

Dock Branch Neighbourhood Masterplan

“You Said, We Did”

Response(s)	Changes to the Masterplan	Comments
<p>Responses to Question 8 and 9: Do you have any concerns about this project?</p> <p>Relating to Project Plan: Respondents were concerned that the project would not have achieve its desired effect.</p>	N/A	<p>Engagement with local residents, local businesses and the community panel has been promoted throughout the process. Extensive housing studies have been conducted by the housing team and local plan team within the Council to assess housing need. All this will inform a phased strategy for the delivery of the neighbourhood.</p>
<p>Responses to Question 8 and 9: Do you have any concerns about this project?</p> <p>Relating to security and the presence of current crime/antisocial behaviour</p>	N/A	<p>The design of the park has been informed by discussions with the Police’s architectural liaison officer to look over the design plans and feedback in at the end of each stage so far. The design team have also used the “Safer Parks guide for women and girls” to inform design. Lighting and CCTV is a key mitigation to be implemented, aswell as working with the Councils ASB team and the local police.</p>
<p>Responses to Question 8 and 9: Do you have any concerns about this project?</p> <p>Relating to Completing the Project may take too long, and concerns may not come to fruition.</p>	N/A	<p>The Councils ambition in the Local Plan for Brownfield First developments is driving a need for housing, leisure and commercial developments to come to fruition in Birkenhead. Developments will be phased to ensure delivery is achievable and feasible.</p>
<p>Responses to Question 8 and 9: Do you have any concerns about this project?</p> <p>Relating to Transport</p>	N/A	<p>Transport is a key aspect of the masterplan, with the focus placed on encouraging active travel and public transport (the town is remarkably well connected via public transport). Car usage will play a role, and parking strategy is in development for the borough.</p>
<p>Responses to Question 8 and 9: Do you have any concerns about this project?</p> <p>Relating to the Environment</p>	N/A	<p>The environment is a key concern for the masterplan and is mentioned throughout. There is an ambition to create green streets and encourage public transport/active travel as much as possible.</p>
<p>Responses to Question 8 and 9: Do you have any concerns about this project?</p>	N/A	<p>The Council will be actively seeking development partners, which will be underpinned by the large amounts of</p>

Relating to Funding		infrastructure investment into Birkenhead including improved waterfront, town centre and creation of the new park along the Dock Branch Rail Corridor.
Lack of communication on community and local business considerations.	Chapter 4 altered to reflect community uses, highlighting benefits and investment to local communities. Approach to Delivery chapter redrafted.	
Technical language is not defined	Glossary of terms index added to the document	
Soft measures (“programmed, managed and operational interventions that require collaboration between a diverse set of actors, such as community stewardship and innovative leasing strategies”) to be promoted	Approach to Delivery Chapter to be redrafted to reflect next steps and to build on the successes of Wirral’s Borough of Culture 2024 (among other community led initiatives). WBC to consider commissioning an activation and stewardship strategy to support the definition and implementation of these soft measures in the development of the delivery strategy that will be prepared to deliver this Masterplan.	
Google streetview and location to be added to visualisations.	Location plan added to all illustrations, and street photography where existing street locations exist. In some cases, the drawings relate to a context that is to be created and therefore has no direct relationship to an existing street, so therefore no streetview/location added.	
Illustrations do not reflect Birkenhead	Cover Image altered. Caveats added to each image explaining the context that illustrations are examples of what the art of the possible could be and do not necessarily reflect what is to be delivered. Any potential future development must go	

	through planning process and local consultations.	
Issue with the terminology of 'reintroducing homes' when homes already exist in the area.	Wording checked and refined. However the meaning behind reintroducing was that in the past many more homes used to exist in the area than do now, so this masterplan aims to bring back some of these homes to the area.	
Issues with Housing Mixes/Typologies	N/A	The Local Plan requirement for a minimum residential density of 60 and 70 dwellings per hectare (Policy WS 3.2 - Housing density), which combined with a need to deliver a mixed neighbourhood establishes an approach to typologies. The Wirral Housing Density Study formed the evidence base for underpinning the minimum residential density requirements in the Local Plan. Neither it nor the Local Plan are prescriptive in the types of housing required. Suggest WBC explore opportunities for co-design on early phases where the Panel can express preference.
Explain how workspaces can be affordable in perpetuity.	N/A	its important to note that the masterplan cannot control the rental or sale value of any use. However, it does set the ambition to attract the right type of developer and workspace operator, as well as promoting employment (commercial / industrious) use on WBC-owned land where they could exercise stronger leverage in delivering affordable workspace through various means. WBC to explore affordable workspace strategy / policy.
Requested date of black and white photo on page 30	N/A	Date unknown but sourced here: https://www.benjidog.co.uk/Geoff%20Topp%20Postcards/birkenhead.php
How has socio-economic context informed the masterplan?	N/A	Population and housing delivery ambitions set out in the 2040 Framework have been taken forward by identifying how different types of housing could be delivered within the masterplan area. The masterplan sets out the importance for different types of housing (type, size, tenure, model) and how these could inform delivery to diversify the type coming forward.

