

# 04

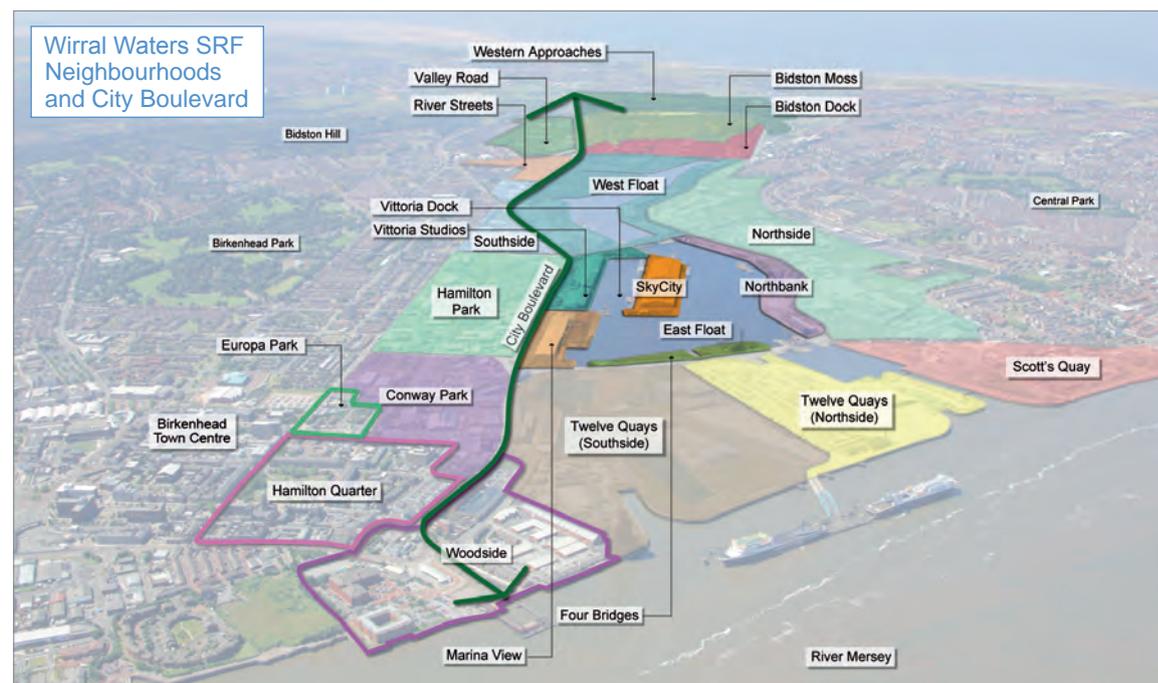
## Catalysts, partnerships & City Structure

