



WOODSIDE MASTERPLAN

*THE BEATING HEART OF THE LEFT BANK
A MIXED USE CULTURAL HUB*

MASTERPLAN REPORT

 **WIRRAL BDP.**

PREFACE

This document has been prepared on behalf of Wirral Council by BDP acting as Masterplanners, Planner and Landscape Architects supported by Aspinall Verdi as Viability Consultants, WSP as Transport Consultants, and Curtins as Flood Consultant.

This Masterplan provides the vision, framework and future development context to a focused area called Woodside Masterplan within a wider Waterfront Development Action Plan.

The Masterplan is supported by a design code which details the design requirements for any subsequent Outline or Detailed Planning Applications to be brought forwards.

The Council's approach to Neighbourhood Frameworks and Masterplans

Local Plan Spatial Strategy

The Council's emerging Local Plan sets out the overall spatial strategy for the Borough which is to focus on the regeneration of Birkenhead and the wider regeneration programme for the 'Left Bank' of the River Mersey, stretching from New Brighton to Bromborough. The Local Plan identifies 11 Regeneration Areas and 19 Masterplan Areas. The Council has been working on a series of documents to support these designations and to assist the delivery of the regeneration strategy for the Borough. All of the documents can be found on the Council's web pages at <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/local-planning-evidence-and-research-reports-3>

Birkenhead 2040 Framework

The Birkenhead 2040 Framework is a 20 year strategy that defines the vision and ambition for the transformational regeneration of Birkenhead. The document has been adopted by the Council as its Interim Regeneration Strategy for Birkenhead and provides a comprehensive regeneration framework for

Birkenhead as a low carbon, sustainable waterfront garden 'city'. Eight of the Regeneration Areas lie within the Birkenhead 2040 area. The three remaining are designated at Liscard, New Brighton and New Ferry. Each of the Regeneration Areas has a specific policy approach included within Part 4 of the Local Plan.

Neighbourhood Frameworks

Neighbourhood Frameworks are primarily regeneration strategy documents. They provide further information on each Regeneration Area, building upon Birkenhead 2040. Neighbourhood Frameworks will also help to inform the development of Masterplans and site specific proposals.

Masterplans

Local Plan Policy WS 6.3 - Masterplan Areas requires proposals within defined Masterplan Areas to be in general conformity with a Masterplan which has been endorsed by the Council.

The policy identifies 19 Masterplan Areas where Masterplans are required to guide site specific proposals.

Policies WS6.2, RA1, RA2, RA3, RA4, RA5, RA6, RA7, RA9, RA10, RA11, WP4.2 and WP6.3 of the Wirral Local Plan set out requirements for development within a series of Masterplan Areas to conform with Masterplans which have been endorsed by the Council. With the exception of the Masterplan for West Kirby Concourse, all Masterplan areas fall within Regeneration Areas.

Purpose of the Document

The Woodside Masterplan relates to Policy RA3 in the Council's emerging Local Plan and covers the Masterplan area MPA-RA3.1. RA3 of the emerging Local Plan states that Development proposals within the Masterplan Area shown on the Policies Map must be in conformity with a Masterplan and Design Code which has been endorsed by the Council and provide, as appropriate, for:

1. the delivery of a high quality, attractive and vibrant residential mixed use neighbourhood of appropriate scale, height and massing which reflects the opportunity of the strategic waterside location;
2. a mix of residential, cultural, hotel, leisure, and commercial uses which are complementary to the regeneration of Birkenhead town centre;
3. the provision of high quality public spaces with riverside access;
4. a shared use road network which ensures safe access for all users and provides a safe pedestrian and cyclist route between Hamilton Square and the waterfront; and
5. a range of building heights including taller landmark buildings which acknowledge and respect the Queensway Tunnel ventilation tower and key views from the Hamilton Square Conservation Area.

The document contains advice and guidance on how the area can be developed comprehensively, in a phased and coordinated way and how the necessary infrastructure can be provided on a phased basis (See policy WS 6.3 of the emerging Local Plan). It is the Council's intention to revise the document following feedback from consultation and endorse it to support the policies in the emerging Local Plan.

