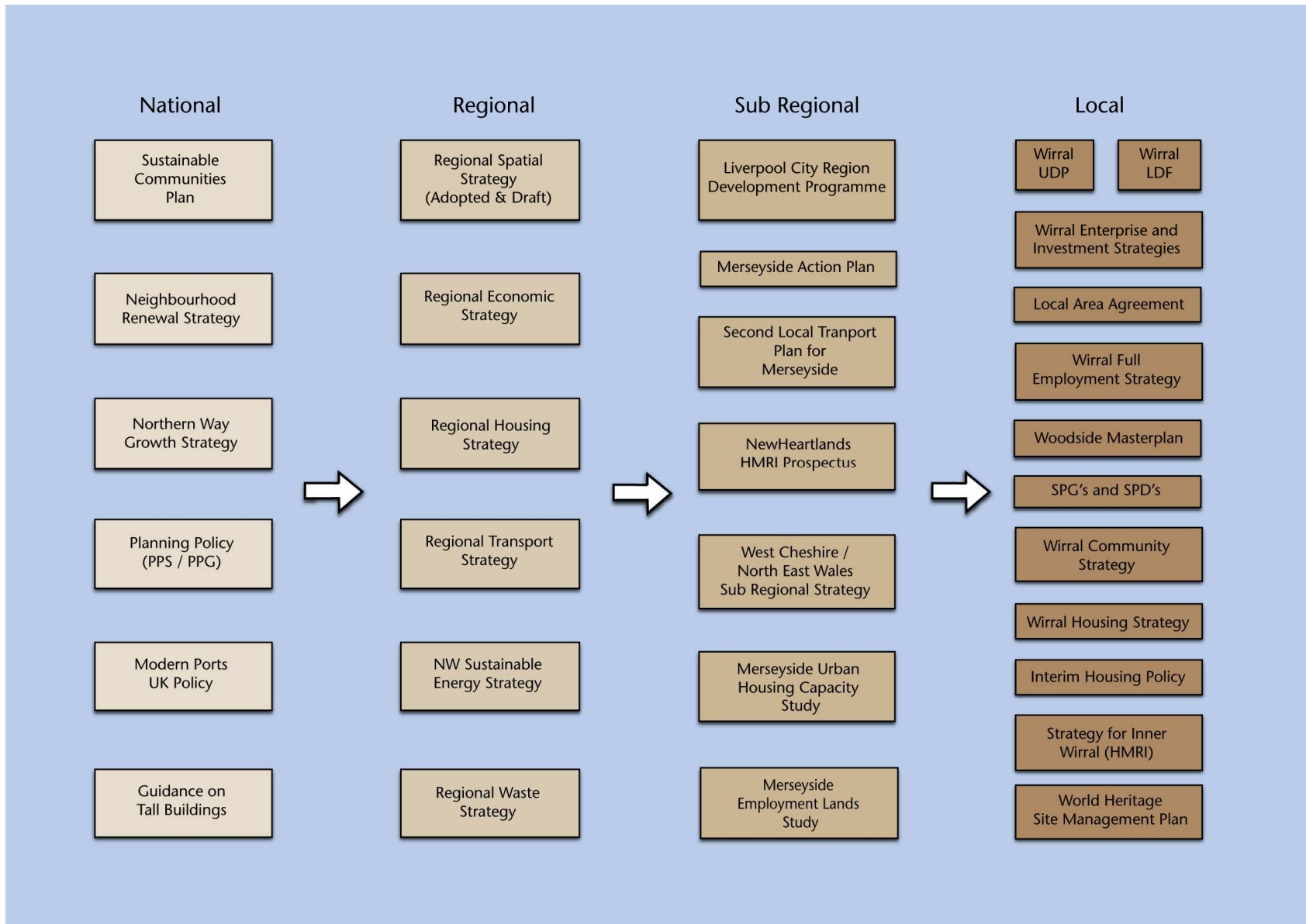


## 2. Catalysts for Change

### Introduction and Overview

- 2.1 Wirral Waters offers the potential to match a need and opportunity for regeneration on a scale seen previously in dockland settings only in the most iconic regeneration projects, such as Canary Wharf in London's Docklands.
- 2.2 The need for Wirral Waters derives from a vast array of drivers and catalysts for change, which affect Wirral, the Liverpool City-Region and beyond. These drivers are highly diverse in form, ranging from European and Central Government funding regimes, to private sector investment in the resurgent Liverpool City-Region.
- 2.3 The planning and economic development policy context within which the Wirral Waters vision will emerge is highly focussed on facilitating sustainable urban regeneration in the core areas of major urban centres.
- 2.4 This section of the Baseline Study therefore sets out the key factors both that have led to the Wirral Waters opportunity and will influence the manner in which this should be taken forward. It is supported by **Appendix 1** which contains a more detailed Policy and Literature Review, and considers planning, economic development/regeneration, environmental and transport policy.
- 2.5 The complex policy basis for Wirral Waters is shown diagrammatically overleaf, in Figure 2.1. This sets out the most relevant policy influences.
- 2.6 The remainder of this section is structured as follows:
- **Key messages** brought out through "Catalysts for Change";
  - **European setting:** highlighting the EU funding regime;
  - **National setting:** consideration of the UK Government's agenda;
  - **Regional setting:** policy and initiatives for the North West;
  - **Sub-Regional setting:** the Liverpool City-Region and Merseyside;
  - **District setting:** local policies and strategies in Wirral;
  - **Capturing Success:** regeneration activity happening in the wider area, and how this affects Inner Wirral and Wirral Waters;
  - **Partners:** a description of key public and private sector partners.



The **key messages** of this section are set out in **Table 2.1** below:

Message	Origin	Potential fit
<b>Closing the productivity gap</b> between the North of England and the South East, by promoting <b>accelerated economic growth</b> .	Established by the Northern Way Growth Strategy, the North West RES and sub-regional policy documents and in local economic development policy documents.  This will require a substantial expansion of economies, focussed on <b>higher-valued added economies</b> , which are currently under-represented in the Liverpool City-Region.	Wirral Waters is a major development and regeneration opportunity, which can make a significant contribution to achieving these objectives.  It can have a regional, national and international profile, and is additional to those initiatives previously identified.
<b>Developing and realising key assets and opportunities</b>	Northern Way policy, the RES and sub-regional policy all place great emphasis on the importance of improving and realising key assets and opportunities to attract investment and raise competitiveness. In Merseyside, the importance of realising <b>waterfront opportunities</b> on both sides of the Mersey is emphasised in local and sub-regional policy.	Wirral Waters will make the best use of land within the core of the urban area and, in particular, the re-use of under-used previously developed land which, in turn, will help to protect more “vulnerable” locations from the pressure of development. (The environmental capacity and accessibility by public transport of such more sensitive sites is a strategic consideration.)
<b>Creating sustainable communities</b> where people will want to live and work.	PPS1 and the Sustainable Communities Plan. The particular challenges for Inner Wirral are providing a wide choice of residential environments capable of attracting and retaining skilled workers to ensure that businesses are able to draw upon well-qualified and able staff, alongside sustainable economic growth.	Wirral Waters can offer a high quality of life, including suitable employment, residential, retail and leisure opportunities. Additionally, there is a clear need to ensure community cohesion and integration, to ensure that the many potential benefits of Wirral Waters are reaped locally.
Promoting <b>good design and place-making principles</b> , and the benefits that these can bring to quality of life.	PPS1 and CABA guidance recommend a <b>comprehensive approach to integrated development</b> . Aims include promoting more <b>sustainable patterns of development</b> , reducing the need to travel and encouraging the provision and use of public transport	Wirral Waters is a strategic opportunity which can be planned and delivered comprehensively. The opportunity exists, through the scale of potential investment, to ensure that good design, place-making and sustainable development flow through all aspects of Wirral Waters.
<b>Key influences in the Liverpool City-Region.</b>	The resurgence of Liverpool City Centre, the Housing Market Renewal Initiative and the key roles of River Mersey, the Port of Liverpool and other key assets at the core of the City Region. The importance of private sector investment is heightened, as public resources, in particular for physical development (including the Objective 1 programme in Merseyside) are now being reduced.	The opportunity to realise private-sector led investment on a scale previously unseen in the area, within an area of need, is highly important to the ongoing regeneration of the wider City-Region, and critical to the future of Inner Wirral. Wirral Waters is the most significant opportunity in Inner Wirral. It is readily deliverable and can deliver a transformational “step change” in Inner Wirral.
The extent of <b>support for Wirral Waters from public and private sector partners.</b>	Wirral Council, The Mersey Partnership, North West Development Agency, English Partnerships, Merseytravel, Groundwork Trust, Forestry Commission and National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside are public sector partners committed to the sustainable regeneration of Inner Wirral.	All public sector partners have stated their support for the progression of Wirral Waters towards delivery, subject to securing wider policy objectives. Peel Holdings is the most significant private sector investor in Inner Wirral, and through the advancement of Wirral Waters, it will seek to deliver on its vision for Wirral Waters.

## European Setting

### *European Structural Funds*

- 2.7 Merseyside has been eligible for the Objective 1 programme of European Regional Development Funds (ERDF) and European Social Funds (ESF) since 1994. Seven “Strategic Investment Areas” (SIA) were identified for Objective One funding, one of which is the Wirral Waterfront SIA, which covers most of Inner Wirral and covers the docks system in its entirety.
- 2.8 This funding has been a great catalyst for the renaissance of the Liverpool-City-Region, allowing the realisation of many large projects and initiatives which would not have otherwise been viable, through pump-priming key opportunities. Those projects and initiatives of relevance to Wirral Waters, particularly those within the Wirral Waterfront SIA, are discussed below under the heading “Capturing Success”.
- 2.9 The North West Competitiveness Operational Programme 2007 – 2013 acknowledges the forthcoming reduction in European Structural Funds for Merseyside. Having established a healthy momentum of regeneration activity in Merseyside, European Union (EU) funds will increasingly be redirected to other priorities in Europe.

- 2.10 Although there is now evidence of renewed economic confidence, with the private sector showing a much stronger willingness to invest in a wide range of developments and projects, it is critical that confidence should continue to be built up as the economic success of Merseyside will be heavily reliant in future years on attracting private sector investment. Wirral Waters has the potential to act as a major catalyst in terms of building confidence in Wirral and the wider City Region. This will mean that public and private sector partners will need to work together very closely to ensure the realisation of economic aspirations.

## National Setting

### *Sustainable Communities*

- 2.11 The Government has stated its objectives for sustainable communities through a number of policies and guidance documents. These include:
- **The UK Sustainable Development Strategy 2005;**
  - **Sustainable Communities: Delivering Through Planning 2002;** and
  - **Sustainable Communities in the North West: Building for the Future 2003.**
- 2.12 The objectives and themes of these policies are fairly consistent in their approach to creating sustainable, mixed communities. A

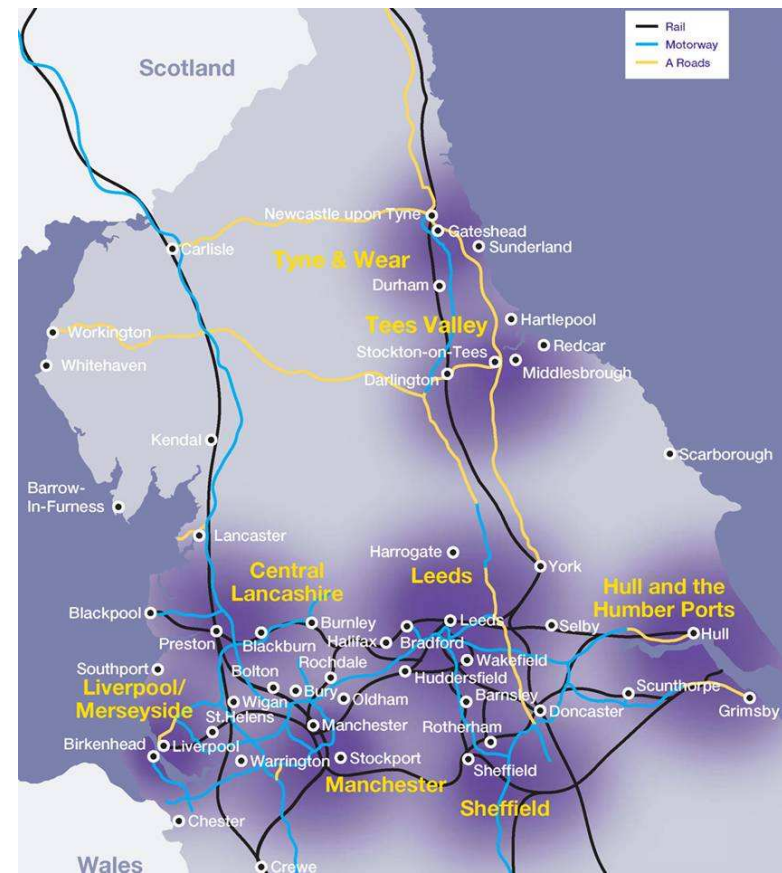
definition of sustainable communities is provided in the DCLG’s Decent Home Guidance and brings together various ingredients, as reviewed in Appendix 1.

2.13 To perform positively against the Government’s objectives, it is evident that Inner Wirral requires a wide and strong economic base alongside a diverse and quality range of housing and associated community and recreational infrastructure. This Baseline Study identifies that at present, Inner Wirral is lacking in these key areas. A significant opportunity such as Wirral Waters can assist in creating and maintaining sustainable, mixed communities in Inner Wirral.

***Northern Way Growth Strategy***

2.14 Moving Forward: The Northern Way Growth Strategy (2004) (NWGS) is the Government’s economic development policy for the North of England. It aims to ensure that the three regions of the North (the North West, Yorkshire and the Humber and North East) realise their economic potential more fully. More precisely, it aims to tackle the £29bn shortfall in economic output (GVA) in the northern regions compared to the rest of the UK.

**Figure 2.2 The Northern Way**



2.15 Government handed over lead responsibility for developing a strategy to close this gap to the three Regional Development Agencies (RDAs). The NWGS places great emphasis upon exploiting existing economic assets and opportunities as well as developing new ones, and upon enhancing the quality of life offer of the North of England in order to attract and retain residents, employment and investment.

2.16 This emphasis is reflected in the Growth Strategy's Vision Statement:

*Together, we will establish the North of England as an area of exceptional opportunity, combining a world-class economy with a superb quality of life.*

2.17 The primary indicators of progress towards the aims of the Growth Strategy are the level of private sector investment across the North, increased employment and increased GVA.

2.18 In order to achieve this Vision, the NWGS identifies ten separate strategic priorities. Those which Wirral Waters can make a significant contribution to are as follows:

- Bring more people into employment;
- Build a more entrepreneurial North;

- Capture a larger share of Global Trade in Key Clusters;
- Meet Employers' Skill Needs;
- Create Truly Sustainable Communities; and
- Market the North to the World.

2.19 The Northern Way Steering Group's analysis has confirmed that the majority of the North's assets and, hence, the major potential for growth, lies within the 8 "City Regions" that currently exist across the North (see Diagram on previous page). Accordingly the NWGS adopts the city regions as its principal spatial focus as a way of ensuring that the economic potential of the 8 city regions is maximised as the key means of driving up the economic performance of the North.

2.20 The Northern Way Growth Strategy is to be delivered through the Regional Economic Housing and Spatial Strategies for each of the three regions, and the 8 City Region Development Programmes (CRDP); that for the Liverpool City Region is considered below. Wirral Waters is a key asset and opportunity for the Northern Way agenda. It has the potential to make a major contribution to the performance of the City Region and the entire Northern Way area on these key indicators.

