

## 5. Movement and Connections

### Overview

- 5.1 The section presents and appraises the movement framework and patterns within the Wirral Waters opportunity area and the connections to the wider district and region; it considers the strategic connections that link the emerging opportunity into the wider region, key issues within the area and an analysis of the Docks area. An appraisal of the land use/transport policies relevant to the Wirral Waters area can be found in Appendix 1.
- 5.2 The area has access to extensive transport facilities including rail, bus, ferry, local and strategic highway networks, pedestrian and cycle networks. This section provides an investigation of movement patterns and links to destinations, in particular limitations and connections, to provide an insight into opportunities to enhance the transport provisions of Wirral Waters with neighbouring areas such as Birkenhead and Liverpool as well as the wider area of Wirral and Merseyside.

### Movement Framework

- 5.3 There are a number of tiers to the movement framework. The strategic highway network and rail network provide access at the national and regional level, including links to John Lennon Airport and hence international connections. At the international and national level there are also passenger and freight ferry services to

Ireland and Northern Ireland from the Twelve Quays Roll on / Roll off Ferry Terminal directly from the opportunity area plus access to the new cruise liner terminal under construction at Pier Head in Liverpool.

- 5.4 The strategic highway network and rail network provide a high level of accessibility at the sub-regional and district level. At this level the movement framework includes the bus network for which there are direct bus services to the Birkenhead Docks area, ferry services across the River Mersey and strategic cycle links within the Wirral peninsula, including cycleways which are part of the National Cycle Route.
- 5.5 At the local level, the most sustainable form of access is by walking and cycling, for which consideration is given to the pedestrian and cycle network, with bus access also of key importance.
- 5.6 The approach taken in terms of the Movement Framework is to consider access by the various modes relating these to the spatial framework. This is dealt with under the headings of the Strategic Movement Framework and Local Movement Framework, although there is overlap between the tiers described above in terms of the transport links to the opportunity area at the regional, district and local levels, and overlap in terms of access to the area across modes. A separate section is devoted to Mersey Ports as a key movement generator, including freight movements.

Figure 5.1 Wirral Transport Network

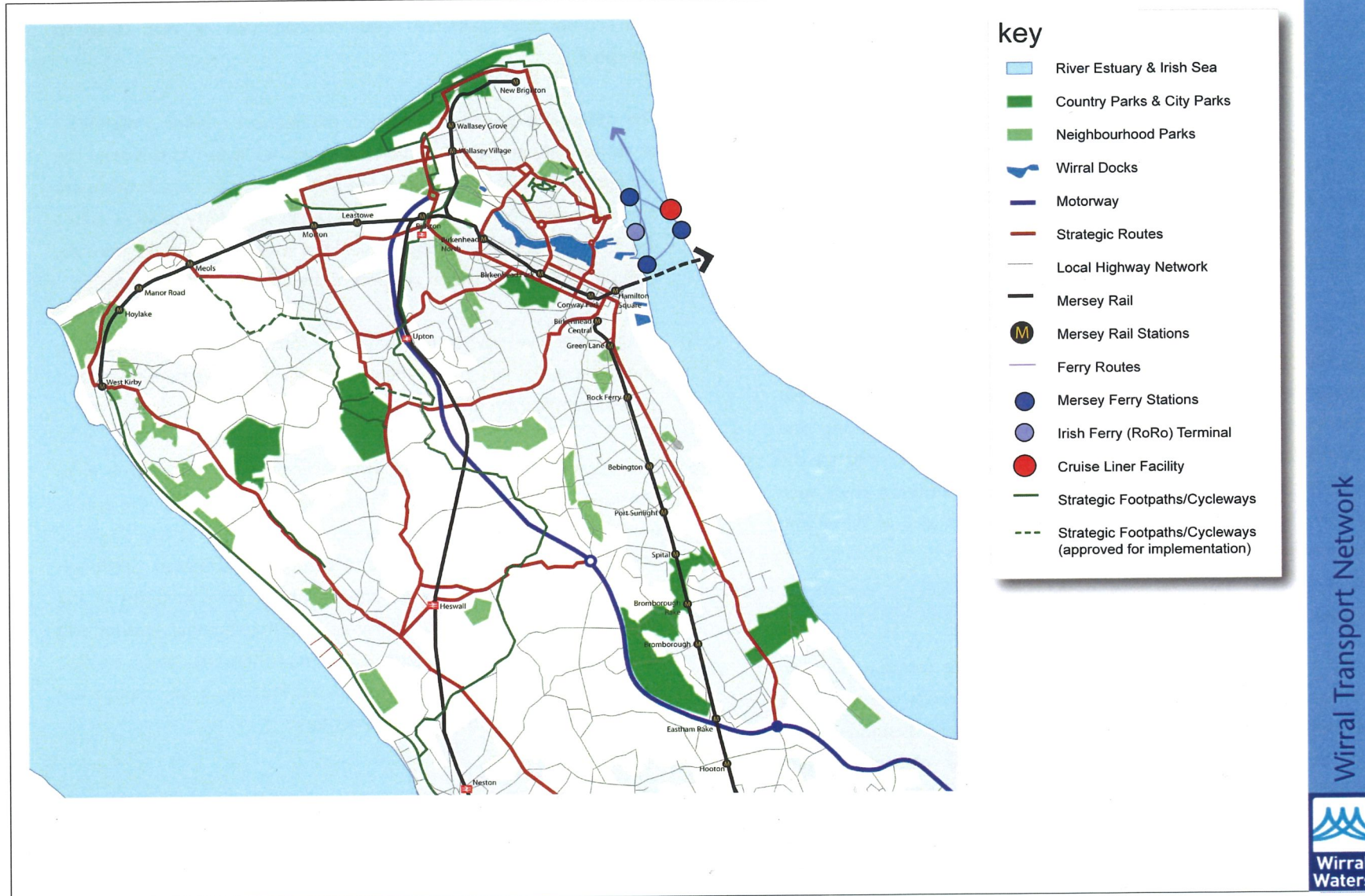


Figure 5.2 North Wirral Transport Network

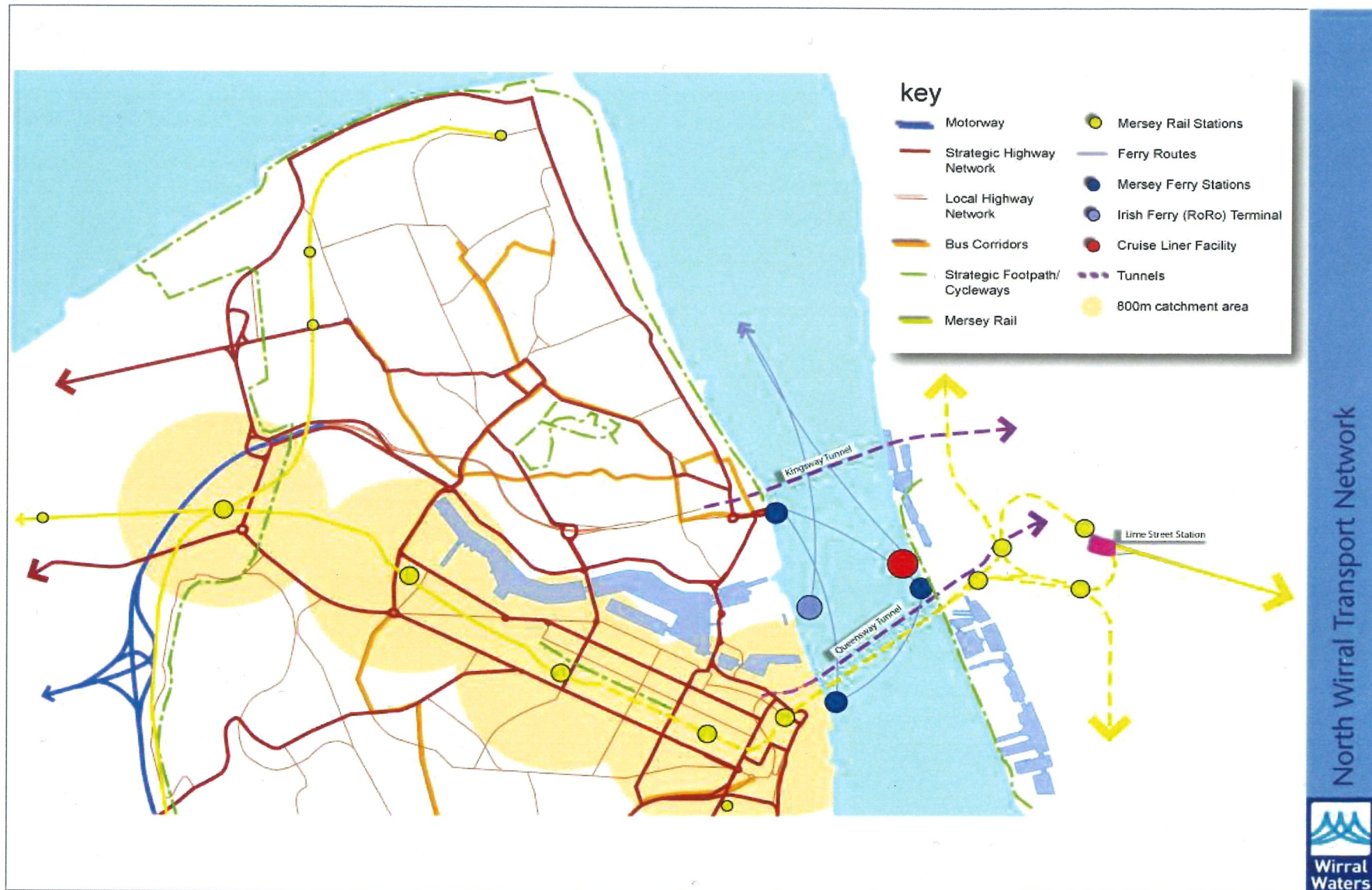
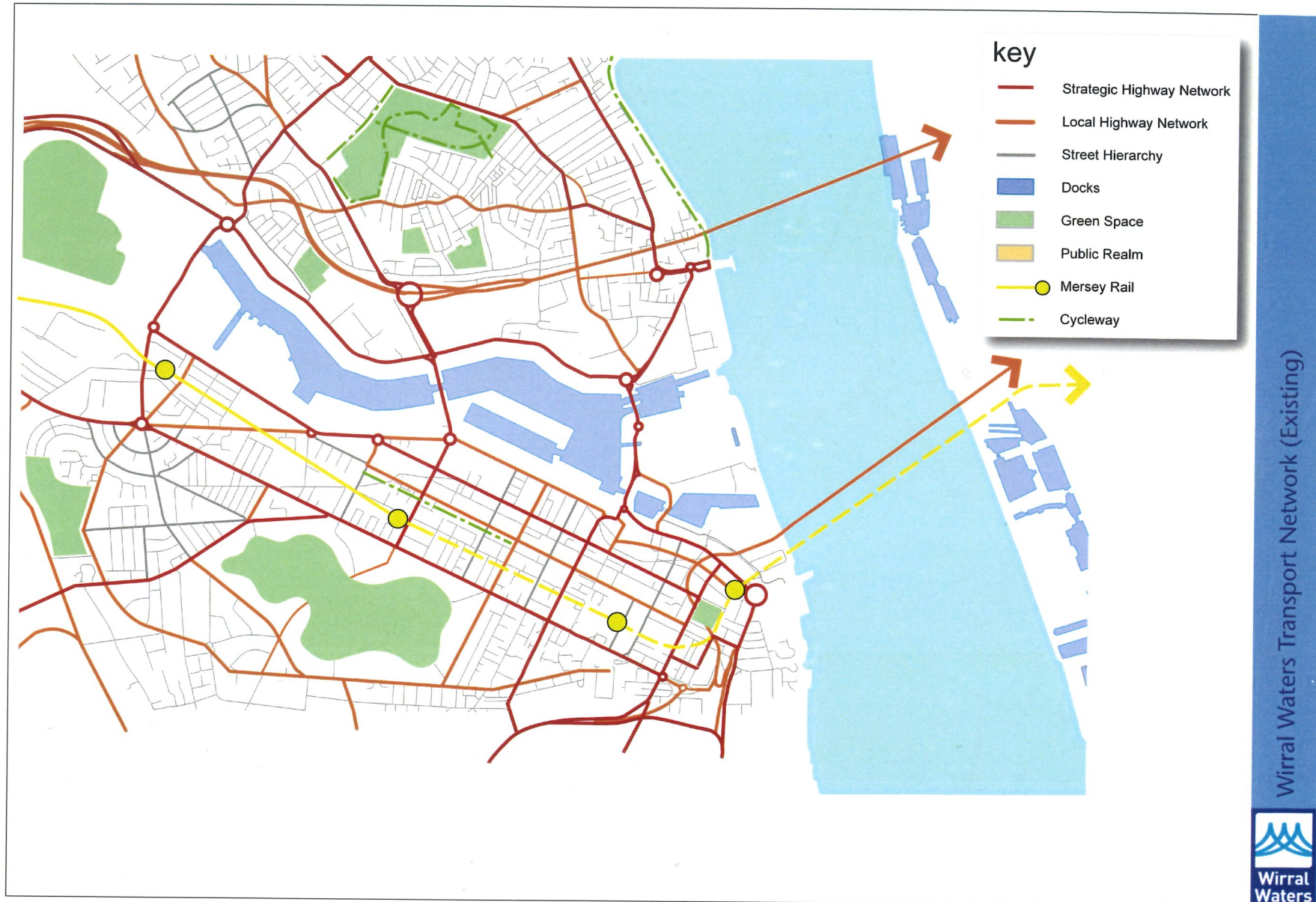


Figure 5.3 Wirral Waters Transport Network (existing)



5.7 Figure 5.1 in the preceding pages shows the transport network serving the Wirral area, with Figure 5.2 providing the strategic transport network for North Wirral. The strategic transport systems within the more local area of Wirral Waters are shown in Figure 5.3.