## Chapter four

# Catalysts, partnerships and structure

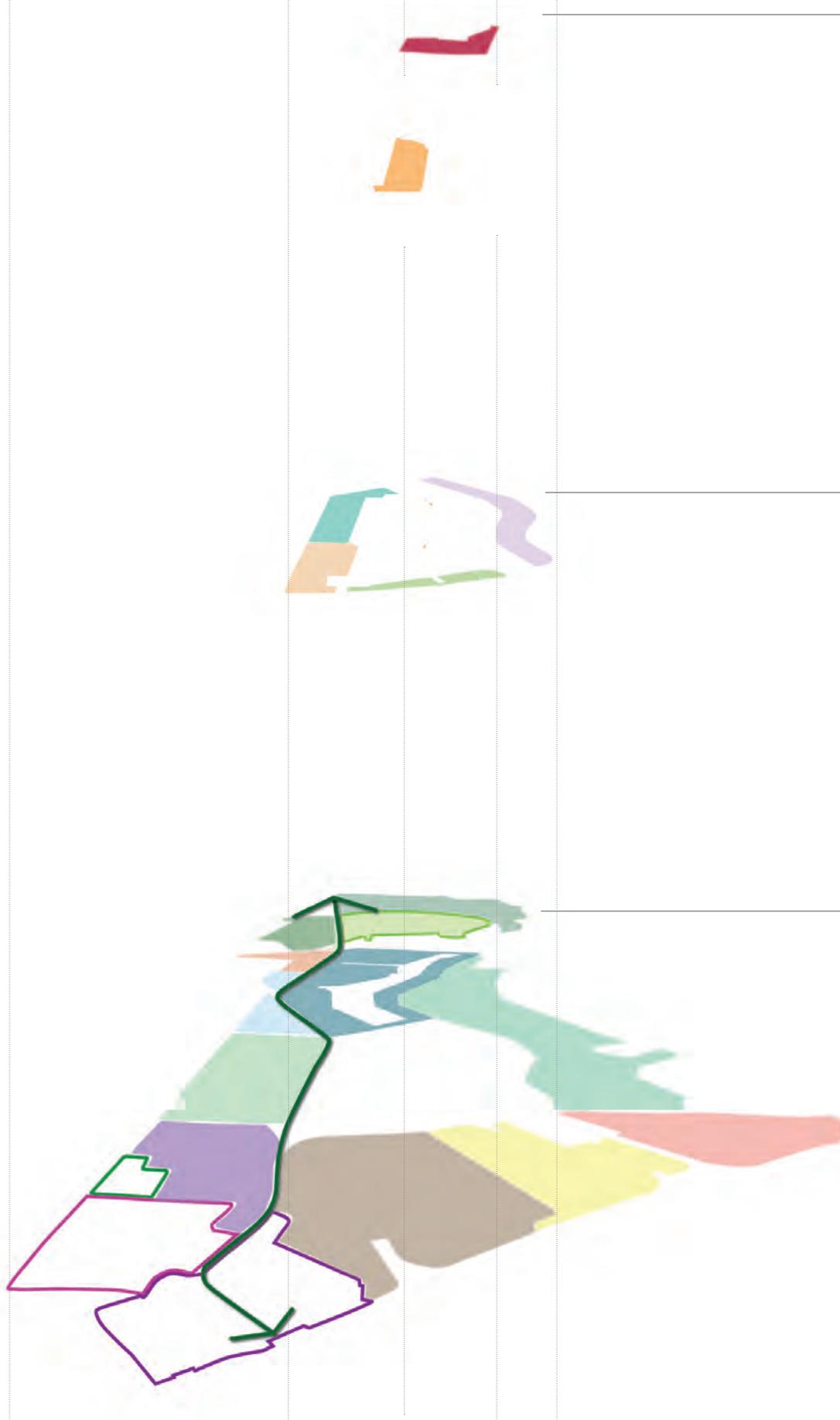
### Catalysts and partnerships

- 4.1 Wirral Waters is a once in a lifetime opportunity to attract and sustain long term, significant economic growth to Inner Wirral. The fundamental drivers are to increase the diversity and economic base of Inner Wirral and the City Region, capture new markets and growing economies, nurture existing employers who are looking consolidate or grow, enable local communities to share in improved skills, training, jobs, housing, quality of life and health, and set the highest design and sustainability benchmarks.
- 4.2 In response, the profiles, roles, identities and relationships of the Wirral Waters neighbourhoods have been considered within the wider city setting to ensure that new employers and growth economies are attracted, that existing businesses and economies are strengthened, and existing communities are integrated. The 'connecting threads' are the City Boulevard, and the city streets and squares, dock edges and riverfront.
- 4.3 The proposed neighbourhoods are defined as Catalysts and Partnership neighbourhoods. The Catalyst neighbourhoods are East Float and Bidston Dock. They are being brought forward by Peel Holdings as the focus for significant investment capable of triggering the regeneration of adjacent Partnership neighbourhoods.
- 4.4 The vision for East Float is to create an internationally recognised, diverse city waterfront destination. To encourage diversity and respond to the scale of the site and setting, East Float is considered as a family of city quarters, centred upon SkyCity – the tall building centre piece of



- Wirral Waters. SkyCity will be the focus for attracting international and UK investment, economies and jobs. The quarters enclosing SkyCity, and watersides Four Bridges and Marina View, Vittoria Studios and Northbank, will be the focus for attracting economic activity and housing.
- 4.5 The vision for Bidston Dock is to create a major leisure and retail destination to complement the City Region, attracting international and UK concepts and investment.
- 4.6 The Partnership neighbourhoods have a key role to play in connecting East Float, Bidston Dock, Birkenhead Town Centre and Hamilton Square together. The focus is to support existing and attract new employers and residents from across the City Region and Inner Wirral.
- 4.7 The key is to ensure that the benefits from the 'catalyst' neighbourhoods are captured and maximised, and opportunities are shared. There are key roles for public sector partners to ensure this happens.
- 4.8 The West Float is being retained and strengthened as a key component in the Port of Liverpool. Whilst the scale of change proposed is not of the scale of the Catalysts neighbourhoods, its role as a decanting opportunity and as a stimulus for creating new maritime employment and business clusters in the Northside and Southside Partnership neighbourhoods is significant.
- 4.9 Given their strategic scale and pivotal positions, the relationship of the East Float and Bidston Dock Catalysts neighbourhoods with their associated Partnership neighbourhoods are explored in further detail through Neighbourhood Frameworks. The Frameworks draw together the key spatial principles set out through the 10 Goals in Chapter 3.

Wirral Waters SRF Neighbourhoods and City Boulevard



**International and UK**

- Bidston Dock
- SkyCity
- the Point and Vittoria Pool

**City Region/Region**

- Marina View and Four Bridges
- Vittoria Studios and Vittoria Dock
- Northbank and the Float

**City Region/Inner Wirral**

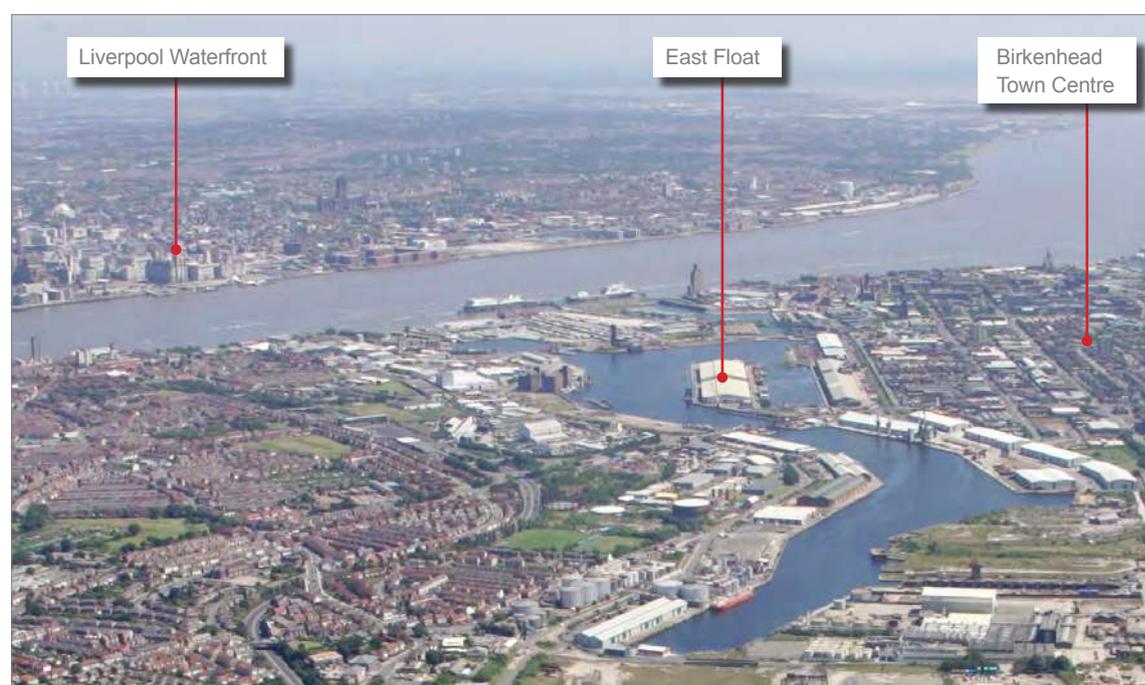
- Hamilton Park
- Conway Park
- Woodside
- Twelve Quays (N&S)
- Scotts Quay
- Northside
- West Float
- Southside
- Rivers Streets
- Valley Road
- Bidston Moss
- Western Approaches

