

## Note of Conference

### Shaping Solihull's Future Together

#### Local Development Framework Core Strategy Conference

27<sup>th</sup> July 2011, The Village Hotel, The Green Business Park, Shirley

#### Opening and Presentations

Cllr Courts	Purpose of Conference
Cllr Courts	Conference Schedule
Cllr Meeson	Keynote address by the Leader of the Council

#### Question and Answer Session

Linda Poulson – Bickenhill PC	If a community gives up land, what would be given in return from the New Homes Bonus and S.106 money?
Paul Watson	Government policy aims to ensure local communities capture meaningful benefits locally, but “meaningful” is not defined.
Ian Spencer DDRA	How is sustainable development defined?
Paul Watson	Quote from NPPF: “Sustainable development means development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It is central to the economic, environmental and social success of the country and is the core principle underpinning planning. Simply stated, the principle recognises the importance of ensuring that all people should be able to satisfy their own basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life, both now and in the future.”
Cllr Courts	We need to be clear about what we want to protect.
Cllr Meeson	Employment has to provide meaningful jobs.
Malcolm Hicken – Berkswell PC	Economic growth is seen as the resolution to the problem, but do not need to solve housing and job shortages with economic growth.
Cllr Meeson	There is worsening unemployment.
Cllr Courts	There are important interrelationships with the West Midlands, but I object to a numbers based policy. There will always be housing demand – low council tax and good schools.
Berkswell PC	Can you identify where schools will be closing?
Cllr Meeson	We want you to answer those questions, you know your area best. Not all questions answered in Solihull, e.g. some jobs filled in Birmingham.
Glyn Prince Balsall Common RA	Public transport is poor in the rural areas.
Cllr Richards	Council is working with Centro and entering LTP3, looking to encourage patronage and increase viability. HS2 can help connectivity of services.
David Cole Kingshurst PC	Residents are particularly concerned about Kingshurst & Babbs Mill Park and Kingfisher Nature Reserve. These are essential for retention and there should be no question of development.
Clive Hill Bickenhill PC	Have a neighbourhood plan in preparation, where will it be reflected in the LDF?
Paul Watson	The Localism Bill is just a bill in preparation. Neighbourhood plans have no statutory status until the Localism Bill is granted Royal Assent, but the Council is keen on local planning which can provide detail and will be invaluable in informing the Core Strategy.
Brian Brown Cheswick	What consideration is given to water run-off from development?

Green PC	
Cllr Meeson	Council takes flood risk seriously.
Anne Brereton	All sites go through an assessment, one of the criteria is flood risk, more detailed assessment undertaken as sites progress through the process.
Cllr Meeson	Risks can be mitigated, e.g. Land set aside at Blythe Valley Park for alleviation.
Linda Poulson Bickenhill PC	How can we ensure that new housing will meet local need e.g. first time buyers and the retired.
Cllr Courts	Today is about identifying local needs.
Anne Brereton	Work on housing need has been done – Housing Market Assessment gives evidence of local needs and differences in different parts of the Borough. Evidence of more housing need for ageing population and supported housing.
Cllr Courts	Need to plan to meet needs for social and affordable housing, but subsidy is required. Developers cannot viably just build affordable housing. One solution is market housing requiring a proportion of affordable housing. Can provide the right type of market housing, but can't legislate who will live there.
Ian Spencer DDRA	Redevelopment of small business sites for housing eliminates opportunities for small business.
Cllr Meeson	Number of areas have been converted to offices, workshops, craft centres in rural area. Need to be innovative and encourage small business concerns. Representations on Government consultation allowing businesses to change to housing have been made. If there is need for more sites, we need your feedback.

