

# Wolverhampton **Local Plan**

## Infrastructure Delivery Plan

Publication Plan  
(Regulation 19)

November 2024



# CONTENTS

<b>CONTENTS</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b> .....	<b>3</b>
1. INTRODUCTION .....	4
2. POLICY CONTEXT .....	4
2.1. National .....	4
2.2. Regional .....	5
2.3. Local .....	7
3. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY .....	9
<b>Part 1 - Future Infrastructure Needs</b> .....	<b>10</b>
4. TRANSPORT .....	10
5. HEALTH .....	14
6. EMERGENCY SERVICES .....	17
7. EDUCATION .....	18
8. UTILITIES .....	23
Electricity and Gas .....	23
Digital .....	24
9. ENVIRONMENT .....	29
Flood Risk and Drainage .....	29
Climate Change .....	31
Green and blue Infrastructure and recreational facilities .....	32
10. WASTE .....	36
<b>Part 2 – Infrastructure Delivery Schedule</b> .....	<b>39</b>

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The national planning system is plan-led, with plans reflecting the community's priorities for the development of an area, political priorities, development requirements and reflecting the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). As such, the Wolverhampton Local Plan is currently being reviewed to plan housing, employment and infrastructure requirements for the city up until 2042.

The NPPF emphasises the integral connection between infrastructure and future development necessary to support and grow sustainable communities. The aim of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) is to firstly understand the capacity of existing infrastructure and then secondly understand and plan for infrastructure requirements necessary to support the development proposed under the plan.

This document has been prepared to support the local plan review and inform the policies of the emerging Wolverhampton Local Plan, to ensure that the future development of the City is truly sustainable and will support and enhance the communities it will serve. The IDP has collated evidence gathered for the Local Plan Review and analysed it to create a holistic picture of how well existing infrastructure can support the proposed development and what infrastructure is necessary to support development. Infrastructure reviewed includes transport, education, health, utilities, the environment and open space and recreational facilities.

The review has found that there are no insurmountable constraints to the planned development in terms of infrastructure. Current infrastructure can support future development, subject to additional contributions from development to expand its capacity and support necessary improvements. This will also be supported by environmentally driven initiatives to increase active travel, reduce waste and protect open spaces.

As such, the proposed Wolverhampton Local Plan sets out the contributions required to make development acceptable and each development that comes forward will be analysed on a case-by-case basis to determine the best outcome for the City and its residents.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1.1. A key role of the Wolverhampton Local Plan (WLP) is to plan for the growth required for a sustainable and prosperous city. Ensuring effective delivery of development will require strong collaborative working, both between the local authority and jointly with public, private and third sector partners, involving a robust process of infrastructure planning and delivery.
- 1.1.2. The WLP adopts a brownfield-led spatial strategy, which aims to bring vacant or underused sites back into use to help regenerate the City. By its nature the spatial strategy is closely aligned with infrastructure, focusing development in centres and regeneration corridors which have good existing infrastructure provision to grow the City sustainably.
- 1.1.3. The aim of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) is to firstly understand the capacity of existing infrastructure and then secondly understand and plan for infrastructure requirements necessary to support the development proposed under the plan. The IDP forms a key piece of evidence for the Local Plan Review, collating the relevant evidence to form a holistic picture on infrastructure provision in the City. The report will provide evidence on the appropriateness and deliverability of the emerging development strategy.
- 1.1.4. Applications that come forward under the WLP, should it be adopted, will be assessed on a case-by-case basis in terms of the implications for infrastructure and developer contributions will be sought to fund necessary infrastructure. However, this IDP will look at the cumulative development and assess infrastructure needs holistically across the lifetime of the plan.
- 1.1.5. Infrastructure necessary to support development includes transport, education, healthcare, green and blue infrastructure, community facilities, and utilities and digital infrastructure such as broadband. The IDP is based on current information. It is a live document and as such will be monitored and developed over the plan period.

## **2. POLICY CONTEXT**

### **2.1. National**

- 2.1.1. Sustainable development is at the heart of the planning system. This includes the sustainable location of new development together with ensuring communities have the adequate facilities and amenities to thrive. It is essential that plan making is infrastructure-led to ensure that development is brought forward in a sustainable manner.
- 2.1.2. To that effect, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 7 states that “the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, including the provision of homes, commercial development, and supporting infrastructure in a sustainable manner”. The NPPF aims to deliver development that is sustainable economically, environmentally and socially, including the coordination of the provision of infrastructure.
- 2.1.3. The NPPF (paragraph 11) highlights how growth should be aligned with infrastructure states (paragraph 20) how strategic policies should make provision for:

“a) housing (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development;  
b) infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat);  
c) community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure);  
and  
d) conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.”

2.1.4. Plans must also set out contributions expected from development such as affordable housing provision and other infrastructure needs for education, health, transport, flood and water management, green and digital infrastructure (paragraph 34).

2.1.5. Transport is a fundamental part of infrastructure and as the NPPF (paragraph 109) outlines that development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable through offering a choice of transport modes.

2.1.6. Additionally, digital infrastructure is growing ever more important with an increasing number of remote workers, as recognised in section 10 of the NPPF to support the expansion of electronic communication networks, mobile technology and full fibre broadband.

2.1.7. An IDP will make a holistic view of an area’s baseline and future infrastructure needs in order to inform Local Plan policies and spatial strategy, forming an important part of the evidence base required to support Local Plans as set out in the NPPF (paragraph 31):

“The preparation and review of all policies should be underpinned by relevant and up-to-date evidence. This should be adequate and proportionate, focused tightly on supporting and justifying the policies concerned, and take into account relevant market signals.”

2.1.8. Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) supports the implementation of the NPPF and contains guidance regarding infrastructure planning. It reiterates that evidence should be “Proportionate, relevant and up-to-date evidence should be used to justify a decision not to update policies” (Paragraph 069 Ref 61-068-20190723).

2.1.9. PPG contains more specific guidance relating to infrastructure by emphasising the importance of transport evidence in reviewing a Local Plan and in encouraging a shift towards sustainable transport usage where possible (Paragraph 001 ID; 54-001-20141010). It also provides guidance on funding educational infrastructure through developer contributions. It states that “Plan makers and decision makers should consider existing or planned/committed school capacity and whether it is sufficient to accommodate proposed development within the relevant school place planning areas” (Paragraph 008 ID:23b-008-20190315)

## **2.2. Regional**

2.2.1. The West Midlands Combined Authority consists of 18 local councils, including City of Wolverhampton Council (CWC). The government has devolved funding and powers to the Combined Authority to make decisions for the West Midlands Conurbation, with its objectives including making transport safer and easier around

the region, using derelict/brownfield land to build homes, developing skills, increasing employment opportunities and helping to tackle climate change.

- 2.2.2. The WMCA Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) was adopted in 2016 and sets out the vision, objectives, strategy and actions needed to improve the quality of life for everyone who lives and works in the West Midlands. While this strategy predates Britain leaving the European Union, the Covid-19 recession, and ongoing shifting economic turbulence, it outlines several high-level challenges facing the West Midlands which remain relevant today. These include bringing forward land for housing and employment and accelerating the rate of house building to match aspirations for growth.
- 2.2.3. WMCA produced the West Midlands Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) which was published in May 2019. The LIS demonstrates how the West Midlands is forging its future and building an inclusive and balanced economy. Together with the supporting documents published locally, it shows the West Midlands is taking action to continue growth in productivity and earning power for all.
- 2.2.4. In July 2022, the WMCA published its Plan for Growth which captured the key features of the West Midlands economy. The Plan for Growth pinpoints clusters where the West Midlands has comparative advantage and businesses are confident to invest. Working in conjunction with local authorities and universities as local anchor institutions, the WMCA will deliver conditions for growth through:
- New powers over economic development
  - Transport investment
  - Housing and land investment
  - Pioneering new approaches to regeneration
  - Developing skills
  - Working with investors
  - Committing to net zero by 2041
- 2.2.5. CWC will continue to work closely with the WMCA to drive forward investment in housing, regeneration, transport and employment to deliver a better connected, more prosperous, fairer, greener and healthier West Midlands.
- 2.2.6. WMCA's strategies have formed the basis for a range of investment programmes supported by Government funding packages. Over £1 billion has been devolved from Central Government for the region since 2018. This increase in power and funding has given the West Midlands greater control to tackle barriers impacting delivery, to acquire land and buildings, and de-risk regeneration. and support WMCA's ambitions to unlock 'difficult to deliver' high-quality homes and places.
- 2.2.7. One of the priorities for this funding is the delivery of projects which provide land for new homes and employment. WMCA has led the way nationally in the delivery of brownfield land, including sites in Wolverhampton. Moving forward, over the lifetime of the WLP, this activity will continue, providing valuable support to unlock constrained sites and deliver critical infrastructure. The focus of this future work includes supporting projects in town centres to enable them to thrive again, innovative approaches to the delivery of sustainable homes, zero carbon homes and the delivery of land to support business needs. WMCA Funding includes:
- Land Fund - £100m gap funding to enable 8,000 housing starts on brownfield land/vacant buildings

- Brownfield Housing Fund - £128m gap funding to enable 7,500 housing starts on brownfield land
  - Brownfield Land, Infrastructure & Land Fund - £100m gap funding to enable 4,000 housing starts on brownfield sites
  - Residential Investment Fund - £70m revolving loan to accelerate housing delivery
- 2.2.8. As announced in the Spring Budget 2023, WMCA secured a Deeper Devolution Deal providing a budget windfall in excess of £1.5 billion to level up the region and new significant longer-term funding agreements, including 100% business rates retention for 10 years, worth £450 million.
- 2.2.9. The WMCA are investing in the transport system and working with Network Rail, Highways England, DfT and bus and train operators to improve the network. Additionally, they are working to drive digital innovation and developing better digital and transport infrastructure.

### **2.3. Local**

- 2.3.1. Funding for the delivery of infrastructure will be sought by the Council from multiple sources over the Plan period. There is no Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) operational in Wolverhampton, therefore developer contributions can be provided in several ways:
- through planning conditions – to make development acceptable that would otherwise be unacceptable
  - through planning obligations in the form of Section 106 agreements – where it is not possible to address unacceptable impacts through a planning condition
- 2.3.2. It is generally expected that developer contributions will provide a contribution to funding infrastructure costs. Alongside this funding there are mainstream sources of funding available to support delivery for education, transport, health care provision and utilities infrastructure.
- 2.3.3. Under section 106 (s106) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, a Local Planning Authority (LPA) can seek obligations, both physically on-site and contributions for off-site provision, when it is considered that a development will have negative impacts that cannot be dealt with through conditions in the planning permission. For example, new residential developments place additional pressure on existing social, physical and economic infrastructure in the surrounding area. Planning obligations aim to balance this extra pressure with improvements to the surrounding area to ensure that a development makes a positive contribution to the local area.
- 2.3.4. The obligations may be provided by the developers “in kind”– that is, where the developer builds or provides directly the matters necessary to fulfil the obligation. This might be to build a certain number of affordable homes on-site, for example. Alternatively, planning obligations can be met in the form of financial payments to the Council to provide off-site infrastructure works or contributions towards providing affordable housing elsewhere in the City. In some cases, it can be a combination of both on-site provision and off-site financial contributions.

