Evolving Cities

The changing face of Birmingham

Artists impression to give an indication of the site's future redevelopment. For reference only.
Evolving cities

The UK’s cities are undergoing a renaissance. Large scale place making schemes are dramatically improving how they are perceived, making them more desirable places to live and work, and better able to attract new people and businesses.

The Changing Face of Birmingham is one of our series of reports looking at how the UK’s key cities are evolving and the transformational change that is occurring, either in terms of the scale of regeneration activity or a shift in perception.

For each city, we identify the key locations where transformation has happened and the key developments that have affected change. We then explore the key large scale regeneration opportunities going forward.

Birmingham today

The UK’s second largest city has seen a dramatic transformation since the turn of the Millennium. The 1980s and early 90s were a period of steady decline for Birmingham, largely due to the fundamental change in the city’s economy as industrial activity declined. Economic output shrunk and unemployment soared. A drastic structural change required to improve the city’s fortunes was drastic.

Birmingham has regenerated through a strategic push to position itself as an international destination for investment and the UK’s top regional centre for conferences and exhibitions. The city has reaped the benefits of the growth of a service based economy to replace the jobs lost in manufacturing. More latterly it has used its industrial heritage to grow its ‘maker’ and knowledge economies.

Private sector employment in financial and professional services, tourism, leisure and retailing has risen rapidly over the last twenty years. The unemployment rate as of end-2018 stood at 6.7%, compared to rates well over 20% for most of the 1980s.

City centre redevelopment has been integral to this revitalisation, creating new office districts, retail schemes and hotels. Brindleyplace was one of the UK’s largest inner city mixed-use developments, delivering a radical and award winning transformation of the city centre.

The redevelopment of the Bullring, Grand Central and The Mailbox has helped Birmingham become a hugely successful retail centre, attracting more than 42 million visitors per year (2017). Alongside these projects, the multibillion pound Eastside development enabled the city centre to expand to the east creating an innovation quarter that is home to two leading universities. Assets such as these, combined with the resurgence of Jaguar Land Rover in vehicle manufacturing, will help Birmingham realise its ambition to become a world leader in the advanced technology manufacturing industries of the future.

A host of more recent schemes have continued to strengthen the city’s offer and cement it as a major destination. Paradise and Arena Central are both landmark mixed-use schemes under construction that will deliver a combined total of 4.3 million sq ft of space, with new public realm and linkages with key destinations. The recent completion of Grand Central Shopping Centre (adjoining New Street Station) has created one of the best performing trading environments for retailers in the UK and is anchored by a 250,000 sq ft John Lewis.

Snowhill’s on-going improvement will add to Birmingham’s professional services and business offer, with Three Snowhill set to deliver 460,000 sq ft in 2019. The Smithfield redevelopment to be undertaken by Lendlease, and the Curzon regeneration proposals around the new HS2 station represent two of the UK’s largest regeneration opportunities.

New and improved infrastructure has been crucial to Birmingham’s progression. New Street Station and the associated Grand Central Scheme is a leading example of this, providing vastly improved connectivity between the city centre core and Southside. As well as being a shining example of good design, it is now the UK’s busiest station outside London.

The Metro has been extended; bringing trams back to Birmingham city centre and representing the start of a major expansion of the system over the next few years.

Birmingham’s national connectivity is one of the city’s greatest assets, with its central location placing it within four hours travel time for 90% of the UK population. HS2 will further cement this and reduce travel times.

Birmingham has been a key player in its own progression with the HS2 project. The city centre station is set to be the largest in the UK and will attract a substantial amount of new investment.

The city has also been instrumental in the development of the region’s rail network, with improvements to the West Coast Main Line and the introduction of the Midland Main Line. These investments have helped to improve connectivity between Birmingham and other major cities in the UK, further boosting the city’s reputation as a key transport hub.

In conclusion, Birmingham has undergone a dramatic transformation in recent years, with a focus on regeneration and the growth of its service based economy. The city has successfully diversified its economy, attracting new investment and creating a vibrant and dynamic urban environment. With further developments on the horizon, Birmingham is well positioned to continue its trajectory of success and become a world leader in advanced technology manufacturing.
2009 – 2019

1. Brindleyplace
2. Buildings One, Two & Three Snowhill
3. Longbridge
4. New Street Station & Grand Central
5. Park Central
6. Paradise
7. Arena Central
Brindleyplace was delivered over a 16 year period, completing in 2009. The pioneering scheme has created a new urban neighbourhood, bringing together offices, shops, homes, leisure facilities and public spaces in a canal side setting with a strong sense of identity and history. It was a major catalyst for the wider regeneration of the Westside area.

Master planned by Sir Terry Farrell, the development is orientated around two major open spaces; Central Square and Oozells Square. Central Square is built around an award-winning butterfly roofed glass cafe designed by Piers Gough of CZWG Architects and Lers Gough and is set in high quality open space with stone paving, raised lawns, trees, artwork and water features. It provides a central focus to the public space network and counter balances the more sedate Oozells Square.

The focal point of Oozells Square is the former Oozells Street School building, now home to the Ikon Gallery. The building was originally constructed in 1877 and provides a strong visual centrepiece.

In total, Brindleyplace delivered 1.1 million sq ft of office space across 11 separate buildings. It transformed the city’s office offering and in 2010 No.11 Brindleyplace won ‘Best of the Best’ in the British Council for Offices (BCO) Commercial Workplace Awards. Brindleyplace also produced 143 apartments and townhouses and 100,000 sq ft of shops, restaurants, and bars.