### Presentations

Anne Brereton	Current Position, the story so far
Paul Watson	Emerging legislation
Anne Brereton	Next steps and looking ahead

### Question and Answer Session

Cllr Courts	Required to maintain 5 year housing land supply , plus 20% = 6 years and to identify land supply for 15 years. Garden grabbing can be detrimental to our suburbs, but can relieve pressure elsewhere, so balance is needed.
Brian Brown Cheswick Green PC	Affordable housing has been provided, but concerned that it can then be bought and rented at market prices.
George Daley	Where affordable housing is required, the Council looks for provision by a registered social landlord (mainly housing associations or Solihull Community Housing) and it should remain affordable in perpetuity.
Glyn Price Balsall Common RA	What procedures are there to assess the impact of development on neighbouring areas?
Paul Watson	We talk to each other to ensure plans make a coherent pattern of development.
Berkswell PC	How is housing need increasing when population is remaining static?
Cllr Courts	There is population growth, but more importantly there is household increase with more people living alone – ageing population, people living longer, more single people, tendency for young people to live alone longer, higher divorce rate. We can challenge forecasts, but the demographic trends are clear.
Berkswell PC	Can't we just ban 4-5 bed homes being built in Solihull?
Cllr Courts	We can't ban them, but we can regulate more.
Paul Watson	Where we have an evidence base for need, we can insist on a certain housing mix.

John D Hampton PC	How does the timetable fit with plans for future engagement?
Anne Brereton	Needs to be defined with Members. If we keep to timetable we will be planning from feedback and a number of smaller discussions. Key stage is bringing information together by the end of the year. We will publish a timetable once clarified with Members.
	Could we provide social housing through builders providing to specification of need and Council buying and leasing back?
Cllr Courts	This is part of the North Solihull strategy where the Council owns the land, but there is a problem of land supply elsewhere and this could not be done economically.

