

Birmingham City Centre:

Vision for Movement Presentation



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Earlier this year, the City Centre Master Plan was launched, fleshing out the ambitious vision for the future of Birmingham City Centre originally set down in the Big City Plan.



This Plan envisages Birmingham as a Global
and a Truly Liveable City.

It envisages the delivery of 5 major projects: Westside,
Snow Hill District, Eastside, Southern Gateway and New
Street Station.



The Big City Plan adopts an integrated approach to movement and spatial planning. This approach is set out in the Vision for Movement. At its launch on the 11th November 2010, it was described as “the 'glue' which binds the parts of the City Centre, and binds the City Centre to the rest off the City, the region and the rest of the world”.



Why does the Big City Plan lay so much emphasis on movement?

What is it about the need to tackle transport issues in Birmingham that makes this Vision such an important element of its forward strategy?

BIRMINGHAM BIG CITY PLAN



Part of the story is buried in Birmingham's industrial history. The development of the City's highway network was driven from a bold vision of the future based around the motor car, and the revolution in access that this brought.



In many ways, this was successful in driving growth and prosperity, but it left a legacy of major barriers to movement and limitations on accessibility in the City Centre.





It also created some major compromises in terms of personal safety and access for the mobility impaired. Indeed, the personal mobility for the majority has been constrained by the needs of car drivers...

...and even where provision has been made for other modes, it has left a legacy of a hostile public realm and lack of integration.





These issues have been recognised as a key issue for some time, and much progress has been made to address them. The ring road has been broken, substantial pedestrianisation has taken place in the City Centre, Metro has been constructed to Snow Hill, and major investment has taken place in relation to provision for bus travel.

The image of Birmingham has been transformed through the provision of high quality public realm and iconic developments such as the Bull Ring...

BIRMINGHAM BIG CITY PLAN



...and more is planned. Recently confirmed is the construction of major improvements to New Street Station, and the extension of Metro from Snow Hill to New Street Station.

Also expected is the expansion of Birmingham Airport, the arrival of High Speed Rail to Birmingham, and major developments of the Library and Paradise Circus – just the first phases of the extensive development envisaged by the Big City Plan.



Over the course of the last ten years, the transformation of the City Centre has resulted in a steady trend of reducing movement in and out of the City Centre by car by about 1% per annum.

This is however not enough to accommodate the growth envisaged in the Big City Plan, and there are still many barriers to personal mobility and access to the City Centre by public transport.

So a radical strategy is needed - no less than completion of the transformation of the City Centre - in order to create a place where access is attractive and convenient by modes other than the car. Only this can provide the capacity for growth envisaged in the Big City Plan, and stimulate the regeneration of the City Centre.

So, how can a Vision for Movement help to
achieve this?

how?

First, it can help to establish a Vision of a place that will in itself change the way in which people want to move into, out of and around the City Centre.



Second, it can reflect changes in policy direction, and political priorities:

- **Localism:** reflecting the emerging regeneration agenda in the City Centre – Big City Plan and Core Strategy – its new geography.
- **Big Society:** reflecting the priorities of the people who live and work there.
- **Employment Generation:** focussing on the urgent need to support job creation by bringing forward schemes that deliver the widest economic returns.



- **Carbon Reduction:** bringing forward new strategies that will maximise impact on carbon reduction – focussing on high volume local movement by zero carbon modes.
- **Cost Effective:** with low cost sustainable travel measures offering high economic returns and effective solutions, all these goals can be achieved.

Third, it can deliver a collaborative Vision which provides the Framework for Investment, bringing disparate funding sources together.





Collaboration helps to create One Shared Vision and instil a strength of intent to deliver it, where the public sector understand the value of unleashing the enthusiasm and creativity of the private sector, and the private sector understand the value of building their aspirations through public sector delivery mechanisms.



No elephants were harmed during Photoshopping

Last, it can reflect the current mood of austerity by providing the framework for a phased approach to implementation.

