

# GREATER ICKNIELD AND SMETHWICK **HOUSING GROWTH** PROSPECTUS

OCTOBER 2016



**WEST MIDLANDS**  
COMBINED AUTHORITY



# Contents

**Foreword** page 1

**Vision** for Greater Icknield and Smethwick page 2

**Big place transformations** page 4

- Grove Lane
- Icknield Port Loop
- Spring Hill
- Brindley Canalside
- Windmill Eye

**Supporting growth** page 16

# Contact

Web:  
[www.westmidlandscombinedauthority.org.uk](http://www.westmidlandscombinedauthority.org.uk)

E-mail:  
[ca@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:ca@wolverhampton.gov.uk)

[planningandregenerationenquiries@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:planningandregenerationenquiries@birmingham.gov.uk)

[ldf-planning@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:ldf-planning@sandwell.gov.uk)

Telephone:  
(0121) 303 4057 or (0121) 464 9855 for Birmingham City Council  
(0121) 569 4054 or 569 4055 for Sandwell Council

# Foreword

The delivery of new housing will be central to achieving economic growth in the region and is a key part of the strategic economic plans of the West Midlands Combined Authority and the Local Enterprise Partnerships for Greater Birmingham & Solihull and the Black Country. The Greater Icknield and Smethwick area will play a vital role in delivering much needed housing. We are delighted, therefore, to share this prospectus with you and our ambitious plans to accelerate the delivery of housing growth in Greater Icknield and Smethwick.

The adjoining areas of Greater Icknield, in Birmingham, and Smethwick, in Sandwell, lie at the heart of the West Midlands conurbation. With over 137ha of land for development, the area offers one of the largest opportunities for brownfield regeneration in the UK. It is fantastically well located - minutes from the unprecedented growth and investment taking place in Birmingham City Centre, at the heart of the West Midlands region, and with high quality transport connections.

Indeed the area has the potential to accommodate more than 5,000 new homes. This growth, positively planned for, properly integrated with existing neighbourhoods, and supported by investment in infrastructure, will reinvigorate the area and build on its existing offer.

The vision for Greater Icknield and Smethwick has already attracted investment and commitments from public and private sector partners, including over £400 million in infrastructure. Delivery is already happening on the ground and confidence is high, however momentum needs to be maintained to achieve the vision. This prospectus sets out how growth will be accelerated using a Housing Zone approach and a programme of targeted investment.

For the West Midlands Combined Authority, Birmingham City Council and Sandwell Council this is a very exciting opportunity. In working together we can make a step change in bringing forward new development and the supporting infrastructure which will affect genuine transformational change to the benefit of the local area and wider region.

**Councillor Sean Coughlan**  
Housing and Land Portfolio Lead,  
West Midlands Combined Authority.

**Councillor John Clancy**  
Leader,  
Birmingham City Council.

**Councillor Steve Eling**  
Leader,  
Sandwell Council.

“  
**Delivery is  
already happening  
on the ground  
and confidence  
is high**  
”





## Vision for Greater Icknield and Smethwick

Greater Icknield and Smethwick will become a revitalised and sustainable place at the heart of the urban area. It will offer high quality residential environments where people can thrive, enjoy world class services, and access aspirational employment opportunities.

At its heart will be the new £353m Midland Metropolitan Hospital providing a state-of-the-art facility. Under construction and due to open in October 2018, the hospital will act as a catalyst for further significant investment in the area in housing, accessibility, leisure, education and the environment.

Housing growth in the area has the potential to deliver over 5,000 homes. There will be an emphasis on providing family homes, creating an offer that will enhance the quality and range of housing. The location of the area, alongside its high quality transport connections and waterside development sites, provide the opportunity for quality innovative design which enables high densities and attractive spaces to be achieved simultaneously.

This transformation will be driven by development in 5 key places:

- Grove Lane.
- Icknield Port Loop.
- Spring Hill.
- Brindley Canalside.
- Windmill Eye.

