



# **THE JEWELLERY QUARTER NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

REG 14 FINAL DRAFT in plain English

July 2020

## Introduction: The Jewellery Quarter Neighbourhood Plan

This Neighbourhood Plan has been written by the community, for the community. The Jewellery Quarter Neighbourhood Plan was initiated by the Jewellery Quarter Development Trust (JQDT) and has been proudly produced by the Jewellery Quarter community. People working in, living in and representing the Jewellery Quarter have created, contributed to and reviewed this Neighbourhood Plan, with help from professionals across Birmingham and beyond.

The Neighbourhood Plan should be read with Birmingham City Council's Jewellery Quarter Conservation Area Character Appraisal & Management Plan.

### Vision

*The Jewellery Quarter Neighbourhood Plan's vision is for the Jewellery Quarter to be a successful community of businesses and residents, with jewellery and designing/making at its heart. It will foster a creative approach to conservation whilst demanding the highest quality design for new development, and it will stimulate the vitality of the area by making it easier to get around and giving people a reason to stay.*

### Goals

- Enabling businesses and residents to co-exist and be successful together.
- Drive up the quality of new developments and avoid dereliction.
- Protect the heritage of beautiful buildings, jewellery and creative industries, and allied activities.
- Facilitate the wider projects needed to support the growth and vitality of the Jewellery Quarter.

To deliver this vision, the Neighbourhood Plan has some BIG IDEAS and lots of little ideas too. Most of the BIG IDEAS are new, but some of them build on the ideas in Birmingham City Council's planning documents that this will replace.

### BIG IDEAS

- Creating a 'Creative District' around where the jewellery industry is based, and requiring all development to provide space for jewellery and other creative industries.
- Supporting a Jewellery Quarter Creative Incubator to tackle skills and support the next generation.
- Safeguarding heritage buildings, making it easier to save our heritage, and supporting action to save those that are rotting.
- All new buildings should be of excellent design – to suit modern requirements but as well-designed as our heritage buildings.
- Creating a new routes to the cut-off parts of the Jewellery Quarter and a 'string of pearls' - new, high quality public spaces dotted around the area. These will increase footfall, spending and investment.
- Main routes through the Jewellery Quarter will have shops, workplaces and leisure premises on the ground floor to keep the streets busy and safe.
- Making better use of the canal and making the canal feel safer to use.
- Having more public art to really signpost the Jewellery Quarter as a creative area.



## Section 1: Supporting and protecting the jewellery and creative industries

### Introduction:

According to official government classification, businesses which “manufacture jewellery and other related articles” are part of the creative industries. The Jewellery Quarter is Birmingham’s original creative quarter and the jewellery industry cluster is joined by many other creative businesses including architecture; crafts; design and designer fashion; film, TV, video, radio and photography; museums, galleries and libraries; and music, performing and visual arts.

*The Neighbourhood Plan wants to nurture this creative quarter and ensure that the jewellery industry can continue to thrive. It has identified where the jewellery industry exists and is creating a special zone so that any development in this area benefits the jewellery and other creative businesses. This zone is called the ‘Economic Character Zone’.*

### Policies:

1(a): Development in the Economic Character Zone should provide workspace suitable for jewellery and other creative businesses by:

- Providing a range of unit sizes and configurations to suit those businesses;
- Providing affordable work space for the creative industries at 20% below the market rate; and/or
- If there are existing buildings in use, keeping existing business uses. If this is not possible, relocating them nearby and supporting them to do so.

1(b): If someone has a site inside the Economic Character Zone with space for an extension or if they have a poor-quality building, they can extend across or upwards or rebuild if:

- They maintain or increase the amount of space for business use; and
- Are no more than 50% residential; and
- Improve the design of the existing building(s); and/or
- Provide business space more suited to the jewellery and other creative industries.

This allows the some of the new space to be used for residential (or other suitable uses) provided it gives a wider benefit e.g. improves the building’s appearance or provides space for the jewellery industry.