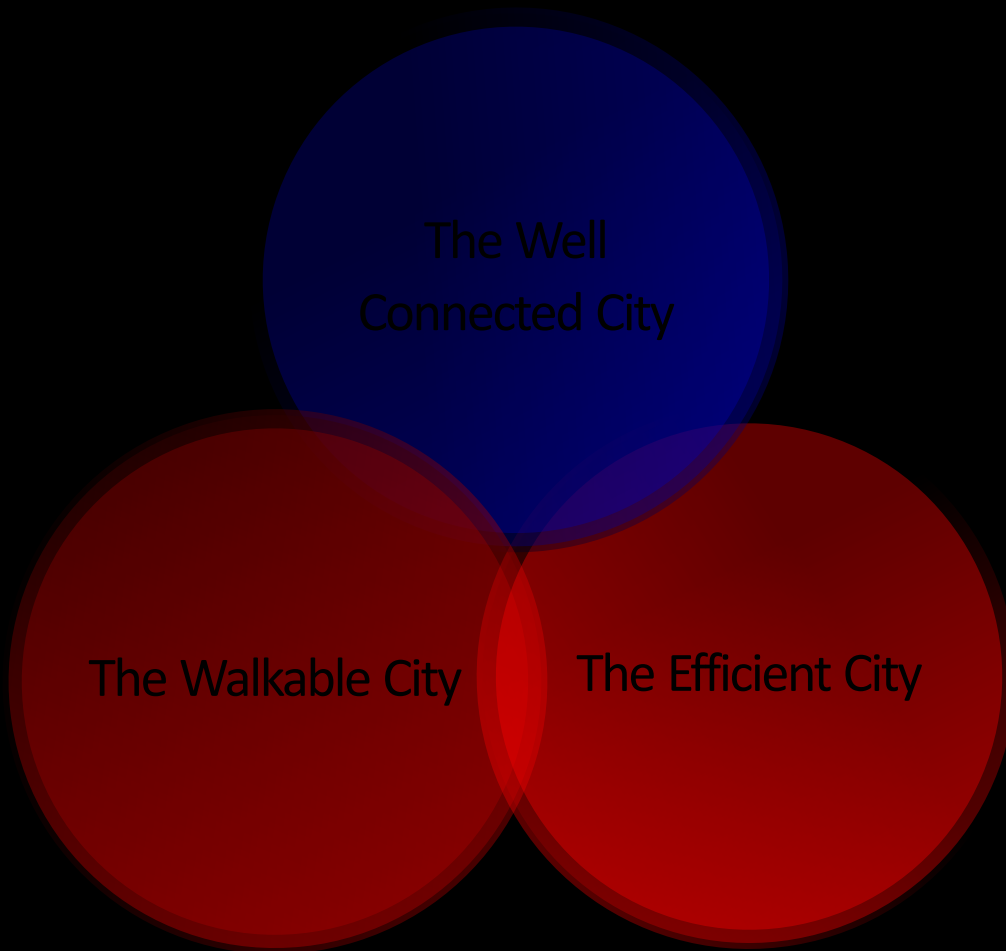
It can identify cost effective schemes that match available funding, and integrate complimentary schemes to maximise benefits.

All the time, continuing to work towards the long term vision. After all, the way to eat an elephant is to eat just a little bit at a time!

So - what does this Vision actually consist of?

what?

There are 3 pillars of the Vision
for Movement:





The Well
Connected City

Well Connected City:

Key to creating a well connected city is the delivery of New Street Station, HS2 and the extension to Metro. But more is required to deliver the quality, high capacity connections into and out of the City Centre needed to support economic growth, and improve priority, reliability and attractiveness of public transport for all users.



Metro has been at the heart of Birmingham's transport strategy for some time, and it remains so. But the difficulty of funding and delivering tram systems in the UK is well known, and further extensions to the network may take some time to come to fruition.

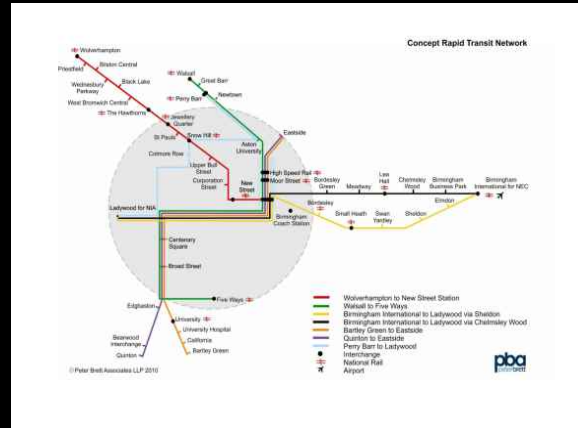
Even so, there remains substantial local support for the early implementation of rapid transit, with the private sector seeing this as crucial to support business and stimulate regeneration. So how can this circle be squared?