Brindleyplace has seen a number of Birmingham’s landmark transactions, including the initial letting of 69,000 sq ft at 1 Brindleyplace to Deutsche Bank in 2008 and a further 134,000 sq ft to them at 5 Brindleyplace in 2013.

The project included a 240-room hotel, a 900-space multi-storey car park, a 340-seat theatre, a health club, art gallery and the National Sea Life Centre, England’s largest aquarium. The estate was acquired in 2010 for £190 million by Hines UK on behalf of Hines Global REIT in a joint venture with Moorfield. The scheme has recently been purchased by HSBC Alternative Investment for £260 million. Key occupiers include RBS, Deloitte, Deutsche Bank, Lloyds Bank and Avison Young.

Brindleyplace is considered a huge success and in excess of 10,000 people now work there. It is frequently cited as a leading example of high quality, successful mixed-use city centre urban regeneration.
These three buildings developed by Ballymore represent the commercial centrepiece of Birmingham’s wider Snowhill Area. These three buildings developed by Ballymore represent the commercial centrepiece of Birmingham’s wider Snowhill Area. These three buildings developed by Ballymore represent the commercial centrepiece of Birmingham’s wider Snowhill Area. These three buildings developed by Ballymore represent the commercial centrepiece of Birmingham’s wider Snowhill Area. These three buildings developed by Ballymore represent the commercial centrepiece of Birmingham’s wider Snowhill Area.

Snowhill has been dubbed ‘Birmingham’s answer to Canary Wharf’ and the success of the first two buildings was key in instigating the production of the much wider Snow Hill Masterplan.

One Snowhill was completed in 2009 and represented a new standard for office accommodation in the city. It delivered 250,000 sq ft of Grade A space with modern, flexible and efficient floorplates. 120,000 sq ft was pre-let to KPMG, with Barclays taking the remaining 99,000 sq ft.

Two Snowhill completed in 2014 and was largely pre-let to Gowling WLG. At the time this represented the biggest pre-let agreement in Birmingham’s history, together with HS2’s commitment to 100,000 sq ft in Two Snowhill this acted as a catalyst for further investment.

Two Snowhill is slightly bigger than its ‘sister’ building at 314,000 sq ft and played an important part in Birmingham’s ongoing office market renaissance, again raising the bar for Grade A space in the city and achieving a BREEAM Excellent rating.

Following the success of the first two buildings, M&G Real Estate committed to funding Three Snowhill. This scheme is currently onsite and will deliver 420,000 sq ft of office and leisure space in the UK’s largest ever speculative city centre office scheme outside of London.

Ballymore is the developer, with BAM the contractor. The building is scheduled to complete in Summer 2019 and will accommodate 4,500 office workers.

The site of the three buildings has had a challenging history due to its adjacency to the main rail line into Snow Hill station and also the introduction of the Metro line that links Snow Hill to the wider city centre and Wolverhampton.

The first two phases enabled provision for the Metro extension from Snow Hill to New Street which is now fully operational. The Snowhill development has been very successful and hugely important in growing Birmingham’s commercial offer.
Longbridge is strictly speaking outside the geographical focus of this report but its significance as the largest private sector led, brownfield development project in the Birmingham conurbation warrants its inclusion.

This 468 acre site, formerly the MG Rover car plant, in south west Birmingham has a worldwide reputation as the historical home of the Austin Mini. Following the collapse of MG in 2005, St Modwen commenced transformation of Longbridge into a mixed use, high quality urban environment.

The completion of the Longbridge Innovation Centre (45,000 sq ft) and Two Devon Way (30,000 sq ft) at Longbridge Technology Park in 2007 helped reinvigorate employment in the local area.

Further opportunities were created following the completion of circa 150,000 sq ft of industrial buildings at The Caftan Centre in 2008. A new £66 million (£250,000 sq ft) purpose built facility for Bournville College with capacity for 15,000 students was also completed in 2011.

Comprehensive plans for a new £70 million town centre regeneration scheme, incorporating shops, restaurants and offices have since been implemented. A new 150,000 sq ft Marks & Spencer opened in 2015 along with other leading retailers and new parking provision for 1,500 vehicles.

So far a total of 110,000 sq ft of office space is now occupied across the town centre, with 250,000 sq ft of warehouse/industrial space also occupied across the wider development. The pre-letting of a 20,000 sq ft office building on the final plot at the Technology Park has just been secured, with completion due at the end of 2019.

Planning consent is in place for an 86,000 sq ft office building at One Park Square and plans are being progressed for further development on Two Park Square, which is likely to offer 45,000 sq ft of offices. Looking ahead, up to 1 million sq ft of future development can be accommodated at Longbridge Business Park, including a significant element of light production, manufacturing and technology space.

The ongoing regeneration of Longbridge is establishing the area as a truly mixed use model of sustainability and the new community will provide up to 10,000 sustainable employment opportunities and 2,000 high quality homes when completed.

Longbridge
New Street Station & Grand Central

Prior to the redevelopment, New Street Station was dark, unwelcoming and overcrowded, with poor access for passengers and providing a poor initial impression of the City for visitors arriving by rail. The new station has created a concourse with three and a half times more space for passengers, more accessible platforms and brighter, clearer and better links to and through the station for pedestrians. It has opened up connectivity between the city centre core and Southside, fuelling expansion, regeneration and a particular focus on new residential development within this key part of the city centre. The exterior design of the station is highly acclaimed and benefits the perception of one of the UK’s main transport hubs.

