

Policy CS5 – Priorities for the Commercial Core of Birkenhead

Summary of Comments Received	Recommended Response
The Vision Statement for the Commercial Core should be reworded to read: “By the end of the plan period, the Commercial Core will be in the process of being transformed. <u>This will be driven by the development of a series of new City Neighbourhoods at Wirral Waters, including Catalyst Neighbourhoods at East Float and Bidston Dock which will be being developed for a diverse mix of uses including commercial uses, residential, leisure, retail and cultural. Wirral Waters will be emerging as a major destination and will be playing a leading role in the economic growth and diversification of the Borough and wider Liverpool City Region</u> ”, to improve the clarity of the Vision Statement and reflect the scale and nature of the economic transformation which will be taking place at Wirral Waters.	Accepted but a simplified wording is recommended to read: “By the end of the plan period, the Commercial Core will be in the process of being transformed, <u>driven by a major mixed-use development at Wirral Waters. A thriving...</u> ”, as the additional wording suggested is already supported by Policy CS12.
High voltage underground electricity transmission cables run across Settlement Area 2. Unrestricted and safe access must be maintained at all times with no trees or shrubs within 3 metres of the cable as, ultimately, the roots may grow to cause damage to the cable.	No change is recommended to Policy CS5 but it is recommended that point 11 of Policy CS42 – Development Management is amended to read: “will not have an unacceptable impact on the operation of Liverpool Airport, Harwarden Aerodrome and the Wallasey Beacon; <u>or the safe and uninterrupted operation of utilities, electricity transmission networks, pipelines, important electrical equipment or instrumentation or their safeguarding zones.</u> ”
The term 'supporting' in Point 1 of Policy CS5 must be clarified so that the scale of retail envisaged in the New City Neighbourhood around Birkenhead Town Centre cannot be misconstrued.	No change is recommended. Policy CS12 – Wirral Waters sets out the scope of development that will be permitted as part of the New City Neighbourhood. Policy CS25 – Hierarchy of Retail Centres sets out the scope of development that will be permitted at Birkenhead Town Centre.
Point 1 of Policy CS5 should be reworded to read: “Establish a <u>series of new City Neighbourhoods at Wirral Waters and around Birkenhead Town Centre to deliver transformational economic growth, jobs and training...</u> ”	Accepted but the use of the word ‘transformational’ is considered to be unnecessary as Policy CS5 already refers to 'significant levels of new high quality housing and employment'. It is therefore recommended that point 1 of Policy CS5 is amended to read: “Establish <u>a series of new city neighbourhoods at Wirral Waters and around Birkenhead Town Centre, to deliver major economic growth...</u> ”
The reference to 'off shore renewable energy' in point 3 of Policy CS5 should be changed to 'renewable and low carbon energy', to more accurately reflect the energy development opportunities which these locations provide.	No change recommended, as the Council only supports provision for offshore renewable energy at Cammell Lairds, Twelve Quays and West Float.

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Point 4 of Policy CS5 should be revised to read: “ <u>Secure the delivery</u> of the International Trade Centre at West Float;”	It is recommended that point 4 of Policy CS5 is only amended to read: “Support the <u>delivery</u> of the International Trade Centre at West Float”, as it will be the responsibility of the developer to secure the delivery of the development.
Point 6 of Policy CS5 should be amended to support integration with Wirral Waters as a whole rather than just East Float.	Accepted. It is recommended that Point 6 of Policy CS5 is amended to read: “Support integration with <u>Wirral Waters</u> and access to employment and training from within the surrounding areas in Bidston, Birkenhead, Leasowe, Liscard, Rock Ferry, Seacombe and Tranmere;”
Policy CS5 provides the necessary positive strategy to address the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. The Core Strategy should, however, include explicit coverage of Heritage at Risk as required by Paragraph 126 of the National Planning Policy Framework. The 2012 Heritage at Risk register includes Birkenhead Priory and Hamilton Square Conservation Area.	No change recommended as Policy CS43 – Design, Heritage and Amenity already provides for proposals that will ‘safeguard the future of heritage at risk’ and Birkenhead Priory and Hamilton Square Conservation Area are already referred to in paragraph 10.1 and in point 7 of Policy CS5.
Support the priorities for this Settlement Area but Policy CS5 could be strengthened by identifying the broad quantum of development to be focused in key locations.	No change is recommended, as the provision of detailed numbers would be over detailed and inflexible and was opposed by respondents to previous consultations. Further information on the potential capacity of the Settlement Area is however available within the supporting evidence base documents and has been used to identify likely future infrastructure requirements in consultation with infrastructure providers.
The emphasis on promoting this area over and above all other areas is flawed. The plans for Birkenhead Dock Estate are undeliverable. It is unrealistic to expect planning policy to change the perception of this area. The market has clearly indicated that it is not interested in a Woodside residential project. No evidence on deliverability is presented. There are no plans to address the declining vitality and viability of Birkenhead Town Centre, utility infrastructure is poor and transportation requirements are significant.	No change is recommended, as national policy indicates that local plans should encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth (NPPF paragraph 19).
It is not clear from Policy CS5 that the port function of Birkenhead Dock Estate will be retained in a rationalised and consolidated form by relocating displaced tenants and businesses that do not require a port location.	No change is recommended, as this is a matter to be addressed by the port operator in the context of the Port Masterplan, within the framework set out within the Core Strategy.