The attractiveness of the housing offer in Greater Icknield and Smethwick comes from its unique setting. The opportunities are within a well-connected and centrally located region that has a growing international recognition, a thriving and dynamic economy with world-class companies, and is a great place to live, work, study and visit. It also offers access to the region's greatest assets:

- Excellent connections into Birmingham City Centre, with its fantastic range of shopping, employment, leisure and entertainment facilities attracting more than 40m visitors a year. Icknield Port Loop is within a 20 minute walk or 10 minute cycle, and Smethwick Rolfe Street rail station offers regular connections taking 6 minutes into the City Centre.
- A regional economy which is growing faster than the national rate. More than 11,000 new jobs were created through Foreign Direct Investment in the region in 2015/16 – a greater number than in any region outside London. The region also supported more small businesses than any outside London.

- Birmingham has been ranked as the best regional UK city for quality of life for the third year running (Mercer 2016). The area is becoming an increasingly attractive residential destination – it is the most popular destination for Londoners relocating from the capital (ONS 2014) – and has a cost of living only 60% of that in London yet offers all the benefits of living in a major city.
- Direct flights from Birmingham Airport, a 9 minute train journey from the City Centre, to 140 destinations including West Coast USA and South Africa.
- At the heart of the UK High Speed rail network, including a brand new station in the City Centre. Birmingham will be within a 49 minute journey from London – the equivalent of Zone 4 of the London underground.
- The youngest population of any major city in Europe with under 25's accounting for nearly 40% of the population. The city's 6 world-class universities produce 32,000 graduates each year; within 1 hour of the city there are 100,000 graduates.

The area also provides distinctive local opportunities:

- Good local transport connections by car, bus and rail, set to be enhanced by the extension of Metro and a commitment to the principles of a Green Travel District.
- A rich industrial heritage reflected in the railways, canals and reservoir which characterise the area. The water features in particular represent a common thread and unique selling point, with a significant number of the housing sites including canal or reservoir frontages. Edgbaston Reservoir, Summerfield Park and Victoria Park, as well as the canal network, provide attractive local settings.
- Vibrant local centres at Dudley Road, Cape Hill, Soho Way and Smethwick High Street provide a range of shops and services. These will continue to be a focus for investment to meet the needs of the growing population in the revitalised neighbourhood.
- The £23.5m Smethwick Learning Campus has recently been completed. Additional education provision, including expanded and new schools, are proposed to meet existing and future demand.

