

Update on The Black Country's Big Lottery Bid



*'The Peoples 50 Million -Black Country Urban Park'
Background, elements and Strata – Dudley's Flagship Scheme*

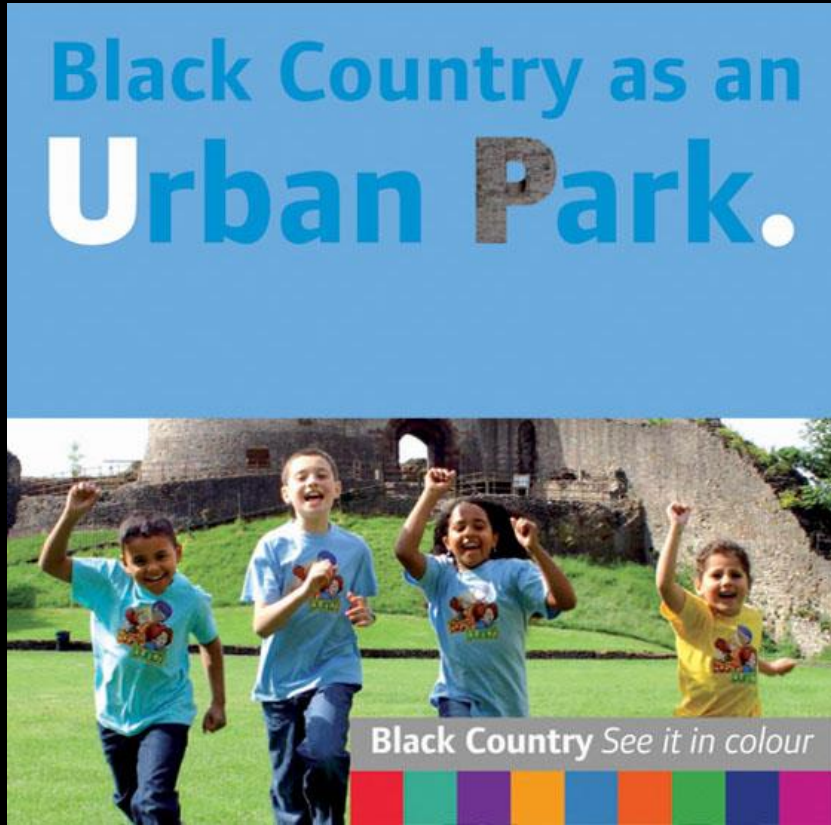


Contents

- Big Lottery Background
 - Mission Statement
 - Black Country Landscape
 - Beacons
 - Corridors
 - Communities
 - Big Lottery Timeline
- The Big Lottery Flagship Projects
- The Strata Project
 - Outline & Elements
 - Works Completed so far
 - Outstanding elements
- The Black Country UNESCO Global Geopark



Background to the Bid



- **Origins in the Black Country Study**
- This identified spiraling cycle of deprivation, outward migration of talent and money
- Key element in this was quality of the environment and perceived lack of opportunities compared to elsewhere
- Project realized the importance of the greenspaces and the amazing heritage features to address this
- Urban Park idea created to link these into one landscape scale 'park'
- Park Concept built around three key elements
 - Beacons
 - Corridors
 - Communities



Mission Statement for the Bid

'It will begin a process of rebuilding a new proud heartland of Britain from the industrial ashes of the past.

To open up this undiscovered gem of British heritage, A project that will access this 'treasure chest' of natural and man-made wonders for all to experience using innovative engineering and novel design.