# Neighbourhood Framework

# East Float

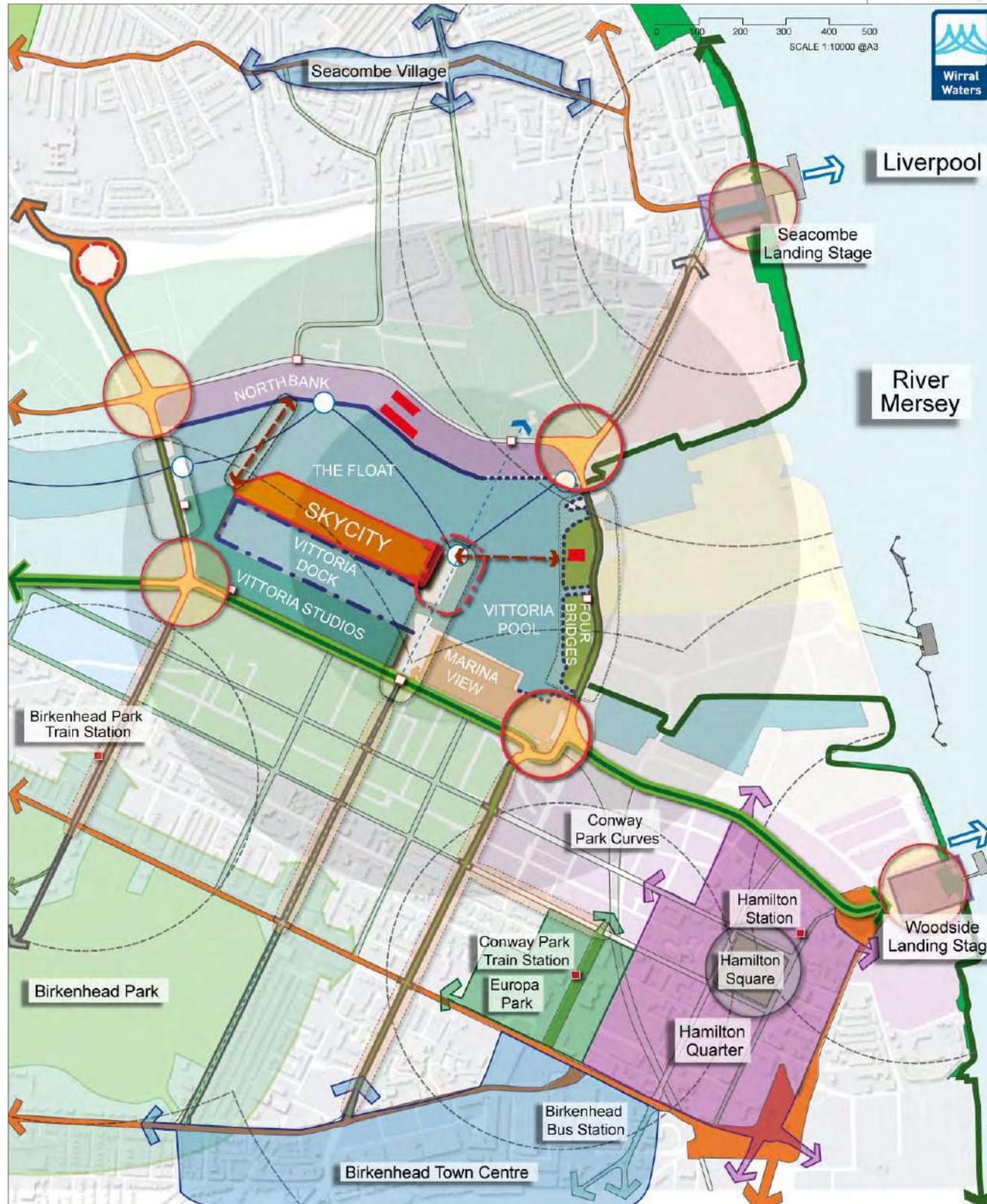
## East Float Neighbourhood Framework

- 4.10 The vision for East Float is to create an international recognised city waterfront.
- 4.11 The Neighbourhood Framework sets out overarching structuring principles to position East Float and the associated Partnership Neighbourhoods with Hamilton Square, Birkenhead Town Centre and Birkenhead Park. This provides a response to the city context and provides the starting point for considering East Float in further detail.
- 4.12 Given the scale and pivotal location of East Float, the Framework proposes a family of city quarters. Each has a role to play in delivering new places, offers and experiences, and responding and shaping new relationships with surrounding uses and activities. The Framework sets out the structuring principles for integrating uses and activities.
- 4.13 SkyCity is the centrepiece of East Float, forming a counterpoint to the Liverpool waterfront to enclose the River Mersey 'City Reaches'. It brings a new commercial and residential destination, with a new city park, boutique shopping, and a cultural destination at 'the Point'. Marina View and Four Bridges are the focus for civic and educational opportunities, centred upon the proposed marina at Vittoria Pool. They respond to the existing college campuses across Conway Park and Europa Boulevard. Vittoria Studios and Vittoria Dock are a focus for creative industries and events, prompting new live work projects to regenerate Hamilton Park. Northbank is a residential led quarter with a unique, waterside setting and aspect.



- 4.14 The 'connecting threads' are the riverfronts and dock edges, the streets and squares of the Laird Town Plan gridiron and the visual sequence of the Alfred, Egerton and Morpeth Docks connecting East Float and the River Mersey 'City Reaches'. The proposed City Boulevard creates a strategic east west pedestrian, cycleway and public transport connection and landscape and recreational corridor.
