

## Spatial Objectives for Policies CEN1-8

The unique character of the Black Country is largely defined by its network of centres and the relationships between them. This provides the basic spatial structure for the sub-region and is reflected in all 3 of the elements of the Vision. The Policies for Centres will ensure the network of Black Country Centres are consolidated, maintained and enhanced and will contribute to the delivery of Spatial Objectives 1,2,5,7 and 8.

### CenEN1: – The Importance of the Black Country Centres for the Regeneration Strategy

#### Spatial Objectives

The Black Country's centres are the focus for retail, leisure, commercial and civic uses and it is the strategy of this document to maintain and enhance these centres appropriate to their role and function. They have a vital role in the economy of the Black Country, and their regeneration is a key component of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) and Regional Economic Strategy (RES). It is critical that they maintain and enhance their offer in order to underpin economic growth and sustainably deliver a vital and viable network of centres to meet the current and future needs of the Black Country residents.

~~The unique character of the Black Country is largely defined by its network of centres and the relationships between them. This provides the basic spatial structure for the sub-region and is reflected in all 3 of the elements of the Vision. The Policies for Centres will ensure the network of Black Country Centres are consolidated, maintained and enhanced and will contribute to the delivery of Spatial Objectives 1,2,5,7 and 8.~~

#### Policy

~~The Strategic Centres of Brierley Hill, Walsall, West Bromwich and Wolverhampton will provide the main focus for higher order sub-regional retail, office, cultural and service activities, balanced by a network of Town, District and Local Centres, providing for more day-to-day shopping needs (particularly convenience shopping).~~

The Strategic Centres of Brierley Hill, Walsall, West Bromwich and Wolverhampton will provide the main focus for higher order sub-regional retail, office, leisure, cultural and service activities, balanced by a network of Town, District and Local Centres, providing for town centre uses including meeting day-to-day shopping needs (particularly convenience shopping). Support will be given for appropriate complementary uses to enhance the evening economy. ~~Development that undermines this strategy will be resisted.~~ **Proposals that undermine this strategy will be resisted.(Note – must now be consistent with policies in CEn4-7)**

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~~To strengthen the Black Country's centres, new development should be well-integrated with existing provision. Consideration should be given to other activities such as offices and housing being accommodated on upper floors as part of mixed developments. Mixed use developments will be encouraged to generate a wide range of activities and to make the fullest use of opportunities to integrate into centres.~~

To strengthen the Black Country's centres, mixed-use developments that are well integrated with existing provision will be encouraged, including the use of upper floors.

~~Development will only be appropriate on the edge of a centre where it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the relevant Local Authority that the development cannot be accommodated within the centre and that the development physically integrates by creating appropriate linkages into the existing fabric of the centre.~~

~~There is considerable scope for centres in the Black Country to improve provision and enhance their evening economy offer.~~

**Policy Justification**

4.27 Centres are well placed to achieve regeneration and to serve their communities needs. The concentration of investment and growth within the centres is the basis to achieve transformation, to make the fullest possible use of existing infrastructure and to deliver regeneration. Similarly, they will provide the best accessibility to a range of opportunities for residents, workers and visitors particularly by public transport, walking and cycling.

~~Insert – definition of Town Centres / District Centres / Local Centres – i.e Such centres are to meet the day to day shopping needs of an appropriate scale as defined in Policy CEN4 and CEN5, and CEN6~~

~~4.28 For the purposes of this core strategy 'town centre uses' refers to those uses contained in government guidance PPS6<sup>4</sup>, subsequent statements of Government Policy and sui generis uses which attract a significant number of trips. For the purpose of the Core Strategy "town centre uses" are regarded as those uses contained in national policy guidance and sui generic uses which are considered appropriate for centres.~~

**Primary Evidence**

Back Country Centres Study :GVA Grimley 2009

**Delivery**

Through preparation of Development Plan Documents  
Through the appropriate consideration of planning applications  
Through working with delivery agents/developers to deliver town centre regeneration.

**Monitoring**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Target</b>
COI CEN1 - Amount of completed floorspace (m2) for Retail (convenience and comparison), B1 a Office, leisure/entertainment/cultural and tourism facilities by location	All retail/B1a office / leisure / entertainment / cultural and tourism facilities completions to be within an appropriate centre.

<sup>4</sup> Retail (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres, leisure, entertainment facilities, and the more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive through restaurants, bars and pubs, nightclubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres, and bingo halls) offices, both commercial and those of public bodies and arts, culture and tourism ( theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).

## **CEN2: Hierarchy Of Centres**

### **Spatial Objectives**

The Core Strategy sets out a hierarchy of centres where investment in retail and town centre uses of an appropriate scale to meet its position in the hierarchy will be promoted, and existing provision enhanced, to facilitate sustainable development in line with Spatial Objectives 1,2 5, 7 & 8.

~~The objective of the Joint Core Strategy sets out the broad framework to guide appropriate development which will be delivered through Local Development Documents prepared by individual Local Authorities to respond to opportunities or other key challenges and reflecting local circumstances for example Sandwell will be assessing the potential of Dudley Port as a local centre as a part of their Local Development Framework.~~

~~The unique character of the Black Country is largely defined by its network of centres and the relationships between them. This provides the basic spatial structure for the sub-region and is reflected in all 3 of the elements of the Vision. The Policies for Centres will ensure the network of Black Country Centres are maintained and enhanced and will contribute to the delivery of Spatial Objectives 1,2,5,7 and 8.~~

### **Policy**

The defined centres are shown in the hierarchy (as set out in Table 13) and identified on the centres key diagram.

To maximise regeneration to protect the identified centres and ensure the appropriate distribution of investment, a hierarchy of centres, consisting of three levels, has been identified across the Black Country:

- Strategic Centres;
- Town Centres
- District and Local Centres

Each level in the hierarchy will have a specific policy approach. In making decisions about development proposals and in preparation of Local Development Documents, consideration will be given to the centre's position in the hierarchy which reflects their scale and function.