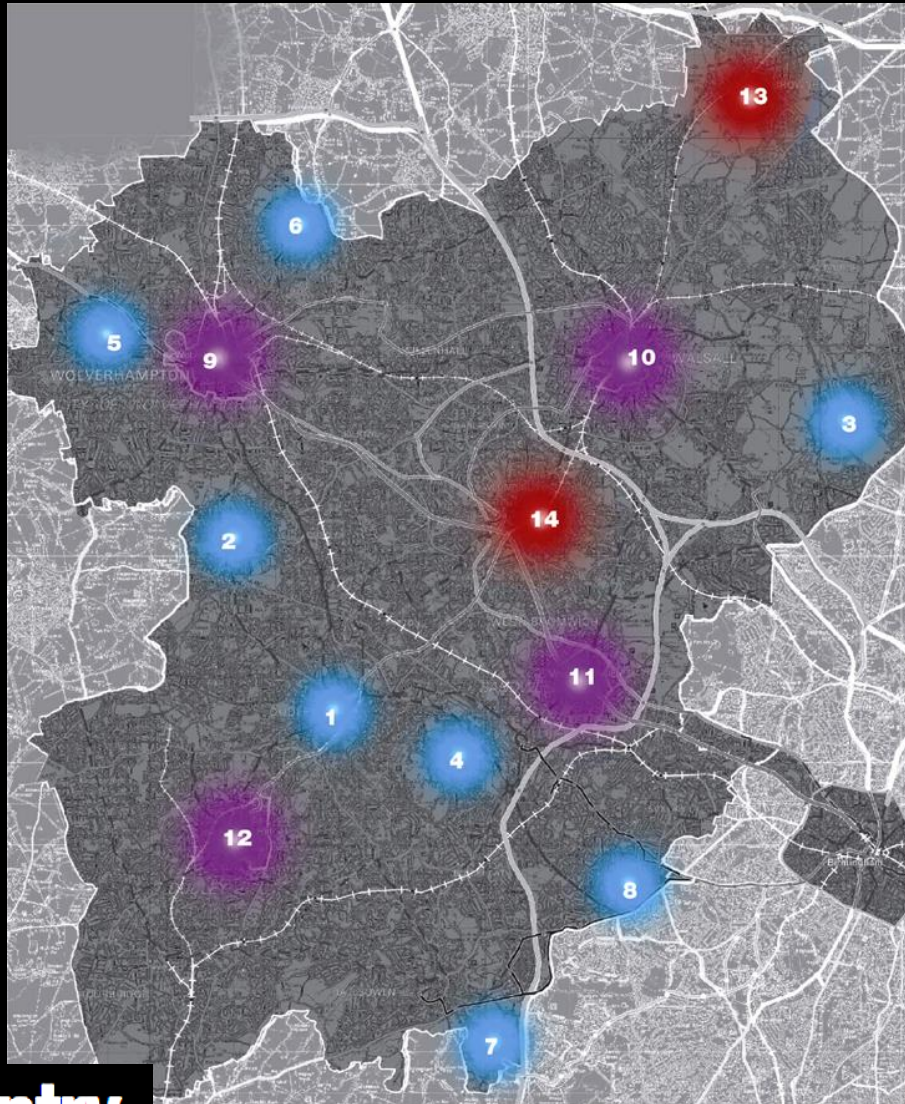
It is a visionary project that will inspire young people, students, artists, engineers, professionals and scholars alike about this special landscape, natural processes and the ingenuity of local people that created it and have changed, and continue to change our world.'



Beacons

Beacons

make residents and visitors aware of the collaboration within the BC, whilst guiding you to be aware above and beyond the horizon, with connections to places near and far.



The beacons have been broken down into a hierarchy:

topography beacons

Have the role of emphasizing the topography, collectively binding the BC

strategic centres

Have the a future role at the heart of the BC – population must be exposed to concept