- 4.15 The existing rail, bus and ferry station are invaluable assets. The immediate proximity and choice of public transport stations, together with the vision for East Float to be a major city destination and 'walkable neighbourhood', is an unprecedented opportunity to draw activity through and bring new life and investment to Hamilton Square.
- 4.16 The structuring principles are the delivery of a choice of high quality, safe, attractive pedestrian streets connecting East Float to the existing rail, bus and ferry stations. Drawing new residents, workers, students and visitors arriving at the existing rail, bus and ferry stations through Hamilton Square and the Partnership neighbourhoods will reanimate the streets, attract interest and investment and increase the sense of safety and security.

# East Float Neighbourhood Framework



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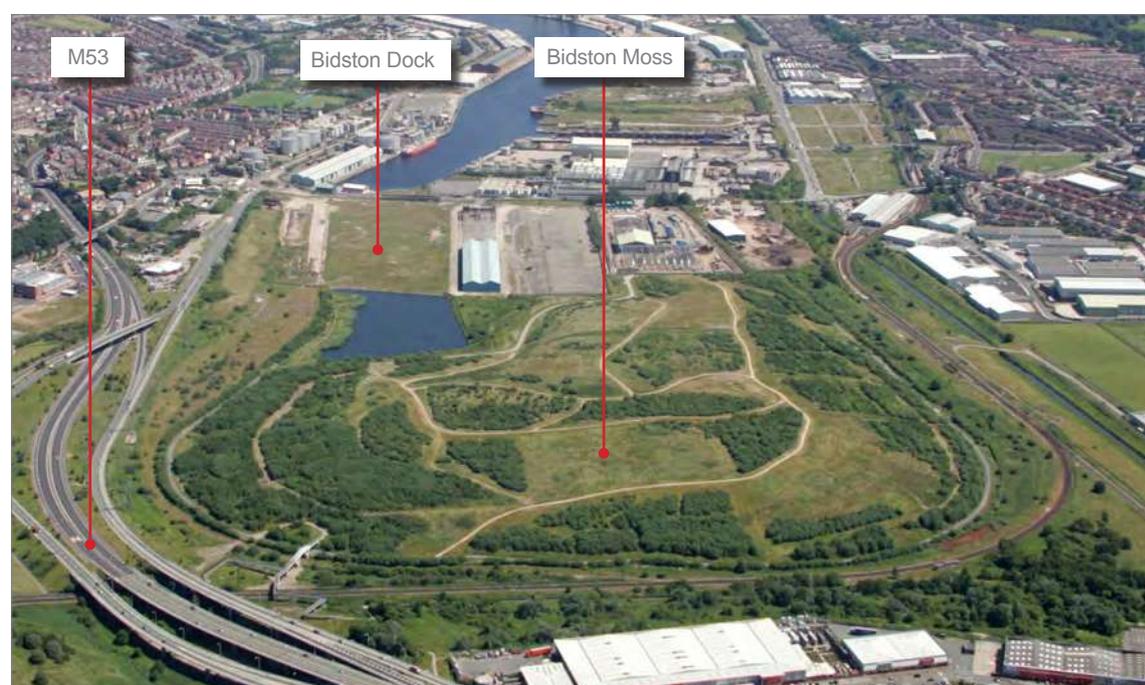
- EXISTING TOWN NEIGHBOURHOODS**
  - Hamilton Square
  - Europa Park
  - Birkenhead Park
  - Existing Hubs
- EXISTING URBAN STRUCTURE**
  - River Mersey
  - Strategic Landscape Corridor
  - City Park
  - Historic Buildings
  - Underlying Urban Structure
  - HMRI Regeneration Area
- PROPOSED: EAST FLOAT QUARTERS**
  - Sky City
  - The Point
  - Vittoria Studios
  - Marina View
  - Four Bridges
  - Northbank
  - Strategic Tall Building Cluster
- PLACEMAKING PARTNERSHIP NEIGHBOURHOODS**
  - Southside
  - Twelve Quays (Northside)
  - Woodside
  - Twelve Quays (Southside)
  - Conway Park
  - Northside
  - Scott's Quay
  - Hamilton Park
- MAKING THE CONNECTION**
  - Strategic North-South Boulevard
  - Key Neighbourhood North-South Boulevards
  - Local Boulevards
  - Strategic Bus Routes
  - City Boulevard
  - Mersey Riverfront Promenade
  - Landing Stages
  - Existing Ped Sheds (400/800m)
  - Gateway
  - Strategic Visual Corridor
  - Neighbourhood Tall Building Clusters & Public Realm Arrival Points
  - Strategic Public Transport/Public Realm Corridors
  - Bus Stops
  - Train Station
- WATERSIDE EDGES**
  - Northbank Waterside
  - Vittoria Docks Waterside
  - Marina View & Four Bridges
  - Potential Footbridge/Causeway
  - Proposed Ped Sheds (400/800m)
  - Water Taxi
  - Docks as Focal Point for Public Access

