Cavendish Quarter

Area description

The Cavendish Quarter opportunity area is located to the south east of the town centre and adjoins the southern bypass. It is bounded on the north west by Trindle Road and Hall Street to the south west. The area is dominated by the vacant Cavendish House building. A few rather neglected retail units front Hall Street and part of Trindle Road.

Within the area an important opportunity site (site i - Hall Street / Porter Street) is identified within the UDP (Policy DTC2 (XIV)). A mix of business, hotel, residential and leisure uses are identified as being acceptable, with retailing acceptable fronting Hall Street round to Porter Street which bisects the area. Elsewhere retailing is identified as being an unacceptable use. Specific design requirements are identified as being a strong elevational treatment to Hall Street, Trindle Road and the southern bypass, with Porter Street being used as the principal point of access for servicing.

Vision

Occupying a prominent location on the south eastern edge of the town centre, Cavendish Quarter will be stylish and contemporary place to experience town centre living, within easy reach of public transport, shops, bars and restaurants. Focused around a re-configured and converted Cavendish House, a prominent if not currently valued landmark, new apartment buildings offering loft style accommodation will be grouped to form courtyards within which shared gardens and parking areas will be discreetly accommodated.

In the Hall Street area, existing fine buildings (no’s 41 and 42) will be retained and a new mix of retail units with apartments above introduced around them. This will help to strengthen the townscape qualities of this approach into the town centre and also help to frame the new square at Prospect Place with a prominent corner building potentially incorporating public art. Pedestrian and vehicular access will be enhanced through the construction of a new Porter Street bridge over the bypass, re-establishing connection with the residential community beyond. The existing footbridge connection to Wolverton Road will be enhanced through improvements to the public realm in Cavendish Quarter.
Development components

Access – principal points of access should be taken from Trindle Road and Hall Street. There is potential for a new access across the southern by-pass through construction of a Porter Street bridge to carry vehicles and pedestrians. The existing Wolverton Road pedestrian footbridge should be enhanced by improving the quality of connections to Trindle Road.

Key frontages – well defined development should front Hall Street and Trindle Road, with frontages also onto Porter Street. Frontages to Hall Street and the Trindle Road/King Street junction should be continuous to ensure strong containment of streets and spaces to the west and to emphasise the gateway function of Hall Street.

Gateways – principal access points off Hall Street, and the Trindle Road/Porter Street junction should be emphasised with strong built form. Pedestrian access from Trindle Road to the bypass footbridge should also be improved by the creation of an attractive space at the bridge landing point.

Corners and landmarks – the corner of Trindle Road and King Street should be emphasised through strong built form providing a focus when viewed from Prospect Hill to the north. The corner of Hall Street and King Street should also be carefully designed as it is prominent when viewed from the southern approach from King Street. Development on the corner of Hall Street adjoining the southern bypass should signal arrival into the town centre with a prominent corner feature. As a local landmark Cavendish House should be given a new lease of life through conversion ideally to residential use.

Viewpoints and vistas – principal viewpoints to the site are from the southern bypass and King Street. Development should create a positive impression for the town centre when viewed from these vantage points.

Built form – built form should respond to the height of Cavendish House, with development of up to four or five stories towards the rear of the site but preserving the seven story tower as the dominant built element. The retained 41 and 42 Hall Street should also be sensitively stitched into the development in terms of the height and character of adjoining buildings.

Mix of uses – residential development will be the key land use. Commercial ground floor uses should be considered along Hall Street, King Street and the southern part of Trindle Road.

Accommodating the car – parking for apartments should be accommodated within courtyards and parking areas largely enclosed by development, or by utilising undercroft and semi-basement areas. Parking should be well overlooked and carefully landscaped to minimise visual impact.

Public realm – two key public realm elements should be incorporated into the development. The first is a new public square at the western end of the bypass footbridge to strengthen connection between Trindle Road and Wolverton Road. The second is the Porter Street area where it will be important to establish a high quality, well surveilled street environment. The southern corner of Porter Street adjoining Trindle Road should be designed as an important element of the Prospect Place square.
Area description

The Central Union opportunity area is focused upon the northern frontage to King Street and from the Churchill Shopping Centre to Vicar Street. King Street used to carry significant volumes of through traffic prior to the construction of the southern bypass. It is wide and engineered for efficient traffic movement; now with limited through traffic, its design is inappropriate. The pedestrian environment is poor and there is an abundance of blank frontages, rear service yards and inactive uses. There are only a few small business that remain open and contribute to the vitality and character of the street.

