

STRATEGIC REGENERATION FRAMEWORK

A BLUEPRINT FOR ECONOMIC
GROWTH IN WIRRAL 2017-2020

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FOREWORD

Driving regeneration, creating jobs and ensuring sustainable, long-term growth in our economy is vitally important. This Strategic Regeneration Framework provides the route-map to achieve it. It clearly defines our plans for future development and investment by providing the robust evidence base, sound principles and strategic drivers on which to plan future regeneration.

Our Wirral Plan places economic growth at its heart: making sure our residents are able to access good, high paying jobs in a stable and thriving economy brings almost immeasurable benefits to all areas of our community, and helps brings us closer to achieving all of our 20 pledges.

The Framework provides confidence and certainty to residents, stakeholders and investors by being clear about our ambitions, plans and vision for the borough.

The Council will provide a clear leadership role, but involvement, joint working and integration with partners will be a major feature of the Strategic Regeneration Framework's delivery. The Framework identifies opportunities for the private sector to take forward and help shape the delivery of our ambitions and we will work with partners such as Wirral Chamber of Commerce and Mersey Maritime to ensure there is a strong private sector input to our plans.

Our plans for the future reflect our understanding of Wirral's growth and regeneration potential, the strengths of our communities and the inherent opportunities of our sector strengths in areas such as advanced manufacturing, energy, maritime and the visitor economy.

The opportunities set out in this Framework are based on an assessment of what is realistically deliverable, but they will require focussed energy and resources from a range of partners including the private sector if they are to be achieved.

As a member of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority we are working to implement our Devolution Deal with Government and the Strategic Regeneration Framework reflects the priorities and approach as outlined within the City Region's Growth Strategy. There has been strong joint working across the city region for many years, but establishing clear city region priorities for attracting investment, business support transport and assets is clearly supported by our progress as a Combined Authority.

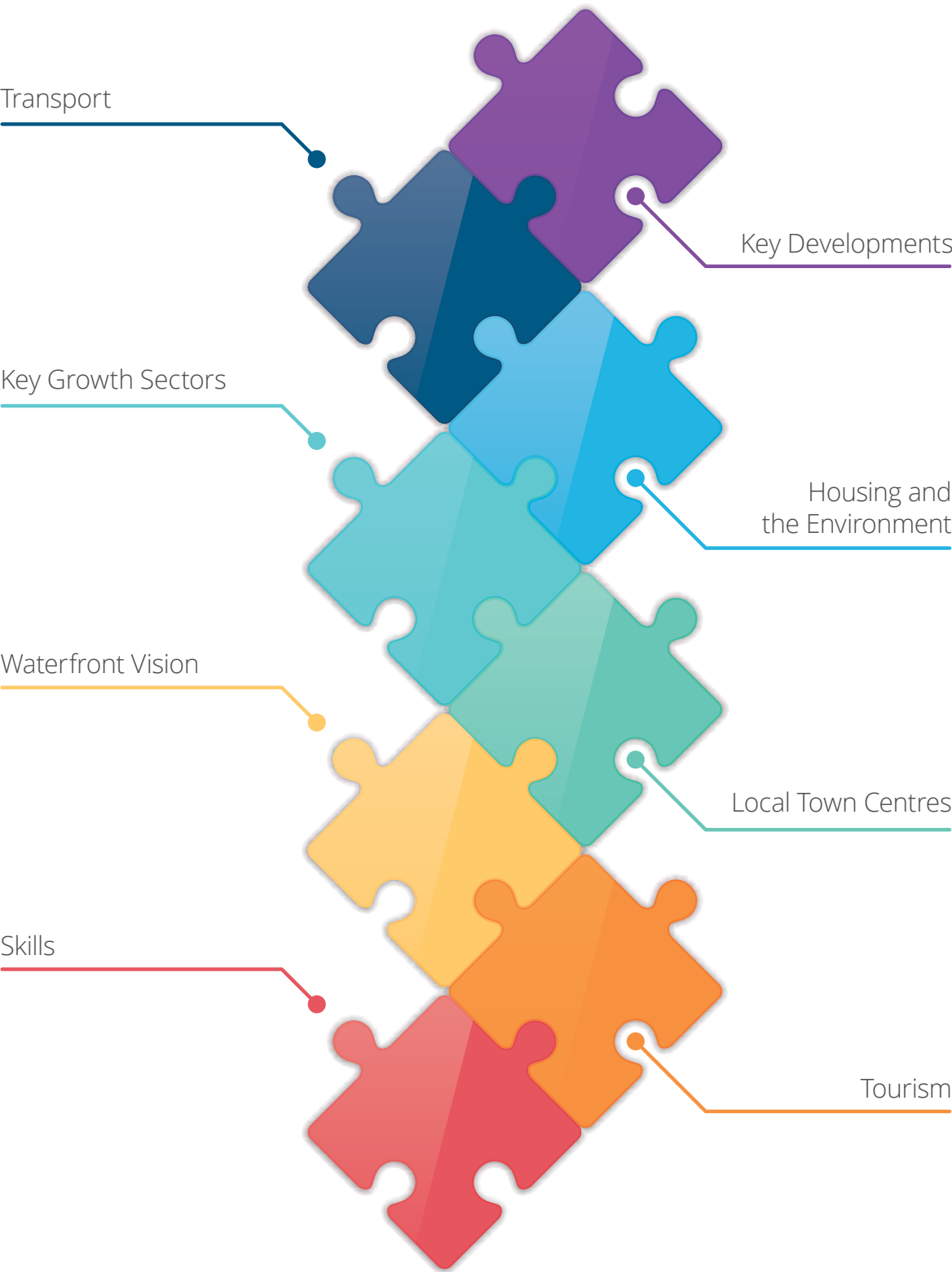
We have not been standing still in recent years, much has been achieved, but we look forward to working together with greater drive and pace in order to realise our shared vision for the borough.



P.L. Davies
Cllr Phil Davies

PLACE SHAPING

Linking key drivers and opportunities for growth and regeneration to maximise outcomes



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Wirral Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) sets out the priorities and challenges for economic growth in the borough, to help guide and proactively drive investment and activity across Wirral to deliver our ambitions for the local economy.

With a particular initial focus on the areas of significant growth potential identified and agreed in the Wirral Growth Plan (Birkenhead Town Centre, Birkenhead Hinterland, Wirral Waters Enterprise Zone (EZ) and the A41 corridor); the SRF will align the key development opportunities with relevant national, regional and local strategies to deliver sustainable and accelerated growth.

The Wirral Growth Plan translates our ambitions for economic growth into a clear direction of travel to ensure we deliver outcomes which enable all residents to contribute to and benefit from sustained prosperity, able to enjoy a good quality of life in a high quality environment. The SRF provides further detail on our spatial priorities and shows how we are integrating them with our thematic actions in areas such as housing, tourism, transport, environment, employment and skills, and sustainability.

To meet this challenge we will continue to provide an environment which supports our residents and our existing businesses to unlock and take advantage of these economic opportunities. However, we will also look to the future, encouraging investment into new sectors to generate jobs and growth in the forthcoming years.

The SRF balances a longer term vision for creating new places in Wirral, aimed at strengthening housing and commercial markets with a series of short term catalyst projects to start to change and shape places in line with the Vision.

Therefore the overriding purpose of the SRF is to put in place a clear, shared and delivery focussed framework to guide regeneration and to co-ordinate and secure public and private sector investment.

The SRF will:

- Set out a vision for economic growth in Wirral
- Provide a strategic context for guiding regeneration, housing and planning interventions
- Set a broad spatial framework within which more detailed place making plans can be developed to guide investment
- Build investor confidence through identifying a portfolio of strategic regeneration programmes and activities
- Ensure links with existing regeneration and investment projects across the borough and with emerging national and city region policy initiatives.
- Set out the linkages with the Liverpool City Region (LCR) Devolution Deal and Northern Powerhouse growth and infrastructure proposals.

OUR VISION FOR WIRRAL

Wirral is poised for significant change: the Northern Powerhouse agenda, the historic Devolution agreement and world-class offer available to businesses combine to create a once-in-a-generation opportunity to transform Wirral's economy for its residents both now and for generations to come.

Wirral is a key gateway to the Northern Powerhouse. We have set out our ambition for Wirral in our Vision 2020 and Growth Plans. Already one of the most attractive places in the UK to live and do business, Wirral combines the benefits of modern living and a thriving local economy – it is a beautiful place, host of globally significant sporting events and is well-connected to the rest of the UK, Europe and beyond. It also boasts a unique waterfront location facing arguably the UK's finest civic panorama – the Liverpool Waterfront.

Wirral also has the opportunity to further its reputation for its independent sectors, music and retail to anchor and underpin the development of new places and spaces.

In addition Wirral has nationally significant economic development projects such as Wirral Waters EZ and key growth sectors such as advanced manufacturing, maritime, visitor economy and energy. One of the largest wind farms in the world is being constructed in Liverpool Bay and the Mersey river has one of the largest tidal ranges in Europe with significant potential to generate sustained renewable energy, all of which provide unprecedented opportunities.

The time is right to accelerate delivery of the development opportunities across the Borough in order to drive forward the Growth Plan vision of sustainable growth where:

“Wirral will be a place where employers want to invest, business thrives and high quality jobs are provided and where all our residents are able to contribute to and benefit from sustained prosperity and a good quality of life in a high quality environment.”

CONTEXT FOR GROWTH

There are a number of factors that position Wirral to deliver transformational growth:

LOCATION

Wirral, part of the Liverpool City Region, is positioned as the western gateway to the Northern Powerhouse. With one of the fastest growing economies in the UK, unique physical characteristics, plus access to a pool of highly skilled talent, we are seizing the unprecedented opportunity provided by the Liverpool City Region Devolution deal to build on our successes, address some of our remaining challenges and put Wirral and the Liverpool City Region at the heart of the Northern Powerhouse.

BUSINESS BASE

Already home to global businesses such as Unilever, Cammell Laird, Bristol Myers Squibb and Typhoo Tea, Wirral's economy is worth £4.6 billion GVA contributing 16% of the wider £29.4 billion GVA city region economy. With nearly 8,500 enterprises our business base continues to grow with a net gain of over 1,000 businesses in the last two years. We are proud of our thriving small business base, with our 88% of enterprises being micro businesses which continue to sustain and grow.

MARKET DEMAND

Future potential demand has been identified within the key growth sectors of Advanced Engineering, Energy, Maritime and the Visitor Economy. These sectors are the focus of targeted action to drive both indigenous growth and inward investment building on the success of business already operating within these sectors. This includes ensuring provision for clustering as well as actions related to business support and skills provision.

WIRRAL GROWTH COMPANY

We are creating a Joint Venture Public/Private company to drive market-led development at pace.

PEOPLE AND SKILLS

Our people are also our key strength. We have a population of almost 321,000, and a working age population of over 194,000 of which 69% are in employment. Within a one hour drive there are a further 6 million people providing access to a pool of highly skilled talent to recruit from with over 1.2 million graduates. The city region is home to 4 universities, including an elite Russell Group Institution with a total of 12 universities within an hour's drive.

CONNECTIVITY

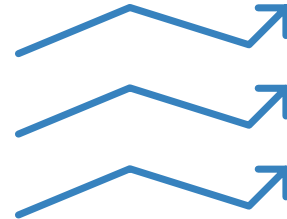
Our national and global connectivity is a major competitive advantage with two international airports within a 45 minute drive serving over 200 global destinations. The £300m Liverpool2 deep water container terminal has transformed freight and logistics for the city region and the UK and we have outstanding national motorway and rail networks with the West Coast Mainline providing a two hour journey time to London. Our excellent commuter infrastructure links to Liverpool and North Wales and Chester.

The Strategic Regeneration Framework will ensure that our vibrant economy continues to grow by providing the conditions within which investment is encouraged and supported.

GVA



WIRRAL GVA PER HEAD

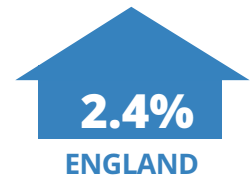
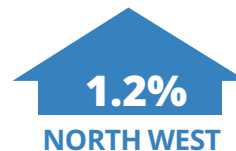
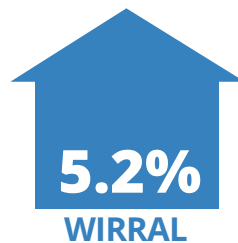
FAST GROWING GVA PER HEAD
(2015)**1ST** IN LIVERPOOL CITY REGION**2ND** IN NORTHWEST**6TH** NATIONALLY

JOB DENSITY

WIRRAL

60 JOBS PER
100 PEOPLE

(2015)



WIRRAL HAD AN ANNUAL INCREASE IN ITS JOB DENSITY OF 5.2% COMPARED TO ONLY 1.2% FOR THE NORTH WEST AND 2.4% FOR ENGLAND WHICH IS AN IMPROVEMENT THAT IS MORE THAN DOUBLE THE NATIONAL AVERAGE.