# Neighbourhood Framework

# Bidston Dock

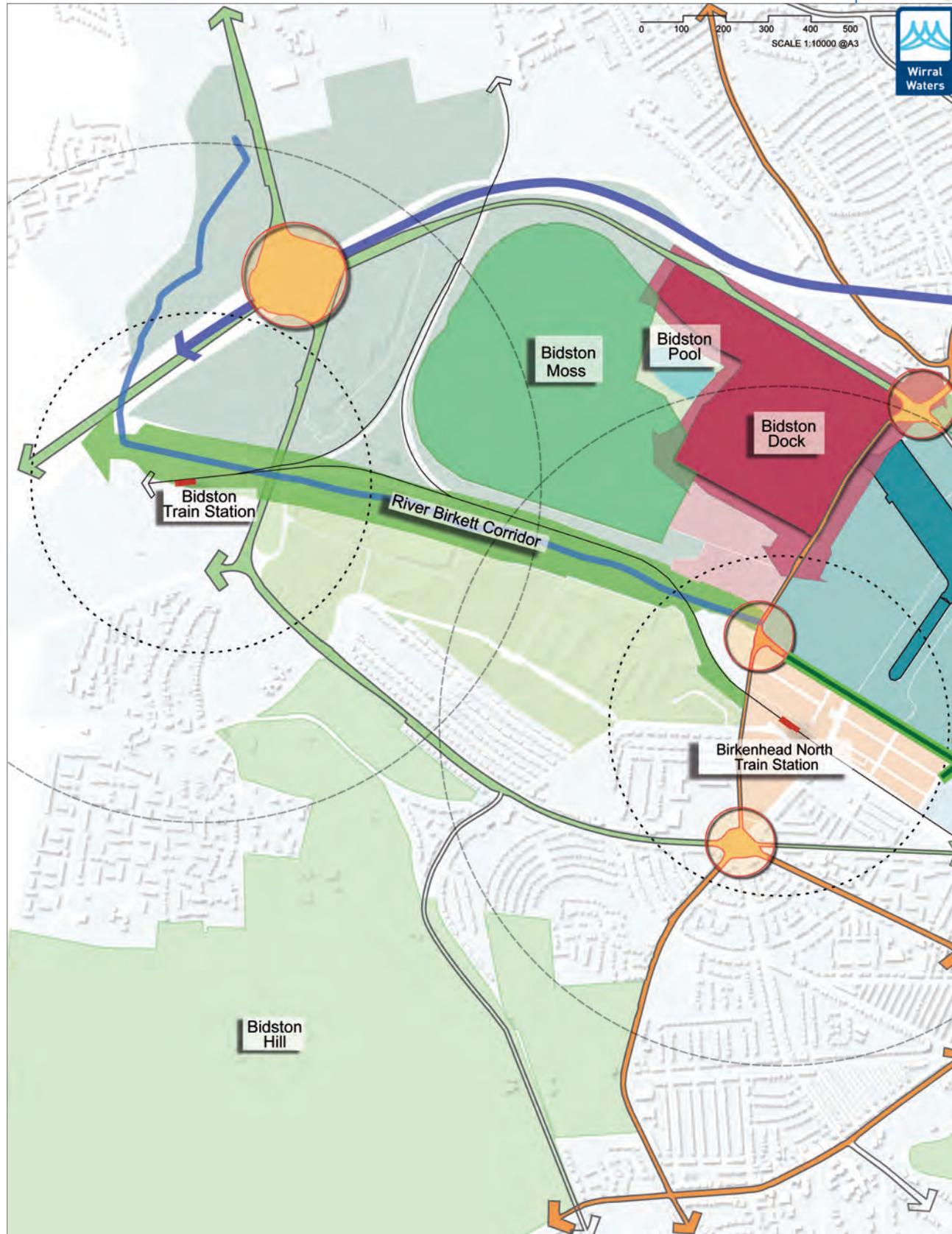
## Bidston Dock Neighbourhood Framework

- 4.17 The vision is to create an international major leisure and retail destination at Bidston Dock.
- 4.18 The Neighbourhood Framework sets out overarching structuring principles to position Bidston Dock and the associated Partnership neighbourhoods with the wider residential neighbourhoods. This provides a response to the landscape and city context and provides the starting point for considering Bidston Dock in detail.
- 4.19 Bidston Dock is proposed as a major new leisure and retail destination, playing a strategic role in attracting new visitors into the heart of the Wirral peninsula. The setting is a real asset, bringing the opportunity to create a new attraction that has links to Bidston Moss Community Woodland. New active leisure uses within Bidston Dock will support the recreational and leisure activities that are already in place across Bidston Moss by improving managed access and attracting a wider catchment of visitors.
- 4.20 The northern and western aspects of Bidston Dock, together with the Bidston Moss Community Woodland, provide the opportunity to create a dramatic approach and sense of arrival from the road, rail and cycleway connections from the west.
- 4.21 The southern aspects of Bidston Dock provide the opportunity to reshape the identity and environmental quality of Poulton Road, creating a safe, attractive pedestrian, cycleway and public transport connection to the City Boulevard, Rivers Streets