The second key component of the scheme was the redevelopment of the “traditional” Pallasades shopping centre that sat above the train station. The new Grand Central complex has significantly enhanced Birmingham’s retail and leisure landscape. Anchored by a 250,000 sq ft John Lewis, with restaurants and F&B outlets benefitting from the annual footfall of 55 million passengers a year. Grand Central provides 200,000 sq ft of additional retail space with a mix of high quality shops, cafes and restaurants. It is now one of the best performing retail destinations in the UK.

The five year £750 million transformation of New Street Station and the new Grand Central shopping complex completed in September 2015. It has transformed first impressions of the City for visitors arriving by rail and fostered further investment in the surrounding area.

The project was financed through a range of regional and government grant regimes, private sector contributions including Birmingham City Council borrowing, to effect the CPO and fund the conversion to create Grand Central. The redevelopment was backed by Birmingham City Council, Advantage West Midlands, Centro and the Department for Transport. The project was delivered and managed through a contractual joint venture agreement between Network Rail and Birmingham City Council. Grand Central was sold in 2016 to Canada Pension Plan and Hammerson for £335 million.

The scheme has directly created around 1,000 new jobs and provided a substantial boost to the City’s economy and infrastructure. It has become symbolic of the ambitions of both Birmingham City Council and the recently formed West Midlands Combined Authority; underlining the growth and strength of the local economy and acting as an ideal focal point for the physical regeneration of an expanding city centre.
Park Central

Park Central is one of the largest and most significant residential regeneration schemes in any UK regional city centre. Park Central is a 61 acre residential led mixed use scheme, delivered by house builder Crest Nicholson in partnership with Birmingham City Council and Optima Community Association. The scheme has been developed over the past 10 years and when complete will comprise approximately 1,650 residential dwellings and 285,000 sq ft of commercial space.

The regeneration of the once deprived Lee Bank area has focused on improvements to the former Central Area estates of Birmingham, providing considerable benefits to the community. These include a 30% mixed tenure housing stock transfer to Optima Community Association, significant public art and open space provision, highway improvements and a range of community buildings.

The development’s close proximity to the city core has led to the emergence of complementary apartment schemes, both pre and post-recession. The removal of the unsightly high rise concrete towers (notably Haddon Tower) and extensive highway works have improved the urban environment of the wider Bath Row area.

To date approximately 1,400 residential dwellings and all the commercial space (285,000 sq ft) have been delivered.

The final phase of Park Central (Phase 13) was completed during 2018. This phase, known as the Lexington Quarter, comprises a mix of Private Rental Sector apartments and private sale units.

The development is built around significant landscaped public realm and park areas. The emphasis on investment in ‘place creation’ has enhanced the scheme’s environmental credentials and will help ensure its longevity.
Paradise is currently Birmingham’s highest profile office led mixed use regeneration scheme. Previously a legacy of 60’s Brutalist architecture and constrained by the City’s road network, it is a transformational example of urban ‘place making’.

Badged as ‘Where commerce meets culture’, Paradise will comprise 3 public squares, 10 brand new high quality office buildings, 70,000 sq ft of retail, 50,000 sq ft of leisure space and a new 250 bed four/five star hotel. It will ultimately deliver approximately 1.8 million sq ft of contemporary space and accommodate around 12,000 workers.

The first phase, consisting of One and Two Chamberlain Square, is under construction and due for completion in Winter 2019. Building One has been pre-let in its entirety to PwC (150,000 sq ft).

Paradise will bring about wholesale change of the entire area, incorporating modern development with truly magnificent historic civic buildings along with existing public squares and will extend the traditional CBD into Westside via Centenary Square.

The huge infrastructure works are creating high quality pedestrian linkages to all key parts of the city. This is being achieved by the closure and removal of the original four lane vehicular ‘circus’ that historically contained and constrained the site.

The massive up front infrastructure costs required to bring the site forward for development has been funded via the Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP under Enterprise Zone legislation. The loan is being utilised for essential infrastructure works, demolition of the old central library, site preparation, plot creation and related phasing of public realm.

The scheme is expected to be completed by 2027, almost 20 years after initial discussions first commenced between the major landowners, Birmingham City Council and Argent.

The scheme is held by a land owning joint venture between Birmingham City Council and Hermes with Argent appointed as development manager. The developer of the individual phase 1 buildings is a joint venture between Hermes and CPP (Canadian Pension Plan).
Arena Central

Arena Central is an important development in central Birmingham fronting Broad Street and adjacent to Centenary Square linking the City’s Westside to the traditional CBD.

Situated in the Enterprise Zone, the scheme benefits from funding for infrastructure improvements and simplified planning. The 9.2 acre site is master planned to deliver a 1 million sq ft mixed-use development, set within new landscaped public realm.

New Grade A office accommodation is proposed with amenity retail/leisure, hotel and basement car parking. One Arena Central has detailed planning permission for 140,000 sq ft of office accommodation.

Two Arena Central, a 210,000 sq ft office building, was forward sold to HSBC Bank as the new headquarters of its retail banking business, delivering a high profile anchor tenant. Construction completed in 2018 with the bank now in occupation.

The scale of the deal clearly demonstrates that major global corporations view Birmingham as an appealing location.

Three Arena Central, a 240,000 sq ft office building, has been pre-let to HMRC as part of the Government Hubs programme and construction is scheduled to complete during Q1 2020. Furthermore, the complementary 250 bed Holiday Inn Express recently completed and a dedicated Metro stop on the route serving New Street and Five Ways will open during December 2019.

The redevelopment will provide a class leading mixed use location that helps meet Birmingham’s growing demand for office accommodation.