### ***National Planning Policy***

- 2.21 A number of other Government policies act as a catalyst to Wirral Waters. The Government's commitment to ***sustainable development*** is encapsulated in **Planning Policy Statement 1**, which identifies sustainable development as a core principle underlying planning. Sustainable development is defined as social progress that recognises the needs of everyone, effective protection of the environment, the prudent use of natural resources, and the maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.
- 2.22 These aims will best be facilitated through promoting ***urban regeneration***: inclusive communities; access to jobs, reduction in the need to travel; and the efficient use of land through higher densities and the use of previously developed land. Wirral Waters can respond to each of these objectives in a significant way.
- 2.23 PPS1 also places ***quality design*** high on the Government's agenda. The Government's Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) has produced good practice guidance on a range of topics. Most recently, and of relevance to Wirral Waters, CABE produced Draft **Guidance on Tall Buildings** (January 2007) for consultation. This document acknowledges the increasing trend towards tall buildings and seeks to clarify the approach to be taken to assessing and setting a policy basis for their realisation.
- 2.24 The recently published **Planning Policy Statement 3** on Housing (PPS3) reinforces the commitment to the creation of ***sustainable communities***, where everyone has the opportunity of living in a decent home which they can afford, through the efficient re-use of previously developed land. It also emphasises the importance of design in new development and the contribution that it can make to quality of life, a theme that will be embraced in the proposals for Wirral Waters.
- 2.25 The Government's policy for industrial and commercial development, set out in **Planning Policy Guidance note 4** (PPG4), is currently under review. PPG4 currently takes a positive approach to the location of new business developments, confirming that economic growth and a high-quality environment have to be pursued together. It also promotes the re-use of urban land for employment uses.
- 2.26 The Government's policy for town centres, **Planning Policy Statement 6** (PPS6), seeks to promote the ***vitality and viability of town centres*** by focussing new town centres uses (retail, leisure and office development) in existing centres. In promoting the Wirral Waters concept, there are significant opportunities for securing a viable future for Birkenhead Town Centre and other nearby centres through a general economic revitalisation of the area, and direct

increases in local population and expenditure. This can be achieved at Wirral Waters through delivering a critical mass to attract individuals and companies to spend money and invest in Wirral whilst also ensuring that any development at Wirral Waters within the town centre sectors is complementary to the Town Centre through providing different retail, leisure or commercial offers.

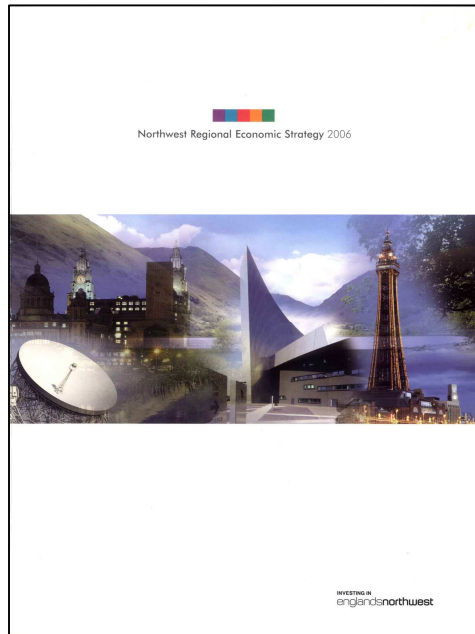
- 2.27 The system for preparing, consulting upon, examining and adopting planning policies is set out in **Planning Policy Statement 12 (PPS12)**. It introduces the Local Development Framework (LDF) as a suite of documents which will guide, facilitate and control development. In respect of Wirral Waters, this baseline study will feed into the emerging LDF for Wirral, which will replace the Wirral Unitary Development Plan (adopted in 2000). The LDF offers the opportunity for Wirral Waters to become an integral part of the statutory development plan, through inclusion in Development Plan Documents such as the Core Strategy.
- 2.28 The Government's transport policy is set out in **Planning Policy Guidance note 13 (PPG13)**. It promotes sustainable patterns of transport, reducing the need to travel and development in locations well served by public transport, walking and cycling. Wirral Waters offers excellent opportunities for integrated sustainable transport, as explored in Section 5 Movement and Connections.
- 2.29 More recently in 2006, the Government has published the **Planning White Paper and Housing Green Paper**, which reinforce the commitment to delivering on the Sustainable Communities agenda. There is a clear emphasis on locating housing, economic and leisure/retail development in areas where the necessary infrastructure exists or can be created, where the environmental effects will be minimised and where it can contribute to economic regeneration and social well being.
- 2.30 Part of the Government's agenda in 2007-08 also included seeking the designation of a number of **New Growth Points (NGP) and Eco-Towns (ET)**. Wirral Council, Liverpool City Council and Peel (the NGP partners) put forward an Expression of Interest to Government, for Inner Wirral and Inner Liverpool (the HMRI area) including Liverpool and Wirral Waters to gain NGP and ET status. The proposals were not considered suitable as an Eco-Town, but were confirmed to be a Growth Point in July 2008. This brings a further uplift in the delivery of new housing and an new way of partnership working between the NGP partners and Government. NGP status also provides access to the Government's Growth Fund.



## Regional Setting: (England's North West)

### *Regional Economic Strategy 2006*

2.31 The North West Regional Economic Strategy (RES) is the key statement of economic development policy in the North West. It sets out the agreed regional sustainable economic development priorities and principles for the next 20 years, and provides detailed actions over a three year period. At the heart of the strategy is a commitment to tackle the region's £13bn GVA (or output) gap with England.



2.32 The RES, which predates the emergence of Wirral Waters, sets out a wide range of actions which partners in the region should implement in order to tackle the region's GVA gap. Many of these actions have direct relevance to the challenges facing Wirral. The opportunity at Wirral Waters can have a significant bearing on these action, such as:

- Improving the formation, survival and growth rates of enterprises;
- Develop key internationally competitive business sectors;
- Develop higher added value activity through innovation;
- Retain and attract people to the region;
- Maximise opportunities from international trade and inward investment;
- Meet skills needs of sectors and growth opportunities;
- Invest in workforce development;
- Develop high quality employment sites and premises;
- Set Housing Market Renewal within a strong economic context;

- Enhance the role of ports (including the Port of Liverpool) as gateways to the region

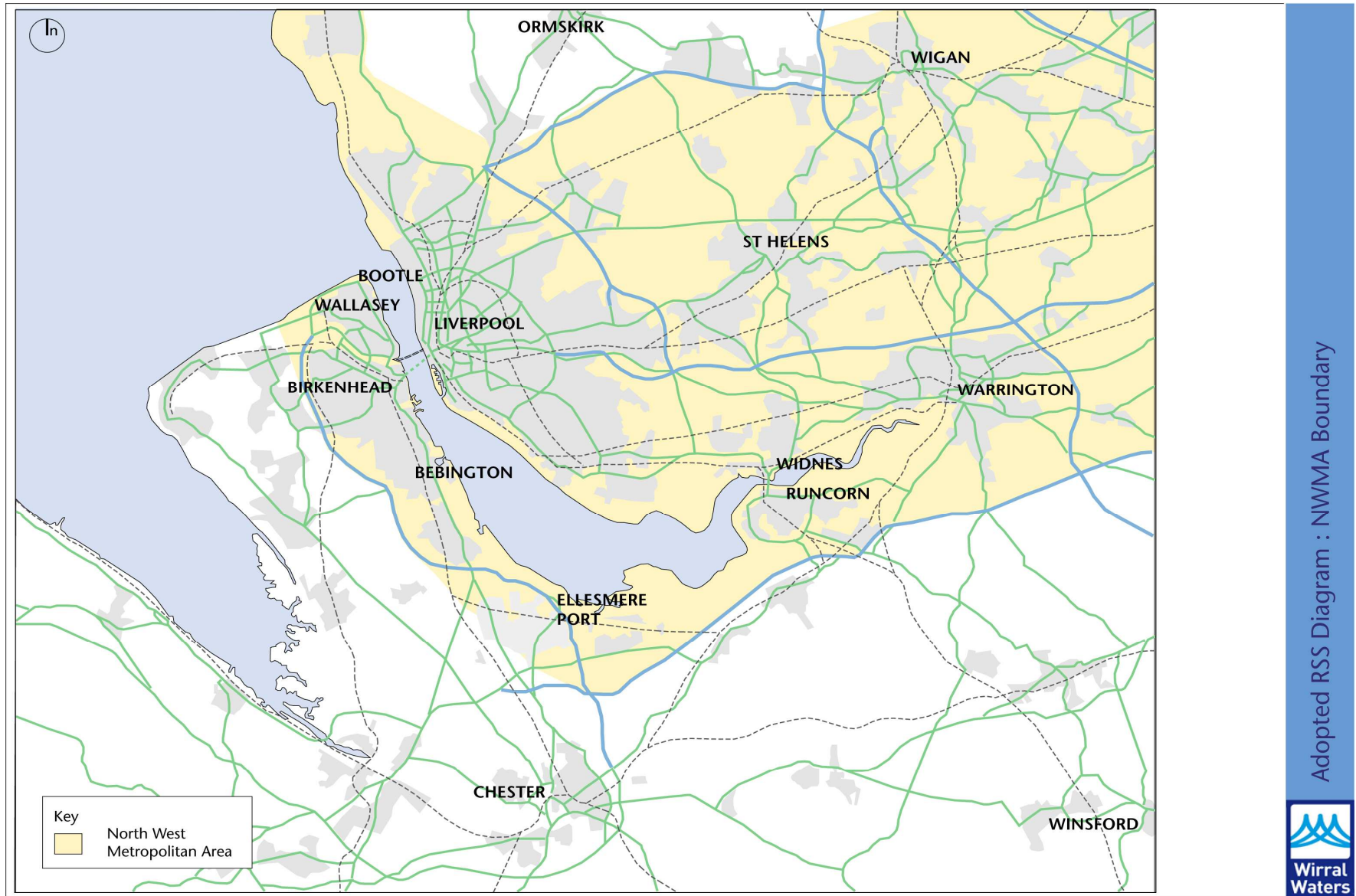
2.33 The RES sets out that Liverpool is a vibrant European city and a key driver of city-regional growth. It also commits to the delivery of a number of Strategic Regional Sites (SRS), which include the Twelve Quays multi-modal freight terminal, which is comprised of the Roll-on Roll-off ferry terminal and surrounding land. Wirral International Business Park is also on the list of SRS and is expected to continue to play an important role in providing for the accommodation needs of more traditional manufacturing sectors. The SRS are considered further below.

***Regional Spatial Strategy (adopted as Regional Planning Guidance for the North West, 2003)***

2.34 The adopted Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) sets a broad spatial framework for the region and a number of themed policies. It is now part of the statutory development plan.

2.35 Policy SD1 gives priority to focussing development in Liverpool and Manchester as the two regional poles and other towns and cities within the North West Metropolitan Area (NWMA). Inner Wirral and the Wirral Waters opportunity are located at the core of the NWMA, as shown in Figure 2.3 below.

Figure 2.3 North West Metropolitan Area (adapted from RSS Diagram)

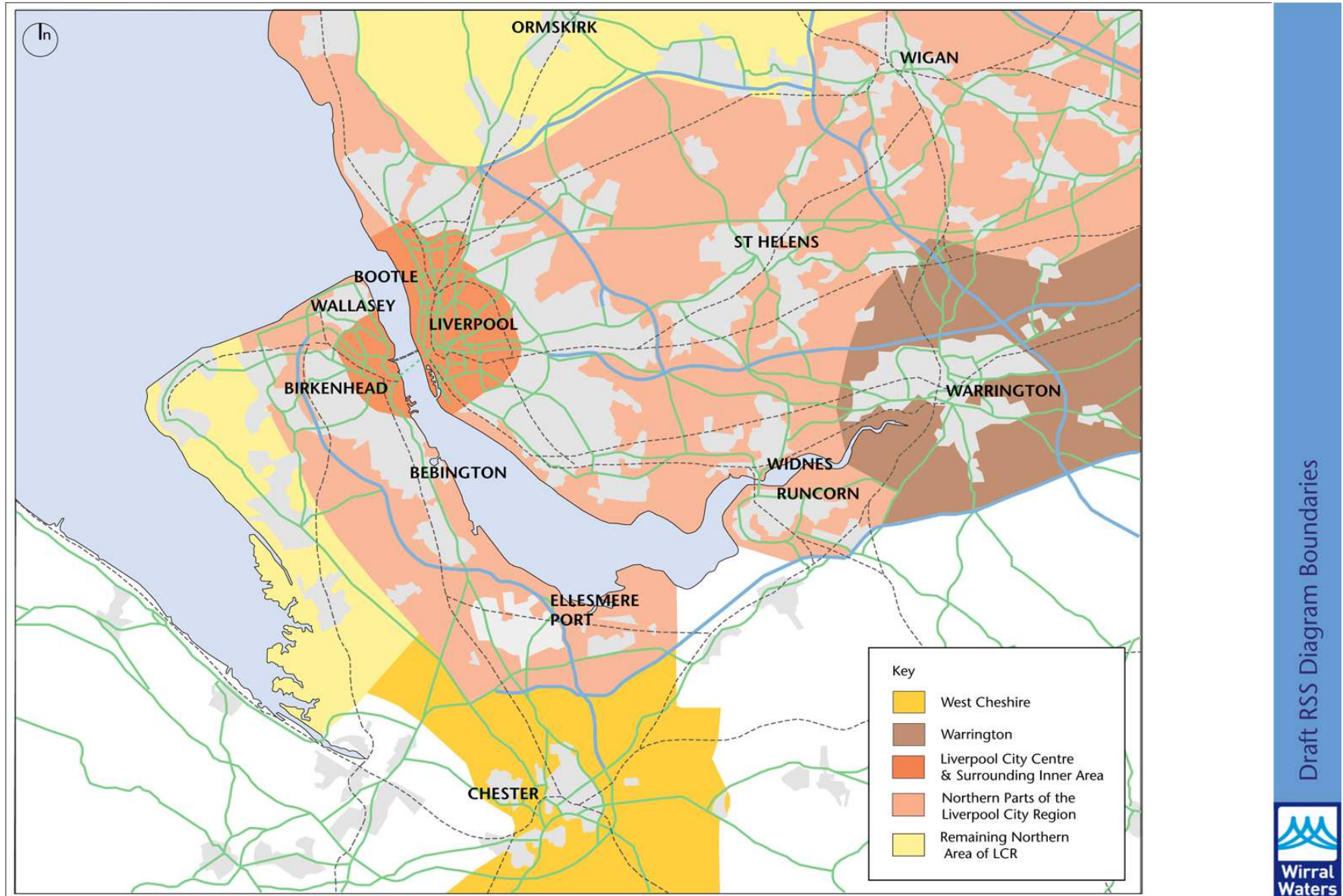


- 2.36 A number of core development principles are established. These include economy in the use of land and buildings, an appropriate mix of uses and efficient use of transport facilities in (DP1), enhancing the overall quality of life (DP2) and economic growth/competitiveness and social progress for all (DP4).
- 2.37 Policy SD7 recognises the potential for regionally significant development in coastal areas, including the diversification of ports and opportunities for tourism development.
- 2.38 Housing policies seek sustainable urban regeneration through the re-use of brownfield land and the phased release of land over the plan period. Wirral is identified in Policy UR7 which seeks to influence housing supply across all tenures and values, in the interests of improving the quality of the Region's housing stock.
- 2.39 Wirral's housing supply figure in Adopted RSS (2003) is 160 per annum, which has been acknowledged as low in comparison with other areas seeking housing led regeneration and is proposed to rise significantly through the emerging RSS (see below).

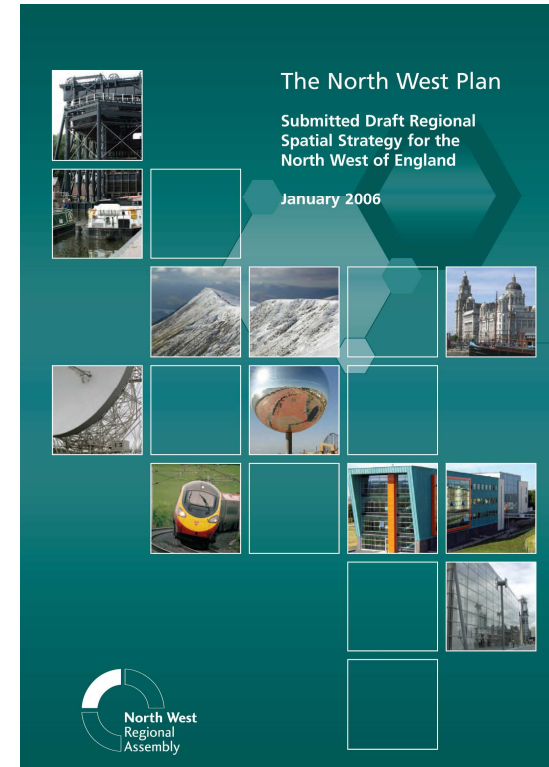
### ***Emerging Regional Spatial Strategy (January 2006 to present)***

- 2.40 The Draft Regional Spatial Strategy (January 2006) was subject to an Examination in Public (EiP) and the EiP Panel's report was published in May 2007. The Secretary of State's Proposed Changes were consulted upon in March 2008. The Draft RSS responds to the Northern Way programme by introducing the City Region concept to statutory planning policy. The Panel Report and Secretary of State's Proposed Changes recommend that the statutory Regional Development Framework should give first priority to the Regional Centre, with the second priority on the Surrounding Inner Area. This follows the HMRI boundary and therefore includes the majority of the Wirral Waters area and its contextual surroundings. Lower priority is given to other parts of the city region, where needed to provide for housing needs and regeneration objectives.
- 2.41 Draft RSS proposed an increase in housing allocation for Wirral, from 160 to 250 per annum. Wirral Council was supportive of this increase, and made it clear at the EiP that it would accept a higher figure provided the allocation can be met on brownfield sites in sustainable locations where new housing is needed, in particular at Wirral Waters. The Panel accepted this and recommend an increase to 500 per annum. The full text of the Panel's commentary on Wirral Waters is included at Appendix 1.