- 2.3.5. Section 278 agreements (s278) under the Highways Act 1980 are legally binding agreements between the Local Highway Authority (Wolverhampton Council) and the developer to ensure delivery of necessary highway works as a result of new development.
- 2.3.6. The details of expected developer contributions will be set out in the WLP and saved parts of the Wolverhampton Unitary Development Plan, Area Action Plans and supporting supplementary planning documents regarding affordable housing, open space, health, education, transport and other supporting infrastructure for development, as appropriate.
- 2.3.7. The Council's Annual Infrastructure Funding Statement (2023/24) states that £0.56m of developer contributions were secured during 2023/24 and that nearly £1.5m of developer contributions were held by the Council at the end of the year, with £0.84m of this allocated for funding infrastructure, the majority for open space and leisure projects and the remainder for affordable housing. £0.31m was spent during 2023/24 on open space and leisure projects and £0.35m on affordable housing.
- 2.3.8. The IDP draws upon a range of evidence including an up-to-date WLP Viability Study, Wolverhampton Open Space Strategy and Action Plan and Black Country Transport Modelling. The IDP also draws on up-to-date information and advice from key infrastructure partners, including utility providers, the local education authority and health bodies. This evidence and input underpins the WLP by identifying infrastructure investment required to support development, potential constraints to delivery and the key delivery mechanisms and partners.
- 2.3.9. Physical and social infrastructure is necessary to enable and support the growth required over the Plan period. New housing and economic development will put pressure on existing services and utilities but may also create opportunities to provide robust and innovative infrastructure solutions.
- 2.3.10. The WLP adopts a brownfield first approach to maximise delivery of development within the urban area. However, poor ground conditions that are a legacy of Wolverhampton's mining and industrial past are a significant constraint, in both physical and financial terms. Therefore, tackling significant and structural delivery constraints are a priority for interventions, as they affect much of the development land supply in the urban area. The Council is working to ensure that brownfield land is prioritised for development and intervention, in particular through partnership with the West Midlands Combined Authority.
- 2.3.11. Parts of Wolverhampton's existing highway infrastructure, and the motorway network, suffer from congestion. Detailed transport modelling work has informed the WLP. Assuming that key projects to improve highways, public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure are delivered, as set out in Section 9 of the WLP, it is anticipated that the development of new housing and employment land will not have a significant negative impact on highways infrastructure.
- 2.3.12. Most new housing development in the urban area will enjoy good accessibility, including to sustainable modes of transport, centres of employment, schools, shops, health facilities and other residential services. This should help to reduce the requirement for additional travel and will also help mitigate the impact of development.



- 2.3.13. The Wolverhampton urban area is well-served by infrastructure and providers generally have access to sources of investment and funding to both maintain quality and increase capacity to support a growing population. The remaining requirements which developers will be expected to fund are relatively limited in terms of both cost and extent and are unlikely to prevent development from going ahead, as evidenced by the Viability Study. Major changes may be required to the way that Wolverhampton is powered over the Plan period, together with an increasing reliance on digital solutions. Where gaps in service provision exist, service providers are aware of and will work to address them. The detailed spatial aspects of implementation and delivery for Wolverhampton City Centre will be set out as part of a review of the Wolverhampton City Centre Area Action Plan.

### **3. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY**

- 3.1.1. Evidence has been collected throughout the Local Plan Review to inform plan making and ensure that the WLP will be fit for purpose and address the issues and challenges that the City faces.
- 3.1.2. There has been ongoing engagement with CWC colleagues, service providers, statutory bodies to ascertain the current baseline capacity of infrastructure in the City and to establish how proposed development will impact on capacity.
- 3.1.3. This information has been reviewed in terms of the baseline infrastructure capacity and the future infrastructure needs for new development.
- 3.1.4. CWC have worked with statutory delivery bodies throughout the development of the WLP to establish how infrastructure will be provided in line with the proposed growth under the plan. A range of evidence-based studies has been used to inform this process. A list of the Council's key evidence base, including joint evidence, is provided in the WLP (Regulation 19), and links to the documents are available at: [Wolverhampton Local Plan | City Of Wolverhampton Council](#).

## Part 1 - Future Infrastructure Needs

### 4. TRANSPORT

- 4.1.1. The delivery of an improved, sustainable and integrated transport network both within Wolverhampton and linking to the regional and national networks is fundamental to achieving strategic transport objectives and in delivering housing growth, improving economic performance and keeping the people of the City moving.
- 4.1.2. A balance needs to be struck between providing enough parking to promote visitors to our centres but also encouraging sustainable transport and efficient use of land.

#### SUMMARY

- 4.1.3. Although transport in Wolverhampton is heavily dependent on the private vehicle and congestion is a problem on some key roads, it is not expected that the development proposed under the WLP will have any significant adverse impact on the network, as evidenced by the Black Country Transport Modelling (2024). The multi modal network improvements, delivery of the metro extension in the wider Black Country, and initiatives to increase more sustainable transport methods are expected to improve the situation going forward.
- 4.1.4. The infrastructure schedule which accompanies this document identifies numerous transport scheme for active travel, public transport and highways at the strategic and local level. These schemes will, to varying degrees, support the growth although not all measures are aimed at proposals in the emerging WLP.
- 4.1.5. Need for future parking has been factored into the site allocations in the Wolverhampton Local Plan, following the evidence and guidance from CWC colleges. Parking is not expected to be a limitation for growth and will be factored into future development proposals together with sustainable transport options.

#### BASELINE

- 4.1.6. Whilst Wolverhampton has a good public transport network and has invested in active travel infrastructure, transport in Wolverhampton continues to involve significant car dependency. The city has a number of key roads all connecting to the city ring road, providing access locally and strategic links to the wider region. Additionally, the City is connected to the wider Key Route Network via the M6 (Junction 10) and M54, although neither of which enter the City the existing highway infrastructure suffers from congestion, due to the dependence for access on a few key route.
- 4.1.7. The West Coast Main Line runs through Wolverhampton station, the only rail station within the city and one of the busiest in the region with frequent rail services across the country. The city centre Interchange facility allows for connection to bus, metro, and active travel routes which provide connections across the city and into the wider area.
- 4.1.8. There are opportunities on the existing rail lines to consider additional station facilities and enhanced route options, including on the Shrewsbury Line and to the north within the Staffordshire area.

- 4.1.9. Active travel uptake is increasing within the city, but the private car or bus and metro remain the main choices for transport. Work is underway to increase cycling and walking uptake, following the implementation of the West Midlands Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and a number of grant funded active travel infrastructure schemes on key corridors. A cycle lane has been installed along the A4124 Wednesfield Road to wards New Cross Hospital and Bentley Bridge, and along the A4150 city centre Ring Road, with the long-term project proposal to complete further develop those routes. However, more needs to be done to encourage modal shift towards active travel.
- 4.1.10. Transport is one of the main contributors towards greenhouse gas emissions, therefore, more needs to be done to ensure transport across the City is more effective and sustainable.
- 4.1.11. A Black Country Strategic Parking Study (2021 and 2022) was commissioned by the four Black Country Authorities and is published as part of the evidence base. This study assessed in Stage 1 the number of private and public car parks in the centres of the City. It recognised that private car parks are outside of council control and, therefore, assessed occupancy of council owned car parks across different days of the week and time periods. Stage 2 examined the relevant policies as they emerged and provided a more focused narrative and analysis on the proposed policy approach to inform the Black Country Plan (which ceased preparation in October 2022). This information has been used to inform the WLP and the Wolverhampton SHLAA (2024), which assesses sites suitable for housing in the city centre.

### **FUTURE GROWTH**

- 4.1.12. The WLP will need to focus on promoting the appropriate location of development, increasing investment in infrastructure, improving the quality, equality and accessibility of public transport, supporting walking and cycling, enhancing road safety and reducing the amount of emissions produced by transport.

### ***Black Country Transport Modelling (2024)***

- 4.1.13. Transport modelling has been produced as supporting evidence for the plan. Due to the strategic nature of transport, the modelling was conducted for the Black Country as a whole. The modelling examined three scenarios:
1. **Reference Case** – Baseline scenario of transport in the Borough in the year 2042, with transport and development as if the WLP is not adopted.
  2. **Do Minimum** – Baseline plus the proposed housing and employment allocations in the WLP in the year 2042. This includes some planned mitigation as part of the development.
  3. **Do Something** – WLP housing and employment allocations including proposed transport schemes in the year 2042, as detailed below.
- 4.1.14. The modelling found that background traffic will increase over the lifetime of the plan, irrespective of the plan proposals. This could put pressure on roads and result in longer journey times across the city. However, the results of the modelling found that the WLP will not have a further significant adverse impact on the road network.
- 4.1.15. In the Do Something scenario, the modelling showed more localised flow differences, with little occurring on minor roads and more around the city centre and its connections along the main arterial routes. The results suggest that links may

become more congested, but many are not at capacity as there are very few changes to the relative queue lengths between the Do Something and the Do Minimum. The A454 corridor connecting to M6 J10 remains heavily congested, along with the A4150 city centre ring road.

### ***Wolverhampton Local Plan***

- 4.1.16. Due to the WLP urban-led spatial strategy, most new housing development in the urban area will enjoy good accessibility, including sustainable modes of transport, centres of employment, schools, shops, health facilities and other residential services (see Wolverhampton Site Assessment Report Appendix 3 for further details). This should help to reduce the requirement for additional travel, help mitigate the impact of development, reduce congestion, reduce air pollution and contribute towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- 4.1.17. The WLP includes policies to promote active travel and support the proposed investment in multi modal improvements and public transport schemes. These changes are aimed to create a more sustainable transport network in the City and facilitate a modal shift away from private car usage. This strategy is to relieve the roads of congestion as well as working towards a carbon zero future.
- 4.1.18. Priority Transport Schemes identified for delivery during the lifetime of the WLP, as set out in proposed transport policy, within the City and the wider regional strategic transport network, are:

#### a) within Wolverhampton City

##### Transport / Connectivity and Rapid Transport

- Wolverhampton to New Cross Hospital
- A449 Corridor to i54 / South Staffordshire
- ULEV Charging Infrastructure
- Active Travel and BCLCWIP Priorities

##### Key Road / Active Travel Corridors

- A4123 Corridor
- A449 Corridor
- A454 Corridor
- A4150 City Centre Ring Road
- A460 Cannock Road / Cross Street North / Stafford Street
- A4124 Connectivity to Wednesfield
- BCLCWIP – Wednesfield to Darlaston Cycle Route
- BCLCWIP – Fordhouses to Heath town Cycle Route

##### Transport and Placemaking

- Wednesfield High Street Redevelopment
- Bilston Town Centre Placemaking
- City Centre Public Realm – Walk, Cycle and Bus Package
- Cleveland Boulevard

#### b) Within the regional strategic transport network

##### Motorways

- M6 Junction 10
- M5 Improvements (Junctions 1 and 2, including Birchley island)
- M54 – M6 Toll Link Road

#### Rail

- Wolverhampton - Walsall – Willenhall – Aldridge Rail Link
- Midlands Rail Hub (HS2)
- Brinsford Parkway Station
- Tettenhall Rail Station
- Wolverhampton – Shrewsbury Line Improvements

#### Rapid Transit

- Wednesbury Brierley Hill Metro Extension
- Walsall – Stourbridge Corridor tram – train extensions
- A34 Walsall Road Sprint Corridor
- Cross-city bus packages
- Sprint routes or equivalent

#### Key Road Corridors

- A4123 Corridor
- A461 Corridor
- A456 Corridor
- A458 Corridor (Lye)

#### Interchanges

- Dudley Port Integrated Transport Hub
- Walsall Interchange

- 4.1.19. Details of the above Wolverhampton projects, along with funding and delivery timescales, are provided in the Infrastructure Schedule of this document. This identifies numerous transport scheme for active travel, public transport and highways at the strategic and local level.
- 4.1.20. Transport Modelling work completed in summer 2024 considered the impacts of proposed growth in the WLP on the highways and related transport impacts. This work was completed at a later stage of the Regulation 19 WLP Publication Plan. As such, specific infrastructure/mitigation requirements have not yet been finalised.
- 4.1.21. The car park study and liaison with CWC colleagues has informed the future approach to parking provision and there are a number of car parks which have been identified as contributing to future housing supply in the Wolverhampton SHLAA (2024), including sites located in the city centre.
- 4.1.22. The parking strategy has been aligned with the transport strategy, to align development sites with good transport links and realise aspirations to increase public transport uptake. The strategy remains flexible in line with changes to the regeneration strategy and proposed projects, to ensure that the balance remains between attracting people to the centres of the City through good parking facilities, making most efficient use of land and encouraging public transport use where possible.