local beacons

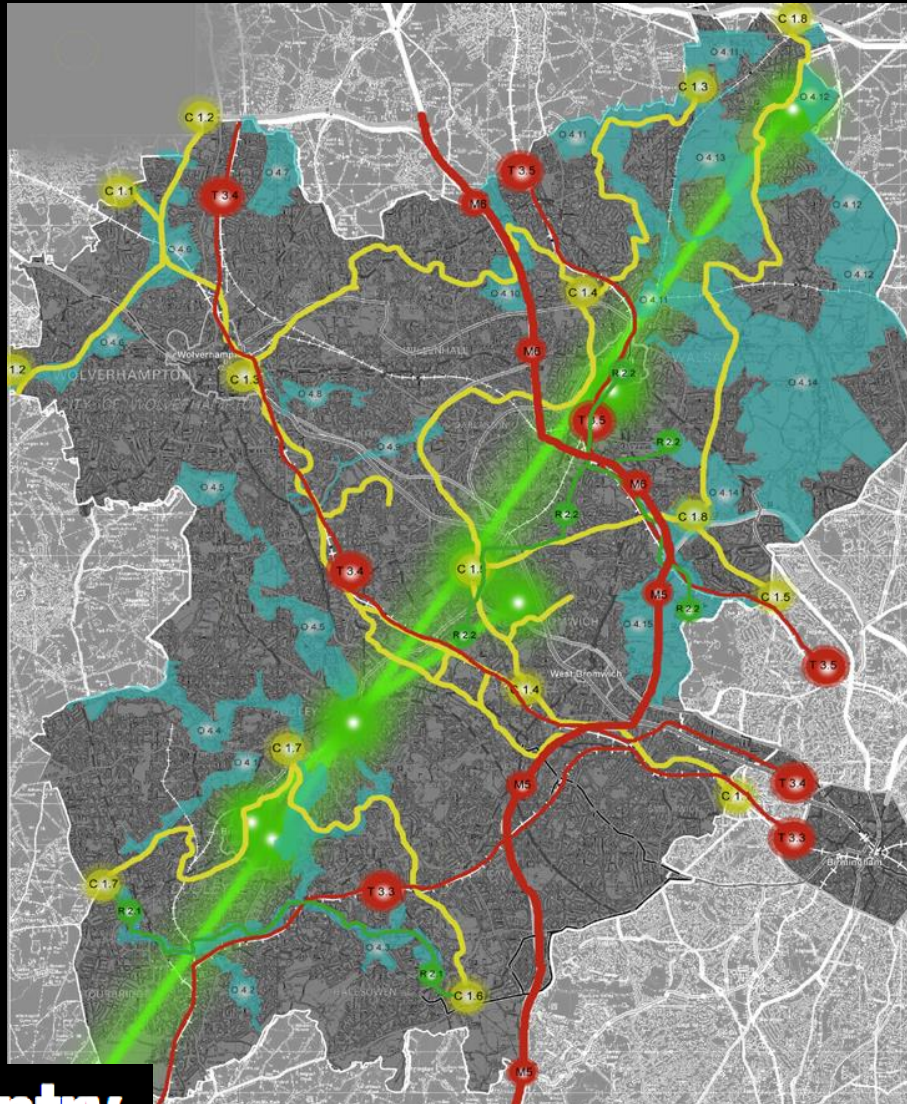
Have a role to help bind in those area revealing specific qualities but are non-strategic or for areas that have restricted access to the beacons above



Corridors

Corridors

provide means of moving within the BC, revealing the qualities below, whilst providing education of the beyond (technology/ sustainability / biodiversity/ development density). This provides the movement framework for a series of sustainable urban villages and showcase sustainability parks



These are potential corridors based on existing networks, new types of corridor can be created, these have been broken down into a hierarchy:

canals

Provide the BC with a unique resource to re-establish an evolving movement network

rivers

Predominantly the Stour and the Tame have an important role to play

infrastructure

The M5, M6, West Coast mainline, all have a very clear view and interaction with the BC – opportunity to attract visitors

biodiversity

The wealth of open space needs to be bound into the movement framework with careful design to maximise exposure