Figure 2.4 City Region (indicative & adapted from RSS diagram)



- 2.42 A number of transport policies in Draft RSS embody the Regional Transport Strategy. These include RT2 which seeks to make best use of existing infrastructure and RT4 which seeks to support the Port of Liverpool as the North West's key international sea port.
- 2.43 Draft RSS also identifies Broad Locations for Regionally Significant Economic Development through policy W2. The Wirral Waterfront Strategic Investment Area (SIA) is among the Broad Locations for Regional Investment Sites (RIS) although W2 does state that there should only be one site in each broad location. The accompanying Technical Appendix confirms that the site within the Wirral Waterfront SIA is the Wirral International Business Park SRS.
- 2.44 The Birkenhead Waterfront and Eastham Docks are both identified separately as inter-modal freight terminals, within the Broad Locations for Regionally Significant Economic Development. At Birkenhead, the Technical Appendix confirms that this specifically relates to Twelve Quays.
- 2.45 It will be appropriate for the Wirral Waters opportunity to be formally recognised at the regional level, given its potential importance to the regional and sub-regional economy.



### ***North West Regional Housing Strategy 2005***

- 2.46 The Regional Housing Strategy (RHS) 2005, produced by the Regional Housing Board, aims to deliver a housing offer that will promote and sustain economic growth within the region ensuring that all residents have access to a choice of good quality housing in successful, secure and sustainable communities. The RHS supports the Northern Way Growth Strategy and agrees that housing has a central role to play in supporting and driving economic development.
- 2.47 The strategy accepts that the quality and range of housing currently available in parts of the region is not good enough and that there needs to be a supply of good quality attractive housing of the type necessary to attract and retain the skilled workforce needed to sustain economic development.
- 2.48 The RHS states the Board's strong support for the Northern Way Growth Strategy's "cohesive arguments" regarding the interdependence of housing and economic growth – i.e. "get the housing offer right and it is an important economic driver, fail to address weaknesses and housing will act as a drag on growth potential".

- 2.49 The strategy notes that the need to support economic development should influence the choice of housing land allocations in Local Development Frameworks (LDFs).

### **Sub Regional Setting (Merseyside & Liverpool City-Region)**

#### ***Liverpool City Region Development Programme***

- 2.50 As highlighted above, the Liverpool City Region is one of eight city-regions identified across the Northern Way area as the most appropriate economic entities on which Northern Way policy should be implemented. It is comprised of the urban core area (Greater Merseyside) and the adjacent areas of North Wales, Chester, Warrington, West Lancashire and Ellesmere Port & Neston. The Vision set out in the Liverpool City Region Development Programme (CRDP) is to:

*'regain our status as a premier European City Region. By 2025 we will secure an internationally competitive economy and cultural offer and outstanding quality of life; with vibrant communities contributing to and sharing in sustainable wealth creation'.*

- 2.51 In order to achieve this Vision, five strategic priorities have been identified. These are:

- **A Creative and Competitive City Region:** through the growth of the Knowledge Economy, Innovation, Inward Investment, the creation of new and high quality Physical Business Infrastructure and Sector/ Cluster Development in order to promote the growth of important and higher value added activities.
- **A Talented and Able City Region:** acknowledging that education, skills and lifelong learning are the passport to sustainable prosperity, there is a focus on both raising those skills required to secure sustained gains in productivity but also those required to help residents enter or re-enter the labour market.
- **A Well-Connected City Region:** the delivery of excellent international and domestic gateways for both goods and passengers and good movement around the City Region. It identifies four key assets and opportunities – the Port of Liverpool, Liverpool John Lennon Airport, the Mersey Gateway (a second crossing over the River Mersey) and road and rail connectivity (reducing congestion and eliminating capacity constraints).
- **Sustainable Communities:** where people actively choose to live, work and visit, to ensure sufficient quality and choice of housing to support the economic growth of the City Region, but also and through action on neighbourhood renewal and liveability.

- **A Premier Destination Centre:** developing and exploiting the cultural and leisure assets of the City Region, as a premier tourist destination delivering a range of activities and investments to transform, energise and connect the Mersey Waterfront.

2.52 Wirral Waters is one of the few major development opportunities at the heart of the City Region that is capable of satisfying these wider aspirations, particularly in terms of securing a competitive City Region able to secure inward investment and driving a change in the economic base of the City Region.

2.53 This role is acknowledged in the 2006 update of the Liverpool CRDP, which reflects the Initial Vision and clearly supports the physical business infrastructure opportunity.

### *Merseyside Action Plan*

2.54 The Merseyside Action Plan (MAP), produced on behalf of Merseyside partners by The Mersey Partnership, sets out those investment programmes that will contribute to the continued renaissance of the Greater Merseyside sub-region (Wirral, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens, Knowsley and Halton). Key priorities include:

- **Skills for Productivity** – a larger, more skilled and flexible workforce;



- **Full Employment** – accelerating the rate at which economically inactive people are brought into, stay and progress in the labour market;
- **Productivity Growth** – increasing the numbers of high growth start-ups and growing businesses, particularly within key sectors and clusters;
- **Rising Enterprise Levels** – raising the rates of business start-up and the total size of the business base.
- **Strategic Sites and Premises** – developing a portfolio of sites and premises capable of supporting wider economic growth ambitions for Greater Merseyside, targeting Mersey Waterfront locations in particular. Key projects include **Wirral Docklands**, Northshore and a review of Strategic Investment Areas and Economic Development Zones in the sub-region.
- **Generating Inward Investment** – equipping Merseyside with a fit-for-purpose inward investment vehicle;
- **Mersey Waterfront Regional Park** - delivering a range of activities and investments to transform, energise and connect the Mersey Waterfront (discussed further below).

### ***NewHeartlands: Prospectus 2005 and Scheme Update 2005***

2.55 The NewHeartlands Housing Market Renewal Initiative (HMRI) Pathfinder was set up to address failing housing areas in Merseyside. Its boundaries now cover the inner parts of Liverpool, Wirral and Sefton. The overall boundary is the same as the “Liverpool city Centre and Surrounding Inner Area” designation of Draft RSS in Figure 2.4 above.

2.56 The main goals of NewHeartlands are to:

- **Create conditions for the revival of housing markets** in the NewHeartlands area;
- **Create attractive, sustainable urban neighbourhoods** through balanced housing delivery to meet the needs of existing communities and attract new residents;
- **Build sustainable communities, ensure community cohesion and safeguard investment** through quality public services supporting infrastructure;
- **Contribute to the competitiveness and prosperity** of the wider region.

- 2.57 The significant public investment underlying NewHeartlands is a key catalyst for change in the inner areas of Liverpool, Wirral and Sefton. NewHeartlands' role as "partner" is set out below. From initial consultation and literature review, it is evident that Wirral Waters has the potential to assist greatly in the delivery of HMRI objectives. Wirral Waters must be careful in how it positions itself to be of maximum benefit to the HMRI, ensuring that it does not undermine HMRI activities and create balanced, mixed, sustainable communities in Inner Wirral.
- 2.58 In Wirral, a strategy and series of non-statutory Neighbourhood Masterplans have been produced, which are reviewed below. Three HMRI Neighbourhood areas in Wirral lie immediately adjacent to the Birkenhead dock estate.
- 2.59 Through the Masterplanning process and the formulation of detailed proposals, regard will need to be had to potential effects on these HMRI areas. In particular, the phasing of development, type and location of any housing delivered, and the provision of employment, infrastructure and community facilities will need to ensure that Wirral Waters and its neighbouring HMRI areas are complementary to each other.
- 2.60 NewHeartlands, like all HMRI pathfinders, is a UK Government funded organisation that seeks to provide public funding to

stimulate areas of housing market failure. Funding is specifically targeted at land acquisition and creating the right climate for the delivery of improved private sector and social housing.

- 2.61 The challenges across the wider NewHeartlands area are diverse. For example, in Liverpool City Centre and those parts of South Liverpool that lie within the HMRI boundary, the market is fairly strong and intervention has been limited. Whereas, in parts of north Liverpool, south Sefton and parts of Inner Wirral (Rock Ferry and Tranmere) there has been a need for major intervention including compulsory purchase and demolition.
- 2.62 As explained below under "Strategy for Inner Wirral", targeted HMRI resources may be limited in the areas around Birkenhead Docks, with the consequence that the delivery of major investment and renewal will have to rely primarily upon private sector investment.

### ***Second Local Transport Plan for Merseyside 2006-2011***

- 2.63 The current Local Transport Plan (LTP) for Merseyside sets out the vision for a fully integrated safe transport network which supports economic and social regeneration and ensures good access for all. Among the transport improvement measures are:
- Mid-Wirral (Wrexham to Bidston line) rail improvement scheme;

- Bidston Moss viaduct maintenance;
- Local road and bus network improvements, and improvements for pedestrian and cycle accessibility;
- Park and Ride strategy;
- Improvements to traffic and pedestrian routes and public realm on the Birkenhead/Wallasey bridge links;
- Access to Mersey Ports; and
- Freight rail link from Wrexham/Bidston.

There is a strong degree of crossover between the LTP proposals and the opportunities at Wirral Waters, as explored in Section 5.

## District Setting (Wirral)

### *Wirral Unitary Development Plan 2000*

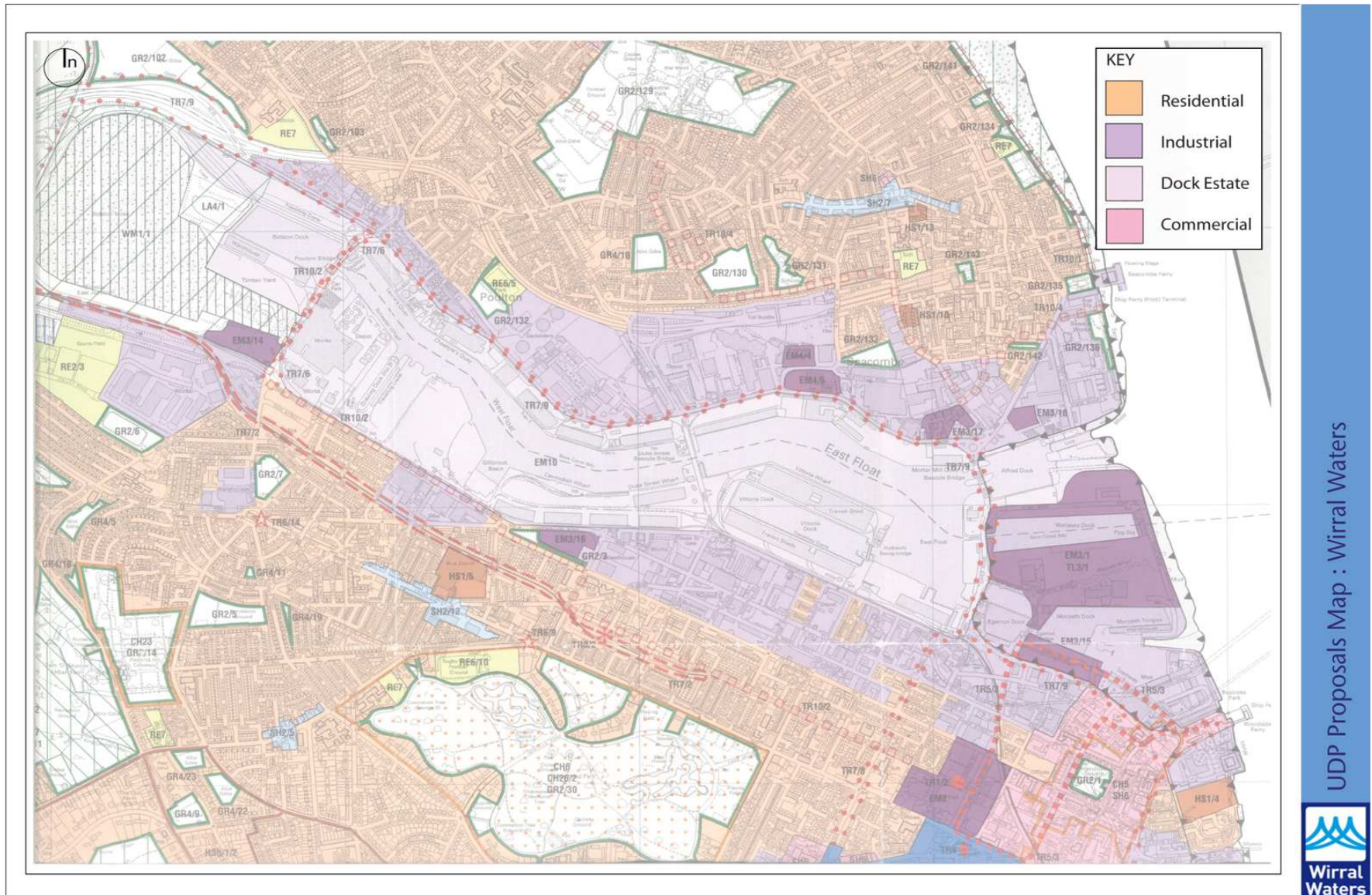
2.64 The Wirral Unitary Development Plan (WUDP) is part of the statutory development plan for Wirral Waters, beneath the regional framework established by RSS.

2.65 The WUDP was adopted in 2000. Urban regeneration is the core theme with an emphasis on targeted renewal in the inner (eastern) parts of the Borough, combined with policies restricting the growth of the urban area in the outlying settlements enclosed by the Green Belt.

2.66 The core dock estate was primarily designated for port use under policy EM10 but was also identified for other employment use in the event that port operational use should cease. Other key policies include EM8, a designation for “primarily industrial uses” given to many of the areas surrounding the dock estate. An extract of the UDP Proposals Map is shown at Figure 2.5 below.

2.67 The UDP will gradually be replaced by a “new-style” Local Development Framework (LDF). The policies of the UDP were initially “saved”, to continue in force, until September 2007. While Wirral Council requested that the majority of UDP policies should be saved beyond September 2007, it asked for Policy EM10 to be abandoned, to enable the Council to respond more positively to the Wirral Waters opportunity. The Secretary of State has endorsed this request and the dock estate is now undesignated.

Figure 2.5 UDP Proposals Map Extract (Crown Copyright – Reproduced with consent of Wirral Council under licence 100037579)



### ***Wirral Local Development Framework***

- 2.68 Wirral Council has produced a Local Development Scheme (LDS) which sets out how the Council will deliver its new Local Development Framework (LDF). The first Development Plan Document (DPD) will be the Core Strategy.
- 2.69 As described in Section 1, this Baseline Study and the Wirral Waters Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) will provide the Council with key information that can be part of the evidence base for the Core Strategy. Other key evidence includes a Retail/Leisure Study, an Employment Land and Premises Study and a Housing Market Assessment.
- 2.70 The current LDS proposed a series of land Allocations DPDs to follow the Core Strategy, allied to alterations to the Proposals Map. The Wirral Waters opportunity will need to be reflected in these DPDs, with the SRF providing the non-statutory framework to guide the day to day implementation of the project.
- 2.71 A number of Neighbourhood Masterplans will be future elements of the SRF, which may be utilised in the preparation of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) once the DPDs are in place to facilitate their formal adoption.

- 2.72 It is important to note that due to the scale of the opportunity, the time horizons for realising and likely time horizons of Wirral Waters – estimated as being at least 30 and potentially up to 50 years – will go way beyond normal planning policy horizons. Within these time horizons, the project will evolve and change as policy and markets evolve. It will therefore be important for the detailed implementation of Wirral Waters to be guided by a continuing review of the Strategic Regeneration Framework and a phasing programme which corresponds with and can practically feed into the Wirral LDF which is used to identify the scale and location of future development over a 15 year timeframe.