1(c): To make sure space is left for businesses to change and grow, new residential use in the Economic Character Zone can only take place if it provides wider benefits as follows:

- It provides space suitable for the jewellery and creative industries, and
- It improves the Conservation Area and/or listed buildings, and
- Is maximum 50% of the development.

The amount of residential space will be linked to the size of the benefit, and anyone neglecting their building in order to get residential or other uses in will be disqualified from this exemption.

1(d): To support the next generation of jewellers and jewellery-related businesses, a Jewellery Quarter Creative Incubator – whether a single site or spread across the Jewellery Quarter – will be supported.

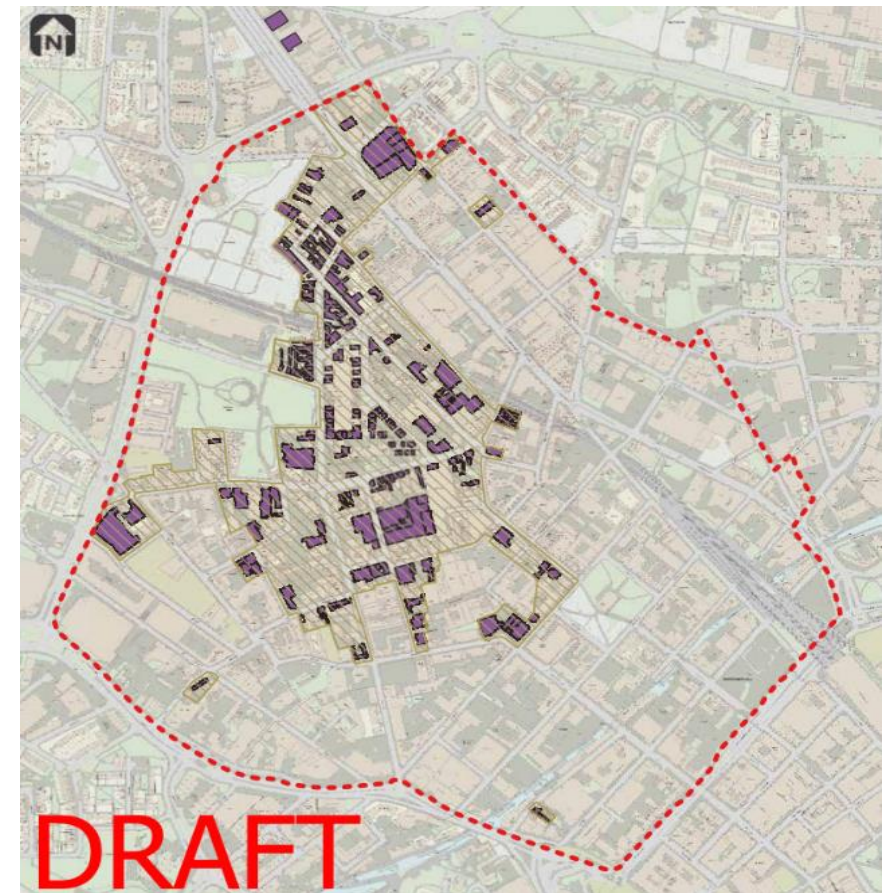


Figure 1: Economic Character Zone (hatched area) with locations of jewellery-related businesses in purple (Map 1)

## Section 2: The Jewellery Quarter as a creative, mixed-use quarter

### Introduction:

The Jewellery Quarter is an authentic part of Birmingham because it has an original 250+ year old industrial cluster; it still has a lot of original streets and buildings; and it still has the spirit of enterprise and innovation that made the Jewellery Quarter in the first place. It also has a vibrant mix of businesses and residents, which has been a feature of the area since it was first built. The Neighbourhood Plan wants to continue in this tradition and maintain the area's authenticity.

The Jewellery Quarter's built heritage is famous and draws people to the area. There are over 240 listed buildings in the Jewellery Quarter which get the most protection. The Conservation Area also gives some protection against loss of or damage to these buildings, and the Neighbourhood Plan reinforces the importance of heritage. It also identifies other heritage buildings that should be protected which are not listed and not in the Conservation Area.

