



**INVEST**  
City of Wolverhampton



**WOLVERHAMPTON INVESTMENT PLAN**

# TOWNS FUND

## Foreword

**At the start of the year the Government chose Wolverhampton as the location to launch its Towns Deal programme heralding new opportunities for investment to deliver catalytic change across the UK's towns and cities.**

At that time, we could not have predicted the impacts of Covid-19 which serve only to underline the necessity for investment to restore confidence and maintain momentum. Prior to lockdown, Wolverhampton was making great strides in delivering an ambitious growth agenda and whilst we have had to adapt and show resilience throughout the last four months, our ambition is undeterred in the face of this new challenge.

Wolverhampton is a proud city, at the centre of the country, part of the industrial heartland that is the Black Country and the West Midlands. We are a young, vibrant and diverse place, a city of potential and opportunity.

Covid-19 hit our city hard and early, exacerbating existing social and economic challenges. But we are a bold and ambitious city and we want to move forward, plan for recovery and 'level up' our city.

This fund gives us the opportunity to do that and to reimagine our city centre so that it becomes a catalyst for wider transformation, further investment and jobs – especially for our younger generations.

Unlocking Towns Deal funding will help us unleash the potential of our city and the creativity of our people.

Large areas of the land proposed for development are owned by the Towns Fund partners, delivery mechanisms have been established and co-funding is in place so our plans are 'shovel ready' and can be delivered at pace. They will be Covid-19 futureproofed and, more importantly, they will contribute to city and national priorities: a greener economy, local jobs and opportunities for our young people.

We are a city that works together to deliver transformation. Strong partnerships – public and private – underpin our planning and are essential to our future. This has been emphasised by the way in which our Towns Fund Board has come together and, despite challenges of physical distance, worked extremely effectively together to agree a set of priorities for the city.

An early intervention from our Board was the insistence that Towns Fund should incorporate the town centres of Bilston and Wednesfield. This typifies the Wolverhampton approach – we don't leave people behind especially when they live in areas of most need. And so, our bid at £48 million is bold and this reflects the ambition of the city and the fact that our programme for investment covers three centres.

As a city we have a track-record of delivery, working with our partners. Despite current challenges, work continues at pace in delivering the city's transport interchange with the new train station opening to the public earlier this year. A further 60 acres of land is being delivered at i54 to build upon the success of one of the UK's premier advanced manufacturing locations. The construction of i9 as the next phase of the city's commercial district will deliver the best office space in the region. Work continues in delivering a new sustainable community at Bilston Urban Village bringing housing and job opportunities to the Bilston area.

Towns Deal funding will be used as a catalyst to accelerate this ongoing transformation of Wolverhampton, Bilston and Wednesfield centres and attract further investment and development.

Our Wolverhampton Investment Plan focuses on five core themes: employment and skills; changing perceptions of the city; regeneration and renewal; connectivity (digital and transport); and vibrancy and footfall.

The bid seeks to support education and skills and bolster enterprise culture through the City Learning Quarter, National Brownfield Institute, 5G application accelerator, and Wolves at Work employment programme.

It aims to ensure the regeneration benefits are felt beyond the city centre through projects in and around

Bilston Market and Wednesfield Market and their High Streets, as well as canal towpath development. It will also stimulate the city centre's residential offer by accelerating the delivery of transformational schemes at Brewers Yard and Horseley Fields as part of the city's Canalside regeneration.

There is a focus on bringing vibrancy and vitality within the city and town centres through the delivery of an Arts Park and City Centre Public Realm Phase 2, plus a Bilston Market, Wednesfield Market & High Street events programme.

Future proofing is at the heart of the bid by exploiting Wolverhampton's part in the UK's first multi-city 5G test bed.

The Wolverhampton Towns Deal will deliver the regeneration of over 15 hectares of brownfield land.

It will enable over 1,200 new homes to be delivered, it will support the delivery of circa 10,000 jobs and over 20,000 sqm of new floorspace.

We believe in our city and we have proven it can be lifted with targeted investment to stimulate growth and resurgence. Before Covid-19 hit, this was being complemented by more private investment – nurtured and supported by the council. The lesson here is, give us freedom, funding and influence and we will deliver strong, investable transformation programmes that stimulate economic growth and bring jobs. We've done it before, and we will do it again. Given the opportunity, with the assets our city has to offer, we are confident we can play a major role in regional and national recovery.