		<p>The masterplan takes account of economic context by promoting employment space (commercial / industrious) across the masterplan area; supporting existing and emerging Wirral sectors and business sizes. The masterplan is explicit in its support for productive 'industrious' activities e.g. food and drink processing, engineering and fabrication, creative and cultural industries rather than an over-reliance on more consumption-based commercial activities, or complete loss of employment space altogether.</p> <p>Deprivation in Wirral is highlighted as a strategic issue for regeneration and the masterplan seeks to improve conditions through improved air quality, access to nature, urban cooling, active lifestyles, access to employment and sense of comfort and safety in the public realm.</p> <p>WBC could explore a preparing a regeneration charter to be developed in accordance with The Community Panel to prioritise meaningful regeneration measures in Birkenhead.</p>
Question over use of the word 'tribes' and how the masterplan connects communities across Birkenhead	Rephrase the wording. The masterplan promotes the co-location of different types of uses and spaces, bringing together different types of people and audiences rather than instilling segregation. The masterplan promotes improvements to physical infrastructure to better connect all people.	
How does the masterplan continue Birkenhead's history as a town of firsts?	N/A	The masterplan promotes a number of strategic projects that relate to the town's legacy including the Wirral Mass Transit (relates to street tramway), Dock Branch Park (relates to Birkenhead Park).
Page 30 (2.2.1 social inclusion and participation): Suggested text order replacement - stewarded ahead of designed.	Document updated to reflect stewarded ahead of designed.	
How does the masterplan integrate with the circular economy and social integration?	N/A	Chapter 4 (Regenerative framework) includes a set of objectives and strategies for addressing and promoting the circular economy within the scope of the

		<p>masterplan. This text is broadly around external drivers and discussion of social integration is to be addressed with the Panel.</p>
<p>Desire to see the Birkenhead Design Guide</p>	N/A	<p>The Council is preparing a Birkenhead Design Guide and schemes will be expected to take account of it once it is published.</p>
<p>Issues with PR1 (Jargon surrounding Blue/Green Infrastructure), PR2 (Where is the open space) and PR3 (What events and where).</p>	N/A	<p>Blue infrastructure strategy is provided in 4.3.5. Green infrastructure is proposed in 4.3.3.</p> <p>The streets and open spaces framework for each character area includes location of additional streets and open spaces e.g. 5.1.4 Argyle Quarter.</p> <p>Regarding events, some of the open spaces have been proposed with the intention of being active in character and suitable for programming e.g. events, whilst others are identified as being calmer and not suited to such activities.</p>
<p>Issue with C1: Adaptive reuse – how does the Masterplan encourage this?</p>	N/A	<p>The masterplan proposes retrofit and reuse of existing buildings in Argyle Quarter, as well as within the heritage strategy.</p>
<p>Issue with C3: The Masterplan illustrations drawings unrelated to the freely available and publicly recognisable Street Views of Birkenhead.</p>	<p>Document changed to add streetview to illustrations where these relate to (and will be recognisable by) existing conditions.</p>	
<p>Issues with UR1 (Detail behind adding to Birkenhead’s mix of commercial/leisure/creative and community uses), UR2 and UR3 (How does the Masterplan suggest moving uses around)</p>	N/A	<p>The land uses and activities chapter sets out extensive strategy on the appropriate type and mix of commercial, leisure, creative and community uses.</p> <p>The masterplan does not provide detail on relocation strategies but advocates the importance of re-providing space. This is a next stage of detail having set the agenda within the masterplan.</p> <p>The masterplan does not make any specific recommendations to move uses. The intention is to add to re-proved space for businesses and activities and co-locate suitable uses together. Any additional detail on the relocation of existing businesses needs to be addressed in a subsequent stage of detail.</p>
<p>Page 33 Statement about compact neighbourhood</p>	<p>Wording changed in document.</p>	
<p>Issue with aspiration for improving connectivity between the town centre and the docks</p>	N/A	<p>This is a key connection between two areas of significant investment, Wirral waters will have many more people living and working in the area over the coming years and connection to the town centre is currently</p>