### Policies:

2(a): Development must be authentic. It should respect and add to the Jewellery Quarter's uniqueness by providing space suitable for the jewellery and other creative industries, creating excellent new buildings, and by providing space for creativity and enterprise.

2(b): Any development which proposes the loss of existing workspace for jewellery and other creative industries should:

- Provide an equivalent amount of appropriate workspace is included in the new development, incorporating existing businesses where possible, or
- Demonstrate that suitable alternative is available nearby and where existing businesses are affected, that they supported to relocate.

2(c): Major developments (1000 square metres or more) should provide flexible workspace suitable for creative industries. It should be proportionate to the scale of development, and be provided on-site, but if this isn't possible then provided somewhere else in the Jewellery Quarter.

If the major development is residential-led, then 50% of any commercial space should be for creative industries. If the major development is commercial-led, then 35% of the commercial space should be affordable i.e. 80% of the market rate.

2(d): For at-risk heritage buildings outside the Economic Character Zone, any use is permitted if it saves the building and doesn't harm it. Anyone deliberately neglecting or damaging their building will not get this exemption.



## Section 2 (continued): The Jewellery Quarter as a creative, mixed-use quarter

### Policies (continued):

2(e): There are great heritage buildings outside the Conservation Area which are to be saved in any future development:

- 6 to 11 Mott Street, a mid-19th century terrace.
- 89 to 91 Constitution Hill, a mid-20th century factory in the Moderne-style,
- The former The Hampton pub 15-17 Great Hampton Row, early 19th century.
- 30 Smith Street and 123 Hockley Street, a 1950's factory with tiled elevations.
- The block formed by Harford Street, Barr Street and Great Hampton Row (pictured, bottom-right).
- The block bounded by Lionel Street, Old Snow Hill, Water Street and the viaduct.

2(f): Any residential development should provide a mix of sizes, types, prices and tenures and follow Birmingham City Council's policies on mix. It should meet national minimum standards at least. No more big developments that are all 1-bed flats.

2(g): Developments are encouraged which provide a range of sizes and types of spaces for business use, especially light industrial and those that are suitable for creative industries.

2(h): 'Meanwhile' temporary uses such as pop-ups on vacant plots or in vacant buildings are encouraged, especially where they help safeguard a heritage building and don't harm it.

2(i): To avoid friction and complaints about nuisance, anyone proposing a new development should identify any issues before the planning application, and they are responsible for dealing with them. For example:

- a new office building next to a factory with noisy extract ventilation should provide acoustic windows, or pay for the factory to install new ventilation kit; or
- new flats next to a pub with a late beer garden should design it so the residents aren't affected by noise from the pub.