**Table 13 – The Hierarchy of Centres in the Black Country**

<b>Local Authority</b>	<b>Dudley</b>	<b>Sandwell</b>	<b>Walsall</b>	<b>Wolverhampton</b>
Strategic Centres	- Brierley Hill	- West Bromwich	- Walsall	- Wolverhampton
Town Centres	- Dudley - Stourbridge - Halesowen	- Blackheath - Cradley Heath - Great Bridge - Oldbury - Wednesbury - Cape Hill - Bearwood	- Bloxwich - Brownhills - Aldridge - Willenhall - Darlaston	- Bilston - Wednesfield
District and Local Centres	- Kingswinford - Lye - Sedgley - Amblecote - Cradley / Windmill Hill - Gornal Wood - Netherton - Pensnett - Quarry Bank - Roseville - Shell Corner - The Stag - Upper Gornal - Wall Heath - Wollaston - Wordsley - Hawne - Oldswinford	- Smethwick High Street - Tipton - Scott Arms - Carter's Green - Quinton - Princes End - Old Hill - Stone Cross - Langley - Hamstead - Rood End - Queens Head – Bristnall - Smethwick Lower High St	- Caldmore - Stafford Street - Pleck - Pelsall - Leamore - Palfrey - Walsall Wood High St - Rushall - Blakenall - Lane Head - Streetly - Queslett - Lazy Hill - New Invention - Bentley - Park Hall - Moxley - Fullbrook - Collingwood Dr, Pheasey - Birchills - Coalpool / Ryecroft - Beechdale - The Butts - Spring Lane, Shelfield - Beacon Road, Pheasey - Brackendale - Woodlands - Shelfield - South Mossley - Dudley Fields - Streets Corner - Buxton Road, Bloxwich - Coppice Farm - Turnberry Road, Bloxwich	- Stafford Road (Three Tuns) - Cannock Road (Scotlands) - Tettenhall Village - Whitmore Reans/ Avion Centre - Broadway - Bushbury Lane - Showell Circus - Wood End - Stubby Lane - Heathtown - Parkfield - Spring Hill - Penn Manor - Upper Penn - Pennfields - Bradmore - Merry Hill - Castlecroft - Finchfield - Tettenhall Wood - Newbridge - Aldersley - Pendeford Park - Fallings Park - Ashmore Park - Compton Village - Warstones Road - Dudley Road (Blakenhall)

## **Policy Justification.**

- 4.29 The status of Brierley Hill (including Merry Hill, the Waterfront and Brierley Hill High Street) as a strategic centre within the Regional Strategic Network along with Walsall, West Bromwich and Wolverhampton, has been confirmed through the Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands. Alongside this, Dudley Town Centre has been re-designated as a Town Centre focusing on its leisure, heritage and tourism role.
- 4.30 The Strategic centres in the Black Country will provide the main focus for high level retail and office, cultural and service activities and are designated through the RSS. The Black Country Town Centres will complement the strategic centres and perform a more reduced shopping and business role but remain an important focus for day to day shopping (particularly convenience), leisure, community and cultural activity. The Town centres will be characterised having at least one anchor supermarket. **CLARITY NEEDED – Is this including existing supply and commitments?- Scale wise this must be consistent with policy CEN4** The District centres provide reasonable range and choice of goods and services at the local level **at a scale consistent with policy CEN5-** All will benefit from good public transport, **walking and cycling** links and car parking provision. They traditionally function as day to day shopping destinations. The Local Centres in the Black Country generally have a small supermarket present and a range of mostly convenience based outlets. Most have a minimum of 10 units present and are recognised because of the important role that they perform.
- 4.31 There are significant variations of features between the centres in the Black Country and there is a need for these characteristics to be acknowledged. Within this diversity there are identifiable common roles, functions and future aspirations. The hierarchies set out in the 4 Unitary Development Plans (UDPs) for the Boroughs have been re-assessed through the Black Country Centres Study 2009 by GVA Grimley. This has enabled centres to be grouped into a hierarchy of three levels. In particular, the process has resulted in the identification of two new local centres within Dudley (Hawne and Oldswinford). The process has also led to the removal of Darlaston Green within Walsall from the hierarchy.
- 4.32 Currently there is no evidence to justify additions or changes to this hierarchy except for potentially the designation of new local centres over the plan period which would be brought forward through the Local Development Documents prepared by Local Authorities.
- 4.33 Each level of the hierarchy will have a specific policy approach reflecting its scale and function, although it is recognised that within the hierarchy there is a need for the different characteristics of individual centres to be acknowledged. This policy approach is valuable in helping to ensure that developments are located in the type of centre that will be most appropriate to their scale, nature and catchment area.
- 4.34 The second level in the hierarchy of Town Centres carries forward the Town Centres identified in Dudley, Wolverhampton and Sandwell UDPs and those centres in Walsall which the Walsall UDP identified as District Centres but which carry out the same role and function as the Town Centres within the other Boroughs and are comparable in scale and function.
- 4.35 These centres are those which portray characteristics that serve a local service function particularly in terms of convenience shopping. They are also important in

meeting the needs of their areas for comparison shopping and a range of other town centre uses such as office, leisure and cultural facilities appropriate to their scale and function.