Arena Central is being brought forward by Miller Developments and Kier under a development agreement with landowner Birmingham City Council.
Birmingham tomorrow

Birmingham is unrecognisable from a decade ago and is a hugely exciting and ambitious City looking forward. The team at Avison Young are greatly enthused by its prospects and believe the next 10 years represent an unparallelled period of opportunity for investment in the City and wider West Midlands region.

The transformation to date has greatly heightened Birmingham’s appeal and according to Birmingham City Council, visitor numbers increased by 2.7% to 41.8 million in 2017. Subsequently, visitor spend rose by more than 9% on the previous year totalling £7.1 billion, supporting 75,000 new jobs. Business start-ups and residential employment are also up as more individuals relocate to the City.

The next section of the report looks at the key schemes over the next 10 years that will enable Birmingham to continue to evolve as a world class city. These, together with ambitious plans for regional economic growth driven by the West Midlands Mayor, will revitalise and develop strategically important locations, providing new opportunities for Birmingham’s residents and visitors.

The arrival of High Speed 2 at Birmingham Curzon in 2026 will be a game-changer and despite concerns of potential delays, the overall sentiment for the new connection remains positive in the City. HS2 has already acted as a catalyst for investment and regeneration in Birmingham. Martineau Galleries is an example of this potential and will become a new focal point following HS2’s arrival, linking Eastside and the Colmore Business District. The regeneration will bring much needed high quality residential and office space.

In terms of connectivity, HS2 will substantially increase rail capacity and reduce journey times to London from 1h 21min to 49min and with the completion of the second phase, will cut the journey time to Leeds by 1hr. It will also unlock new sites for housing and commercial development.

There is also a £110 million rapid bus network, Sprint, being developed ahead of the Commonwealth Games which are to be hosted by Birmingham in 2022. This will speed up travel times between Solihull, Walsall, Sutton Coldfield and other neighbouring towns to Birmingham city centre.

Birmingham continues to battle with a housing shortage, a common theme across the UK. However, solutions are being sought and most recently, planning permission has been obtained by Birmingham Municipal Housing Trust (BMHT). Birmingham City Council’s house-building arm to construct its first modular homes. This could be an opportunity to unlock land and boost scale. However, what is clear is that more must be done if Birmingham is to fulfil its growth potential and it will be a big challenge for both public and private stakeholders.

Foreign Direct Investment into the West Midlands and Birmingham remains consistently high despite the uncertain environment caused by Brexit. The strong talent pool, lower operation costs and modern infrastructure have played a significant role in attracting foreign investors. However, the City must continue to deliver a proposition that enables it to attract further high levels of inward investment. The new skills deal for the West Midlands Combined Authority will help mitigate this concern as up to £6.9 billion has been unlocked to boost productivity and growth.

Fundamentally, we believe that Birmingham’s economy is now more resilient, providing an excellent platform for further growth and the right blend of future assets coming through the pipeline to realise it. The sheer number of transformative projects identified demonstrates the huge potential and investor confidence in the city.
2019 – 2029

9. Birmingham Curzon
10. Smithfield
11. Peddimore
12. Langley
13. New Garden Square - Edgbaston
14. Greater Icknield Masterplan and Port Loop
15. Bristol Street
16. Digbeth
17. Exchange Square 1 and 2
18. Perry Barr Regeneration
19. The Birmingham Life Sciences Park
20. Martineau Galleries
21. Innovation Birmingham
22. Eastside Locks and Steamhouse
Birmingham Curzon

Birmingham Curzon will be a completely new rail terminus for the HS2 project in the heart of both the city and the national rail network. It is the key part of the wider 141 hectare Curzon Masterplan which provides a framework to guide development and regeneration, enabling the City to fully capitalise on HS2’s arrival. The new station will sit within the newly created “Paternoster Place” adding quality new public realm into the area and ensuring linkages across to a number of key regeneration initiatives.

The new HS2 line will be a huge asset, providing seven high speed platforms and delivering radically improved connectivity and a gateway into the City. The station will sit between the existing city centre core, the Eastside regeneration area and the Digbeth Creative Business Quarter. The associated residential development will support around 4000 homes, making an important contribution to the housing supply required for the city’s growing population. Construction of the station will commence in 2021/22 and will open in 2026.

Birmingham Curzon Station will not only be for high speed rail passengers and will become a focal point for transformation driving new development opportunities. The delivery of a world class station that is to be a destination in its own right and which will be fully integrated into an extended tram network, as well as providing pedestrian, cycle, bus and conventional rail connections to the rest of the City and the wider West Midlands will be transformational.

The station and its immediate surroundings will be funded by HS2, while the wider developments fall into the city centre Enterprise Zone. The scheme will be integral to attracting significant private sector investment in the city’s growth and this figure is expected to be around £1.7 billion over the 30 year life of the scheme, leading to the creation of several new neighbourhoods across the masterplan area.

It is currently estimated that 300,000 passengers per day will be accommodated by 2033 with 1,100 passengers per train, and 9 trains per hour. The City Council predicts that Curzon will generate a cumulative GDP impact of £3.1 billion and economic output of £1.4 billion. Over the life of the programme the net additional permanent employment impact is expected to be 36,000 jobs.
Birmingham’s Smithfield is described as a once in a generation opportunity to deliver a truly transformational development in the heart of the City. The area has a rich heritage as the home of Birmingham’s markets and Irish community and this will be embraced in the regeneration to help cement the location’s distinctive identity.

Smithfield is a 17 hectare site which formerly housed the wholesale markets that have now been relocated. The site, located within the city centre’s Southern Gateway area of transformation is set out in the Big City Plan. Its successful redevelopment will play a crucial role in the transformation of the wider city centre expanding it in a southerly direction.