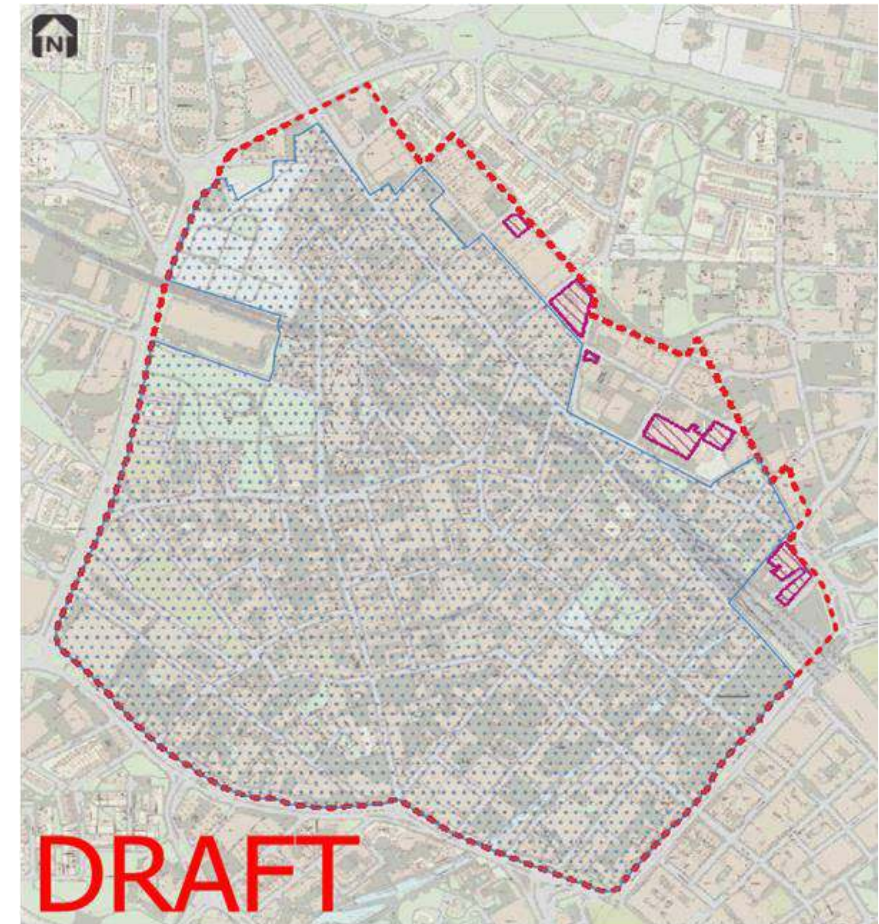


Figure 2: heritage assets outside the Conservation Area but inside the Neighbourhood Plan area (Map 8)



Image: heritage assets on Barr St

Figure 3: key routes (Map 2)

## Section 3: Moving around the Jewellery Quarter

### Introduction:

Getting around the Jewellery Quarter can be difficult. Whether it's people getting lost when roads suddenly bend to the left or right, whether it's some parts of the area feeling cut-off from the rest, or whether it's something as simple as a step at the front door when you struggle with steps. By making it easier, we get more people walking and cycling, and that means a Jewellery Quarter that feels safer and is nicer to be in. Evidence shows that people moving around by foot also spend more in the shops, cafes and bars. Evidence also shows that people want more places to sit, enjoy their surroundings and enjoy more greenery.

This section is about making it easier and more pleasurable to move around the Jewellery Quarter and spend some time here.

### Policies:

3(a): New development on the key routes marked on this map 2 should add to the mix of uses in their local area and should have 'active' ground floor uses which have people coming and going all day.

These routes are the main routes that people use to move around the Jewellery Quarter, but some of them seem pretty dead and it is not obvious that they are main pedestrian routes. This policy will help make them busier.

3(b): People working and living in the Jewellery Quarter want more outdoor space, especially since Covid-19. Creating squares and little 'pocket parks' like Dayus Square gives them this space and also helps people navigate around the Jewellery Quarter. The Neighbourhood Plan has identified where to put these squares and pocket parks – they are called 'nodes' and make a string of pearls around the Jewellery Quarter. Some of them already exist, such as St Paul's Square.

Major developments, and developments near these nodes, should create them or help pay for them.

3(c): Even though it is against building regulations, new developments are still creating steps-up at the front door. The Neighbourhood Plan wants to stop that, and also wants heritage buildings to create step-free access where it can be done sensitively.

3(d): Some of the Jewellery Quarter's streets are narrow, cluttered and/or uneven which makes walking around difficult. Examples include badly-laid cobbles after the pavement has been dug up, no dropped kerbs for wheelchairs, or posts/bins/signboards on narrow pavements. The Neighbourhood Plan supports rectifying this.

3(e): The canal is a valuable part of the Jewellery Quarter – valuable to people but also to wildlife. It is grotty in parts and sometimes doesn't feel very safe. The Neighbourhood Plan wants to improve this by:

- Making it easier to get on and off the canal by creating/reinstating access points at Newhall St, Charlotte St, Water St and Lionel St.
- Reinstating lost canal branches or at least indicating in the landscape where they used to be.
- Making new development face the canal so that people in buildings can keep an eye on things.
- Helping nature along the canal.