Housing growth in the area **has the potential** to deliver over 5,000 homes





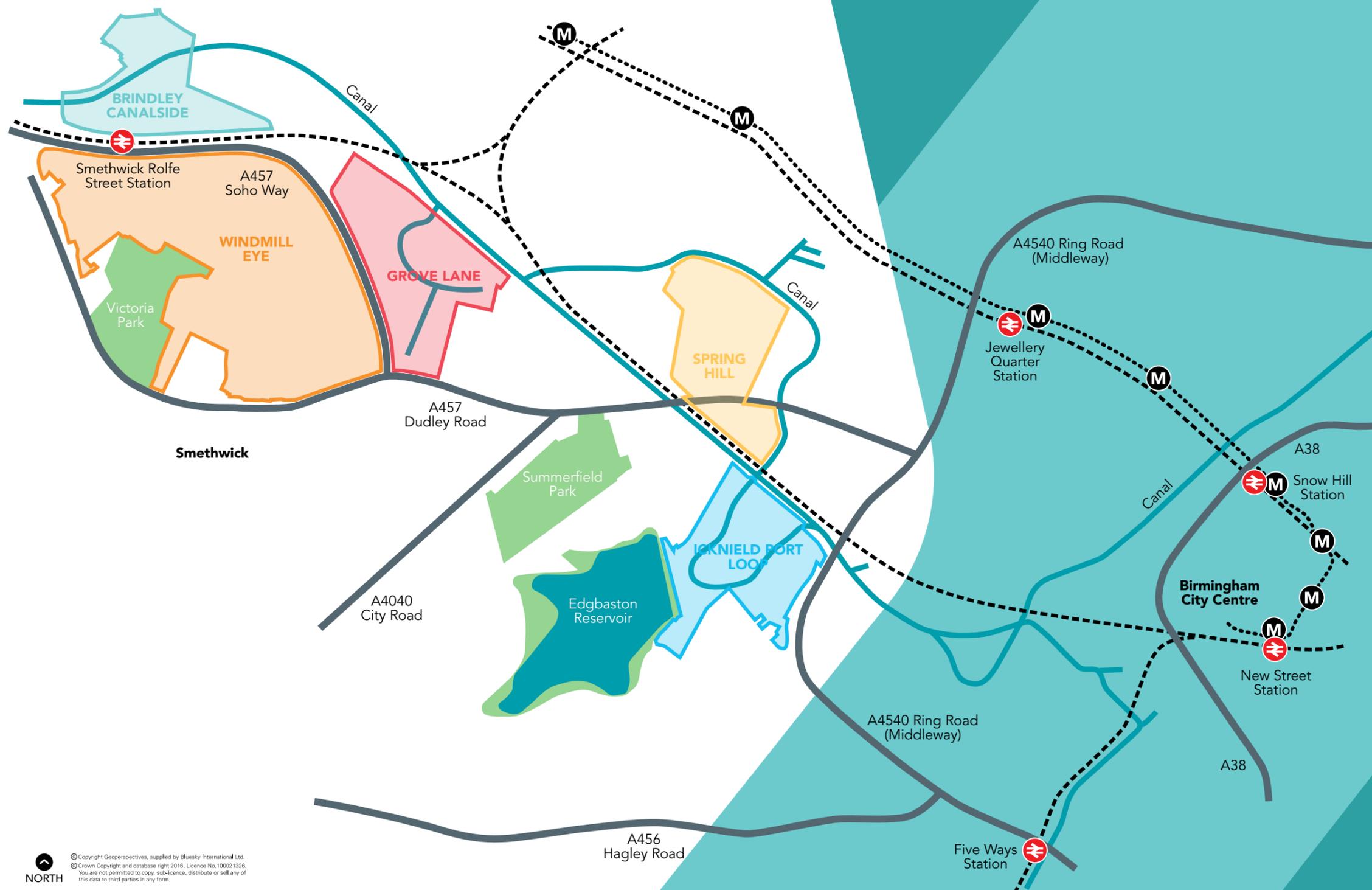
# Big place transformations

There are 5 major opportunities to deliver significant growth and create exciting new places: at Grove Lane including the new Midland Metropolitan Hospital, around Icknield Port Loop, at Spring Hill, and complementing recent development at Brindley Canalside and Windmill Eye.

These offer a range of opportunities for developers and investors.

Development will deliver:

- 5160 new homes.
- 137ha of brownfield land redeveloped.
- At least £400m investment in infrastructure.
- £400m potential investment in housing.



“**Deliver significant growth and create exciting new places**”



© Copyright Geo Perspectives, supplied by Blausky International Ltd.  
© Crown Copyright and database right 2016, Licence No. 100021326.  
You are not permitted to copy, sub-licence, distribute or sell any of this data to third parties in any form.



# PROSPECTUS SITE 1 Grove Lane

**Location:** East of Grove Lane, Smethwick lying to the south of the Birmingham Canal and west of Birmingham City Centre.

**Area:** 29ha.

**Proposed development:** New Midland Metropolitan Hospital and regeneration of the wider area for approximately 900 new homes and ancillary uses.



## Opportunity

Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Hospitals Trust have chosen the Grove Lane site for their new acute hospital to serve the Sandwell and West Birmingham areas. This provides a catalyst for further investment in the surrounding area to provide up to 900 new homes in a sustainable location, close to public transport, shops and services. It also provides the opportunity to improve the environment by reclaiming 18ha of underutilised brownfield land. Housing development will compliment existing residential communities.