In January 2019, Birmingham City Council confirmed the appointment of Lendlease as its preferred development partner following a lengthy selection process. Lendlease are now working with the City Council to conclude a business plan and finalised development agreement before submitting a planning application prior to the end of 2019.

Smithfield will capitalise on established nearby assets including the Bullring Shopping Centre, Grand Central/ New Street Station, as well as future projects including HS2 and the Metro extension. The proximity of these activity centres are a major strength for Smithfield and will generate substantial footfall and ensure integration with the regeneration of Digbeth and the HS2 Curzon project.

Development is expected to run for a 15-year period following the enabling works. The hybrid planning application will incorporate detailed consent for the first phases to include new markets provision, public square and public realm alongside early residential development. The scheme will incorporate new family orientated cultural and leisure attractions; a vibrant market building, a substantial public space known as Festival Square, a residential neighbourhood and integrated public transport. The site will deliver over 3,228,000 sq ft of new mixed-use floor space, more than 2,000 homes and 3,000 new jobs, funded by £500 million of investment. It is anticipated that the regeneration will ultimately add £470 million of economic output to the local economy.

Enterprise Zone funding will be utilised to pump prime the delivery of Festival Square and the public transport networks (Metro and Sprint) that will serve Smithfield.

The key stakeholders in Smithfield’s regeneration include Lendlease, Birmingham City Council (who own much of the site), Centro and the Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP.
Peddimore

Peddimore is another scheme which is strictly speaking outside of the focus of this report but is of such scale and importance that we have decided to include it as it is located within the Birmingham conurbation.

Peddimore is the most significant industrial and logistics development opportunity in the Midlands and one of the best in the UK. The 175 acre greenfield site has been released from the Green Belt and allocated for Class B1(b), B1(c), B2 and B8 development in the recently adopted Birmingham Development Plan.

The site is extremely well located on the north-eastern edge of the City, adjoining the A38 dual carriageway and in close proximity to the M42 motorway and M6 Toll. It is also close to well established industrial and logistics companies and will build on the existing success of the wider area.

The majority of the site was historically owned by Birmingham City Council with the remainder controlled by Seven Trent Water. Initial masterplanning and a recently submitted planning application, indicates that the site can accommodate close to 3 million sq ft of commercial floor space and a mix of development that could create around 4,500-5,000 new jobs.

The City Council will require the development to be of the highest quality and well connected, ensuring that employees and visitors can access the site by sustainable modes of transport. To assist the design and development process, a Supplementary Planning Document has been prepared. This contains detailed information on constraints and opportunities as well as guidance on development parameters and delivery.

Following a selection process, IM Properties have been chosen to bring forward Zone 1 of the development, totalling 91 acres (1.77m sq ft) and upon the grant of planning consent will be marketing warehousing/industrial opportunities ready for occupation from late 2020. The City Council have retained control of their remaining land for industrial development by end occupiers.
Langley

Langley is a significant greenbelt release allocated within the adopted Birmingham Development Plan (January 2017) as a 6,000 dwelling Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE) in Sutton Coldfield, north Birmingham. It will make an important contribution towards the city’s overall housing needs to 2031, and to support the economic growth of the region.

Consultation on the Draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for Langley, published by Birmingham City Council, closed on the 22nd October 2018. The SPD (currently in draft form) is to provide a vision on what the city expects Langley to be once it is developed, including key Development and Delivery Principles.

The development is centred on a large parcel of former greenbelt land strategically located within north Birmingham, in the Royal Town of Sutton Coldfield. It is connected to the major road network directly via the A38 and close to junction 9 of the M42. The site also benefits from easy access to the M6 (Toll) and M6.

The site is owned by several land owners and developers, including the City Council, the majority of which are working together as the Langley Sutton Coldfield Consortium. The development will create a new community supported by a wide range of infrastructure from new public transport connections, to a network of walking and cycling routes, extensive green infrastructure and public open spaces together with education facilities and local amenities.

The vision is to create an exemplar sustainable residential development for future generations incorporating new built form and a distinct identity and living environment.

Along with the development of Peddimore on the adjacent site, Langley represents a great opportunity for the town of Sutton Coldfield and Birmingham to deliver thousands of homes, skilled jobs and modern infrastructure. Peddimore is the most significant industrial and logistics development opportunity in the Midlands allocated for a mix of B1(b), B1(c), B2 and B8 Use Classes.

The Langley site will itself benefit from a new roundabout access designed to service both Peddimore (to the east of the A38) and Langley (to the west of the A38) and which is a commitment to be delivered by IM Properties (the development partner appointed by Birmingham City Council to deliver the Peddimore scheme).
Plans for a mixed-use, £330 million regeneration of New Garden Square in Edgbaston were lodged in January 2017 by landowner Calthorpe Estates, and its joint venture partner U+I plc.

New Garden Square will create a vibrant new urban quarter centred around an attractive public square and adds to substantial regeneration activity by Calthorpe Estates, Birmingham’s largest private landowner.

The site of approximately 10.7 acres is located to the west of the city centre, just to the north of the A456, Hagley Road, a major arterial route into the city.

The vision is to deliver up to 400 apartments, 500,000 sq ft of office space and 19,000 sq ft of retail and leisure uses, including bars and restaurants. The planning permission retains the existing Grade II listed buildings on site and the new office buildings, restaurants and bars will all front onto Garden Square. Parking provision for 900 cars will be provided and there is also potential for a 100 bed hotel.