### Breakout Sessions – Shaping Solihull’s Future Together

M42 Corridor	<p><b>Regional Investment Sites (RIS):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blythe valley Park could help to address housing need through provision for a mixed use business park. Could retain about 167,220 sqm (1.8m sqft) of commercial development out of consent for about 185,800 sqm (2m sqft). The extent of residential development could be 400-500 dwellings (on about a third of the remaining land to be developed). Blythe Valley Business Park should support a broader range of facilities on site to modernise the business park and make it attractive to investment and workers. This could be done through planning policies that enable a broad range of supporting facilities and by enabling residential development on the Blythe Valley Business Park land. Residential occupiers would help to support the broader range of services. These could include: a hotel, crèche, gymnasium, playing fields and convenience retailing. Modern occupiers want a different offer to when Blythe Valley Park first came forward.</li> <li>• The Regional Investment Site (RIS) concept is too restrictive because it only enables B1 business development.</li> <li>• B1 only is similarly too restrictive at the Birmingham Business Park RIS and broader mix of uses is needed. The recent industrial and warehousing consent on Birmingham Business Park enables the business park to be marketed more broadly. Other supporting uses would be appropriate and residential would be appropriate on land within/adjacent the business park Potentially could provide for 450 houses around Birmingham Business Park. About 60,000 sqm of offices could also be provided at the business park. New development could help to integrate Birmingham Business Park with the local community in a sustainable way.</li> <li>• A broader mix of uses would help to stimulate demand.</li> </ul> <p><b>National Exhibition centre and Birmingham Airport</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A broad range of supporting uses is needed at the NEC. These should include: industry, offices, research, education, retail and leisure and possibly residential. NEC car parks gave some scope for further development within the NEC.</li> <li>• There is a need to improve connectivity, including north/south links within Solihull and north/south links that include areas beyond the Borough boundary to the north.</li> <li>• There is a need for a master-planning approach to the further development of the general area containing the Airport, the NEC, Birmingham Business Park and other commercial development in the locality. This should include consideration of the development and connectivity implications of HS2.</li> <li>• HS2 will be important for future investment and development. There could be benefits of focussing development around BIA/NEC with HS2 as a further stimulus.</li> </ul> <p><b>Motorway Junctions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is some concern about further development around motorway junctions because of capacity issues but in principle this could be supported. At M42 junction 5 mixed feelings were expressed in regard to development. Whale Tankers were considered to be a good example of how development can be accommodated in rural surroundings</li> </ul>
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	<p>but public transport issues would need to be resolved and there may be less harm to the green belt if existing commercial sites are extended rather than creating new ones.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is some concern that further development at Junction 5 could worsen traffic and congestion through Knowle High Street and Hampton.</li> <li>• Improvements may be needed to Junction 6.</li> </ul> <p><b>Other main Points</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The planning system has some uncertainties at present, particularly in regard to how neighbourhood plans might work and whether development would be resisted by communities. More clarity and more contact in the planning process is supported.</li> <li>• Public transport improvements are needed generally. 15 minute public transport hubs should be created linked to car parking to help connectivity. Public transport improvements should be considered in consultation with adjoining local authorities, for example to improve links between Hams Hall, Coleshill, Packington and the NEC/BIA/Birmingham Business park area.</li> <li>• Concern that some types of commercial development remain unlet.</li> </ul>
<p>North Solihull</p>	<p><b>A) NORTH SOLIHULL CHALLENGES</b></p> <p>Key challenges include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Babb’s Mill and Kingfisher Country Park - areas of outstanding natural beauty that needs to be kept.</li> <li>• Employment – not much employment land in North Solihull and transport is difficult and costly. 1/5<sup>th</sup> of the salary earned by apprentices goes to cost of travelling to job and training. North Solihull needs employment opportunities and training.</li> <li>• Good schools but problems with transport and parking e.g. at Kingshurst Academy.</li> <li>• The scale of housing demand – housing waiting list of 16,000 and demand is generated by the nature of the local economy and accessibility to motorways and airport. The Government sees the planning process as a vehicle for growing the economy.</li> <li>• Loss of open space, clear from work undertaken with local communities. Communities haven’t benefited from new housing and some older residents have had to move out of area due to a lack of suitable housing. Would like to see more housing for older people. There are strong individual settlements in North Solihull with communities who have known each other for generations.</li> <li>• Public transport a big issue. Areas of growth NEC and airport. Not able to connect areas of employment and people. Castle Bromwich feels remote because it is so far away from regeneration area. Young people need to be trained to have skills for work. Public transport is difficult for shift workers. Train times need changing; early finishes not helpful.</li> <li>• Police cut backs – not wanting to lose confidence built up. Bluebell shopping centre – joined up working in the Solihull Connect Centre. A lot of footfall within this area. Undertake more police work in the shopping centre. Joined up thinking with Solihull Council. Casino and hotel development – how is this going to work to meet local need?</li> <li>• In North Solihull there is a total disconnection to employment. We have got to build capacity of people to be employed and skilled and be able to work, otherwise it will not work. Single housing is an issue. People will wait 2-3 years for a one-bed property. Unemployment, youth training, and housing capacity are key issues. The people in North Solihull are very territorial.</li> <li>• Level of unemployment and the new housing required in North Solihull. Surprised there is so much unemployment when the NEC, Birmingham Airport, and business parks are so close. Marston Green residents do not want more housing built in Marston Green except for housing to meet the needs of local older people. The schools and services are already at full capacity.</li> <li>• No development is not an option. Housing must be in the right place and must include community elements. Good transport connections need to be in place.</li> </ul>

## **B) EMPLOYMENT**

- Provision of land for employment. Rely on existing sites. NEC, Airport, Trinity Park, CHEP site.
- Chelmsley Wood Shopping Centre has a number of vacant units. Everyone goes to Chelmsley Wood; there are good bus links to the centre. The empty units make it look like a ghost town. It would be a good idea to bring in other uses to fill up the empty retail units, e.g. social enterprise organisations. Chelmsley Wood Town Centre should be a centre for retail, employment, and social enterprise organisations. Also the smaller local centres could have a mix of uses including employment, community facilities, services and housing.
- Chelmsley Wood Town Centre, Craig Croft, Smith's Wood, North Arran Way, and Kingshurst are the local shopping centre for North Solihull.
- Kingshurst Shopping Centre is run down. Looking at how it can be improved to regenerate the area.
- The Developers are having too much of a say about where development goes. We need to have more of a say and steer the developers.
- Issue of getting people to jobs. What employment opportunities are there in North Solihull?
  - Waterloo units
  - Town Centre and local centres
  - Best bus route is the number 97 to Birmingham.
- Public transport system is geared towards Birmingham, not to the south of the Borough. This problem is historical.
- Jaguar and Land Rover near by. Need to ensure local people can take advantage of these jobs.
- The problem is lack of job skills and poor transport network. The land is not available on a large scale for employment development. Only small scale employment development opportunities.
- Need to talk to our partners to solve the employment problems in North Solihull.
  