## **5. HEALTH**

- 5.1.1. The built and natural environments are key determinants of health and wellbeing, with an increasing body of research indicating that the environment in which people live is linked to health across their lifetime. For example, the design of neighbourhoods can influence physical activity levels, travel patterns, social connectivity, food consumption, mental and physical health, and wellbeing outcomes.
- 5.1.2. In terms of health infrastructure planning across the city, the Black Country Integrated Care Board (ICB) work with local authorities to understand where growth is likely to occur and how best to serve needs arising from that growth. The ICB takes the Council's five-year housing land supply into account and as well as the longer-term Local Plan aspiration. The ICB then produces and maintains a Strategic Plan, which anticipates the impact of growth on healthcare services and the mechanisms for delivery. The evidence in the Strategic Plan is a key tool in demonstrating the deliverability of sites and providing assurances to local communities that healthcare needs will be met following the development.
- 5.1.3. The NHS assessment of need and trends in healthcare demand at the local level are underpinned by a real-time evidence system. Strategic Health Asset Planning and Evaluation (SHAPE) is available to NHS and Local Authority professionals with a role in Public Health or Social Care. The ICB are able to use SHAPE to evaluate the impact from a potential new development by locating the closest GP practices and assessing each practice's clinical data, which includes number of registered patients and their age profile, practice workforce, catchment areas, Care Quality Commission (CQC) assessments and Primary Care Network (PCN) information.
- 5.1.4. The Black Country ICB Estates Strategy, approved in 2023, represents the Improvement and Development Plan for the Black Country ICB and the continuing evolution of the local and national drivers for change. These are live documents spanning the period 2023 to 2027 and are subject to regular review.

### **SUMMARY**

- 5.1.5. As part of the work on the WLP, the existing facilities in Wolverhampton have been reviewed by the ICB alongside a review of the impacts of the development of the proposed site allocations. Whilst the ICB's review found that no new facilities are needed in order to accommodate the level of growth proposed under the WLP, it did identify up to an additional 12 consulting rooms would be required across the city over the Plan period. The location of the additional consulting rooms shows a clear correlation between the areas with the largest concentration of housing sites or larger housing sites. Contributions towards the expansion of existing primary health service facilities will be sought from developers on major applications as evidenced in the Infrastructure schedule.

### **BASELINE**

- 5.1.6. Evidence, including that from the West Midlands Sustainability and Transformation Partnership, suggests that the Black Country, including Wolverhampton, performs worse than the average for England with regards to risk factors for poor health outcomes that are linked to the built and natural environment. For example, Wolverhampton has lower rates of physical activity and higher rates of obesity. Poor air quality is harmful to health and unhealthy fast food is easily available. In the home,

rates of falls and hip fractures in older people are high, as are households living in fuel poverty, meaning people are exposed to the risk of cold housing in winter thereby exacerbating long-term conditions.

- 5.1.7. Wolverhampton has lower rates of both life expectancy and healthy life expectancy than the average for England meaning people not only die earlier but live more of their life with ill health, which has implications for their ability to be productive and for how they use the built and natural environment. Wolverhampton also has higher rates of multiple deprivation, of children living in poverty and of unemployment than the rest of England.
- 5.1.8. Wolverhampton also has higher rates of hospital admissions for alcohol compared to the England average. Many users of adult social care say they feel isolated and experience poor health-related quality of life.
- 5.1.9. Wolverhampton has higher rates of physically inactive adults and children and higher rates of obesity than those for England as well as lower rates of the population eating 'five a day' and a higher number of fast-food outlets per 100,000 population. High concentrations of Hot Food Takeaways in certain areas of those which are not appropriately located, can result in an undue influence on poor choice of diet than contributes to a wider range of health issues discussed above.
- 5.1.10. There are currently two projects planned in Wolverhampton to improve primary healthcare, as set out in Part 2 – Infrastructure Delivery Schedule

#### **FUTURE GROWTH**

- 5.1.11. City of Wolverhampton Council and its partners, including other healthcare infrastructure providers, have a critical role to play in delivering high-quality services and ensuring Wolverhampton's healthcare infrastructure amenities and facilities are maintained, improved and expanded.
- 5.1.12. Meeting Wolverhampton's future housing needs will have an impact on existing healthcare infrastructure and generate demand for both extended facilities across the Plan area, as well as impacting upon service delivery as population growth results in additional medical interventions in the population.
- 5.1.13. As part of the work on the WLP, the existing facilities in Wolverhampton have been reviewed by the ICB alongside a review of the impacts of the development of the proposed site allocations.

#### **Promoting good health**

- 5.1.14. Firstly, the WLP will support initiatives to prevent ill-health and aimed at encouraging healthier lifestyle choices, mental wellbeing and addressing socio-economic and environmental issues that contribute to poor health inequalities. Policy set out in the WLP will enable the Council to support developments which create an environment that promotes healthy communities, protects, and improves the physical, social and mental health and wellbeing of its residents, including children, young people and vulnerable adults. Developments should help to maximise opportunities to improve the quality of life, make it easier for people within Wolverhampton to lead healthy, active lifestyles and encourage healthy choices.

- 5.1.15. The WLP sets out developments that are required to produce a Health Impact Assessment with a planning application. This includes hot food takeaways which will be managed in terms of their location, concentration and hours of operation.

#### **Healthcare Infrastructure**

- 5.1.16. The WLP will ensure existing primary and secondary healthcare infrastructure and services will be protected, unless it can be demonstrated that the loss of the existing facility has a satisfactory replacement or is no longer fit for purpose as part of a wider public service transformation plan which requires investment in modern infrastructure and facilities. New or improved healthcare facilities and services will be provided, in accordance with requirements agreed between the Local Planning Authorities and Local Health Organisations. Opportunities will be explored for the co-location of health and other community facilities such as community centres, libraries and sport and recreation facilities.
- 5.1.17. The assessment of the capacity of existing healthcare facilities to meet the demand generated by residents of new development, uses an established method adopted by the Integrated Care Board (ICB). The assessment of the proposed development under the WLP found that future demand generated can be dealt with through existing infrastructure or expansion of existing facilities rather than the development of new healthcare facilities.
- 5.1.18. Whilst the ICB's review found that no new facilities are needed in order to accommodate the level of growth proposed under the WLP it did identify up to an additional 12 consulting rooms would be required across the city over the Plan period. The location of the additional consulting rooms shows a clear correlation between the areas with the largest concentration of housing sites or larger housing sites. Contributions towards the expansion of existing primary health service facilities will be sought from developers on major applications.
- 5.1.19. In line with WLP policies, proposals for major residential developments of 10 units or more will be assessed against the capacity of existing healthcare facilities and/or services. Where the demand generated by the residents of the new developments would have unacceptable impacts upon the capacity of these facilities, developers will be required to contribute to the provision or improvement of such services.
- 5.1.20. The WLP will require applicants to consult the ICB in advance of the submission of a planning application where a significant amount of housing is to be provided, with guidance to be provided in a new Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). Where it is not possible to address such provision through planning conditions, a planning agreement or planning obligations may be required.



## 6. EMERGENCY SERVICES

- 6.1.1. Future requirements for police, ambulance and fire services are usually determined through national policy and funding arrangements and are linked to delivery of new developments. On this basis the Council will liaise with the relevant parts of the emergency services throughout the Plan period as developments are brought forward.
- 6.1.2. The Council consulted the WM Police and Crime Commissioner and WM Ambulance Service and WM Fire Service on the WLP Issues and Preferred Options Report (Regulation 18). The Council will reconsult with these organisations as part of the Regulation 19 stage of the Plan.
- 6.1.3. The WM Ambulance Service and WM Fire Service did not submit a representation to the Regulation 18 consultation. The Regulation 18 consultation response from the WM Police and Crime Commissioner highlighted the recently updated WMP Estates Strategy (October 2023), which makes proposals for WMP site in Wolverhampton, as summarised in the table below. The response highlighted a need for more policing resources and supporting infrastructure across the city as a whole in order to support a growing population, however no specific physical infrastructure need related to concentrations of development was identified.

LPA	Site	Proposed outcome	Details	Projected delivery date (not before)
WV	Bilston	Retain	Recent refurbishment NHTs, Response and corporate functions	
WV	Low Hill	Retain	Recent refurbishment NHTs and Response	
WV	Pennwood Court	Serve notice & vacate at lease expiry	Site no longer supports operating model	Winter'23
WV	Wednesfield	Relocate locally & then dispose	NHTs will relocate locally; all other corporate functions will relocate within WMP estate	Winter'24
WV	Wolverhampton Central	Retain	Refurbishment WV LPA HQ, multiple corporate functions, PCO, Custody, NHTs and Response	Winter'24

## **7. EDUCATION**

- 7.1.1. City of Wolverhampton Council is a unitary authority and the Local Education Authority (LEA) with responsibility for ensuring that there are adequate early years and school places available for children and young people within the city.
- 7.1.2. The Council has a statutory duty to ensure sufficient school places, promote high educational standards and help to fulfil every child's educational potential, promote diversity and parental choice.
- 7.1.3. One of Wolverhampton's key Council priorities set out in Our City: Our Plan 2024-25 is 'Strong families where children grow up well and achieve their full potential', by supporting children in having the best start in life and high quality education.
- 7.1.4. Good education is key to delivering the high ambitions for children and young people in the city. The vision is to create an inclusive education system which promotes the highest standards for all children and young people, closes the attainment gap and allows every pupil to achieve their full potential.

### **SUMMARY**

- 7.1.5. The main challenge that Wolverhampton faces in relation to the organisation of school provision, is ensuring that sufficient high quality school places for all children are available to meet the needs of local communities across the city.
- 7.1.6. In order to provide additional mainstream school places, the Local Authority receives Basic Need capital grant funding from the Department for Education (DfE).
- 7.1.7. In addition, where a housing development of ten or more homes would increase the need for education facilities to the extent that new or improved facilities would be required to meet this need, planning obligations will be secured sufficient to meet the need in a timely manner, where this is financially viable. Contributions will be secured retrospectively where forward funding of improvements is necessary to meet immediate needs.
- 7.1.8. National guidance sets out the presumption that housing developments will fund the provision of education facilities sufficient to meet their own needs, including the provision of land for the construction of new buildings where necessary. However, the Viability Study indicates that, depending on the extent of other planning obligations required, this may not be viable on some sites, particularly those located in lower value zones.
- 7.1.9. To ensure projected numbers at point of entry (Reception and Year 7) are as accurate as possible, many factors are considered in the projection methodology including pupil yield from housing developments.
- 7.1.10. Wolverhampton's Education Department have confirmed that the education infrastructure needs arising from the proposed WLP growth can be accommodated via expansions to the current school estate as opposed to the creation of new schools, and that contributions will be sought from developers on major applications in order to support education provision and expand facilities where appropriate.
- 7.1.11. However, it should be noted that estimated pupil yields are based upon the anticipated new housing developments which have full planning permission, or where

the development is present in the latest five-year land supply and the LA has a demonstrable degree of certainty that the development will go ahead. Therefore, due to the Plan period extending well beyond current education forecasts, this analysis would be ongoing, and contributions from housing developers may be required at some stage during the Plan period.