- 4.36 The third level of District and Local Centres carry forward the District Centres identified in the UDPs of Dudley (Kingswinford, Sedgley and Lye), Wolverhampton (Stafford Road (Three Tuns), Cannock Road (Scotlands), Tettenhall Village and Whitmore Reans/Avion Centre) and Sandwell (Smethwick High Street, Tipton (Owen Street), Carter's Green, Quinton and Scott Arms); Local Centres identified in Dudley (with the addition of Hawne and Oldswinford), Wolverhampton and Sandwell UDPs and those centres in Walsall which the Walsall UDP identified as Local Centres (with the removal of Darlaston Green).
- 4.37 These Centres range in scale but all portray characteristics that provide for day-to-day convenience shopping and services which meet local needs. These centres often have special importance for sections of the community such as ethnic minorities and the elderly.
- 4.38 In addition to this hierarchy there is an extensive network of small parades and small local shops meeting essential day-to-day needs of communities within walking distance. This is covered in Policy Cen6.
- 4.39 ~~Existing centre boundaries will remain unaltered from those currently set out in the Boroughs' Unitary Development Plans.~~ The Core Strategy does not alter the existing centre boundaries currently set out in the four Local Authorities' Proposals Maps. As a new strategic centre Brierley Hills boundary and Primary Shopping Area will be identified through its AAP. Detailed boundaries for the two new Local Centres and any adjustments made to existing centre boundaries and primary shopping areas will be delivered through Local Development Documents prepared by individual local planning authorities.
- 4.40 During the process of the development of both Regional and Local Planning strategies it might be necessary to alter the terminology describing the hierarchy but this will not alter its three-level structure.
- 4.41 The Core Strategy seeks to protect and enhance distinctive assets in different centres, for example the canal side setting of Brierley Hill, the Edwardian heritage of Walsall West Bromwich and Wolverhampton, the markets in Walsall, Wednesbury and other centres, and the traditional Black Country character in Dudley, Stourbridge, Bilston and Willenhall. .

### **Evidence**

Back Country Centres Study: GVA Grimley 2009  
Black Country Authority Unitary Development Plans

### **Delivery**

Through preparation of Development Plan Documents  
Through the appropriate consideration of planning applications  
Through working with delivery agents/developers to deliver town centre regeneration.

### **Monitoring**

Indicator	Target
COI CEN2 - Amount of completed floorspace (m2) for Retail (convenience and comparison), B1a Office, leisure / entertainment / cultural and tourism facilities by location	All retail / B1 & office / leisure / entertainment / cultural and tourism facilities completions to be within an appropriate centre.

## CEN3: Growth in the Strategic Centres

### Spatial Objectives

The unique character of the Black Country is largely defined by its network of centres and the relationship between them. This provides the basic structure for the sub-region and is reflected in the 3 elements of the Vision. The policies for Centres will ensure the delivery of Spatial Objectives 1, 2, 5, 7 and 8. The Black Country Strategic Centres provide the focus for comparison shopping, office employment, leisure and culture in the Black Country. The policy for growth in the Strategic Centres will contribute to the delivery of Spatial Objectives 1 and 8.

### Policy

The strategic centres of Brierley Hill, Walsall, West Bromwich and Wolverhampton will seek to secure **the highest amount of an appropriate share of** comparison and convenience retail and office development, **while at the same time ensuring in order to ensure** that investment that **could regenerate** to the Black Country as a whole will not be lost, **and to comply with strategic policy CSP1.**

### Comparison Shopping Provision

~~The table below sets out the quantum of floorspace between 2006 and 2021 and between 2021 and 2026 for each strategic centre. Each Local Planning Authority will plan for the identified amount of comparison retail upto 2021 (prior to commitments). Table 14 sets out the quantum of floorspace to be planned for in each Strategic Centre over the plan period, prior to commitments.~~

**Our suggestion is that the table is removed from policy and placed in explanatory text OR is removed altogether with reference to supporting study work.**

Table 14 – Comparison Shopping Provision

Strategic Centre	Delivery of comparison floorspace (sqm gross)	
	2006-2021	2021-2026
Wolverhampton	70,000sqm	30,000sqm
Brierley Hill	65,000sqm	30,000sqm
Walsall	60,000sqm	25,000sqm
West Bromwich	45,000sqm	20,000sqm

Between 2021 and 2026 as set out in the RSS there could be further comparison provision as identified in the table above in each of the strategic centres.

Planning permission for development **intended** to meet the requirements arising after 2021 should not be granted before 2016. **This level of floor space and control is too prescriptive.**

~~This quantum of floorspace will be delivered through current existing commitments, planning permissions and allocations through within individual Local Development Documents, as outlined in Appendix Two. Not clear as to audit of delivery. Alternatives may arise which deliver the policy objective.~~

New comparison retail development within Brierley Hill Town Centre as set out above will be carefully controlled so that no new comparison retail floorspace is brought into operation until the three conditions set out in the West Midlands RSS are met. Development in Brierley Hill will be planned for within the Brierley Hill Area Action Plan.

The above sets out a possible timescale for delivery of the above levels of floor space. However, specific proposals will be assessed on their own merits and the scale of floor space monitored regularly to see if the above needs are met or if alternative needs should be considered.

~~Any proposed development exceeding 500 sqm gross floorspace – whether brought forward through an LDD or planning application, that would lead to the amount of floorspace in an individual strategic centre exceeding the figures set out above, will only be considered favourably if the retail impact assessments contained in the most recent national guidance on retail planning are satisfied. Note: This needs deleting to exemplify the point made about floor space figures in the first place – e.g.g.:- Are we really expecting such assessments if one is 500sq.m over 70,000sq.m WITHIN a defined strategic centre?~~

Any proposed development in an edge-of-centre location exceeding 500 sqm gross floorspace will only be considered favourably if the retail impact assessments contained in the most recent national guidance on retail planning are satisfied. However, if it is considered that development below this threshold is likely to have a significant impact on other centres, then those proposals will be required to carry out an impact assessment.

**Convenience Shopping provision**

Between 2006~~9~~ and 2026 each Local Authority will plan **at least** for ~~the~~ following amounts of convenience floorspace, **prior to commitments**:

Table should be deleted OR placed in text and set as a MINIMUM.

Notwithstanding this, floor space figures should be revised UPWARDS for Wolverhampton (and potentially other areas) if it is accepted that the GVA methodology is incorrect.

**WCC – could you provide further clarity over what this table is informing, do the figures used within the table represent Commitments?**

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**Table 15 – Convenience Shopping Provision**

Strategic Centre	Target completions / delivery of convenience floorspace (sqm net)			
	2006 <del>9</del> -2016	2016-2021	2021-2026	Total over the Plan Period
Wolverhampton	9,400sqm	100sqm	1,300sqm	10,800sqm
Brierley Hill	5,000sqm	-	-	5,000sqm
Walsall	8,000sqm	-	-	8,000sqm
West Bromwich	4,800sq m	-	-	4,800sq m

Convenience provision in Brierley Hill will be limited to 5,000 sqm net to ensure the delivery of convenience provision in Dudley Town Centre (see policy CEN4).