(2014-2015)

EMPLOYEE JOBS

PUBLIC SECTOR

39% WIRRAL **26%** NATIONAL

STRONG OPPORTUNITY
FOR PRIVATE SECTOR GROWTH

PROPORTION OF FTE JOBS IN BIRKENHEAD & WIRRAL ARE BELOW NATIONAL AVERAGE
(2015)

**PROPORTION
OF FTE JOBS
BELOW LCR,
NW, ENGLAND
AVERAGE**

(2015)

WEEKLY WORKPLACE EARNINGS

WIRRAL BELOW LCR,
NW & ENGLAND AVERAGE

£14.20 **£13.30**

LOWER THAN LCR LOWER THAN NW

£54.30

LOWER THAN ENGLAND

(2016)

BUSINESS

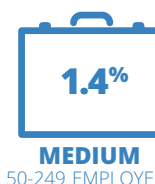
2015 2016

+1025 ▶ 8425

NUMBER OF BUSINESSES
IN WIRRAL HAS GROWN SINCE 2015

PROFESSIONAL, SCIENTIFIC
& TECHNICAL SECTOR

LARGEST PROPORTION IN WIRRAL

19%
WIRRAL**20%**
BIRKENHEAD

(2016)

POPULATION, EMPLOYMENT & SKILLS



TOTAL POPULATION

321,000

(2015)

69%OF 194,000 WORKING AGE
POPULATION ARE EMPLOYED6M PEOPLE WITHIN 1HR DRIVE
GIVES ACCESS TO HIGHLY SKILLED
TALENT TO RECRUIT FROM,
INCLUDING 1.2M GRADUATES**LCR HOME TO 4 UNIVERSITIES**

- 12 WITHIN 1HR DRIVE

WIRRAL MET COLLEGE -
FE SPECIALIST IN CONSTRUCTION
AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT IN
WIRRAL WATERS ENTERPRISE ZONE

CONNECTIVITY

**2 INTERNATIONAL
AIRPORTS**

WITHIN A 45 MINUTE DRIVE

**£300m**LIVERPOOL2 DEEP WATER
CONTAINER TERMINAL HAS
**TRANSFORMED FREIGHT
& LOGISTICS FOR LCR****OUTSTANDING
NATIONAL RAIL AND
MOTORWAY LINKS**
(2 HOURS FROM LONDON)

EXCELLENT COMMUTER INFRASTRUCTURE LINKS TO:

**139,775**PEOPLE COMMUTE TO
LIVERPOOL BY FERRY PER YEAR**2 HOURS** BY RAIL TO LONDON
3 MINS BY RAIL TO LIVERPOOL**LOGISTICS & FREIGHT EXCELLENCE**
VIA L2 DEEP WATER PORTRAPID ACCESS TO
UK MOTORWAY NETWORK
VIA M53

ASSETS

**1,800+**
COUNCIL ASSETSAVERAGE HOUSE PRICES
£135k - £140k
(2013/14) (2014/15)HOUSING ZONE STATUS
SECURED**HOUSEHOLD
NUMBERS**
PREDICTED TO GROW
(CURRENTLY 140,000)

HOUSING

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The SRF defines the strategic context to drive the regeneration of Wirral and it sets out the key strategies, principles and objectives across the range of inter-related economic, social and physical issues that impact on the borough. In doing this the SRF reflects relevant national, city region and local strategies in order to maximise the opportunities to drive forward regeneration within key spatial development areas. Key strategies include:

The Government's Industrial Strategy Green Paper

Government has set out its vision to drive forward industrial strategy across the entire economy, identifying 10 pillars for economic growth: investing in science, research and innovation; developing skills; upgrading infrastructure; supporting businesses to start and grow; improving procurement; encouraging trade and inward investment; delivering affordable energy and clean growth; cultivating world leading sectors; driving growth across the whole country; and creating the right institutions to bring together sectors and places. The strategy will provide a policy framework against which major public and private sector investment decisions can be made, and Wirral's sector strengths are poised to capitalise on this.

Liverpool City Region Growth Strategy [This document](#) sets out the strategy for growth for the City Region and identifies key priority sectors for growth – Low Carbon Energy, Advanced Manufacturing, Digital and Creative, Finance and Professional Services, Health and Life Sciences, Maritime and Logistics and the Visitor Economy. Focussing on these growth sectors will maximise the impact of investment and opportunities over the coming years.

Wirral's growth sectors of advanced manufacturing, energy, maritime and visitor economy have been identified by city region research as underpinning these key priority areas.

Devolution Deal

The devolution deal with Government gives the Liverpool City Region (LCR) control over a £900m, 30 year investment fund which will help unlock the huge economic potential of the City Region. It also gives the LCR Combined Authority (CA) control over transport budgets and more responsibility for employment and skills provision and strategic regeneration opportunities at a local level. As the second largest partner in the city region, Wirral is a key player in these opportunities. As part of the deal a 'single pot' approach to funding has been established which consolidates various funding streams into one allocation. This allows a streamlined approach to allocating funding across the city region.

The Northern Powerhouse

The Government initiative aims to rebalance the economy by increasing economic growth in the north of England. Critical to the vision is the implementation of a sustainable and connected transport system which links up the cities and towns in the North of England and the LCR CA is a prominent partner within the Transport for the North grouping which will identify the transformational infrastructure schemes needed to radically improve connectivity across the North of England.

Atlantic Gateway

Wirral has been a key player in developing the Atlantic Gateway strategy which recognises the potential for growth linked to the maritime, port and energy sectors.

Mersey Dee Alliance

The Mersey Dee Alliance (MDA) represents shared economic interests across West Cheshire, Wirral and the North East Wales area. The area is unique in the UK as although it is divided by a national boundary it is recognised as a single economic sub-region with a population of close to 1 million. MDA partners work together to realise the full sustainable economic growth potential of the region.

The Wirral Plan – A 2020 Vision

[The Wirral Plan](#) set out the vision for the borough and identifies 20 key outcomes to be delivered over the next three years that reflect the three key priority areas of Business, People and Environment. The Plan provides the impetus to create economic opportunities by attracting enterprise and investment and embraces new models of delivery.

Wirral Core Strategy Local Plan

[The Core Strategy Local Plan](#) will set the overall statutory framework for future land use planning decisions in Wirral over the next 15 years. It sets out the Council's view of what will be a sustainable pattern of development for Wirral and the strategic policies to which neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity. The Core Strategy Local Plan is expected to be submitted to the Secretary of State for public examination in 2019 and once adopted, will be used to make decisions on planning applications and inform other planning documents including a site-specific local plan that will identify the sites needed to implement the policies in the Core Strategy.

The emerging Core Strategy Local Plan sets out:

- a brief picture of Wirral and its relationship with the surrounding areas;
- the spatial vision and objectives for the area;
- the proposed broad spatial strategy and local priorities for each of the Borough's main groups of settlements;
- the strategic policies that will be used to ensure the delivery of the strategy and guide individual development management decisions

At present, the emerging Core Strategy Local Plan sits alongside the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) for Wirral (adopted 2000), the Joint Waste Local Plan for Merseyside and Halton (adopted July 2013) and 'made' Neighbourhood Plans for Devonshire Park (2015) and Hoylake (2016). The strategic policies in the UDP will be replaced by those in the Core Strategy Local Plan and the site-specific elements of the UDP (including the Proposals Map) will be

replaced by a follow-on site-specific Local Plan. In addition, a statutory Spatial Framework for the LCR is expected to be prepared by the City Region Mayor.

The LCR Housing Strategy Plan is being developed to identify common objectives for housing growth and investment across the sub-region.

The Wirral Growth Plan

[The Wirral Growth Plan](#) sets out the aspiration for growth for the borough and the implementation of the plan will support the delivery of the following thematic outcome areas, thereby providing a clear framework for investment and growth.

- **Growing competitive businesses**
- **Increasing employment**
- **Workforce skills that match business needs**
- **Increase inward investment**
- **Develop a vibrant visitor economy**
- **Provide efficient, well maintained and accessible transport networks**
- **Assets and buildings are fit for purpose for Wirral businesses**
- **The provision of good quality housing**

The Growth Plan defines the spatial areas that are seen as priorities for regeneration and key investment opportunities and they therefore provide the starting point as the footprint for the SRF. However, there are other areas across the Borough where there are opportunities for regeneration and these are included within the SRF so that development proposals can be taken forward within the context of the Vision and Principles set out in this document. In addition there are further supporting strategies to the Wirral Plan which include key principles and actions that relate to economic growth. These also provide the context within which the SRF has been developed and include the strategies relating to housing, tourism, culture, digital connectivity, transport and sustainability.

Infrastructure plan

Financial Planning

Budget / Income

- Business Growth:**
- New business
 - Sector growth
 - Export
 - Business space

- Employment:**
- Access
 - Engagement
 - Upskill

- Housing Growth:**
- New sites
 - Enabling
 - Marketing

- Transport:**
- Efficient networks
 - Access
 - Sustainability



- Inward Investment:**
- Attracting new business
 - Marking place
 - Supply chain growth

- Tourism:**
- Events
 - Place marketing
 - Strong business

- Skills:**
- Skills for growth
 - Skill gaps
 - Meeting business needs
 - Links to schools

Partnership / Collaboration

Core Strategy



Conclusion:

The review of key policies shows that there is a robust higher level framework in place within which the opportunities and needs of Wirral can be considered and which has informed the development of this SRF.

This is principally drawn from the national strategies, Wirral Plan and Growth Plan, together with their supporting strategies as well as from the LCR Growth Strategy and Devolution Deal.

THE WIRRAL OPPORTUNITY

Wirral offers a varied range of modern office, warehousing and industrial accommodation - plus the land to deliver much more. We have major opportunities including the potential to develop the most exciting mixed-use waterfront at Woodside, a new commercial and civic hub in Birkenhead and further development sites at dynamic New Brighton.

£5.75

PER SQ FT

**COST OF MODERN INDUSTRIAL
SPACE IN WIRRAL**

IT'S £10.25 PER SQ FT IN LONDON

£21

PER SQ FT

**COST OF MODERN, NEW-BUILD
GRADE A OFFICE SPACE IN WRRAL**

IT'S £38 PER SQ FT IN MANCHESTER

£250,000

PER ACRE

**COST OF INDUSTRIAL
DEVELOPMENT LAND**

464.1

ACRES

**AVAILABLE EMPLOYMENT LAND
IN WIRRAL**

70

ACRES

**SIZE OF WOODSIDE WATERFRONT
REGENERATION SITE, OVERLOOKING
LIVERPOOL WATERFRONT**

32

**NUMBER OF SITES/ASSETS WIRRAL
GROWTH COMPANY WILL VEST,
INITIALLY, IN ITS FIRST SERIES OF
JOINT VENTURES**

DELIVERING GROWTH

The ambition of the SRF is to deliver by 2020:

- 5,000 new jobs
- £250m of new inward investment
- £450m of tourism revenue
- 3,500 new homes
- 250 new businesses
- 250,000 sq ft of new employment space

The spatial priorities for the SRF are:

- Birkenhead Town Centre – including Hamilton Square and Woodside
- Wirral Waters Enterprise Zone
- The A41 employment corridor – including Wirral International Business Park
- New Brighton
- Local Town Centres

The strategic themes of the SRF for driving growth are:

- High Quality Housing
- Employment, Skills and Economic Development
- Excellent Connectivity – transport and digital
- The Tourism and Culture offer
- Sustainable development and a high quality environment
- A great place to live and work – healthier lifestyles and safer neighbourhoods

Details of these themes are set out in the appendix to this Framework.

We have also identified some key principles to support regeneration:

Maximise existing momentum

- A range of delivery approaches will be considered in order to ensure a step change in pace.
- For council owned assets and sites this will include direct delivery of schemes by the council or through partnership arrangements with investors / developers including the formation of a Joint Venture Property Company in order to enable market led development to take place in the future.
- The council is in the process of identifying an investor / developer partner to work with us in setting up a Wirral Growth Company. A joint venture to support the delivery of a number of key development opportunities across the borough.

Utilisation of public resources

- The LCR single investment fund has been established as part of the devolution deal with government and enables priority schemes across the city region to be driven forward.
- The Wirral Waters Investment Fund: The fund is one of the innovative approaches that the council has taken to support development in the EZ. The EZ status allows the council to prudentially borrow against the projected uplift in business rates to support new developments in the zone.

Engage the community

- Our communities must be at the heart of regeneration across the borough which will be taken forward through a range of mechanisms including our Constituency committees, our local council publication Wirral View and on-going resident consultation.

A council that supports growth

In line with the Wirral Plan, the Council will provide the strategic lead for Wirral's sustainable growth and proactively co-ordinate dialogue and delivery with partners to achieve agreed outcomes. This includes:

- Providing strong leadership
- Communicating with and involving partners, stakeholders and businesses
- Understanding the needs of residents and local markets to shape places
- Ensuring a positive planning environment
- Using public sector assets much more

responsively to meet the needs of communities and businesses

- Being ambitious to help deliver an even stronger future for the city region by influencing growth and decision making beyond our statutory boundaries

To advance this ambitious agenda we will build on the strong partnership arrangements and influence with our partners through local structures such as the Wirral Growth Board, and regional structures such as the CA and the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).



KEY INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The Strategic Regeneration Framework has identified those spatial areas that provide the key opportunities for development and investment following analysis of employment land availability, business space and feedback from developers and investors.

The locality level is the one at which most actions will be delivered, within the overall framework of the SRF, but the boundaries of these areas are not rigidly fixed. There will be certain developments, activities and functions that reflect a clear sense of place and the council will need to be flexible as to linkage and the margins of each area. The Framework is an enabling, not a constraining document.

Viability is a significant issue for employment uses in Wirral and the draft Core Strategy notes that given the low rental and rateable values of industrial and office uses that public sector intervention may be needed in the short term to kick start development.

The SRF recognises this and has enabled the prioritisation of key sites to support the rationale for public funding from programmes such as the LCR Single Investment Fund, the Wirral Waters Investment Fund and other national government programmes.

Investment is already taking place in these areas and they provide the initial basis from which the Strategic Regeneration Framework will be driven forward, programmes developed and schemes delivered.