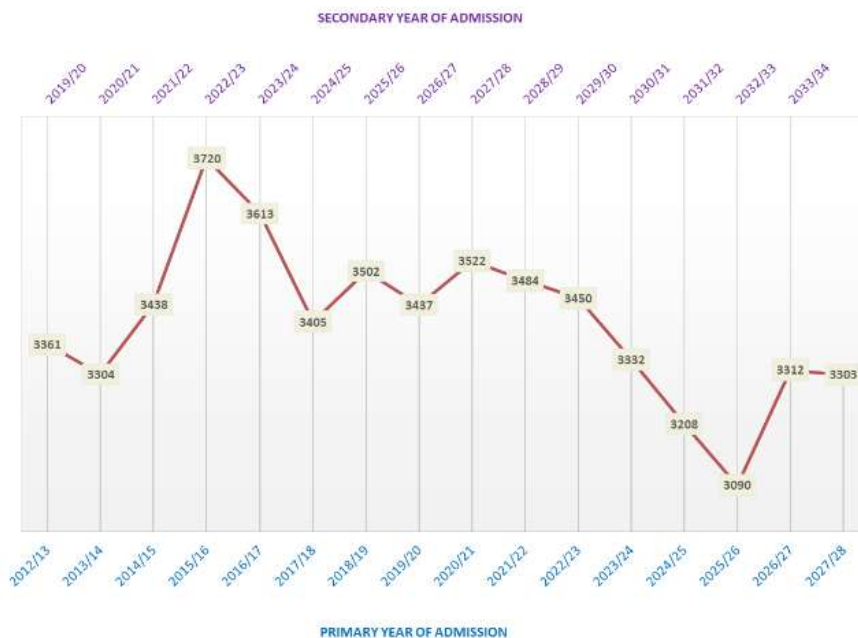
- 7.1.12. Wolverhampton have ongoing discussions with neighbouring authorities as and when the need arises dependent on the location of housing developments and the potential impact on cross border movement and school capacity.

**BASELINE**

**Mainstream Primary and Secondary School Provision**

- 7.1.13. Across the City there are 68 primary schools, 2 Infant schools and 2 Junior Schools, with 56% of these being an academy. Secondary school provision consists of 19 schools, of which 89% are academies. In addition, there is one all-through academy free school catering for both primary and secondary education.
- 7.1.14. Wolverhampton experienced a bulge in birth rates peaking in the cohort that entered Reception in 2015-16 as illustrated in Figure 1 below, the largest expansion programme to date was undertaken to meet demand. This programme provided a combination of permanent and temporary school places. This cohort reached Secondary provision in 2022-23, whereby a Secondary School Expansion Programme was implemented to ensure sufficiency of provision.

**Figure 1: Births and year of admission for Primary and Secondary**



Statistics regarding births and mortality are created from Civil Registration Data "Copyright (2019), the Health and Social Care Information Centre. Re-used with the permission of the Health and Social Care Information Centre. All rights reserved."

- 7.1.15. Although there was a decline in birth rates for cohorts entering Reception between 2016-17 and 2017-18, due to subsequent rise, a further expansion programme was required in the Primary estate in 2018-19 which will impact on the Secondary estate in 2025/26. A Secondary School Expansion Programme is currently in progress to meet this demand for September 2025.
- 7.1.16. For Reception cohorts from 2021-22 to 2025-26 there has been a year on year decrease in the number of births, however, as illustrated in Figure 1 this trend is reversing from 2026-27 with a significant increase in births with rates remaining relatively static for 2027-28.
- 7.1.17. In recent years there has been unprecedented demand for in year places especially in the primary phase (Years 1 to 6 for primary). As illustrated in Figure 2 below, the Year 6 cohort from last academic year (2023-24) increased by 9 forms of entry since it started in Reception in 2017-18 (a form of entry is 30 pupils). Historically between 9 and 10 forms of entry growth has been seen. However, last year's Years 2 and 3 are already at that level of growth and Years 4 and 5 have exceeded this. These cohorts are continuing to grow and will impact on the Secondary estate from 2025-26 onwards.

**Figure 2: In year Growth from 2016-17 to 2023-24 (citywide)**

NCY (2023/24)	Reception Start	Number on Roll Summer 2024 Census	Cohort growth since starting in Reception	Growth - Forms of Entry
R	2023-24	3423	81	2.7
1	2022-23	3595	223	7.4
2	2021-22	3613	275	9.2
3	2020-21	3668	310	10.3
4	2019-20	3719	337	11.2
5	2018-19	3722	326	10.9
6	2017-18	3572	270	9.0

Source: School Census - Autumn and Summer

- 7.1.18. Local Authority pupil forecasts for entry into Reception and Year 7 are updated annually and include information from datasets including; births; historic uptake rates; cross border movement; migration; School Admissions data and pupil yield from housing developments.
- 7.1.19. The Education Department is regularly supplied with estimates of anticipated dwelling completions within on-going and planned housing developments which detail anticipated volume, phasing and dwelling type; this data informs the calculation of pupil yields.
- 7.1.20. The Department for Education (DfE) expects LA's to seek developer contributions towards school places as noted in the Securing developer contributions for education guidance (August 2023) to mitigate the impact on community infrastructure including schools and other education facilities. It is expected that yields are refreshed approximately every 5 years to ensure that ratios are valid. In Wolverhampton pupil yield ratios were last refreshed in December 2021 and are being revisited in Autumn 2024.

- 7.1.21. Figures 3 and 4 below illustrates the pupil yield ratios currently applied to housing developments, based on number of dwellings by type and size and is applied to available information from each housing development for different phases of education (pre-school, Primary, Secondary, Post 16 and SEND).

**Figure 3: Pupil Yield Ratios Mainstream Pre-school, Primary, Secondary and Post 16 excluding SEN (for developer contributions)**

Type	Dwelling Type unknown	Pupil Yield Per Dwellings Type									
		Flat				House					
No. of bedrooms	-	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5	6
Yield - Pre-school	0.083	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.000	0.113	0.076	0.093	0.000	0.000
Yield - Primary	0.042	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.000	0.042	0.044	0.053	0.143	0.143
Yield - Secondary	0.022	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.008	0.024	0.045	0.300	0.300
Yield - Post 16	0.013	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.007	0.013	0.027	0.000	0.000
Pre-school pupils per 100 dwellings Total	8	1	1	1	1	0	11	8	9	0	0
Primary pupils per 100 dwellings total R-6	20	8	8	8	8	0	20	31	37	100	100
Primary pupils per 100 dwellings per NCY	4	1	1	1	1	0	4	4	5	14	14
Secondary pupils per 100 dwellings total 7-11	11	0	0	0	0	0	4	12	23	150	150
Secondary pupils per 100 dwellings per NCY	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	5	30	30
Post-16 pupils per 100 dwellings Total	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	3	0	0

**Figure 4: SEN total (including Special Schools, Mainstream and Resource Base provision) (for developer contributions)**

Type	Dwelling Type unknown	Pupil Yield Per Dwellings Type									
		Flat				House					
No. of bedrooms	-	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5	6
Yield - Pre-school	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.004	0.000	0.000
Yield - Primary	0.001	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001
Yield - Secondary	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.000
Yield - Post 16	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Pre-school pupils per 100 dwellings Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Primary pupils per 100 dwellings total R-6	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1
Primary pupils per 100 dwellings per NCY	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Secondary pupils per 100 dwellings total 7-11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Secondary pupils per 100 dwellings per NCY	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Post-16 pupils per 100 dwellings Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

## FUTURE GROWTH

- 7.1.22. The Wolverhampton Local Plan is making provision for 9,330 new homes (518 homes per year) up to 2042. Half of these new homes will be located in the city centre, however many of these will be in the form of apartment blocks which are significantly less likely to generate a pupil yield.
- 7.1.23. Since 2012 in the Primary phase and 2018 in the Secondary phase capital investment has been made in schools across the city to accommodate the expansion of mainstream places due to the increase demand.
- 7.1.24. Alongside this investment, approximately £1million has been received via a Section 106 agreement from a new housing development. This money was used to towards increasing capacity in the primary estate.
- 7.1.25. Regarding future demand for school places, discussions and ongoing partnership working with the Education Department confirm that education infrastructure needs can potentially be accommodated via expansions to the current school estate as opposed to the creation of new schools. However, due to the Plan period extending

beyond current education forecasts, this analysis would be ongoing, and contributions may be required where it can be demonstrated there is insufficient provision.

- 7.1.26. Planning applications will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, if a development would increase the need for education facilities that cannot be catered for in the existing capacity of the school estate, planning obligations will be secured where this is financially viable to do so.

## **8. UTILITIES**

- 8.1.1. A Black Country Utilities Infrastructure Capacity Study (BCUS) was undertaken by the Black Country Authorities in 2019, to review the capacity of the current utilities infrastructure (electricity, gas and broadband) and assess how this would cope with the proposed development in the Draft Black Country Plan. The report looked at optimal locations for new development and highlighted where any constraints may arise. The BCUS found there are likely to be no potential abnormal costs and/or technical constraints associated with prospective housing and commercial growth in combination across the sub-region. Both the electricity and gas distributors stated they would be able to deliver the required infrastructure to support growth as part of their future asset plans.
- 8.1.2. The Infrastructure Paper (May 2021) prepared as part of the Black Country Plan Delivery and Viability Study subsequently took account of development sites identified in the Draft BCP. The capacity analysis suggested that gas and electricity utilities provision would not constrain housing growth in the Black Country over the Plan period. In addition, no strategic infrastructure over and above existing planned improvements were identified.
- 8.1.3. The number of housing and employment sites has been reduced in the WLP (and the Dudley and Sandwell Regulation 19 Local Plans) compared to the Draft BCP, meaning that findings regarding electricity and gas capacity are likely to still apply.
- 8.1.4. The following utility providers were consulted on the WLP Issues and Preferred Options consultation (Regulation 18) – Severn Trent Water, National Gas Transmission, National Grid (Electricity) Transmission. None of these agencies expressed any concerns in their representations to the consultation regarding capacity / infrastructure issues in relation to the proposed allocations or policies in the WLP Issues and Preferred Options consultation (Regulation 18).
- 8.1.5. Severn Trent Water were subsequently engaged to carry out a Wolverhampton Wastewater Treatment Works and Network Assessment, to address issues raised in the Black Country Phase 1 Scoping Water Cycle Study and Reg 18 representations by Environment Agency regarding water quality issues. At a meeting on 2 October 2024, the Environment Agency indicated that they were satisfied with the level of evidence provided by this Assessment, subject to review of the final WLP (Regulation 19) and all supporting evidence. This engagement will continue as work on the WLP progresses.
- 8.1.6. The Council regularly responds to requests from National Grid Distribution and Severn Trent Water for information regarding planned developments in Wolverhampton, to enable their network planning process. This engagement will continue as work on the WLP progresses.