~~The vast majority of convenience floorspace will is expected to be delivered by existing commitments, as outlined in Appendix 2. Note: Unless a clear audit trail is provided~~

over high confidence of delivery by specific sites then we suggest this is removed. E. G Raglan Street,

~~In the case of Brierley Hill, convenience provision will be limited to 5,000sqm net, to ensure the delivery of convenience provision in Dudley (see Policy Cen4). This will be delivered through the Brierley Hill AAP~~

~~When putting forward proposals through LDDs or determining applications floorspace capacity will be judged over a 5 year time frame.~~

~~Any proposal exceeding 500 sqm net floorspace – whether brought forward through an LDD or planning application, that would lead to the amount of floorspace in an individual strategic centre exceeding the figures set out in the Table above, will only be considered favourably if the retail impact assessments contained in the most recent national guidance on retail planning are satisfied. Note – Same point applies as for comparison goods, not flexible more pragmatic. Any proposed development in an edge-of-centre location exceeding 500 sqm net floorspace will only be considered favourably if the retail impact assessments contained in the most recent national guidance on retail planning are satisfied. However, if it is considered that development below this threshold is likely to have a significant impact on other centres, then those proposals will be required to carry out an impact assessment.~~

~~The retail growth should occur within the primary shopping areas as identified in UDPs and Brierley Hill AAP. These boundaries may be adjusted by subsequent DPDs. Proposals will have to show flexibility to ensure that retail growth can be delivered in the most sustainable way in centres. Edge-of-centre locations (within 300m walking distance of a primary shopping area) will only be considered if it can be demonstrated that growth can not be accommodated within primary shopping areas, and the edge-of-centre sites can provide physical linkages to the existing shopping core, particularly by pedestrians. Locations out-of-centre will be resisted.~~

### Offices

Each Strategic Centre will ~~accommodate~~ **upaccommo date up** to 220,000 sqm of B1(a) floorspace between 2006 and 2026. Delivery of this floorspace will be planned for within, or on the edge of each of the Strategic Centres through the following mechanisms, particularly as much of the demand for B1(a) floorspace is expected to occur after 2016:

- Brierley Hill Area Action Plan
- West Bromwich Area Action Plan
- Wolverhampton City Centre Area Action Plan
- Walsall Site Allocation Document and commitments at the Gigaport development and Walsall Waterfront **North**

### Other Centre Uses

The strategic centres should be the principal locations for major leisure, commercial leisure, entertainment, cultural facilities and service, such as Hotels which meet the

needs of the sub region and beyond. ~~Policy EMP6 details the strategic objectives and policy framework in relation to cultural facilities and the visitor economy and this policy complements this.~~ However, it is recognised that ability for individual centres to accommodate all land uses needs may be difficult and alternative locations will be considered positively where other policies of this Plan are met. Policy EMP6 deals with cultural facilities and the visitor economy. Walsall, Wolverhampton and West Bromwich are identified as priorities for cinema provision.

### Policy Justification

- 4.42 The comparison floorspace figures are presented to ensure conformity with the RSS and have been subject to a sensitivity test. ~~This sensitivity test has shown that it is not necessary to use any of the flexibility allowance identified in Regional Spatial Strategy.~~ This sensitivity test has shown that it is not necessary to plan to use any of the flexibility allowance identified in the Regional Spatial Strategy. These figures will give the Black Country Authorities the certainty to deliver strategic regeneration. The convenience capacity has been derived from the evidence commissioned to underpin the strategy. This was undertaken by GVA Grimley and included a current and robust household survey of the Black Country. ~~This evidence led to policy recommendations which have been reflected in the policy and ensures there is not an over concentration of convenience provision in strategic centres. This policy approach ensures regeneration of the non strategic centres which are dependant on their convenience role for their vitality and viability.~~ (assuming GVA is corrected then revise) There is a need to plan for further convenience goods provision within the JCS area. The level of provision and its scale should be commensurate with each of the relevant centres and specific catchment areas. Larger scale food retail should be directed towards the main strategic centres and smaller scale day-to-day convenience provision towards the smaller town and district centres as set out in policies CEN4 and CEN5.
- 4.43 The policy framework for the Black Country strategic centres is based upon a proactive development strategy recognising the current economic circumstances however planning for the long term growth in the sub region.
- 4.44 The Core Strategy has not set out figures for particular kinds of leisure, entertainment and cultural development as these are predominately market led. However, it is clear the strategic centres as the most accessible locations should be the principal focus for major leisure, entertainment and cultural facilities. Existing hotel provision in the Black Country is largely out of centre. The policy approach is to improve the quality and quantity of in centre hotel provision in the Black Country to cater for tourism needs.

### Primary Evidence

Black Country Centres Study ; GVA Grimley 2009

### Delivery

Through preparation of Development Plan Documents in particular the production of Area Action Plans for the Strategic Centres  
Through the appropriate consideration of planning applications  
Through working with delivery agents/developers to deliver town centre regeneration and food store provision.

**Monitoring**

Indicator	Target
COI CEN3 - Amount of completed floorspace (m2) for Retail (convenience and comparison), B1a Office, leisure / entertainment / cultural and tourism facilities by location	As set out in policy for 2009-2021 for each strategic centre.

**CEN4 –Regeneration of Town Centres**

**Spatial Objectives**

The unique character of the Black Country is largely defined by its network of strategic and local centres and the relationships between them. This provides the basic spatial structure for the sub-region and is reflected in all 3 of the elements of the Vision. The Policies for Centres will ensure the network of Black Country Centres are maintained and enhanced and will contribute to the delivery of Spatial Objectives 1,2,5,7 and 8. The network of Town Centres provide for comparison shopping as well local comparison shopping opportunities, local services and local leisure facilities. The policy for the regeneration of Town Centres will contribute to the delivery of Spatial Objectives 5 and 8.