- Low skill levels, poor employment opportunities within North Solihull itself, and poor transport links to employment opportunities outside of North Solihull.
- New cycle route linking north Solihull to employment sites e.g. NEC / Airport.
- Older people in Solihull – they need services. More opportunities in service industries than the manufacturing industries.
- Need to re-skill people.
- What type of employment for future? Working from home, virtual offices.
- A lot of the business units around airport are empty. Why extend Birmingham Business Park when there are existing units empty?
- North Solihull Colleges – should train people with workplace skills. Bellway have taken on apprenticeships – local people working on local building sites. Learning a trade and developing skills. There are not enough of these types of apprenticeships available.
- Apprenticeship schemes – cost of transport to get to job. The perception from local people.
- It almost feels like people are getting pulled in from other areas instead of giving the jobs to local residents.
- Missing a massive opportunity on service industries. Need to develop apprenticeships in hotel management, catering services to link in with NEC and hotels in area.
- Cultural changes that need to come about in attitudes to work where there is intergenerational worklessness.

- Sorting out Solihull College – need to provide skills for local residents.
- Need better public transport links to Jaguar, Land Rover, NEC, Airport, Lode Lane, Hams Lane, Coleshill Industrial Estate, and Birmingham Business Park.
- At what age should we start talking to students about employment? Need to prepare young people for work from primary school onwards.

### **C) HOUSING**

- Activity in Craig Croft and Smith's Wood.
- Cole Valley – consulting about potential sites. Not building on Meriden Park. Flags put on map in area of Cole Valley to represent potential housing sites following consultation events recently undertaken (Becky Ayres).
- Marston Green - need houses for the over 50's only. Any development needs to address infrastructure e.g. roads, local schools, medical facilities.
- Cole Valley – consulted on opportunities for development. The development has now been scaled back. There are now 4 key sites. Links to Chester Road – in conjunction with improved bus links on Chester Road. Conway Road open space. Site near Meriden Park. Site already identified in Core Strategy. Housing still around village centres. Assisted living and building with care. Supported housing extra care in north.
- Mobility and disability needs – must be accessible to town centre and local centres. Housing for vulnerable people – Kingshurst. How can we create that? Land around Mountfort and adjacent land. A lot of requests for new housing in Castle Bromwich area. Ex Bosworth Wood Primary School – possible site for housing (although buildings are currently in use)? Might be suitable for supported housing and for older people. A lot of requests for bungalows.
- Improve Infrastructure links.
- Is there potential for development near airport? Yes, for single people who work at airport.
- Potentially two schools could be released – an opportunity for housing sites.
- Woodlands Highway – potential housing site. An application for housing is being submitted soon.
- Problem with North Solihull losing Green Space.
- From the work undertaken so far there is potential for 1,000 housing units. This depends on housing density (Becky Ayres).
- What is the current capacity of schools, doctor surgeries, etc? Are they to full capacity now?
- Clusters of activity:
  - Around village centres
  - New Bishop Wilson in Craig Croft. More than just a school. The site also offers local services, e.g. GP surgery, retail.
  - Smith's Wood Village Centre includes a medical centre.
  - Mountford is a possible housing site that could include a medical centre.
  - Social amenities are needed in village centres.
  - Bring a company in to regenerate halls and get some employment opportunities. Other possible halls include: Crabtree Hall, Auckland, Greenlands, a hall in Meriden.