### **Electricity and Gas**

#### **SUMMARY**

- 8.1.7. There is no evidence that electricity and gas infrastructure is a constraint for the level of development proposed under the WLP. The Black Country utilities evidence and representations received from National Gas Transmission and National Grid Transmission to the WLP Issues and Preferred Options have not flagged up any

issues with capacity / infrastructure issues in relation to the WLP proposed allocations or policies.

## **BASELINE**

- 8.1.8. Overall, electricity grid capacity across the Black Country represents a generally positive picture regarding spare capacity. For Wolverhampton the Black Country utilities evidence base concluded that there were no constraints relating to electricity or gas infrastructure for either housing or employment sites.

## **FUTURE GROWTH**

- 8.1.9. Generally, the investment in upgrading the network to meet increased demand is done on a reactive basis. This is because the network is privately owned by Distribution Network Operators (DNOs) and because it is a highly regulated sector, DNOs are not allowed to forward-fund assets in a particular area as there needs to be a competitive opportunity for other parties to supply new developments or future areas of growth. The same principle applies to the National Grid gas distribution network and the competitive opportunities to Independent Gas Transporters (IGTs) for supplies to new developments.
- 8.1.10. Recent engagement with utility providers (National Gas Transmission, National Grid), did not express any concern regarding the capacity to deliver on infrastructure issues as a result of the proposed housing and employment land allocations in the WLP.
- 8.1.11. The power capacity within the sub-region offers excellent opportunities to underpin future housing and economic growth. In particular, the power infrastructure co-located with existing employment land uses shows that the Black Country can become a centre for the UK's Industrial Strategy. This includes opportunities for industries looking for high power capacity requirements such as advanced manufacturing or uses such as data centres. It should be noted, though, that successful economic growth will take power capacity which in turn will reduce the available capacity for residential growth. The relationship between commercial power use and residential growth will need monitoring.
- 8.1.12. It should be noted that utility capacity for 'new demands', such as increased use of electric vehicles and plans to roll-out of low and zero carbon heating solutions, are currently being considered separately by the UK Government. The Council will continue to engage with utility providers to consider the potential impact of new government regulation and potential future demands.

## **Digital**

- 8.1.13. This section covers the digital network, which comprises broadband and the 5G network across the city. For the Draft Black Country Plan, evidence was collated in a Digital Infrastructure Report (2021) and Utilities Infrastructure Capacity Study (2019). For preparation of the WLP, the Wolverhampton Digital Infrastructure Evidence Base (2024) has provided an update to the evidence base on this issue.
- 8.1.14. Future-proofed digital infrastructure is the backbone of a modern thriving economy, driving productivity and spreading growth. Wolverhampton is making significant progress upgrading its digital infrastructure with gigabit coverage at 94% and full fibre coverage at 62% (2023), with all providers upgrading to full fibre in the city. Wolverhampton has an extensive digital infrastructure and is at the forefront of digital



innovation. The city is also making progress supporting the upgrade of mobile connectivity, with 5G available for 99% of the city from at least one operator and 66% of the city from all operators. Digital connectivity will increasingly become important, with the switch over from analogue to digital, to support new ways of working, service delivery and consumer demand, so we need to continue to support the rollout to ensure digital infrastructure meets our needs now and in the future.

- 8.1.15. An estimated 11,660 households in Wolverhampton are without broadband and there are an estimated 118,000 limited and non-users of the internet in the city. Although older people generally use the internet less, 44% of those that are offline are under the age of 60. Digital is increasingly important for accessing services, skills, job search and employment along with keeping in touch with families and friends, with digital considered the 4th utility.
- 8.1.16. To maximise the benefit locally, the city is proactively supporting residents to get online by providing devices and connectivity through a network of trusted partners to improve digital skills and supporting businesses to digitalise and introduce smart technology to support the delivery of services.

### **BASELINE**

- 8.1.17. The Council has taken a proactive approach to FTTP coverage, allowing coverage to reach 82% of Wolverhampton in 2024, above the average UK coverage of 66%. However, it is important to ensure that all homes and businesses have access. FTTP is required to meet future demands for connectivity, as highlighted by a 50% increase in demand each year, and there are wider economic, health and service delivery benefits.
- 8.1.18. West Midlands 5G Limited (WM5G) is the UK's largest 5G innovation company and was established in 2019 by WMCA and DCMAS to accelerate 5G rollout. The West Midlands was found to be the best-connected region for 5G in 2023, with two thirds of locations in the West Midlands having access to 5G from at least one network operator<sup>1</sup>. Wolverhampton has access to 5G from EE, Vodafone, Three and O2<sup>2</sup>.

### **FUTURE GROWTH**

- 8.1.19. Regarding broadband, Full Fibre to the Property is now covered under Building Regulations and will be required for major developments under WLP Policy DEL3. Applications will be assessed on a site-by-site basis, and required to ensure FTTP broadband, unless demonstrated to be infeasible or unviable.
- 8.1.20. To deploy 5G and improve coverage in partial "not-spots" (a place where wireless internet, especially broadband, services are not available), mobile network operators will need to strengthen existing sites to accommodate additional equipment. To extend coverage into total not-spots or to add capacity in areas of high demand, mobile network operators will also need to identify and develop new sites. Masts may need to be higher than at present to accommodate 5G, which may impact on local amenity and character in some areas.
- 8.1.21. WLP Policy DEL3 supports the delivery of 5G networks in principle, subject to sensitive siting and design. Mobile Network Operators are encouraged to have early

---

<sup>1</sup> West Midlands Combined Authority (2023). West Midlands remains the best connected region for 5G. Available from: <https://www.wmca.org.uk/news/west-midlands-remains-best-connected-region-for-5g/>

<sup>2</sup> 5G Coverage (2024). Available from: <https://5g.co.uk/coverage/>

discussions with the Local Planning Authority and to communicate and consult with local communities, especially in the case of new sites, to ensure that the best sites are selected for 5G infrastructure and that equipment is sympathetically designed, in line with principles set out in the NPPF and relevant Development Plan Document policies. Where larger developments are planned, developers can consider the incorporation of potential sites for telecoms equipment to ensure 5G coverage.

## **Water**

### **SUMMARY**

- 8.1.22. New homes require the provision of clean water and safe disposal of wastewater. Severn Trent Water provide these functions for the Wolverhampton area.

### **FUTURE GROWTH**

- 8.1.23. A Phase 1 Water Cycle Study (WCS) was produced for the Black Country Authorities, to assess the constraints and requirements likely to arise from potential growth in the Draft Black Country Plan on water infrastructure including water supply, wastewater collection and wastewater treatment. In addition to increased housing demand, future climate change presents further challenges to pressures on the existing water infrastructure network, including increased intensive rainfall events and a higher frequency of drought events. Sustainable planning for water must now take this into account.
- 8.1.24. During 2024, Severn Trent Water were engaged to carry out a Wolverhampton Wastewater Treatment Works and Network Assessment, to address issues raised in the Black Country Phase 1 Scoping Water Cycle Study and Reg 18 representations by Environment Agency regarding water quality issues.
- 8.1.25. The WLP development sites are spread across three Wastewater Treatment Works catchments – Barnhurst, Coven Heath and Minworth.
- 8.1.26. In the Minworth WwTW area, performance will be monitored against an existing expectation for growth in the catchment. However, investments planned in AMP9 (2030-35) will likely accommodate the projected 400 dwellings to the end of AMP9. It is unclear how growth at Sandwell will affect the treatment capability at Minworth. The proposals for employment are planned in for AMP11 with only a small fraction in AMP8/AMP9 which will be likely accommodated by the AMP9 investment.
- 8.1.27. Proposed growth in the Barnhurst catchment is likely to be accommodated within the current treatment capacity of the works to the end of AMP8, subject to growth information / assumptions for other LPAs served by Barnhurst remaining valid. Further analysis will be required beyond this time horizon.
- 8.1.28. As a water company, Severn Trent have an obligation to provide water supplies and sewage treatment capacity for future development. Where more detail is provided on site allocations, Severn Trent will provide specific comments on the suitability of the site with respect to the water and sewerage network. In the instances where there may be a concern over the capacity of the network, they may look to undertake modelling to better understand the potential risk. Where there is sufficient confidence that a development will go ahead, we will look to complete any necessary improvements to provide additional capacity.

- 8.1.29. A network capacity assessment has been carried out for the sites in the Barnhurst and Minworth catchments as listed in the Assessment. The purpose of these desktop-based assessments is to indicate where proposed development may have a detrimental impact on the performance of the existing public sewerage network, considering the size of the development proposals.
- 8.1.30. These are desktop assessments using readily available information and have not been subjected to detailed hydraulic modelling. For most new development provided the surface water is managed sustainably through use of a SuDS the additional foul only flows will have a negligible impact on existing sewer performance but where there are pre-existing capacity constraints additional capacity improvements may be required.
- 8.1.31. Where subsequent detailed modelling indicates capacity improvements are required such work will be phased to align with development occupancy with capacity improvement works to be funded by Severn Trent Water. However, whilst Severn Trent have a duty to provide additional capacity to accommodate planned development, they also have a requirement to manage our assets efficiently to minimise our customers' bills. Consequently, to avoid potential inefficient investment they generally do not provide additional capacity until there is certainty that the development is due to commence. Where development proposals are likely to require additional capacity upgrades to accommodate new development flows it is highly recommended that potential developers contact Severn Trent as early as possible to confirm flow rates and intended connection points. This will ensure provision of additional capacity can be planned into the Severn Trent investment programme to ensure development is not delayed.
- 8.1.32. The Assessment concluded that Severn Trent would have no major concerns with the proposed site allocations, subject to the addition of text to site allocation policies set out in Section 13 of the WLP to highlight which site allocations could have an impact on wastewater treatment works and therefore Severn Trent should be consulted at an early stage in any planning application process to ascertain if any sewer infrastructure upgrades / network connections are required, and can be delivered, before commencement or occupation of development.. This has been completed. The relevant sites are H4 – West of Qualcast Road; E23 - Bilston Urban Village; and E12 – Land at Neachells Lane.
- 8.1.33. At a meeting on 2 October 2024, the Environment Agency indicated that they were satisfied with the level of evidence provided by the Severn Trent Assessment, the addition of relevant wording to Section 13 for sites H4, E23 and E12, and the wording of WLP Policy ENV12 – Flood Risk and Water Quality and supporting text, which requires early consultation with Severn Trent and the Environment Agency for site allocations which may have an impact on wastewater treatment works. This engagement will continue through the WLP Regulation 19 consultation process.
- 8.1.34. The WCS Phase 1 report outlines that there are opportunities in the planning system to ease pressure on the wastewater network by separating foul and storm flow into existing combined systems, and not allowing new surface water connections. Additionally, it states that surface water can be better managed through retrofitting SuDs in existing residential areas. The integration of SuDs into schemes will aid the collection of wastewater and limit additional impact on the system, as well as reducing the impact of diffuse pollution. The WLP Policy ENV13 – Sustainable Drainage

Systems and Surface Water Management supports this through promotion of the use of SuDs wherever possible.