Profiles have been prepared for those areas identified as providing significant growth potential and they provide further detail on the spatial priority areas of:

- Birkenhead Town Centre
- Hamilton Square
- Woodside Waterfront
- Wirral Waters
- The A41 Corridor
- Borough-wide investment opportunities



KEY DEVELOPMENTS

- The Wirral Growth Company will drive development at pace
- The Wirral Waters Investment Fund is kickstarting projects in our Enterprise Zone (EZ)
- A new residential offer, including potential for student accommodation in Birkenhead to revitalise the area - supporting new retail and leisure uses such as an independent food, retail and music offer
- A new vibrant and refocussed market to position Birkenhead as a city region destination
- A civic cluster to support a modern thriving centre

GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES AND KEY ASSETS

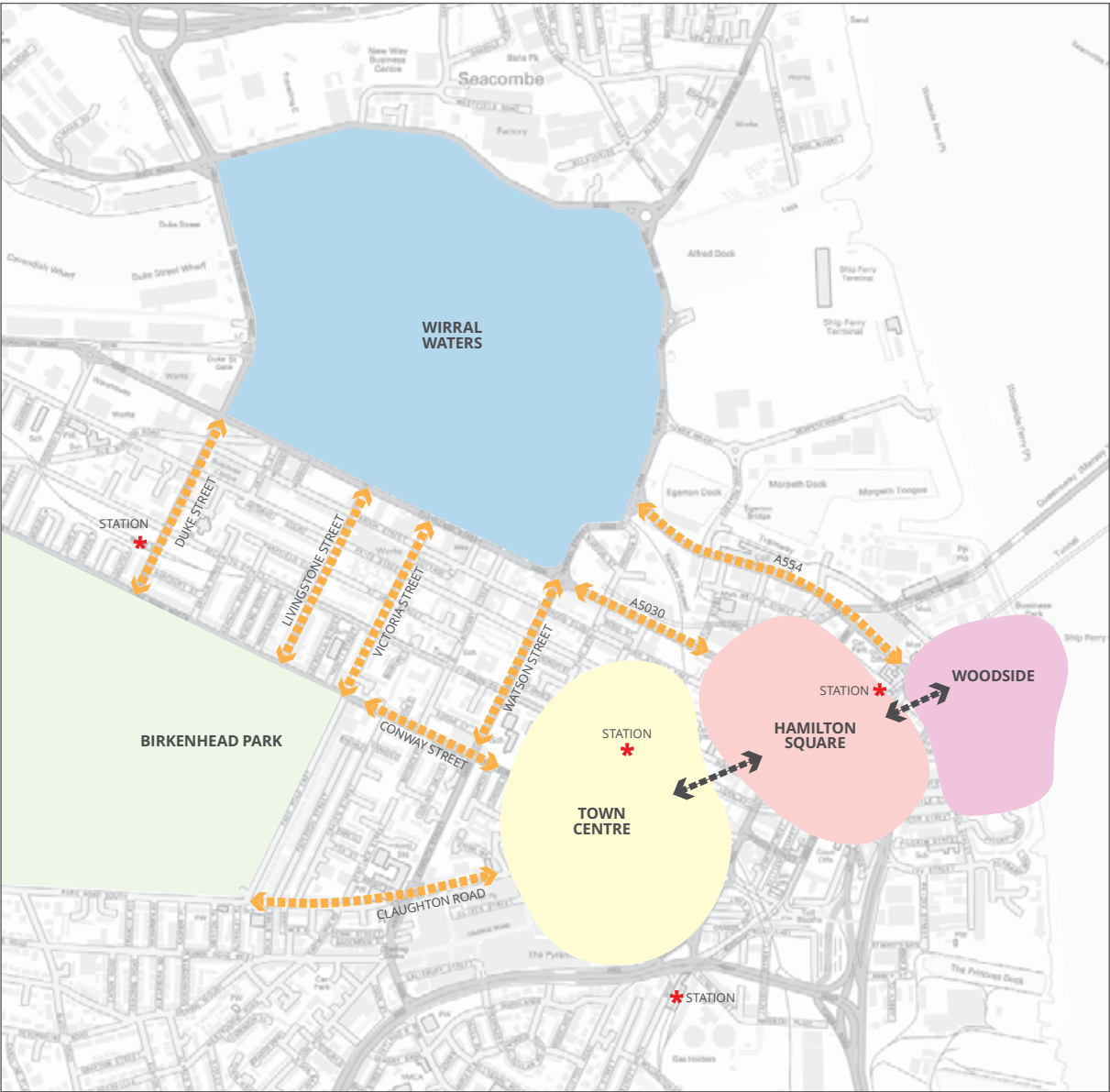


BIRKENHEAD TOWN CENTRE

AMBITION

Birkenhead town centre will once again be a thriving town centre of choice, a destination in its own right as a result of the range and quality of its retail, food and leisure offer, and our civic hub. Its position in the sub-region will be cemented as a second-tier centre only behind Liverpool.

CONTEXT PLAN



POTENTIAL

Birkenhead Town Centre is the largest town in Wirral and a sub-regional destination for retail and leisure in the wider Liverpool City Region and Cheshire area.

The opportunity to maximise and grow the retail, leisure and evening economy in Birkenhead is significant given its catchment potential (both in terms of scale and affluence) and the presence of key assets under Council ownership strategically located in the centre.

Birkenhead has all the makings of a vibrant, creative and inspiring destination in the Liverpool City Region with a well established market and fantastic transport infrastructure, with the town centre having three train stations, and a modern bus station.

The opportunity is to redevelop and redesign existing assets into a modern highly functioning, thriving centre with a reconfigured civic function, a new, vibrant and refocussed market dedicated to fresh produce and local goods, with a retail and leisure offer worthy of its prime location in the LCR.

This is an area that is ready for change and is a key priority for the council.

WHY INVEST?

The Town centre has significant untapped potential within its catchment population. Birkenhead will be the new civic hub for public sector functions to support the growth and aspirations for the area, with reconfigured infrastructure to enable growth and improved linkages to other key locations such as Woodside, Hamilton Square and Wirral Waters.

Birkenhead is strategically located at the end of the A41 corridor which supports the growth of key employment and residential developments for Wirral and feeds directly into Birkenhead.

With Liverpool City Centre less than 3 minutes away on the train and the iconic Mersey Ferry on its doorstep, Birkenhead has the makings of a thriving and vibrant centre which supports the growth of Liverpool City Centre but which has a separate and distinct identity providing different, yet complementary functions and uses.

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY

Town centre key outputs:

- A civic cluster of 60,000sqm incorporating civic and commercial floorspace and car parking spaces.
- Increased and improved residential offer.
- An enhanced station gateway – a recognised entry point to the town centre, bringing in visitors from the City Region and beyond.
- An entertainment and leisure offer providing visitor and evening economy focussed space to complement the commercial opportunities.
- Total Gross Development Value across the neighbourhood in excess of £200m.

WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW

Clustering our civic functions

To underpin and support the regeneration of Birkenhead and the town centre, the council will commit to relocating the core of our civic functions to the centre, to be housed in a new purpose-built facility.

One public estate

Further to the clustering of our own civic functions within the town centre, we will work with our wider public sector partners to further support the delivery of a true concentration of public sector services within the town centre.

Strategic acquisitions

We have identified, as part of the preparation of this document, a number of sites which we believe will be key for the delivery of the ambitions that we hold for the town centre. We are progressing discussions with third-party landowners in each case to identify opportunities for strategic acquisitions to ensure that we have control of these sites. We will continue to work to identify and secure sites as required, alongside any future private sector delivery partner(s).

Transformational infrastructure delivery

We understand that we need to deliver more place-changing infrastructure across Birkenhead and the town centre, specifically to unlock potential in the future, building on previous major investment in a new bus station, removal of a redundant tunnel flyover, construction of Europa Boulevard and Conway Park railway station.

The Council has commissioned a scoping exercise to look at the future requirements to ensure that Birkenhead, the A41 corridor, Woodside and Wirral Waters are linked and connected in the most sustainable and effective way to ensure that people and places are intrinsically linked.

Planning policy integration

Our adopted development plan supports the regeneration of Birkenhead town centre, and our emerging Core Strategy Local Plan promotes it as a sub-regional retail centre, including supporting development for all key town centre uses (A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1, C1, D1, and D2) with residential supported at upper floor levels and backland sites.

We will work with delivery partners to develop a comprehensive masterplan for the centre, which will be signed off by the Council in advance of any planning applications, to give greater certainty to delivery and de-risk the process as much as possible.

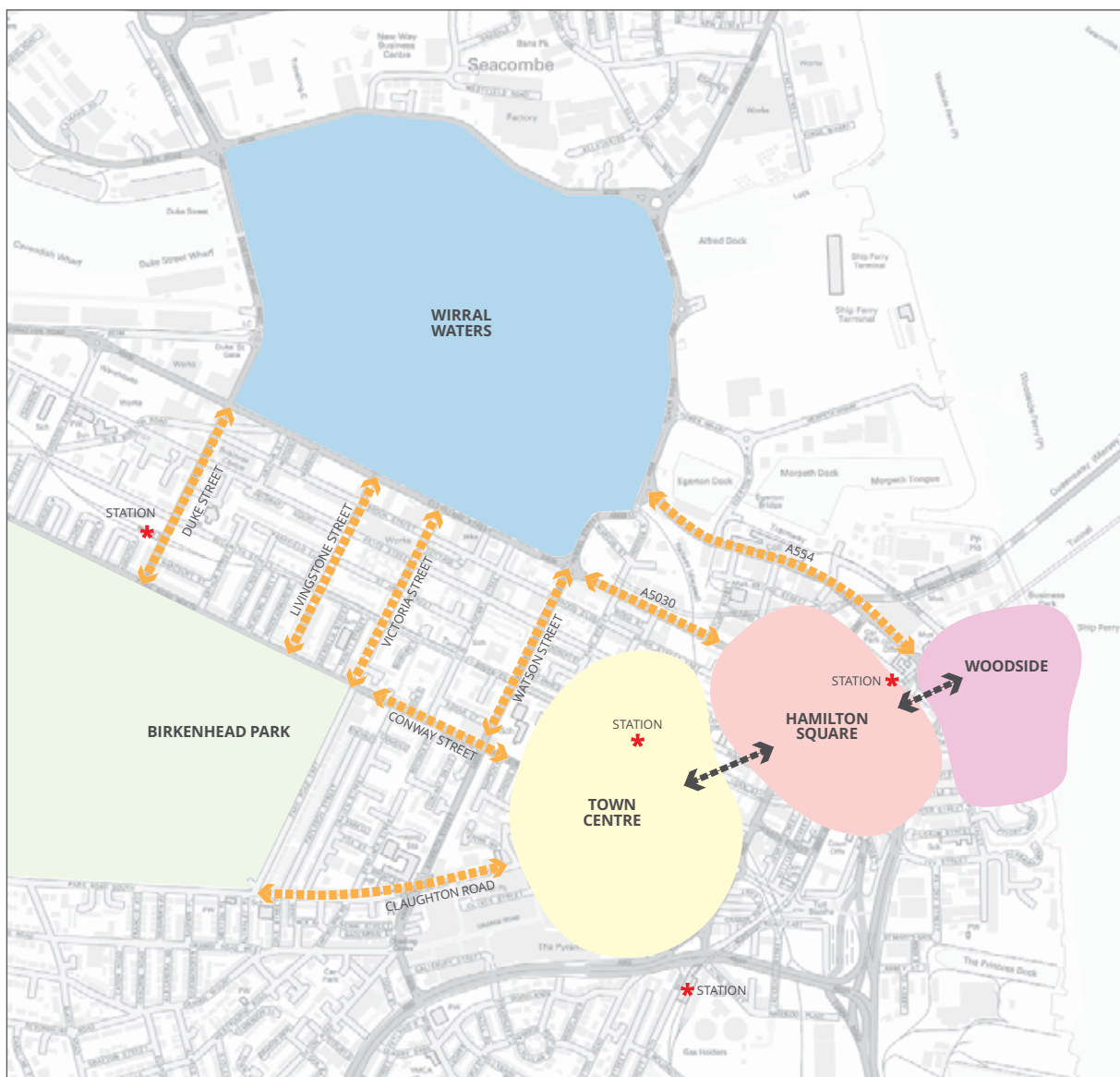


HAMILTON SQUARE

AMBITION

Hamilton Square will be a unique sustainable residential neighbourhood for a new urban community within Birkenhead, attracted to the area by the economic, educational, retail and recreational opportunities within the town centre, Woodside, Wirral Waters, and Liverpool and the wider sub-region over the Mersey. Its identity will be steeped in its heritage, including its scale and the quality of development that will be brought forward.

CONTEXT PLAN



POTENTIAL

Hamilton Square has the largest collection of Grade I listed buildings in a square outside of London and is a truly iconic setting in the middle of Birkenhead.

Strategically located between Woodside and Birkenhead Town Centre, it is the key linkage between the waterfront at Woodside Ferry, Hamilton Square train station and the town centre. Hamilton Square is a distinct destination in its own right, with a spectacular setting of Georgian buildings and beautiful public space which forms key walking routes across Birkenhead. Liverpool City Centre can be reached in under 3 minutes by underground rail.

The listed buildings within Hamilton Square are a key asset for Birkenhead and require significant investment to realise their full potential, including investment in their surroundings to reflect their quality.

Birkenhead Town Hall overlooks the square and provides a major opportunity for re-use as a boutique hotel and conference facility which would sit alongside a mix of commercial and the re-emergence of a residential focus in the square.

WHY INVEST?

The surrounding area comprises a network of streets and buildings with exceptional character and regeneration opportunities. The area has the potential to become home

to cultural and creative entrepreneurs looking to set up in what can be regarded as Liverpool's new Left Bank.

The council's assets here could therefore serve as a catalyst to the creation of a live/work town centre community, including the potential for student accommodation as part of a wider residential mix.