### ***Strategic Movement Framework***

#### **Strategic Highway Network**

- 5.8 As can be seen from Figures 5.1 and 5.2, the opportunity area is strategically located at the end of the M53 Motorway, accessed from Junction 1 and close to the Kingsway Tunnel, providing access to Liverpool city centre.
- 5.9 The M53 Motorway is identified as a route of regional importance in the Draft Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). The M53 Junction 1 links the northern areas of Wirral, Birkenhead and Wallasey to areas further south on the Wirral peninsula, including Ellesmere Port, and then to other areas in the North West. An important strategic function of the M53 is to provide access to Birkenhead Docks.
- 5.10 The M53 provides a major transport link between regional centres of population and employment of Liverpool and Chester and on to North Wales. Towards its southern end it forms a junction with the M56, which links to the regional and national motorway network, the M56 accessing the south of Manchester and linking with the M60 Manchester orbital motorway, in addition to the M6 Motorway. The M53 Motorway also provides a local distributor function providing a bypass to the population centres of Birkenhead and Ellesmere Port.
- 5.11 The strategic location of the opportunity area is enhanced by its location south of, and with ease of access to, the Kingsway Tunnel. This provides a tolled link to Liverpool City Centre and the other boroughs of the Merseyside conurbation. The Kingsway Tunnel together with its approach roads is identified as a route of regional significance in the RSS.
- 5.12 The Kingsway Tunnel carries about 45,000 vehicles per day of which approximately seven per cent are heavy goods vehicles. The toll for the use of the tunnel is £1.40 for cars and light goods vehicles with two axles rising to £4.20 or £5.60 for heavy goods vehicles depending on weight and number of axles. Solo motorcycles are not charged. These charges came into effect in April 2008.
- 5.13 South of the Kingsway Tunnel is the Mersey Queensway Tunnel which links Birkenhead with Liverpool. This has recently been upgraded to improve the emergency facilities in the Tunnel. The Queensway Tunnel operates the same toll as the Kingsway Tunnel. Access to Liverpool via the Queensway and Kingsway tunnels facilitates road based surface access to Liverpool John Lennon Airport. There is a 3.5T weight limit on the Queensway tunnel restricting access for heavy goods vehicles. A 38 T weight limit exists on the Kingsway Tunnel.

- 5.14 The strategic location of the Birkenhead Docks area, with direct access to the M53 motorway and wider motorway network, provides an opportunity to attract national and regionally based investment, given the high level of accessibility to the regional motorway network. Whilst the opportunity area lies at the end of the M53 motorway, this network is free from congestion and therefore travel times for access to other strategic regional and national highway routes such as the M56 and M6 is not prohibitive.
- 5.15 The strategic location, directly adjacent to the Kingsway Tunnel, also provides an opportunity for ease of access to Liverpool City Centre. However, the tolled nature of this route may present a barrier for access by certain road users. There is also the perceived barrier presented by the River Mersey, in addition to the real barrier created by the tolls.
- 5.16 This form of road user charging does, however, provide advantages in respect of national transport policies seeking to reduce car travel, including car commuting, particularly as there are good rail links from the area into Liverpool City Centre. This must be balanced against the potential overall disadvantages of Wirral compared to other Merseyside districts in terms of the barrier created by the Kingsway and Queensway tolls and River Mersey.

#### *Bidston Moss Viaduct M53 Junction 1*

- 5.17 Junction 1 of the M53 provides a strategic junction for access to the Birkenhead Docks area. Bidston Moss Viaduct is a 730 metre long box girder bridge which carries the M53 over the A554 roundabout and the Birkenhead to New Brighton railway. It is jointly owned by the Highways Agency, Wirral MBC, and Mersey Tunnels and carries some 50,000 vehicles daily including 3,000 heavy goods vehicles.
- 5.18 During 1998/99 the viaduct was strengthened to meet the then new legislation introducing 40 tonne heavy goods vehicles to the UK's road network, however, during this work the need for further strengthening work was identified. As a safety precaution heavy goods vehicles were restricted to the inside lane of the main carriageway, a 3.5 tonne weight limit imposed on the outside lane and the slips reduced down to one lane. A further restriction in early 2005 only allowed cars on the viaduct, however, some initial strengthening work carried out between November 2005 and April 2006 returned the viaduct to allowing heavy goods vehicles on the inside lane and a 3.5 tonne weight limit on the outside lane.
- 5.19 More detailed structural assessments were carried out and options for dealing with the problem were considered. These included strengthening the viaduct or rebuilding the bridge off-line. A decision has been made to carry out more strengthening of the viaduct and this scheme is included in the list of schemes of Regional Transport Priorities within the Regional Funding Allocation

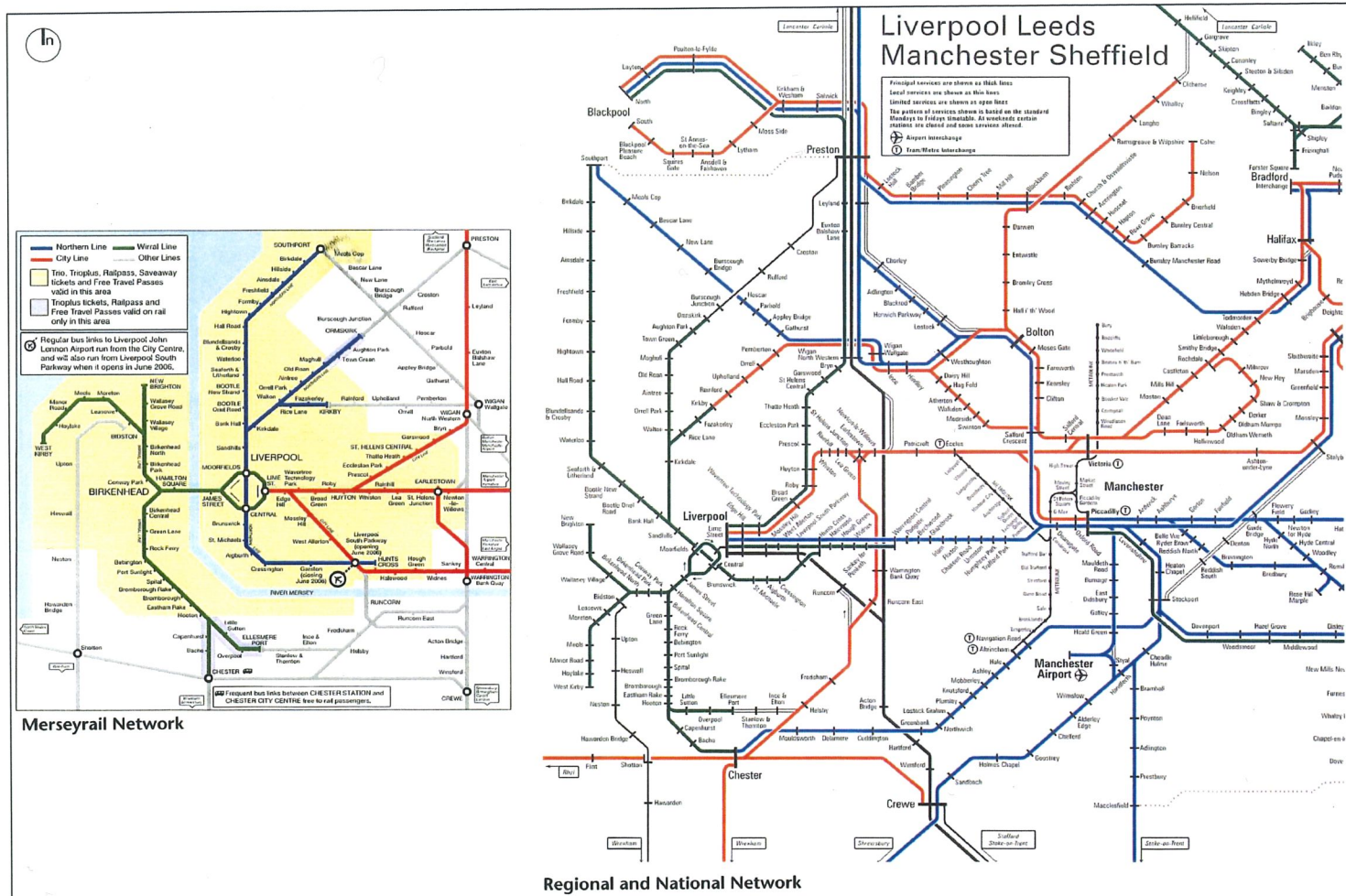
Programme. A business case for the strengthening work has been submitted to DfT to obtain funding, for which confirmation is awaited. It is anticipated that subject to funding confirmation the works will be complete by 2012.

- 5.20 The LTP also makes reference under major schemes to access to major ports, stating that a comprehensive package of access improvements will be developed to deliver the necessary capacity with a balance between road and rail, which will support growth of Mersey Ports in a sustainable manner.
- 5.21 As indicated, the M53 Junction 1 viaduct is an important element of the network to link the M53 motorway to the Birkenhead Docks area, serving existing Dock activity and the Ro Ro Terminal at Twelve Quays. Whilst there are other routes to the Docks area, that is through the Junction 1 grade separated roundabout with the North Wallasey Approach Road, the potential for increased Dock activity and importance of the Birkenhead Docks for the economy of Merseyside makes the viaduct strengthening scheme of key importance.
- 5.22 Failure to implement the strengthening scheme will be a constraint to future development of the area. Implementation of the scheme would be an opportunity to assist the accommodation of future traffic movements in respect of the opportunity at Wirral Waters.

### ***Rail Network***

- 5.23 Part of the opportunity area is within walking distance of four railway stations on the Wirral Line rail network, these being Birkenhead North, Birkenhead Park, Conway Park, and Hamilton Square, the Wirral Line providing rail routes to New Brighton, West Kirby and Wrexham from Liverpool city centre.
- 5.24 The walk catchment to the rail stations is based on a maximum walk distance of 800m as identified in the IHT Guidelines on Planning for Public Transport for Development. Figure 5.4 below provides a schematic of the regional rail network, with the Merseyside rail network shown in more detail. Reference to Figure 5.5 above also shows the Wirral rail network.
- 5.25 As can be seen from these plans, the Wirral Line provides a direct connection to Liverpool Lime Street station which provides rail access at the national and regional level.

Figure 5.4 Regional Rail Network





5.26 The Wirral Line runs from stations in the centre of Liverpool (Lime Street, Central, Moorfields and James Street) across the River Mersey in tunnel to serve the Wirral peninsula and onto New Brighton, West Kirby, Chester and Ellesmere Port. It carries 12 million trips per year, which compares to 16.5 million and 5.6 million trips per year on the Northern and City Lines respectively. The Wirral Line is operated by Merseyrail. Merseyrail Electrics is now regularly the best performing train operating company in mainland UK.