- 4.22 The Valley Road Partnership Neighbourhood is an opportunity to connect residential communities to the south of the River Birket to the new jobs and community hubs in Bidston Dock, and underused recreational assets across Bidston Moss. New pedestrian and cycleway connections will also bring the opportunity to link the isolated Bidston Moss rail station, increasing activity and the sense of safety and security.
- 4.23 In the same way as the East Float acts as a catalyst reconnecting communities to the waters edge, Bidston Dock is well placed to reconnect existing and new communities to the wider Wirral peninsula, via the River Birket landscape corridor.
- 4.24 The close proximity to the M53 junction enables immediate access without drawing traffic into the existing and proposed neighbourhoods across Inner Wirral.

# Bidston Dock Neighbourhood Framework



## PLACEMAKING NEIGHBOURHOODS

- Western Approaches
- Bidston Dock & Poulton Bridge
- Valley Road
- River Streets
- West Float
- HMRI Regeneration Area

## CREATING THE URBAN STRUCTURE

- Underlying Urban Structure
- Strategic North-South Boulevard
- Key Neighbourhood North-South Boulevards
- Other Boulevards
- Strategic Landscape Corridor
- Greenspace
- Strategic Landmark
- Strategic Public Realm Arrival Point

## MAKING THE CONNECTION

- City Boulevard
- Key Neighbourhood North-South Boulevard
- Other Boulevards
- Strategic Bus Routes
- M53 Motorway
- Existing Railway Station
- Proposed Public Transport Arrival Point
- Existing Ped Sheds (400/800m)
- Proposed Water Taxi
- Strategic Footpaths

# Creating a place of many places

## Creating a place of many places

- 4.25 The scale of Wirral Waters and the 30+ year delivery timescale requires a tailored and appropriate approach to placemaking. The approach to setting out clear roles, uses and identities for each place needs to balance 'detailing the place' with an ability to respond to changing lifestyles, technologies and markets over the extended delivery timescale.
- 4.26 The Neighbourhood Frameworks set out the spatial principles to integrate the Catalyst and Partnership neighbourhoods with the existing neighbourhoods, public transport stations, and landscape and cityscapes of Inner Wirral. They also provide introductions to the proposed roles and identities of the Wirral Waters neighbourhoods, quarters and City Structure.
- 4.27 This initial introduction to the ability of Wirral Waters to create new places is explored here in further detail. The aim is to illustrate how the Wirral Waters proposals will add to, rather than compete with and duplicate, existing neighbourhoods and destinations by creating for new places for living, working, meeting, playing, visiting and learning. This is fundamental to attract new employers, residents and visitors and retain existing people who may otherwise leave Inner Wirral to live, work and learn in other parts of the region and UK.
- 4.28 Following this consideration of new opportunities for living, working, meeting, playing, visiting and learning across Wirral Waters, the individual contributions of each neighbourhood and quarter is considered through 'pen portraits'.

