SWOT Analysis

Analysis of the Dudley Port area provides important information regarding the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, and provides a good insight into how an area works, what works well, and what does not work so well.

Field analysis of the Dudley Port Priority Area identified the following information:

Strengths
- Canal network
- Green spaces (scale of Sheepwash Urban Park)
- Overall sustainability of the location with a choice of means of transport to local facilities without using the car.
- Linkages
- Train service to Birmingham from Dudley Port (15mins) and Sandwell and Dudley (10mins)
- Integration of bus and train stations
- Direct train service to London (1hr30mins)
- Good public rights of way
- A direct off-road cycle route into Birmingham City Centre (7 miles)
- Old Stourbridge freight line for light rail/freight (Stourbridge, Merry Hill, Dudley, Dudley Port, Wednesbury and Walsall)
- Light Rail/Train/Bus/Cycle interchange at Dudley Port Rail Station
- Situated between two town centres Oldbury & Great Bridge

Weaknesses
- Connectivity
- Isolation/vulnerability on canal/LNR
- Lack of activity and overlooking
- Safety concerns
- Quality of towpath & green space surfaces
- Lack of legibility/signage & lack of interpretation boards-difficult to make vandal proof
- Poor bicycle connectivity from NCN81 to Dudley Port Station & lack of parking provision
- Anti-social behaviour/litter/graffiti/damage
- Railway line/canal forms a barrier between the north and south of the intervention area
- Multiple land ownership of potential development sites
- A lack of focal points
- Poor quality cycle route along Dudley Port
- A461 Dudley Port congestion & at capacity local rail service at peak times
- Great Bridge has poor quality facades, which need a facelift

Opportunities
- Promote and enhance the canal network
- Promote and enhance local nature reserve
- Dudley Road children’s play area/walking bus meeting point
- Creating a traffic free walking & cycling network (improving on highway facilities)
- New developments
- Overcoming barriers/improving links
- New housing development
- New employment development
- Environmental / energy efficient minded
- Funding streams CIL, LEP, European Funding, Integrated Transport Budget, Public Health
- Upgrade John’s Lane & Rose Lane Tunnels to improve connectivity between north and south of the intervention area
- Develop a showcase site to create interest amongst developers
- A tree lined boulevard along Dudley Port
- Solar powered bus stops/or with green roofs
- Improving integration between No74 bus route & Dudley Port Station (moving bus stops)
- Creating a safe place to live through design e.g. overlooked towpaths and green spaces
- Uplifting Dudley Port to attract investment
- Extend Dudley Port Platform to allow an extra train carriage to increase capacity
- A residential fringe could be developed to increase overlooking of the greenspace and increase usage and overlooking to increase safety
- Thin out trees to increase sightlines over the Park.
- Could heat pumps be used in any of the former mineshafts?
- EU Structural funds
- To provide a ‘hub’ type office space with video links etc to reinforce home working/provide associated facilities- this was seen as building on the already good sustainability features of the location.
- Netherton Canal Tunnel- an underused heritage asset- possibility of putting in lighting to replace original defunct gas lighting– increased pedestrian use would reinforce viability of Canal Trust visitor centre building at Warrens Hall nature reserve, and be the counterpoint to proposed canalside café at Tividale entrance. This could utilise the turbine (repaired with Heritage lottery fund?) to generate power for low power LED lights in the tunnel
- Possibility of using coppicing on Sheepwash to generate an income. Trees can be grown as a crop, this would avoid any potential contamination issues growing food.
SWOT Analysis

Threats
- Inappropriate development
- Contaminated land/remediation costs
- Lack of interest/investment in investing in Dudley Port
- Weak/recovering housing market making developers more cautious
- Lack of gap funding to remediate Limestone mine housing allocation at Coneygre