5.27 The Wirral Line serving the locality of Wirral Waters branches off after Birkenhead North into two lines, to terminals at New Brighton and West Kirby. A summary of the services and their frequencies at the stations that serve the opportunity area is provided in Table 5.1 below.

**Table 5.1 Rail Services**

Direction	Route	Approximate Frequency per Hour			
		Monday-Friday		Saturday	Sunday
		Peak	Off Peak		
West	Birkenhead North, Wallasey Grove Road, New Brighton	4	4	4	3
	Birkenhead North, Bidston, Leasowe, Moreton Meols, Hoylake, West Kirby	4	4	4	2
East	Birkenhead North, Birkenhead Park, Conway Park, Hamilton Square, Liverpool	9	8	6	4

5.28 As can be seen from the table, there is a high frequency of services between the various stations serving the opportunity area and Liverpool city centre, with 9 services per peak hour and 8 services off-peak, equating to average train headways of 7 minutes and 7.5 minutes respectively. There are services on average every 10 minutes to/from Liverpool city centre on Saturday and every 15 minutes on Sunday.

5.29 The travel time between Birkenhead North station and Liverpool is 14 minutes, which with the high frequency of services provides a good standard of rail access to the city centre. The particularly frequent service provision between Liverpool and the stations accessible to the opportunity area is in part due to the two branch lines converging at Birkenhead North railway station.

5.30 Between New Brighton/Wallasey and Liverpool there are trains in each direction during weekday peak and off peak periods, and Saturday, every 15 minutes in each direction, reducing to every 20 minutes on Sunday. Trains to/from West Kirby have similar frequencies apart from Sunday when they run every half hour. Services between Bidston and Wrexham are hourly providing access to Upton, Heswall and Neston

5.31 In summary, the rail network within walking distance of part of the opportunity area provides direct rail links from many of the key towns in Wirral. With a single change of service rail access to the opportunity area would be available from other towns such as

Bromborough and Ellesmere Port and from Chester to the south. Hamilton Square provides a key interchange point for rail services as it is where the line to Chester and Ellesmere Port meets the Wirral Lines to West Kirby and New Brighton.

- 5.32 In addition, given the strong connection to Liverpool city centre and the numerous rail services that run to the regional centre, the area can be considered accessible by rail from those parts of the Merseyside conurbation with rail access. This conclusion is given weight by the low headways, resulting in minimal interchange times.
- 5.33 Access by rail via a change of service in Liverpool City Centre, (Moorfields or Lime Street) is available to Liverpool South Parkway station which opened in June 2006. This railway station serves Liverpool John Lennon Airport through express bus connections linking JLA with Liverpool South Parkway. This is 5km (3 miles) from JLA with a seven bus per hour shuttle-link in each direction providing access between Liverpool South Parkway and JLA.
- 5.34 Discussions with Merseytravel and from observations during visits to the area indicate that there is spare capacity on Wirral Line trains to accommodate additional demand. The annual number of passengers recorded boarding and alighting at nearby stations are shown in the table below and indicate low figures at the stations adjacent to the area compared with Hamilton Square, for example.

Station	2005/06 Annualised Total	
	On	Off
Birkenhead Central	371,629	364,767
Hamilton Square	1,082,496	1,083,615
Conway Park	679,095	660,982
Birkenhead Park	362,747	325,027
Birkenhead North	309,130	289,861
Bidston	115,474	120,941

**Table 5.2 Annual Boarding/Alighting at Wirral Line Stations**

- 5.35 There are proposals for Park and Ride at Bidston and Birkenhead North stations. Phase 1 of the Park and Ride scheme at Birkenhead North is south of the station and would consist of some 200 spaces. A planning application is to be submitted for the Phase 1 Park and Ride scheme to Wirral MBC. Phase 2 of the park and ride scheme would be north of the station with some 400 spaces being considered.
- 5.36 Merseyside's Rail Strategy, which has been worked up in tandem with the Local Transport Plan 2006-2011, sets out a programme for rail network expansion. This includes the Mid Wirral Upgrade (including new stations and provision of park and ride). Merseytravel is currently investigating the technical operational, and

economic and financial case of a number of options to integrate some or all of the line between Wrexham and Bidston into the Mersey Electrics network subject to funding. Findings of this work are due to be published this year and subject to there being a robust value for money case, a preferred option will be taken towards implementation.

- 5.37 With respect to rail freight, there are proposals, as originally contained in the Wirral Waterfront SRB and subsequently integrated into the first LTP, to reconnect the Birkenhead Docks railway to the rail freight network by re-instating the disused railway line running along the southern boundary of the Docks area. The previously considered route proposed re-opening the disused railway line running from cutting through Birkenhead which connects to the route south of Birkenhead Docks.
- 5.38 As part of a subsequent review of potential options, including best value for money, it was proposed to re-instate the disused railway line from Bidston, rather than Birkenhead. This route runs from Bidston in the west, to the route south of West Float, terminating at Duke Street. This route would only require a limited length of track to the east from Bidston for industrial/port freight use.
- 5.39 Part of the line is owned by Peel Ports, with the remainder being Network Rail. This solution is considered more cost effective than using the disused line through Birkenhead, at an estimated cost of £1.4 million (source LTP2). Whilst the LTP sets out funding

proposals, this information was based on the funding mechanisms in place at the time and so a review of funding opportunities would need to be made in light of SRB funding not now being available and the Wirral Waters opportunity coming forward.

- 5.40 It appears highly unlikely that the previous route from Birkenhead will ever be taken forward for a rail freight link and therefore there would be an opportunity to consider some other use for this part of the disused railway line. The future extent and status of the docks freight line needs to be clarified, especially the section west of Duke Street/ Canning Street. Retention of the section remains a potential constraint on regeneration in parts of the Hind Street area and has already necessitated costly bridge works for the Mollington link. If surplus, consideration can be given to future uses for the cutting through Birkenhead.
- 5.41 In summary, the Docks area, particularly the area south of Bidston Dock, West Float and East Float benefits from access to the rail network, which provides direct links to New Brighton/Wallasey, West Kirby and Heswall, and direct services to Liverpool City Centre. This presents key opportunities as follows:
- To attract investment to a location benefiting from accessibility to the rail network at the national, regional and district level;
  - To exploit the Docks area for more intensive development in a sustainable manner given the high degree of rail access; and

- To provide benefit to the rail network by increasing patronage and in turn benefiting the economics/future viability of an improved rail network.

- 5.42 Some areas north of East and West Float are outside of the 800m catchment areas for access to the Wirral Line railway stations. There would, however, be the ability to access Birkenhead North station as a Park and Ride destination from these areas. The proposed provision of Park and Ride at Birkenhead North is an opportunity to link the Docks area to the sustainable transport network and accordingly feed off this network. An opportunity exists to develop the Phase 2 element of the Birkenhead North Park and Ride scheme in conjunction with Merseytravel and Wirral MBC.
- 5.43 Opportunity exists for serving part of the Docks area, particularly south of West Float, for rail freight to extend the rail network from Bidston to terminate at Duke Street, along the currently disused railway line. A constraint could be the financial viability of this proposal linked to economic viability.

### ***Bus Network***

- 5.44 The bus network serves sub-regional, district and local areas with a number of existing bus services accessible from the opportunity area. Those services within a 400m walking distance of the emerging opportunity are provided in the Tables 5.3 to 5.6 below, the 400m distance being the reasonable walk distance for access to bus

services as indicated in the IHT Guidelines on Planning for Public Transport for Developments. Given the scale of the opportunity area, the services have been broken down into those travelling via Wallasey Bridge Road, Duke Street, Tower Road, and Poulton Road. The routes of these services are shown in Figure 5.5, which also shows the 400m catchment to each route and indicates the frequency of services along the route.

- 5.45 The bus services running along Wallasey Bridge Road mainly link New Brighton with Arrow Park Hospital, although there is also a service between Liscard Crescent and Woodside Bus Station. Bus services running along Duke Street link Birkenhead and Woodside with Wallasey, Liscard and New Brighton. There are also services between Chester and New Brighton via Bromborough and Birkenhead. In addition, Monday to Saturday morning services run from Mill Park to New Brighton, these running all day Sunday, and night bus services run between Liverpool city centre Birkenhead, Liscard and New Brighton.
- 5.46 Bus services via Tower Road link between Birkenhead including Woodside, to Seacombe, Liscard and Wallasey Village. There are also limited journey services to a range of destinations, including Upton, Twelve Quays and cross boarder service between Broughton, and Leasowe. Services running on Poulton Road generally operate in an east west direction linking Wallasey with Seacombe Ferry terminal, and Birkenhead with Seacombe Ferry, although these services are accessible only from the north of the former Bidston Dock area.

**Table 5.3 Buses via Wallasey Bridge Road**

Service	Route	Operator	Mon-Fri	Saturday	Sunday
10	New Brighton – Liscard – Woodchurch	Avon Buses	2 per hour	2 per hour	0
10A	New Brighton – Liscard – Woodchurch – Upton	Avon Buses	2 per hour	2 per hour	0
11	New Brighton – Liscard – Woodchurch – Noctorum	Avon Buses	2 per hour	2 per hour	0

**Table 5.4 Buses via Duke Bridge Street**

Service	Route	Operator	Mon-Fri	Saturday	Sunday
118	Mill Park, New Brighton	Arriva	2 per hour	2 per hour	1 per hour
119	Mill Park, New Brighton	Arriva	2 per hour	2 per hour	1 per hour
450 (night bus)	Liverpool City Centre – Birkenhead – Duke St – Liscard – New Brighton	Arriva	Fri Night	Sat Morn/ Sat Night	Sun Morn
810	New Brighton – Liscard – Birkenhead	Cumfybus	1 jny PM peak	0	0
101	New Brighton – Woodside	A1A Travel	4 jnys Morn only	4 jnys	6 jnys
401/402	New Brighton – Birkenhead – Bromborough – Chester	Arriva	3 per hour	3 per hour	2 per hour
411	New Brighton – Birkenhead – Bromborough – Chester	Arriva	2 per hour	2 per hour	2 per hour
412	New Brighton – Birkenhead – Bromborough – Chester	Arriva	2 per hour	2 per hour	2 per hour
150 (night bus)	Liverpool City Centre – Birkenhead	Raddoneur	Friday night	Sat night	sun mornings
410	New Brighton – Woodside – Birkenhead – Clatter Bridge	Arriva	6 per hour	6 per hour	2 per hour