There may also be opportunities for complimentary uses associated to the hospital, such as research and development and service providers.

### Midland Metropolitan Hospital

Due to open in October 2018, the new acute hospital incorporates wards and clinical uses over 10 levels, car parking and a winter garden. New community space will be included to the frontage as well as new public space adjacent to the canal.

The wider hospital site has opportunity for further development in the future including the provision of a crèche, gym and building for training and offices as part of a Phase II scheme.

### North of Cranford Street

The former Atlas Metals site (4.75ha) is currently being developed by Mar City to deliver 142 new houses and apartments south of the Birmingham Canal. 40 modular build homes are expected to be completed in 2016/17. There is scope to include land to the west of this site with an opportunity for a further 40 homes.

The Heartlands Furniture site (2.4ha) will provide the opportunity for 250-300 residential units which will complement surrounding development.

There is also a longer term option to bring forward a 1ha site on the boundary with Birmingham for approximately 30 homes.

### South of Cranford Street

The redevelopment of the area to the south of Cranford Street provides opportunities for residential (approximately 270 homes) and commercial uses. The regeneration of the area will enhance this location and make best use of its situation near to local centres, public transport and open spaces.

The site immediately adjoining the hospital is currently being used as a contractors compound. Upon completion of the hospital redevelopment options could include research and development facilities or other complimentary services. Alternatively if residential is proposed the site could provide approximately 70 homes.

A phased strategy is proposed to bring forward the area at Abberley Street and Grove Street (6.2ha) for new homes to make best use of Moillett Street Park. The clearance of industrial from this area could make way for at least 200 homes.

### London Street/Cranford Street

There is a longer term opportunity for approximately 70 units on this 2ha site to contribute to the housing provision in this sought after area.

The area is located between two busy roads with links into Birmingham and other parts of Sandwell. Due to the number of ownerships to be acquired and the current uses on site, this is seen as a longer term proposal. Discussions with landowners and occupiers will be required in relation to relocations.

## Delivery

The Smethwick Area Action Plan provides a clear context for the development of these sites for residential uses, and has been the starting point for delivery.

The Grove Lane Supplementary Planning Document (2011) provides further detail.

The new hospital is seen as a catalyst for regeneration of the wider area. The area has therefore been included in a submission to the Department of the Environment to gain Housing Zone status which will bring focussed support.

The Grove Lane area represents a prominent gateway for both Sandwell and Birmingham, and the regeneration of land surrounding the hospital will be important in accelerating growth across the area.

There is a commitment to:

- Address relocation, clearance and site remediation challenges. Intervention from LEP or West Midlands Combined Authority funding streams will be considered to assist in this process.

- Consider the current and future housing needs and requirements in order to provide for the housing market including the consideration of Starter Homes.
- Provide improved linkages between Sandwell and Birmingham, and also more locally including to the canal network and open spaces.

“Housing development will compliment existing residential communities”





## PROSPECTUS SITE 2 Icknield Port Loop

**Location:** Immediately west of Birmingham City Centre adjoining Edgbaston Reservoir.

**Area:** 43ha.

**Proposed development:** 1,800 homes and complimentary leisure and community facilities.



 NORTH  
© Copyright Geoperspectives, supplied by BLISKY Integration Ltd.  
© Crown Copyright and database right 2018, Licence No. 100021326.  
You are not permitted to copy, sub-licence, distribute or sell any of this data to third parties in any form.

### Opportunity

A unique opportunity for ‘City Centre’ living in a suburban environment, with the potential to accommodate at least 1,800 new homes which will complement the surrounding residential neighbourhoods.

The area offers the opportunity to develop new innovative family focused neighbourhoods at densities far higher than traditionally found in the region. These neighbourhoods will benefit from new local facilities, as well as being a short walking distance to the attractions of Birmingham City Centre, having access to the canal network, and the major sports and leisure destination at Edgbaston Reservoir.