**Chair**  
**NINDER JOHAL**  
Wolverhampton Town Deal Board

## Towns Fund Vision

*Wolverhampton will be a place where people come from far and wide to work, shop, study and enjoy our vibrant city.*

*It will be transformed while still retaining all of those attributes that give our city its unique identity. A healthy, thriving and sustainable international 'smart city' – renowned for its booming economy and skilled workforce, rich diversity and a commitment to fairness and equality that ensures everyone has the chance to benefit from success"*

(Vision 2030 - Council Plan 2020-2021)

## Towns Fund Deliverables



**Towns Fund Capital Ask**

**Towns Fund Revenue Ask**

- 1,281 Homes Delivered
- 15.6ha brownfield land reclaimed
- 1.2m people attracted
- 21,933sqm floorspace delivered
- 23,390 learners supported
- circa 10,000 jobs supported
- £2.13m local expenditure/GVA

## Cross cutting themes







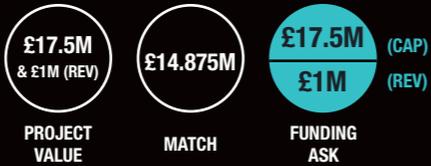
### Employment and Skills



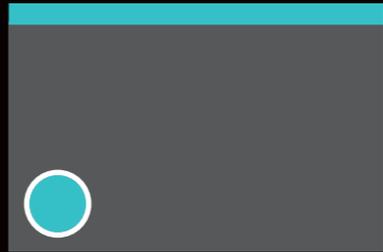
City Learning Quarter



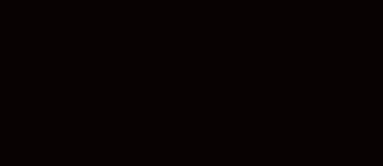
National Brownfield Institute



Wolves at Work



Bilston Learning Quarter



### Regeneration and Renewal



Brewers Yard



Horseley Fields



### Changing Perceptions



Arts Park



Events Programme



### Enhancing Connectivity



City Centre Public Realm - Phase 2



5G Accelerator



### Vibrancy and Footfall



Bilston Market



Wednesfield Interventions





1 Employment and Skills  
**City Learning Quarter**



**OUTPUTS**

- 10,800sqm floorspace created
- 2,500 apprenticeships over 10 years
- 2,800 learners in FE course over 10 years
- 11.82ha Brownfield land reclaimed
- 50 Jobs for Black Country

CLQ will consolidate Further Education and Adult Education services into a state-of-the-art learning environment in Wolverhampton's city centre and in Bilston. A new Further Education College will provide over 10,800 sqm of new and refurbished educational floorspace. Adult Education services in the city centre will be improved alongside a refurbished and reconfigured central Library.

The project is proposed in the Old Hall Street and St George's Parade area of the city centre, following the demolition of the former Faces nightclub building on the corner of Garrick Street and Bilston Street.

CLQ will also deliver improvements to the surrounding public realm and capitalise on improved transport links.

Alongside CLQ, City of Wolverhampton Technology Campus (CoWTechC) is proposed on the existing CoW Wellington Road campus. It is proposed that motor vehicle and engineering courses would be relocated to a new building on the campus. Funding for feasibility works already approved and technical work undertaken (site investigations & design work). The project is currently at concept stage and aims to reach delivery stage within 2 years.

CLQ will enable the release of several sites for redevelopment of mixed use. The estimated economic benefits of the project are £233m (£214m net present value) and a further £46m (£34m NPV) arising from Wellington Road. The programme is estimated to safeguard and generate a total of 745 net additional FTE jobs in the Black Country and accelerate the delivery of 1,530 net additional jobs within the City.



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Employment and Skills

# National Brownfield Institute



**OUTPUTS**

- 348 construction jobs supported
- 3,900 commercial floorspace
- 0.4ha brownfield land remediated
- 37,000 businesses supported

The National Brownfield Institute ('NBI') will be a new facility associated with University of Wolverhampton, which will be home to a team of specialist researchers, consultants and industry experts who will advise on all aspects of brownfield development, including contaminated land, repurposing buildings and sites and delivering modern methods of construction ('MMC') and Building Information Management (BIM).