### ***Wirral Enterprise Strategy***

- 2.73 The Wirral Enterprise Strategy sets out the scale of the enterprise gap in Wirral, finding that of the 42 districts in the North West (itself a relatively weak performer in terms of enterprise), Wirral has:
- The second largest business start up gap;
  - The second largest business stock gap; and
  - The third largest self-employment gap.
- 2.74 The Strategy seeks to nurture and sustain a culture and infrastructure in Wirral which recognises and celebrates enterprise,

embraces risk and constantly seeks out new forms of innovation. This will be reflected in a higher rate of self-employment and business starts, a larger and more productive business stock, and greater GVA per head.

### ***Wirral Full Employment Strategy***

2.75 The Full Employment Strategy proceeds from a recognition that:

- There are geographic concentrations of worklessness and economic inactivity (inner Wirral);
- Those with the lowest qualifications are most likely to be affected by worklessness;
- Although there is a significant volume of employment opportunities across the Travel to Work Area, there is a relatively low take-up of these opportunities; and
- Many of Wirral's residents are trapped in a low-pay, no-pay cycle, moving back and forwards between low-paid temporary employment and worklessness.

2.76 Partners in Wirral have set a full employment target employment rate of 76%, to be achieved by 2012. This requires a movement of some 9,500 people into employment in Wirral, an aspiration which

could only be delivered through a major employment based regeneration project like Wirral Waters. This is potentially achievable within the early phase of the project.

### ***Wirral Housing Strategy Statement***

2.77 The Vision for Wirral's housing strategy is to create sustainable communities across the whole of the borough. The vision seeks to tackle socio-economic infrastructures to create neighbourhoods offering better quality and choice as well as housing market decline.

2.78 An assessment of Wirral's housing market and needs has been made and the priorities which need to be addressed identified. The strategy is intended to be in line with the strategic priorities within the North West Regional Housing Strategy. Wirral's Strategy seeks to deliver four Strategic Housing Priorities of:

- Delivering an urban renaissance;
- Providing affordable homes to maintain balanced communities;
- Delivering decent homes in thriving neighbourhoods; and
- Meeting the needs of communities and providing support for those who need it.

### ***Strategy for Inner Wirral 2003 / Neighbourhood Masterplans***

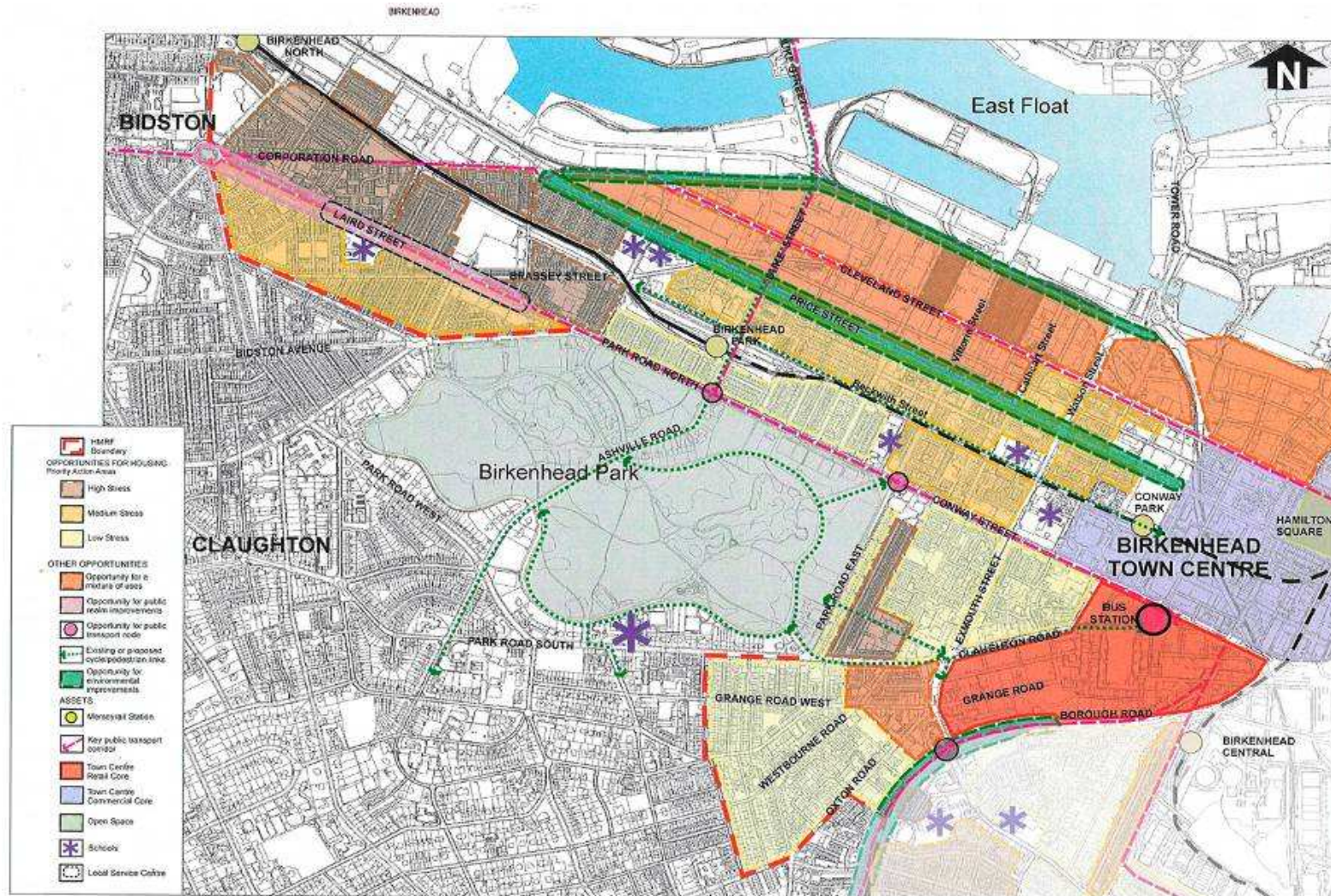
- 2.79 This document, produced by Wirral Council and NewHeartlands, establishes a comprehensive regeneration strategy for the HMRI areas of Wirral (known as “Inner Wirral”), which extend to some 1,220 hectares. It sets a wide range of objectives for the area. The prospects of delivering these objectives will be greatly enhanced through the realisation of a major development opportunity at the heart of the HMRI area. Some examples are:
- Reducing the proportion of housing in Council tax bands A and B and increasing the proportion in higher bands, thereby providing a more diverse range of housing types;
  - Increasing the net area of accessible urban greenspace;
  - 1 million square feet of new, converted or re-used high quality commercial and employment floorspace by 2014; and
  - Reduce the gap in health inequality between Inner Wirral and the rest of Wirral by at least 50%.
- 2.80 Of the five HMRI Neighbourhoods in Wirral, three are within and immediately adjacent to the Wirral Waters opportunity. These are Poulton, Seacombe/Egremont and Birkenhead (the latter was subsequently extended north west to North Birkenhead and Bidston – as explained below through the “Framework for Regeneration”).
- 2.81 HMRI activity in Wirral to date has been mostly concentrated in the other two areas of Tranmere and Rock Ferry. Funding is limited and these areas have been identified as in greater need. However, the problems and challenges for the areas around the docks have not reduced. With public funding committed to other areas and the market unlikely to attract new investment without public assistance there is a risk that the HMRI areas around the docks could decline further.
- 2.82 Therefore, owing to the need to ensure that these Neighbourhoods do improve, coupled with the scale of change required, Wirral Waters could provide the only realistic catalyst available. The need to integrate Wirral Waters with the HMRI areas will be a fundamental principle of the Wirral Waters opportunity.
- 2.83 For future stages of the SRF, these relationships will be explored and options considered as to how the opportunities can result in the more sustainable forms of urban regeneration. The following plans

show how the Neighbourhood Masterplans sit in the context of Wirral Waters.

- 2.84 The **Birkenhead Neighbourhood Development Framework** (see Figure 2.6 below) has obvious synergies with the dock estate, particularly the area between Price Street and the East Float which is shown as an opportunity for a mix of uses, in contrast with the more residential character south of Price Street. A number of pockets of residential property intermixed with the surrounding industrial areas between Price Street and East Float, known as Ten Streets, have already been demolished. The marketing strategy agreed between EP and Wirral Council is directed at promoting redevelopment of this area for industrial use.
- 2.85 There are opportunities for linkage and connectivity with Birkenhead Town Centre (including Hamilton Square and the Woodside Quarter) and Birkenhead Park. The high stress areas at the western end of this Masterplan between Laird Street and Price Street fed into the later Framework for Regeneration of North Birkenhead and Bidston, which shifted the focus towards Bidston (see review below).
- 2.86 A consultancy study to consider the detailed proposals for the Laird Street area will be commissioned shortly.



Figure 2.6 Birkenhead Neighbourhood Development Framework – Reproduced with consent of Wirral Council under licence 100037579



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S09 NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS

104-105

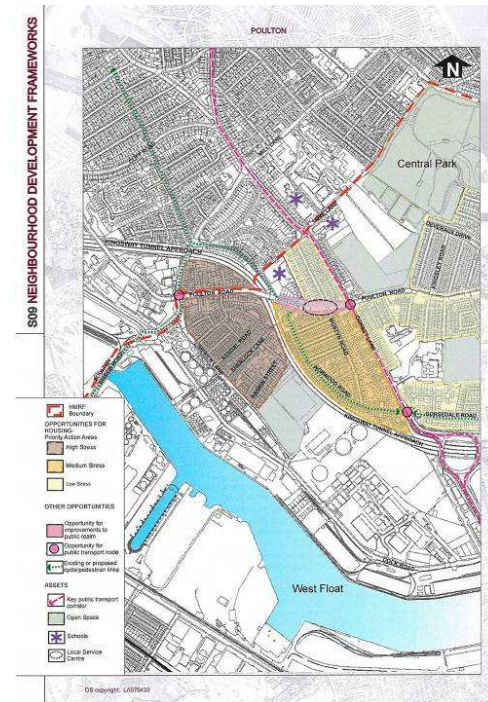
2.87 The **Seacombe/Egremont Neighbourhood** sits north of the Twelve Quays and East Float areas of the dock estate. It shows a number of “high stress” areas immediately beyond the Scotts Quay area, which is identified as a mixed use opportunity. The landmark to the immediate north of East Float is the listed grain warehouses, which are already being converted for residential apartments.

**Figure 2.7 Seacombe/Egremont Neighbourhood Development Framework** (Crown Copyright – Reproduced with consent of Wirral Council under licence 100037579)



2.88 The **Poulton Neighbourhood** shows a large area of “high stress” between the Kingsway cutting and Limekiln Lane, to the north of West Float. There are no proposals at present in this area for significant HMRI activity; however this is a possibility in the future subject to further consultation and funding.

**Figure 2.8 Poulton Neighbourhood Development Framework** (Crown Copyright – Reproduced with consent of Wirral Council under licence 100037579)

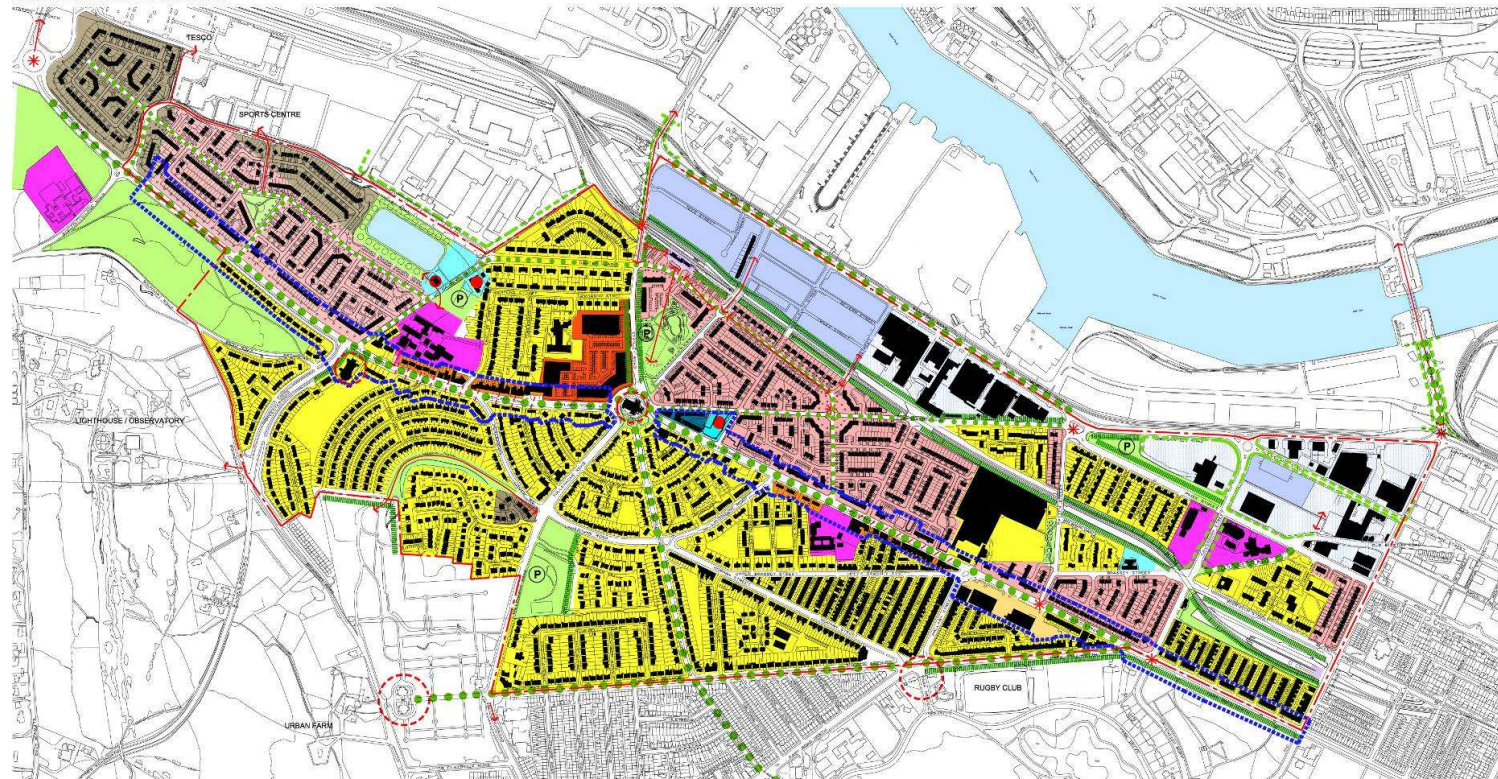


- 2.89 The **Framework for Regeneration for North Birkenhead and Bidston** was consulted upon in 2005. It promoted significant clearance and rebuilding of new homes in order to secure a sustainable future for North Birkenhead. The new Park & Ride proposals for Birkenhead North station are emerging following clearance in this area.
- 2.90 There is also a group repair scheme underway in Norman street triangle area and there a significant, private sector new build residential development has recently been completed opposite St James Church in North Birkenhead.
- 2.91 Wirral Waters and North Birkenhead offer significant opportunities for integration and mutual benefit, particularly related to the future development of the cleared area around the former Rivers Streets. The integration of this area is explored further in Section 3 Urban Design and the accompanying Appendix 2.

**Figure 2.9 Framework for Regeneration for North Birkenhead and Bidston**  
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**OVERALL PLAN OF THE MASTERPLAN AREA**



This plan shows the proposals for change across the Masterplan area as a whole. These proposals result from work undertaken by the consultancy team, including physical surveys, housing market analysis and financial appraisals along with feedback from developers, local agencies and other stakeholders and the views of local residents



We want to know what YOU think are the best solutions for both your neighbourhood and the Masterplan area as a whole.

WIRRAL GVA Grimley SJC  
 Brock Carmichael architects

BOARD 5



### ***Woodside Masterplan***

2.92 Wirral Council and a number of public and private sector partners have prepared a Masterplan setting a design and implementation framework for the creation of a mixed-use quarter in the Woodside area of Birkenhead. The Masterplan is also addressed further below in consideration of Wirral's significant projects, the conclusion being that this is (excluding Wirral Waters) one of the most significant opportunities for major new development in Wirral at present. The emphasis is on creating a major attraction at this key gateway to Wirral and Birkenhead, through a range of individual development projects and public realm improvements.