**Policy**

The Black Country’s town centres are a distinctive and valued part of the Black Country’s character. The network of centres will help to meet needs in the most accessible and sustainable way. Development for retail, office, entertainment and leisure will be permitted, subject to other Policies in the Core Strategy, where they are of an appropriate scale that reflects the size and role of the town centres.

Of particular importance is to encourage new convenience development in Town Centres and support proposals to extend or refurbish existing stores where they are well integrated and to serve to anchor the centre as a whole. Individual retail developments of up to 650 sqm net for convenience goods and 500 sqm gross for comparison goods will be considered appropriate in these centres. For Dudley, up to a total of 5,000sqm net of convenience and 15,000sqm gross of comparison retail floorspace would be acceptable.

~~Any development above these thresholds, any development above Dudley’s totals, and any development which would be on the edge of, rather than within one of these centres will only be permitted if all of the following criteria are met:~~

- ~~• A particular need for the development to serve that centre’s catchment, and which could not be accommodated within the boundary of the centre could be demonstrated; and~~
- ~~• It could be shown the development proposed would be appropriate to the scale and role of centre and to meet the identified need and could not be served by investment in another centre; and~~
- ~~• It could be demonstrated there would not be an unacceptable impact on the trade and/or investment in any other centre and~~

- ~~It could be shown that the development can provide physical linkages to the existing shopping core, particularly by pedestrians and would be accessible by a choice of means of transport including public transport and cycling.~~

Any proposed development above these thresholds and any development above Dudley's totals, whether brought forward through an LDD or planning application, will only be considered favourably if evidence demonstrates that they are of an appropriate scale to the function of the centre and which would not undermine the vitality and viability of other centres. Any proposed development in an edge-of-centre location exceeding these thresholds, whether brought forward through an LDD or planning application, will only be considered favourably if the retail impact assessments contained in the most recent national guidance on retail planning are satisfied. However, if it is considered that development below these thresholds is likely to have a significant impact on other centres, then those proposals will be required to carry out an impact assessment.

Should there be insufficient physical capacity to accommodate floorspace requirements in, or on the edge of a Town Centre any new floorspace should be directed to nearby centres as set out in Policy ~~CEN7.5 and 6~~ **7.5 and 6 (assume this is an error?)**

Retail capacity in Town Centres will largely be met by existing commitments, **planning permissions** and allocations, ~~brought forward from UDPs~~ and any redistribution of floorspace between Centres to meet strategic priorities. ~~and these will be outlined in Appendix 2.~~

~~This floorspace, and any adjustments to Primary Shopping Areas will be planned for within individual Development Plan Documents prepared by the four Local Planning Authorities.~~

~~Locations out-of-centre will be resisted. Should there be insufficient physical capacity to accommodate floorspace requirements in, or on the edge of a Town Centre any new floorspace should be directed to nearby centres as set out in Policy Cen7 and demonstrate flexibility in their operation requirements.~~

In addition up to 5,000 sq.m. of office B1(a) development will be allowed in each of the Town Centres up to 2026 to meet their local service function.

It will also be suitable for the town centres to provide entertainment, leisure and cultural facilities of an appropriate scale and kind to serve their roles and catchments. The use of upper floors will be encouraged to accommodate relevant town centre uses. It will be important to recognise the special role of Dudley Town Centre, as well as the distinctive assets offered by individual centres in the provision of other town centre uses.

### **Policy Justification**

4.45 The large number of town centres across the Black Country are important to the area's character and community identity<sup>2</sup>. However, the comparison shopping roles of these

<sup>2</sup>The non-strategic town centres in Walsall (Aldridge, Bloxwich, Brownhills, Darlaston and Willenhall) are designated as 'district centres' in Walsall's UDP although the plan does make clear that they can be considered

centres has declined over recent decades, and many of the centres do not offer the space for major development, or find it difficult to attract significant comparison retail investment. Nevertheless, the **smaller** town centres do play a localised comparison shopping role and there are some retailers who do continue to trade and invest in **smaller** town centres. This policy approach seeks to protect the vitality and viability of these centres.

- 4.46 **The threshold approach requires consideration of the appropriate scale and impact of proposals in order to deliver regeneration within a balanced network of town centres.** There has long been a commitment to provide convenience shopping provision in the order of 5,000 sqm net in Dudley Town Centre and 15,000 sqm gross of comparison retail to bolster its centre and this will be planned for by the Local Authority. Similarly, planning permissions for convenience provision have been granted in some of the other centres in the Black Country for example in Stourbridge and Willenhall.
- 4.47 The network of town centres across the Black Country also provides opportunities for convenience shopping and each of the town centres supports or is proposed to accommodate at least one foodstore (either within or on the edge of the centre). The Core Strategy’s plans for housing growth may lead to a need for further convenience shopping in particular centres once the housing locations are determined through Area Action Plans or Site Allocation Documents.
- 4.48 The RSS provides for all office developments in excess of 5,000 sq.m. gross, required to serve the Black Country (apart from committed floorspace) to be accommodated in the strategic centres. It is therefore necessary for a policy that provides for small office developments to take place within the smaller town centres as long as the total amount of new office development in each centre would not exceed 5,000 sq.m. gross over the period of the plan.
- 4.49 In terms of leisure, entertainment and culture the policy takes forward the recognition of Dudley Town Centre but it also recognises that other centres have particular assets, such as live music in Bilston, the library theatre at Bloxwich, or commitments, such as The Junction development at Oldbury. It is appropriate to recognise these facilities which contribute to the overall culture of the Black Country, provided they do not detract from the strategy for the strategic centres to be the ‘flagships’ in terms of the provision of major facilities serving extensive catchment areas.