- Accelerate development - public sector more actively developing sites and providing homes across a range of different tenures.
- Provide an expert approach to developing a regional pipeline - founded on a forensic analysis of delivery and sites.

The centre's success will be built around three strategic integrated levels, none of which are currently offered, and by close working with those responsible for enacting and enforcing legislation relating to brownfield development and regeneration.

These stages are:

- Policy & Strategy Development
- Research, R&D and the Knowledge Base
- Commercial Testing & Laboratory Space

By integrating research, innovation and skills provision, the National Brownfield Institute will help address multiple big issues and deliver positive impact locally, nationally and internationally. It will:

- Lead innovation and industry change - become a market leader in brownfield development, land remediation and construction skills.
- Attract international investment into housing - translate capital into revenue return on house building.

The NBI will also have a major digital component with virtual environment to facilitate virtual walkthroughs, and have an extensive database, which will help facilitate the information gathering of brownfield sites and decision making by developers for future use.

NBI can be considered as the first phase of National Centre for Circular Economy and Sustainable Development (NCCESD) which will also have Centres for: 1. Asset Optimisation 2. Circular Economy 3. Sustainable Development

The NBI will offer a cutting edge facility at the heart of new construction and remediation technologies, able to respond to 21st century challenges of building new homes and cohesive communities sustainably. It will also identify and look to address gaps in current provision, with a particular focus on the digital skills needed to transform the industry. The NBI will be a part of the University's emerging Springfield Campus



3 Employment and Skills  
**Wolves at Work**



**OUTPUTS**  
 5,000 people back into work over 3 years  
 600 employers participating  
 Economic benefit of over £32m over 3 years  
 Increased access to employment for people with mental health issues

**Wolves at Work** is a market-led employment initiative that has assisted over 5,600 people back into work since 2017, generating an assumed economic benefit over £32m. The programme supports people with work-readiness, whilst supporting employers as well to train and retain programme participants.

The programme focusses on building employer relationships, with over 600 local employers having pledged to participate in the programme. The programme is seeking to help over 1,600 people back into work over the next three years, with a particular focus on increasing youth employment, upskilling residents and retaining talent in the city. The recent job losses driven by Covid-19 have been experienced by residents with a higher skills profile than previous participants; the programme will be adapted to meet their needs and potential employers' needs over the next three years.



4 Regeneration and Renewal  
**Brewers Yard**



**OUTPUTS**  
 715 homes created  
 1.32ha brownfield land reclaimed

Redevelopment of the existing Marston's brewery site and CWC Culwell Street Depot to enable the delivery of a new residential neighbourhood comprising up to 1,118 homes in total, with ancillary retail and commercial floorspace at ground floor level. Towns Fund investment would enable 715 new homes out of the total 1,118 homes to be delivered. A feasibility study and order of costs has been prepared, as well as a massing study. £11.7m is required to relocate the existing uses to alternative sites and undertake land remediation. The site is situated to the south of the planned National Brownfield Institute / Springfield Campus and to the north of Wolverhampton Interchange. The scale and quality of the residential-led redevelopment proposed provides an opportunity to demonstrate to developers and inward investors that high quality city centre living can be delivered in the city centre, creating new housing choice for an array of young professionals and key workers in an accessible location.





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# Regeneration and Renewal Horseley Fields



### OUTPUTS

- 352 homes created (20% affordable)
- 2.14ha brownfield land reclaimed
- 154 Jobs created
- 1.00ha public realm created

This project is the first phase of residential-led redevelopment of Canalside South, an area of derelict industrial land east of Wolverhampton Interchange. Canalside South comprises a number of sites situated a five-minute walk from Wolverhampton Interchange train/bus/Metro station featuring significant historical assets with the potential to deliver a unique waterside development. This will be the first phase of a transformational residential-led opportunity along the canal network that underpinned the city's historic growth.

The scheme developer, Placefirst, is a specialist development company with a proven track record in delivering high quality homes. Their approach is building sustainable communities through the provision of communal green space and a long-term commitment to neighbourhood management and using local labour and local subcontractors wherever possible.

The project will bring forward 352 new homes and canalside public space, with 20% of new homes being affordable. The homes are planned to be 'Build to Rent'. The project will also deliver enhanced public realm along the canal and include the refurbishment of a Grade II listed building linked to the history of Wolverhampton's canalside industry (Former Stamping Works and Butter and Cheese Warehouse), bringing the designated heritage asset back into productive use.