The scheme will benefit from future public transport improvements including the extension of the Metro along the A456 arterial route and Sprint, both of which will have stops close to the development. High quality pedestrian linkages will be delivered with access points and walkways through the development, connecting it to the wider area.

The public square itself will form the centre piece of the development and has been designed by award winning Glenn Howells Architects. It will be delivered in the first phase of the scheme which is expected to complete in 2022. The key stakeholders in the scheme are Calthorpe Estates and commercial development partner U+I.
Greater Icknield is an area with over 60 hectares of new development opportunities making it the largest brownfield led redevelopment proposal within Birmingham. The redevelopment of the area will strengthen connections between the city centre and Edgbaston and Ladywood areas.

Icknield Port Loop is the largest proposed development within the Masterplan at 43.5 acres. The site has an outline planning permission for a mixed use redevelopment of up to 1,150 dwellings, together with retail, service, employment, leisure uses.

Places for People and Urban Splash, together with Birmingham City Council and Canal and River Trust have formed Port Loop LLP. This is the vehicle which will facilitate the development of this important regeneration opportunity which will protect and enhance the Edgbaston Reservoir (a site of Importance for nature conservation). In 2017 the first phase of the development was granted Reserved Matters planning permission for 207 residential dwellings, with commercial space for Use Classes A1 – A5 and D1. The development of this phase commenced in 2018.

Soho Loop extends to c. 12 acres and forms part of the wider Greater Icknield Masterplan. The site is located to the south of Dudley Road and sits between both the Icknield Port Loop and the City Hospital sites. Planning permission was granted for the development of up to 504 residential apartments as part of a mixed use development and the site was subsequently acquired by the Joint Venture of Aspley House Capital, Galliard Homes & Claremont Property Group in 2017.

Following the release of the Birmingham Development Plan (2017), the Joint Venture has decided to revisit the proposed development and is seeking to increase the residential offering. While a planning application is yet to be submitted, a public exhibition in 2018 displayed their proposal for a mixed development of c. 680 residential dwellings.

The City Hospital site extends to 49.4 acres. Homes England acquired 32.9 acres of the site from the NHS Trust, and this part of the site is due to be released for development once the new Midland Metropolitan Hospital in Sandwell has been completed. A previous outline planning application submitted by the NHS Trust proposed the development of the site to provide up to 700 mixed residential dwellings, including an element of conversion of retained buildings.
Bristol Street forms part of the Southside and Highgate Quarter within Birmingham City Council’s Big City Plan. The area enjoys an effervescent mix of existing land uses and offers substantial redevelopment opportunities.

The Southside and Highgate Quarter has undergone significant regeneration within the last decade to include the relocation of Birmingham’s Wholesale Markets outside of the city core and intensive high density residential apartment development, encouraging the growth of urban living.

Major redevelopment opportunities remain, as evidenced in particular by the considerable areas of vacant land and derelict buildings along the Bristol Street frontage. It is envisaged that the continued regeneration of such sites coupled with effective placemaking infrastructure will create a vibrant community environment together with improved connectivity to the city core.

The now part demolished derelict buildings comprising Monaco House prominently front Bristol Street. The site has been an eyesore for some time however an application has recently been submitted to the Planning Authority seeking approval for a high density residential redevelopment.

The proposed scheme seeks to accommodate 1009 residential units together with an element of commercial space subject to obtaining the necessary planning approvals.

The Bristol Street gateway to the city core is also dominated by land comprising the Bristol Street and St Lukes Development Framework located beyond Monaco House and fronting both Bristol Street and the Belgrave Middleway. This gateway site is owned by Birmingham City Council and Homes England who sought a development partner for the circa 21.5 acre site before plans were subsequently submitted on behalf of Barratt Homes.

The approved scheme which is bisected by Sherlock Street, totals 778 dwellings together with associated retail. The scheme will comprise 590 apartments and 188 houses across the assembled site. The Bristol Street streetscape is certainly one to watch in 2019 as pipeline regeneration projects continue to evolve.
Digbeth

Digbeth is a developing area less than a 10 minute walk from Bullring & Grand Central. Digbeth has a fast emerging reputation as Birmingham’s Creative Quarter and was recently named the ‘Coolest Neighbourhood in Britain’ by The Sunday Times.

The area is currently home to a variety of uses including industrial, retail, offices and increasingly residential with the most recently completed scheme of 313 apartments developed by Seven Capital at Fabrik Square.

Digbeth has several Enterprise Zone sites which will enhance opportunities for new development and reinforce the area’s economic activity. Both HS2 and Phase 2 of the Metro extension will provide additional transport links transforming connections and boosting the regeneration potential of Digbeth.

The aspirations for the creation of a new pedestrian focussed space connecting Shaws Passage and Bordesley Street will provide an arrival gateway into Digbeth from Birmingham Curzon and the city centre Core.

Typhoo Wharf comprises an area of circa 3.2 ha which has been identified as a regeneration opportunity for business, retail, residential and leisure development around a canal basin with potential for residential moorings. Beyond 2029, the creation of a new public green space will be important for future residents. The proposed Duddeston Viaduct SkyPark will mimic the iconic ‘New York Highline’ and provide opportunities next to the canal side off Montague Street.

A number of residential schemes are currently under construction which continues to transform the southern area of Digbeth into a residential neighbourhood. These schemes include 170 apartments at St Anne’s Court situated on Bradford Street and 520 apartments at Lunar Rise situated on High Street Bordesley and due for completion in 2019. Planning permission has been granted for a further 684 apartments nearby.