Black Country

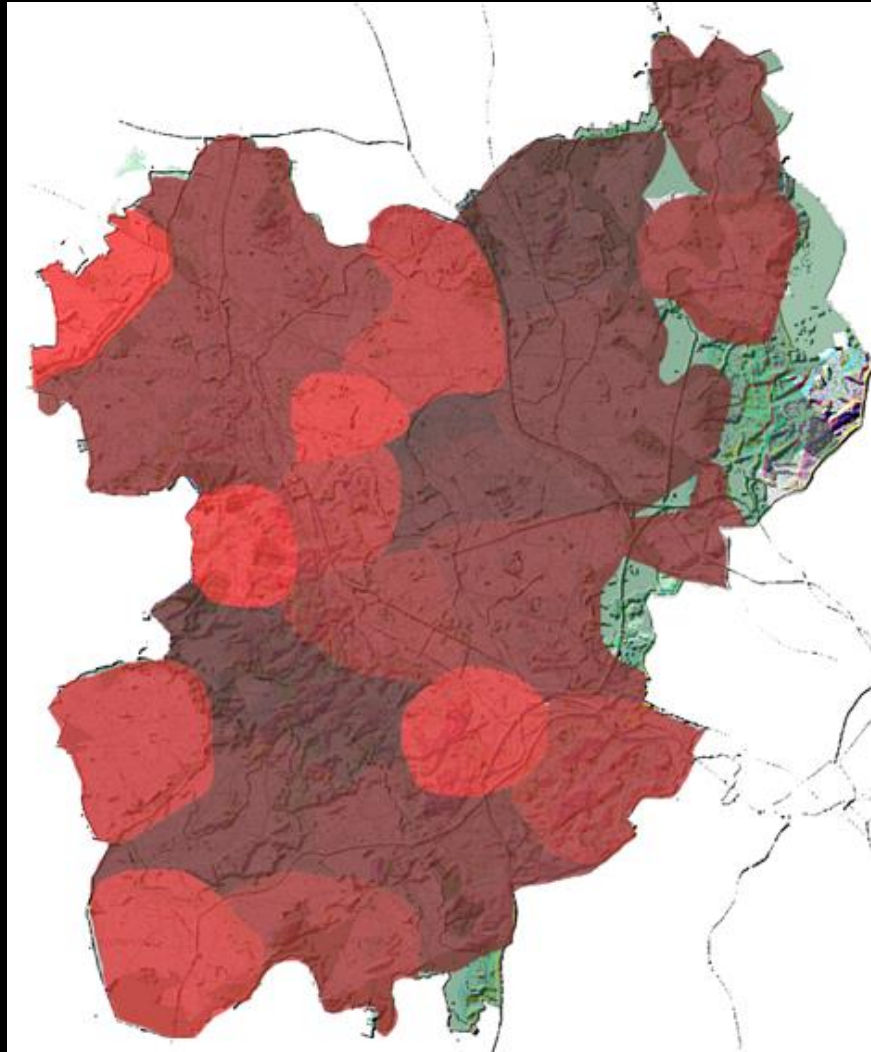
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Communities

Communities

All developments, parks, plaza, streets and development within each community should eventually respond to a common design code, managing the emerging designs within a flexible brief to create a series of distinctive character areas for the 21st



The community areas must be identified. A strategy must be developed for how the urban design codes may work – can there be an CABE urban design code pilot scheme in the BC to test the concept first

strategy

To establish a series of design codes –pilot scheme to start

collaboration

Set up a series of community collaboration committees to get involved with the emerging design code contents

control

Establish a BC design champion to co-ordinate the emerging design codes

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The Big Lottery Bid - Timeline

- **Autumn 2006, - bid submitted**
- **December 2006 - Shortlisted** – given £500,000 development grant
- **Spring 2007 - Schemes designed** and various detailed studies done
- **August 2007 -TV campaign**
- **December 2007 Vote (Result – runner up to Sustrans)**
- **2008 – work on some elements of the Strata project commences independent of Big Lottery**



The Urban Park – Flagship Projects

Designed to happen in a way that uses traditional and new technologies to establish the Black Country landscape as the nation's first ever **Urban Park**.

World class iconic modern development hand-in-hand with world class heritage experiences that make the Black Country a great place to live and work as well as being attractive for business investment.

Kick-started by the Big Lottery investment around 4 iconic flagship projects

- **The Strata Project**
- **The Green Bridge**
- **The Canals**
- **Living Landscapes**



Flagship Projects of the Bid

- The Strata Project
- The Green Bridge
- Wolverhampton Canals
- Living Landscapes (20 sites linking the heritage together)