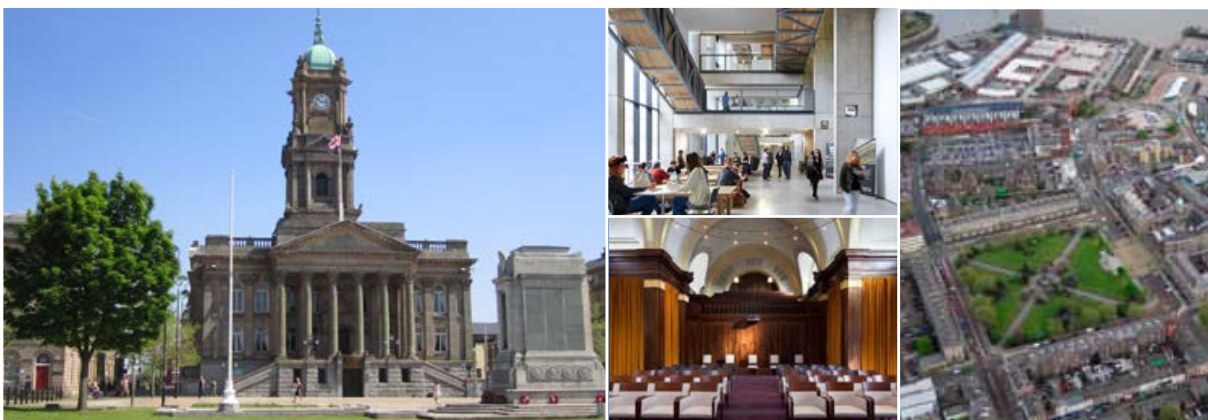
On the corner of Hamilton Square, the Treasury building boasts unrivalled views across Birkenhead to the Liverpool Waterfront. This building could accommodate a modern hotel or residential complex.

There is significant opportunity to regenerate Hamilton Square into a truly remarkable residential area and to create a vibrant neighbourhood to support the growth and aspirations for Birkenhead, Woodside, Wirral Waters and Liverpool City centre.

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY

Hamilton Square neighbourhood key outputs:

- Hotel offer.
- Residential units including student bed spaces, 3,600sqm of retail, food and drink floorspace.
- Total Gross Development Value across the neighbourhood in excess of £60m.



WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW

Use of our assets

We recognise that we have ownership of land and buildings within the Hamilton Square neighbourhood which could hold greater commercial potential in the future including the Town Hall. The potential is even greater when the wider public sector is considered – including for example the Police Station. We are committed to reviewing and where appropriate, rationalising our assets in this area to drive greater value returns for the public sector – through either direct disposal or inclusion within any future delivery vehicle that may be established to deliver our regeneration aspirations.

Strategic acquisitions

We have identified a number of sites which we believe will be key for the delivery of the ambitions that we hold for Hamilton Square.

We are progressing discussions with third party landowners in each case to identify opportunities for strategic acquisitions to ensure that we have control of these sites. We will continue to work to identify and acquire sites as required, alongside any future private sector delivery partner(s).

Transformational infrastructure delivery

We understand that we need to deliver placechanging infrastructure across Birkenhead to unlock potential in the future. We are committed, alongside public and private sector partners, to delivering this infrastructure to support our regeneration priorities. For Hamilton Square this could include consideration of a new parking strategy and vehicular flows around the square.

Planning policy integration

Our emerging development plan supports a focus of regeneration to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area at Hamilton Square, to secure a long-term mixed use commercial future for the designated area. Delivery of additional housing in Wirral is also a corporate priority. We will work with future investment partners to deliver development within this quarter of the town.

Stakeholder engagement and lobbying

Working with Central Government alongside local partners such as the Local Enterprise Partnership, Birkenhead Business Improvement District and Wirral Chamber of Commerce, we will place Birkenhead's regeneration at the forefront of stakeholders thinking including testing delivery strategy fundamentals and areas of innovation and best practice, and alignment of strategy and priorities with funding opportunities.

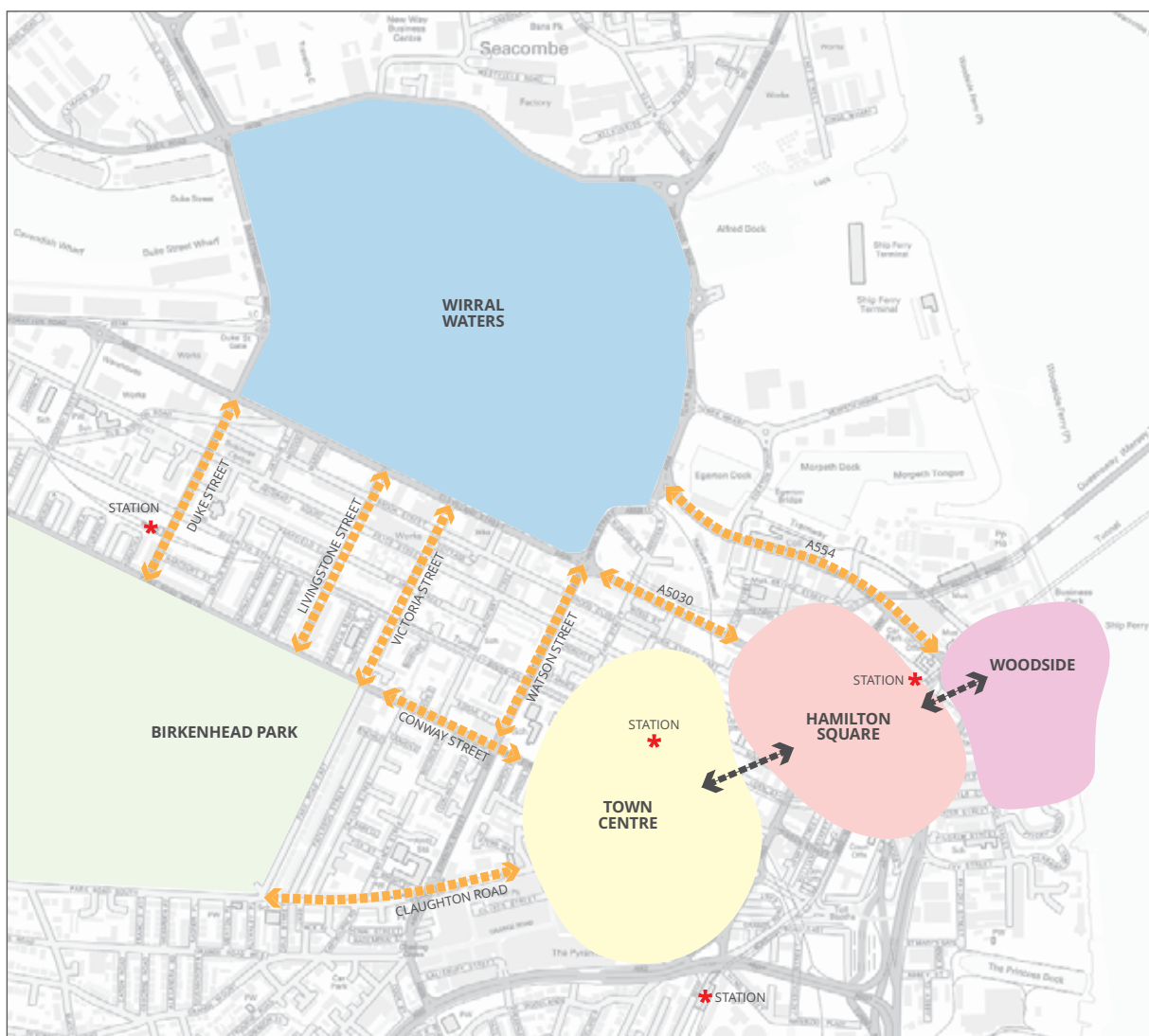
WOODSIDE WATERFRONT

AMBITION

At Woodside, Wirral will have a waterfront residential and commercial quarter of scale, style and built quality that reflects its positioning on the Left Bank of the Mersey, but which also respects and enhances the heritage assets within Birkenhead.

This will be an iconic and exciting residential and commercial hub within Wirral, a home to hotel and conference facilities, commercial office activity, and new residents overlooking one of the world's most recognisable and spectacular views – that of the UNESCO World Heritage Liverpool Waterfront.

CONTEXT PLAN



POTENTIAL

Woodside is the jewel in the crown for opportunity and ambition for Wirral and the LCR. Woodside is under 3 minutes from Liverpool City Centre, by the fast, frequent underground Merseyrail network. It also has excellent bus and rail links to much of the Wirral and wider City Region. Woodside Ferry terminal provides an additional link to Liverpool city centre which has the potential to enhance its role as part of a regeneration project.

The council supports the principle of a key commercial core at Woodside with links to Hamilton Square and Birkenhead needing to be embedded in the plans to create a corridor of opportunity to Birkenhead Town Centre. The pieces are in place to create a truly unique, sustainable and cultural asset to the City Region and beyond.

WHY INVEST?

The area is perfectly located to act as the next phase of opportunity associated with the critical mass of activity within the Liverpool Central Business District.

The Woodside area holds the potential to deliver an innovative and modern, mixed use development within an area of huge opportunity, enviable connectivity, and with the presence of significantly underutilised public

sector assets. It will form the gateway to Birkenhead from Liverpool, with the resulting opportunity undeniable.

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY

Woodside presents a once in a lifetime opportunity to achieve a landmark private sector-led development which should not only drive the regeneration of this important part of Birkenhead but also achieve a quality of design and visual impact worthy of its location. Woodside could comprise a mixed use series of buildings and public spaces which:

- Uses including commercial office, retail, food and drink, hotel and conference, and residential.
- Over 65,000sqm commercial floorspace, a 200-bed hotel, over 580 residential units, and 450 car parking spaces.
- Re-connects the waterfront with the centre of Birkenhead, including Hamilton Square, and Wirral Waters.
- Represents an attraction in its own right and creates a high quality and accessible environment for visitors, day and night and throughout the year.
- Total Gross Development Value across the area in excess of £300m.



WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW

Strategic acquisitions

We have identified a number of sites which we believe will be key for the delivery of the ambitions that we hold for Woodside, including public sector assets.

Woodside Steering Group

A Woodside Steering Group is set up that includes the Council and the key landowners for the Woodside Masterplan area. This is designed to bring third-party landowners and partners together to secure the redevelopment of Woodside through a collaborative partnership approach that builds on the 2010 BDP Masterplan.

Transformational infrastructure delivery

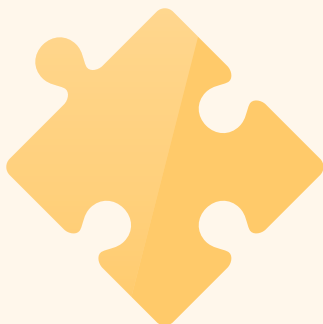
We understand that we need to deliver placechanging infrastructure across Birkenhead and Woodside specifically to unlock potential in the future. We are producing a Transport and Major Infrastructure and Delivery Strategy to support identified growth potential. We are committed, alongside public and private sector partners, to delivering this infrastructure to support our regeneration priorities. For Woodside this could include a potential re-alignment of the A41 at the Woodside gyratory,

and redesign of the road and infrastructure layout, transformational public realm and enhanced, innovative public transport.

The Council has commissioned a scoping exercise to look at the future requirements to ensure that Birkenhead, the A41 corridor, Woodside and Wirral Waters are linked and connected in the most sustainable and effective way to ensure that people and places are intrinsically linked.

Planning policy integration

Urban Regeneration is a consistent theme in our existing and emerging development plans and the mixed-use redevelopment of Woodside to enhance the economic role and commercial offer of Birkenhead Town Centre would support these objectives as well as contributing to the delivery of additional housing in Wirral which is a corporate priority. The endorsed 2010 Woodside Masterplan is being updated by partners and the Council will work with delivery partners and landowners to develop a comprehensive masterplan for Woodside. This will provide a comprehensive framework and a holistic approach to delivery.



WATERFRONT VISION

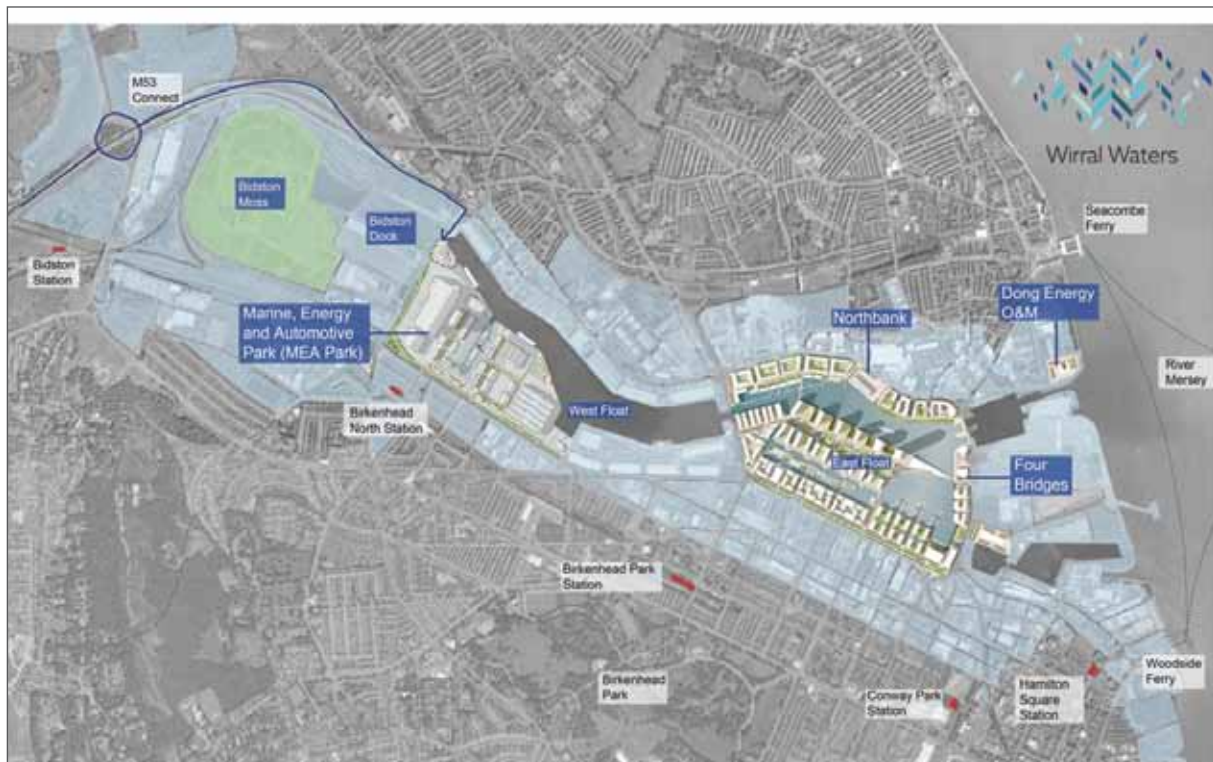
- Creative and digital industries – supporting local entrepreneurs – start-up space and support at The Sheds
- Event space and meanwhile uses supporting an independent creative sector
- Reconnecting the waterfront to Birkenhead – a strong food offer
- New waterfront living will form the gateway to Birkenhead from Liverpool
- Innovative space is being discovered and enabled for use by creative businesses
- Major and iconic development to complement Liverpool's world class waterfront

WIRRAL WATERS

AMBITION

Wirral Waters is the largest regeneration project in the UK and has Enterprise Zone status. It is also set to become the most sustainable. It will be a new place to live, work and play and a place for all. It is centred on the Wirral Dock system on the banks of the River Mersey, overlooking Liverpool's world-class, city waterfront. At its heart the project seeks to use the unique water assets of the city to drive growth across all sectors; for trade, for jobs, for energy, for transport, for play and for 'placemaking'.