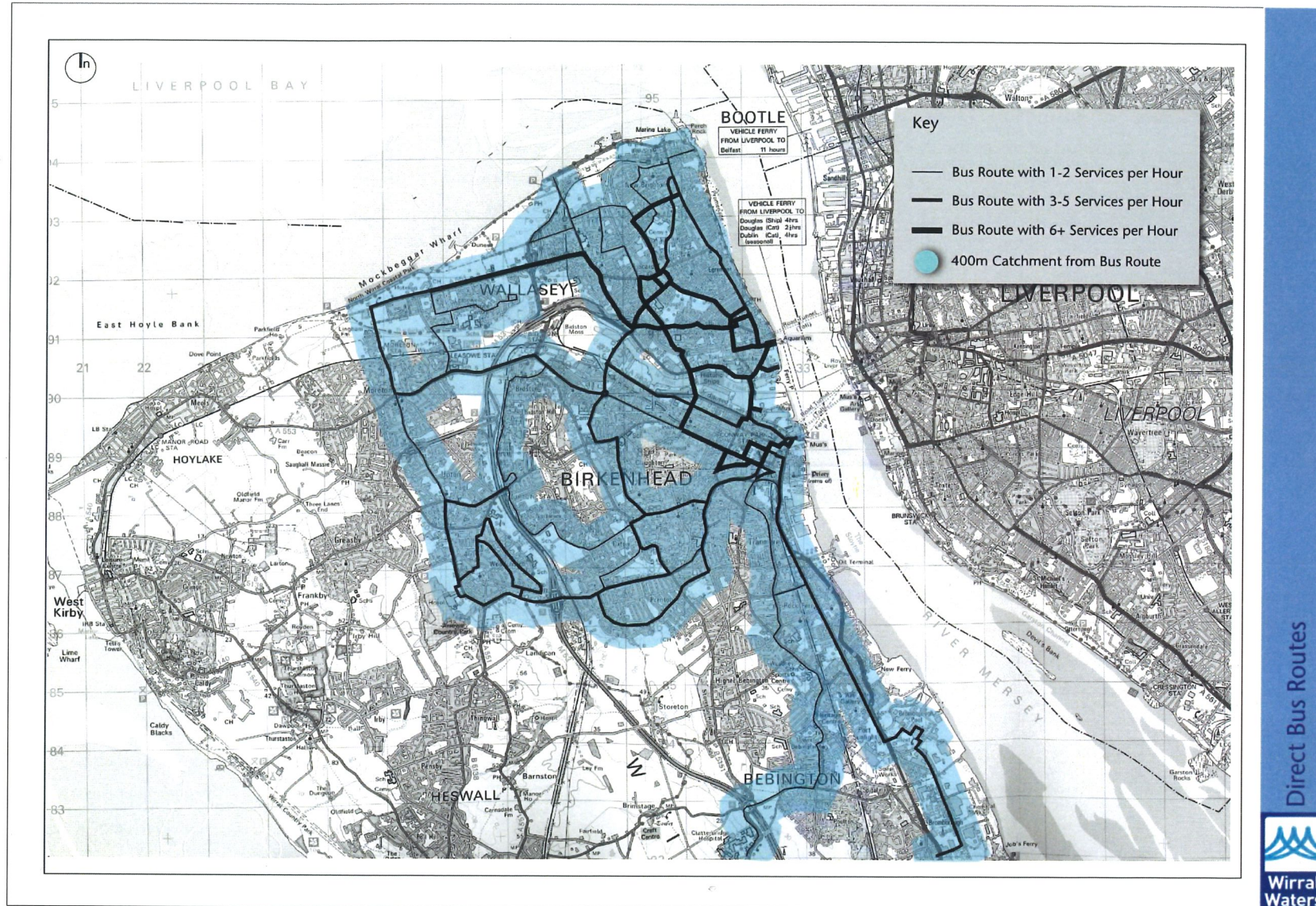
**Table 5.5 Buses via Tower Road**

Service	Route	Operator	Mon-Fri	Saturday	Sunday
409	Wallasey Village – Woodside – Birkenhead – Liscard – Wallasey	Arriva	2 per hour	2 per hour	0
807	Alderhey Hospital – Paradise St Interchange	Huyton Travel	5 jnys	0	0
811	Broughton – Leasowe	Cumfybus	7 jnys	0	0
817	Arrowe Park – Birkenhead – Brombrough – Broughton	Cumfybus	4 jnys	0	0
874	Upton – Nocotolum – Prenton – Birkenhead – Twelve Quays	Cumfybus	3 jnys	0	0

**Table 5.6 Buses via Poulton Road**

Service	Route	Operator	Mon-Fri	Saturday	Sunday
103	Moreton Cross, Seacombe Ferry	Arriva	6 per hour	6 per hour	2 per hour
124	Wallasey, Seacombe Ferry (circular)	Eazibus	2 per hour Evenings	2 per hour evenings	2 per hour
125	Wallasey, Seacombe Ferry (circular)	Eazibus	2 per hour evenings	1 per hour evenings	2 per hour
403	Seacombe Ferry, Birkenhead	Arriva	6 per hour	6 per hour	2 per hour
430	New Brighton – Seacombe – Kingsway – Liverpool	Arriva	1 return jny	0	0
433	New Brighton – Liscard – Birkenhead – Liverpool (night service)	Arriva	Fri night	Evenings only 2 per hour	0

Figure 5.5 Bus Catchment Plan



5.47 In summary, there are bus services providing access to the various areas of the opportunity area allowing all areas to access the bus network using existing services.

5.48 With respect to direct bus services, the East Float area is mainly served by bus services running north/south on Tower Road and Duke Street, providing access from New Brighton, Liscard, Seacombe, Woodside, Birkenhead, Bromborough, Ellesmere Port, Chester, and areas between these destinations. A lesser degree of access is provided from Broughton, Leasowe, and Upton.

5.49 The former Bidston Dock area is accessible by direct bus services from Seacombe, New Brighton, Wallasey, Liscard, Noctorum, and Upton, these services running along Poulton Bridge Road.

5.50 With respect to improvements to the bus network, the LTP and Merseyside Bus Strategy which feeds into the LTP process, indicates that the network will be developed by the Integrated Corridor Management Strategy. This approach entails where appropriate the integration of:

- Bus priority measures;
- Traffic management measures (eg. red routes, selective vehicle detection);
- Safety measures and elements of local safety schemes; a

- Local environmental/streetscape improvements.

5.51 The potential for Red Routes is explained in the LTP. Through recently launched powers Merseytravel are investigating the concept of red routes, already common place in London, to seek to improve enforcement of bus priority measures and reduce conflicts with other traffic and parking/loading.

5.52 Based on the Integrated Corridor Management Strategy Approach, the LTP sets out a scheme prioritisation and programme. Corridors for improvement have been prioritised for investment by combining an assessment of congestion problems, the existing and potential bus patronage, an assessment of the implementability of measures and the fit with wider objectives. Corridor improvement assessment also includes consultation with bus operators to identify problem locations. There are three corridors in Wirral with the following priorities allocated:

- Birkenhead/Liscard/Wallasey/West Kirby – Low;
- Birkenhead to Heswall – Low;
- Birkenhead to Bromborough – Low.

5.53 These priorities were set in the LTP without consideration of the Wirral Waters opportunity. Given the emergence of the opportunity post LTP2, consideration could be given to the potential for increasing the priority particularly for the Birkenhead/Liscard/Wallasey/West Kirby corridor.

5.54 In summary, the opportunity area is directly served by the bus network. This network generally runs along north/south corridors via Poulton Bridge Road, Duke Street and Tower Road providing good connections north/south, although there are limited direct connections east/west, and around the Docks area due to lack of demand. Private operators rely on services being economically viable and therefore without Quality Bus Contracts the continuity of sustainable provision can always be under risk.

### ***Ferry Services***

#### ***Irish Sea Ferries***

5.55 Irish Sea Ferry services to and from Liverpool are as follows:

**Table 5.7 Irish Sea Ferries**

Operator	Route	Mon-Fri	Sat	Sun	For use by
Norfolkline	12 Quays – Belfast	Twice Daily	Twice Daily	Twice Daily	Freight & passenger
Norfolkline	12 Quays – Dublin	Twice Daily	Twice Daily	Twice Daily	Freight & passenger
P&O Irish Sea Ferries	Liverpool–Freeport – Dublin	Twice Daily	Twice Daily	Twice Daily	Passenger & freight
Steam Packet	Liverpool Ferry Terminal (Princes Landing Stage) – Douglas, IOM	Twice Daily	Twice Daily	Twice Daily	Passenger & freight

5.56 Ferry services operate from Twelve Quays within the opportunity area to Dublin and Belfast. These are freight and passenger ferry services, with two per day between Twelve Quays and Belfast, and two per day between Twelve Quays and Dublin, as seen from the above table. The ferry services from Twelve Quays include a roll-on-roll-off facility completed in 2002.

5.57 The focal point for passenger ferry services at the Twelve Quays presents a significant benefit in terms of accessibility to Ireland and Northern Ireland and is a potential key opportunity to attract further investment to the Docks area.

5.58 There are also passenger and freight ferry services to Dublin (twice per day) from Liverpool Freeport, and to the Isle of Man, from Princess Landing Stage twice daily.

#### ***Cruise Liner Terminal***

5.59 A major new cruise liner and ferry terminal at Pier Head and Princes Dock linked to regeneration and tourism was completed in September 2007. The £11 million publicly funded project will enable Liverpool to accommodate the world's biggest liners and will encourage large cruise liner vessels to return to the Mersey Waterfront.

5.60 The development includes a 350 metre extension to the Princes Dock landing stage, with a round the clock operational jack up barge



positioned against the Princes Dock Wall. The Pier Head footbridge will also be relocated by approximately 30 metres to make way for a 75 metre vehicle bridge in the historic floating roadway.

**Mersey Ferries**

5.61 There are opportunities for links to the cruise liner facility at Pier Head and Princess Dock from Wirral Waters both through local ferry services and rail links to Liverpool city centre.

**Table 5.8 Mersey Ferry Services**

Operator	Route	Mon-Fri	Sat	Sun	For use by
Mersey Ferries	Seacombe–Pier Head	3/hr peak periods	1, pm only	1, pm only	Passenger only
Mersey Ferries	Pier Head–Seacombe–Woodside–Pier Head	1/hr inter-peak, 2/hr eve peak	1/hr, 10.00-18.00	1/hr, 10.00-18.00	Passenger only
Mersey Ferries	Seacombe–Pier Head–Woodside–Seacombe	-	1, am only	1, am only	Passenger only

5.62 There are local ferry services across the Mersey between Woodside and Seacombe in Wirral to/from Pier Head in Liverpool. These are summarised in Table 5.8.

5.63 During the weekday morning peak, direct services run between Seacombe and Pier Head every 20 minutes with each crossing taking

10 minutes. During the weekday evening peak, there are services every half hour which run from Pier Head to Seacombe (10 minutes duration) then to Woodside (10 minutes duration from Seacombe). Off peak, the River Explorer Cruise timetable comes into operation departing from Pier Head every hour to Seacombe, from Seacombe to Woodside, then Woodside to Pier Head.

5.64 On Saturday and Sunday there are direct services which run from Seacombe (9:05am) to Pier Head to Woodside, back to Seacombe, then back to Pier Head at 9:45am. The Riverside Explorer Cruise timetable then operates from 10am to 6:50pm, with services every hour starting at Pier Head. At 7:00pm there is then a direct service from Pier Head to Seacombe.

5.65 Over the past 5 years there has been significant investment in Mersey Ferries including:

- Completion of a programme of vessel refurbishment;
- The construction of a major new visitor attraction, Spaceport at Seacombe;
- The redevelopment of Seacombe terminal, and provision of a bus/ferry interchange and extension of park and ride facilities;
- Actions to make terminals and vessels fully accessible.

5.66 In addition, Woodside terminal is proposed to be further developed to complement the adjoining regeneration proposed through the Woodside Masterplan.



5.67 Discussions with Mersey Ferries indicate that the ferry services are under utilised with considerable spare capacity available, and that there has been a decline in ferry use. One of the reasons for this is thought to be the relocation of Pier Head terminal following sinking of the landing deck on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2006. The temporary replacement facility is less accessible for users and so negotiations are ongoing between Mersey Ferries and for a replacement ferry terminal at Pier Head.

5.68 Patronage numbers have been provided from Mersey Ferries and listed in the table below for the previous three years. The yearly period runs from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March. The table shows the 10 months to date for the 2006/07 period and this indicates a drop in passengers for this year. Discussions with Merseytravel confirm that the local Mersey ferry services are not used to their potential and that they are exploring ways of increasing ferry patronage.

**Table 5.9 Ferry Passenger Numbers**

Year	Morning	Interpeak (leisure)	Evening	Total
2003/04	80,619	496,198	136,382	713,199
2004/05	75,104	432,205	124,518	631,827
2005/06	87,071	436,905	141,219	665,195
2006/07 (up to end of Jan only)	62,249	334,506	96,650	493,405

5.69 In summary, the ferry services across the River Mersey provide an underutilised resource for transport links between Wirral and Liverpool City Centre. Increasing numbers of potential passengers through the development of Wirral Waters would improve the financial viability of local ferry services.

### ***Mersey Ports***

5.70 The Mersey Ports comprise:

- The Port of Liverpool – Seaforth/Bootle, North Liverpool and Birkenhead Docks (Peel Ports); and
- Garston Docks (ABP).

5.71 The Mersey Docks and Harbour Company was acquired by Peel Ports Group in June 2005. Peel Ports now operates the Port of Liverpool, which is now one of the largest ports groups in Europe. Garston Docks is operated by Associated BATL Ports (ABP).

5.72 The summary position for Birkenhead Docks is:

- Twelve Quays to be retained as a Ro-Ro ferry terminal;
- Cammell Laird to be retained in port use, although this may diversify from the current permitted use of ship repairs; and
- West and East Floats to be restructured to provide enhanced and more effective port facilities, and to create new opportunities for major development.