The UDP identifies part of King Street as a priority renewal area (policy DTC2(II)). A stronger retail frontage along this part of King Street is a key proposal together with stronger links north south from Market Place to the Flood Street area.

Vision

Central Union will become a fulcrum within Dudley town centre stitching together the High Street and Market Place to the north with new retail development around New Mill Gate to the south. Key to the proposals will be the re-working of King Street to create an attractive tree lined boulevard accommodating surface parking, wide pavements and along part of its length, Midland Metro.

Pedestrian crossings will link with routes through Long Entry and the Churchill centre, whilst a new entrance point to the south of the Centre will improve linkages through the existing mall and into New Mill Gate. Along King Street new frontage development will provide a stronger urban form and introduce activity into the street. This will be achieved through redevelopment to the south and subdivision/reconfiguration of large plots and units to the north, that currently only front the High Street.
Development components

**Access** – this area will be one of the most accessible locations within the town centre. Development should be accessed from King Street with enhanced pedestrian accessibility through surface level crossing and improvements to Long Entry and through the Churchill Centre.

**Frontages** – principal frontages should be re-established along King Street to create a more vibrant, activity filled boulevard.

**Gateways** – the main gateways into Central Union are from Flood Street, New Mill Street, Long Entry and via the Churchill Centre. Each should be defined through either built form, tree planting or using public art.

**Viewpoints and vistas** – the key vista from the high point of King Street down Flood Street over the landscape to the south should be maintained.

**Built form** – it will be important to provide a well defined built edge to King Street, with development up to four stories to help define the new boulevard.

**Mix of uses** – a mixture of retail and commercial uses should be provided along King Street at ground or first floor level, with office suites or apartments above.

**Accommodating the car** – a significant amount of public on street parking will be provided along the westerly section of King Street using 90 degree bays (where this does not conflict with metro and bus access). This is possible through a reduction in the overall width of King Street, reducing it from four lanes to two in the area between Union Street and Vicarage Road. Other operational parking should be accommodated where necessary within development blocks.

**Public realm** – the significant enhancement of King Street, transforming it into a tree lined boulevard, is of key importance. Avenue tree planting should be accommodated on both sides of the street, with parking bays and wider pavements provided. Co-ordinated, high quality surface materials and street furniture, including public transport infrastructure, should be specified.

Transforming King Street into a new high quality public space is a major opportunity to reclaim a ‘lost” area of the town centre for the community. This project presents an ideal opportunity to implement, as a demonstration project, the ‘communities’ strand of the Black Country urban park initiative. This seeks to cultivate local distinctiveness and a sense of place through community led public realm improvements.

King Street should be retained as an important pedestrian and public transport corridor. The arrival of metro will encourage great use of the existing bus mall. The removal of through traffic on King Street between Hall Street and Flood Street will allow greater opportunity for public realm improvements.
New Mill Gate

Area description

The New Mill Gate opportunity area contains the largest single development site in the town centre. It covers a site bounded to the west by Vicar Street, to the north by King Street and to the south by Martin Hill Street and the southern bypass. The area is currently dominated by large areas of surface car parking. There is a 1960’s office building, Falcon House, occupying a key location between Flood Street and New Mill Street. To the west of New Mill Street is an historic church as well as a number of historic and more modern buildings housing a variety of uses including small businesses and the territorial army.

The majority of the area is identified in the UDP as an opportunity site (site h - King Street / Flood Street) (policy DTC(XII)). A mix of retail, office, leisure, food and drink, residential and hotel uses are identified as being preferred or acceptable, and the site is a major opportunity for integrating new development with the established retail core of the town centre. Specific design requirements include a strong retail frontage; mixed use with a residential component; high quality elevations; clear and direct pedestrian linkages to the rest of the town centre; new high quality public spaces; and the full integration of Midland Metro.
Vision

Of all the opportunities in Dudley town centre New Mill Gate is perhaps the most exciting. A new urban quarter is proposed around New Mill Street and Flood Street focused on Midland Metro and incorporating a mix of substantial new comparison retail, a food store and residential development. The area will radically enhance the setting of the town centre when approached from the south east and complement the mix of uses and opportunities already available in Dudley.