### Icknield Port Loop

The Icknield Port Loop site will lead the transformation of this former industrial area. Proposals are being developed by Urban Splash and Places for People for a mixed use waterside development of around 1,150 new homes and 7,000 sqm of commercial space. There is the opportunity for further investment into the site, with serviced plots to be made available to third party development partners.

### Other sites

Other key schemes in the wider area include the City Council owned Embankment site for 92 homes, conversion of heritage buildings as part of a City Centre gateway scheme of approximately 200 homes on Ledsam Street, and the redevelopment of Severn Trent’s surplus Waterworks Road depot to potentially deliver 100 homes. Both of these will require investor and/or development partners.

Proposals are also in place to support the family orientated growth of the area, including an eight lane 25 metre competition swimming pool at Icknield Port Loop and a new secondary school on St Vincent Street West.

### Delivery

The Greater Icknield Masterplan has been agreed with partners and adopted by the City Council to provide certainty and guidance for the main development sites in the area. This builds upon the areas growth potential identified in the Birmingham Development Plan. With this in place, the area is already benefitting from investment and commitments from key stakeholders, including:

- The establishment of a Limited Liability Partnership to deliver the Icknield Port Loop site, with Birmingham City Council, the Canals and Rivers Trust, Urban Splash and Places for People. Outline planning permission has been secured, with clearance work already undertaken on parts of the site.
- Serco appointed to construct and operate the swimming pool on Icknield Port Loop.
- The imminent commencement of development on the Embankment site of a private rented sector scheme by InReach.
- The preparation of a masterplan for Edgbaston Reservoir to maximise the potential of a key leisure asset of the area. It will set out a vision which will enhance its economic potential and its sports, leisure and natural environment offer.
- The delivery of walking and cycling improvements to the canal towpaths as part of Birmingham Cycle Revolution programme.
- Completion of the 45 dwelling Chamberlain Gardens development by Birmingham Municipal Housing Trust.

“A unique opportunity for ‘City Centre’ living”





# PROSPECTUS SITE 3 Spring Hill

**Location:** On Dudley Road, leading into Birmingham City Centre.

**Area:** 25ha.

**Proposed development:** 1,250 homes and complimentary facilities.



## Opportunity

Major new neighbourhoods will be created on one of the main gateway routes into Birmingham City Centre. The relocation of the Hospital will provide the catalyst for regeneration, with the potential to deliver a range of homes including family housing. With the area's good connections, shops and facilities, the quality of the place and surrounding environment will be enhanced.

### City Hospital

The delivery of the Midland Metropolitan Hospital will release a significant development opportunity on the City Hospital site. As well as a new residential community of approximately 750 homes, primarily for families and including the conversion of attractive buildings, there will also be retained health services operated on the site. With the potential for other complementary uses and attractive landscapes, including canalside opportunities, a strong sense of place will be created. A developer will be sought for the site.

### Soho Loop

The other key scheme in this area is Soho Loop which provides an important regeneration stepping stone between Icknield Port Loop and City Hospital. The site offers the opportunity to deliver an attractive residential neighbourhood with a canal

side setting. Key connections will be enhanced to improve access in and around the area, including pedestrian and cycling access to the canal network. The site will require investor and/or development partners.

## Delivery

These sites make an important contribution to the overall growth plans in this area, including the Greater Icknield Masterplan and the Birmingham Development Plan. The City Council has worked with developers and partners to progress development in the area, including:

- The City Hospital site will be vacated once the Midland Metropolitan Hotel site is open in 2018, allowing for development to then come forward. An outline planning application is expected in 2016.
- Outline planning consent is in place for the Soho Loop site, including 500 private rented sector homes, a data centre and other uses. Some clearance work has also been carried out on site.
- A major highway improvement scheme along the Dudley Road, with £30m secured in principle from the Department for Transport. These improvements will directly benefit the Soho Loop and City Hospital sites. The project is currently under development, with a full business case to be brought forward.