- 5.73 Given the importance of the Port of Liverpool as a key economic driver for Merseyside, it is essential that transport links are safeguarded and developed, including access to West Float, Twelve Quays and Cammell Laird.

### ***Local Movement Framework***

#### ***Local Highway Network***

- 5.74 Figure 5.3 above shows the links between the strategic and local highway networks serving the Birkenhead Docks area. Access to the docks area from the south and west is from Junction 1 of the M53 via the A5139 Docks Link and Dock Road running north of the former Bidston Dock and East and West Float. Access from the east and the Kingsway Tunnel is via the grade separated roundabout junction of the Kingsway Tunnel Approach with the A5027 Gorsey Lane, this linking down to Dock Road. To the south of the East Float/Victoria Dock the Wirral Waters area is bounded by the B5146 Corporation Road. To the south of West Float it is bounded by the A5030 Beaufort Road.
- 5.75 There are three distributor routes running north south through the Docks area, these being the A5088 Wallasey Bridge Road/Poulton Bridge Road adjacent to the Bidston Dock site, the A5027 Duke Street running between East Float and West Float, and the A554 Tower Road between East Float and Twelve Quays. Other important routes providing access to the Docks area are: the A553 Hoylake

Road and A554 Bidston Link Road, which links to Junction 1 of the M53 and North Wallasey Approach, the A554 Canning Street accessing Birkenhead, and the A554 Birkenhead Road accessing Seacombe. Wirral UTC has noted daily weekday congestion and delay during the evening peak hour on the Tower Road Four Bridges route.

- 5.76 The three cross-dock highway bridges (A5088, A5027 and A554) are currently owned by Peel (formerly MDHC) and maintained by Wirral Council. These bridges are single carriageway with parallel pedestrian footways and no current capacity for separate cycle facilities. The long term structural viability of the maintenance of these structures continues to be of concern to the local highway authority.
- 5.77 In summary, the opportunity area is served by a series of distributor roads with ease of access from the strategic and local highway network. In general terms this network operates under free flow traffic conditions for the majority of the week days and at weekends, however, there is some pressure on key junctions particularly along the A554 Canning Street and Tower Road. The availability, in general terms of spare capacity on the majority of the highway network immediately adjacent to the opportunity area provides some benefit for future development.
- 5.78 Wirral MBC was previously progressing the design of an improvement to the A5027 Gorsey Lane/Duke Street/A5139 Dock

Road junction, which is on the route between the Kingsway Tunnel and the Roll-on Roll-off terminal at Twelve Quays, to benefit traffic on the strategic freight network. This included measures to improve traffic management and junction efficiency, particularly in the event of an incident on the tunnel approach roads forming part of the M53 Junction 1 viaduct requiring diversion of vehicles. However, LTP resources have now been focussed elsewhere due to protracted progress on land requirements.

## ***Pedestrian and Cycle Networks***

### **Pedestrian Environment**

5.79 In overall terms, the highway network surrounding the opportunity area is provided with footways to normal design standards, although the dock bridges do not comply with the Merseyside Code of Practice for Access and Mobility in terms of footway widths.

5.80 With respect to the Bidston Moss area, to the north and west footways link the site to the residential areas of Liscard and Poulton. The pedestrian route in this direction is via the A5139 Dock Road/A5088 Poulton Bridge Road roundabout which does not have dedicated pedestrian facilities. To the west, the Docks Link does not have footways. However, there are no existing pedestrian origins/destinations in this direction. To the south, the pedestrian network links to Birkenhead North railway station and residential areas between Bidston and Claughton. There is limited pedestrian activity between the Bidston Dock site and Birkenhead North railway

station, and with the route enclosed with vacant and underused industrial sites, the pedestrian environment is not particularly pleasant.

5.81 Considering the East Float area, to the north there is limited pedestrian permeability, which is due to the Kingsway Tunnel Approach Roads providing a barrier to pedestrian movement. The A5027 Gorsey Road is dominated by vehicular activity this being a main route to the Birkenhead Docks area, and has no footways up to the grade separated roundabout with the tunnel approach slip roads. There are however pedestrian facilities from the north east of the area, towards Seacombe and Seacombe Ferry terminal.

5.82 To the south of East Float pedestrian access is available via a network of footways forming part of the local highway network. This includes good standards of design for the facilities linking the area to Birkenhead Park railway station. Whilst the pedestrian network between the opportunity area and areas to the south is of standard design providing connectivity and permeability, the pedestrian environment is that of an industrial area and so not particularly attractive. To the southwest towards the Woodside and Hamilton Square areas of Birkenhead, there is a network of footway routes forming part of the highway network providing connectivity to these areas. Whilst most junctions benefit from some form of pedestrian crossing provision, these are not universally controlled.

5.83 There are a series of pedestrian routes via Bidston Moss linking to the nearby Millennium Bridge and beyond, these also forming cycle routes. As described in Section 2 under "partners", there are proposals for Bidston Moss by Newlands. Initial consultation has identified opportunities to provide good pedestrian linkages between Bidston Moss and the former Bidston Dock area.

5.84 In summary, the Kingsway Tunnel Approach provides a barrier to pedestrian movements from areas north of East and West Floats, although there are opportunities for pedestrian linkages to the north from Bidston Moss to the west of the opportunity area and from Twelve Quays/the eastern end of East Float from the Four Bridges corridor to Seacombe. To the south there are a series of highway routes providing opportunities for access on foot to areas of Bidston and Birkenhead; however, the nature of pedestrian environment through areas south to get to destinations is a potential constraint and barrier to pedestrian movement. Dock Road is also a barrier to pedestrian movements. To the east there are reasonable pedestrian facilities for access to the Woodside area of Birkenhead. To the west the pedestrian links through Bidston Moss present an excellent opportunity for pedestrian linkages to the Bidston Dock area in a pleasant environment.

#### Cycle Routes

5.85 Figure 5.2 above shows the strategic cycle routes serving the Wirral area with Figure 5.3 showing these at a more local level. To the west of Bidston Dock is Bidston Moss which provides a network of

cycle routes, these linking to the National Cycle Network route by the relatively recently constructed pedestrian/cycle bridge known as the Millennium Bridge.

5.86 Under the Newlands proposals, the Bidston Moss area is proposed to be enhanced for mountain biking with the routes linked to the existing facilities, thus Bidston Moss will become an increasingly attractive destination for cyclists. The National Cycling Route 56 runs between Leasowe and Wallasey and onto the coast, following this round to New Brighton. From there, it continues along the coast to Seacombe, to the north east of the opportunity area.

5.87 From Bidston, the National Cycle Network broadly follows a southerly direction onto Chester, providing access to various areas of Wirral peninsula along the way, as can be seen from Figure 5.2. Thus the opportunity area benefits from some cycle links to the strategic cycle network. At present, cycle access onto Bidston Moss is not possible from the remainder of the opportunity area. Elsewhere there is minimal provision for cyclists – the route along Beckwith Street and cycle lanes implemented around St. James roundabout are the only dedicated cycle facilities in the opportunity area. Both east-west and north-south routes are not particularly cycle friendly and have heavy levels of traffic. The Council's cycling officer has undertaken some work on potential improvements to cross-dock cycling routes although there is no commitment to delivering these schemes.

- 5.88 Proposed improvements to the cycle network, notably new links to Egremont Promenade via Church Street, have been completed.
- 5.89 In summary, the area benefits from a location close to strategic cycle routes with a major opportunity to link into these to provide a high level of cycle accessibility. Given that there are links to the east, and more predominately to the west, there is opportunity to connect these links through the Docks area, creating a strategic cycle network which extends around the Wirral peninsula coastline and south as it does at present towards Ellesmere and Neston and beyond.

### ***Historic Tram***

- 5.90 Birkenhead is the home to the first street tramway in Europe which opened in 1860, and ran from Woodside to Birkenhead Park. The tram system was closed in 1937 with all routes being taken over by bus services. A part of the historic tramway has however been restored this running between Woodside interchange via Pacific Road to Edgerton Bridge and down to Taylor Street.
- 5.91 The historic tram route does not form part of the everyday transport network, this being a tourist attraction running on Saturdays and Sundays. There is, therefore, a potential opportunity to link into the tourist tram network for potential leisure based activities.

## **Movement Patterns**

- 5.92 Having described the transport systems serving the opportunity area, this section of the movement and connections baseline considers existing travel patterns in the area, in particular journey to work patterns, and shopping and leisure patterns.

### ***Car Availability***

- 5.93 Based on Countywide Travel Interview Survey Data at 2005, some 72% of Wirral households have a car available for use, which compares to 65% for Merseyside as a whole. Car availability in Wirral has risen from 66% in 1996 to 72% in 2005. This compares to a rise from 58% to 65% for all Merseyside counties. 2001 National Census data indicates that Wirral is on a par with the North West as a whole with 70% households in Wirral and the North West having car availability, although this is lower than the 73% for England.
- 5.94 It is likely however, as with other socio-economic indicators in Section 6 and Appendix 5, that the overall Wirral statistics mask inequalities between higher car ownership in more affluent parts of (west) Wirral and lower ownership in more deprived (inner) areas. An examination of ward data will assist in identifying low car ownership levels more accurately.

**Travel Mode**

5.95 The Countywide Household Survey provides data on travel mode for travel in Wirral and Merseyside as a whole. Figure 5.1 and 5.2 provide this data in graphical form for Wirral and Merseyside respectively.

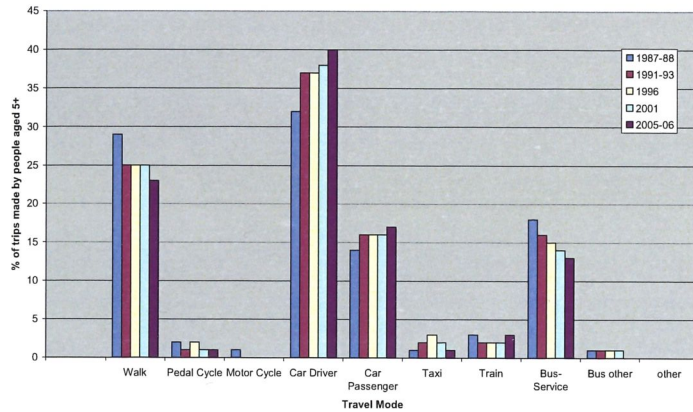


Figure 5.6 - Wirral Main Mode of Travel

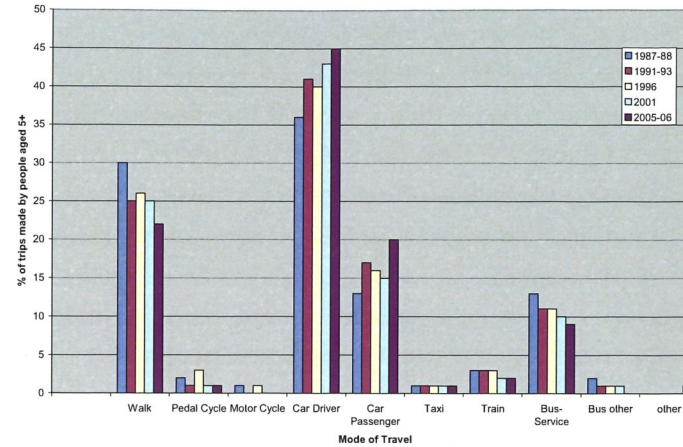


Figure 5.7 – Merseyside Main Mode of Travel

5.96 This shows that for all trips, the current mode share by car for Wirral at 65% is greater than for Merseyside as a whole which is 57%. The data also shows a trend of increased mode shares by car since 1996 with a decline in bus use, which is now 9% for Wirral and 13% for Merseyside as a whole. Rail mode share has remained relatively static at 2% to 3%.