Meet the Birmingham Sprint –

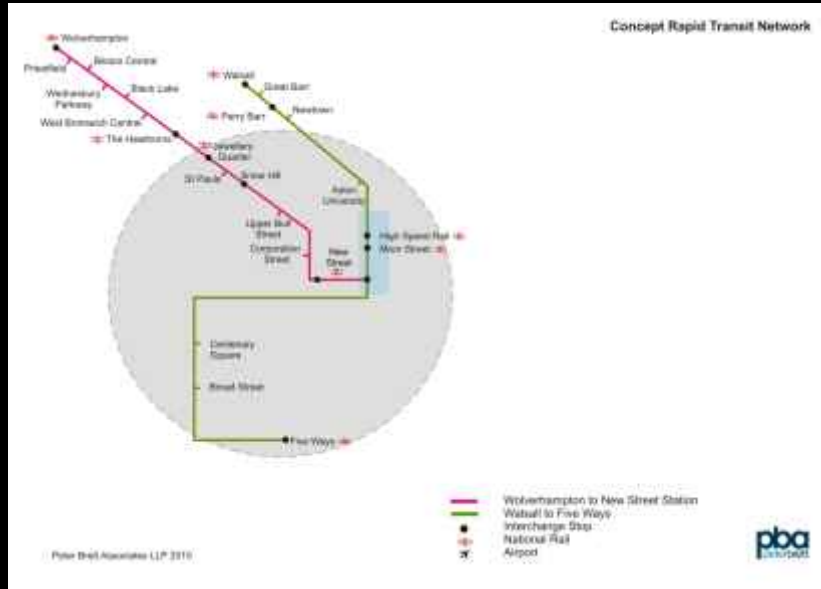
Metro's little sister! Rapid transit with tram-like ride and passenger experience, 'turn up and go' frequency and priority over other vehicles on the road in places to avoid congestion, but with two key differences.

First, it runs on existing road surfaces without the need for too much costly infrastructure. Second, crucially, it can be implemented in a phased manner, whilst retaining the long term goal of tram systems on the high volume corridors



Seven different Metro and Sprint routes have been identified, and a clear tube style map prepared to demonstrate the principles of how this would operate.

Sitting behind this high level strategy is a targeted piece of work to establish the feasibility of delivering these routes - in particular the section through the City Centre where high levels of priority will be required to allow effective operation, and existing bus routes re-organised to integrate with the new rapid transit network, train stations, the coach station, car parks, the airport, and High Speed 2.



The first phase consists of:

- Metro Line 1 extension to New Street as now confirmed, and
- Birmingham Sprint – Five Ways to Walsall, via Broad Street, New Street Station, Moor Street Station, High Speed 2, and the A34 corridor.

The cost of the infrastructure required for this first stage of Sprint has been assessed at just under £15 million



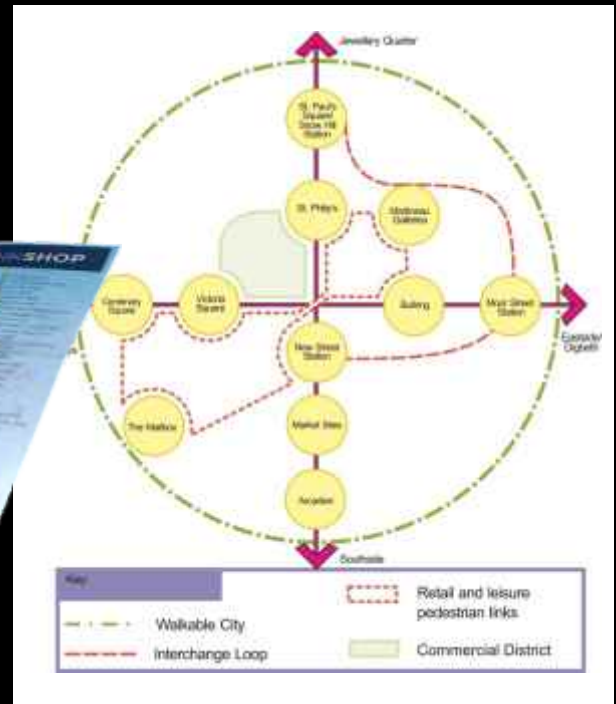
Also key to the Well Connected City is the provision of better quality, more continuous and convenient routes for cyclists, providing the facilities that are essential to encourage a significant increase in cycling as a mode of access to and from the City Centre

The Walkable City

The Walkable City

Many public transport journeys to the City Centre end with a trip on foot to the final destination. Hence the quality and convenience of walking around the City Centre is a crucial part of the strategy.

Birmingham has already shown the UK what pedestrianisation can achieve. You can already walk from Brindleyplace to the Bull Ring without crossing a major road. But there is much more to do, with many journeys in the City Centre not being easy or attractive for able bodied people, let alone those who are less able!



So what is needed?