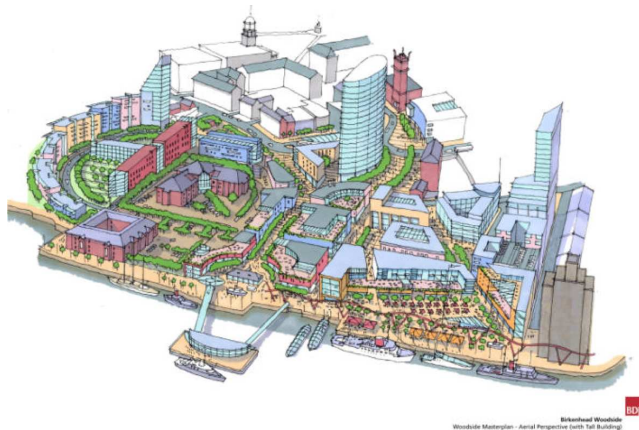
2.93 A key aspect is the improvement of linkages between Woodside Ferry Terminal and the Hamilton Square Conservation Area. The Masterplan was prepared prior to the emergence of Wirral Waters but the two schemes are considered to be complementary.

2.94 The detailed design for projects emerging under the Woodside Masterplan will need to have regard to issues of capacity and linkage through to Wirral Waters, in addition to the core principles already established. Considerations of height and scale may change in the context of future Masterplanning for Wirral Waters.

Peel is one of the key landowners of the Woodside Masterplan area through ownership of Woodside Business Park.

**Figure 2.10 Woodside Masterplan boundaries and Concept (Crown Copyright – Reproduced with consent of Wirral Council under licence 100037579)**





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### ***Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) & Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)***

2.95 Wirral Council has recently produced, a number of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD). These will guide future Masterplanning and Implementation, and include:

- SPD2 – Designing for Self-Contained Flat Development & Conversions (October 2006);
- SPD3 – Hot Food Takeaways, Restaurants, Cafes & Drinking Establishments (October 2006); and
- SPD4 – Car Parking Standards (July 2007).

### ***Interim Housing Policy***

2.96 The Interim Housing Policy is a refinement of a policy that was initially introduced in December 2003, following the issue of the current RSS. It sought to focus new development and urban renaissance into the area of Wirral to the area to the east of the M53, within the North West Metropolitan Area.

2.97 The current Interim Housing Policy seeks to restrict housing development in the west of the Borough and direct residential development to the Housing Market Renewal areas and other identified regeneration priority areas. The Interim Housing Policy will need to be reviewed again when the new RSS is issued in its final form, for the period until the new LDF can be adopted.

## Capturing Success

### *Mersey Waterfront and Port of Liverpool*

- 2.98 The River Mersey is the defining natural feature of the Liverpool City-Region. Its influence cannot be overstated. The River has been the focus of human activity for hundreds of years, principally through the port-related activity upon which the local economy was built. The role of the waterfront has changed considerably in the post-war era, through changes in the port requiring an ability to handle larger vessels and through wider processes of deindustrialisation.
- 2.99 The waterfront's leisure and tourism role has also changed beyond recognition, in both positive and negative ways with examples being the decline of New Brighton as a coastal resort, the regeneration of Albert Dock/Kings Dock and the rise and fall of the Liverpool Garden Festival site. The regeneration of New Brighton is being addressed through the Council's New Brighton programme.
- 2.100 At the present time there is great change underway on a number of key sites on both sides of the River Mersey, with regeneration schemes planned for the vast majority of sites that have suffered decline. Most of these are referred to below in the subsections dealing with Wirral, Liverpool and Sefton. Additionally, the **Mersey Waterfront Regional Park** and **Mersey Maritime** initiatives highlight the key role of the waterfront in terms of economic development, maritime industries and leisure/tourism (see "Partners" below).
- 2.101 The main driver for the maritime economy is the **Port of Liverpool**, which is constantly evolving to meet the ever changing demands of the maritime industry particularly in respect of the ability to handle large vessels and turn them around as quickly as possible. The Mersey benefits from deep water access and can therefore accommodate the largest of vessels although many of the older parts of the Port cannot receive such vessels because of their restricted depth or the constraints of the dock access channels.
- 2.102 Port infrastructure must respond to this, and Peel Ports has recently secured Government approval for the **Seaforth In-River container berth**, which will expand the Royal Seaforth dock to accommodate the large post-panamax vessels.
- 2.103 Additionally, recent investment in the **Twelve Quays Roll-on Roll-off facility** has allowed quick turnaround and improved infrastructure for ferry services between Dublin and Liverpool. This facility is part of the Birkenhead Dock estate and a designated Strategic Regional Site in RES. A Masterplan, prepared by NWDA, was commenced but not completed, looking at how best to capitalise of the success

of the Ro-Ro through new commercial development (see Appendix 1).

2.104 The Port of Liverpool is undergoing a number of investments, both in the future of the port and in realising opportunities for major redevelopment of the dock estate. **Birkenhead Docks (West and East Floats)** have a role to play to play in the future success of the port. However due to physical constraints is unlikely to serve the major international markets in the same way as other Port assets such as Seaforth, Langton, Eastham and Twelve Quays. Hence the emphasis is on sustaining and restructuring West and East Floats, which then acts as a catalyst to Wirral Waters through creating new development opportunities. Any relocation of tenants necessary to facilitate Wirral Waters will be delivered through a relocation strategy, which will be the subject of consultation through the SRF process.

2.105 The leisure and tourism economy of Merseyside has always benefited from the Mersey Waterfront, to varying extents and in a number of guises, as discussed above. A future role for the waterfront lies in the development of cruise liner facilities and attracting international markets to the City-Region. A **cruise liner terminal** is current being constructed at Pier Head in Liverpool and is due to open in 2007. It is hoped that this will kick-start a major

opportunity in serving the cruise market and making the Liverpool City-Region a key cruise destination in North West Europe.

2.106 The **Mersey Ferries** have long acted as an important means of passenger transport between Wirral and Liverpool, both as a commuter and on leisure service. Consultation with Merseytravel, which operates Mersey Ferries (see “Partners” below), has revealed that the ferries struggle to remain viable due to low patronage. Wirral Waters presents a clear opportunity to introduce a critical mass in Wirral of residential, employment and leisure uses that could attract pedestrians back and forth across the River Mersey using the ferries.

2.107 A range of other opportunities and investments existing along the Mersey Waterfront. Peel Holdings and partners are looking into the potential to create **Mersey Tidal Power** which would produce renewable energy.

2.108 Further inland, the **Mersey Gateway** project has received Government funding for a new bridge between Runcorn and Widnes. The estimated cost is £335m and the preferred route will provide relief to the Silver Jubilee Bridge.

2.109 Other major infrastructure projects include **Port Wirral, Port Weston** Phases 1 and 2 (port development in Runcorn at the Manchester



Ship Canal), the **Mersey Multi-modal Gateway** (a road/rail interchange in Halton) and the proposed **Ince Resource Recovery Park** which will utilise rail, road and water to create an environmental technologies and renewable energy complex.

2.110 **Liverpool John Lennon Airport** is an important contributor to the role and function of the waterfront. It has given the City-Region a regional airport, a critical component in a successful city economy. Situated adjacent to the Mersey, and under the same ownership as the Port of Liverpool, it provides an opportunity to develop the “**Mersey Superport**” concept, building on the synergies of multi-modal transport in the same locality and ownership.

2.111 In summary, the scale of change in the Mersey Waterfront is enormous. The improvements being made to infrastructure and sustainable transport are highly significant and represent both a major upheaval and an unprecedented opportunity across the entire City-Region. Cumulatively these projects represent a major catalyst to attracting inward investment on a significant scale.

2.112 Within the wider waterfront, there are a number of key areas of change relevant to Wirral Waters. These are set out below.

### ***North Liverpool: Northshore/Liverpool Waters***

2.113 Like Inner Wirral, North Liverpool is one of the most deprived areas in the UK. It has also been identified as a Strategic Investment Area under the Objective 1 programme. Although a few individually successful projects have been completed, North Liverpool has not yet felt the significant benefits of wider regeneration activity and continues to suffer acute social, economic and environmental problems. The need for major transformation is evident.

2.114 A large area of the dock estate in North Liverpool has already been identified as surplus to “industrial” port requirements. Planning permission was granted for a mixed use redevelopment of the Central Docks area, to stimulate the regeneration of the area and secure a viable use for the dock estate.

2.115 This permission has not been implemented, and the area remains in need of major change. Having acquired the dock estate in 2005, Peel Holdings is taking a fresh approach to this area, and is consulting on major proposals for a high density regeneration project. The project is called **Liverpool Waters** and is similar in scale to the Wirral Waters vision launched in September 2006.

2.116 Peel Holdings is committed equally to the delivery of both Wirral Waters and Liverpool Waters. However, they are interdependent upon each other, and Peel is keen to devise a complementary

delivery strategy that will benefit the entire City-Region through two major projects in the heart of the deprived inner area. Peel Holdings views to the two projects as contributions to the creation of an **Ocean Gateway** for the North West of England. The Ocean Gateway concept is currently being explored further by Peel Holdings with its partners.

2.117 The Liverpool Land Development Company has also considered the area and is also seeking major change. It has identified a number of key opportunities in the Northshore Atlantic Gateway. These will need to be incorporated in a more comprehensive exercise, taking the Peel Holdings vision and wider aspirations for the HMRI areas in account.

2.118 Key City-Region stakeholders including Liverpool City Council, Peel Holdings, English Partnerships, TMP and LLDC are focused on the **need for transformational change in North Liverpool**, from the waterfront back through Vauxhall and Everton into the HMRI areas of Anfield/Breckfield.

### ***Liverpool City Centre (and Surrounding Inner Area...)***

2.119 Liverpool City Centre is undergoing a major renaissance, and has underway some of the largest and most high profile projects in the country. Much of this change has been spearheaded by **Liverpool Vision**, which was the UK's first urban regeneration company and

consists mainly of Liverpool City Council, English Partnerships and the North West Development Agency. Although considerable EU funding has been levered, private sector investment has also been highly significant in Liverpool city centre. The key projects are set out below:

- **Kings Waterfront:** comprises the 10,000 capacity Liverpool Arena and Convention Centre, a car park, public piazza, 400 bed hotel and several hundred residential apartments on a key site immediately south of the Albert Dock.
- **Retail Core:** Liverpool's retail offer will change beyond recognition in the coming 2-3 years through the opening of the largest urban retail scheme in Europe – the Paradise Project, to be named **Liverpool One** – and a host of other improvements including the newly opened **Met Quarter** and the proposed **Central Village**.
- **Lime Street Gateway:** incorporates landmark buildings in mixed use, improvements to Liverpool's mainline station and a host of public realm improvements.
- **Pier Head/Mann Island:** the new Museum of Liverpool project and a link for the Leeds-Liverpool Canal, in a sensitive setting next to the world famous three graces.

- **Capital of Culture:** Liverpool is European Capital of Culture in 2008. In addition to the completion of a range of key projects, the city will be providing a range of major activities and profile-raising events to ensure that in 2008 and after the city can capitalise on its strong cultural assets. In preparation for 2008, a range of environmental improvements have been taking place, including the “Big Dig” which has seen many of Liverpool’s key thoroughfares undergo major improvements to public realm and transportation.
  - **World Heritage Site:** the WHS designation was granted to Liverpool in July 2004, and recognises Liverpool has outstanding universal value as the Maritime Mercantile City. The WHS designation places Liverpool back on the international stage as a heritage asset of worldwide significance. The designation affects 6 parts of the city. Additionally, a Buffer Zone has been drawn around the Site, primarily to protect its visual setting. The WHS boundary and Buffer Zone are shown in **Appendix 3**. A management plan has been drawn up which includes a commitment to establishing a planning framework for the EHS, which will need to take a balanced approach to the need for conserving important assets and responding to transformational change happening in and around the WHS.
  - **Commercial District:** Liverpool’s commercial heart is part of the WHS and also a key driver in the City-Region’s economy. Like much of the city centre, the area is undergoing major change through a number of key office schemes. Some in the pipeline include St Paul’s Square (Phase 2 is 130,000sqft), Pall Mall (350,000sqft), Unity (150,000sqft), The Plaza (195,000sqft) and Exchange Flags (160,000sqft). Capacity beyond these schemes will be limited, therefore the City-Region’s economy will need high quality office locations in sustainable central locations to respond to future economic trends in the knowledge economy – a role that may be ideally suited to both Wirral Waters and Liverpool Waters.
- 2.120 It is evident that there is a great momentum of success in Liverpool City Centre. The projects underway will secure the city centre’s role as the key driver in the sub-regional economy and allow it to increase its performance in key areas when compared with other Core Cities and international cities.
- 2.121 It is acknowledged that capacity for further significant growth in the city centre is limited. There are other parts of the city centre which can be improved; however, the projects outlined above represent the strategic opportunities that will drive the city centre into the foreseeable future. If the City-Region is to progress, it must look for

major opportunities beyond the boundaries of what is presently thought to represent the city centre.

2.122 This need is recognised by the Draft RSS, which highlights the city centre and “surrounding inner area” as the key driver for the economy. The inner area follows the NewHeartlands HMRI boundary and includes large parts of Liverpool, Wirral and Sefton. Much of these areas of existing communities being regenerated through the HMRI. The opportunities for major mixed-use and economic development will need to be identified by local authorities through their Core Strategies and the evidence bases which inform them.

2.123 Liverpool Waters (Central Docks) and Wirral Waters (Birkenhead Docks) areas represent key strategic opportunities for the inner area of the City-Region.

2.124 A further key issue arising from the analysis of the city centre is the extent to which its successes have benefited, or will benefit, the wider city-region. There is no doubt that in terms of employment opportunities and the provision of quality places/services, the city centre will improve beyond recognition. However, the areas around the city centre, broadly definable by the HMRI boundary, remain in need of major investment and continue to suffer more acute social, economic and environmental problems.

2.125 The “ripple effect”, as it is often called, whereby investment in central areas spreads out and the benefits are felt in nearby areas through improved life chances and reduced deprivation has not yet been fully felt. Further regeneration is necessary in these areas to ensure that the gains secured so far will also begin to benefit the surrounding areas. In respect of inner Wirral, the Socio-Economic analyses at **Section 6** and **Appendix 5** highlights that the Liverpool City Region has considered a number of economic growth scenarios needed in order to improve the social and economic performance of the Liverpool City Region. There is an intrinsic link between the sub-regional economy as a whole and socio-economic condition of deprived inner areas, hence it is evident from the socio-economic information that significant investment and change will continue to be needed in the inner area of the City Region.

### ***Regeneration in Wirral***

2.126 In light of the above, it is appropriate to consider the extent to which Wirral has shared in the recent successes of the sub-region. Again, Section 6 highlights a contrast between affluence and success in West Wirral and deprivation and inequality in East (Inner) Wirral by looking at socio-economic indicators.

2.127 In considering the current regeneration position and the potential for Wirral Waters to have a “ripple effect” in terms of assisting the

regeneration of the wider area, it is necessary to look at the effects of previous regeneration and development activity in Wirral, specifically:

- What regeneration activity has happened in Wirral, and has it addressed deprivation issues in Inner Wirral?
- What prospects does Inner Wirral presently have for major investment and development?

2.128 As background, during the 1980s and early 1990s, Inner Wirral, along with most urban areas in Merseyside and the North of England in general, experienced an ongoing decline in traditional industries. The urban decay that had begun to appear in the post-war period manifested itself in well documented structural economic, social and environmental problems.

2.129 As the need for regeneration climbed the political agenda in the early 1990s, change started to occur through the Inner Area Programme and the designation of the Merseyside Urban Development Area which was extended in 1988. The City Challenge programme, which introduced the City Lands project to Inner Wirral, also ran from 1992 to 1997 and started the process of revitalising Wirral Docklands, Central Birkenhead and parts of Wallasey. New investment in offices, retail and leisure developments was supported by major environmental improvements, and new

bus and rail stations. The Europa Boulevard area and Conway Park railway station were the key schemes delivered. City Challenge invested £37.5 million, which attracted private investment of £101 million and further public sector investment of £80 million. The Merseyside UDC was instrumental in securing the regeneration of the Egerton dock area and in MDHC's multi million pound investment in the Twelve Quays ferry terminal. The UDC was wound up in 1998.

2.130 Through the 1990s, a number of other initiatives followed under the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB), to further aid the recovery of Inner Wirral and the Merseyside Development Corporation was wound up. This culminated when the extent of structural economic problems in Merseyside, calculated as producing less than 75% average GDP, provided entitlement to the European Union's highest level of funding for urban areas, the Objective One Programme.