THE TEAM

Clients:	Wirral Council
Masterplan Architect:	BDP
Viability:	Aspinall Verdi
Highways Consultant:	WSP
Planning:	BDP
Flood Consultant:	Curtins

Revision

Comment

P10 // Updated Report Issue

Report Number: WSM-BDP-XX-XX-RP-A-000003

Prepared by

Checked by

Date

// VD // MB // 25.11.24

CONTENTS //

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.0	INTRODUCING WOODSIDE //
1.1	Introduction
1.2	Masterplan Boundary and Context
1.3	Planning Status
1.4	Consultation
1.5	Public Consultation

2.0	VISION + MASTERPLAN //
2.1	Vision
2.2	Objectives
2,3	Urban Design Principles

3.0	SPATIAL CONTEXT, OPPORTUNITIES + CONSTRAINTS //
3.1	Spatial Context
3.2	Constraints and Opportunities
3.3	Land Use Strategies
3.4	Key Challenges
3.5	Key Opportunities

4.0	Woodside MASTERPLAN //
4.1	Development Opportunities
4.2	Wider Opportunities
4.3	The Big Picture
4.4	Masterplan
4.5	Approach to Street Character + Identity
4.6	Active Frontages
4.7	Spaces + Interfaces
4.8	Landscape Masterplan
4.9	Pedestrian and Cycle Movement
4.10	Vehicle Movement
4.11	Public Realm Design Principles
4.12	Landscape Character
4.13	Active Ground Floors
4.14	Wayfinding
4.15	Sustainability

5.0	LAND USE, DESIGN PRINCIPLES + DESIGN CODE //
5.1	Land Uses – Ground Floor
5.2	Land Uses – Upper Floor
5.3	Scale and Massing
5.4	Opportunity for a Tall Building
5.5	Skyline
5.6	A Kinetic Waterfront
5.7	Opportunity for Tourism
5.8	Culture Led Regeneration
5.9	Celebrating Heritage
5.10	Public Open Space
5.11	Sub Character Areas
5.12	Future Context

6.0	DEVELOPMENT SITE AREAS + SITE-SPECIFIC GUIDELINES //
6.1	The Landing Stage
6.2	Woodside North
6.3	Woodside South
6.4	Woodside Central
6.5	Canning Street
6.6	Policy Parameters

7.0	INFRASTRUCTURE //
7.1	Car Parking
7.2	Servicing & Subterranean Bins
7.3	Potential Heat Network
7.4	Public Transport

8.0	PHASING //
8.1	Extent of Demolition
8.2	Phase 1
8.3	Meanwhile Use
8.4	Phase 2
8.5	Phase 3
8.6	Phase 4
8.7	Phase 5
8.8	Phase 6

9.0	KEY VIEW ASSESSMENT //
9.1	Key View Assessment
9.2	Masterplan Key Views

10.0	BACKGROUND //
10.1	Historic Development
10.2	Environmental Conditions
10.3	Flood Risk
10.4	Site Levels
10.5	Below Ground Services
10.6	Heritage and Conservation
10.7	Key Views
10.8	Movement
10.9	Land Ownership
10.10	Constraints Overlay
10.11	Strategy for Scale
10.12	Regional and Local Planning Policy Context
10.13	Planning delivery strategy

11.0	PARAMETER PLANS //
-------------	---------------------------

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY // “Woodside IS THE BEATING HEART OF WIRRAL’S LEFT BANK”

Woodside represents **one of the best development sites on the Wirral, if not Merseyside**. This is Brooklyn to the New York skyline - the great place to live with an amazing view, but so much more.

It is a **major waterfront site with one of the world’s most recognisable skylines as a backdrop** providing an outstanding setting, but also **incredible visibility** to capitalise upon.

It has access to some of **the best sustainable transport systems** with underground train and bus services in the North West, including the world famous **‘Ferry Across the Mersey’** on the doorstep.

It holds a **key starting piece of the historic evolution of Merseyside** and offers huge story telling potential on a nationally significant stage.

Woodside is a place that can capture and **enhance Liverpool’s tourist economy and drive new footfall to Birkenhead and the Wirral**.

The potential of this place is as **a cultural mixed use hub. A thriving waterfront community and a place at the heart of the Left Bank** - a key piece of the future of both Birkenhead, and Wirral.

Woodside represents an exciting opportunity to help shape the future of the waterfront and create **a sustainable new community at the heart of the city region**.

WOODSIDE

A VIBRANT EXPERIENCE ON THE

WATERFRONT

A MIXED USE CULTURAL HUB



1

INTRODUCING WOODSIDE //



1.1 INTRODUCTION //

Woodside is arguably one of the most important locations on the Wirral, if not Liverpool City Region. The Woodside Masterplan offers a new vision of a vibrant cultural mixed use sustainable hub on the waterfront.

The context of Liverpool is one that today looms large both on the skyline, and in local people's identity as both neighbours and partners in the maritime evolution of the left and right bank of the Mersey.