- 8.1.35. WLP Policy ENV14 introduces the higher water efficiency standard of 110 litres per person per day for all new homes in Wolverhampton, justified by evidence provided in the Water Cycle Study (2020) and by the Environment Agency classification of Severn Trent Water as an area of serious water stress for the purposes of water resources planning. This change in water stress classification adds further weight to the tighter limit, which will be enforced through the Building Regulations system.
- 8.1.36. Policy ENV14 also introduces a requirement for major non-residential developments to meet BREEAM standards which include full credits for category Wat 01 (water efficiency).
- 8.1.37. It is important that new developments do not contribute to an unsustainable increase in water abstraction. This can be done in a number of ways including reducing water demand from new development.
- 8.1.38. Recent engagement with Severn Trent Water via the Regulation 18 Draft Wolverhampton Local Plan consultation did not express any concern regarding constraints in water supply capacity as a result of the proposed allocations in the WLP. Therefore, infrastructure will be dealt with on a site-by-site basis by the water companies and it is not expected that any capacity issues will occur.
- 8.1.39. The Council regularly responds to requests from Severn Trent Water for information regarding planned developments in Wolverhampton, to enable their network planning process. This engagement will continue as work on the WLP progresses.

## 9. ENVIRONMENT

### Flood Risk and Drainage

- 9.1.1. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) Level 1 and Level 2 was undertaken for Wolverhampton City during 2024, to identify areas of risk of flooding from all sources, assess the cumulative impact of development and consider the potential impacts of climate change.

#### SUMMARY

- 9.1.2. Applications will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis and assessed for flood risk. WLP Policies require the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) to prevent flooding from surface water and improve drainage in the wider area.

#### BASELINE

- 9.1.3. The study found that the city is at risk from flooding from fluvial, surface water, groundwater, sewers, reservoir inundation and canal breaches - the most significant sources of flood risk are fluvial and surface water.
- 9.1.4. The primary fluvial flood risk is along the Smestow Brook and along a culverted tributary of the River Tame in the north of Bilston. Elsewhere, fluvial flooding occurs in close proximity to the Waterhead Brook (feeding into the River Penk) and across an area to the south and east of the Black Country Route (A463). There are several culverted watercourses within Wolverhampton which pose a residual flood risk to the city in the event of blockage, becoming overwhelmed or failure.
- 9.1.5. There are many areas at high risk of surface water flooding in Wolverhampton, due to the heavily urbanised nature of the area that impedes natural infiltration and drainage. Surface water flooding is most often caused by periods of intense rainfall, which may become more frequent as a result of climate change. Areas at particularly high risk include Pendeford, Perry Hall, Ettingshall and land between Dunstall Hill and Low Hill. The areas least impacted by surface water flood risk include large open green spaces which are situated along the northern, western and southern boundaries of Wolverhampton.
- 9.1.6. The sewers in Wolverhampton are managed by Severn Trent Water. Severn Trent Water provided their Hydraulic Flood Risk Register which details recorded incidents of sewer flooding in Wolverhampton between 11th June 1997 and 24th October 2023. According to this dataset, there are spatial clusters of sewer flooding in Aldersley, Claregate, Tettenhall, Castlecroft, Ettingshall Park and Fordhouses. The Severn Trent Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP) was published in March 2023. The plan states planning objectives for internal sewer flooding risk is a high priority in the catchment served by the Barnhurst Wastewater Treatment Works to the west of Oxley. Storm overflow is considered a high priority for the catchment served by Trescott which is located in Perton to the west of Wolverhampton. The risk of internal flooding in a 1 in 50-year storm as well as storm overflow performance are classed as high priorities in the catchment served by Coven Heath which partly drains suburbs in the north of Wolverhampton including Fordhouses and Moseley Green.
- 9.1.7. There are areas in the city with groundwater levels that are either at or very near (within 0.025m of) the ground surface, predominantly in the north of the city in

Pendeford, Oxley and Fordhouses, with some areas in the west, in Tettenhall and Compton. The 2020 SFRA recognises that as pumping and abstraction regimes have ceased or been changed, that local groundwater flooding incidences have occurred in the north-east and south-east of Wolverhampton. It is therefore anticipated that groundwater flooding issues are likely to be localised in their nature, affecting limited areas and a small number of properties.

- 9.1.8. There are six canals in Wolverhampton which are the Birmingham Canal Navigations, Bradley Arm of the Birmingham Canal Navigations, Shropshire Union Canal, Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal, Walsall Canal, and the Wyrley and Essington Canal. These have the potential to interact with other watercourses and pose a risk of flooding during breach or overtopping incidents. There have historically been three recorded breaches and four recorded instances of overtopping, all along the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal. There are several locations along the Birmingham Canal Navigations between Cannock Road and Wolverhampton Racecourse where the canal is perched. This means the canal is raised above the ground level of the surrounding land, which increases the risk of flooding from the canal in this area.
- 9.1.9. Reservoirs: There are no reservoirs situated within Wolverhampton and there is low potential flood risk from the Sedgely Beacon Reservoir which is located to the south of the city, therefore this can be dealt with on a site-by-site basis, as the level and standard of inspection and maintenance required under the Reservoirs Act means that the risk of flooding from reservoirs is relatively low..

#### **FUTURE GROWTH**

- 9.1.10. The cumulative impact of proposed development across the city was considered in the study, assessing the impact of the total loss of floodplain storage volume. Neighbouring authorities of Sandwell, Walsall, Dudley and South Staffordshire were contacted for information on their site allocations. The cumulative impact assessment was undertaken in conjunction with Dudley and Sandwell councils.
- 9.1.11. The report includes a number of recommendations for developers, in order to reduce cumulative flood risk. These include applying the sequential test and exception tests, consulting statutory consultees at an early stage of development, considering risk from all sources of flooding, ensuring the development does not increase flood risk elsewhere, ensuring the development is safe for future users, managing surface water runoff from development, enhancing the natural river corridor through development and applying relevant local planning policy.
- 9.1.12. Recommendations for local authorities include:
- Allocating land of lowest flood risk
  - Promoting the use of SuDs
  - Reducing surface water runoff from new developments
  - Enhancing and restoring watercourse corridors and habitats through development
  - Improving flood awareness and emergency planning
  - Requiring post-development runoff rates that are lower than or equal to pre-development runoff rates

- 9.1.13. The report recognises that there is potential for development in the catchments to contribute towards reducing flood risk and enabling regeneration, as well as contribution to the provision of green infrastructure.
- 9.1.14. Developments should demonstrate opportunities to create, enhance and link green assets. This can provide multiple benefits across several disciplines including flood risk and biodiversity/ ecology and may provide opportunities for recreation. Wherever possible, developments should seek to help reduce flood risk in the wider area e.g. by contributing to a wider community scheme or strategy for strategic measures, such as defences or natural flood management or by contributing in-kind by mitigating wider flood risk on a development site.
- 9.1.15. As recommended by the report, the WLP includes the requirement for developers to produce a sequential test for unallocated sites that are affected by flood risk, to prioritise land least likely to be flooded for development, or exceptions test, to determine the scale and nature of flood risk, for sites affected by flood risk. Applications will be required to demonstrate that surface water runoff will not increase as part of the development. Flood Risk Assessments will be required for developments in Flood Zone 1 or greater. Policy additionally promotes the use of SuDs and encourages opportunities to be taken to remove rivers from culverts and daylight them where possible. WLP Section 13 – Site Allocations sets out in the policy approach for each site the key recommendations of the SFRA Level 2, as appropriate, to ensure that all relevant issues are addressed in the Flood Risk Assessment accompanying any planning application.
- 9.1.16. Consequently, development proposed under the WLP is not considered to increase flood risk in the city and strong policies will promote development schemes that are considerate to reducing flood risk (including the use Sustainable Urban Drainage schemes), not just within the development but also the wider catchment. Cumulative flood risk will continue to be assessed and applications determined on case-by-case basis.

## **Climate Change**

- 9.1.17. The consequences of climate change are making themselves known worldwide and in Wolverhampton already, which is only set to be exacerbated in future years. The scale of the challenge requires fast and largescale adaption and change, in order to prevent further deterioration of the climate.

### **SUMMARY**

- 9.1.18. The WLP has climate change and the environment at its heart and, therefore, it is not expected that the development proposed under the plan will further exacerbate climate change and instead will direct change towards a more sustainable growth in the city.

### **BASELINE**

- 9.1.19. In July 2019, the City of Wolverhampton Council became the first local authority in the Black Country to declare a Climate Emergency. The Climate Emergency Declaration pledged to make all council activities carbon net zero by 2028, ensure all strategic decisions and budgets are in line with the shift to carbon net zero, and work with partners across the city to work towards a carbon net zero future.

- 9.1.20. The Council has made good progress towards becoming a net zero council. The Council's carbon footprint for 2022/23 was 11,500 tCO<sub>2</sub>e, compared to the 2019 Base Year of 16,050 tCO<sub>2</sub>e, a reduction of 4,550 tCO<sub>2</sub>e (28%). The majority of progress over the last 3 years has resulted from a reduction in emissions due to the LED Streetlight Programme, asset rationalisation and national grid decarbonisation.
- 9.1.21. The Council has also committed to supporting Wolverhampton to become a carbon net zero city by 2041. As of 2021, energy only emissions from the city were circa 900,000 tonnes (900KT) of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), from the following sources: Domestic (39%); Transport (27%); Industry (20%); Public Sector (7%); Commercial (7%). The city's per person emissions remain the joint second smallest across the region. Since 2005, Wolverhampton has seen a 44% reduction in absolute emissions, compared to 36% across the region, and 39% across the UK. A Net Zero 2041 Strategy for the City is currently being developed.
- 9.1.22. The WLP has a key role to play in delivering carbon net zero by: reducing carbon emissions from new developments; reducing the need to travel and enabling a shift to more sustainable travel modes; maximising the use of low carbon energy solutions; seeking to reduce the impact of flooding; and enhancing Wolverhampton's green and blue infrastructure, to protect the people, environment and economy of Wolverhampton.
- 9.1.23. A wide range of Policies within the WLP support the Council's Climate Change ambitions and will help Wolverhampton to work towards addressing Climate Change and net zero carbon emissions.

### **FUTURE GROWTH**

- 9.1.24. As well as reducing emissions, future development must be resilient to the effects of climate change, which could include flooding, heatwaves, drought and more extreme weather events.
- 9.1.25. Climate change and sustainable development are central to the WLP and cross the infrastructure areas outlined in this plan. Policies in the plan will promote sustainable transport, energy efficient homes, sustainable urban drainage, protect green space, plant more trees and protect the environment where possible. This aligns with the Council's Climate Change Ambitions.

### **Green and blue Infrastructure and recreational facilities**

- 9.1.26. Green and blue infrastructure form an important part of the infrastructure of the city, not only offering ecosystem services such as reducing air pollution and flood risk, and also contributing significantly towards the wellbeing of both people and nature within the city. It is important that this is protected as far as possible when planning development in the city.
- 9.1.27. Recreational facilities, including open spaces and playing fields, provide an important part of people's health and wellbeing, improving their quality of life. They help to build inclusive communities, promote healthy lifestyles and provide green spaces for reflection and relaxation.



## **SUMMARY**

- 9.1.28. Green and blue infrastructure form an essential part of the city and will continue to be protected under the WLP. Where possible green corridors will be strengthened, and major applications will be expected to provide green infrastructure and Sustainable Urban Drainage as set out in WLP policy.
- 9.1.29. Wolverhampton is a dense urban city, part of the Black Country and Birmingham conurbation. It is important that green space is maintained where possible and residents have good access to green spaces. This has a well-established impact on people's health and wellbeing.
- 9.1.30. Publicly accessible urban open space, play and sports facilities all have a vital role to play in helping to promote healthy lifestyles. Sports provision and public open space quality and access could be improved and enhanced over the plan period. Existing facilities have been safeguarded under the WLP.