**Primary Evidence**

Black Country Centres Study : GVA Grimley 2009

**Delivery**

Through preparation of Development Plan Documents  
 Through the appropriate consideration of planning applications  
 Through working with delivery agents/developers to deliver town centre regeneration  
 Local Strategies and Regeneration Plans

**Monitoring**

Indicator	Target
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~~as town centres in terms of national planning policy and these have been considered as small town centres in this policy.~~

COI CEN4 - Amount of completed floorspace (m2) for Retail (convenience and comparison), B1 a Office, leisure / entertainment / cultural and tourism facilities by location	For Dudley no convenience retail development over 5,000sqm net convenience and 15,000sqm gross comparison. 100% retail development in-centre.
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## **CEN5 - District Centres and Local Centres**

### **Spatial Objectives**

The unique character of the Black Country is largely defined by its network of strategic and local centres and the relationships between them. This provides the basic spatial structure for the sub-region and is reflected in all 3 of the elements of the Vision. The Policies for Centres will ensure the network of Black Country Centres are maintained and enhanced and will contribute to the delivery of Spatial Objectives 1,2,5,7 and 8. A network of vibrant District and Local Centres provide particularly for day to day convenience shopping and local service needs. The policy for District and Local Centres will contribute to the delivery of Spatial Objective 7 and 8.

### **Policy**

Within the District and Local Centres individual convenience retail developments of up to 500 sqm net and developments for comparison retail, offices or leisure uses of up to 200 sqm gross will be permitted where they satisfy local requirements and are appropriate to the scale and function of that particular centre.

Any proposed development above these thresholds, whether brought forward through an LDD or planning application, will only be considered favourably if evidence demonstrates that they are of an appropriate scale to the function of the centre and which would not undermine the vitality and viability of other centres. Any proposed development in an edge-of-centre location exceeding these thresholds, whether brought forward through an LDD or planning application, will only be considered favourably if the retail impact assessments contained in the most recent national guidance on retail planning are satisfied. However, if it is considered that development below these thresholds is likely to have a significant impact on other centres, then those proposals will be required to carry out an impact assessment.

~~Development above this threshold or any development which would be on the edge of, rather than within, one of these centres could be allowed if all of the following criteria are met:~~

- ~~• A particular need for the development to serve that centre's catchment, and which could not be accommodated within the boundary of the centre could be demonstrated; and~~
- ~~• It could be shown the development proposed would be appropriate to the scale and role of centre and to meet the identified need and could not be served by investment in another centre~~
- ~~• It could be demonstrated there would not be an unacceptable impact on the trade and/or investment in any other centre; and~~

~~It could be shown that the development would be accessible by a choice of means of transport in particular public transport walking and cycling~~

For District and Local Centres in the Black Country centre uses adjoining the centre will be defined as edge-of-centre.

These criteria will also be used when considering the designation of new local centres, through Local Development Documents, where required.

Lye in Dudley Borough has been identified as a priority to provide convenience floorspace of up to 650 ~~1000 sqm~~ net to strengthen its role as a District Centre to meet the needs of its local population.

**Policy Justification**

4.50 The Centres Key Diagram and Table 13 ‘Hierarchy of Centres’ indicates that a large number of locations across the Black Country are designated as District and Local Centres. The main functions of these centres are to meet the day-to-day convenience shopping and local service needs of their local areas and they often have a special importance for certain sections of the community, such as elderly people or for ethnic minorities (for example at Smethwick High Street in Sandwell, Caldmore in Walsall and Blakenhall (Dudley Road) in Wolverhampton).

4.51 The threshold approach ensures that new developments should be of a scale and nature to serve the centres and their catchments. Convenience shopping developments should be in scale with the centre in which it is located.

4.52 There is a need for the smaller centres to be flexible to respond to particular circumstances such as a defined local need or a special local role or opportunity such as to support a regeneration scheme.

**Evidence**

Black Country Centres Study : GVA Grimley 2009  
 Black Country Local Authority Unitary Development Plans

**Delivery**

Through preparation of Development Plan Documents  
 Through the appropriate consideration of planning applications  
 Through working with delivery agents/developers to deliver Town/District/Local centre regeneration  
 Local Strategies and Regeneration Plans

**Monitoring**

Indicator	Target
COI CEN5 - Amount of completed floorspace (m2) for Retail (convenience and comparison), B1a Office, leisure / entertainment / cultural and tourism	100% development in-centre In plan period no convenience retail developments in district and local centres over 400 sqm net. In plan period no comparison

facilities by location.	retail, offices or leisure developments in district and local centres over 200 sqm net.
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## **CEN6 – Local Shops and Centre Uses**

### **Strategic Objectives**

Within the Black Country there are a significant number of small local shops either individually or in small parades of shops serving a very local need.

Recognising this, the Black Country Joint Core Strategy seeks to ensure the provision and retention of local shops and other centre uses to meet essential day to day needs within reasonable walking distance of people's homes [thereby contributing to Spatial Objective 8](#).

### **Policy**

**New small-scale local facilities outside defined centres of up to 200sqm gross, or extensions to existing facilities which would create a unit of up to 200 sq.m. gross will be permitted if it can be shown that all of the following requirements are met:**

- **The proposal is of an appropriate scale and nature to meet a specific day-to-day need of a population within walking distance [\(400m\)](#) for new or improved facilities .**
- **[The local need Local provision](#) could not be better met by investment in a nearby centre;**
- ~~**There would not be an adverse impact on the vitality or viability of any centre;**~~
- ~~**There would be no impact on existing local provision such as to leave some local needs unmet, contrary to the efforts to promote social inclusion;**~~  
**Existing facilities that meet day-to-day needs will not be undermined.**
- **Access to facilities by means other than by car would be improved and, in particular, will be within convenient, safe walking distance [400 m\)](#) of the community it is intended to serve.**
- **Where new local facilities are to meet the specific needs of new housing development, particularly food provision, then proposals need to meet the requirements of Policy HOU2**

**These considerations will apply to proposals for non ancillary retailing at petrol filling stations outside of defined centres.**

**Any larger scale proposals will have to meet the requirements of Policy CEN7.**

**Shops that provide an important service to a local area, whether they are in a defined centre or in a free standing location will wherever possible be protected. Development involving the loss of a convenience shop, pharmacy or post office will be resisted where this would result in an increase in the number of people living more than [400m](#) a [convenient walking distance from alternative provision](#).**

### **Policy Justification**

4.53 This policy acknowledges the role of existing local shopping, service, leisure community and other facilities. The approach of the Black Country Authorities is to encourage existing centres to continue to meet as many of the day-to-day needs of

~~residents~~'of residents', workers and visitors in their immediate localities as possible. As such the policy protects such facilities unless it can be convincingly demonstrated these are no longer viable.