The historic evolution of this place is an amazing story of religious foundation, economic enterprise, trade and transport, reclaiming of land, rapid industrialisation and exponential growth, to current sustained decline and disconnection to the place and industries it was once so fundamentally intertwined with.

Birkenhead was in essence founded in circa 1150 with the establishment of Birkenhead Priory by Baron Hamon de Mascy, and with it a ferry service across the Mersey, both of which remain in some form today some 800 years later. Liverpool is thought to have been first founded in 1190 some 40 years later with the ferry service thought to be a key factor in the location of the growth of Birkenhead's partner over the water. The Ferry was confirmed by Edward III in 1330 by charter with the responsibility by the priory making it one of the oldest and longest running Ferry services in Europe.

Woodside is thought to have been one of the locations that the Monks may have used for their ferry service, and as such could be considered to be one of the foundation points of the town, and one of the reasons for the foundation of Liverpool. It is thought to have been named after a headland lost within the reclaimed foreshore called Birchen Head named itself after the Birch trees that grew there. Today it is a place with little evidence of this past with little greenery, a mix of low level industrial buildings, out of town offices and large expanses of hard-standing and private car parks.

Today the Birkenhead waterfront is uniquely positioned, directly overlooking Liverpool city centre with views of; the 3 Graces, Royal Albert Dock, Arena and Convention Centre and the emerging Liverpool Waters and Bramley Moore Stadium being framed across the River Mersey. This, in turn, makes Birkenhead Waterfront highly visible from the Liverpool Docks and a significant opportunity to capitalise upon as an attractor with the vent shaft, Town Hall and Hamilton Square Tower being clear landmarks.

With Liverpool's growth and busy skyline, Birkenhead could be seen as the poor relation, but the change in density and the access to great public hard wired infrastructure of the grid iron plan, underground railway, road tunnels, gentle density and public parks is a key asset for a different offer to its neighbour. New York's Brooklyn to Manhattan has been a common reference point for this place which was once a direct historic reference for people arriving to Liverpool. Today this place hold a similar potential as a liveable asset to the city region, as place to see and be seen, somewhere to call home, connected and symbiotic.

**BIRKENHEAD
FOUNDED IN 1150**
40 YEARS EARLIER THAN LIVERPOOL



**HOME OF THE WORLD
FAMOUS FERRY ACROSS**

THE MERSEY

ONE OF THE OLDEST IN EUROPE
AND TODAY LIVERPOOL'S MOST USED,
PAID-FOR VISITOR ATTRACTION



**AND BIRKENHEAD'S
PRIORY**

THE FOUNDERS OF BIRKENHEAD
AND THE OLDEST
BUILDING
IN MERSEYSIDE



**A PLACE AT THE HEART OF
MERSEYSIDE**



**WITH 420M OF PRIME RIVER FRONTAGE
WITH ONE OF THE BEST VIEWS IN THE WORLD**

LIVERPOOL 9TH LARGEST CITY IN THE U.K.