Significant forthcoming residential developments include Seven Capital’s £200 million development known as Connaught Square. Planning has now been approved for up to 700 apartments which will provide up to 500,000 sq ft of residential accommodation along with 42,000 sq ft of commercial space. The proposed development comprises four buildings of 4 to 28 storeys and will bridge the gap between the main city centre and the growing creative quarter. Work on site is expected to begin in summer 2019, with completion of the first phase expected in March 2022 and full completion by August 2023.
Exchange Square represents the latest phase of the Masshouse development in an enviable location adjacent to the proposed new HS2 Curzon Street Station. Construction is progressing on the three residential towers which make up the first phase of development, which are scheduled to be completed from 2019 onwards.

Exchange Square is the final addition to Nikal’s hugely successful £350m Masshouse development in Birmingham city centre. Exchange Square is located between the city’s traditional business and retail districts and Eastside, which has been the focus for a sustained period of investment and regeneration, including the Curzon Masterplan and the city’s new HS2 terminus. An exciting new urban village is being created which will provide circa 1,000 new high quality apartments plus shops, cafes and restaurants, all directly opposite the new Birmingham Curzon HS2 terminal.

The scheme will be delivered in two phases. Phase 1 will complete mid to late 2019 and comprises 603 rental apartments in three buildings of 27, 16 and nine storeys plus a 5,000 sq ft residents’ hub including a concierge and members club style private lounge. The scheme will also provide 27,500 sq ft of ground floor retail and leisure space plus 186 car parking spaces. The Phase 1 apartments have been sold to LaSalle Investment Management through a build to rent deal worth in excess of £100m. LaSalle acquired the long leasehold interest in the scheme on behalf of a client.

A new public square will also be crafted that will form the heart of the development. Facing south, this new public realm will include a mix of hard and soft landscaping and be flanked by a number of restaurants, bars and cafes.

Phase 2 now has planning consent for the development of 223 apartments (secured 2016), although Nikal is due to revise its proposals and submit a new planning application in early 2019 which will seek to increase the number of apartments. A deal has been agreed by Nikal with Grainger PLC, the UK’s largest listed residential landlord and leader in the UK private rented sector (PRS), to forward fund and acquire 373 apartments at Exchange Square Phase 2 for £77 million, as well as having secured a pre-let for the delivery of a new hotel as part of the overall phase.

A third tower is proposed to complete the comprehensive development with details still to be confirmed.
Under the tag line “Heart of the UK, Soul of the Commonwealth”, Birmingham’s rising confidence and increasing reputation is characterised by the City’s bold ambitions to host the 2022 Commonwealth Games, with proud ambitions to ensure a focus on regeneration and rejuvenation. Whilst the Games’ themselves will only take place over a period of 11 days, the legacy will last for generations.

Whilst Birmingham will be host City to the Games and be at the very heart of the programme, in a joined up approach, venues and events are to be spread across the West Midlands Combined Authority area. Mountain biking at Cannock Chase, Netball at Coventry, Lawn Bowls in Leamington Spa, six sports being hosted by the NEC in Solihull and a brand new aquatics centre to be developed in Sandwell provide a flavour of the diversity of locations from across the region that will pull together to ensure a successful outcome.

Andy Street, Mayor of the West Midlands, said: “This was always a regional bid, with many of the regional partners supporting financially. It is, therefore, particularly pleasing that some of the events and competitions will take place around the region, giving us the opportunity to showcase places like Cannock Chase and Leamington Spa to the world, and ensure the benefits of what I am confident will be a fantastic event, are shared out.”

The events programme adds a number of additional sports to the mandatory disciplines and this diversity of sports reinforces the Commonwealth Games’ track record for inclusive para sport and gender equality.

As a major component of the games, the athletics programme will take place at a fully modernised Alexander Stadium in Perry Barr, North Birmingham, with its capacity being increased on a permanent basis from the existing 12,700 to 20,000 spectators.

Alongside the redeveloped stadium, the former 18 acre Birmingham City University Teaching Campus will have its legacy underlined by a complete redevelopment to comprise the Athlete’s village supporting the entirety of the Games. The site has now received planning consent to accommodate 1,072 new flats and maisonettes, alongside 79 houses and 268 extra care apartments. During the Games, this accommodation will house up to 6,800 athletes whilst post Games, they will be converted to 1,400 homes, together with associated public realm and community facilities.

This new Games associated development will herald the complete regeneration of Perry Barr in what has been termed “the most transformative legacy” of the Games, bringing significant investment and regeneration. Development will also be supported by a significant level of infrastructure ranging from the “Sprint” public transport system, a remodelled rail station and a breaking down of hard highway infrastructure that has, for many years, scarred the area, resulting in a far wider and more diverse access solution.

Research by the former Treasury and MHCLG economist, Chris Walker, provides the latest update on economic impact, estimating that hosting the 2022 Games will provide an economic boost of at least £1.5 billion into the West Midlands economy in the first year alone, with further benefits each year beyond, adding an additional 1.3% GVA to the West Midlands.
The development of a significant Life Sciences Park (LSP) is a long standing regeneration initiative of the City Council. Following its remediation, the University of Birmingham purchased a 10 acre part of the former Battery Park site from the City Council. Having worked up their outline proposals and ambitions for the development, the University are promoting it as the focal point for Life Sciences and healthcare/medical related development in the region.

The University’s ambition is to ensure that the site’s unique position close to the QE Hospital, University of Birmingham and part of the Edgbaston Medical Quarter (EMQ) is used to further the growth of the life sciences sector in the City and attract further inward investment.

The on-going expansion of the University of Birmingham, the recent establishment of the new QE Super Hospital, and other developments such as the Bio Hub Incubator and Institute of Translational Medicine has underscored the area’s importance for health related uses. The Edgbaston Medical Quarter is predicted to expand significantly in the coming years.