		<p>not easy. Linking the areas together will be greatly beneficial.</p> <p>The ambition is to create a fully integrated network of green open space to support climate resilience, ecology, health and well-being. More widely, making strong physical connections to areas seeing investment around the Docks can help spread benefit and footfall e.g. encouraging employees in the Maritime Knowledge Hub to visit Dock Branch Park and the town centre, bringing footfall and monetary spend opportunities rather than siloing them.</p>
Issue with feasibility of Renewable and circular resources	N/A	A district heat network is a project led by WBC, and is being actively considered as part of number of other projects, including decarbonisation of public buildings.
Question about historic park edge reference in 4.1.1.	Removed reference to historic in that section	
Question about green streets and wild streets and how much they cost to maintain	N/A	The public realm strategy 4.3.2 includes reference images of planting character for green and wild streets. Costing of public realm upgrades will be part of the planning considerations of any development.
Comments on street level access into the Dock Branch Park	N/A	This is important and is being looked as part of the design of the park itself, with numerous access points (including accessible access) throughout the length of the park.
The character of the park design could influence form and character of the surrounding neighbourhood.	N/A	The intention is for the landscape design and planting character to change between different character areas along the length of the park - see landscape character 5.1.7, 5.2.6, 5.3.6, 5.4.6.
Improve links with the Wirral Transport Museum	N/A	The masterplan promotes an improved public realm setting for the museum and its activities.
Question around potential for displaced businesses	N/A	The masterplan promotes a proactive approach to maintain displaced businesses within the Wirral economy.
Query over use of language 'divorcing car parking from homeownership' and "Car Barns"	N/A	<p>In relation to separating the expectation that each dwelling is accompanied by a private on-plot parking space, as well as the notion that individuals living in Dock Branch Neighbourhood necessitates needing a car in order to benefit from quality of life and access to different services and amenities.</p> <p>Car barns were a Wirral initiated term. The draft new Local Plan sets out ability for reduced parking standards in highly accessible locations (WS. 7.4), such as Dock Branch. Car barns provide a solution for</p>

		optimising residential density as set out in the draft new Local Plan (WS 3.2). Car barns releases the need for cars to be parked within the curtilage of homes and allocates them within secure structures that can be dismantled or adapted in the future.
Comments on delivery and stewardship of Dock Branch Park	N/A	Agreed and included in the document, the document is very positive about creating models for stewardship. The parks design team and WBC are actively exploring options.
Comment on preference to slow, rather than block, vehicle movements.	N/A	Agreed. The street hierarchy 4.4.1 suggests just that. Cleveland Street and Price Street should be designed to function as 'calm streets' that dissuade large vehicles from seeking to travel across Dock Branch Park - however, they will still be allowed if they enter this space. Moreover, all streets are suggested to be designed to reduce the speed of vehicles and disincentivise through-traffic movements, promoting resident and local business access instead.
Preference for communal gardens and spaces to be stewarded by local residents	Wording to be changed to reflect that the Masterplan can express preference for (but not dictate) resident-led stewardship of shared gardens and courtyards to encourage sense of ownership and responsibility.	
Issue with gallery access housing/maisonette/communal gardens typology	N/A	All widely accepted and successful typologies for accommodating households within urban settings; responding to both the minimum density requirements and promoting dual access homes that have good access to natural light and ventilation. Also responds to The Wirral Housing Density Study for the need for homes to be 30% 3 bedroom or larger.
Concern over perceived lack of value of local business	N/A	The employment section of the uses and activities section (4.2.3) explicitly states the importance of keeping and actively adding to productive spaces and activities in Dock Branch Neighbourhood and Birkenhead more widely - particularly industrious activities which are characteristic of the area. The ambition of the masterplans to retain local businesses through the reprovision of suitable space (particularly at ground floor) in appropriate settings.