CONTEXT PLAN



POTENTIAL

The scheme is jobs driven. The economy comes first for Wirral Waters as it seeks to create well over 20,000 permanent new jobs for the Liverpool City Region. The scheme seeks to create the workforce to deliver the project therefore being a catalyst for appropriate training and skills giving the young people of Wirral a brighter future.

Wirral Waters will transform the derelict docks in Birkenhead into a world class waterfront that is alive with activity on land and in the water. Although inspired from other places, Wirral Waters will certainly be 'of Wirral' a unique place known for its big skies, lush countryside, striking coastline as well as its pioneering spirit and distinctive culture.

WHY INVEST?

The Wirral Waters project is supported by Central Government. It was designated Enterprise Zone status in 2011 – one of the 1st four Enterprise Zones in the UK and known as the Mersey Waters Enterprise Zone. Wirral Waters has also been awarded Housing Zone status by the Government in 2017 which recognises the opportunity for housing growth within the Zone which has outline planning approval for upto 13,500 units to be developed throughout the duration of the project.

Wirral Waters seeks to match the undoubted opportunity of the site, its water, its open space, its mercantile infrastructure with the assets of the area and the undoubted quality of life, rich culture, its skills, coastline and countryside.

Wirral Waters is however immediately located within an area of economic need, thereby making the scheme essential to help drive economic growth in East Wirral as well as the Liverpool City Region.

This opportunity is recognised in the wider economic growth strategies of the Atlantic Gateway, the Liverpool City Region LEP, and the Combined Authority. It is a priority project for the Northern Power House.

Building on Peel's track record of sustained investment and delivery in the region over the last decade, including Liverpool John Lennon Airport and the ongoing £350m investment into port infrastructure - Liverpool2, the Wirral Waters project seeks to catalyse the vision to re-harness the water assets of the area – its Port, the River Mersey, the Manchester Ship Canal, the Irish Sea and the wider Atlantic and for these to once again be the drivers of jobs and growth whether through increased trade, logistics & connectivity, energy, advanced manufacturing or through the visitor / creative economy for this genuinely distinct part of the UK. Fundamentally, this is what underpins the Mersey Waters Enterprise Zone- a re-harnessing of the River Mersey to deliver jobs and growth.

In addition, Wirral Council has established the Wirral Waters Investment Fund based on the re-investment of the uplift in business rates. The Fund will enable loans or grants to be offered to developers who present clear ideas/ projects for the successful development of land in the Enterprise Zone, with the effect that such development will ultimately lead to the generation of business rates for the WWIF once end users take occupation in the Enterprise Zone.

Key outputs:

- Transform 500 acres of docklands into an internationally recognisable waterfront destination.
- An Enterprise Zone where over 20,000 new jobs and 13,000 new homes will be created.

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Egerton Square

A new amenity village on the banks of the East Float docks that provides local amenity for existing and new residents, students and workers that are starting to populate Four Bridges and Northbank East. The scheme can also provide a much needed hub for the artistic and creative industries of Wirral. Following an architectural competition, architects OMI are working up the project that will include some amenity retail, a new square with an events programme, managed workspace and studios and a restaurant.

Laird House, Tower Road South

Named after one of Birkenhead's famous forefathers, Laird House at Tower Road South will provide new flexible and sustainable office space with views across the Docks and to Liverpool. This will be available as a single building or in suites. Designed by award winning architects, Glenn Howells Architects, the office will be circa 25,000 sq ft over 4 stories.

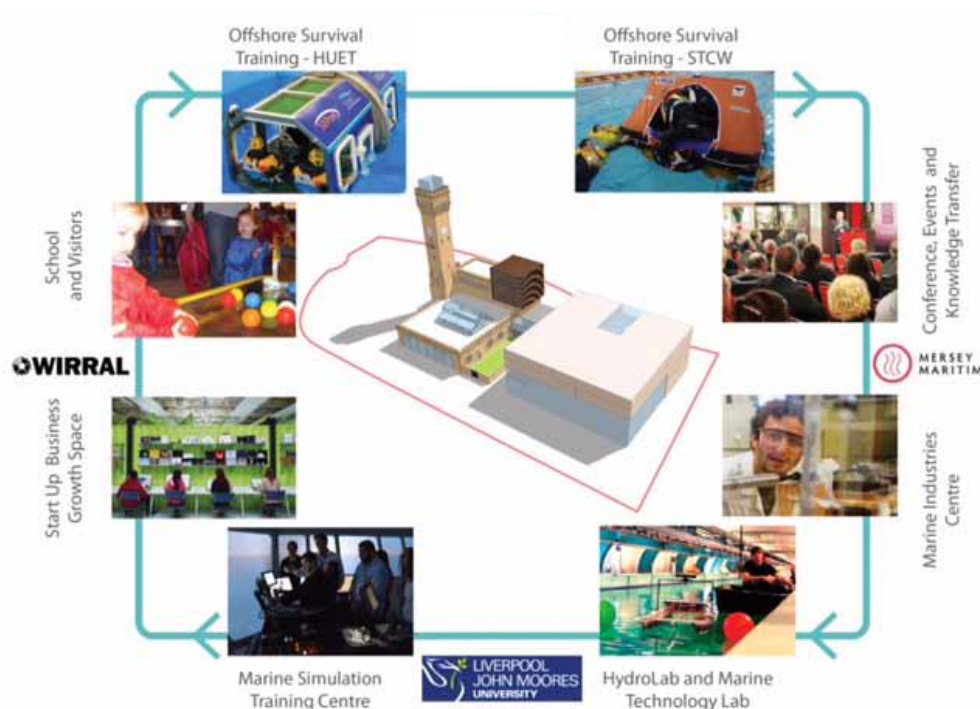
Maritime Knowledge Hub

The Maritime Knowledge Hub is to be developed at the Hydraulic Tower. Focussed on the maritime sector, it will provide up to 50,000 sq ft of new office, incubation, teaching, R&D and cultural space. It will also provide a tank for an Offshore Survival Training Centre.

The Maritime Knowledge Hub will be focussed on the Grade 2 listed Hydraulic Tower building, which is a copy of the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence. Bombed in the war and now largely derelict, the Hydraulic Tower is an important part of the history and heritage of the Dock Estate. The Maritime Knowledge Hub will once again become a beacon for the area, positioned at the very heart of Wirral Waters. Its refurbishment will be a barometer of progress for Birkenhead creating a centre for Marine entrepreneurship, enterprise, skills and culture to support the wider Marine & Maritime sectors.

Project partners: Liverpool John Moores University, Mersey Maritime, the Manufacturing Technology Centre, Wirral Council and Peel Holdings.

Wirral Waters Catalyst Project - The Maritime Knowledge Hub



MEA Park

MEA Park (Marine, Energy and Automotive Park) is a proposed new, multi-unit, 1 million sq ft waterside manufacturing, logistics, R&D and assembly campus. This is targeted to support the Marine, Maritime and Energy sectors.

Phase 1 of MEA Park is intended to be the conversion of the existing 42,000 sq ft existing Mobil building where we are targeting a Government R&D Catapult centre. The focus of the project will be a research centre for Modular Construction, skills factory and Digital Design.

It is envisaged that Phase 2 will be a multi-unit B1/B2/B8 project of circa 50,000 sq ft for engineering supply chains in the energy, maritime and automotive sectors.

MEA Park will seek to build on key strengths and growth sectors, in particular the Energy

Sector – offshore wind and civil nuclear – as well as automotive in supporting Jaguar Land Rover in Halewood, GM Vauxhall and Bentley.

The 60 acre MEA Park is now remediated and serviced. This site also benefits from Enhanced Capital Allowances within the Enterprise Zone.

Northbank East Phase 2

Northbank will be a residential neighbourhood with waterside living, designed to attract new residents and strengthen the emerging residential community in the adjacent converted Grain Warehouses.

The development will provide a product that's unique to the Liverpool City Region: aspirational, high quality design, construction and management, with a south-facing waterside location and views across the River Mersey to the world-class Liverpool city skyline.



WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW**Wirral Met College**

The Wirral Met College Construction campus is the first building to have been delivered in Wirral Waters. This starts the educational / training 'campus' at Four Bridges. The new Wirral Met College is circa 38,000 sq ft with construction courses aligned to Wirral Waters and focussed on the Built Environment. The design of the building has secured a RIBA Regional Award, a RIBA National Award, a Civic Trust National Award and a Wirral Society Award for Excellence.

Egerton Square

A new amenity village on the banks of the East Float docks.

WHAT'S PLANNED

Between now and 2020, it is intended that delivery activity will be focussed at the Four Bridges / Northbank East neighbourhoods and at MEA (Marine, Energy & Automotive) Park. These 'cluster' areas are to be developed in parallel and will create new sustainable employment and residential, office, amenity and educational space within the Wirral dockland.

Site preparation and infrastructure come first. These initiatives create the platforms for delivery followed by the landscaping, the spaces between buildings being vital in 'placemaking'. The 'connecting threads' are then the green infrastructure, and a commitment to cycling and improved public transport.



THE A41 CORRIDOR

AMBITION

The A41 corridor will continue to accommodate employment growth in the key locations from Eastham through Bromborough up to Birkenhead Town Centre and the Waterfront. It offers immense potential to contribute to the growth of the Borough and unlocking development opportunities and barriers to growth is a key priority for the Council through its growth ambitions.

POTENTIAL

The A41 is a Key Route Network for Wirral and has also been identified as part of the Major Route Network for the wider region. It intrinsically links the east of the borough and the key centres as well as some of the main employment locations in the borough including Unilever, Wirral International Business Park, Cammell Laird ship yard and Birkenhead.

Work has previously taken place to deliver improvements through a programme of environmental enhancements to the corridor and recently the Council has enabled developers to bring forward two supplier parks to serve the growing energy sector supply chain.

The potential to increase employment and grow existing and new locations along the strategic highway route is significant and the Council will support sustainable growth and investment in this area.

There is the opportunity to improve access to Birkenhead Town Centre from the A41 through the provision of a new Mollington Road link which could enable the future removal of the Town Link flyover as part of a wider regeneration aspiration to open up under-used and vacant sites south of the town centre. Unlocking sites off the A41 through new road links to bring sites to fruition will be critical.

WHY INVEST?

The A41 corridor provides exciting development opportunities to grow and expand the employment and housing opportunities along this key corridor to Birkenhead. The A41 corridor has a proven track record of delivery of light industrial units and has successfully created a major employment destination which supports and sustains growing companies and adjacent residential areas.



INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Hind Street

Hind Street is a large under-utilised area to the immediate south of Birkenhead Town Centre and to the west of the A41, well served by public transport including direct rail links to Liverpool and Chester. The Council is working closely with partners to bring forward a key development location at Hind Street which will create a new gateway into Birkenhead Town centre and provide a comprehensive mixed use scheme. A successful office development at Queens Gate, to the immediate north of the area, highlights the potential for high quality development and investment in this location.

Wirral International Business Park

A Strategic Regional Site in Bromborough, to the east of the A41, extending between the watercourse at Bromborough Pool and Eastham Country Park, is one of the Borough's most successful business locations. There are a few remaining sites with the Business park which are yet to be developed out and the Council will be looking to secure suitable uses to complete the business park. Adjacent to the Business Park is the Croft Retail and Leisure Park which is one of the Borough's main retail and leisure destinations.

Eastham QEII Dock

Eastham QEII Dock is adjacent to the entrance to the Manchester Ship Canal - a regionally important facility with links to Stanlow, Runcorn and Manchester, operated as part of the Peel Ports portfolio, with a large area of brown field land which is currently not developed. This is part of the Atlantic gateway prospectus across the City Region and is supported as a key investment location. The Mersey Ports Master Plan proposes the phased re-location of out-dated port facilities.

WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW

Work has taken place to deliver improvements through a programme of environmental enhancements to the A41 corridor, including significant cycling infrastructure along the whole length of the corridor. Several junctions have been identified for road capacity improvements and green corridors. Two new business parks have been established along the A41 which are looking to enable businesses to serve the growing energy sector supply chain.

Unilever Port Sunlight Factory and Research Laboratories

The Unilever factory and adjacent Research Laboratory at Port Sunlight is still one of the largest private sector employers in the Borough. Due for completion in 2017 a new Advanced Manufacturing Centre facility is to house a state-of-the-art pilot plant enabling scientists and engineers to test new ideas during personal care and home care product development on a factory scale.

Housing

The former Golf Driving Range at Bromborough – planning permission has been granted to Bellway Homes for 98 homes on a 4.5 Hectare site and the first batch of 22 units are currently under construction.