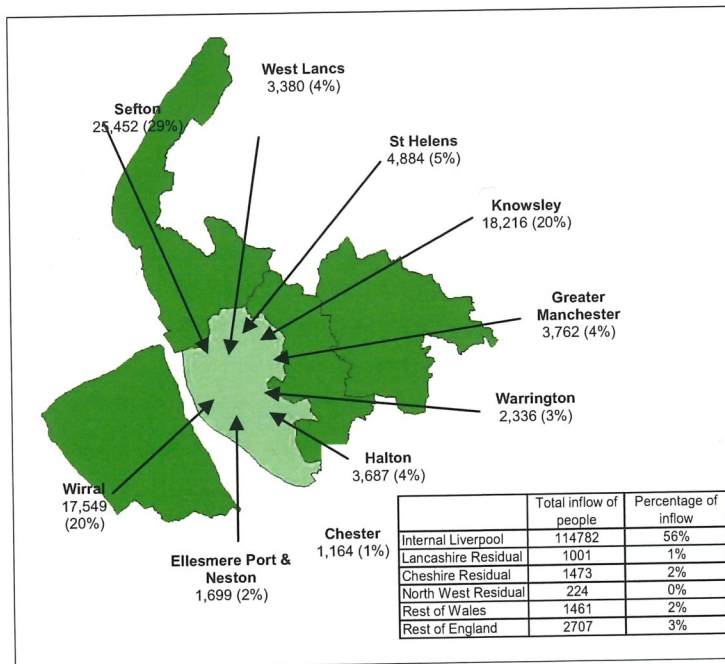
**Journey to Work**

5.97 Information on work travel patterns is available from the 2001 National Census. Within the Liverpool City Region, patterns of commuting indicate three primary employment areas, these being Liverpool, Warrington and Chester. These are the only three areas



with large net in-commuting flows, although the net inflows for Liverpool are significantly greater than for Warrington and Chester. Within Merseyside, as would be expected, Liverpool is the main destination for journey to work trips, given it is the main economic centre. Figure 5.8 shows the areas from which journeys to Liverpool are made, indicating that 20% of commuters to Liverpool come from Wirral, the main other areas being Sefton (29%) and Knowsley (20%).

Figure 5.8 – Commuting to Liverpool (Source: Local Transport Plan)



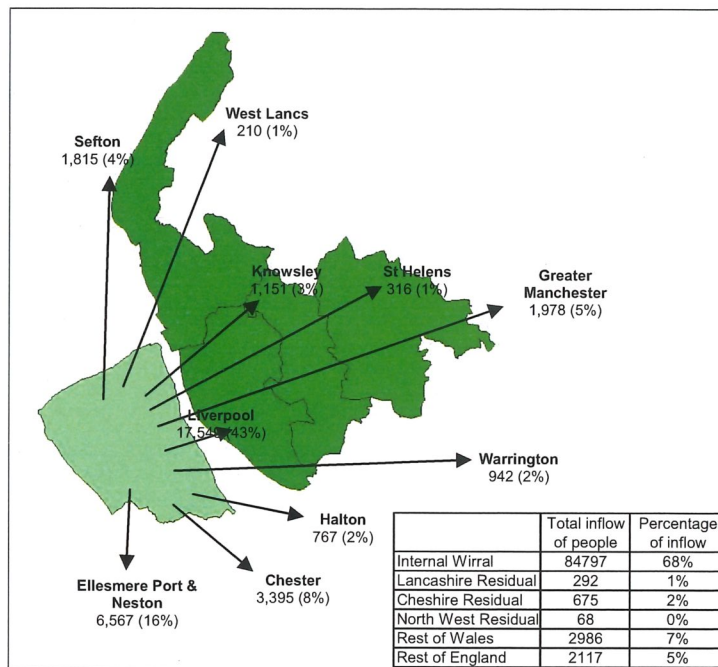
5.98 The Census data indicates Liverpool has 217,000 jobs for which there is an import of 70,000 commuters from other Merseyside areas, plus 17,000 from outside Merseyside. Some 40,000 residents of Liverpool travel out of Liverpool to work, meaning Liverpool is a net importer of 47,000 workers.

5.99 Considering journey to work patterns for Wirral, 68% (84,800) of Wirral residents work in Wirral district, meaning roughly a third, 32%, commute to work outside the area (40,642). This compares to only 15,685 of in commuters to Wirral from other areas resulting in a net outflow from Wirral of 24,957 workers. Therefore, of jobs in Wirral some 84% (84,800) are filled from residents in Wirral with 16% (15,685) from outside Wirral.

5.100 Figure 5.9 shows the destinations of those people working outside of Wirral, the vast majority, 43%, travelling to Liverpool, with Ellesmere Port and Neston being second at 16%, and Chester at 8%. Figures for in-commuting to Wirral indicate that the majority at 28% come from Ellesmere Port and Neston, 18% from Liverpool and 10% from Chester.



Figure 5.9 Commuting from Wirral (Source: Local Transport Plan)

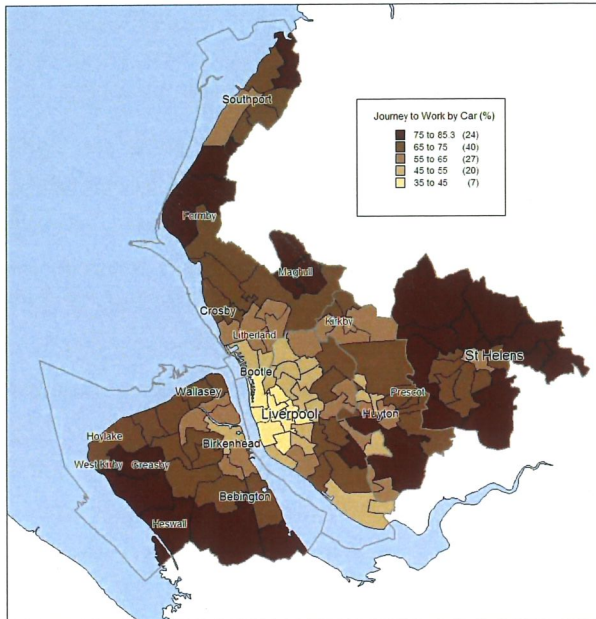


5.101 Data on mode share for journeys to work is also available from the 2001 Census, reference the LTP. Figures 5.10, 5.11, 5.12, and 5.13 indicate the mode shares by car, rail, bus, and walking/cycling respectively.

5.102 The car is the dominant mode overall but there are significant differences in mode share depending on the area within Merseyside considered. With reference to Wirral, for the majority of origins in south and west Wirral, the mode share by car is relatively high at some 75% to 85% of journeys to work.

5.103 This compares to Birkenhead for which the car mode share is much lower at 45% to 55%. Other areas of Wirral such as New Brighton, Hoylake, Wallasey Upton and Bebington have car modes share of 65% to 75%. On average a car mode share of 65% is experienced for Merseyside, compared to less than 45% for those living in Liverpool city centre.

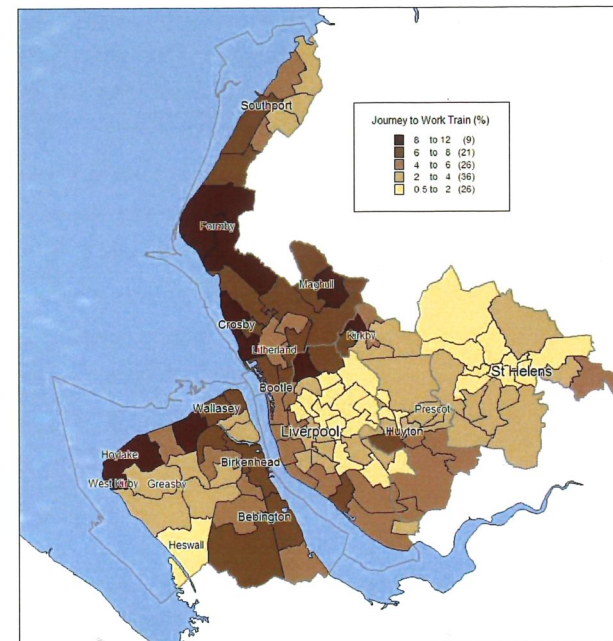
Figure 5.10 Mode Share by Car (Source: Local Transport Plan)



5.104 Mode share by rail clearly depends on the location in relation to the rail network. In relation to Wirral, there are relatively high mode shares by rail of 8% to 12% from those areas to the north and west, well served by rail, such as West Kirby, Hoylake, and Wallasey. Relatively high rail mode shares also occur for New Brighton, Birkenhead, and Bebington at 6% to 8%.

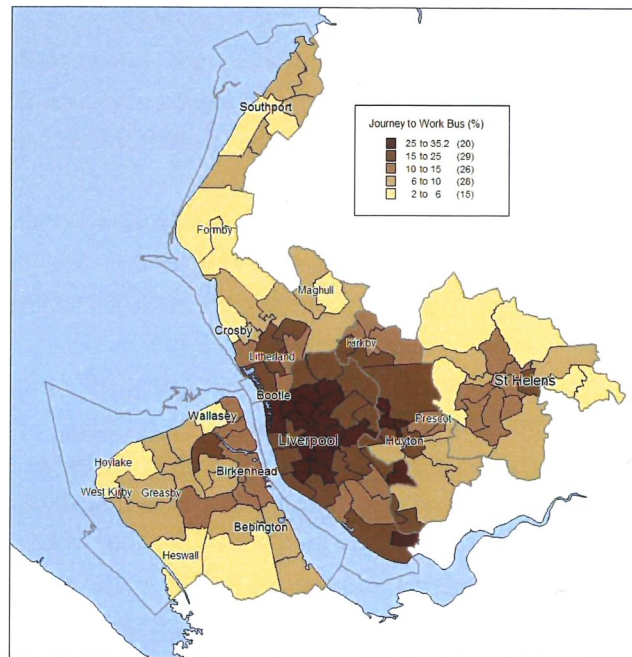
5.105 This is again reflective of the accessibility of these areas to the rail network, although it is interesting to note that there are other areas of Merseyside accessible to rail, particularly those to the east for which mode shares by rail are less than 4%. This may be in part due to the different socio-economic characteristics of the area, it also being notable that areas to the north of Liverpool such as Formby and Crosby also have higher mode shares by rail.

Figure 5.11 Mode Share by Train (Source: Local Transport Plan)



5.106 As would be anticipated, the mode share by bus for the Birkenhead area, at 10% to 15%, is higher than for the more outlying areas of Wirral, although less than Liverpool which ranges from 15% to 35%. One of the reasons for this is likely to be that commuting to Liverpool has a comparatively higher proportion by rail.

Figure 5.12 Mode Share by Bus (Source: Local Transport Plan)

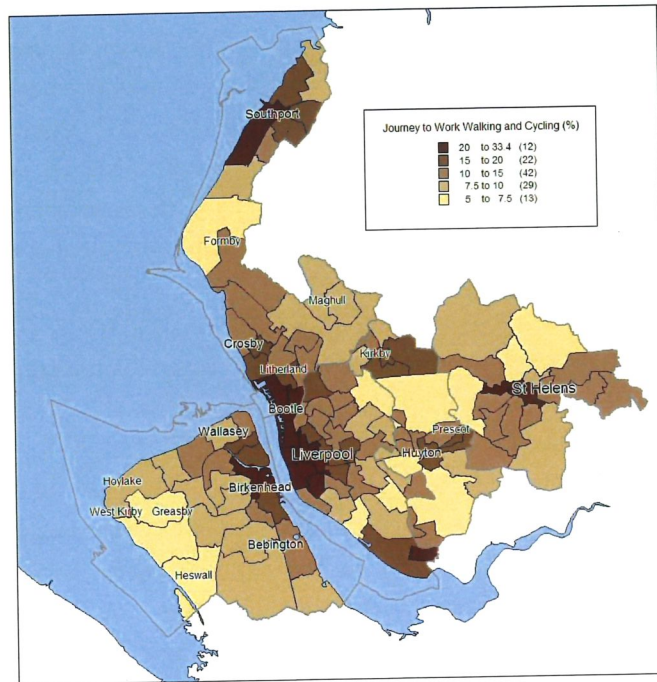


5.107 With reference to walking and cycling, Birkenhead experiences the highest mode share by these modes of the Wirral area with 20% to 35% by these modes. Liverpool city centre also experiences walk/cycle mode shares at this level. The further from Birkenhead the mode shares by walk and cycle decrease with the western area of Wirral peninsula has the lowest mode shares by non-motorised modes at 5% to 7.5%. This is due to the main population and employment areas being to the east of the Borough, hence a greater proportion of workers being close to their jobs, and due to lower car ownership levels.