		4.2.3 states "Detailed business engagement will be needed to understand the full suite of spatial and operational requirements of existing businesses on site. Where residential and mixed uses are proposed a detailed co-location strategy will be necessary to enable the successful mitigation of potential conflicts."
Concern over perceived lack of responding to needs and desires of existing local residents and involvement of the panel	N/A	The Dock Branch Community Panel was setup to act as a bridge between the design team/WBC and the community, and although there is room for improvement, the panel has meant that the links between the design and what the community wants has been a lot closer. There has also been consultation and engagement via BirkenEd's Place and Have Your Say, as well as with local schools and arranging walking tours.
Issue with use of precedents used on page 41	Precedents used have been reviewed and captions updated to make the following clear: The precedents used to illustrate the typologies are not meant to illustrate aesthetic choices or architectural style - rather they represent fundamentals of how the typology in question can work well i.e. agnostic of architectural vernacular.	
Comments surrounding Height restrictions in Birkenhead		Masterplan has been informed by the Local Plan Policy WS7.5 and also the Tall Buildings Guide.
Issue with proposed approach to delivery	Approach to delivery section to be updated/redrafted.	
Typos and clarifications as detailed in Community Panels Annex 2	Document updated to amend these.	
Issue with colour blindness and monochrome	WBC are working with design team to create a easier to read version which will review diagrams/plans.	
Issues with plans, plan legends, plans missing street names, naming plans or with colour on plans/diagrams	Document reviewed and amended where necessary	
How does the masterplan expose concealed activities and	N/A	The masterplan promotes industrious activities at ground floor, using this to promote visibility of interesting activities in

<p>what about those who wish to remain concealed.</p>		<p>an urban setting. This improves choice for businesses or organisations that may otherwise locate in out of centre employment parks due to a lack of available / appropriate space e.g. coffee roasting, textiles production, furniture restoration etc. Activities that do not wish to have a public interface can remain as they are.</p>
<p>Annex 1: Dock Branch Park idea</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Annex 1 was discussed with the panel and the design team. Numerous ideas formulated in Annex 1 have either already been incorporated or to be incorporated into the park design, some in phase 1, with others in phase 2. The park design was presented to the panel in February 2024, with the community panel continue to be involved in the parks design.</p>
<p>Development of a new permanent market in the town centre.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Outside of the scope of the Dock Branch Neighbourhood and will be picked up by the Town Centre Masterplan – due for public consultation later in 2024.</p>
<p>Comments relating to single storey and detached dwellings with their own private spaces</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>A wide variety of housing typologies have been suggested in the masterplan, and whilst detached housing/single storey dwellings with private spaces aren't included, that doesn't mean they will not feature in the area in the future. The typologies suggested are to fulfil the housing density numbers as part of the local plan policy requirements.</p>
<p>Where/How is the project working with community groups to identify community ownership? How is engagement and collaboration happening? What citizen-led action is allowed?</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>The following are examples of where the project has worked with the community to develop a sense of community ownership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a relationship with Wirral Met College photography and filmography department to document project and to involve young people in the process. • Haymarket Tunnel RIBA 1 Design: involvement from creative sector to input into initial ideas for the tunnel. • Dacre Street site: Explored community ownership into the site. • Working with the Dock Branch Community Panel and local residents over the design of the park, and also input into the market street/argyle street improvements. • Engaging with primary schools, secondary schools and harder to reach groups on the parks design.

		Community ownership and involvement is an evolving picture and will continue to be at the forefront of the project as it develops. Currently the rail corridor is not in council ownership, there will be more opportunities for working with the community once the corridor has been acquired,
Issue with Movement M2 – Active travel is not always applicable /suitable for all.	N/A	Agreed, the masterplan is not looking to exclude vehicle users but instead makes it easier, safer and more convenient for active travel and public transport users.
Issue with Identity I1 How does the Masterplan which claims to be about “building and street design” produce an “exciting programme of events and attractions”?	N/A	The masterplan does not detail events to take place but provides a framework of streets and spaces where events could take place.
Why are there no serviced sites / self build?	N/A	The masterplan supports diverse housing delivery models and sets out a number of proposed options in 4.2.3. Self-build has not been identified as an option as typology is unlikely to achieve the Local Plan requirement for a minimum residential density of 60 and 70 dwellings per hectare (Policy WS 3.2 - Housing density).
If it is possible to open up workspace and venues as ‘common platforms for after-hours community use’, why are we not doing this now? Is this a concert in the library, for example, or something different?	N/A	Whilst not wide-spread (owing to a lack of ambition) it can happen when parties are willing and can see benefit. The more people living, working and visiting Birkenhead the more likely this will be viable.
Question around the creation of an ongoing business fair.	N/A	To be explored with Economic growth team within WBC.
What is Wirral’s Mass Transit Route?	N/A	‘Mass Transit’ is defined as any transport system or mode which can move lots of people across a city or town and neighbouring areas. Mass Transit often refers to a high-quality public transport mode providing regular frequency, high capacity, and highly legible services (often with instantly recognisable branding and distinct routes with clearly defined interchange points). WBC is exploring delivery a mass transit system in Wirral.