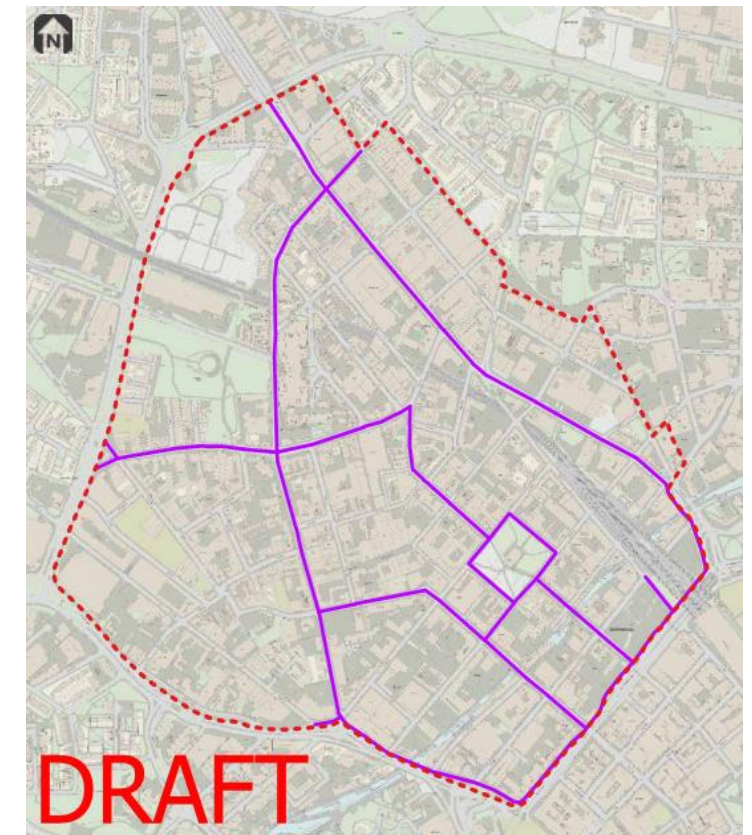


Figure 4: public realm interventions 'nodes' (Map 4)

## Section 3 (continued): Moving around the Jewellery Quarter

### Policies (continued):

3(f): The Jewellery Quarter has some strange road layouts, partly because that's the way the area evolved and also partly because old layouts have been lost. This makes it difficult to get around and some parts of the area are cut-off and have become derelict. To fix this, the Neighbourhood Plan wants to reinstate some old routes and create new routes listed below and shown on map 3, and we want to be able to walk across Great Charles St like we used to before the Queensway:

- Camden St to Summer Hill Rd.
- Newhall Hill to Sloane St.
- Charlotte St to George St.
- Northwood St re-opening the AE Harris route.
- From the junction of Graham St and Newhall St through to the re-opened Northwood St.
- Hylton St to York Terrace.
- Livery St (Jewellery Quarter) to Livery St (City Core) across Great Charles St Queensway.
- Ludgate Hill to Church St across Great Charles St Queensway.
- Through the Big Peg from Northampton St through to Golden Square.
- Improving the alley between Regent Place and Warstone Lane.

3(g): Some areas need a mini-plan to help guide development or regenerate them, especially when the new routes are created. The Neighbourhood Plan supports creating these mini-plans that will help benefit jewellery and creative businesses and fix any problems:

- The area to the north of the Big Peg.
- Hockley Hill – Great Hampton St – Constitution Hill.
- Camden St (north and south) and Camden Drive.



Figure 5: new routes (Map 3)



Image: at-grade crossing of Great Charles St as envisaged by Birmingham City Council's Snow Hill Masterplan

## Section 4: The Jewellery Quarter environment

### Introduction:

The ‘feel’ of the Jewellery Quarter is something special. A lot of it is to do with heritage, and a lot is to do with the hustle and bustle of businesses, bars and restaurants, and people visiting. It is also about what the area looks like, noticing the pavements made of blue bricks and that we have a lot of public art around. There are also parts of the Jewellery Quarter that are less nice, even derelict or vacant, but could be brought back. Unfortunately, some have had ugly buildings and unsympathetic developments happen to them. There are also modern demands for greenery and access to nature.

