

APPENDIX 2

Attached for the information of Members is the relevant extract from the draft 'Future of the North West Coastal Resort Towns Strategy' by the North West Development Agency as recently conveyed to the Chief Executive and with regard to the Wirral towns of Hoylake, West Kirby and New Brighton. The officer's view of the draft extract is that this statement is appropriate, timely, encouraging and welcome. The views of Members are requested.

A New Vision for the Northwest Coastal Resorts Towns: Draft Vision for New Brighton, Hoylake and West Kirby

1 A 10 Year Vision

This 10 year vision sets out the activity required to regenerate the Wirral Coast resorts of New Brighton, Hoylake and West Kirby as successful and vibrant destinations. It sets out a long-term direction for change which reflects and draws upon the strategy set out in A New Vision for Northwest Coastal Resorts¹.

The NWDA will work in partnership with Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council and others to help deliver the vision by:

- a) providing its direct support for appropriate projects;
- b) supporting appropriate resource bids to other funding bodies;
- c) encouraging other public bodies to share this vision;
- d) making the case for policies which support the vision in the Regional Spatial Strategy, Regional Transport Strategy, Regional Housing Strategy and similar strategic documents; and
- e) supporting policies and proposals which help to deliver the vision through its responses to Local Development Documents, the Local Transport Plan, and major planning applications which fall into the Agency's notification as a statutory consultee.

The Agency is not making any financial commitments in endorsing this vision. Any financial support from the Agency would need to be considered on a project by project basis and appraised under the NWDA's Single Programme Appraisal process. However the Agency will not support projects which do not conform with or clearly support the vision.

2 The Branding

New Brighton, Hoylake and West Kirby will form an integral part of the

¹ Produced on behalf of Northwest Development Agency by Locum Destination Consulting, March 2003.

Wirral Coast sub-regional brand. The enhanced north Wirral coast will provide a superb recreational facility for both Merseyside and the wider area.

Hoylake and West Kirby will aspire to the quality of 'Classic Resorts'. The individual values that contribute to the 'Classic Resort' brand are:

- Heritage
- Pristine Built and Natural Environment
- Quality Shopping
- Quality Hotels
- Quality Food and Beverage
- Culture

The projects identified in this vision will put Hoylake and West Kirby firmly on the path to achieving these values.

3 Hoylake and West Kirby - The Direction for Change

The vision for Hoylake and West Kirby shared by all partners is to create a top-quality recreational resource for Merseyside and the wider area. This will build on the elegant Edwardian ambience of the towns and raise the quality of their retail and leisure offer. Hoylake and West Kirby are gems in need of polishing, and with some investment they will become a real asset to the region's tourism offer.

Public sector investment will be directed towards improving the attractiveness of the public realm and upgrading the recreational infrastructure. Improvements in the town centres will attract an enhanced range and quality of retail provision. By lifting the overall quality of the product, Hoylake and West Kirby will be able to attract the discerning visitor in a range of specialist short-break markets including golf, bird watching, sailing and coastal walking.

An absolute commitment to this vision will be made by all partners in order to generate the investor confidence required to deliver this strategy. This will move Hoylake and West Kirby towards a strong, long-term market position.

4 Hoylake and West Kirby - Potential Projects

Over the next 10 years Wirral MBC will act as the lead partner to support and deliver the following key projects:

Quality new hotel development

The development of quality new hotels within north Wirral linked to the return of the Open Golf Championship to the Royal Liverpool will be progressed rapidly as a key priority. A golf resort would provide a regional asset for the North West.

Actions:

- Investigate the market viability and options for new hotel development within north Wirral.
- Identify a suitable high-quality site (or sites).
- Prepare development briefs that ensure high design quality, and approach potential developers.
- Ensure that hotel development is progressed successfully through the planning system and development process.

Improvements to Hoylake and West Kirby town centres

Improvements to the public realm within the town centres will be provided in the context of the Mersey Waterfront Regional Park. High-quality materials will be used in a consistent manner to achieve a unified public realm that reinforces the Edwardian ambience of the towns. By lifting the overall quality, and working with local businesses, it will be possible to enhance the range and quality of retail and catering provision.

Actions:

- Prepare a design brief for public realm improvements.
- Investigate the potential for the re-instatement of the Edwardian-style covered walkways.
- Wirral MBC and relevant local interest groups to work with owners to encourage repairs and improvement to building facades and shop fronts.
- Work with local SMEs to promote excellence in retail and catering provision, to secure high quality standards and get more restaurants, pubs and hotels listed in the Good Food/Pub/Hotel Guides.

Improvements to Hoylake Promenade and West Kirby Promenade and Marine Lake

Enhancements to the existing recreational infrastructure will be provided in the context of the Mersey Waterfront Regional Park and combined with the attractive physical location will create an attractive recreational space. The promenades and marine lake will be linked into the North Wirral Coast in the context of the Mersey Waterfront Regional Park (see New Brighton Priority Projects).

Actions:

- Prepare a design brief for public realm improvements.
- Investigate the potential for better exploiting the heritage of the north Wirral coast, particularly its maritime associations and the Roman and Viking settlements at Meols. Investigate opportunities for exhibitions linked to the Tourist Information Centre and interpretation panels.

5 New Brighton - The Direction for Change

The vision for New Brighton shared by all partners is to create a desirable place to live which attracts new residents and caters for the

Wirral and wider Merseyside leisure market (including food and catering).

A commercially viable mixed-use scheme will be developed on the seafront. In view of the past history of failed leisure-led schemes in New Brighton, it is essential that the components of this scheme fully reflect local market conditions and demand. This is likely to require a significant residential component. Investment will also enhance New Brighton's recreational infrastructure to improve linkage with the north Wirral coast.

An absolute commitment to this vision will be made by all partners in order to generate the investor confidence required to deliver this strategy. This will move New Brighton towards an improved, stable and realistic long-term market position.

6 New Brighton - Potential Projects

Over the next 10 years Wirral MBC will act as lead partner to support and deliver the following key projects:

Mixed-use redevelopment on the seafront site

The leisure and retail elements of the mixed-use scheme should be sustained largely by Wirral residents.

Actions:

- Produce a development brief to ensure a high quality commercially viable mixed-use redevelopment incorporating a significant residential component.
- Implement public realm improvements to support redevelopment.

Improvements to the coastal park and Fort

This will become an important recreational resource for Merseyside and will be taken forward in the context of the Mersey Waterfront Regional Park.

Actions:

- Upgrade the landscape quality of the North Wirral Coast from New Brighton to Red Rocks, including an upgrade of the leisure path to improve linkage to Hoylake and West Kirby.
- Approach potential partners to develop one-way cycle hire facilities along the route.
- Explore the opportunity for a new commercial use for the Fort.

Beacon attraction feasibility study

A feasibility study will be commissioned into an iconic landmark at the mouth of the Mersey at New Brighton.

Actions:

- Prepare a brief for a feasibility study.

- Commission a feasibility study to test all aspects of the scheme.

App2
Report to Economic Regeneration Planning Strategy Select Committee
9th November 2004