6 Changing Perceptions  
**Arts Park**



**OUTPUTS**  
 200 space theatre  
 100 businesses supported  
 4000sqm commercial floorspace  
 322 learners assisted

The University of Wolverhampton (UoW), City of Wolverhampton Council and Grand Theatre will lead the transformation of Lichfield Street into an Arts Park. It responds to local needs by pioneering a fully joined-up local approach to creative skills, connecting new School, College and University teaching provision to leading professional practice at the Grand Theatre and providing space for start-up businesses.

Phase 1 comprises the Grand Theatre Studio Extension, a 200-seat flexible theatre/event space under a lightweight canopy, support facilities and storage, actors' quick-change rooms, bar and cafe and new foyer.

It will be located at 66-70 Lichfield Street, which is currently a prominent derelict building and has planning permission.

It builds upon the Grand Theatre and University of Wolverhampton as existing cultural and educational assets, providing new space to expand the theatre programme, and enhancing the quality and scope of the UoW's teaching provision and Grand Theatre's training opportunities.

Phase 2 comprises the Black Country Screen School/Gaming, Animation, Media & Events ('GAME') 'incubation hub' to support start-up creative industry businesses, collaborative space for businesses in the arts/creative sector and potential for postgraduate live/work activity i.e. a Graduate Village.

GAME will drive employment creation (graduate employment and business spin-outs) and upskilling (CPD, apprenticeships), promote and facilitate business start-up activity and enhance business engagement. This will improve productivity by assisting businesses to innovate, access top-of-the-range facilities, and address the skills gap. It will make links to wider support mechanisms, ensure that graduates are employment ready, and meet the requirements of industry.

7 Changing Perceptions  
**Events Programme**



**OUTPUTS**  
 80,000 visitors  
 £1.89m increase in local expenditure

Events play a crucial role in creating the vibrancy and generating footfall in city and town centres generating local spend and supporting businesses. This proposed revenue funding pot will build capacity and support a 5-year events programme in the city centre and Bilston, to complement capital investment maximising local spend and benefits to the city. The Events Programme is currently being finalised. It will build on key events such as the British Art Show, creating additionality by supporting fringe events to showcase local talent, moving visitors across the City to maximise local spend and economic benefit. In shorter-term, it will support more outdoor, family-friendly events in light of social distancing requirements. To complement physical interventions to enable events, including Arts Park and City Centre Public Realm Phase 2.

The project would assist with costs associated with organisation and promotion of events, as well as purchase of moveable infrastructure required to support events, including mobile staging, mobile lighting and mobile electricity generation equipment.

It is proposed that £750,000 is allocated to expand the existing Wolverhampton city centre events programme led by the Council and Wolverhampton Business Improvement District, with £250,000 to support events in Bilston town centre.



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# Enhancing Connectivity City Centre Public Realm Phase 2



**OUTPUTS**

Public realm enhanced  
Local and external perceptions changed

The project comprises Phase 2 of the Council's Public Realm programme, pedestrianising Darlington Street, Queen Square and Lichfield Street up to Wolverhampton Art Gallery. The project will contribute to a 'necklace of public spaces' in conjunction with Connected Places Phases 1 and 3 (to be delivered as part of the Future High Streets Fund bid for City Centre West). In addition to creating more attractive, well connected public realm, the project will create an enlarged events space in Queen Square, smaller scale events space at the top of Victoria Street and in Lichfield Street. These spaces will be designed with the utility connections and lighting infrastructure required to support events, as well as hostile vehicle measures. The project will create an environment conducive to increased uptake of active travel modes, and help increase footfall within and around the area which

will contribute to the overarching output of increased retail activity, an improved environment for residential development and vibrancy in the project area.



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# Enhancing Connectivity 5G Accelerator



**OUTPUTS**

476 businesses assisted  
39 mobile sites upgraded to 5G  
425 jobs created  
£8.2m net GVA created

The 5G Application Accelerator (AA) will be the UK's first commercial 5G accelerator centre that is open to all and, over the next 5 years, will allow c. 2,000 Small and Medium Size Enterprises in the West Midlands, of which c. 500 in the Black Country LEP, to learn about and engage with 5G technologies to grow and develop new products/services with suitable technical and business support.