Persimmon Homes have planning consent for 169 dwellings on the former Croda site on Pool Lane as part of a mixed use development.

Cammell Laird

The site now provides a major marine engineering and ship building and repair facility. The open land to the south of the ship repair facility is currently in use for the assembly and construction of off-shore wind turbines and other associated equipment and has the potential to become a major supply and construction centre for the offshore renewable energy industry.

Cammell Laird and the Nuclear Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre (AMRC) have recently announced a new partnership which will see the opening of a Nuclear AMRC facility within the site. This will provide a base for the sector in the north west and be used to develop and industrialise technology and knowhow to service the nuclear industry.



WHAT'S PLANNED

Transport infrastructure

The A41 carries significant volumes of traffic and capacity issues are forecast by 2024. A number of transport schemes are planned which will improve capacity at several junctions, reducing delays and allowing the traffic to flow more freely through the junctions, reducing journey times and improving flow and journey time reliability of the A41 Corridor to support growth and opportunities in Wirral.

- New link road (Mollington Link) into the redevelopment of land at Hind Street to open up the site as part of the development.
- Improvements to the A41 / Green Lane Roundabout (Campbeltown Road) to increase capacity.
- Improved bus, cycle and pedestrian routes and connectivity along the A4



BOROUGH-WIDE INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

NEW BRIGHTON

New Brighton is located on the north eastern tip of the Wirral Peninsula and is surrounded by miles of spectacular coastline with stunning views of Liverpool's waterfront. New Brighton is a year-round premier seaside destination, attracting increased day trippers and overnight stays. We want to extend the appeal of the resort to new markets, and regenerate areas with potential for growth to bring further new businesses and jobs.

Potential for New Brighton

In recent years, New Brighton's seafront area has undergone significant regeneration which has led to a dramatic resurgence in its fortunes, restoring New Brighton's reputation as an outstanding visitor destination. New Brighton is recognised as an attractive visitor destination with huge potential that could be further maximised through developing additional unique attractions to entice more visitors to explore and enjoy New Brighton's natural seaside charm.

The Floral Pavilion Theatre and Conference Centre is a key asset within the £70 million New Brighton regeneration programme that includes a hotel; an 8 screen digital cinema; superstore; children's play centre, restaurants & bars, and was rebuilt at a cost of over £11 million. Over 500 new jobs have already been created as part of the regeneration of the town, however Wirral's key coastal resort still has room for economic growth and increased visitors.

The Economic Plan for New Brighton (Jan 2016) outlines that the visitor economy is worth £25.5m to the resort compared to just £15.8m in 2009 (excludes expenditure made by Wirral residents) and has helped Wirral become the fastest growing visitor economy in the city region.

Investment Opportunity

The Economic Plan sets out how we can build on the success of New Brighton to appeal to new markets and regenerate areas with potential for growth to bring further new businesses and jobs into the area. This includes the opportunity to invest in the development of a range of sites.



NEW FERRY

In March 2017 an explosion took place in the centre of New Ferry causing untold damage to business premises and residential areas located close to the site of the blast. High level discussions with Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government have taken place to secure investment for the area.

To ensure its survival it is clear that the district centre will need to contract, creating a smaller more accessible retail centre, using underused land and buildings for businesses to move into as part of a mixed use scheme. Investment interest could be further stimulated through the inclusion of some residential components within any proposed development.

HOYLAKE GOLF RESORT

Building on the success of hosting several Open championships, Wirral Council plan to establish Hoylake as the capital of England's Golf Coast by developing a new world class golf resort. We have entered into a Joint Venture agreement with the Jack Nicklaus Group as preferred development partner.

Plans for the golf resort include an 18-hole championship course designed by Jack Nicklaus and the re-provision of a high quality municipal 18 hole course, a proposed top class hotel, including health and spa facilities and a clubhouse, and a 'Links Academy' where visitors can learn about the unique demands of playing links golf before embarking on a tour of the North West's three championship links courses. Housing units are also included as part of the mix of the development as well as the provision of a new road to provide increased linkage to the site.



LOCAL TOWN CENTRES

In addition to the spatial areas identified here there are other key development sites within our town and district centres across the Borough and more detailed place shaping work is ongoing in order to set out the ambitions for each area.

Wirral's town and district centres are key assets for our local communities as well as supporting the Borough's economy and providing valuable local jobs.

A successful centre is important to the surrounding neighbourhood and any development should support them to retain their vibrancy and vitality and reinforce the sense of community and ownership.

Currently six areas across the borough have been identified on the basis that they contain a high concentration of public assets - Bebington, West Kirby, Wallasey (Liscard), Bromborough, Moreton and Heswall and we are in the process of developing profiles for these areas to provide an overview of the sites and their current uses.

This will be the first step in developing more detailed Place Profiles to be included within the Strategic Regeneration Framework which will be shaped by consultation and engagement with communities and wider stakeholders.

The aim of the consultation and the delivery of the Place Profiles will be to set out a clear ambition for each of the areas that reflects local needs and contributes to the achievements of the aims of the Wirral Growth Plan and Wirral Vision. For example Liscard will be the focus of a pilot to revitalise the town centre and the Place Profile will develop alongside the pilot.



LOCAL TOWN CENTRES

- Innovative business support service will help high streets with new project activity
- The Birkenhead BID is supporting the use of our town centre spaces for creative community and visitor uses
- Promoting our local offer – farmers markets, food and drink festivals
- Use of Parks and open spaces to support our creative people through music and drama festivals, art events

APPENDIX: STRATEGIC THEMES

This appendix sets out the series of strategic themes which will guide the development of our key investment opportunities. The themes will support the delivery of physical, economic, social and environmental change in a co-ordinated and cohesive way and deliver wider regeneration.

The Wirral Strategic Regeneration Framework provides the context for delivering the Growth Plan outcomes including existing and new initiatives that will accelerate delivery of physical, economic and social change in a co-ordinated way.

It enables a twin track approach by setting out the ambition and opportunities for development and investment in key spatial areas whilst also providing a series of strategic themes which will guide and support that development and deliver wider regeneration.

The following strategic themes have been identified:

- High Quality Housing
- Employment, Skills and Economic Development
- Transport connectivity
- Digital connectivity
- The Tourism and Culture offer
- Sustainable development
- A high quality environment
- Healthier lifestyles
- Safer Neighbourhoods

HIGH QUALITY HOUSING

INTRODUCTION

Access to good quality housing is a crucial component of strong and sustainable communities and maintaining and developing sustainable housing markets is at the heart of the SRF. The framework also seeks to maintain, and where appropriate, increase levels of choice in the market whilst protecting the character of our successful neighbourhoods.

Ensuring that Wirral has a sufficient range of high quality housing via new build and the existing stock together with a wide choice of housing tenure is a fundamental factor in delivering place shaping and our ambitions for growth and regeneration. Wirral's draft Core Strategy's spatial vision recognises that the focus of new development and investment will be on improving and regenerating the Borough's existing urban areas. This includes ensuring that the housing market offer within the East of the Borough competes on a more equal footing with outlying residential areas. Wirral is a borough of sharp contrasts, with many affluent and attractive residential areas alongside areas of high deprivation and the SRF reflects the Wirral Plan in providing a framework through which this gap can be closed.

As part of the Combined Authority, work is taking place to deliver the LCR Strategic Housing Employment and Land Market Assessment and this, together with ambitious One Public Estate activity, will provide further opportunities for site acquisition and development as well as options for delivery models that will ensure that our assets are aligned to our economic and housing growth plans.

KEY ISSUES

The draft Core Strategy recognises that to meet national policy requirements there is a requirement for significantly more homes to be built over the next five years than have been built during the last decade. This is in part due to previous regeneration programmes, such as Housing Market Renewal, which saw a high level of demolitions as well as improvements to social housing stock taking place.

As a result Wirral's Housing Strategy published in July 2016 reflects the need to build more homes to meet our economic growth ambitions and sets a target of 3,500 new homes by 2020, with 1,000 of these being at Wirral Waters. New housing will need to reflect a range of housing types and tenures so that it integrates into the existing communities whilst also reflecting the need for more family homes, single person accommodation and extra care facilities for Wirral's ageing population. This is supported by Wirral's Housing Market Assessment.

A number of sites have been identified for new housing development and a wider review of potential development options is currently under way to support the delivery of these new homes. This includes sites within our four key spatial focus areas where it is recognised that a significant residential population is highly important for the successful functioning of town centres and in particular the sub regional centre of Birkenhead. Within Birkenhead our aim is to provide more homes for families, workers and students to establish a high value market for retail, restaurants and entertainment and contribute to the general level of activity within the town centre. The challenge is to increase market confidence in the town centre for the provision of a wide range of housing types.

WIRRAL'S HOUSING STRATEGY

Our [Housing Strategy](#) has been informed by ongoing consultation with key partners, residents and stakeholders and is based on a strong evidence base. The priorities to be achieved through this strategy and associated plans are:

- Building more homes to meet our economic growth ambitions
- Improving the quality of housing available to our residents
- Meeting the housing and support needs of our most vulnerable people to enable them to live independently

ACTIONS

We are establishing a dedicated housing growth team to support private sector and Registered Provider partners to accelerate development and we have reconvened Wirral's Strategic Housing Partnership.

Completion of our Employment Land Study, taken alongside our Housing Market Needs Assessment, will support the wider review of development sites to support the delivery of new homes within key sites across the borough.

We have secured Housing Zone status within the following areas – Wirral Waters, Rock Ferry, Moreton and Bromborough . These areas will be a focus for accelerated delivery of new homes, but there are other areas of opportunity and scale which will be delivered alongside our housing zone work.

New building in the borough will also be supported by key activities to improve the borough's private rented housing offer, creating a housing market that is flexible and of a quality to meet a variety of needs.

New homes and improvements to existing stock will support the provision of a high quality built and natural environment and reflect a distinct sense of place.



HOUSING AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- Residential sites supporting investment and regeneration
- Accelerated delivery of new homes to revitalise our town centres and waterfront opportunities
- Public realm improvements driving business growth and access to employment
- Using our parks, coast and open spaces for leisure, arts and tourism activities - Open Golf championship, Mersey River Festival of Light

EMPLOYMENT, SKILLS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

The City Region's Growth Strategy recognises that the success of the area is intrinsically linked with its ability to attract and retain workers with the right skill sets to meet the current and future needs of business. As a result the Combined Authority through its Employment and Skills Board has created a Skills Commission to work with businesses, learners and education providers to oversee a Skills Strategy for commissioning our locally devolved Adult Skills budgets.

Wirral is already a growing economy - closing the productivity gap with the North West, and a proactive and responsive approach to local skills provision is a core component of the SRF. It is vital in attracting investment and supporting business growth, as well ensuring that local residents are able to benefit from that growth.

We are already seeing existing businesses expand and grow and we have completely redesigned our Business Support Service to bring in investment and commercial expertise. Delivered by Wirral Chamber of Commerce the service will provide a strong offer to businesses including support for start-ups, growth, sector networks, relocation and workforce development.

We have responded to opportunities by linking the LCR Skills for Growth Advisors with the Wirral Business Growth Hub Advisors in order to provide businesses with potential access to funding and bespoke advice on skills. In addition our strong inward investment offer is promoted through a city region approach to maximise its impact.

KEY ISSUES

The council is committed to providing suitable employment locations across the borough to accommodate the needs of indigenous businesses and supporting inward investment to Wirral. A flexible supply of employment land is needed to meet the demands and economic and commercial challenges that the economy faces and the council is therefore reviewing its employment land supply to ensure that we have a fit for purpose supply, in the right locations.

An LCR wide Strategic Housing and Employment Land Market Assessment (SHELMA) will identify the future need for employment land, across the City Region and at district level based on the LEP's latest Growth Strategy projections. The Wirral Employment Land and Premises Study Update, which was commissioned in January 2017, will re-assess the adequacy of the Borough's existing supply of employment land and premises alongside the findings of the SHELMA. When it comes to allocations in a future site-specific Local Plan, priority will be given to sites that are 'market ready' for development, able to accommodate the priority sectors identified above and which provide employment and training for people in areas of greatest need.

Areas within Wirral such as the Wirral International Business Park and the adjoining A41 corridor already provide successful and growing employment locations with a broad range of accessible jobs. We are working with our partner Peel Holdings to bring forward sites within our Wirral Waters Enterprise Zone and see these areas as opportunities to enable our economically active workforce to increase.

We have already seen key capital investments into the Borough to support skills development such as Wirral Metropolitan's College new Campus for the Built Environment at Wirral Waters, their STEM centre and the North West College of Engineering. We know more is needed and we are working with our partners, including the Universities, to realise major new skills infrastructure projects including Phase 2 of the Maritime Knowledge Hub and a Manufacturing Technology Catapult Centre.

In spite of the presence of employment centres across the Borough and beyond, inactivity rates remain high and many employed residents are in lower paid jobs. These factors have a considerable impact on household income and we are delivering a £6.5m Ways to Work programme to help people access training and employment.

We have a commitment to ensuring that our young people are ready for work. Our emerging Schools Strategy will ensure that we build on existing high quality education

provision and raise levels of achievement across the borough so that our young people have learning experiences which support them into employment. This includes raising the aspirations of our young people and ensuring access to a range of opportunities. This could involve apprenticeships, vocational training and employment or higher education.

WIRRAL GROWTH PLAN

Ensuring that there are greater job opportunities within the Borough and that workforce skills match business needs are two of the key pledges within the Wirral Growth Plan.

To take these forward the Growth Plan sets out that we will work with partners to increase the number and range of jobs and reduce unemployment. We will also closely align the provision of training offered with the skills businesses will need to develop and grow.