The Life Sciences campus has planning consent for approximately 375,000 sq ft of life sciences use within use class B1 and the University will be entering into a deal with an appropriate party to re-masterplan, and ensure that the site optimises its potential to bring forward development.

To ensure that best use is made of the site and that the key partnering needs of both the public and private sectors are met through the development and on-going use of the site, the University will be ensuring that a true partnership approach is taken to all aspects of both delivery and future occupation of all premises within the scheme.

The Birmingham Life Sciences Park
Martineau Galleries

Martineau Galleries is a large city centre site occupying a strategic location between the head of the proposed HS2 station at Curzon and the Colmore Business District.

Extending to approximately 6.5 acres and consisting of The Square shopping centre, Dale and Century Houses, High Street NCP, 1-7 Kings Parade and Londonderry House, the site will become a key gateway to the city centre when the new HS2 station opens in 2026.

It is likely to be delivered alongside other major regeneration opportunities related to HS2 and other transport infrastructure improvements in the locality, including the wider Curzon area regeneration, the Digbeth corridor and across Eastside generally.

The site is now wholly owned by Hammerson having been bought out of a consortium previously including Land Securities and Phoenix Group in early 2015. This consortium had previously developed Martineau Phase One and the Bull Ring under the banner of The Birmingham Alliance.

Martineau Galleries was originally going to be developed as a retail led mixed-use scheme, with a planning consent granted in 2006, but is now likely to be more commercially-focused. It is likely to include substantial office and residential space, with supporting retail and leisure.

Master planning and massing proposals are not in the public domain at the time of publication, but could well exceed 2 million sq ft of commercial space and 1,000 residential units.
Bruntwood who recently acquired Innovation Birmingham are keen to expand and develop the campus with a long term aspiration to support the development of Birmingham’s wider ‘Knowledge Quarter’. This has the potential to become a thriving and internationally renowned research and innovation led sustainable city neighbourhood. Competitiveness and attractiveness to both local, regional, national and international businesses and individuals is required to ensure a sustainable and leading knowledge quarter.

Funding for the Knowledge Quarter expansion has been secured through Bruntwood’s £360m landmark partnership with Legal & General Capital, and Bruntwood will be actively seeking further Foreign Direct Investment.

With the investment capital secured, Bruntwood’s SciTech are ready to commence delivery of the initial phases of building to deliver new innovation space. Three phases of development create a roadmap to realising the ambition to create a vibrant and productive Birmingham Knowledge Quarter of international standing.

Phase 1 (2018 – 2020)
To allow Innovation Birmingham to meet latent market demand, flourish and reach its full potential, Bruntwood are looking to quickly enlarge the quantum of space available for new and existing incubated businesses to grow on. Maximising the Enterprise Zone and 5G test bed status the development of new buildings will allow growth, with the first 85,000 sq ft of new commercial innovation space planned for design and delivery in 2019. There is the ability to create up to a total of 240,000 sq ft of innovation work space.

Phase 2 (2019 – 2023)
To fuel further growth in digital and innovation start-ups, and build strong public-private-academic innovation partnerships, additional space is required to ensure adequate grow-on space and new purpose built accommodation for innovative anchor companies. Phase 2 focuses on opportunities within Birmingham Science Park to stimulate and consolidate the innovation ‘ecosystem’ with the ability to create somewhere in the region of 1.1 million sq ft of innovation space and close to 3,000 jobs.

Longer Term Opportunities (2021 – 2030)
Strong partnerships, involving Aston University and Birmingham City University along with others, will drive investment and growth. Emerging smart city technologies, the arrival of HS2 and the diverse and young city population allow the opportunity to re-imagine the future of the wider area and consolidate Birmingham as a top global city. Realising this potential will rely on coordinated spatial, economic and infrastructure planning amongst all stakeholders – the Birmingham Knowledge Quarter plan aims to outline the opportunity.
Eastside Locks is a major mixed use scheme in the heart of Birmingham’s Eastside Quarter. It covers approximately 14 acres in a prime strategic location adjacent to the proposed HS2 station. Its purpose has evolved significantly since its inception as part of the Eastside knowledge economy, transforming this part of Birmingham as an educational and research sector.

The scheme is adjacent to the new Birmingham City University campus and the Innovation Birmingham campus and forms part of the wider Eastside Quarter. The canalside setting and views over the city ensure a class leading environment in which to live and work.

The ambition is that as the site develops it will foster interaction between students and the private sector much like around Kings Cross in London. Development will include an incubation hub and innovation building extending to approximately 120,000 sq ft, aimed at the STEAM sectors and owned and operated by Birmingham City University. Developing this offering and the associated reputational benefit is important for Birmingham, if it is to deliver on its ambition to be a centre for knowledge based industries.

The scheme has outline planning consent for 650,000 sq ft of commercial space. The first phase of this has already been delivered in the form of the 45,000 sq ft Joseph Priestly building which was purchased by Birmingham City University. The remaining undeveloped commercial land was subsequently acquired by the University in 2018 to accommodate future expansion across the educational and commercial sectors.

Again in 2018, the remaining undeveloped residential land was purchased by Berkley Homes for up to 550 apartments to complement the now established £30 million, 625 unit student housing scheme by Alumna.

100,000 sq ft of retail and leisure development is also proposed along with significant landscaping and public realm. The plans seek to maximise the waterfront setting and should make Eastside Locks a unique destination when complete.
If you’d like to talk to one of our team to discuss property services or any market leading research, please get in touch.

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