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<p>Point 10 of Policy CS5 should be altered to read "Maintain strong transport links and <u>rail and road</u> freight connections from the industrial areas and docklands to the M53 motorway <u>and the national rail network</u> ..." as the greater use of rail will not be delivered, unless existing links are retained and brought back into operable condition.</p>	<p>No change is recommended, as the existing wording would include rail and road connections and would not prevent the greater use of rail or the reuse of existing links, where this is found to be viable. Policy CS12 requires that detailed planning applications for each element of proposed development at East Float, West Float and Bidston Dock develop, update and implement the public transport and access strategy for the area and Policy CS41 - Transport Schemes states that land will be safeguarded to facilitate the greater use of public transport and to support the more efficient use of the rail network (point 3) and the protection of routes that may be critical in developing future transport infrastructure (point 5).</p>
<p>Point 13 of Policy CS5 should be altered to read: "Address the need for flood resilient design; reduce tidal, river and other flood risks; <u>to consider the availability of water and wastewater infrastructure by working with utility providers to promote a coordinated approach to the delivery of development and the delivery of future infrastructure works</u>" to remove the reference to local limitations on the supply of water and the treatment and disposal of waste water. An on-going dialogue will be maintained with the Council to provide information on infrastructure capacity and the delivery of new infrastructure and improvement works.</p>	<p>Accepted but it is recommended that point 13 of Policy CS5 is amended to read: "Address the need for flood resilient design and reduce tidal, river and other flood risks." as Policy CS42 – Development Management already requires development to be adequately served by existing local infrastructure.</p>
<p>The Core Strategy should contain a plan of the Birkenhead Dock Estate or refer to a plan within the Spatial Portrait to include Twelve Quays and West Float. The Core Strategy should also contain a plan of Cammell Lairds or refer to a plan within the Spatial Portrait</p>	<p>As the Core Strategy is not a site specific Local Plan, it is recommended that appropriate plans in the Spatial Portrait are referred to in the Glossary.</p>
<p>More detail on the levels of development expected in each Settlement Area should be provided.</p>	<p>No change recommended, as Policy CS5 is only intended to outline the overall priorities for the promotion of sustainable development within the Settlement Area rather than the quantities of development involved. The provision of detailed numbers would be over detailed and inflexible and was opposed by respondents to previous consultations. Further information on the potential capacity of the Settlement Area is, however, available within the supporting evidence base documents and has been used to identify likely future infrastructure requirements.</p>

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A new point should be added to Policy CS5 to read: <u>“Deliver a major new retail and leisure destination at Bidston Dock (Wirral Waters) to complement development at the East Float Strategic Site and which complements the retail and leisure offer at Birkenhead Town Centre;”</u> to reflect the proposal to develop a major nationally important leisure/retail destination at Bidston Dock.	No change is recommended, as the proposal to develop a major nationally important leisure and retail destination could only be supported subject to the provision of further information which has not yet been provided (NPPF paragraphs 24, 26 and 27 refer). Any proposal for town centre uses in an out of centre location would be required to comply with Policy CS29 – Criteria for Edge-of-Centre and Out-of-Centre Facilities.
A new point should be added to Policy CS5 to read: <u>“Deliver a commercial-led mixed use scheme at Woodside to enhance the economic role and commercial offer of Birkenhead Town Centre”</u> , to reflect the identification of Woodside in Policy CS2.	Accept the inclusion of a new point in Policy CS5 but a revised wording is recommended to remove the duplicate reference to 'commercial' and to reflect that delivery will be the responsibility of the developer, to read: <u>“Support a mixed use scheme at Woodside to enhance the economic role and commercial offer of Birkenhead Town Centre;”</u>