This section tries to deal with all of that, making the environment in the Jewellery Quarter better and asking developers and architects to do their best work here, just like they used to.

### Policies:

4(a): A lot of new development isn’t designed as well as it should be for an area with such rich heritage, and the workmanship isn’t as good either. The Neighbourhood Plan includes new design guidance to help developers, architects, engineers and the council to do their best work here.

4(b): There are some simple design rules that all development should follow:

- Street frontages should be respected – most buildings should be next to the pavement.
- New development will respect the historic street patterns.
- Historic boundaries will be maintained and reintroduced where they have been lost.
- Larger sites which used to be multiple properties should be developed as a series of individual buildings to reflect the historic grain of the area.
- New developments on hills should step down with the hill.
- New buildings should use different types of brick pattern and not just the normal one we see nowadays.
- Long blank walls at street level will not be accepted.
- The scale of new buildings will respect the scale of traditional buildings near them.
- New buildings are to respect the heights of traditional buildings in the area.
- Rooflines of new buildings will respect and complement adjoining buildings.
- Traditional building materials are expected, to reflect those found in the in the surrounding historic buildings. Alternative materials are possible if they are high quality, well-detailed and enhance nearby historic buildings.

4(c): Developments should improve the area around them and the improvement should be in proportion with the size of the development. Improvements could include:

- Replacing Tarmac pavements with blue bricks;
- Upgrading uneven pavements and cobbles;
- Creating more space for pedestrians and cyclists;
- Creating new public spaces;
- Lighting and/or public art installation; and
- Contribution to local ‘Nodes’ (see Map 4).



Figure 5: new routes (Map 3)



Image: different brick types and bonds found in the Jewellery Quarter

## Section 4 (continued): The Jewellery Quarter environment

### Policies (continued):

4(d): The Jewellery Quarter has a lot of public art or art in developments that people can see from outside. The Neighbourhood Plan wants more, helping make the area more interesting and providing opportunity for local artists. All developments are encouraged to include art, whether a special commission or decoration on a building, and major developments should incorporate or contribute to art in its vicinity.

4(e): We have too many historic buildings that are allowed to rot. Where historic buildings have been allowed to become dilapidated, the Neighbourhood Plan supports the council in enforcement. There should be no ‘get out of jail free card’ where owners deliberately allow their buildings to become derelict to try to get a change of use.

4(f): There is a crisis in native plants and animals in the UK, and seeing nature is good for our mental health. Even though we are in the city centre and very built-up, we have rare species such as bats, Black Redstarts and Peregrine Falcons in the Jewellery Quarter, as well as lots of other birds and bugs in the green spaces and canal areas. The Neighbourhood Plan wants the Jewellery Quarter to play its part in improving the natural environment by asking all development to help encourage more nature. Major developments should have ‘green roofs’ to help birds, bugs and bats get around.

4(g): There’s a lot of ugly signage and advertising, and there’s some lovely historic signs. The Neighbourhood Plan wants to improve modern signage and preserve historic signage. Internally-illuminate signage is not allowed.

4(h): Acres of car parking detracts from the area, and while parking is needed, it can be done more efficiently. Alternatives are encouraged, such as more cycle/moped/motorbike parking, underground parking, having permits-to-park rather than a space each, or having a car pool.

4(i): Vacant sites are harmful, especially the Conservation Area parts of the Jewellery Quarter. They should be developed and add to the vibrancy of the area

4(j): Car parking on vacant sites discourages the development of them, and the Jewellery Quarter needs more space for businesses and residents. Therefore surface car parks should not be permitted.



Figure 5: new routes (Map 3)



Image: artworks and motifs around the Jewellery Quarter