A clear Mental Map that pedestrians can hold in their head as they navigate the City Centre, and a clear design and wayfinding strategy that reinforces the legibility that this mental map provides. The City Council's Interconnect project provides the basis for this strategy



This approach is supported by the provision of clear, high quality walking routes designed to assist pedestrians who have specific journey purposes, such as:

- The Retail Loop which will define a walking route through the retail and civic core of the City Centre,
- The Interchange Loop, which will aid navigation between the main transport interchanges within the City Centre.

In addition to this, it is essential that the key barriers to movement on foot are addressed. For example, creating and safe pedestrian crossing facilities across Great Charles Street, to allow a more direct and convenient route between New Street and the Jewellery Quarter.

The creation of high quality streets and spaces underpins this approach, so that the direct, legible pedestrian routes created are a pleasure to use, and of themselves, encourage people to change the way they move around the City Centre. This is the cornerstone of achieving a more walkable and liveable city.

The Efficient City

The Efficient City

The final part of the jigsaw is to ensure that the highway network supports efficient operation of the transport systems that need to use it

Even though car trips to and from the City Centre have been falling by 1% per annum over recent years, and demand for corporate car parking is falling, many roads remain congested.

We therefore need to make our transport systems more efficient to cater for complex demand from essential car use, public transport, cycling and pedestrians.



We must therefore make smarter use of the existing roadspace, using techniques appropriate to each individual circumstance.

For instance:

- The use of shared space for cars, taxis, cyclists and pedestrians in City Streets
- Provision of priority for public transport, especially on radial routes into and out of the City Centre, and across the ring road to circumvent congestion, and



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- Highway improvements at key junctions to encourage more traffic to use the ring road, instead of using valuable roadspace on routes through the City Centre – thereby releasing capacity for non car modes within the City core.



In addition, the use of traffic management techniques and transport technology will support the objective of creating an efficient transport system, such as:

- a new parking strategy, integrated with rapid transit in the city centre, with good information for users and charging points for electric vehicles,
- the wide use of smartcards to make public transport use attractive and efficient,
- a new freight delivery strategy to manage access by delivery vehicles.



Implementing the Vision

A key focus now is how this is all to be implemented, in a climate of major organisational change and constraints on expenditure.

Preliminary work has been undertaken to identify what can be implemented within the first five years. The ambition is to deliver....

A Well Connected City

- First phase of 'Birmingham Sprint'
- Metro extension between Snow Hill and New Street Station
- Birmingham Gateway
- Birmingham City Centre Interchange
- Planning for HS2

An Efficient City

- Smart Routes, integrated with the delivery of Sprint
- Smartcard, implemented city wide

A Walkable City

- Pedstrian link between Moor Street and New Street
- Wayfinding and visitor information systems



The implementation of this agenda will need meticulous planning, and require buy in from, and co-ordination of, an even wider range of stakeholders. It will need to pay attention to the emerging organisational framework, in particular the LEP's. From the beginning, therefore, planning for implementation will be directed by:

- A Steering Group – co-ordinating public/ private sector working, and delivering a large agenda for transport over the coming years. It will have a key role in overseeing and co-ordinating transport projects in the City Centre.
- A Delivery Board - whose terms of reference include identification of funding sources and delivery mechanisms.

Whilst we have now seen the implications of the 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review, we have also seen that there has

been some protection of funding for capital projects which support economic growth. Nevertheless, finding the funding will be challenging, and much will depend on how best use can be made of a range of funding sources, for instance:

- The £1.4 billion Regional Growth Fund – targeted at job creation
- Local Funding Grant Schemes, including:
 - Major schemes – unlikely to be a major factor until after 2014/15, but planning needs to start now.
 - The £560M Local Sustainable Transport Fund – targeted at wider economic benefit and carbon reduction from local transport measures, due to be announced early next year.
 - Block Funding for smaller projects – although this has been significantly reduced, it will enable the development of proposals in preparation for the upturn when it comes.

- Tax Increment Financing – this scheme, based around borrowing against future growth in business rates, requires new legislation, and is therefore a longer term play.
- In the shorter term, it will be essential to be working with developers and operators to maximise the effectiveness of available funding, especially as proposals for the Community Infrastructure Levy emerge.
- As well as seeking European match funding wherever possible



Miracles Happen for
those Who Believe

With this level of complexity involved, it is essential that no momentum is lost, and that the 'strength of intent' demonstrated by the stakeholders to get to this point is not diminished.

The Core Strategy has already embedded the approach set out in the Vision and, through the consultation process, priorities will be agreed, and projects defined.

With all that is now happening in Birmingham, this is a moment of opportunity, waiting to be grasped!

Thank you.