2.131 The first Objective One Programme for Merseyside ran from 1994-2000. Although some initial improvements in the economy were delivered, Merseyside qualified for a further stage of Objective One funding for 2000-2007. Consultation is currently underway on a final round of convergence funding for the period 2007-2013 – which is likely to be front loaded in terms of commitments. Opportunities for additional major projects to benefit from EU funds

are therefore limited and are set to decrease significantly, as set out in Appendix 5.

2.132 Table 2.2 below is a summary of programmes and initiatives which, in approximate chronological order, have taken place in Wirral over the past 10-12 years.

**Table 2.2: Major Regeneration Initiatives and Projects in Wirral to Date**

Initiative	Description
Hamilton Quarter (SRB1)	A seven year programme to regenerate the historic area of Birkenhead. It began in 1995, and through a Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) award of £15million, a further £67million of public and private sector funding was levered. The programme aimed to diversify the economy of the Hamilton Quarter, attract residents and visitors, and improve the image and perception of the area.
Regeneration Through People (SRB)	Another funded programme, launched In 1995 with an emphasis on people rather than infrastructure. The programme concerned the whole of the Wirral and offered opportunities to encourage the development of people into work. Funded by an initial award of £3.5million, at completion it was estimated that a further £9.9million had been levered.
Pathways Communities (Objective 1)	<p>Launched in 1995 under the first Objective One Programme, the Pathways focussed on thirteen communities in Wirral, identified through need by exhibiting levels of unemployment significantly higher than ward-level information. The programme encouraged locally determined activities and community economic development. During the course of funding, areas within the Wirral benefited from over £5 million of EU financial support.</p> <p>Areas in Wirral included Birkenhead Pathways, Seacombe/Poulton and Egremont, which are located around the Wirral Waters opportunity area. These broad areas then went on to become HMRI Neighbourhood Masterplan areas, highlighting that the problems in those areas are not</p>

	new and have been in need of regeneration for some time.
New Wallasey Regeneration (SRB3)	A six year project ended in 2003. The project was awarded £9.6 million of SRB funding, to encourage the regeneration of communities in New Wallasey. The focus was upon community involvement/benefit, the regeneration of New Brighton, the regeneration of Wallasey, Docklands, and the Twelve Quays site, business support, lifelong learning and environmental improvements, especially to Public Open Spaces. The SRB budget was estimated to lever in almost £60 million of public and private investment
NWDA Twelve Quays	The North West Development Agency designated the Twelve Quays site as a Strategic Regional Sites in 2001. Twelve Quays has benefited from a number of investments in recent years, most notably the Roll-on Roll-off Ferry Terminal. In 2004 NWDA commenced a study to consider further development/redevelopment of the remaining area around Scott’s Quay. However the study was not taken forward and the RDA has subsequently scaled back its interest in the Scott’s Quay.
Birkenhead Town Centre 20:20 Vision and Strategy	The 20:20 Vision and Strategy was drawn up as a succession strategy to ensure the continued regeneration of the area post SRB funding. Key themes were shopping, transport, leisure and tourist economy, cultural development and town centre environment. These themes concentrated on a “core area” plan for the town centre and four development zones. The four development zones were Woodside/Rose Brae/Shore Road, Railway Corridor/Conway Park, Hind Street and Claughton Road/Oliver Street.
New Wallasey Docklands Corridor Regeneration Study	<p>This Study was produced in August 2000 to focus delivery under one of the key themes of the New Wallasey SRB programme. Key objectives included creating a positive climate for investment and defining strategic investment opportunities; building upon the strength of the traditional dockland economy and the new opportunities related to the Ro-Ro ferry and development of Twelve Quays; attracting new commercial investment to the area to generate significant employment opportunities; and improving the environment to develop a distinctive character for this key corridor based upon its existing and potential commercial base.</p> <p>A number of key projects are set out in the Study, alongside a proposed funding strategy, although lack of major investment has limited the extent to which objectives have been delivered.</p>

<p>Wirral Waterfront Strategic Investment Area (Objective 1 and SRB6)</p>	<p>This funding programme is one of seven Strategic Investment Areas in Merseyside. It began in 2000 and is timetabled to run to 2008, by which time the Objective 1 monies must be allocated. The aim is to implement a comprehensive regeneration strategy for the Wirral Waterfront Strategic Investment Area (SIA) – see Figure 2.11 below. This incorporates 7 strategic objectives, which include community involvement, learning opportunities/employability and access to employment, encouraging entrepreneurship, healthier and safer environments, enhancing economic opportunities in strategic sites and promoting sustainable environmental renewal.</p> <p>Three programmes form the strategy, one of which is Programme C – The Wirral Employment Corridor. This stretches along the Mersey Waterfront from New Brighton to Eastham, and is identified as the economic heart of Wirral, representing the greatest opportunity for strengthening the local economy and increasing employment. A number of projects have been undertaken or are underway from the initial award of £20 million of SRB funding. This is expected to have levered investment of £125 million on completion in March 2008.</p> <p>One of the key beneficiaries of the Wirral Waterfront SIA is the successful project in the Seacombe Spaceport, which cost £8 million. It opened in 2005 adjacent to the new bus interchange at Seacombe ferry terminal.</p>
<p>Housing Market Renewal Initiative</p>	<p>The Government’s initiative to improve areas of low housing demand operates across the inner areas of Liverpool, Wirral and Sefton.</p> <p>See commentary on HMRI Masterplann areas above and on “NewHeartlands” below under “Partners”.</p>
<p>Wirral International Business Park</p>	<p>Wirral International Business Park (WIBP) is Wirral’s major out of centre employment park. It is acknowledged by NWDA as being of regional scale and has created significant employment opportunities for the people of Wirral. It has a well established location and has benefited from public subsidies and significant private sector investments.</p> <p>it is of critical value to the Wirral economy. Located in the south of the Wirral Peninsula, its location and scale has meant that it has not been directly able to transform the inner areas of Birkenhead and Wallasey and will not be able to address the scale and nature of the challenge faced by these areas in the longer term.</p>

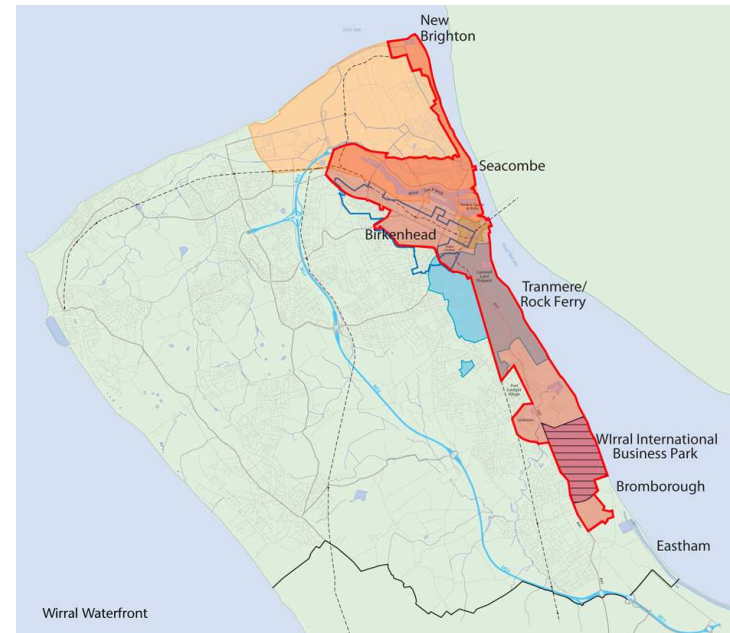


Figure 2.11 Wirral Waterfront Strategic Investment Area (reproduced with consent of Wirral Council)

2.133 With the exception of WIBP, all of the above programmes and initiatives have either been completed or are nearing completion. The Objective 1 and SRB monies which have stimulated regeneration in Inner Wirral over the past 10 years will not continue at the same levels. The NewHeartlands Housing Market Renewal Initiative (HMRI) reviewed above will continue to provide investment and act as a catalyst in Inner Wirral. However, the scale and breadth of publicly funded activity, particularly for major infrastructure and development projects, is likely to be significantly lower than in recent years.

2.134 The reducing flow of public funding does however come at a time when private sector investment confidence in the area is good, and should allow the economy to continue to grow. The key challenge will be to ensure that the private and public sectors work in partnership to ensure the delivery of key opportunities.

2.135 It is also important to have regard to those projects and initiatives which in more recent times have been put forward or remain on the agenda for **Inner Wirral**, but are yet to be delivered. The most significant projects are set out in the Table 2.3 below.

**Table 2.3: Inner Wirral: Major Pipeline Projects**

Project	Description
Woodside Masterplan	The creation of a new urban quarter with a significant leisure/cultural emphasis and complementary commercial and residential uses, linking the Woodside ferry terminal to the Hamilton Quarter and Birkenhead town centre. The project is now being designed by a consortium of landowners. This is presently Wirral's largest development opportunity in the short term (outside Wirral Waters).
Cammell Laird site	A number of different proposals for alternative uses were put forward by the former owner Reddington Finance, prior to Peel's acquisition of the site in early 2007. Peel's intentions are that the site will be kept in port/maritime/employment generating uses. Major investment has recently been secured by operators North Western Shiprepairers and Shipbuilders (NSL) through a maintenance contract with the Royal Navy. This will underpin the local maritime economy and the use of the Cammell Laird site for port industries for the foreseeable future.
Hind Street Regeneration Area	This site is the subject of proposals by Lattice Properties/English Partnerships for an edge of town centre retail extension. A revised scheme has recently been approved. The proposals will bring regeneration benefits but these will largely be limited to the south side of the Town Centre near Tranmere.
New Brighton Promenade	Neptune Developments has re-submitted its New Brighton proposals. Phase 1, including the redevelopment and extension of the Floral Pavilion, is already underway. The planning application for Phase 2 is has recently been approved. Its economic benefits are likely to be significant at the local level and it will also will deliver wider tourism benefits.
Grange Road / Oliver Street car park	Planning permission exists for a new supermarket within the town centre. Development is yet to commence. This will enhance the town centre, and improve the food retail offer in central Birkenhead and provide c. 400 new jobs. These benefits will be locally significant and the proposal will make an important contribution to the area's regeneration, though prospect of it delivering long term



	transformational change to Inner Wirral’s economy is limited
Bidston Moss (Newlands)	<p>Bidston Moss and Cross Lane are former landfill sites adjoining the M53 alongside a prominent gateway to Inner Wirral. Through the Newlands project this area is being transformed to provide 68 hectares of community woodland and a beacon site in the Mersey Waterfront Regional Park.</p> <p>It will have significant community and some economic benefits through improving the3 image and attractiveness of the area, but, on its own, is unlikely to deliver any transformational change.</p> <p>This project will bring accessible green infrastructure into Inner Wirral and there are significant opportunities for Wirral Waters to build off the platform that this will provide in terms of creating an enriched urban environment at the heart of Inner Wirral.</p>

2.136 Table 2.2 above demonstrates that planned activity in **Inner Wirral** includes a number of economic development projects of significant scale. These include Woodside, New Brighton, Oliver Street and Hind Street.

2.137 These projects are significant in their own right and will bring benefits in terms of the profile and attractiveness of Inner Wirral as a place to visit, invest and live. Their ripple **effects are however likely to be relatively localised**, and these projects along with other planned activity in Wirral are **unlikely, on their own, to deliver a significant step change in local economic performance**. The retail issues are considered in Section 8 of the Baseline Study.

2.138 These projects are being progressed alongside the other ongoing initiatives reviewed in the preceding Table 2.2 and other parts of this Section, including Wirral International Business Park (though not in Inner Wirral), Ten Streets and HMRI Masterplanning activity in Tranmere/Rock Ferry and Birkenhead.

2.139 In **West Wirral**, the issues are very different, as highlighted in Section 6. The population is healthier and wealthier. The area is home to a large professional/managerial population and benefits from a range of environmental assets, including picturesque villages/towns, international golf courses, the River Dee Estuary and large areas of accessible open countryside. The Open Golf Championship 2006 was hosted with great success at the Royal Liverpool Golf Club at Hoylake. Policies in West Wirral are, however, largely aimed at restraining growth so as to support regeneration at the core of Inner Wirral.

2.140 The most significant project in West Wirral is the **Hoylake and West Kirby Regeneration Masterplan**. The vision is for both towns to become a “classic resort” and “regional recreational resort”. There is a variety of short and medium term projects. Key longer term projects within the Masterplan are:

- **West Kirby Marine Lake** – the redevelopment of the sailing school, called “The Sail” will regenerate and secure viable uses for the

marine lake. Options with and without a new hotel are being considered.

- **Golf Resort & Spa** – the redevelopment of the existing municipal course as a reserve course to Royal Liverpool, incorporating complementary resort and spa development.

### *Sefton*

2.141 The “surrounding inner area” of the Liverpool City-Region, as referred to above, includes parts of Sefton Metropolitan Borough around Bootle that lie within the HMRI boundary. South Sefton has major deprivation issues and is undergoing significant change through a variety of public and private sector projects, many of which are coming forward under the HMRI. Sefton is also home to Seaforth dock and the proposals for the post-Panamax facility.

2.142 Like Wirral, Sefton is a borough of two halves. The northern half of Sefton is characterised by the largely more affluent towns of Crosby, Maghull, Formby and Southport. Southport in particular is a key attraction as a “classic resort” and is one of the North West’s largest retail centres. There are also large areas of good agricultural land within the Merseyside Green Belt.

### *Chester/Cheshire*

2.143 Although the Wirral peninsula sits very much in the heart of the Liverpool City-Region, it is also part of the “wider reference area” for the West Cheshire / North East Wales sub-region. This is a result of the strong travel to work and retailing patterns between Wirral and Chester/Cheshire. The existence of the **Mersey Dee Alliance** demonstrates the strength of the links between the areas.

2.144 There are a number of key attractions in this area for residents of Wirral. **Chester City Centre** is a sub-regional centre for shopping, leisure, culture and tourism, and attracts visitors internationally due to its strong historical legacy. The attraction of Chester has resulted in the emergence of a very strong city centre living culture and associated market for apartments, something which does not yet exist on any scale in Inner Wirral. Young professionals from Wirral seeking the city centre lifestyle are at present likely to look towards Liverpool, Chester and Manchester to meet these aspirations because of the absence of a similar quality of offer within Inner Wirral.

2.145 **Chester Business Park** and other key developments in and around Chester are highly attractive to the market for higher value added business services. This is due to the highly skilled/educated local

workforce in West Cheshire/NE Wales and the key location at the heart of this emerging sub-region.

2.146 Ellesmere Port is home to the **Cheshire Oaks** Factory Outlet Centre and the adjacent Coliseum retail and leisure complex. These facilities are set in a high quality, safe, attractive environment with free and convenient car parking immediately off the M53. Cheshire Oaks is therefore highly attractive to Wirral residents, particularly the higher spending, more mobile (car owning) residents of West Wirral, who prior to Cheshire Oaks' opening would have been more likely to shop in Chester and Liverpool. .

2.147 The Draft RSS policy for West Cheshire/NE Wales (LCR4) highlights the need to link areas of opportunity with areas of need through better use of the **Wrexham – Bidston – Liverpool transport corridor**. This policy reflects the previous lack of local opportunities for significant employment growth in Inner Wirral. Wirral Waters provides a unique opportunity to redress this balance by providing for a significant growth in employment directly alongside the areas of greatest need. The emerging Wirral Waters proposals are therefore deemed to be of important to the West Cheshire/NE Wales sub-region in addition to the main Liverpool City-Region.

2.148 There is also an emerging **technology cluster** in West Cheshire, focussed on petrochemicals and environmental technologies. It

presently centres on the **Stanlow complex** and is proposed to expand east with the emergence of the **Ince Resource Recovery Park**. Whilst the Stanlow area has specific locational advantages for this industrial sector it is possible that Wirral Waters could provide accommodation for some related businesses.

### *Liverpool City-Region: Other Assets*

2.149 RES also re-confirms the needs to delivery the Strategic Regional Sites (SRS). These are the Regional Development Agency's key locations for economic growth. In Wirral, the Twelve Quays inter-modal freight site (the Roll-on-Roll-off facility) and the Wirral International Business Park are identified. A number of other SRS are located within the Liverpool City-Region, including Liverpool University Edge, Liverpool Science Park, The Estuary Speke/Garston, Kings Business Park and Ditton (Widnes). These are identified in Figure 2.12 below.