#### **Potential Housing Sites:-**

- Former Simon Digby school site (Cole Valley)
- Conway Road open space (Cole Valley)
- Centurion Pub and land around (Cole Valley)
- Bishop Wilson site - ?? not sure if it is still required for Lowbrook school site (Cole Valley)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land off Winchester Drive – Phase 2 of Oxford Grove former school site.</li> <li>• North Arran Way village centre – opportunity for assisted living / supported housing care.</li> <li>• Craig Croft village centre – supported housing.</li> <li>• 2 surplus school sites in Chelmsley Wood.</li> <li>• Bosworth Wood School?</li> <li>• Land at the former Lakeside Club.</li> <li>• HS2 route – if it transects open space then there may be opportunities for housing around it.</li> </ul>
Rural	<p><b>Employment:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for jobs</li> <li>• How do we integrate public transport?</li> <li>• How are we going to get blue collar jobs into the area?</li> <li>• Need for paces for small employers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Opportunities lost to housing</li> <li>○ Small businesses changing to up-market offices</li> <li>○ Problem in replacing, because of high land values.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• How can we address these issues</li> <li>• Protect existing employment</li> <li>• Greater flexibility in allowing employment within the green belt, but still protecting green belt</li> </ul> <p><b>Housing:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impossible to identify suitable sites</li> <li>• Need to develop organically and maintain green belt</li> <li>• Need rural exceptions sites</li> <li>• Tidbury Green - Problem providing facilities for an aging population, but existing population don't want new housing</li> <li>• Need is recognised and most communities are likely to support small sympathetic developments close to villages provided they meet local need, including small areas of green belt</li> <li>• New housing is unlikely to be occupied by people from the village</li> <li>• Council's should get profit from right to buy and buy new housing</li> <li>• Green belt boundaries need to give villages room to breathe and stay alive</li> <li>• If housing land is not allocated, developers will focus on garden grabbing</li> <li>• Most villages are unsuitable for substantial growth because infrastructure is locked in the centre</li> <li>• Needs do not have to be met in villages, new families don't expect to afford to live in a village straight away, but leads to problem with community mix and viability of services, eg. shops and schools.</li> <li>• Expanding to meet needs will help balance communities, but it is reasonable to expand to resolve the mistakes of the past?</li> <li>• Potential solution is sites near centres to meet local needs, within walking distance for families and elderly people.</li> <li>• Reuse redundant buildings within the village centres.</li> <li>• Identify sites through local meetings.</li> <li>• Already threatened with loss of land to HS2, difficult to identify more land.</li> </ul> <p><b>Housing Mix:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local support for affordable housing</li> <li>• Need for rented social housing</li> <li>• Affordable housing threshold is a problem – development tends to be under threshold</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing mix is a fundamental issue</li> <li>• Look at opportunities to convert old large housing into smaller units – the opposite is happening now</li> <li>• Most villages need affordable elderly persons accommodation</li> <li>• Development briefs can deliver housing to meet needs, but only if we can define sites</li> <li>• Can't continue to allow market demand to lead</li> </ul> <p><b>Infrastructure:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must be provided – medical, schools, employment</li> <li>• Profit for infrastructure can be captured if sites are allocated</li> </ul> <p><b>Community Involvement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delegates felt unable to represent their communities in looking at opportunities to address need. This needs to be done in smaller local groups, eg Parish Council meetings.</li> </ul>
Urban West	<p><b>Preliminary Comments / Issues:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marston Green – Housing for older people (over 50s) is a big issue and the need to have specific types of housing to accommodate this group. This is also the case for many other areas in the urban west.</li> <li>• Pockets of deprivation in the urban west.</li> <li>• Questioned whether there is a need for first time homes in Marston Green as they seem to be available in Chelmsley Wood.</li> </ul> <p><b>Areas</b></p> <p><b>Marston Green</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some older 3 and 4 bed housing occupied by older generation who want to downsize, yet stay in the village. They therefore need appropriate properties to enable them to stay in the village and still be able to access local services and facilities. Need mix of accommodation including bungalows, 1-bed flats, small houses with small gardens.</li> <li>• Need for independent living – possibly purpose built apartments as well as supported living, perhaps in a complex.</li> <li>• Site in the centre of the village identified that may be suitable for meeting the accommodation needs of older people.</li> <li>• Marston Green Railway Station – Significant parking issues. Further development around the station will exacerbate this.</li> </ul> <p><b>Olton</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential residential sites in Olton included an area of open space between Mickleton Road and Gospel Lane (potential for 10 – 20 houses?). However, it was noted that Olton is one of the areas that does not have a lot of open space – therefore, an objection raised in the group to building on open space.</li> <li>• Plumbase site off Warwick Road in Olton potential for residential development – advantages cited as easy access to local shops and services, railway station etc. Disadvantage would be the loss of a commercial use.</li> <li>• Rocksborough House – Warwick Road potential for residential development. Comment from the group that this already has planning permission for residential apartments. (This is confirmed).</li> <li>• Olton Railway Station – Parking issues.</li> <li>• Olton also noted as having an elderly population.</li> </ul> <p><b>Elmdon and Lyndon</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comments that there is over-development in these areas.</li> <li>• Hobs Meadow – Potential site for residential development on redundant land (Wescote Close).</li> <li>• Lyndon also noted as having an elderly population.</li> </ul> <p><b>Shirley</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Powergen – Potential for mixed residential development with 100 plus homes with at least 40% affordable. Majority of the group thought that there are no problems with</li> </ul>