5.108 There are a number of potential opportunities that can be identified from the journey to work data analysis.

- (i) There are sustainable strategic transport links in the form of the rail network accessible to the opportunity area, which provides the opportunity for access to the regional centre without relying on access by car. Thus there would be the opportunity to deliver a relatively high mode share by rail.
- (ii) Consideration of opportunities for reducing the levels of out-commuting could lead to benefits in terms of reducing overall travel distance and could provide the scope for use of more sustainable transport modes. In-commuting can access the opportunity area by rail with the potential for a more balanced use of the rail network particularly during weekday peak periods.

Figure 5.13 – Mode Share by Walking and Cycling



Source: Local Transport Plan

### Shopping and Leisure Movements

5.109 General information in relation to shopping and leisure movements has been obtained from the Wirral Retail Strategy (March 2004).

This was based on data from a telephone survey undertaken in September 2003.

5.110 With respect to shopping for food and groceries, the surveys indicated that a high proportion of households usually shop in their nearest large food store. This is illustrated below, summarising where households from the various areas stated they mainly undertake their food shopping:

- West Kirby/Hoylake – majority shop at Safeway West Kirby, with Tesco Bidston the second most popular;
- Upton/Greasby – majority shop at either Asda Woodchurch Road or Sainsbury’s Upton, although a significant proportion of people visit Tesco, Bidston Moss;
- Wallasey/New Brighton/Liscard/Poulton – nearly two thirds of households in these areas shop at the Asda in Liscard;
- Birkenhead/Tranmere/Bidston – in the main use Asda, Woodchurch Road, Tesco, Bidston Moss, and Sainsbury’s Prenton;
- Bromborough – two thirds shop at Asda, Bromborough;
- Heswall – two thirds shop at Tesco, Heswall.

5.111 On average, 80% of respondents indicated that they used their car for main food shopping. This ranged from 74% for the zone covering Birkenhead/ Tranmere/ Bidston, to 89% for Heswall.

5.112 With respect to comparison goods shopping, Section 8 considers leakage issues and shows that a significant proportion of shoppers

travelling out of the Borough to facilitate their shopping needs. This leads to a higher level of overall travel distance for Wirral shoppers, particularly by car given the high car mode shares identified from the household surveys.

5.113 With respect to local shopping movements, the main focuses of travel activity are to Birkenhead, which has a Wirral wide catchment, although limited beyond the borough boundary. Bromborough Village/South Wirral/Croft Retail Park is also a significant retail destination whose catchment extends beyond Bromborough to the majority of other areas of Wirral.

5.114 The more local centres in Wirral of Liscard town centre/Wallasey Village Local Centre, West Kirby town centre and Hoylake town centre have much more local catchments with the majority of the expenditure coming from households within the immediate area.

5.115 For larger comparison goods, such as furniture/household goods/DIY/white goods/electrical the mode share was found to be 80% by car. A lower mode share of just over two-thirds was discovered for clothes and shoe shopping, with 17% bus and 11% train.

5.116 Given the extremely high proportion of expenditure being spent outside Wirral, there is a clear opportunity to reduce overall travel and car use (given also the high car mode share for such journeys) by seeking to claw back trade to the borough.

5.117 With respect to leisure trips, 62% of households visit the cinema; the most popular cinema locations are the Odeon Multi-screen at South Wirral Retail Park (27%) and the Warner Village cinema in Birkenhead town centre (24%) with relatively few Wirral residents travelling beyond the borough to access cinemas, for example only 2% visit cinemas in Liverpool city centre.

5.118 Birkenhead town centre was the most frequent destination for restaurant users (17%) followed by Liverpool city centre at 10%, although 29% of households indicated that they did not visit restaurants at all. With respect to theatres and concert halls, of the 56% who use such facilities, Liverpool is the main destination with almost half of theatre/concert goers travelling to the city centre. Only a third of respondents claimed to pursue other commercial leisure interests such as bingo or bowling, the Bromborough Hotshots bowling alley and Gala Bingo at South Wirral Retail Park being a main destination (10% of respondents) followed by New Brighton (6%).

### Local Movement Patterns to Key Destinations

5.119 Having considered the overall accessibility of the area by various modes of transport, and looked at strategic movement patterns, it is now useful to assess the baseline accessibility in the Wirral area. In particular, access to:



- The closest town centre of Birkenhead and to the more local centre of Liscard;
- Public transport corridors;
- Retail;
- Local shops and facilities;
- Employment;
- Education and healthcare;
- Play areas and formal open space (parks);
- Adjacent residential areas.

### ***Birkenhead Town Centre***

5.120 Birkenhead provides the main retail and leisure destination in the area. Birkenhead town centre is within walking distance of the eastern end of the opportunity area, with pedestrian facilities in the form of footways provided within the highway infrastructure between the area and Birkenhead town centre. However, whilst there are some pedestrian crossing facilities available, there is limited provision of controlled facilities on routes. There are no direct cycle lanes or facilities to Birkenhead from the opportunity area.

5.121 Bus access to Birkenhead town centre from the Duke Street and Tower Road areas are good, given these north/south routes provide bus corridors. The Duke Street bus corridor links New Brighton to Birkenhead including Woodside and onto Bromborough and Chester. The Tower Road corridor links directly to Woodside and Birkenhead, from Wallasey Village, Liscard and Seacombe. Access to Birkenhead town centre from the Bidston Dock area is more difficult

as there are less direct services from this area, particularly during daytime periods.

5.122 There is direct rail access between the southern areas of the East and West Float given the Wirral Line runs east/west with Bidston, Birkenhead North, and Birkenhead Park rail station and linking directly to Birkenhead town centre stations of Conway Park and Hamilton Square.

5.123 Development of temporary car parks in Birkenhead has put pressure on the car parking supply, although the parking policies and charges are generally towards limiting the duration of stay to reduce car commuting. Changes to the on-street parking regime in Birkenhead have recently been implemented. This has resulted in a change from free disc parking to parking charges, which could affect parking demand. Opportunities should therefore be considered to provide park and ride, bus or rail based, to benefit access to Birkenhead town centre, linked to the opportunity area.

### ***Liscard***

5.124 Liscard provides a more local retail and leisure destination compared to the main centre of Birkenhead. Pedestrian access can be gained to Liscard from the Bidston Dock area along Poulton Bridge Road and Mill Lane. There are dropped crossings at the Poulton Bridge Road/Docks Link/Dock Road roundabout, although there are no controlled facilities. Signalised crossing facilities are provided at the Breck Road/B5145 Poulton Bridge Road/A5088 Mill Lane junction.

5.125 As has been highlighted, from the East Float area there is limited pedestrian connectivity and permeability to the north, including to Liscard.

5.126 There is direct bus access between the Bidston Dock area and Liscard, these services linking mainly between Arrowe Park Hospital and New Brighton, running via Bidston Dock and New Brighton. There are also direct bus services running along Duke Street Bridge and Four Bridges/Tower Road linking the eastern area of the opportunity area to Liscard.

### *Transport Corridors and Hubs*

5.127 Access to public transport corridors has been dealt with when considering the strategic movement framework. Key points to this baseline appraisal are as follows:

- The opportunity benefits from good accessibility to the rail network, with the Wirral Line running to the south, providing links to Liverpool and Wirral. The convergence of these branch lines to Bidston, Birkenhead North, Birkenhead Park and Conway Park stations provides frequent services to Liverpool City Centre. Pedestrian access to Birkenhead North railway station from the Bidston Dock area, whilst benefiting from the provision of standard footways, is via a network adjacent to vacant sites, which does not provide for a particularly attractive pedestrian environment. Access

to Birkenhead Park station benefits from standard footway provision, although is via an existing industrial area.

- The opportunity benefits from access to a number of bus corridors, these mainly running in a north/south orientation. The Bidston Dock area is served by buses on the Poulton Bridge Road corridor, mainly linking New Brighton, Liscard and Arrowe Park Hospital. The Poulton Road corridor is within walking distance of the Bidston Dock corridor, which mainly links Seacombe, Wallasey and Birkenhead.
- The East Float area and Twelve Quays benefit from ease of access to bus corridors running along Duke Street and Tower Road, again in a north/south direction. These routes mainly link Birkenhead with New Brighton, Wallasey, Liscard and Seacombe. Some services run further south to Bromborough and Chester.

5.128 There is the opportunity to explore the role and development of **“transport hubs”** where existing and possible future infrastructure can be provided in a manner that results in more sustainable forms of transport and creating accessibility to areas of need. This would build upon existing links such as Birkenhead Bus Station, Woodside and Seacombe. Birkenhead bus station is a main bus interchange and is close to Conway Park and Birkenhead Central railway station, or different branches of Wirral rail line, providing opportunities for interchange. Seacombe, with its ferry terminal and car park, on a bus route/interchange, clearly has existing potential to be promoted in this way, which can be assisted by the critical mass of Wirral

Waters. The Hamilton Quarter and Woodside also have this clear potential, through Hamilton Square Railway Station, Woodside Ferry Terminal and bus interchange, and associated high levels of pedestrian/cycle activity.

5.129 A third area which could be promoted as a transport hub is Birkenhead North & Bidston. Birkenhead North Railway Station is the key driver for this, due to frequent and fast services to Birkenhead and Liverpool. Plans are in the pipeline for Park and Ride, and through the Dock estate at Bidston is has good strategic accessibility to the highway network (M53). The area is also on a strong bus corridor. Further opportunities for developing this concept and in particular exploring associated infrastructure will be consider through the Masterplanning process.

### ***Retail Destinations***

5.130 As has been highlighted under the strategic movements section and in Section 8 considering retail markets, some 45% of retail expenditure is currently spent outside Wirral, mainly in Liverpool City Centre and Chester. Birkenhead town centre provides the most important retail destination in Wirral, with approximately one third of expenditure being in Birkenhead town centre. This was based on a 2003 survey which is soon to be updated.

5.131 Ease of access is provided to Birkenhead via the road network, which does not generally suffer from undue congestion. However, careful management of parking provision and the highway and transport

networks will be required to maintain effective accessibility to the town centre. Pedestrian access is also available from areas of the opportunity within walking distance.

5.132 Direct access can be gained from the rail network, particularly from areas south of the Docks, via Birkenhead North and Birkenhead Park. Birkenhead Central rail station lies to the south of the retail centre and links into Liverpool city centre and south to Ellesmere Port and Chester. Access to Birkenhead can also be gained via the Duke Street and Tower Road bus corridors, however, bus access from Bidston Dock is more limited due to the lack of east/west services.

5.133 Access to the key retail destination of Liverpool City Centre is via the Kingsway tunnel which for the most part does not suffer from congestion problems, although Merseytunnels have identified that this tunnel is at or approaching capacity during the morning peak hour. Access to Liverpool is also available via the Queensway tunnel which has been identified as operating at capacity in the morning peak, although this is less critical for access to retail land uses. From a public transport perspective, key access to Liverpool City Centre would be via rail, which as identified provides frequent, low journey times between the opportunity area and the City Centre. There are no direct bus services between the opportunity area and Liverpool for access to retail, only a night bus, although interchange facilities at Birkenhead bus station allow bus access to the City Centre with a change of service.



5.134 As identified in the shopping and leisure movements analysis, Chester and Cheshire Oaks provide shopping destinations to which there is significant expenditure for the Wirral population. There is ease of access to Chester and Cheshire Oaks, mainly by car via the M53 Motorway, which provides a relatively quick access to these destinations.

5.135 Although there is no direct access by rail to Chester from the opportunity area, a change of service can be made at Hamilton Square, with a travel time of 52 minutes from Birkenhead North to Chester. In conclusion, access by rail to Chester is good with the journey time being significantly less than one hour.

5.136 Access to Chester can be gained directly by bus, from the Duke Street bus corridor, with services every hour Monday to Saturday daytime.

5.137 There are issues over access to major supermarkets. The closest large foodstore is the Tesco Extra at Bidston. There will be a high car mode share for access to this store given its location, although a free bus service is provided at the store. There are no direct bus services to the Tesco from the opportunity area. Similarly the Junction One Retail Park located on the Bidston Link Road has good car access, but lacks public transport access.

5.138 Bromborough Village/South Wirral/Croft Retail Park has also been identified as a significant retail destination. Access to this destination

would mainly be by car, although there is a direct hourly bus service to Bromborough which links to this destination via the Duke Street corridor.