## new places for...



living



working



meeting



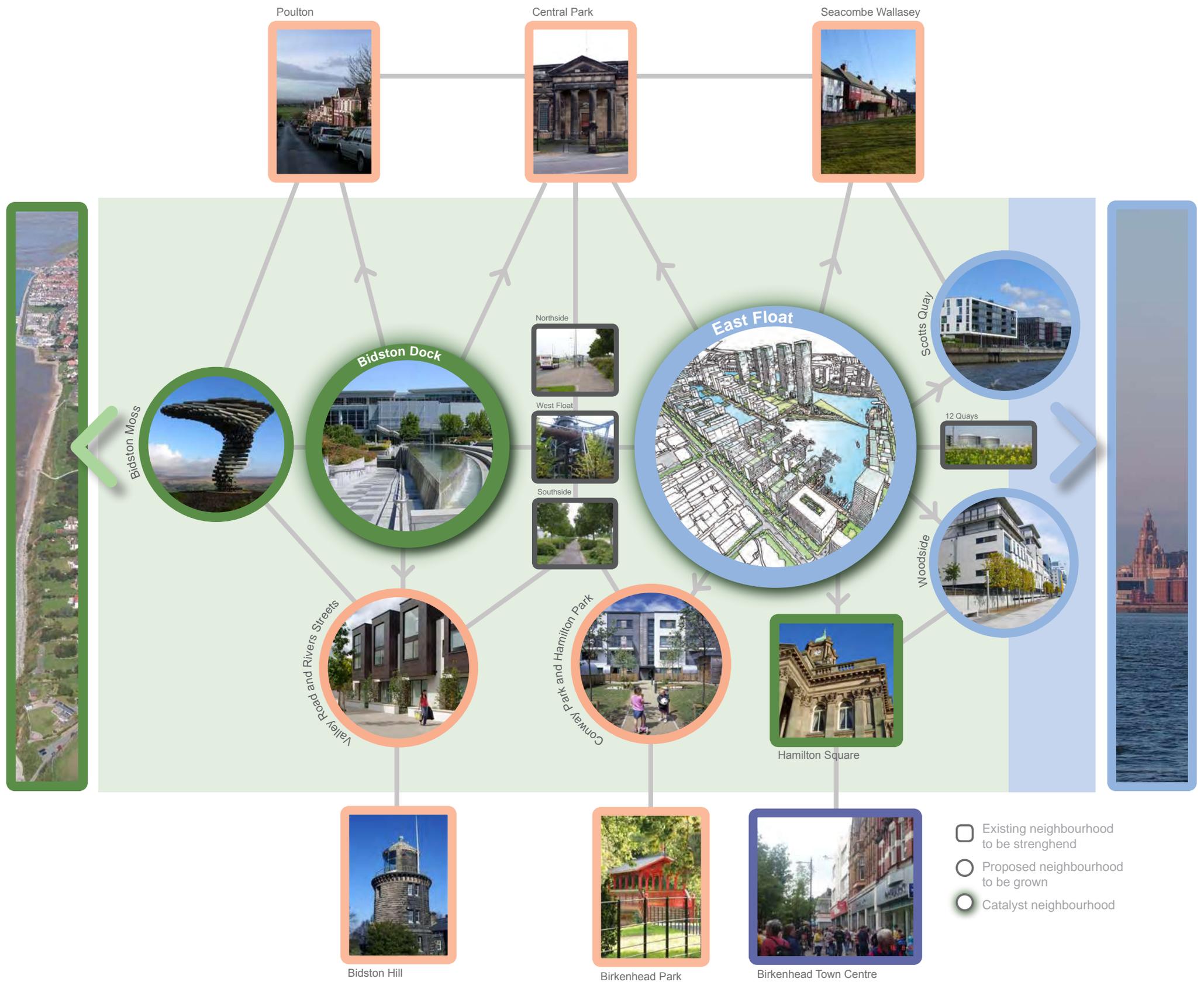
playing



visiting



learning



# new places for living

- 4.29 There is a distinct and telling contrast between the affluent, sought after residential villages and neighbourhoods of west Wirral and the declining housing markets of north east Wirral. The structural housing market failure is evident in the poor quality of the existing housing stock, and the acute limitations in the choice of housing types.
- 4.30 The scale of East Float enables the creation of innovative housing solutions as the setting for a diversity of new residential communities and lifestyles, city living right in the heart of the City Region. The opportunity is to create mixed communities by encouraging younger people, families and older residents to move or return to Inner Wirral. New residents will have immediate access to all the cultural and leisure activities and events, their workplace, and public transport, together with access to the coastlines, promenades and landscape of the Wirral Peninsula and Liverpool city and waterfront.
- 4.31 With safe access to attractive well managed community hubs, parks, gardens, clear evidence of a long term investment and management strategy, and an understanding that the new residential population will be significant, East Float is well placed to attract new residents, provide for existing local residents to access a wider choice of new homes, and encourage those who have left Wirral to return and live and work in the same neighbourhood.
- 4.32 East Float will deliver new, innovative approaches to higher density city living. The scale of investment, and working partnership arrangements with Wirral MBC and delivery agencies, will trigger the regeneration of the immediate Partnership Neighbourhoods. These locations, particularly those positioned between East Float and Birkenhead Park and Town Centre, and between Bidston Dock and Birkenhead North are the most deprived neighbourhoods in the City Region. Wirral Waters will support the HMRI proposals to create lower density, family living



# new places for working

4.36 There is a distinct contrast between the national and regional profile of Inner Wirral in relation to the inner parts of other City Regions across the UK. The location at the heart of the Liverpool City Region, and immediate adjacency to the Liverpool waterfront and city centre defines Wirral Waters in some ways as a natural extension to the regional centre. It is also well positioned to provide a more sustainable model for new commercial development in the City Region. This is consistent with the Regional Spatial Strategy and the identification of Birkenhead Docks as a Strategic Regional Site by the Northwest Regional Developments Agency. It is also a key component of the 'Super Port' and Ocean/Atlantic Gateway concept to position the North West as a global player.

4.37 SkyCity is the centre piece of East Float and proposed international commercial hub. The dramatic setting and lush landscapes will create a world class, internationally recognisable place. The scale and location of East Float, together with Peel Holdings delivery expertise, sets Wirral Waters out as an unprecedented opportunity to create a new business destination to capture major inward investment. The ability for potential occupiers to shape their prospective environment and deliver world class lifestyles for their employees and their families is unique on this scale, not only within the City Region but across other City Regions too.

4.38 This new commercial destination is supported by more local business hubs across East Float, together with Hamilton Square and Birkenhead Town Centre, and a commitment to ensuring that East Float develops in way that does not threaten Liverpool City Centre.

4.39 High quality boutique shopping, leisure, food and drink are essential components to create the business destination. These attractions will be set within SkyCity, and at a sequence of leisure destinations around the waters edge. They, together with the proposed leisure



and retail destination at Bidston Moss, will provide employment opportunities in the hospitality and service industries which represent a significant opportunity to tackle worklessness.

4.40 In contrast to SkyCity and local business hubs, the enclosing city quarters offer an alternative setting for incubation and start up business, creative industries and home working, particularly Vittoria Studios.

4.41 The creation of new residential neighbourhoods from the start allows the infrastructure and flexibility for homeworking and live-workers to be included in an integral way.

4.42 Beyond East Float and Bidston Dock, the Partnership Neighbourhoods are the focus for consolidated light industry and workshops, with improved environmental quality and performance, safety and security and management. The focus for marine and maritime industries to support West Float is the Northside and Southside neighbourhoods.