	<p>this site, however, a few raised the issue of location at a busy road junction (Haslucks Green Road and Stratford Road).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group also recognised that the Powergen site could also be used for other types of development, alongside residential, including offices and retail.</li> <li>• Aquaduct Road – Potential for residential development and possibly a small mix of other uses including a small shop e.g. Tesco express.</li> <li>• Sunhaven and Coombs Care Homes sites: Possible closure of existing sites, but re-provision will be required.</li> </ul> <p><b>Town centre and surroundings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moat Lane Depot - Potential residential site and very accessible for the Town Centre. Relocate existing uses elsewhere, however, transport implications for staff that will have to travel to another site. Sustainability issues?</li> <li>• Ambulance Station, Hermitage Road - Potential for elderly assisted living. Good bus route, hospital access etc.</li> <li>• Touchwood 2 – needs to include affordable apartments. Utilise current council house site and relocate staff to premises at Blythe Valley Park (BVP), Birmingham Business Park (BBP), or smaller neighbourhood offices (possibly village centres in north Solihull?). However, certain Council functions will need to remain in the Town Centre e.g. Civic offices</li> <li>• Alongside residential development, the Council house site could also include a mix of other uses including retail, offices and other employment.</li> <li>• ANITA (Airport and NEC Integrated Transport Access) scheme will assist with sustainable transport options to BBP for relocated Council staff or others. Still need bus operators to use the scheme and need viability to attract buses. Increase in patronage would assist with this.</li> </ul> <p><b>North Urban Area</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sites identified along Chester Road (Near Old Croft Lane) potential for residential or commercial.</li> </ul> <p><b>Other Issues</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Although a number of sites were identified by the group, the issue was raised about whether this would meet need.</li> <li>• This raised the issue about whether rural areas with a railway station should take a share of development. There are practicality issues about continuing to locate development in the urban area e.g. parking at railway stations already cited as an issue.</li> <li>• The group raised the issue of whether some areas of Green Belt that are not particularly high quality could go.</li> <li>• Suggestion of a sensibly planned new development that is well connected and sustainably built, rather than continued piecemeal development in the urban area.</li> </ul> <p><b>High Speed 2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If HS2 goes ahead, possibility of some commercial / office or mixed use development around the new station area. Group not keen on residential development around there. The group were keen that there should be a Development Brief for future use of the site.</li> </ul>
Town Centre	<p><b>Key messages:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questioned the need for both 80,000sqm retail space and 35,000 sqm office space up to 2026.</li> <li>• 80,000sqm additional comparison retail space would be greater than the largest regional centre in the country and could not be filled with enough stores</li> <li>• Agreed that some more retail would be welcome, especially expansion along Homer Road if civic buildings became redundant</li> <li>• Want to keep distinction between undercover and open air shopping experience</li> <li>• Currently empty office space in the Town Centre</li> </ul>