### *Local Shops and Services*

5.139 Local shops and services are remote from the opportunity area, on Poulton Road and Laird Street. Access is available on foot from the area south of West Float to the Laird Street shops, although the pedestrian routes are unattractive. Local access from the north of East Float can be gained on foot to the local shops on Poulton Road, however, in reality these facilities are considered too remote to provide a local function. Pedestrian accessibility is restricted due to the Kingsway Tunnel barrier.

### *Employment*

5.140 The Docks area itself provides a significant employment destination. The accessibility to the Docks area is dealt with in detail under the Movement Framework. Key conclusions are:

- The Docks area benefits from good access to the rail network, providing access from Wirral and from Liverpool City Centre via direct services. Ease of access is also available from other origins via changes of services either in Liverpool City Centre, or at Hamilton Square for access from Ellesmere Port and Chester.

- The Docks area benefits from good bus links north/south linking to New Brighton, Liscard, Wallasey, Seacombe, and Birkenhead for the Duke Street and Tower Road corridors. The Bidston Dock area has north/south links to Liscard/New Brighton and Arrowe Park Hospital. However, there are limited facilities east/west which means limited bus links around the Docks area itself.
  - The Docks area benefits from excellent access to the strategic highway network of the M53 and Kingsway Tunnel, providing a good level of accessibility from the Wirral peninsular and Liverpool, and strategically from the regional and national motorway network.
  - Local road links around the Docks area are good and in general free from congestion for much of the day.
  - Public transport access is available via the Mersey Ferry services
- 5.141 As identified under strategic movement patterns, 43% of Wirral out commuters travel to Liverpool, for which there are direct road and rail links, well documented in the baseline. Birkenhead town centre also provides an employment destination the accessibility of which has already been considered. Other destinations for journey to work are Ellesmere Port and Neston, and Chester for which there are reasonable bus links. Access by rail is however, good with Chester a 52 minute journey from Birkenhead North with a change of service at Hamilton Square.

### *Education and Healthcare*

- 5.142 Local primary and secondary education facilities are limited within the area of the Docks. These are located mainly north and south of the Docks area in the residential areas of Liscard/Wallasey/Poulton to the north and Birkenhead and Prenton to the south. Access on foot to the north as indicated is restricted by the Kingsway Tunnel and approaches barrier. Access on foot can be made to the south; however, whilst the pedestrian routes are adequate, the environment is not particularly attractive. Bus access is however available via the north/south corridors.
- 5.143 There are a number of colleges in the vicinity of the opportunity area, these including Wirral Metropolitan College, for which the Twelve Quays Campus is located near Morpeth Dock to the east of the opportunity area. This campus is, therefore, accessible on foot from the eastern end of the opportunity area. However, the infrequent east/west bus links mean bus access from the Bidston end of the area is limited.
- 5.144 The Conway Park Campus of the college is located adjacent to Conway Park railway station and is therefore accessible by rail from the Bidston end of the opportunity area. Bus access from other areas is available via the Duke Street and Tower Road bus corridors. It would also be possible to walk to the Conway Park campus from the eastern areas of the opportunity area.

5.145 With respect to healthcare, the NHS hospitals at:

- Arrowe Park Hospital, Upton;
- Clatterbridge General Hospital, Bebington;
- St Catherine's Hospital, Birkenhead;
- Victoria Central Community Hospital, Wallasey.

5.146 Arrowe Park Hospital provides the main hospital for Wirral and has the only Accident & Emergency department in Wirral along with a minor injuries and illness walk in centre. There are a limited number of direct bus services to Arrowe Park Hospital from the Bidston Dock area. There is also a direct bus service travelling via the Tower Road bus corridor linking the eastern area of the opportunity to Arrowe Park Hospital, although the service is limited in frequency. There is good access to Arrowe Park Hospital by car via the M53 motorway, Junction 2 link and a route via the Upton Bypass, or via Junction 3 and Woodchurch Road/Arrowe Park Road.

5.147 The Victoria Central Hospital lies closer to Wirral Waters in the Wallasey area, just south of Liscard centre. It also contains a minor injuries and illness walk in centre. There are good bus links to this hospital both along the Poulton Bridge Road and Duke Street bus corridors. Access could also be gained on foot from the Bidston Dock area along the A5088 Mill Lane, although the route has notable gradients for pedestrians and there is limited access from other areas on foot due to the Kingsway Tunnel barrier. There is ease of access to this hospital via the road network.

5.148 St Catherine's Hospital is located to the south of Birkenhead. The main vehicular access is on Derby Road, although pedestrian access is also available on the B5148 Church Road. Bus access is available via a change of service at Birkenhead bus station.

5.149 Clatterbridge General Hospital is located adjacent to Junction 4 of the M53 motorway, and so the main form of access would be by car. There is, however, also a direct frequent bus service from New Brighton to Clatterbridge Hospital, which runs via the Duke Street corridor, through the opportunity area. There is also a private BUPA Spire Healthcare hospital at Murrayfield, Thingwall.

### *Play Areas and Formal Open Spaces (Parks)*

5.150 The main parks to note are Birkenhead Park to the south, Central Park to the north, and Bidston Moss to the west. Bidston Moss is directly adjacent to Bidston Dock and so would present opportunities for ease of access on foot and cycle.

5.151 Central Park is connected by the north/south bus routes that run through the opportunity area. That is via Poulton Bridge Road, Duke Street Bridge and Four Bridges/Tower Road. Access on foot is available via the A5088 from Bidston Dock; however pedestrian links are limited from other areas due to the Kingsway Tunnel approaches barrier.

5.152 Birkenhead Park is accessible on foot from the southern areas of the opportunity area, however, as documented the routes south are via an industrial area which is not a particularly attractive pedestrian environment. The Duke Street and Tower Road bus corridors allow access to Birkenhead Park by this mode of travel. The park contains a series of cycle routes to the promenade at Egremont.

### ***Adjacent Residential Areas***

5.153 Adjacent residential areas are located north and south of the opportunity area. To the north the areas of Poulton and Seacombe are segregated to a degree by the Kingsway Tunnel approach, particularly for access by walking and cycling. Areas of Poulton and Liscard are accessible on foot from the Bidston Dock area via the A5088 and linking highways. Access to the residential areas to the north is available by the north/south bus corridors running through the opportunity area, including Poulton, Seacombe, Liscard, Wallasey Village and onto New Brighton. These bus links also provide access to the adjacent residential areas of Bidston and Birkenhead. Access on foot can be gained to the residential areas south, although again there is the issue of the pedestrian environment for links north/south.

### **Summary of Issues and Opportunities**

5.154 The Birkenhead Docks area is well placed to take advantage of the strategic transport network due to its location adjacent to Junction 1 of the M53 motorway, and direct access to the rail network.

Advantage can be taken of the spare capacity that exists on the local highway network and of the existing local bus links which serve the area.

5.155 The strategic location adjacent to the M53 motorway, with direct access to Junction 1, provides advantages for attracting business which require links to the regional and national motorway network. It is also well placed for access to existing and emerging economic drivers such as the regional centre, Mersey Ports, Twelve Quays Ro-Ro terminal, the Cruise Liner terminal and John Lennon Airport.

5.156 The strategic location adjacent to the Kingsway Tunnel provides the opportunity for ease of car links to Liverpool City Centre. The tolls are likely to provide a barrier for some road users and the River Mersey provides a perceived barrier, although this barrier is reduced by the effective rail system.

5.157 There are structural problems with the M53 Junction 1 viaduct, and a decision has been taken that the most appropriate solution to this would be to strengthen the existing viaduct rather than build a new bridge off line. This is programmed to commence at the earliest by 2010 with completion 2012. The Highways Agency has part funding for the scheme and a business case has been submitted to DfT for the remainder of the funding. Failure to maintain the viaduct could provide a barrier to increasing port activity and to realising the potential of the opportunity area.

- 5.158 Spare capacity exists in general on the local highway network serving the Docks area which provides some scope for growth without major infrastructure investment. Wirral Council has concern regarding the on going maintenance of the cross dock bridges. These structures provide crucial access for north south movements and are key to the distribution of traffic around the docks area, so any closure would have a negative impact on traffic movements.
- 5.159 There is an opportunity to create good pedestrian linkages from the former Bidston Dock area to Bidston Moss and the Newlands proposals, including links to the gateway to Bidston Moss.
- 5.160 The Kingsway Tunnel approach and topography provides a barrier to pedestrian movement to the north, although there are links from the Bidston Dock area to Poulton and Liscard, and from the Four Bridges/Twelve Quays area to Seacombe. To the south the pedestrian environment passing through vacant sites and is industrial in nature providing a potential barrier to pedestrian movement. The cross dock bridges do not fully comply with pedestrian provision standards and provide a constraint for cyclists.
- 5.161 There is an opportunity to create strong cycle links to the National Cycle Network via the Newlands proposals at Bidston Moss, and opportunity to connect with links to the east via the Docks area to provide a strategic cycle route serving the area around the Wirral peninsula coastline, and linking to the National Cycle Route to the south.

- 5.162 The strategic location with access to the rail network particularly for the Bidston Dock area, and areas south of West Float and East Float, provides a major opportunity to exploit the Docks area for more intensive development, accessible by the more sustainable travel mode of rail. This would in turn increase rail patronage benefiting financial viability of the rail network.
- 5.163 Considering the wider regeneration potential of the Docks area, at present the most is not being made of the accessible location by rail. Redevelopment of the area would benefit from the high level of rail accessibility, and it is considered that this should be exploited as a major opportunity. For example the area around the Mobil site is well placed to take advantage of its location adjacent to Birkenhead North railway station. Redevelopment of this site would also present the opportunity to improve pedestrian linkages between the Docks area and the station including Bidston Dock, although there are footway links at present.
- 5.164 Some areas to the north fall outside the 800m walk catchment to rail stations, however, there would be opportunities for ease of access to Park and Ride at Birkenhead North. An opportunity exists to develop Phase 2 of the Birkenhead North Park and Ride with Wirral MBC and Merseytravel. This would benefit commuting trips, but could also be promoted for trips to Birkenhead town centre, either train or bus based, given parking constraints in the centre.

- 5.165 All parts of the Docks area benefit from access to the bus network. The bus network generally runs in north/south corridors via Poulton Bridge Road, Duke Street, and Tower Road. The Duke Street and Tower Road corridors provide good north/south links between Birkenhead, Seacombe, Liscard, Wallasey and New Brighton, whilst the Poulton Bridge Road corridor links New Brighton, Liscard and Arrowe Park Hospital. There are limited east/west links, and Dock Road, north of West Float is not served by bus. This means that the areas to the west such as the former Bidston Dock do not have good bus connections to Birkenhead. There is therefore an opportunity to improve bus linkages east/west and linking areas of the Docks.
- 5.166 The opportunity exists to promote transport hubs, particularly at Birkenhead North/Bidston and the make better use of existing hubs at Woodside/Hamilton Quarter, Seacombe, and Birkenhead Bus Station.
- 5.167 Ferry services across the River Mersey provide an under utilised resource for public transport links between Wirral and Liverpool. An opportunity is presented, therefore, to make better use of this resource and assist the financial visibility of local ferry services.
- 5.168 The location of the Twelve Quays Ro-Ro Terminal within the opportunity area provides major benefits to potential future economic development, and attraction of investment, feeding on the excellent passenger and freight links.
- 5.169 Opportunity exists to serve part of the Docks area south of West Float for rail freight through proposals to extend the rail network from Bidston along the currently disused railway line, which would facilitate multi-modal freight access. Economic viability of such a project may act as a constraint for this proposal.
- 5.170 With respect to the journey to work analysis, there are sustainable strategic transport links by rail which provides access to the regional centre as the main employment destination, without reliance on the car. Opportunities for reducing the levels of out-commuting could lead to benefits in terms of reducing overall travel distances and provide scope for access by more sustainable travel modes. In-commuting can access the area by rail which could help balance rail network usage.
- 5.171 There is a large outflow of shopping trips from Wirral to Liverpool and Chester, predominately car based. Opportunity exists to drawback these trips with potential for reducing car mode share.
- 5.172 To conclude, the Wirral Waters opportunity is well placed to take advantage of its location adjacent to the strategic transport network and to build on the existing good levels of access by sustainable transport modes. Such opportunities are scarce and therefore should be encouraged in line with national policies which seek to better integrate land use and transport.