## **BASELINE**

- 9.1.31. Wolverhampton is rich in both its natural and built heritage and its environmental assets. There is an extensive waterbody and canal network which has the potential to provide a wide range of ecosystem services, including recreation, land drainage, flood protection, water supply, energy generation, carbon storage, heritage preservation and nature conservation. Water Framework Directive designated water bodies in Wolverhampton are currently classed as 'moderate' status due to diffuse and point source pollution, physical modifications and groundwater abstraction. The Plan can help deliver River Basin Management Plan measures and objectives for these water bodies by protecting and enhancing water quality.
- 9.1.32. Parts of the Wolverhampton landscape have been recognised for their importance for nature and are protected under various laws or designations. The area is home to the Smestow Valley and Wyrley & Essington Canal Local Nature Reserves, as well as Ancient Woodlands such as Tettenhall Ridge.
- 9.1.33. There are approximately 473,000 trees across Wolverhampton, that cover an area equivalent to 1,150 ha. They filter 14.5 tonnes of airborne pollutants and remove an estimated 6,150 tonnes of carbon from the atmosphere, each year. They also intercept around 151,000 m<sup>3</sup> of rainwater each year, equivalent to an estimated £149,000 in avoided water treatment costs.
- 9.1.34. The new Wolverhampton Open Space Strategy and Action Plan, adopted by the Council in November 2024, is the result of a thorough review which started in autumn 2022, involving public consultation and a review of standards and strategy. It sits alongside the Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy, approved in November 2022, and the emerging Wolverhampton Built Facilities Strategy. The three strategies will together provide an up-to-date evidence base to inform investment in new open spaces and sport facilities, both indoor and outdoor, across the city and the management and improvement of existing facilities, as well as supporting applications for external funding and negotiations on developer funding.
- 9.1.35. The Wolverhampton Open Space Strategy and Action Plan (2024) identifies where there are surpluses and shortfalls in a range of types of open space across the City. It identifies a broadly adequate level of open space in Wolverhampton, although there are variations across the city producing some local surpluses and shortfalls. The

City's Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy (2022), whilst it identifies some local shortfalls in sports provision, suggests these can largely be addressed by improvements to existing facilities plus provision of additional 3G (third generation) pitches.

## **FUTURE GROWTH**

- 9.1.36. The WLP is an urban-led plan, with 97% of proposed housing supply on brownfield land. Green belt will continue to be protected throughout the plan period. This will ensure protection of green spaces which will provide habitat for nature as well as helping to clean the air and drain the land. The WLP protects SINC's and the majority of SLINC's across the city from development.
- 9.1.37. Green corridors will be protected and strengthened where possible under policy in the WLP. This will be achieved as part of the nature recovery network and allows the movement and migration of species across the city.
- 9.1.38. Development in the city will be in line with the latest government guidance on biodiversity net gain. This ensures that development gives more back to nature than it takes out, through a combination of onsite provision and offsite contribution.
- 9.1.39. The blue infrastructure network will be protected under WLP policy, with development carefully planned to ensure there is no additional flooding. Policy will ensure that future development will take steps to improve the condition of water bodies, including re-naturalising culverted sections of watercourses. Additionally, policy on the canals will ensure their heritage is maintained and that they are improved as recreational and active travel networks throughout the city.
- 9.1.40. Where open space is being developed, all appropriate mechanisms, including use of developer contributions, will be employed to address local open space deficiencies in quantity and accessibility in the surrounding local area, and to provide improvements to the quality and value of open space. This could be through improving access or facilities at existing open spaces or through provision of new on site open space, as set out in Development Plan policies and SPD, and reflected in the WLP policies and the Open Space Strategy and Action Plan (2024).
- 9.1.41. The Wolverhampton Open Space Strategy and Action Plan contains an analysis of deprivation, health and the living environment across the city as well as of available data on specific groups with protected characteristics such as children, and minority ethnic communities. Combining data highlighted the parts of the city with greatest needs. The areas of greatest combined open space need were identified as the central areas of Wolverhampton, including Blakenhall, East Park, Heath Town and Whitmore Reans, plus parts of Bilston and Wednesfield, with areas of combined play needs following a similar pattern.
- 9.1.42. The Strategy also looked at areas of future growth by examining emerging Local Plan housing allocations, the majority of which are in the city centre. The analysis shows that these and many other sites are in areas with an already high need for open space, demonstrating the importance of investing in new or improved open spaces alongside these developments to deliver liveable and healthy environments, as well as support biodiversity and address climate change.
- 9.1.43. The Strategy contains a profile for each of the analysis areas, providing headline findings which illustrate the Action Plan, also provided by analysis area alongside city

wide actions. Previous Action Plans have drawn on a known programme of works, mainly funded by developer contributions, which has delivered both new and improved open spaces, including major schemes such as Bilston Urban Village. The new Action Plan contains fewer funded projects and is instead a priority list for use when developing capital projects, negotiating developer contributions and seeking external funding. This focuses on areas of greatest need in terms of both providing new open space where there is a shortage and improving the quality where it is poor, with a focus on areas of new housing and of greatest levels of social, health and other inequalities. It also contains some general aspirations for improvements to open space across the city.

9.1.44. In recent years, significant investment across the city, funded largely through developer contributions, has improved the quality of key sites and created quality open spaces, such as at Bilston Urban Village and the Goodyear and Ward Street Neighbourhood Parks, to serve new and existing residents. Over the period 2018-2024 around £6.5 million in developer funding secured through the planning process delivered these and other open space improvements across the city. A programme of further improvements to open space and recreation facilities will be taken forward by the Council and partners, where funding is available, as set out in the Wolverhampton Open Space Strategy and Action Plan (2024).

9.1.45. Key projects in the Action Plan include:

A. New community facilities at East Park, funded partly by the proposed development at Neachells Lane (Tip) Open Space (subject to planning permission).

B. Protection of the line of the former Bradley Canal in support of plans for its reinstatement.

C. City centre public realm improvements and new open spaces in the city centre and Canalside Quarter to meet existing deficiencies and those arising from new residential development.

D. Improvements to Northwood Park funded by developer contributions.

E. Shared Prosperity Fund / Heritage Fund projects in Smestow Valley to improve access, nature habitats and community involvement.

F. Feasibility work on providing a new facility for young people in the Finchfield/ Merry Hill/ Warstones area.

G. Improved open space and play provision at New Park Village as part of its regeneration.

H. City-wide actions to: ensure inclusive consultation and design on any improvements, including to children's play; support community gardening initiatives to support health and wellbeing; and protect the city's Greenways to improve connections between open spaces and access from areas with less provision.

## 10. WASTE

- 10.1.1. A growing population in the city and decreasing land area means that waste management is integral to the success of future development. Not only does this include the careful disposal of waste but also creating a circular waste economy in the city where waste is first prevented, then reused and then sustainably recycled where possible. This is a national issue, and the Council will endeavour to be part of the solution in line with emerging technologies and strategies.

### SUMMARY

- 10.1.2. Waste has the potential to be an issue in the future, however, the development proposed under the WLP is not thought to increase this substantially. The plan promotes the reuse and recycling of waste ahead of disposal, which is expected to become more frequent over the plan period. The plan has safeguarded sites for waste.

### BASELINE

- 10.1.3. The Wolverhampton Waste Study (2024) provides an updated baseline on waste arisings, imports and exports. In 2021 Wolverhampton was estimated to generate approximately 626,000 tonnes of waste. Excluding exempt sites, the largest waste stream was estimated to be construction, demolition and excavation (CD&E) waste at just under 437,000 tonnes. Just over 102,000 tonnes were collected by Wolverhampton from household sources. Commercial and industrial (C&I) waste arisings (including LACW non-household sources) were estimated to be just under 80,000 tonnes and hazardous waste arisings to be over 25,000 tonnes. Other waste stream arisings were over 200 tonnes, composed primarily of agricultural waste and batteries.
- 10.1.4. With the exception of exempt sites, just over 179,000 tonnes (28.6%) were re-used, recycled or composted, nearly 139,000 tonnes (22.1%) were subject to recovery or treatment, over 269,000 tonnes (42.9%) (mainly construction and demolition waste) was disposed to landfill, and just under 40,000 tonnes (6.4%) were transferred for management elsewhere.
- 10.1.5. Despite Wolverhampton overall being a net exporter of Waste, facilities within its boundaries (including permitted sites and incinerators) managed 484,000 tonnes in 2021. Of this total the biggest percentage (by tonnage) (43%) was received at Transfer sites, followed by Treatment sites (24%), incinerators (23%) and MRS (11%).
- 10.1.6. Overall, Wolverhampton was estimated to export c.362,000 tonnes more waste than it imported in 2021 being a net exporter of non-hazardous waste by approximately 401,000 tonnes and a net importer of hazardous waste by approximately 39,000 tonnes. The vast majority of waste imported (79%) arose from within the West Midlands Region.
- 10.1.7. Exports from Wolverhampton amounted to nearly 730,000 tonnes in 2021. Of the 614,000 tonnes received at permitted sites in England and Wales and incinerators in England, outside of Wolverhampton, the biggest percentage (by tonnage) (42.5%) was received at Landfill sites, followed by Treatment sites (31.5%), On/In Land sites (15.5%), MRS (7%), Transfer sites (2.5%) and incinerators (1%).

## FUTURE GROWTH

- 10.1.8. The updated waste capacity requirements are based upon the housing and employment growth figures for the borough as set out in the WLP. Under the projections, the quantity of waste Wolverhampton is projected to manage (included imported waste) increases from 1 million tonnes (mt) in 2021 to 1.4 mt in 2041/42 equating to an increase of 49.8% or 2% per annum. An ongoing emphasis on waste reduction has seen a 15% reduction in waste per household since 2006/07 and this trend could have a significant influence on future waste growth. However, there are emerging changes in the need for different types of waste management capacity. Exports already reflect a shortage of landfill space; household waste Material Recycling Facilities (MRFs) and composting facilities and the way waste will be managed in the future is expected to change significantly with transition towards a Circular Economy. In particular, the quantities of waste reused, recycled and composted are expected to increase substantially.
- 10.1.9. The Wolverhampton Waste Study (2024) presents two key waste management scenarios, according to the extent to which circular economy targets for re-use and recycling of C&I and municipal waste are met over the period 2021/22 to 2041/42. Based on the assumption that the circular economy targets will either be met (WMS2) or partially met (WMS3), the Study predicts the additional waste management capacity will need to be delivered by 2041/42 to maintain net self-sufficiency, as set out in the table below:

### Wolverhampton Waste Management Capacity Requirements 2041/42

	WMS2 (tonnes per annum)	WMS3 (tonnes per annum)
Re-use/Recycling	701,000	674,000
Energy Recovery	305,000	287,000
Disposal	95,000	139,000

- 10.1.10. Most of the identified capacity requirements are expected to be delivered by the waste industry rather than by the Council. Delivery will therefore depend on whether new projects are financially viable and attractive to investors. This will in turn depend on demand from waste producers, the effectiveness of government initiatives to incentivise re-use and recycling of waste in preference to energy recovery and disposal to landfill, and the availability of suitable sites for new facilities (see Policy W3).
- 10.1.11. As waste facilities are an essential part of the total infrastructure of an area, it is not only important that they are appropriately located but also that policy protection is applied to areas suitable for waste uses to help achieve the objectives of moving waste up the hierarchy and enabling communities to take responsibility for waste arising in their area. Policy protection for existing and new waste management facilities is provided through WLP Policy W1 – Waste Infrastructure – Future Requirements, Policy W2 – Safeguarding Waste Sites, Policy W3 – Locational Requirements for New Waste Management Facilities, Policy W4 – Key Considerations for Waste Developments.