This will accelerate the take-up and benefits from 5G technologies significantly. The 5G AA will be based in three locations in the West Midlands, one of which is planned to be located at Wolverhampton University's Science Park where there will be flexible office space, presentation, workshop and engineering space, 5G network coverage indoor and outdoor and a cutting edge private 5G testbed network including the latest 5G features – for organisations to see and use before they're publicly released. The project will engage SMEs by working with local business organisations including the Local

Enterprise Partnerships, Local Authorities, universities and other business support partners in the 3 locations and target SMEs who will be able to access the facility on a short to medium term basis free-of-charge.

The project will be managed by WM5G and delivered by a consortium composed of

- Telefonica O2 a leading mobile network operator
- Deloitte a big 4 consultancy
- Wayra a leading business accelerator operator
- Digital Catapult a leading testbed operator



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# Vibrancy and Footfall Bilston Market



### OUTPUTS

- Enhanced public realm
- Improved market stalls
- Increased footfall and visitor numbers
- Improved perceptions

The revenue funding ask will enable the Council to undertake a full appraisal of Bilston Market, the potential development land within the Market site as well as the development potential of the wider Bilston town centre area, including the Bilston Central Metro/bus interchange. This will build on the initial Concept Level Study undertaken by Greig and Stephenson and include:

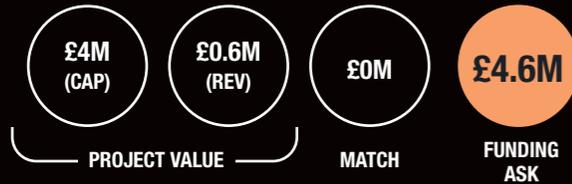
- Full options appraisal for Bilston Market;
- Comprehensive stakeholder engagement;
- Movement study;
- Appraisal of commercial land opportunities;
- Intrusive site investigations to develop costings and de-risk redevelopment opportunities;
- Completion of Strategic, Outline and Full Business Cases;
- Planning brief;
- Visuals.

The capital ask for this project will deliver physical improvements to Bilston Market, including enhancement of entrances of Bilston High Street and off the Black Country Route, reorganisation and refurbishment of indoor and outdoor markets, introduction of new small retail units and consolidation of existing site to unlock future development plots for complementary uses to increase activity on Bilston High Street.

The re-arrangement and refurbishment of the outdoor market canopies and facade creates more accessible pedestrian passageways and creates the potential for two extra food or permanent retail units to drive footfall into the market.

The additional retail units are proposed next to the outdoor part of the Market, to provide small units suitable for independent businesses, with a flexible layout to accommodate business needs. The units will help to activate the site on the day that the outdoor market does not operate.

11 Vibrancy and Footfall  
**Wednesfield Interventions**



**OUTPUTS**

- Covered walkways / canopies / seating areas
- Improved high street environment
- Upgraded security, lighting and facilities
- Reuse of vacant spaces
- Improved canal permeability
- Retail area / public space improvements
- Resurface 3.6km towpath

This project comprises improvements to Wednesfield Market, including replacement of market stalls, creation of events space and infrastructure for street traders, and transfer of market ownership and operation to a community-led organisation. Revenue funding for a Development Framework is also requested, in order to articulate the opportunity for regeneration of Wednesfield High Street, encompassing area from Rookery Road to west up to Lichfield Road in north-east and canal towpath improvements.

A series of capital improvements to the quality of the Wednesfield High Street environment is proposed, which are currently at concept stage and will be explored and refined on the basis of the Development Framework and accompanying feasibility study:

- 1) Covered walkway with canopies outside shops when there is inclement weather from the corner of Wednesfield High Street / Albert Squire Road up to the Dog and Partridge Public House.
- 2) Covered seating areas on High Street at the corner of High Street / Albert Squire Road and outside Boots at top end of High Street.
- 3) Seating area in front of Savers (17 High Street).
- 4) Facade improvements to High Street properties.
- 5) Upgrading street furniture: better lighting, more CCTV cameras, bins, public toilet and bike stands.
- 6) Re-use former Wolverhampton Homes unit as a community advice centre.

The other component of the project comprises improvements to circa. 2km of currently unpaved towpath along the Wyrley and Essington Canal from Bentley Bridge into Wednesfield town centre to enhance pedestrian and cycle connectivity and provide improved connections to residential areas along the canal are also included.



**Further information:**

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