4.54 Elsewhere it is considered there is likely to be a need to provide for more / improved local facilities – for convenience shopping, local services, eating and drinking places, and health, community and local education facilities – to meet existing deficiencies, to serve housing growth or to make the best use of existing premises and /or combine uses. This should be the subject of strict criteria, to complement the regeneration strategy for centres, Developments for town centre uses which fail to meet all of the requirements listed above should be assessed against CEN 7 and the relevant tests for out-of-centre development in the most recent government advice on retail and town centres.

**Primary Evidence**

Black Country Centres Study : GVA Grimley 2009

**Delivery**

Through preparation of Development Plan Documents  
 Through the appropriate consideration of planning applications and resisting development in inappropriate locations  
 Through working with delivery agents/developers to deliver town centre regeneration

**Monitoring**

Indicator	Target
LOI CEN6 - Percentage of planning permissions for local facilities granted approval that are more than <del>400m</del> a convenient walking distance from residential areas (each authority to determine what is a convenient walking distance through other LDF policy.)	0%

**CEN7 – Controlling ~~Edge-of-Centre and~~ Out-of-Centre Development**

**Spatial Objectives**

The Centres Strategy for the Black Country is a Centres first strategy. Its success relies upon directing growth into the network of Centres within the Black Country to facilitate regeneration. This will deliver growth in the centres and ensure the vitality and viability of Centres as the most accessible and sustainable locations. Furthermore it promotes social inclusion across the Black Country.

Development in inappropriate locations risk undermining the Black Country Strategy, the Core Strategy therefore requires a strong policy to resist this. [The policy for controlling out of centre development will contribute to Spatial Objectives 1,5 and 8.](#)

**Policy**

~~There is a clear presumption in the Black Country against out of centre development.~~  
There is a clear presumption in favour of focusing development in centres.

Proposals for out of centre development will have to demonstrate that development cannot be provided in-centre or at edge-of-centre locations of existing Centres appropriate to the hierarchy **and to the scale of development proposed**. ~~For retail purposes, in the strategic and town centres in the Black Country, edge-of-centre is defined as up to 300 meters walking distance from a primary shopping area, for all other main town centre uses this is defined as 300 metres walking distance from a town centre boundary, or as otherwise defined in relevant saved UDP policies.~~ For retail purposes, a location that is well connected and within easy walking distance (i.e. up to 300 metres) of the primary shopping area of Strategic and Town Centres will be regarded as edge-of-centre. For all other main town centre uses a location that is well connected and within easy walking distance (i.e. up to 300 metres) of the centre boundary of Strategic and Town Centres will be regarded as edge-of-centre, unless otherwise defined in relevant saved UDP policies.

For District and Local Centres in the Black Country centre uses adjoining the centre will be defined as edge of centre.

~~The need for centres to be expanded will be considered through development plans and other documents where necessary. It is not considered that there is a need for out of centre development, except to meet particular day to day local needs, in terms of policy CEN 6 as there are sufficiently sequentially preferable locations to accommodate the identified retail capacity arising in the Black Country.~~

Any proposal for a town centre use in an ~~edge or~~ out of centre location, **whether brought forward through an LDD or planning application, will only (note: have to recognise other positive policies in the plan, it cannot be and excluding policy) be** considered favourably if the impact assessments contained in the most recent national guidance **on retail planning** are satisfied, or the requirements of Policy CEN6 are satisfied. Any out of centre proposal which is considered to fall within the catchment area of a relevant centre will be required **and which is also of an appropriate scale** to include that centre in any sequential test.

**If no sites are available, support will be given to those out of centre proposals which are located within identified regeneration corridors of this Plan in the first instance.**

It will be important to ensure developments are accessible by a choice of means of transport, in particular public transport, walking and cycling, and support both social inclusion and the need to sustain strategic transport links.

It will be important to acknowledge the issues raised by particular proposals. However, the strategy is to accommodate investment (for more than local needs) in **strategic** centres and to expand **such** centres where necessary. **(must be the case to accord with CEN4/5/6) In this context, it will be important to recognise strong justification would be required for out of centre schemes that could otherwise be contrary to the strategy for the regeneration of the Black Country. Superfluous as this is covered in national policies and criteria requirements.**

It is not accepted that specific classes of goods can not be sold from in-centre locations. Developments will need to demonstrate flexibility in their operational

requirements in terms of format. Likewise this strategy acknowledges that there will be situations where business models will require certain types of format to come forward (note: cannot ignore the flip side of PPS4 on this – OR take the whole sentence out as it duplicates PPS4)

This policy also applies to applications for extensions and variation of conditions. As above.

~~Where permitted, strict conditions~~ The effective use of planning conditions will be applied, such as controlling types of goods to be sold, removing permitted development rights for mezzanine floors, future sub-division and defining unit sizes and sales areas ~~will be applied to ensure the impact of development on the vitality and viability of centres are minimised. to minimise the impacts of edge-of-centre and out-of-centre development.~~ As development. As above – deletion of whole may be suitable. IF not then it must be recognised that this is subject to impact testing and only applicable where impacts may be of concern in any particular case.