4.43 The vision is to create new places and lifestyles for working to attract:

- Commercial Destination
- Business Hub (local)
- Hospitality and services
- Homeworking
- Light industry and workshops
- Creative studios

# new places for meeting

- 4.44 Bringing existing and new communities together to share in the prosperity, improved quality of life, and new opportunities is fundamental to the vision for Wirral Waters. A shared network of community hubs, each with clearly defined roles and ownership, is essential to delivering this vision. The approach is to understand the nature of existing community hubs and networks, and ensure that new proposals strengthen and complement those that are already active and valued.
- 4.45 Birkenhead Town Centre and Europa Boulevard are the existing focus for civic and educational facilities and services, together with shops and leisure services, along with Liverpool City Centre. East Float presents the opportunity for new community facilities and services that are under represented in Inner Wirral, or require larger developments to bring together services that are currently dispersed, into one place. It also provides the opportunity for on-site community, leisure and retail facilities to support a growing resident and working population
- 4.46 Existing public transport stations and services, supported by the proposed City Structure public realm and improved transport connections, are well placed to connect East Float and Birkenhead Town Centre, Hamilton Square and Europa Boulevard together.
- 4.47 The new communities will need a step change in community services and networks. An Increased population of over 20,000 new residents and a similar number of new workers, together with visitors and students, will need access to new services.
- 4.48 The opportunity is to consider the delivery of these services in partnership with Wirral MBC and other partners by creating 'city civic hubs' to serve Wirral Waters and the wider City Region, together with more intimate 'local community hubs'.

- 4.49 Given the close proximity to established educational and civic hubs across Conway Park, Marina View and Four Bridges are well placed to act the 'city civic hub' for Inner Wirral and the region.
- 4.50 SkyCity will offer a community and cultural focus for Inner Wirral and the wider City Region. The Point will bring a new cultural destination to the region, and has an important role to play in introducing culture and arts to local communities. SkyCity Park will create a new city park as the central focus for events, a more contemporary parkland to complement the more intimate, passive and sensitive quality of Birkenhead Park and Hamilton Square.

- 4.51 Bidston Moss is an established community hub for recreation and linked to schools and education. The creation of a new leisure and retail destination at Bidston is an opportunity to deliver a new 'city civic hub' for active sports and recreation, and educational visits including environment, energy and waste.
- 4.52 These 'city civic hubs' are supported by a network of smaller local hubs at the quarter level providing local shops, crèches, play gardens and services for residents and workers.
- 4.53 The vision is to create new places to meet including:
- City civic hub
  - Local community hubs



City Civic Hub



Local Community Hub



# new places for playing

4.54 Set between the outstanding west Wirral landscape and recreational resources, and the Liverpool city waterfront, Wirral Waters is well placed to play a pivotal and complementary role. The 'connecting threads' are the expanded 'City Structure' of streets, squares, parks, river promenades and docksides.

4.55 This wealth of recreational assets, together with the lush landscape dock margins, provides the most unique and distinctive lifestyle features of Wirral Waters. The ability to live and work close to the waters edges, with 'space to breathe', with immediate access to riverside promenades, coastlines and beaches, and the cultural and leisure attractions of Liverpool, East Float and Bidston Dock is remarkable.

4.56 The scale of the East Float supports three new waterspaces. They each offer new ways to engage with the waters edge. Vittoria Dock is a more enclosed and intimate place for events and docksides bars and restaurants. Vittoria Dock is a more animated destination, with boardwalks and arcades boardwalks around a new marina in Vittoria Pool. The more open, organic waterway of the 'Float' connects Wirral Waters to the River Mersey promenades.

4.57 Together with SkyCity Park and City Boulevard, the waterspaces connect East Float to the wider neighbourhoods and offer new places for active sports and informal recreation for the City Region.

4.58 Bidston Dock provides an opportunity to bring an indoor, sports and leisure complex to complement the open aspects and experience of Bidston Moss. The vision is to create a regional/national scale destination, with retail and supporting uses bringing a new dimension to the Mersey Waterfront Regional Park.



4.59 The vision is to create new places for playing including:

- Marina
- Adrenaline and destination sports
- Cycling
- Watersports
- Running and walking

# new places for visiting

- 4.60 Wirral Waters is an alternative destination for the North West City Region, located in the centre of the city conurbation and easily accessible by public transport and strategic footpaths and cycleways. This is a significant opportunity to relieve the recreational demands placed on those more popular visitor 'honey-pots' along the City Regions more sensitive coastlines and landscapes.
- 4.61 The creation of a cluster of new destinations 'on the doorstep' of those who travel widely across the region by car brings major changes in travel patterns and retains visitor spend within the region. The public transport connections provide more sustainable ways for visitors to move within the region. Wirral Waters is well placed to add new experiences to the Mersey Waterfront Regional Park and Atlantic/Ocean Gateway, by strengthening the depth and diversity of attractions to complement and support the Wirral Peninsula, Liverpool City Centre and waterfront, Sefton coastlines and Chester city brands.
- 4.62 The most distinctive asset is the waters edge. The dock edge of the East Float, and the ability to regulate the water levels and quality of the contained waterspaces, brings new opportunities to reach out, touch, swim, sail and partake in watersports in a safe, attractive and stunning city environment. These experiences are precluded in most other UK city dock complexes and riverfronts due to the inability to manage water levels, flows and quality.
- 4.63 The scale of East Float is stunning and demands an appropriate cityscape. The tall building cluster of SkyCity is centred upon SkyCity Park and the Point – the location for a new cultural city hub of national importance, This is the centrepiece of the wider sequence of walkways, events, bars, restaurant and galleries around Vittoria Pool and Vittoria Dock.



- 4.64 The vision to create of a new international city waterfront and a major leisure and retail attraction bringing a host of new destinations to the City Region including:

- Cultural hub
- Marina and watersports
- Studios and galleries
- Waterfront events
- Bars and restaurants
- Boutique shopping
- Regional Parks
- City Parks