“The relocation of the Hospital will provide the catalyst for regeneration”



## PROSPECTUS SITE 4 Brindley Canalside

**Location:** A cluster of three sites to the north of Smethwick Town Centre, alongside the Birmingham Canal.

**Area:** 20ha.

**Proposed development:** 755 homes, with some small business units and workspaces.



### Opportunity

An opportunity for 755 new homes on three sites which are enviably located alongside the Birmingham Canal. The historical formation of canals in this traditional industrial area, which form part of the Smethwick Galton Bridge Conservation Area, provides unique opportunities for waterfront development. The area is within easy walking distance of Smethwick High Street and Rolfe Street railway station. Development here will compliment recent housing development in the area which has taken the place of industrial uses.

#### Brindley II

Following the development of Brindley Urban Village, immediately to the west, the Brindley II site has benefited from clearance, remediation, and provision of access. The private sector owner/developer of this site has submitted a planning application for 155 homes, and development will commence in 2017.

#### Rolfe Street

The Engine Arm canal intersects the site and presents opportunities for unique development to reflect the historic setting. Development of this area could potentially provide up to 400 new houses and apartments, complemented by commercial/businesses and workspace set within a canalside setting. There is the potential for refurbishment of historical canalside buildings as part of this. The site will require investor and/or development partners.

#### Rabone Lane

Access to this site has been improved through recent implementation of highway and junction works. There are residential moorings along the canal to the north of the site. Comprehensive redevelopment could accommodate some 200 new homes in the longer term.

### Delivery

The Smethwick Area Action Plan provides a clear context for the development of these sites for residential uses, and has been the starting point for delivery.

Commitment has already been made by stakeholders, including:

- The formation of a public/private partnership with significant funding from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) and the former Urban Living Pathfinder for the remediation of the Brindley II site, and the subsequent acquisition of that site by a major housebuilder.
- Additional private sector investment in sites adjacent to the canal to further housing provision.
- Funding applications to increase housing on sites adjacent to Rolfe Street railway station as part of the HCA bid for funding under the Fixing the Foundations budget linked to the development of sites around railway stations that feed into the HS2 development proposal in Birmingham City Centre.

The Rolfe Street and Rabone Lane sites are currently occupied. Relocation of existing uses will be necessary prior to clearance and remediation.

“ Sites which are enviably located alongside the Birmingham Canal ”



## PROSPECTUS SITE 5 Windmill Eye

**Location:** Predominantly residential area to the north of Cape Hill Town Centre.

**Area:** 12ha over four sites.

**Proposed development:** 450 new homes.



### Opportunity

There is potential for at least 450 new homes to be created within this predominantly residential setting, concentrated on four distinct areas identified for intervention.

The area lies close to Cape Hill Town Centre and more local facilities at Lower High Street. It has good transport links with buses serving Birmingham and other areas of the Black Country, and rail links at Rolfe Street railway station nearby. Windmill Eye is currently well provided for in terms of social and community infrastructure with health centres, schools and a range of community, faith, culture and youth amenities serving residents in the area.

### Crocketts Lane

Two sites totalling 3.1ha are available following the relocation of Sandwell College.

The sites, which are mainly in private ownership, provide the opportunity for a range of good quality homes within a pleasant setting overlooking Victoria Park. The sites, which lie within a Conservation Area, already have the benefit of planning permission.

### Raglan Road/Durban Road

Two areas of 6ha and 3ha situated to the south east of the Windmill Eye are currently occupied by housing in mixed ownership. New development has already taken place off Unett Street as part of the £29m scheme by Barratts, HCA and Sandwell Council. There will be additional targeted sites within each of these areas which will require intervention and significant funding to support delivery.

There is the potential for a number of other smaller sites, which have planning permission, to increase the housing stock in the coming years.