#### Policy Justification

- 4.55 The Spatial Strategy is based upon major investment in the strategic centres whilst recognising that there are a large number of other centres across the Black Country, (Town centres, District and local centres). All of these centres are considered in need of regeneration and are vulnerable to the diversion of trade and investment away from these centres. Yet these centres serve a population that is relatively deprived and needs access to an increased range of opportunities. The success of the regeneration strategy depends on major housing growth and providing for investment in industry and distribution. This will inevitably put pressure on land outside of centres.
- 4.56 Apart from developments to meet specific local 'day-to-day' needs within walking distance, development outside of centres will need to show there is a clear requirement that cannot be accommodated within or failing that, on the edge of any appropriate centre, and that there would not be an adverse impact on the strategy to expand and strengthen the Black Country's centres. National policy and the other policies of this plan ensure such developments would be accessible to all sections of the community.
- 4.57 Due to the multi-centred nature of the Black Country it is considered that strong justification will be required for development outside of the network of existing centres and that, whilst centres are to be expanded where necessary, out-of-centre developments will be rare. The assumptions of the GVA Grimley study of Black Country Centres 2009 are based upon the redirection of any of out of centre notional capacity to centres to complement the overall strategy.
- 4.58 ~~It is not considered that there is any quantitative or qualitative requirement for out-of-centre development, except to meet particular specific small scale local day-to-day needs within walking distance as outlined in Policy Cen6.~~ It MUST follow on from other suggested amendments that this is not a correct position to take- Delivery is questioned / quantum are questioned / levels of scale are set out in other policies. Whilst it COULD in theory be the case that overall needs may be delivered in centres, this is for individual applications to test and for authorities to determine. Hence this is not appropriate.
- 4.59 Where edge of centre and out of centre developments are considered as the only way of meeting particular needs the location of such developments will be considered in relation to the catchment areas they will serve irrespective of local authority

boundaries. Locations should be sought adjacent to appropriate centres of an appropriate scale to serve the catchment area. **Note: This paragraph makes it even clearer that para 4.58 is wrong.**

4.60 It will be important to ensure that such developments are accessible by a choice of means of transport and support both social inclusion and the need to sustain strategic transport links. The potential impacts on centres will also need to be assessed within the context of the strategy to regenerate centres.

### **Primary Evidence**

Black Country Centres Study : GVA Grimley 2009

### **Delivery**

Through preparation of Development Plan Documents in particular Area Action Plans for centres

Through the appropriate consideration of planning applications and resisting development in inappropriate locations

Through working with delivery agents/developers to deliver town centre regeneration

### **Monitoring**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Target</b>
LOI CEN7 - % of development out of centre	0%

### **CEN8: Car Parking in Centres**

#### **Spatial Objectives**

The management of the demand for road space and car parking, together with influencing travel choices, is fundamental to achieving the Vision for sustainable communities. ~~The Policies for centres~~ [The policy managing car parking in centres](#) will also ensure the network of Black Country Centres are maintained and enhanced and will contribute to the delivery of Spatial Objectives 1, 2, 5, and 7

#### **Policy**

##### **Pricing**

**The pricing of parking will not be used as a tool for competition between Strategic Centres.**

**A more generous pricing regime may be identified for Town Centres and District and Local Centres.**

##### **Type of Parking**

**The amount and charging of publicly available long stay parking in centres will be managed to ensure a balance between provision of long stay parking and encouraging commuters to use more sustainable modes.**

**Except where there is an accepted need for secure dedicated provision, car parking within or on the edge of Strategic Centres, Town centres and District and Local Centres will generally be required to be available to the public to serve the centre as a whole.**

**Adequate provision will be made in centres as a whole and in new parking facilities for all types of users, including those with reduced mobility, cyclists and users of powered two wheelers.**

### **Maximum Parking Standards**

**The application of maximum parking standards will be consistent with PPG 13 and any subsequent government guidance, which, in the case of long stay provision, will encourage reduced levels of provision where public transport accessibility is highest.**

**A more generous maximum standard for off street parking will be identified for development within Town Centres and District and Local Centres where the parking provision is to serve the centre as a whole.**

### **Policy Justification**

- 4.61 Core Spatial Policy 5 Strategic Transport priority (h) indicates that demand management and the promotion of sustainable transport will play a key part in achieving a shift in favour of these modes of transport. This policy supports this priority and will assist in reducing congestion, greenhouse gas emissions, improve road safety, promote social cohesion and improve the attractiveness of centres as places to visit and invest in.
- 4.62 A number of measures are available to help manage travel demand but their potential impact on economic regeneration needs to be considered. In particular, the correct balance needs to be found between managing and pricing regimes to maximise the use of sustainable travel to centres and avoiding the situation where new development is deterred. The JCS Spatial Strategy aims to promote centres as sustainable locations for investment while making centres as attractive and accessible as possible by sustainable modes.
- 4.63 Non strategic centres have increasingly struggled to compete with the more dominant higher order centres and out of centre shopping provision. These non strategic centres are generally less well served by good quality off street parking.

### **Primary Evidence**

Black Country Centres Study 2009 GVA Grimley  
Dudley Parking Strategy 2007  
Walsall Parking Strategy  
Review of Parking Policy 2009, AECOM

### **Delivery**

The provision of parking in new developments within centres will be managed through Development Plan Documents, Supplementary Planning Documents, Town Centre Strategies and other non statutory documents, and through "Network Management Duty Strategies" which Local Authorities are obliged to publish by the Traffic Management Act 2004 and monitored through West Midlands LTP monitoring.

**Monitoring**

**Indicator**

LOI GEN8a - Mandatory Indicator

Target LTP6

LOI GEN8b - Mandatory Indicator

Target LTP6 – Additional target at

Local Authorities' discretion

**Target**

No increase in morning peak traffic flows into the nine LTP centres between 2005/6 and 2010/11

Increase in the morning peak proportion of trips by public transport into the nine LTP centres as a whole to 33.8% by 2009/10 from the 2005/6 forecast baseline of 32.7%

Centres Key Diagram

Remove Tourism and Culture facilities from Diagram and Key

Add missing Walsall and Wolverhampton local Centres

Change Key 'District/Local Centres' to 'District and local Centres'