- Agreed that need more flexible office space, e .g. to meet requirements of small businesses or sole traders.
- Doubt that big multi-nationals would want to locate to the town centre given suitability of other locations and lack of car parking space
- Consensus that should increase mixed use offer in town centre but that 1500 dwellings was too much
- Residential offer was question of design as well as density
- Police would rather be closer to Council offices and under new terrorist threats it is better to have police station at a reasonable distance from town centre
- Solihull Town centre has lots of strong points:
  - Both mall and open air shopping experience
  - Historic high street and attractive buildings
  - Surrounded by mostly low rise mature housing
- Agreed weak points in the town centre
  - Transport links and congestion– if we aspire to a strong regional retail centre we will need an effective transit hub; BUT, town centre is still the most accessible place in the Borough by public transport
  - Mell Square is out of date visually and functionally
  - Parking

#### **Possible development sites in Town centre:**

##### **Transport:**

- Relocate Train Station e.g. close to Princes Way/Monkspath Hall Road junction
  - Constraints include: High cost, change in levels road and railway line, multi-stakeholder working, likely very high cost
- Divert bus traffic away from Poplar Road/Station Road and create a bus depot/hub e.g. on site of Lode Lane Car park or link with a new railway station hub by Monkspath Hall Road
- Use second lane on New Road near CRC building as a drop-off zone for St. Alphege primary school and short stay on-street parking outside of school drop-off hours.

##### **Residential:**

- Convert Mell Square tower into a retirement centre – lower car parking need, with some retail and/or office
- Remodel Mell Square and develop Morrison's car park site to include extra residential/retail/office and parking offer
- If relocated train station and fire station, could use area as a retirement village or other housing

##### **Mell Square:**

- Remodel Mell Square shops/office/residential. Keep a public open square with a continental cafe feel at the centre, not necessarily same size as now.

##### **Touchwood:**

- Potential expansion of Touchwood agreed towards Council House site or over Magistrates Court/ Police station site.

##### **Homer Road civic buildings:**

- Demolish part or wholly Council offices and replace with better designed office/retail/leisure space and some residential as part of expanded Touchwood scheme. Relocate Police Station to a 'blue light' emergency services hub possibly on the old maternity ward site at Solihull hospital.
- Replace Magistrates Court and Police Station with retail/office/residential mix.
- Move core Council offices to hub near Warwick Rd/Lode Lane roundabout or move all offices out to North/South sites in the Borough. But recognise the importance of

	<p>retaining some civic presence of the Council in the Town Centre. Possible new civic centre in vicinity of St Alphege Church</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Unintended consequence – Council are significant employer in the town centre and provide a lot of custom to local shops and food outlets. Town centre location is also an advantage when attracting and retaining staff.</li> </ul> <p><b>Parking:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Council makes a lot of revenue from parking and need to think carefully about undercroft and deck solutions of parking and not just sell the asset at Monkspath Hall Road.</li> </ul> <p><b>Night-time economy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Police are not in favour of a proliferation of nighttime economy.</li> <li>● Town centre investors would not like to see too much A3-A5 next to residential uses, however, some restaurants/cafes would be welcome in moderation.</li> </ul> <p><b>Malvern Park:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Potential to link High Street better with Malvern/Brueton Park, e.g. by Cedarhurst.</li> </ul>
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### Plenary Session