The Strata Project



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The Strata Project Overview

Wrens Nest National Nature Reserve

SEVEN SISTERS MINE

STEP SHAFT MINE

TODDS END VISITOR CENTRE

CASTLE MILL BASIN

FUNICULAR RAILWAY

WREN'S NEST TUNNEL

UPPER LEVEL STATION

WREN'S NEST INTERPRETATION CENTRE

**Castle Hill
Tourism node
and SINC (Site
of Importance
for Nature
Conservation)**

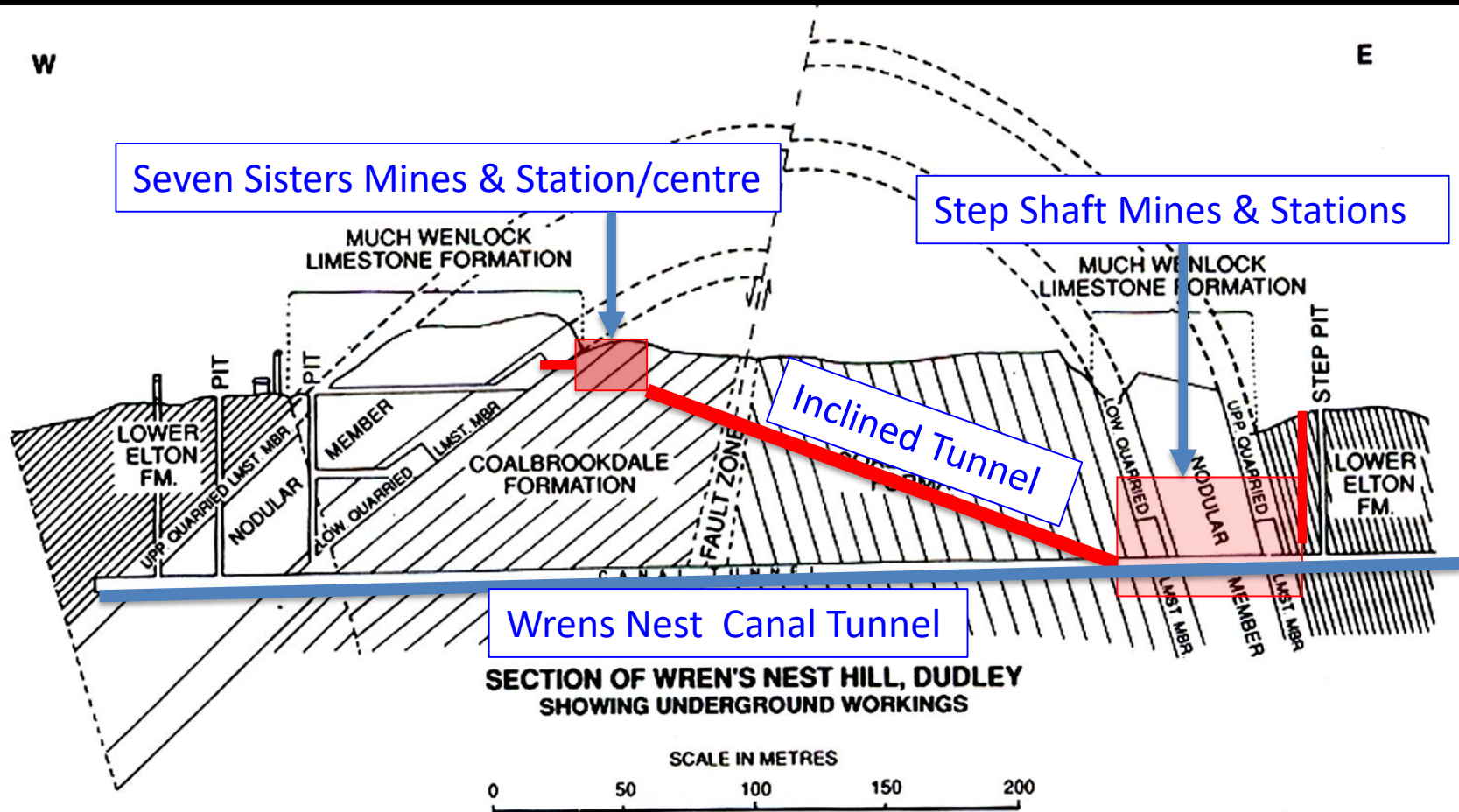
AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH SHOWING KEY FEATURES OF STRATA
SCALE 1:5000

Strata Project Elements

- Visitor Centre at Todd's End
- Wrens Nest Canal Tunnel
- Step Shaft Mines underground areas
- New stations & and Inclined tunnel in Step Shaft
- Seven Sisters Mine Daylight Gallery
- New Visitor Centre at Wrens Nest Surface
- New Surface Access improvements at Wrens Nest



Wrens Nest Component



Cross-section through Wren's Nest Hill showing the anticlinal structure broken along its axis by a fault zone. The old limestone workings and canal tunnel through which the stone was carried away are clearly shown. The line of the section runs east-west approximately 400 m south of the college buildings.

