

West Bromwich Gas Showroom in its heyday Black Country Living Museum

A rare opportunity to save landmark community and commercial buildings from demolition and rebuild them at the Black Country Living Museum in Dudley, has been awarded £9.8million from The National Lottery.

Some of the buildings identified will be moved brick-by-brick to the museum, including West Bromwich's Gas Showroom and Dudley's Woodside Library – both the focus of strong community support to save them. Others, including Wolverhampton's Elephant & Castle Pub and Lye's Marsh & Baxter's Butchers, will be recreated from archive material and images.

450 news jobs

The hugely ambitious scheme – which will create 450 jobs in the local area - will allow the museum to tell the story of the Black Country up to the closure of the Baggeridge Coal Mine in 1968.

Ros Kerslake, Chief Executive of HLF, said: "The Black Country Living Museum is one of the UK's most popular open-air museums bringing knowledge of the country's industrial past to a national and international audience. Our funding, which is made possible thanks to National Lottery players, will help update the wider site making it a visitor attraction truly fit for the 21st century."

[quote=Andrew Lovett, Black Country Life Museum Director and Chief Executive]“We would very much like to thank National Lottery players for making such support possible.”[/quote]

Significant expansion plans

The museum will expand by a third, transforming its site with a new historic development focusing on the period 1940-1960. It will also transform the visitor welcome and learning facilities.

Andrew Lovett, Director and Chief Executive of the Black Country Life Museum, said: “We would very much like to thank National Lottery players for making such support possible.”