Development in New Mill Gate will re-establish a fine pattern of connected streets across the area with blocks designed to accommodate the needs of modern retail uses. In New Mill Gate East, the core retail area of the town centre will be extended around Flood Street with frontage development and a Midland Metro stop. Parking and services will be unobtrusively accommodated within the centre of blocks. Apartments will be available above ground floor retail uses.

Working around established businesses and occupiers, New Mill Gate West will contain town houses and apartments that front formal tree lined streets and enclose parking courtyards and gardens. Development will be designed around a network of well defined public and private spaces echoing the historic pattern of development that existed before slum clearance in the area. An emphasis on high quality will ensure that New Mill Gate becomes a valued, integral part of Dudley town centre.
Development components

Access – the principal points of access into New Mill Gate will be derived from Flood Street and New Mill Street. Flood Street will accommodate the Midland Metro alignment and be pedestrianised with significantly enhanced surface crossing points over King Street into the Churchill Centre. New Mill Street will be the principal vehicular access point with a realignment of the access from the Flood Street Island linking into Martin Hill Street and Vicar Street. Alma Place and Church Street will be extended to help create a network of connected streets broadly based on the original street pattern that existed in the area. Garden Walk will be retained and enhanced with tree planting, open space, and selective frontage development. Access into new development areas will be directly from the network of streets.

Frontages – frontages will be established along the main streets of Flood Street and New Mill Street. Frontage development will also be important along King Street to re-enforce activity, and along the southern bypass to create a positive edge to the town centre. Elsewhere within New Mill Gate frontage development will be required to ensure that streets and spaces are contained and overlooked.

Gateways – there will be three main gateways into the area: Flood Street island; Flood Street/ King Street; and New Mill Street. Each should be strongly defined by buildings that ‘signpost’ and guide people into the town centre.

Corners and landmarks – corners at the junctions of Flood Street and King Street, New Mill Street and Martin Hill Street should be well defined by buildings. Development adjoining the bypass and the Flood Street Island has the potential for accommodating a landmark building, perhaps adopting a circus arrangement that follows the curve of the island and helps to better define the space.

Viewpoints and vistas – there are important views from Flood Street to the south which should be maintained. The southern vistas down New Mill Street should be terminated with a landmark building. The Flood Street area dominates the foreground view of the town centre as it is approached from the by-pass. The scheme must therefore showcase the approach to high quality, contemporary development, as promoted by the ADF.

Built form – the built form within New Mill Gate will establish the area as part of the town centre and also positively address and frame streets and open spaces. The built edge adjoining the southern-bypass will be an important component to give clear definition to the edge of the town centre. Adjoining the Flood Street Island a multi deck car park should be provided, sleeved with single aspect apartments to provide a lively elevation to the road. Development will be up to four stories high, with corners and landmarks emphasised with taller elements. High quality development will be sought that complements and re-enforces the appearance and townscape of other parts of Dudley town centre.
Mass and density – in order to maximise the development potential of this key brownfield site, residential development of at least 60 to 70 dwellings per hectare will be appropriate. A mixture of three storey townhouses and apartment buildings will help to increase density, with apartments also accommodated above retail and commercial development.

Mix of uses – retail development including a foodstore of between 7,000 and 8,000 square metres and 11,775 of comparison shopping will be a principal use, focused on the Flood Street area and Midland Metro stop. In addition, commercial office suites, residential development comprising apartments and town houses, and leisure uses including bars and restaurants will be accommodated to create a vibrant, mixed use area.

Accommodating the car – there are currently large numbers of surface car parking spaces accommodated within the New Mill Gate area. This will be replaced with modern multi deck parking of equivalent capacity occupying two strategic locations, accessed from New Mill Street and designed to serve the retail and commercial premises around Flood Street. Other parking will be discretely accommodated within the centre of development blocks utilising parking courtyards that are well overlooked. On-street parking for short stay shoppers or visitors may also be provided.

Servicing – this should take place from the side or rear of commercial premises in private servicing yards that are well overlooked and secure.

Public realm – key public realm components will include the pedestrianisation of Flood Street which will also accommodate the route of Midland Metro. Tree planting, high quality and co-ordinated surface materials, public transport infrastructure and street furniture should be specified in order to provide an attractive ‘high street’ environment. A new area of open space should be provided at the heart of the residential area of New Mill Gate adjoining Garden Walk.