

Midland Metro

2.4 Objectives of The Scheme

The primary objectives of the West Midlands 2000 Local Transport Plan ^([20]) (LTP) are:

- to ensure that the transport system underpins the economic revitalisation of the West Midlands Metropolitan area;
- to ensure that transport contributes towards social inclusion by increasing accessibility for everyone;
- to move towards a more sustainable pattern of development and growth;
- to improve safety and health for all; and
- to integrate all forms of transport with each other, with other land uses and with other policies and priorities.

A core element of the LTP is to develop a multi-modal, integrated 'turn up and go' public transport network, referred to as *Network West Midlands*. This is identified as the means by which many of the LTP objectives will be met. The proposed extension of Line 1 from Wednesbury to Brierley Hill is highlighted in the LTP as a key component of this network.

The Network West Midlands public transport network proposals have been developed further in the 20 Year Public Transport Strategy ^([21]). The overriding objective of the strategy is to increase the use of public transport, through partnership, to improve the economic, environmental and social well being of the West Midlands. The strategy identifies specific local networks as being critical in supporting the strategic public transport network.

Network West Midlands identifies the Midland Metro Line 1 extensions as part of the public transport solution for the area in appropriate locations where forecast demand is high and generally substantially more than 2 000 passengers during the AM peak.

Against this context, and taking into account the successes of the Midland Metro Line 1 in reducing pollution and delays to road traffic, the proposed scheme has three main objectives for the corridor, including Great Bridge town centre, Dudley town centre, the Waterfront commercial/leisure complex, Merry Hill and Brierley Hill High Street, as described below:

- to improve and enhance accessibility;
- to improve and enhance street safety; and
- to improve and enhance the physical environment.

The Wednesbury to Brierley Hill scheme will also help to address the key objectives outlined in the LTP, as described above, by:

- improving public transport accessibility through the provision of rail based links to area that are not currently served by rail, particularly Dudley and Brierley Hill;
- easing traffic congestion on historic road networks by providing an alternative to the private car which is more reliable than buses;
- creating good quality transport links and associated economic benefits in one of the most important regeneration corridors in the West Midlands;
- providing interchanges with the national rail network at Dudley Port and onward to Birmingham New Street Station and Birmingham International Airport from areas which are poorly served by public transport links; and
- providing interchange with the bus network and the existing Line 1 to Birmingham city centre.

It is also envisaged that the scheme will build on the success of the Midland Metro Line 1, where already more than 15% of journeys made on the Metro were previously made by car, and offer new journey opportunities and increased patronage on Line 1.