KEY GROWTH SECTORS

- The Maritime Knowledge Hub project will deliver innovative and cost saving solutions through the co-location of businesses and HEI researchers
- Energy – use of physical assets and skills to attract investment – Dong Energy O&M base, business parks on the A41 to support Cammell Laird and the Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre in the civil nuclear sector
- Increase the value of the digital and creative sectors - development of applied technologies linked to the Wirral Waters EZ offer and maritime sector
- Major visitor economy attraction – Eureka – maximising links to Liverpool linked to shaping new places and spaces

ACTIONS

We will seek to develop further skills initiatives with the Universities in order to provide higher level skills in our key growth sectors – reflecting the [LCR's Skills for Growth Agreements](#).

We will work with our partners to promote Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics skills through innovative engagement projects and the delivery of STEM Higher Level Apprenticeships.

We are putting in place programmes that are based on detailed insight into the needs of those residents furthest away from work. In partnership with Public Health colleagues, we are addressing those needs through a pioneering new programme that tackles the deep social isolation that our community researchers found in some of our neighbourhoods.

We are commissioning the delivery of an Enterprise Hub to support higher levels of innovation and entrepreneurial activity amongst our residents. This includes the provision of incubator facilities at 'The Sheds' put in place by Wirral Chamber of Commerce.

We will work with our major employers such as Unilever, Cammell Laird, Typhoo and Bristol Myer Squibbs to promote knowledge transfer partnerships utilising expertise from our universities, colleges and small business community.



SKILLS

- New infrastructure projects such as the Maritime Knowledge Hub and the Manufacturing Technology Catapult centre will deliver 21st century skills in applied technologies
- Devolution is delivering responsive adult skills training through the Skills for Growth Fund – responding to growth sectors, supporting Wirral's businesses
- Projects to support residents with creative and innovative ideas are delivering new skills
- Young people are being encouraged to develop skills in the digital production sector - supported by work spaces and business services

TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY

INTRODUCTION

Wirral benefits from a good transport network within the Borough together with strong city region, national and international links. It is well served by a range of transport types including bus, road, rail, ferry and walking and cycling routes. However, ensuring that our communities are well connected is essential for the Wirral economy and efficient, well maintained and accessible transport networks that meet the current and future transport needs of businesses and residents is a critical factor in supporting economic growth.

A key aim for transport in Wirral is to create a network that delivers good accessibility for a range of users from across the Borough and beyond and which enhances the sense of place for residents, businesses and visitors.

In this respect high quality public transport underpins economic growth and a key part of delivering that quality is through a greater reach of the bus network alongside the on-going upgrading of the buses.

The investment taking place through Merseytravel's bus strategy is beginning to deliver that change and is supported by a programme that seeks to change travel behaviour to increase the usage of public transport.

In addition the Merseyrail network is one of the most extensive in the UK and there is strong year on year growth in its usage which is forecast to grow still further.

The SRF has been developed within the context of the Wirral Transport Strategy and the [LCR Transport Plan for Growth](#) and it will provide the broad framework through which investment in transport projects can be prioritised. This will ensure that we maximise the benefits from the city region transport investment in terms of public transport improvements, infrastructure works, demand management measures and behavioural change initiatives.



KEY ISSUES

Within the East of the Borough the current and future development proposals for Wirral Waters together with the Council's aspirations for regeneration in the east of the borough such as Birkenhead Town Centre, Woodside and the A41 corridor require a co-ordinated approach to developing a transport network that will support investment and growth. This approach is critical to ensure that there is a prioritised programme of transport projects linked to development plans and the draft Core Strategy Local Plan for Wirral reflects the importance of these networks for Birkenhead and Wirral Waters.

The delivery of the Hoylake Golf resort also requires investment in appropriate transport infrastructure including the provision of new physical links and this is reflected in the Council's pipeline of projects identified as a priority for city region funding.

Improving connectivity to employment and regeneration sites is critical in connecting people and communities to the opportunities in and around their neighbourhoods reflecting the Wirral Plan vision of promoting equity as well as growth. In addition to road links and public transport provision, the promotion of safer and better connected pedestrian and cycle routes is a fundamental part of delivering the outcomes within the Wirral Plan. Car park provision is a requirement of new developments and is seen as an important part of any regeneration plans for the Borough. Wirral's car parking strategy reflects the need to support the long-term viability of the Borough's commercial and shopping centres whilst also encouraging the greater use of public transport and the use of facilities such as Park and Ride sites.

THE WIRRAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY

[The Wirral Transport Strategy](#) has been developed to support the delivery of the Wirral Plan outcomes and includes the following priorities:

- Keep traffic moving safely and efficiently
- Reliable and affordable public transport
- Encourage healthy active travel
- Inclusive integrated transport that meets resident needs
- Provide suitable provision of car parking in key locations

The Council's Car Parking Strategy contains ten clear objectives and supporting principles which reflect a range of issues including:

- That the pressures on the Borough's retail and commercial centres are many and varied and the economic sustainability of each of the centres needs to be considered when reviewing any changes to the car parking strategy
- Parking facilities should be accessible and located in such places as to meet the needs of users of shops and commercial premises.



ACTIONS

We will improve transport links to key employment and regeneration sites through continued investment in improved road and public transport networks. This will include the development of a strategic transport framework for East Wirral to ensure transport investment supports regeneration and growth proposals and opportunities in Wirral.

We will maximise the potential of the [Liverpool City Region Bus Strategy](#) within Wirral by working with the LCR Bus Alliance. We will also work in partnership with Merseytravel to deliver a marketing and communications programme to help change the perception of bus travel for new and existing bus users.

We will support the delivery of the [long term rail strategy](#) by Merseytravel and use the re-opening of the Merseyrail network following major repairs as an opportunity for re-branding so as to emphasise the scale, coverage and accessibility of the system.

We will deliver transport schemes that cover all modes of transport including cycleways and pedestrian links. Wirral Waters schemes include the development of a number of active travel corridors and routes and we will develop a city region Local Journeys strategy to support access to key destinations, such as New Brighton.

We will also encourage the adoption by businesses of travel plans designed to change travel behaviour in favour of the uses of more sustainable and healthy modes such as buses, trains, cycling and walking.



TRANSPORT

- Prioritising key schemes to support investment through the East Wirral transport study – linking our key regeneration sites
- Promotion of existing assets – the connectivity of Birkenhead to central Liverpool – 3 minutes on the train
- Devolved funding supporting priority schemes – Hoylake Golf Resort, Wirral Waters
- Using digital technology to deliver transport solutions for access to work, education and leisure

DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY

INTRODUCTION

A digital strategy for Wirral is critical to ensure that the Borough remains competitive as a location for businesses to grow and to attract new investment.

[Wirral's Digital Strategy](#) commits to ensuring that technology and infrastructure in the Borough is modern, fit for purpose and allows our businesses to succeed and compete in global markets. This approach includes harnessing digital technology to create efficient and seamless services that respond to our residents and businesses expectations as to how public services should be delivered or accessed. Our aim is to create a truly connected Wirral through enabling our businesses and every resident to access services online in as simple, accessible and seamless format as they are in person.

Many cities are investing in advanced fibre connectivity and it is important that Wirral is not left behind in this area. We recognise that every business will need to be connected to global markets through high speed and reliable broadband. We are working to increase internet access and high speed connectivity so that our businesses can increase their performance, profitability and ability to invest and grow. In conjunction with this we are exploring opportunities to create a 'smart city' for Wirral to ensure that our key retail and business areas are fully connected with each other and with the world. It is our ambition to create a borough and an economy which is truly digital enabled, so that every Wirral business, regardless of sector or size, is able to use digital technologies to expand their horizons and grow.

KEY ISSUES

We want to maximise the opportunities contained within the Government's current [Digital Economy Bill](#) which includes plans for a broadband Universal Service Obligation as a safety net for those residents and businesses with poor connectivity. This aims to ensure that all residents and businesses have access to 21st century digital connectivity. We wish to work in partnership with commercial operators who have the obligation to extend coverage as we have a clear overview of the areas' digital connectivity needs.

Technology is changing the way the world operates and transforming the way we live our everyday lives; in terms of how we communicate, buy goods and access services. Digital inclusion is therefore a key priority to ensuring that all residents and businesses are equipped with the skills to live in a modern world. We know that for some groups within Wirral and in some of our neighbourhoods there are significant concentrations of digital exclusion. We need to address this and ensure that all people regardless of age or ability are supported to develop the digital skills that businesses want and have the confidence to be able to utilise digital platforms to start their own business.

Wirral has a vibrant and growing digital and creative business sector and some strong and dynamic business networks. We want to enable these sectors to grow by supporting the creation of information, networking and business opportunities to local companies, through harnessing new and innovative ways to connect businesses, entrepreneurs and public organisations by utilising online platforms such as social media and digital marketplaces.

WIRRAL DIGITAL STRATEGY

The strategy's aim is for Wirral to become a truly digital borough, where businesses and residents are connected to each other, services and the world. The priorities [this Strategy](#) will work to are:

- Connected People: every resident with the ability and the skills to get the most out of technology to improve their lives.
- Connected Business: every business benefiting from market-leading technology infrastructure, helping them to open up new markets and compete globally.
- Connected Services: every public service joined up, integrated and available online in a way which makes it simple and accessible to get support online.

ACTIONS

We want to enable our businesses and places to be at the forefront of the digital revolution and we will ensure all businesses have access to superfast broadband and are supported on the specific advantages of digital connectivity and superfast connections.

We will work with Wirral Chamber of Commerce to use information data to tailor our business support offer and to review our processes and systems to make sure we interact with businesses using digital technology in ways which best suits them.

Within the Liverpool City Region the sector has a significant economic presence with an employment base of some 26,000 people across 3,500 business units. Businesses will be targeted with a Digital Makeover to identify opportunities and challenges, and to implement digital equipment and processes to improve systems, increase effectiveness and reduce costs.

We will develop digital entrepreneurship skills with young people to use digital tools to build business opportunities including business planning and learning how to sell ideas.

We will procure a customer access platform that will support improvements to customer services across all access channels making it easier, faster and more efficient to do business with the Council.

TOURISM AND CULTURE: THE OFFER

INTRODUCTION

Tourism and culture today is much more than specific events or attractions and is inextricably linked to growth in the local economy.

Wirral is a key destination; its unique character and picturesque coastal and countryside offer are unrivalled, with Wirral's attractive scenery acting as a magnet to visitors. Wirral boasts the fastest growing visitor economy in the Liverpool City Region and this is driven by an outstanding tourism offer that combines our leisure, cultural and heritage assets. The SRF recognises that both culture and the visitor economy are important factors in contributing to local economic growth, developing local talent, creating jobs and developing skills. Local strategies for taking forward culture and the visitor economy are therefore reflected in the physical development proposals that will be progressed through the SRF.

The emerging Wirral Visitor Economy Strategy identifies the need to promote and grow the borough's tourism offer through attracting new visitor markets and making the best use of our heritage, leisure and cultural assets to drive tourism, the associated creation of jobs and increase revenue for Wirral's visitor economy.

There is a more proactive and co-ordinated approach being taken by a range of partners in this area and this will assist, not only in positioning and profiling Wirral as a strong tourism destination, but will also drive economic activity. The SRF will provide the framework within which infrastructure projects including accommodation development can be co-ordinated with wider investment proposals.

There are a range of opportunities for Wirral that are generated through the further development of the borough's visitor economy. Research indicates that key areas for growth include a targeted increase in day visitors, together with the overnight stay and business markets.

There has been a total increase of 25% in visitor numbers and 39% in related spend since 2011 in Wirral. This has already resulted in an additional £113.4 million of spend within local visitor economy during the same period. This can be increased even further through partnership, product development and strategic marketing to achieve the Wirral Plan Pledge of £450m of tourism revenue by 2020.

KEY ISSUES

We have already begun to revitalise the tourism offer on the East of the Borough through better linkages, and hosting events in areas such as Hamilton Square and Birkenhead Park, together with making use of both banks of the River Mersey for attractions such as the River of Light, International Guitar Festival and Mersey River Festival. However, there is the opportunity to do much more and the SRF must provide the structure within which the unique Wirral waterfront, with its stunning panoramic views of the Liverpool skyline, can contribute far more to the growth of this sector.

We recognise the need to strengthen the quality and diversity of the current offer. Whilst we know that there is low awareness of Wirral's wider tourism offer from the recent research conducted, there are strong links to the North West leisure and corporate markets highlighting that there is great potential for growth.

We will ensure linkage with the Borough's cultural offer and Culture Strategy to ensure that partners and key organisations in arts, cultural & creative industries work together to deliver exciting and unique opportunities that support growth and maximise the contribution to the local economy.

WIRRAL'S CULTURE STRATEGY

[The Culture Strategy](#) aims to ensure that more people are able to enjoy the wide range of leisure, culture and sporting opportunities on offer across Wirral and to ensure that strategies for leisure, tourism and growth complement each other.

The priorities addressed by the strategy are:

- Develop creative partnerships and a cultural events programme to promote arts, culture and heritage in Wirral
- Increase resident and visitor participation in Wirral's arts, culture and heritage offer to promote its educational, social and wellbeing benefits
- Promote Wirral on the global stage as part of the LCR to attract world class arts, culture and heritage events and exhibitions
- Maximise the contribution of the arts, culture and heritage to the local economy

ACTIONS

We will host further events with the wider city region such as the annual River of Light; The Giants in 2018 and The Walker Cup at the Royal Liverpool Golf Club, Hoylake in 2019.

There is a clear economic impact of such events. For instance the Liverpool Giants in 2015 resulted in spend of some £46m into the local economy with some 300,000 visitors attracted from outside the City region.

Wirral's unique venues and vast open spaces will be utilised and promoted to deliver blockbuster events that build on Wirral's brand as a tourist destination and celebrates the Borough's distinctiveness. This will enable us to attract more visitors from both within the region and from across the UK as a whole.

We also have the ambition to increase the number of businesses operating within the sector – further linkage of the Visitor Economy Network with the Wirral Chamber of Commerce will enable better engagement and a stronger, more focussed business support offer.

