understand Solihull's future growth opportunities and set the vision for the future, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council are working with AECOM, Cushman Wakefield, WSP and Mott MacDonald consultants to develop a Masterplan and we would welcome your views.



Above: Solihull Town Centre Masterplan Study Area including key areas of influence

## Solihull Today

Land Use

The historic development of Solihull has shaped current land use patterns within the town centre. The town is characterised by large single use areas, which have little interaction.

Whilst this can reduce potential conflicts between landuses, it fails to recognise the commercial and lifestyle benefits that complementary mixed land uses can provide.

At present land uses are divided as follows:

- Retail core - incorporating the High Street, Mell Square and Touchwood.
- Commercial areas located along Homer Road and the western end of Warwick Road.
- A number of civic uses situated throughout the town providing key landmarks and points of interest.
- There are currently very few residential areas within the town centre and they are generally located on the periphery of the town centre.

Movement

The town centre is currently dominated by cars, with congestion, roads and junctions acting as barriers to pedestrians and cyclists. As Solihull develops and grows congestion could get worse, therefore the masterplan needs to encourage greater pedestrian, cycle and public transport use. Key influences the masterplan will examine include:

- The train station is located on the periphery of the town centre and has poor pedestrian and cycle connections into the centre.
- Local bus services suffer from delays due to congestion, which discourages use.
- Limited number of crossing points across the busy ring-road discourages pedestrians and cyclists.
- Poor north-south connections through the town centre and a distinct lack of cycle routes.
- The standard of some key public routes and spaces doesn't reflect Solihull's heritage and quality.

Heritage

Solihull Conservation Area is located at the heart of the town along the High Street and Poplar Road. The conservation area contains all of the listed buildings within the study area. These include:

- The Church of Saint Alphege (Grade I Listed);
- War Memorial to the front of the Church of Saint Alphege (Grade II Listed);
- A cluster of 15 listed buildings along the eastern end of the High Street (Grade II and Grade II\* Listed);
- The Roman Catholic Church of Saint Augustine of Canterbury, located on the corner of Herbert Road / Station Road (Grade II Listed); and
- A cluster of 5 listed buildings located to the north of the Warwick Road/Poplar Road junction (Grade II Listed).

Public Spaces

The town centre provides a wide variety of public spaces which support a range of different functions. Some key spaces include:

- Mell Square - This large public square benefits from lots of passing footfall, however the layout and relatively tired paving and street furniture mean that its potential uses are restricted and the quality doesn't reflect Solihull's future ambitions.
- The High Street - The main pedestrian spine through the town. The vibrant, quality uses located to each side are let down by the poor quality of materials and contrasting styles of street furniture.
- Jubilee Gardens - Adjacent to Solihull Registry Office this space has the potential to become a popular outdoor destination for shoppers with new user friendly facilities and improved connections to Library Square, the Holiday Inn, Tudor Grange Park, and the Council Offices.
- The town centre is in close proximity to two large public parks (Malvern and Brueton Park, and Tudor Grange Park) but connections to the parks are poor with little directional signage.

# Solihull Town Centre Masterplan

Public Consultation