### *Capturing Success: Key Points*

2.150 Significant improvements have occurred in Wirral through the various regeneration initiatives reviewed above. Although successful in their own right, it is apparent that these many initiatives and programmes have not generated a sufficient critical mass of new development or momentum of private sector investment in the area to provide for its regeneration and recovery over the long term. In

this regard Wirral has fared less well than other parts of Merseyside where such a momentum of renewal and new development seems to have been better established.

- 2.151 Traditionally, the area has not attracted the large, high profile, high value commercial developments that are critical to a successful urban economy, as set out in Section 8 on commercial markets. Generally, where major commercial uses locate in Merseyside, they locate in Liverpool or along the M62/M6/M56 belts. The need to attract such development is, therefore, one of the challenges which the area now faces.
- 2.152 There are many Strategic Regional Sites and other areas of major investment in the wider City-Region. These are shown on a large scale “Catalysts for Change Plan” below in this section. The Wirral Peninsula, a major urban area with the necessary infrastructure and population to support large investments, has not, however, attracted the expected level of activity to date.
- 2.153 The exception to this is Wirral International Business Park. However, as noted above, whilst evidently important to the Wirral economy, its location and scale has meant that it has not been directly able to transform the inner areas of Birkenhead and Wallasey and will not be able to address the scale and nature of the challenge faced by these areas in the longer term.
- 2.154 In answer to the question of whether Wirral has had an equal share in the renaissance of the Liverpool City-Region, the answer is partially yes, but partially no. There is no doubt that the west of Wirral is a highly successful and a desirable place to visit, live and work. In Inner (East) Wirral, it is evident that, following a difficult period in the 1980s, a substantial amount of investment has occurred, mostly through public funding being used to gap fund projects alongside private investment.
- 2.155 It is clear, however, that significant problems of long term deprivation remain within Inner Wirral. There remains the need for transformational change if the Wirral is going to achieve sustainable communities, reduce out-commuting and outward migration, and be truly competitive over the long term with other parts of the wider Liverpool City-Region, the North West Region and the rest of England and the UK. This is evidenced in the Socio-Economic Review (Section 6 and Appendix 4) and is recognised in the Councils Investment Strategy.
- 2.156 **Inner Wirral therefore faces a challenging economic future.** This is at a time when the public funding from which it has benefitted for many years is being reduced (by an estimated c50%). However this public investment has laid the ground for the private sector to start to play its part in securing the continued and sustained

regeneration of the area and major private sector investment by companies such as Peel will be essential if this is to be achieved.

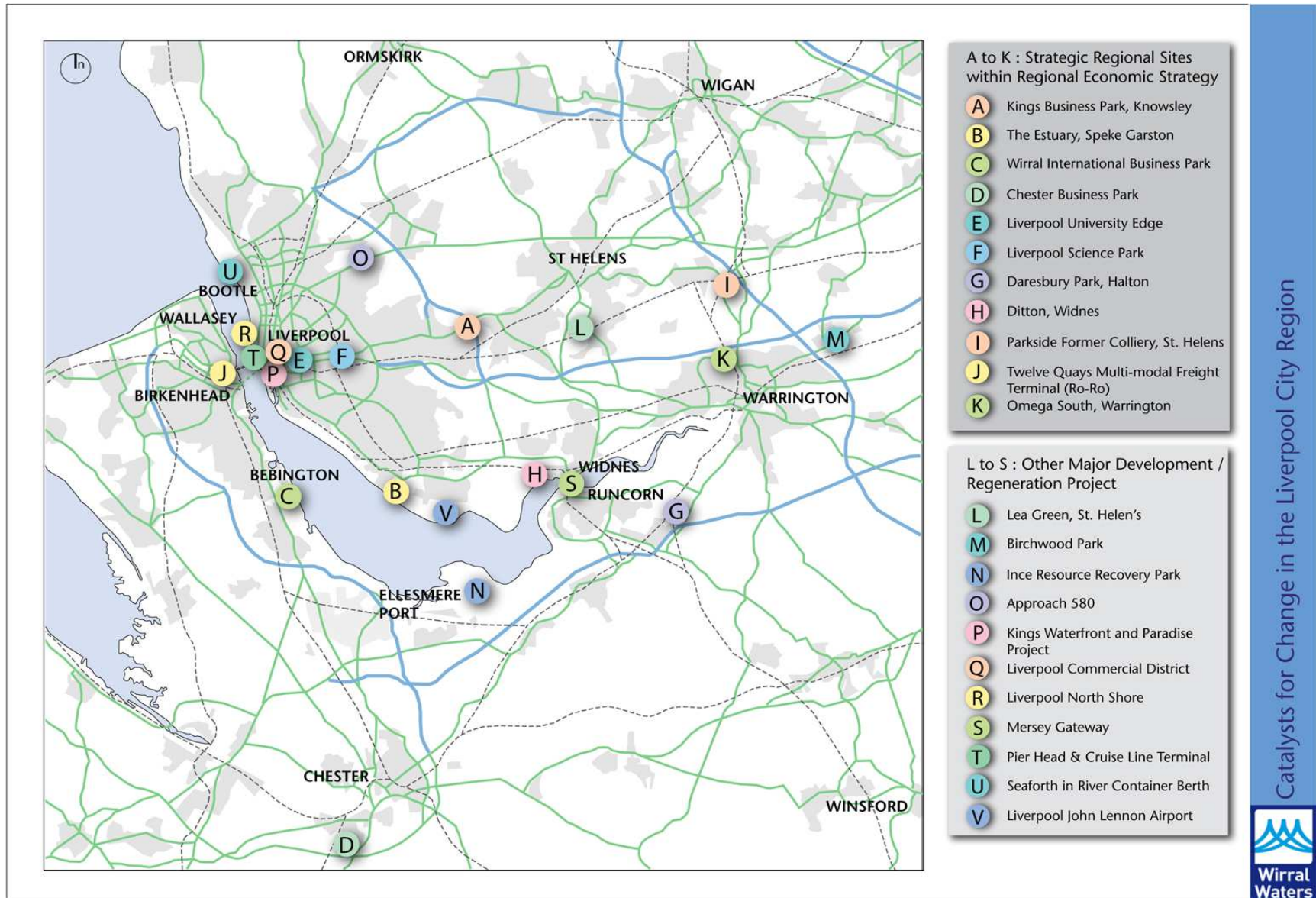
2.157 If it is to attract major investment, and thereby remain competitive, reduce inequalities and have a sustainable future, **Wirral must be able to attract significant private sector investment to areas of need in Inner Wirral, and adapt to embrace the knowledge economy on a major scale.**

2.158 **Wirral Waters is the one opportunity of sufficient scale to realise the major transformation.** In a single ownership, it combines a scale and certainty of delivery that no other project can match. Wirral Council and other local stakeholders have been fully supportive of the initial Wirral Waters vision and are keen to work in partnership with Peel Holdings and other stakeholders to ensure maximum benefit.

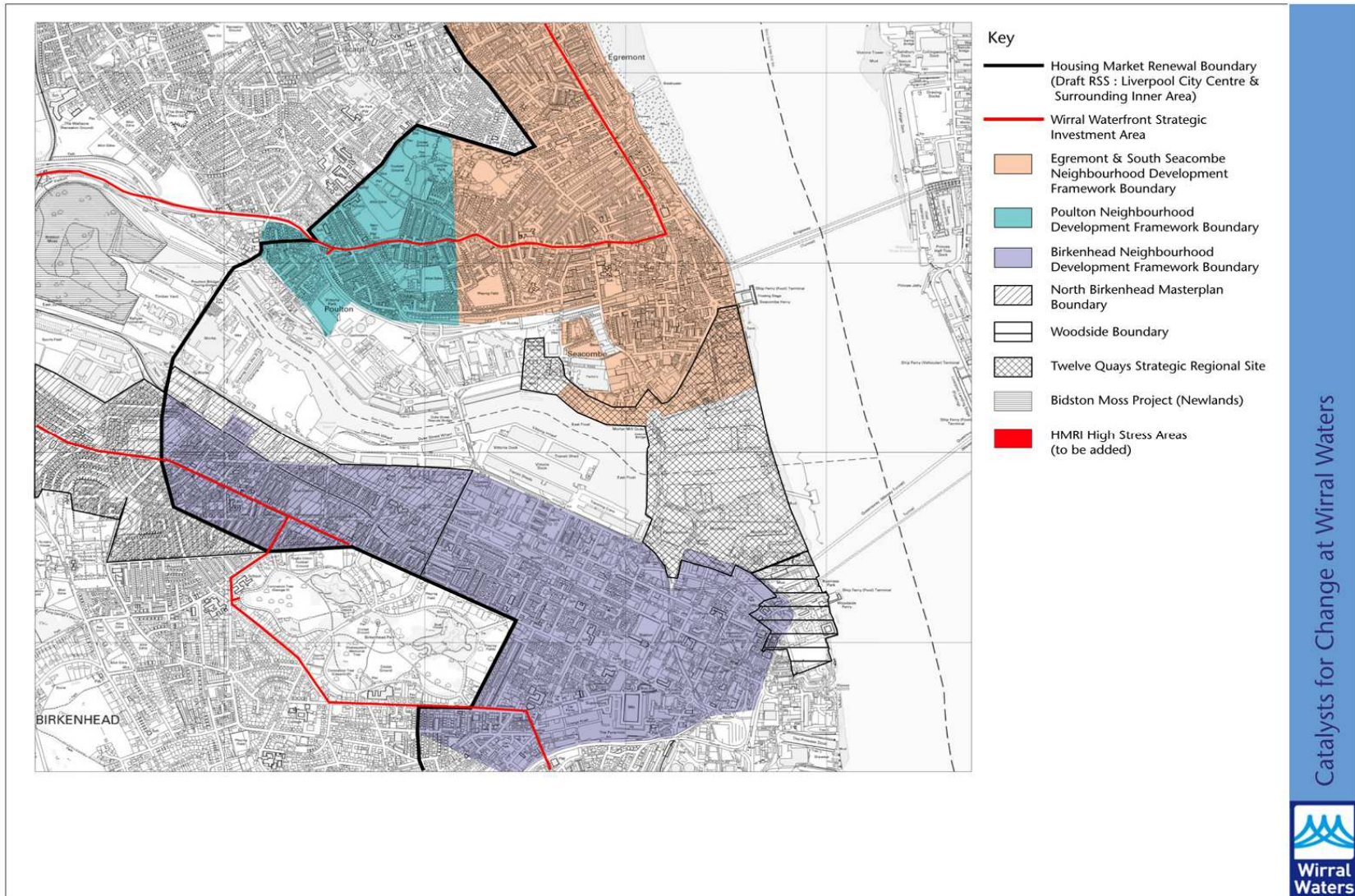
2.159 Figure 2.12 below shows the key Catalysts for Change in the City Region.

2.160 Figure 2.13 on the subsequent page brings together a composite plan showing Catalysts for Change at Wirral Waters, which demonstrates the relationship between the dock estate and HMRI Neighbourhoods, Woodside, Bidston Moss and the Twelve Quays SRS.

Figure 2.12 Catalysts for Change in the Liverpool City Region



**Figure 2.13 Catalysts for Change at Wirral Waters (by Peel Holdings under licence 100018033)**



2.161 In undertaking such a review, it is apparent that there are foreseeable limitations to this activity, brought about principally by reduced prospects for public funding and capacity constraints in Liverpool City Centre. In the peripheral parts of Liverpool City Centre's "surrounding inner area" which includes the Wirral Waters and Liverpool Waters areas, there is a clear need to focus activity and direct investment to ensure the regeneration of deprived communities and the growth of the wider sub-regional economy.

2.162 The review of activity in Wirral has highlighted that, whilst there are some schemes to be delivered and HMRI will address some of the critical areas, without major change the spiral of relative decline for Inner Wirral will continue. Both the need and the opportunity for transformational change at Wirral Waters are therefore evident in the extreme.

## Partners – Objectives and Resources

### *Wirral Council*

2.163 Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council is the unitary authority for the Wirral peninsula. Its responsibilities include the following functions:

- **Planning:** as the Local Planning Authority (LPA) responsible for producing a Local Development Framework and determining planning applications;
- **Economic Development and Regeneration:** facilitating economic progress through focusing on chosen areas of the district, supporting business, investing in Wirral's people and improving infrastructure and the environment;
- **Housing:** the Council is responsible for managing Housing Market Renewal activity in Wirral and producing the Housing Strategy;
- **Environmental Services:** keeping Wirral clean and safe, including responsibilities for air quality, contaminated land, noise and litter;
- **Leisure and Tourism:** providing the Wirral's tourism strategy, managing the Council's portfolio of leisure assets and delivering new tourism and recreation initiatives and facilities alongside stakeholders;
- **Social Services:** information, advice and assistance for Wirral people.
- **Education:** acting as Local Education Authority (LEA) for Wirral schools and colleges.



2.164 Wirral Council is working closely with other key stakeholders towards delivering transformational change in inner Wirral, through its various functions. However, Wirral Council acknowledges that its resources are limited and that it must work in partnership with the private sector to deliver regeneration.

2.165 Wirral Council has stated from the outset that it supports the Wirral Waters opportunity, and will be a key party in the emerging Wirral Waters proposals. Its economic regeneration and planning functions will be fundamental to the successful realisation of the opportunity, through a participative approach alongside other key parties.

2.166 Notwithstanding its support for transformation at Birkenhead docks, Wirral Council is committed to a thorough and objective approach to its consideration of the Wirral Waters opportunity, at all stages from initial baseline and visioning work, through Masterplanning to detailed proposals and implementation. This will ensure the effective and proper realisation of the opportunity.

### ***Community Stakeholders***

2.167 Wirral Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) is comprised of a wide range of local public and private sector organisations. The Wirral Voluntary and Community Sectors Network (WVCSN) brings

together a wide range of community and voluntary groups to participate in the LSP's work.

2.168 The LSP has produced a Community Strategy called "Getting Better Together" which sets out a vision for Wirral and takes a themed approach to proactive delivery. In essence it is a bringing together of all significant projects and initiatives locally into one robust and accountable strategy and monitoring tool. Specifically it is also a vehicle for channelling Neighbourhood Renewal Fund monies from central government.

2.169 Due to the scale of the opportunity, it is likely that all LSP members and other community groups will all be affected by Wirral Waters. It is therefore important that the LSP and other community groups are actively involved in the Masterplanning process for Wirral Waters. Wirral Council is committed to consulting a wide range of bodies on the Local Development Framework, including the LSP and a wide range of other groups, through its Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

2.170 In taking forward the Wirral Waters opportunity, it is intended that the extent and nature of consultation will reflect that set out in the SCI. The LSP and all relevant community groups will be involved in the consultation process on the Masterplanning of Wirral Waters

although the exact means of how this will be done will need to be agreed with the Council as the detailed strategy is worked up.

2.171 Community issues are explored in further detail in Section 7 – Community Cohesion.

### ***NewHeartlands Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder***

2.172 NewHeartlands is the Pathfinder organisation set up to deliver the Housing Market Renewal Initiative (HMRI) across parts of Liverpool, Sefton and Wirral. It comprises the interests of NWDA, English Partnerships and the Housing Corporation, in addition to the three local authorities (Liverpool, Wirral and Sefton). It is now in its fourth year. Activity to date has mainly focussed on land acquisitions, both voluntary and via Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO). To date have been used only in the Sefton and Liverpool parts of the Pathfinder area.

2.173 The HMRI boundary includes most of Inner Liverpool, Inner Wirral and South Sefton. In general terms the southern half of the HMRI area is market driven and only limited funds have been needed to trigger development, allied to targeted interventions/masterplans. In the northern half (which includes the Birkenhead/Poulton/Seacombe areas) more intervention is needed due to structural economic problems and associated social and environmental issues. The approach in the northern part is more

about comprehensive regeneration than simply housing market improvements e.g. Anfield/Breckfield and Bootle. Some of these areas have major contamination costs which are prohibitive to market development in low value areas. The approach so far has been more about regenerating targeted priorities than large scale enhancement. There is, for example, no intervention in Liverpool city centre, which is market led, and does not require HMRI intervention.

2.174 NewHeartlands retains the overview of HMR activity in Merseyside. There are three local teams (Liverpool, Wirral and Sefton) which are allocated funding and required to deliver key outputs. To date Liverpool has received over half of the funding, with Wirral and Sefton splitting the remainder equally. There is a lead developer and housing association for each area. Private sector investment is critical. £97.6m of Government subsidy over the programme to 2006/08 has levered in over £200m private funding already.