10.1.12. The Wolverhampton Waste Study (2024) identifies that around 80% of waste imported and exported from Wolverhampton stays within the West Midlands region, and there is a high interdependence in terms of waste flows between authorities in this region. The only other regions that receive significant tonnages of Wolverhampton waste are the East Midlands and the North West. It is recognised that ongoing collaboration with relevant local authorities under the Duty to Cooperate will be required to ensure waste capacity requirements that cannot be delivered within the city are met in other areas, particularly where there are existing import / export relationships established and ongoing (e.g. disposal at landfills).

## Part 2 – Infrastructure Delivery Schedule

Location	Scheme Name	Scheme Description	Lead delivery organisation	Indicative Cost	Timescales/Phasing	Funding Mechanism/ Source
<b>Transport/Connectivity and Rapid Transport</b>						
City wide	Wolverhampton to New Cross Hospital	Rapid Transit Connectivity between Wolverhampton City Centre and New Cross Hospital / Wednesfield	CWC / TfWM	£100m	Delivery 2026 – 2036	DfT
	A449 Corridor to i54 / Staffordshire	Rapid Transit Connectivity between Wolverhampton City Centre and i54 / South Staffordshire	CWC / TfWM	-	Delivery 2026 – 2036	DfT
	Active Travel and BCLCWIP Priorities	Ongoing delivery of active travel routes	CWC	£10 million + package	Underway and ongoing	CRSTS / ATF
	ULEV Charging Infrastructure	Ultra Low Emission Vehicle Charging infrastructure	CWC	£5 million +	Underway and Ongoing	ORCS / LEVI / CRSTS / DfT
City Wide	<b>Key Road / Active Travel Improvements</b>					
	A4123 Multi Modal Corridor	Corridor Improvements to various sections of A4123 between Wolverhampton, Dudley and Sandwell	Midlands Connect, TfWM, City of Wolverhampton, Sandwell MBC and Dudley MBC	£30m	Delivery 2027  Outline Business Case submitted to WMCA SAF	CRSTS 1 period to 2027
	A454 City East Gateway	Multiple Phases of multi modal improvements for the highway corridor, including	CWC	£70 million	Phase 1 – 2 and East Park Delivery 2027	CRSTS / Midlands Connect MRN

Location	Scheme Name	Scheme Description	Lead delivery organisation	Indicative Cost	Timescales/Phasing	Funding Mechanism/ Source
		Canalside area (phase 1 - 2), East Park and Neachells Lane (Phase 3)			Phase 3 Delivery post 2027	
	A4124 Connectivity to Wednesfield	Extension of Active Travel Infrastructure	CWC	£2.6 million	Delivery 2025/26	Active Travel Funding (ATF)
	A449 Stafford Road Corridor	transport improvements along the A449 corridor to Wolverhampton to reduce congestion, improve journey time and improved facilities for active travel	CWC	£20m	Development 2021-2025  Delivery 2025-2030	CRSTs  WM Local Transport Plan (LTP)
	A4150 City Centre Ring Road	Active Travel and Placemaking enhancements (Great Spaces)	CWC	£50 million	Ongoing phased delivery underway and continuing throughout plan	ATF / CRSTs / future TBC
	A460 Cannock Road / Cross Street North /Stafford road	Junction Improvement for access to development opportunities around Springfield Campus and wider employment / housing allocations	CWC	£2.6 m	Delivery 2027 onwards	CRSTs
	BCLCWIP – Wednesfield to Darlaston Cycle Route	High Quality cycle connection between Wednesfield and Darlaston, as identified within the BCLCWIP	CWC	£5 million	Delivery 2025 – 2027	CRSTs



Location	Scheme Name	Scheme Description	Lead delivery organisation	Indicative Cost	Timescales/Phasing	Funding Mechanism/ Source
	BCLCWIP – Fordhouses to Heath Town Cycle Route	High quality cycle connection between Fordhouses and Heath Town, as identified in the BCLCWIP	CWC	£5 million	Delivery 2025 – 2027	CRSTS
<b>Transport and Placemaking</b>						
	Wednesfield High Street Redevelopment	Investment in transport and placemaking infrastructure to support viability and economic growth	CWC	£3 million	Delivery 2025 / 2026	Towns Fund
	Bilston Town Centre Placemaking	Active travel infrastructure and lacemaking investment	CWC	-	Delivery beyond 2026	-
	City Centre Public Realm – Walk, Cycle and Bus Package	Active Travel, public transport and Placemaking investment	CWC	£19.5 m	Delivery 2025 – 2027	CRSTS / ATF / Towns Fund
	Cleveland Boulevard	Improved connectivity across the A4150 Ring Road between St George’s and the Royal	CWC	£6 million	Delivery 2025 onwards	Single Settlement / Developer Contributions
Regional/ Strategic Network	<b>Motorways</b>					
	M6 Junction 10	Improvements include new, wider bridges over the motorway; more lanes on the roundabout and slip roads; widening of the westbound A454 Black Country Route; and alterations to the junction of Wolverhampton	Highways England and Walsall MBC	£78m	Under construction	DfT

Location	Scheme Name	Scheme Description	Lead delivery organisation	Indicative Cost	Timescales/Phasing	Funding Mechanism/ Source
		Road/Bloxwich Lane to improve safety.				
	M5 Improvements – Junction 1 and 2 (Birchley Island)	Major junction upgrade improvements to address congestion, road safety	Highways England and Sandwell MBC	£30m	Not scheduled	DfT Major Road Network Fund WM LTP
	M54-M6/M6 Toll	Provision of a link road from M6 north/M6 Toll to the M54 to divert traffic from local roads.	Highways England	£175-200 million	Anticipated end date 2025	DfT
<b>Rail</b>						
	Wolverhampton-Walsall-Willenhall-Aldridge Link	Provision of new rail stations at Darlaston and Willenhall and Aldridge with regular passenger rail services to Walsall, Wolverhampton and Birmingham New Street.	TfWM, Walsall MBC, Network Rail, WM Rail Executive and West Midlands Trains	£90m	Various development stages between 2020 - to 2025  Delivery stages between 2023 – 2030	DtT, Network Rail, WM Rail Executive

Location	Scheme Name	Scheme Description	Lead delivery organisation	Indicative Cost	Timescales/Phasing	Funding Mechanism/ Source
	Midlands Rail Hub (HS2)	Two new chords to increase service frequencies into Birmingham (Moor Street)	Midlands Connect	£1.48bn - £1.54bn	Outline Business Case submitted in 2022. £123m secured for design work in 2024	DfT
	Brinsford Parkway Station	New station facility at Brinsford on West Coast Mainline	SCC / Network Rail / WMRE	-	SOBC developed – no delivery scheduled	DfT
	Tettenhall Rail Station	New station facility along the Shrewsbury line	WMRE / Network Rail / CWC	-	SOBC Developed – no delivery schedule	DfT
	Wolverhampton / Shrewsbury line improvements	Alignment and signalling improvements to increase speeds to 90mph	Midlands Connect	£650m	Business case submitted 2022. Delivery in 2024 subject to funding agreement	DfT
<b>Rapid Transit</b>						
	A34 Walsall Road Sprint Corridor	Bus corridor Walsall – Solihull and Birmingham Airport	TfWM	-	Phase 2 works expected in 2024	Bus service Improvement Plan/WM LTP
	Cross – city bus packages	Implementation of cross-city bus routes to reduce journey times, reduce the need to change bus routes and	TfWM	-	Consultation launched in September 2024	Bus Service Improvement Plan CRSTs

Location	Scheme Name	Scheme Description	Lead delivery organisation	Indicative Cost	Timescales/Phasing	Funding Mechanism/ Source
		improve reliability between Birmingham and parts of the Black Country (inc Sandwell and Sandwell).				
	Sprint routes or equivalent	Bus priority corridor linking link Walsall with the centre of Birmingham, Solihull and Birmingham Airport - joining the A34 with the A45 to create one continuous bus route.	TfWM	-	Phase One – A45-A34 corridor are completed.  Phase 2 will include improvements to three main areas in Solihull commencing in 2024	TfWM/WMCA and DfT
	Wednesbury-Brierley Hill Metro Extension Sustainable Access Measures (SAM)	Connectivity Improvements (Active Travel) to proposed Metro Tram stops	Dudley MBC and Sandwell MBC	- £16m	March 2027	CRSTs1 Outline Business Case Approved
	Walsall – Stourbridge Corridor tram – train extensions	Rapid transit extensions between Walsall – Stourbridge along sections of the disused South Staffordshire heavy rail line, to the north and south of the proposed Wednesbury to Brierley Hill metro corridor.	TfWM, Walsall MBC, Sandwell MBC, Dudley MBC.	- £300m	Post 2027	DfT, CRSTs

Location	Scheme Name	Scheme Description	Lead delivery organisation	Indicative Cost	Timescales/Phasing	Funding Mechanism/ Source
<b>Interchanges</b>						
	Dudley Port Integrated Transport Hub	Upgrade to Station to provide seamless step free access between bus, metro and local rail services. Phase 1 – funding secured	TfWM	£2.4m	None scheduled	CRSTs 1 WM Local Transport Plan (LTP)
	Walsall Interchange	Walsall Rail Station, St Paul's Bus Station and Bradford Place Interchange more visible and easier to navigate to and from, in line with the twenty-year vision of the Walsall Town Centre Masterplan.	TfWM, WM Rail Executive, Network Rail, Walsall MBC	£77m over 3 phases	2021- post 2025 Delivery over three phases	TfWM,
<b>Healthcare Provision</b>						
Oxley	Oxley Health & Wellbeing Facility and new homes	New modern health and wellbeing facility providing integrated primary and community health and social care services.	City of Wolverhampton Council	Est. £13.5m	Due out to tender in 2025 Estimated completion 2027	Council and grant funding
Bilston	Bilston Health & Wellbeing Facility	New modern health and wellbeing facility providing integrated primary and	City of Wolverhampton Council	Est. £15m	Due out to tender in 2025	Council and grant funding

Location	Scheme Name	Scheme Description	Lead delivery organisation	Indicative Cost	Timescales/Phasing	Funding Mechanism/ Source
		community health and social care services.			Estimated completion 2027	
<b>Green &amp; Blue Infrastructure and Recreational Facilities</b>						
City-Wide	Wolverhampton Open Space Action Plan (2024) Projects	Various open space and recreational facility projects across the City – details are set out in the Open Space Action Plan (2024)	CWC	Please see Open Space Action Plan for details	Please see Open Space Action Plan for details	Please see Open Space Action Plan for details



You can get this information in large print, braille, audio or in another language by calling 01902 551155 or emailing [translations@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:translations@wolverhampton.gov.uk)

**wolverhampton.gov.uk 01902 551155**

 [WolverhamptonToday](#)    [Wolverhampton\\_Today](#)    [@WolvesCouncil](#)

City of Wolverhampton Council, Civic Centre, St. Peter's Square, Wolverhampton WV1 1SH