Works So far

The Step Shaft Mines element – safeguarding future potential



Works So far

The Step Shaft Mines element – safeguarding future potential



Step Shaft Canal Basin 70m below Wrens Nest Bulkhead on entrance to Thin bed workings in place secured for temporary sand infill



Works So far

The Step Shaft Mines element – safeguarding future potential



Sand mixing and pumping plant



Heavily Shielded inspection Tunnel



Sand emplacement in mine gallery

Step Shaft Mine, Cathedral Gallery sand loading to secure stability



Works So far

Dudley Canal & Tunnel Trust– Visitor Welcome & Journey Start



Artists impression 2007



The New Portal building 2016



Opening by HRH the Princess Royal 2016



Works So far

The Seven Sisters Mines element – safeguarding future potential



Seven Sisters prior to becoming less stable in the 1960's



Works So far

The Seven Sisters Mines element – safeguarding future potential



Loose Rock Infill
to daylight
gallery



New Viewing
Platforms &
Walkways



Future Vision

new level, wheelchair friendly accessible walkway and visitor/learning centre within mine helping to support it



Works So far

The Surface element at Wrens Nest– The Ripples Through Time Project



New car park and interpretation



New double-width stairs and interpretation



Works So far

The Surface element at Wrens Nest– The Ripples Through Time Project



New wheelchair friendly viewing platforms and interpretation



New artworks / sculptural interpretation



Works So far

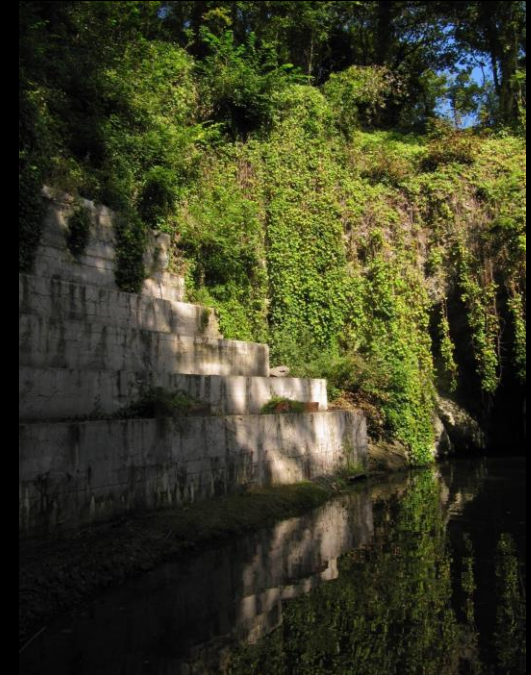
The Wrens Nest Tunnel element – safeguarding future potential - Castle Mill Basin Stabilisation



Weak Rock Pillar over tunnel entrance



Engineering works



New buttress support



Works still to be carried out

The Wrens Nest Tunnel element – de-silting and stabilisation in some sections



Castle Mill end of
tunnel



Step Shaft Mines end
of tunnel



Works still to be carried out

The Step Shaft Mines element – permanent stabilisation works in Cathedral Gallery (& Minstrel Gallery)



Cathedral Gallery (photo
– Vic Smallshire)



Minstrel Gallery



Works still to be carried out

The Step Shaft Mines element – underground stations, inclined tunnel & people mover



Canal Basin Station

(image – Knight Architects)



People Mover &
inclined shaft

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Works still to be carried out

The Seven Sisters Mines element – upper station, access to daylight gallery and interpretation/learning centre



(image – Knight Architects)



The Black Country UNESCO Global Geopark



UNESCO Tag-line *'celebrating Earth heritage
supporting local communities'*



The Black Country UNESCO Global Geopark - summary

- Over-arching landscape scale heritage designation
- Intended to be first layer of Urban Park – underpinning everything else
- Collective of the best natural and cultural heritage of whole Black Country
- Formal Partnership project – lead partner Dudley MBC
- Supporting sensitive sustainable development/local business
- UNESCO Designation



World Class Assets– An Exceptional Heritage 'Menu'



Geopark Timeline

- Initiative of Black Country Study work 2006
- Investigated by Black Country & West Mids Geodiversity Partnerships (2009 - 2013)
- ABCA approval 2013
- ABCA Draft Bid Created and submitted 2015
- UNESCO Scrutiny Visit 2016 – Recommendations
- Final Report Submitted May 2019
- Global Council Recommended approval – October 2019
- Ratification by UNESCO Executive Paris May 2020 (may now be delayed)

The Black Country
Global Geopark Project



European & Global Geopark Network
Application Dossier

The Association of Black Country Authorities
November 2015



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