The SRF will provide the framework to consider how the planned development within Wirral Waters, Birkenhead and other sites can best drive new markets for tourism, for instance the new Visitor Economy Strategy recognises the opportunity to bring more day and multi-day conferences to Wirral through capitalising on the peninsula's close proximity to Liverpool, Cheshire and North Wales. Through promoting and hosting business meetings and events we will attract regional markets to Wirral and generate more returns from this sector.

We will identify opportunities to build on Wirral's vibrant creative sector to further grow this sector and attract new businesses and individuals to locate in the Borough. This is reflected in the SRF's place shaping profiles which identify potential physical locations for this sector.

It is only by taking full advantage of the assets and opportunities within the Borough, that Wirral will be able to succeed in an increasing competitive marketplace, in order to achieve the Wirral Plan tourism and culture pledges by 2020.



TOURISM

- Building on our culture and heritage to deliver a thriving new music culture – events, festivals
- Better use of our assets to support the growth of the creative sector
- Working with partners across the city region to enable our creative and diverse cultural industries to develop with new facilities such as an independent music venue
- Delivering innovative events to showcase and re-position Wirral – The Giants, Wirral's Year of Culture (2018) and the Walker Cup (2019)
- Maximise use of sports facilities and venues – Tranmere Rovers – for events, promoting healthier lives and skills development

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. [The National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF) states that there should be a presumption in favour of sustainable development and that this is a golden thread that should run throughout decision making. It identifies three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental and states that pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life.

KEY ISSUES

The Council is committed to supporting sustainable development and growth across the borough.

Policy CS1 of the emerging Core Strategy Local Plan states that when considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the NPPF. The Council will always work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.

We will ensure that sustainability is at the heart of all future developments and we recognise the need to ensure consistent levels of urban design across the borough to achieve sustainable development credentials.

WIRRAL'S CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY AND EMERGING CORE STRATEGY LOCAL PLAN

The Council's emerging local plan and the [Climate Change Strategy](#) reflect the commitment to supporting sustainable development and growth. This will be achieved by supporting:

- Sustainable transport
- High quality built and natural environment
- Encouraging health and well being
- Energy efficiency and carbon reduction
- Sustainable urban design
- Meeting community and social needs

These factors underpin the key principles of the growth strategy and will be embedded in future regeneration schemes and developments. A key factor in achieving sustainability is:

- Developing resilient communities, places where people want to live and work both now and in the future
- Places which meet the diverse needs of residents and communities, which are sensitive to their local environment and positively contribute to health and wellbeing
- Areas should be safe and welcoming to all, well planned and seek to provide a flourishing economy and good services for all.

Wirral's Climate Change Strategy sets out six aims for substantially cutting climate pollution associated with Wirral namely:

- Reduce demand for energy and make Wirral more energy efficient
- Generate and source more of our local energy needs from 'Renewable' sources
- Use more sustainable modes of transport, more fuel-efficient vehicles and less polluting means of getting around
- Reduce the indirect negative impacts that our decisions have for climate pollution in Wirral and elsewhere
- Identify the risks and vulnerabilities from expected changes and bring forward plans and actions to limit negative impacts and improve resilience
- Build capacity for action by strengthening local networks and partnerships and by developing wider awareness and education Initiatives

ACTIONS

Sustainable transport: Reducing dependency on the car and providing safe and efficient access to public transport and cycling and walking routes will be crucial to creating a good quality environment where people want to work, live and play. We will future proof transport needs into new developments and ensure they are planned for in emerging strategies.

We will support high quality employment: Creating and supporting new and growing employment opportunities through the Council's growth sector priorities and through our key regeneration areas. The Council is committed to providing good quality, well paid jobs for residents in an environment which can attract and sustain businesses.

We will develop a network of high quality neighbourhoods: This driver provides the social and community emphasis of creating and sustaining a network of high quality neighbourhoods. The Council will support this through seeking to create attractive neighbourhoods which attract and retain people with skills and aspirations to flourish and grow, providing links from successful neighbourhoods to areas of need. The Council will drive high quality housing and environmental design into new urban neighbourhoods to support the growth aspirations of the Council.

This will be achieved by working successfully with the private sector to promote sustainable growth and development through collaborative working and where appropriate joint ventures and partnerships.

A HIGH QUALITY ENVIRONMENT

INTRODUCTION

The environment is one of the major influences on a person's quality of life, impacting on their physical, mental and social well-being. Good design and a healthy, unspoiled physical environment are not only about the aesthetic improvement of our environment, but also about improved quality of life, equal opportunities and economic growth.

Within Wirral we have worked hard to ensure our countryside and coast are of the highest standard. Wallasey Beach has been awarded a Blue Flag which is the gold standard for beaches and brings international recognition. In addition we now have 24 Green Flags for our parks - the most in the North West region.

Our mission is to improve the quality of life for those living and working in Wirral by raising aspirations for excellent design. Well-designed homes and neighbourhoods create better and healthier places to live and build strong communities; they can reduce crime, make people feel safe and provide homes that maintain their value. Good-quality, well designed public spaces help create healthy communities, desirable properties, increase professional productivity and can revitalise run-down neighbourhoods.

The Strategic Regeneration Framework will look to ensure that the principles of good design are applied across new development in the borough.

KEY ISSUES

The council will ensure a consistent approach to high quality design which is fit for purpose and location. Setting the principles and actions to address this will help drive investment and give developer confidence to the approach which the council is taking.

National policy requires local authorities to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes based on the defining characteristics of the area.

We will ensure the quality of design of buildings and spaces is a fundamental factor in securing sustainable physical, economic, social and environmental regeneration within the borough. It should be used to protect or enhance local distinctiveness, improve the environment and the conditions in which people carry out their daily lives.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Emerging Core Strategy Local Plan Strategic Objective 5- Environmental Quality - aims to ensure that new development will preserve and enhance locally distinctive characteristics and assets which make Wirral a healthy and attractive place to live, work and visit. Draft Core Strategy Policy CS43 proposes that all new development will be expected to enhance the character, quality and distinctiveness of the area in which it is located and relate well to surrounding property and land uses and the natural and historic environment.

In addition Wirral's Leisure Strategy includes a commitment to encouraging more residents and visitors to enjoy the wide range of leisure, culture and sporting opportunities including accessing Wirral's Parks, coast and green open spaces. Wirral has a range of fantastic natural leisure assets and many of our parks, beaches and open spaces have won national awards.

ACTIONS

We will aim to safeguard and enhance local identity and character and ensure that all new development that comes forward will enhance the character, quality and distinctiveness of the local area.

We will promote innovative thinking and quality design: Innovative building designs which present exciting, contemporary and thought provoking solutions will be encouraged for developments. This could take the form of new mixtures of uses, innovative building materials which promote sustainable and strong design principles. Enhancing existing high quality or unique elements of buildings should where possible be retained, if this is not possible new, statement architecture will be promoted.

We will promote high quality public realm, Public realm needs to be well designed and integrated into the surrounding area and building form to ensure that a new urban fabric is created to link existing and new development together. High quality public realm also plays a critical role in creating a place through green and blue infrastructure provision. Public realm should be appropriate to the place and location within the borough and should be used to maximise connectivity and sustainability.

To maximise the potential of our parks, beaches and open spaces. We will develop our country parks as national tourist attractions and further enhance these assets by preparing a plan for each of the country parks. We will use our natural leisure assets to increase the number and variety of events held in Wirral, including festivals and local activities for the benefit of all our residents.

Access for all: We will ensure all new developments and proposals enable access for all to be embedded into the design and concept of the movements and flows to, through and from the area. It will need to ensure that other sustainable transport infrastructure is well integrated into the streets, buildings and place.

We will promote successful relationships between public and private space, to create successful and engaging developments and incorporate a balance of both public and private amenity space. Public space should be available to be utilised by all with a mix of day and evening uses available.

To promote quality, choice and variety we will create a balance between quality and commercial viability can be a challenge. However the Council believes that a strong sense of quality and variety must exist in developments to capture the sense of place and diversity of Wirral. Without this we will lose our distinguishing features and create places with a lack of ambition, style and distinction which will be reflected in the type and mix of schemes and occupiers which chose to locate here.



HEALTHIER LIFESTYLES

INTRODUCTION

Our ambition to grow the local economy and to expand and diversify employment opportunities is integral to our commitment to improve the health of Wirral residents. We will utilise growth, development and strategic planning opportunities to maximise health outcomes so that Wirral residents will be able to contribute to, and benefit from, sustained prosperity, decent employment and a good quality of life. This will also enable our economically active workforce to increase in order to maintain a sustainable and balanced population as people live longer.

We also recognise the importance of creating sustainable places that give people the opportunity to live healthy, active lifestyles and which improve health. This includes developing good quality housing, providing access to community and healthcare facilities; creating Active Travel opportunities and well-maintained, safe open spaces for physical activity and food growing. Quality public realm can also have a significant positive effect on people's mental well-being.

A healthy workforce is fundamental to economic growth. We have been working with a number of key local employers to ensure that as well as robust health and safety policy and practice, there is a holistic approach to employee wellbeing. The Strategic Regeneration Framework will look to ensure that these principles are inherent to those of the partners we work with.

KEY ISSUES

Ensuring that there are opportunities to increase access to quality employment and that places are developed in ways that enable residents to stay healthy.

We know that deprivation is higher than average in Wirral and are aware that the main cause of health inequality is living in poverty. This has a fundamental impact on other factors that influence health such as education, living environment, employment and lifestyle. We need intervention across the borough, but with a focus on our communities with the greatest health needs to ensure we reduce these health inequalities to enable our local residents to live healthier lives and contribute to the local economy.

Wirral Residents Live Healthier Lives Strategy:

Our health and wellbeing is influenced by many factors – where we live, whether or not we have a job and the lifestyle choices we make. We have identified the following priorities in order to tackle health inequalities and help our residents live healthier lives.

- Reduce the number of smokers in Wirral
- Reduce the impact of alcohol misuse on individuals and communities
- Promote healthy eating
- Support local people to take control over their own health and wellbeing

ACTIONS

- Deliver the actions within The Wirral Residents Live Healthier Lives Strategy to support the delivery of the Wirral Plan outcomes and the ambitions of the Wirral Growth Plan.
- We are working alongside businesses and local residents to reinvent the high street as a community asset and to meet the changing needs of communities; increasing desirability as a place to live and work, promoting economic regeneration and to improve health and wellbeing. We are starting this work in the following four high streets; Laird Street in Birkenhead, Upton, Liscard and New Ferry.
- We are working with business partners to ensure that good quality employment recognises the importance of holistic health and wellbeing in the workplace.
- We will consolidate the Better Food Wirral brand and implement Better Food Wirral innovation Schemes to increase access to good food, support the local food ecosystem to thrive and enable communities to make better food choices.



SAFER NEIGHBOURHOODS

INTRODUCTION

Community safety is essential to the quality of life of the people in Wirral affecting how people value their neighbourhoods and what is considered to make a neighbourhood a good or bad place in which to live and grow up. Neighbourhood sustainability and the viability of an area can be compromised by both the reality and perception of crime and disorder. This is true for Wirral residents, but it is also an important factor for Wirral neighbourhoods in respect of their potential as locations for business and investment.

Success in building safer neighbourhoods cannot be delivered by the Police or the Council alone and a renewed Community Safety Partnership, the Safer Wirral Hub, will be central to delivering community safety locally. The Safer Wirral Hub will also be working with communities to deliver local solutions, to make people feel safer and ensure the voices of local people are heard.

KEY ISSUES

Ensuring Wirral's neighbourhoods are safe is the responsibility of all who live and work in Wirral and integrated multi-agency working has already started to show results with the overall crime rate in Wirral continuing to fall. The activities that the Safer Wirral Hub are taking forward, reflect the four priorities outlined in the safer neighbourhoods strategy, and are built on a strong evidence-base of crime data and analysis, feedback from Wirral residents and a clear understanding of what works.

A fundamental feature of the activities is that services are integrated across agencies and communities involved in their delivery. This underpins the approach which aims to combine appropriate enforcement action with preventative and educational work including placing a greater emphasis on activities which positively engage both young people and communities to prevent anti-social behaviour.

Despite the fact that reported crime and anti-social behaviour have continually fallen over the past 11 years residents perception of crime is sometimes at odds with this. Whilst continuing to work towards further reductions in the levels of crime, work also needs to take place to communicate the significant improvements that have been made.

ENSURING WIRRAL'S NEIGHBOURHOODS ARE SAFE

[This strategy](#) sets the direction for community safety in Wirral for the next few years and identifies the following strategic priorities:

- Build stronger and more confident communities where people feel safe
- Improve community safety by tackling the cause and impact of crime and anti-social behaviour
- Protect the most vulnerable people in our communities
- Deliver greater integration of all partner agencies to achieve a Safer Wirral

ACTIONS

Introducing the website 'Merseynow' will enable residents and agencies to access information, including that relating to tackling anti-social behaviour. This provides the basis for encouraging businesses and the voluntary sector to become a part of the solution to tackle the causes of crime and anti-social behaviour.

We will build on the opportunities provided by the recently opened £6m 'Hive' project which is Wirral's first Youth Zone. There have been dramatic reductions in the levels of anti-social behaviour in similar locations across the country where such Zones have been created.

The establishment of the Safer Wirral Hub will join /up services, delivering improved results, making Wirral safer, our communities stronger and our places friendlier and more welcoming.

Targeted interventions will be delivered to raise awareness of hate crime, zero tolerance of domestic abuse and encourage people to report incidents of crime and /or anti-social behaviour. This will support strong and inclusive communities.

We are working across the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority to identify future opportunities for delivering services across that wider footprint.

We will have a greater focus on the quality, design and management of the built environment to reduce the level and perception of crime. This can be achieved through applying imaginative design solutions to schemes and developments.

To find out more:



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