M42 Corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Developments at junctions 4 and 6. Principles – creating jobs, providing the right offer for today and tomorrow, more manufacturing, eg JLR.</li> <li>● J4 – Blythe Valley Park – mixed opportunities for housing and commercial.</li> <li>● J5 – Pressures on traffic system, business development should be sympathetic, eg Whale Tankers.</li> <li>● J6 – HS2, greater focus for economic activity, opportunities around the airport etc., housing, employment land.</li> <li>● A452 – buffer to retain Meriden Gap.</li> <li>● Need right public transport links, more regular bus links, linking to stations in Coleshill and Hams Hall.</li> </ul>
North Solihull	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Limited opportunities to create jobs.</li> <li>● Limited scope for building factories and office space.</li> <li>● Transport and jobs skills need to be addressed. Poor public transport = no link to jobs</li> <li>● Industrial area, people working at JLR, with poor transport services.</li> <li>● Opportunities at Coleshill, Water Orton, but no public transport.</li> <li>● Vacancies and opportunities around the NEC, airport and casino.</li> <li>● Housing need for older people / special needs (extra care / supported housing).</li> <li>● Mix of housing needed</li> <li>● Aging population and growing young population</li> <li>● Infrastructure – need increased medical centres, schools, parking and affordable nurseries, youth clubs, shops, sports, transport – there are links to Solihull and Birmingham but public transport is slow.</li> <li>● Training for hospitality and engineering needed.</li> <li>● Housing – identified some small sites, need for older people and affordable housing</li> <li>● Need improved village centres.</li> <li>● Loss of open space</li> <li>● Communities not benefiting from new housing</li> <li>● Schools population could increase, so schools should be maintained and there could be capacity issues</li> <li>● Areas that should not be built on were identified by the group and include Meriden Park, Babb's Mill, Kingfisher Nature Reserve, Yorkswood, Smith's Wood</li> </ul>
Rural (Ian Spencer)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Concern villages don't have a functional housing mix, can't be addressed by development.</li> <li>● Functional constraints stop redevelopment – lack of transport, threat to green belt function.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Want mix – housing for aging population.</li> <li>• Family homes have created another generation that now need housing.</li> <li>• Village centres are already embedded, so new housing has to replace or be on the edge – too far from village centres.</li> <li>• Unacceptable to force housing through fear.</li> <li>• Council needs to go out to communities to get them involved.</li> <li>• HS2 is already a burden on the green belt, losing further green belt to housing is a further burden.</li> </ul>
Cllr Courts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is the start of engagement, we want to talk to communities.</li> <li>• Government policy has become clearer this week.</li> <li>• Through RSS we spent a lot of time negotiating because Solihull was accused of not taking its share.</li> <li>• Target was 16,000 at the time when the perceived need was 13,000.</li> <li>• Through negotiation target reduced to 7,600, but Government then wanted 20,000. The final recommendation was 10,000.</li> <li>• 14,000 is the perceived need now. We want to preserve the best of Solihull, but we can't bury our heads in the sand.</li> </ul>
Urban West	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 areas with some sort of deprivation identified, both in north and south of the urban west (in addition to those areas in the North Solihull Regeneration Zone).</li> <li>• 17 sites identified for up to possibly 1500 homes.</li> <li>• Priority for over 50s housing of varying types, as well as supported living. Need a mixture of bungalows, small houses and apartments.</li> <li>• Need for housing for younger people</li> <li>• Potential sites include: Powergen, Moat Lane Depot, Council House in Solihull, Ambulance Station site, Aquaduct Road, Plumbase in Olton, Moordown Avenue garage site (extension off residential home), plus various other smaller sites.</li> <li>• Council employee relocation to BVP or BBP (utilising ANITA scheme to BBP)</li> <li>• Mixed use sites include Powergen and Solihull Town Centre</li> <li>• HS2 Station area – need mix of uses and a Development Brief for the future use of the site</li> <li>• Residential care re-provision</li> <li>• Issue raised as to whether some rural areas with railway stations take their share of growth and development. This would help to sustain rural areas, keep them alive.</li> <li>• Look at scope for using existing and under-utilised employment land.</li> </ul>
Town Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to consider how existing development can be reconfigured.</li> <li>• Opportunities in Mell Square, Touchwood expansion for mixed use with residential above and integrating Mell Square and Dury Lane.</li> <li>• Red line doesn't capture prime uses, eg railway station. Could move station or alter bus transit.</li> <li>• Aging population provides an opportunity for assisted living.</li> <li>• Do the Civic Centre and Council offices need to stay in the centre. Better to take services out to people, creating space in the town centre.</li> <li>• Further development could have infrastructure implications, so its about finding the balance.</li> <li>• Other services could be moving out – police, fire, ambulance and hospital creating development opportunities.</li> <li>• Scope for 1 way routes.</li> </ul>
Cllr Courts	<p><b>Key Messages</b></p> <p><b>Next Steps</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will give thought to how we can go back to communities.</li> <li>• Expecting delegates to go back to communities and come back with ideas.</li> <li>• Will collate and feedback notes from today.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Aiming for submission strategy at the end of the year with decisions in October, but depends on a smooth process.</li></ul>
Clr Meeson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Need to maintain contact.</li><li>• Need to be realistic, no development is not an option.</li></ul>