### Delivery

The Smethwick Area Action Plan outlines the intervention areas within the Windmill Eye. Further guidance on shaping this area is contained within the Windmill Eye Neighbourhood Plan.

The area has already seen investment at Unett Street through partnership arrangements. Further partnerships will be initiated for sites at Raglan Road and Durban Road. These will require significant funding to support the replacement social housing to be lost

and to ensure the communities that have been established are maintained.

Private sector intervention is expected on the Crocketts Lane site to provide housing in a sustainable location and to invest in bringing the listed structures back into use, therefore protecting and enhancing local heritage.

“Further partnerships will be initiated”





## Supporting growth

Birmingham City Council and Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council are excited by the potential of this partnership to facilitate growth. We will take a Housing Zone approach to bring new housing forward, with formal status applied for from Government. For Greater Icknield and Smethwick, we can achieve this by expanding our partnership working and targeting funding to revive brownfield sites, from financing infrastructure to supporting individual schemes.

### Infrastructure and access

The delivery of infrastructure, including the potential to enhance existing assets, will provide the basis for the areas successful growth. By working in partnership, the delivery of infrastructure can be coordinated on a phased approach to bring forward development in the right market conditions. This will lead to successfully rejuvenated neighbourhoods that will be well connected, have a good range of facilities and services, and be attractive to residents and investors.

Investment in infrastructure will include:

- £30m of improvements to the A457, which will provide better access for the area to Birmingham City Centre and the M5.
- A Green Travel District approach where the quality and reliability of sustainable transport modes is maximised. New canal bridges will improve connectivity and access to the canal network, and further upgrades to the canal towpaths. Improvements to public transport such as rerouting buses to serve new developments, improving service quality and reliance, and improving interchanges.

- Improvements to local centres in the area at Dudley Road, Cape Hill, Soho Way and Smethwick High Street through a comprehensive approach to public realm, access improvements and place management.
- Low-cost energy through a potential district heating network with Combined Cooling, Heat and Power generation. Various options to create a network that links large heat consumers across the area are being assessed, including links to the Birmingham City Centre network.
- £16m investment in a new school in the Icknield Port Loop area.
- A new £10m swimming pool, an enhanced sports and leisure offer at Edgbaston Reservoir and improved public spaces.

### Facilitating site delivery

Delivery will be accelerated by providing greater confidence for developers and investors. This will mean maximising the benefits of the Housing Zone approach and the interventions across the wider area. This will include:

- Entering into formal partnerships with developers and investors to deliver new development. We are already working successful with partners on certain key sites, including the Canals and Rivers Trust, the Homes and Communities Agency and developers.
- Working with strategic partners to provide leadership to help unlock opportunities. This could include funding mechanisms to enable site assemble and remediation, and the use of compulsory purchase powers where necessary to create viable and attractive sites.
- Further expanding our arrangements with the Homes and Communities Agency, including the potential to provide starter homes in the area.
- Working with existing land owners and occupiers to identify appropriate relocation premises wherever possible within their desired locations to ensure that businesses which are displaced are able to continue to trade.
- Consideration of further masterplanning where required to support growth.

- Streamlining the planning process through use of Planning Performance Agreements in order to bring more certainty of timescales for decision making.
- Building on the success of the Birmingham Municipal Housing Trust to deliver new rented and market homes in the area.

**Paul Dransfield**  
Strategic Director,  
Major Programmes and Projects,  
Birmingham City Council.

**Jan Britton**  
Chief Executive,  
Sandwell Metropolitan  
Borough Council.

“ Targeting funding to revive brownfield sites ”





**WEST MIDLANDS**  
COMBINED AUTHORITY

[www.westmidlandscombinedauthority.org.uk](http://www.westmidlandscombinedauthority.org.uk)

BIRMINGHAM · COVENTRY · DUDLEY · SANDWELL · SOLIHULL · WALSALL · WOLVERHAMPTON