2.175 In Wirral, Keepmoat, Wirral Methodist Housing Association and Riverside Housing Association are to deliver the projects. Historically, Wirral has a strong housing renewal strategy, which HMRI has accelerated in the Tranmere/Rock Ferry area. However, unlike parts of Liverpool and Sefton, the process of renewing the housing market was already happening. Despite the extent of socio-economic deprivation in Wirral, there is generally a better land

value potential and less rife abandonment than in much of the eastern side of the HMRI area.

2.176 The **Strategy for Inner Wirral** sets out the objectives for the HMRI in Wirral. These are reviewed above and in Appendix 1. It is evident that Wirral Waters has the potential to meet many of the objectives head-on. The Socio-Economic review in Section 6 and Appendix 5, read together with the commentary above under “Regeneration in Wirral”, highlight that meeting the key objectives is unlikely without Wirral Waters.

2.177 The Strategy for Inner Wirral establishes five Neighbourhood Masterplans: Tranmere, Rock Ferry, Birkenhead, Poulton and Seacombe/Egremont. As described above, most of the intervention in Wirral to date has been in the Tranmere and Rock Ferry areas. There is an acknowledged need for this to move further north into Birkenhead, subject to future funding allocations.

2.178 However, the scale of intervention may be limited to a general facilitation role and targeted cost effective measures such as public realm improvements, if sufficient funding is not allocated and nothing of major significance occurs to stimulate local regeneration activity.

2.179 At the time the Masterplans were created and consulted upon in 2003, there was no major identifiable opportunity in the dock estate. Additionally, some of the interests and focuses have changed in these areas. NewHeartlands and Wirral Council acknowledge that there may a need for some refreshing to the Neighbourhood Masterplans, to bring them up to date and take account of Masterplanning for Wirral Waters. This is the subject of ongoing discussion between NewHeartlands, Wirral Council and Peel Holdings.

### ***The Mersey Partnership***

2.180 The Mersey Partnership (TMP) is a sub-regional partnership comprised of public and private sector interests representing the Liverpool City-Region. It was created in 1993. It plays a pivotal role in shaping the future economic vision, attracting new investment and developing tourism for the City Region and with its members and partners is committed to the creation of a dynamic regional economy.

2.181 TMP’s mission is *“to build a dynamic partnership campaigning for the City Region as a great place to invest, live, work and visit - generating greater returns for all”*.

2.182 The mission statement continues:

*Improve awareness and build a positive image in the minds of investment decision-makers, potential visitors and local business communities. Identify key sectors that provide strong product fit and prospects for sustainable growth.*

- *Attract investment interest from key growth sectors from around the world.*
- *Provide a gateway into the City-Region and deliver enquiries to the relevant partners adding value in the process.*
- *Use market intelligence to ensure that the region's resources achieve best value.*
- *Promote business success, lifestyle and tourism advantages and work with partners to address obstacles preventing further investment and wealth creation.*
- *Be enterprising and use our competencies to generate revenue to help finance our mission.*

2.183 TMP will play a key role in the delivery of Wirral Waters. This will take a number of forms, including: attracting key business sectors such as knowledge, leisure/tourism and maritime and marketing the Liverpool City-Region to the world. TMP is highly supportive of the aspiration to realise a major opportunity at Wirral Waters, and to ensure that in doing so, maximum benefit to the City-Region is gained. TMPs resources are limited and it is anticipated that its role

will be one of facilitation and co-ordination rather than the provision of significant funding and delivery of outputs.

### ***North West Development Agency***

2.184 The North West Development Agency (NWDA) has a broad remit, providing strategic leadership, programmes and funding to ensure the sustainable economic development and regeneration of England's Northwest. One of its main roles is to produce the Regional Economic Strategy, which is reviewed in Appendix 1.

2.185 NWDA also actively promotes and supports business in the region, and is involved in the delivery of a wide range of projects and initiatives which may not be delivered by private sector investment alone. These include the promotion of a portfolio of 25 Strategic Regional Sites, one of which – Twelve Quays – is located in the Wirral Waters area whilst several more are found in the Liverpool City-Region (see Figure 2.12 above).

2.186 Peel Holdings will explore opportunities to work with NWDA and local and sub-regional partners to ensure maximum economic, social and environmental outputs from Wirral Waters.

2.187 In terms of financial assistance, NWDA's funding resources are currently allocated to a range of projects and initiatives, which could not be delivered through private investment alone. NWDA

has recently sold a number of sites within and near the Wirral Waters area, and two years ago decided not to progress with its Masterplan for Twelve Quays (see Appendix 1), which would have facilitated a commercially-led scheme on the waterfront north of the Ro-Ro facility.

- 2.188 There may be opportunities to be explored for Wirral Waters (and Liverpool Waters) to gain access to future NWDA funding streams for particular elements of the opportunity, however in terms of planned activity and scale of likely funding available, at this time it is not envisaged that NWDA will be in a position to contribute significant public sector monies to the realisation of the Wirral Waters opportunity.
- 2.189 Finally, through the Sub-National Review being undertaken by Government, NWDA may in the future become regional planning body for the North West, responsible for production of the Single or Integrated Regional Strategy.

### ***Mersey Waterfront***

- 2.190 The North West Development Agency, ERDF and other local organisations (see “Partners” below) has created a programme to secure the further regeneration of the waterfront and enhance its leisure and recreation role. The **Mersey Waterfront Regional Park** is both a place and a programme. It follows 135km of coastline and

was set up to transform, energise and connect the waterfront, and all its assets, to create a unique sense of place that attracts people to live, work, visit and invest in the Liverpool City region.

- 2.191 The Waterfront Regional Park covers major projects around the estuary, including ports and airports, the Wirral Waterfront and the Liverpool Waterfront. Key objectives are the delivery of major developments, estuary development and management, and the development of tourism, sport and leisure. The programme is currently in the process of producing a vision to 2020 and Strategic Framework for delivery. Wirral Waters has been identified as a major opportunity for the Regional Park in the emerging Strategic Framework.

### ***Mersey Maritime***

- 2.192 The **Mersey Maritime** initiative involves a wide range of private and public sector partners in the port marine engineering and maritime industries. It was launched in 2003 and exists to champion the work of Merseyside’s dynamic and diverse maritime industry, promote its standing around the globe and build relations that make it more competitive nationally and internationally. Peel Ports is a key member of the group and Peel’s plans for Wirral Waters will ensure that port activities in the Wirral continue to contribute to the further development and future success of the maritime economy.

2.193 Mersey Maritime has produced a “Mersey Ports Growth Strategy”. The accompanying economic impact study highlights that the maritime economy in Merseyside is responsible for:

- 26,441 FTE employees;
- £698m household income;
- £913m gross value added (GVA);
- £2,534m output.

2.194 The study estimates that the maritime economy contributes between 5% and 5.5% to the total GVA of Merseyside. It confirms that the maritime sector provides high value-added employments, with GVA per capita at £34,600 which is well above Merseyside and Wirral averages (see Appendix 5 Socio-Economic Review for further information on GVA).

### ***English Partnerships***

2.195 English Partnerships (EP) is the national regeneration agency for England. It is to be merged with the Housing Corporation, the new organisation being formed in early 2009 as the Homes and Communities Agency. It has a wide ranging role, including developing its own strategic sites, advising Government on brownfield land, ensuring the effective use of surplus public sector land, helping to create communities where people can afford to live

and want to live, and supporting the Urban Renaissance by improving the quality of towns and cities.

2.196 EP is very active in the Liverpool City-Region through its involvement in a number of high profile projects and initiatives. It is active in the NewHeartlands HMRI Pathfinder, the activities of Liverpool Vision and the disposal of Government assets for sustainable development. English Partnerships is leading the delivery of the planned Omega Warrington project, a 226 hectare employment park. Planning permission was recently granted for 3.2 million square feet forming Phases 1 and 2 of the project.

2.197 Like Wirral Council, EP also has powers to issue Compulsory Purchase Orders, and is actively doing so in a number of areas in the region. There is the opportunity to use these powers (or those of Wirral Council) should they be needed to unlock any key elements of Wirral Waters. The Masterplanning process and formation of detailed proposals, alongside public consultation, will identify any such requirements.

### ***Merseytravel***

2.198 Merseytravel is the publicly owned transport authority for the five local authorities of Merseyside. It operates and invests in an integrated public transport network. Merseytravel is committed to the regeneration of Merseyside, through the provision of public

transport services to communities, and in particular those areas which need public transport to facilitate regeneration. An example of this is Merseytravel's current proposals to establish a Park and Ride facility at Birkenhead North Rail Station, within the heart of the North Birkenhead HMRI Neighbourhood Masterplan area.

- 2.199 Initial consultation undertaken with Merseytravel has established that the Wirral Waters area benefits from excellent prospects for sustainable transport provision, through the existence of four railway stations with frequent services into Liverpool and out to other parts of Wirral and beyond. Bus penetration in the area is also good, and the Mersey Ferries (see above) provide a further means of transport to Liverpool.
- 2.200 Whilst capacity and prospects for use of public transport at Wirral Waters is excellent, Merseytravel's greatest challenge is achieving the critical mass of public transport users to both make services viable and facilitate investment in public transport infrastructure. Whilst the basic infrastructure does exist, much of it is not of a high quality and requires investment in public realm, for example station refurbishments.
- 2.201 Merseytravel is keen to ensure that the Wirral Waters opportunity is of sufficient scale and critical mass to achieve the long term sustainability and improvement of the integrated public transport

network. Merseytravel will be a key partner in ensuring the realisation of Wirral Waters. Further partnership working through the Masterplanning process will establish the detailed requirements for infrastructure, services, links/connections, funding and an appropriate phasing and implementation programme. Merseytravel are also a partner with Peel in Woodside.

### ***Groundwork Wirral***

- 2.202 Groundwork is a federation of Trusts in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, each working with their partners to improve the quality of the local environment, the lives of local people and the success of local businesses in areas in need of investment and support. Groundwork Wirral works in partnership with local people to change places and change lives across Wirral, Ellesmere Port & Neston.
- 2.203 Groundwork Wirral works in partnership with the local community, public sector and private sector on environmental, social and economic regeneration projects. Projects range in size and scope from small open space regeneration to large-scale industrial corridor improvements.
- 2.204 The most relevant projects have included a package of M53 Corridor landscape improvements, the regeneration of the Bidston Moss site (now part of the NEWLANDS project) and on-going

involvement within the Housing Market Renewal Initiative. The Trust also advises on accessing European and UK public funding resources.

### ***Newlands***

2.205 NEWLANDS is a partnership between the Northwest Regional Development Agency and the Forestry Commission. It is a unique £23 million scheme that is reclaiming large areas of derelict, underused and neglected (DUN) land across England's Northwest. The project responds to local and regional economic needs by transforming sites into thriving, durable, community woodlands.

2.206 Newlands is one of the activities within the Regional Economic Strategy 2006 and contributes significantly to both the Manchester and Liverpool City Region plans by helping to create quality living environments across the Northwest. The project delivers key themes of the NWDA Sub-Regional Partnerships (SRP's) including creating appealing gateways, transport corridors and settings for investment, and screening significant areas of industry.

2.207 As described in Table 2.3 above, Bidston Moss is a Newlands project, selected due to its prominence along the M53 corridor approach into Inner Wirral and Liverpool. The Project is made up of four sites, three owned by Wirral Council and one by Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority. The sites are the Bidston Moss and

(former) Cross Lane Tip site, Land adjacent to Bidston Golf Course and Bidston Local Nature Reserve (LNR). The proposal is creating grassland, woodland, access and cycle improvements across the sites to improve their value and accessibility to the adjacent residential communities.

### ***Peel Holdings***

#### **Introduction**

2.208 Peel Holdings is a major private sector transport, infrastructure and development company based in the North West of England. Its assets include the Port of Liverpool, which includes the dock estates of Birkenhead and Liverpool, and is held alongside a number of other ports in the company's Peel Ports division. In addition to its ports division, Peel Holdings owns the Peel Airports division, which owns and operates Liverpool John Lennon Airport, Durham Tees Valley Airport and Robin Hood Airport Doncaster Sheffield. Other assets include The Trafford Centre, the Manchester Ship Canal and substantial land holdings at Salford Quays. Through Peel Land and Planning, the company owns substantial landholdings and has a significant ongoing development programme.

2.209 The company has substantial interests in the heart of the Liverpool City-Region and is a key party in delivering opportunities for



economic regeneration and sustainable development. Peel Holdings is seeking to both deliver the aspirations of the Mersey Ports Growth Strategy and the Liverpool City-Region Development Programme, through continuing investment in the Port to ensure its long term viability, allied to the realisation of major alternative use development opportunities.

### **Investment in the Port & Maritime Economy and Major Development Opportunities**

2.210 The strategy for Wirral Waters will be to retain current use of the Birkenhead Dock estate, but improve its efficiency and concentration into part of the estate, in order to free up a major redevelopment opportunity in an area of need. The retention of Cammell Laird in maritime, port and employment generating uses and ongoing investment in the port economy within Wirral Waters are key principles to be taken forward through future work stages.

2.211 In addition to Wirral Waters, Peel Holdings is also seeking to realise the major opportunity that exists in North Liverpool at the surplus dock estate which stretches from Princes Half Tide Dock (immediately north of the redeveloped Princes Dock) north to Bramley-Moore Dock (see “North Liverpool” section above).

2.212 In terms of its interests across the Port of Liverpool, the Department for Transport has recently published a Port masterplan guidance consultation document which providing advice and guidance in the preparation of masterplans for the future development and operation of all ports handling more than 1m tonnes of cargo per annum. Such masterplans will be used to shape and guide future investment, based on a full analysis of the physical (land, water and infrastructure) context, market position and future growth prospects. Peel intends that a Port Masterplan will be undertaken in due course. However, this will be a major and complex initiative in itself, which is likely to take a number of years to come to full fruition.

2.213 The progression of the SRF for Wirral Waters cannot be postponed for any wider Port Masterplanning exercise. Under the Initial Vision, the effects of Wirral Waters on the Port would largely be limited to the need to free up operational land for major economic and residential development (at East Float) by relocating tenants elsewhere in the dock estate. Hence, if the Initial Vision is progressed (on an “expanded and refreshed” basis, in order to deliver the integrated regeneration approach advocated by this Study), then the benefits would accrue to both the port economy through reinvestment and to the wider economy through sustainable economic growth. Other options will however be tested in order to ensure and demonstrate that Peel’s initial ideas for how

the port estate could and should be redeveloped are properly founded and represent the optimum solution. Reinvestment in the Port will consolidate the existing operational land and ensure the Port's future is safeguarded inline with the aspiration of Policy RT6 of Emerging RSS.

2.214 The Stage 3 Frameworks for Wirral Waters will therefore include an analysis of strategic land options for the Birkenhead Dock estate. This will include full consideration of the implications on both port investments and development opportunities, with a view to finding the optimum solution that meets all needs and safeguards and facilities all future opportunities. At this "evidence gathering stage" it would be premature to pre-empt that analysis and hence the implications for the port are not yet fully known.

2.215 Stage 3 of the SRF will also include a strategy for decanting port operators to alternative sites, in order to ensure that both the economic opportunities can be realised and the future of the maritime economy is ensured.

### **Peel's approach**

2.216 As a wholly private company, unlike other partners identified above, Peel Holdings operates on a commercial basis. The company has the advantage that it owns the entire Port of Liverpool estate and

has significant other landholdings beyond, which can be used for both the displacement/relocation of uses which do not fit into the vision and the realisation of uses that will be complementary or synergistic to Wirral Waters. The Company also has substantial interests in waste management and energy production activities, hence giving it further valuable experience and insight to bring to the delivery of a project of this substantial scale.

2.217 The company has set out ambitious, long term aspirations. It has committed to a scale and type of development as yet unknown in Wirral, and untried in Liverpool. Peel Holdings is confident that its vision can be delivered, and will fully resource the process necessary – Peel will work in partnership with other stakeholders to ensure the necessary markets are attracted, the delivery of high quality integrated development and that the benefits of Wirral Waters will be reaped locally.

2.218 Peel Holdings is taking a long term and global approach to Wirral Waters and Liverpool Waters. As a private property company and investor, rather than a development trading company, its approach is to build and then retain ownership/management where appropriate, rather than sell at maximum profit once developments are completed. In taking this approach, it is critical that Peel Holdings delivers lasting quality, a theme that will run through these two emerging flagship projects.