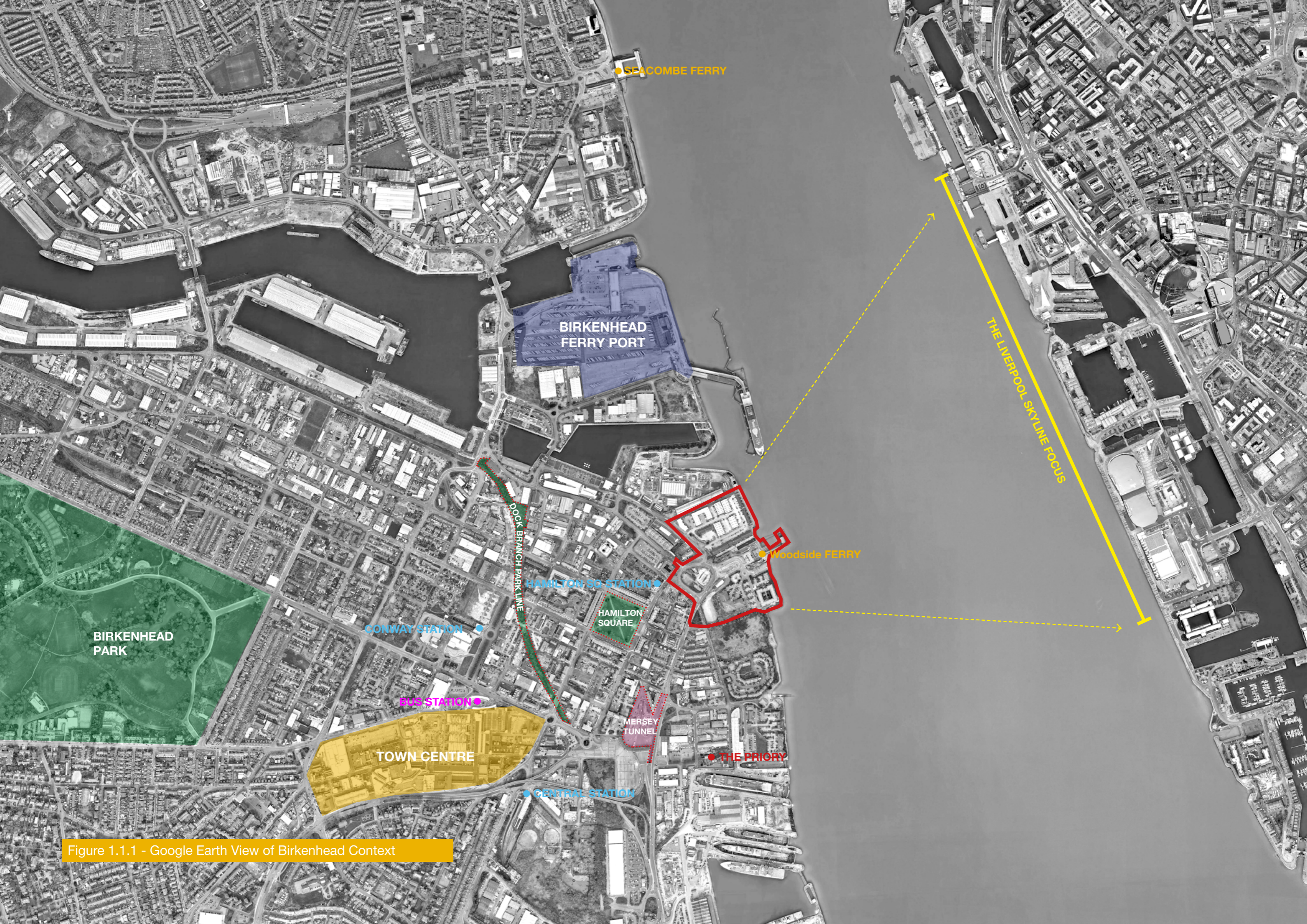


Figure 1.1.1 - Google Earth View of Birkenhead Context

Wirral's Local Plan sets out a clear strategy on urban growth in population and this is underpinned by a brownfield first approach aligned to sustainable travel, public amenities and employment. Birkenhead is at the heart of this and Woodside is a key focal point to attract growth that has been lacking in recent years as identified within the 2021 Census data.

As noted the heritage of Birkenhead and Woodside can be seen to have played a critical role in the Merseyside and City Region development, and in close context to Woodside is an amazing manifestation of the importance this place once held - Hamilton Square, the centre piece of the James Gillespie's Masterplan for Laird and the grid iron town planning designed for planned liveable growth. Hamilton Square has the 2nd highest number of Grade I Listed buildings outside of Trafalgar Square in London, but today is lost to those that do not use it on a daily basis, and holds so much potential of the sign of quality and ambition that this place can hold for the future.

Woodside represents one of the shortest points to cross the River Mersey at just over 1km wide. It was a logical place for the ferry to cross, and also became the point for both the first rail tunnel in 1886, and then the first of two road tunnels the Queensway in 1925. This provides Birkenhead with some of its most recognisable skyline features with road and rail tunnel vent shafts. Liverpool also has these features, but over time they have been absorbed into the city with buildings becoming the features rather than infrastructure and raises an interesting question on their future identity and visual importance within Birkenhead.

The river frontage presented is over 400m long and is used by the Wirral Circular walking and cycling trail. This is a key local asset but one at Woodside that is under capitalised upon. The river frontage provides unique world class views of the Liverpool waterfront and has the potential to become a prime driver for the visitor economy.

There are many forms of public transport to this place; the Ferry service has been diminished with only a river cruiser leisure stop now on offer, underground train from Hamilton Square Station is less than 3 minutes into Liverpool and just over 30 minutes to Chester, bus services connect from the Ferry and Train Station and offer a range of local and sub / regional locations.

With the amazing waterfront location and visibility from Liverpool Woodside offers huge potential to capitalise upon the City Region Visitor Economy and drive footfall to this special place building upon the existing attractions and the potential for new facilities.

Over the years various masterplans have been produced for this space, but only now is a comprehensive approach being taken to the wider town and Borough regeneration that has enabled this plan for growth building a clear vision and identity for this place in the context of Wirral and the City Region.

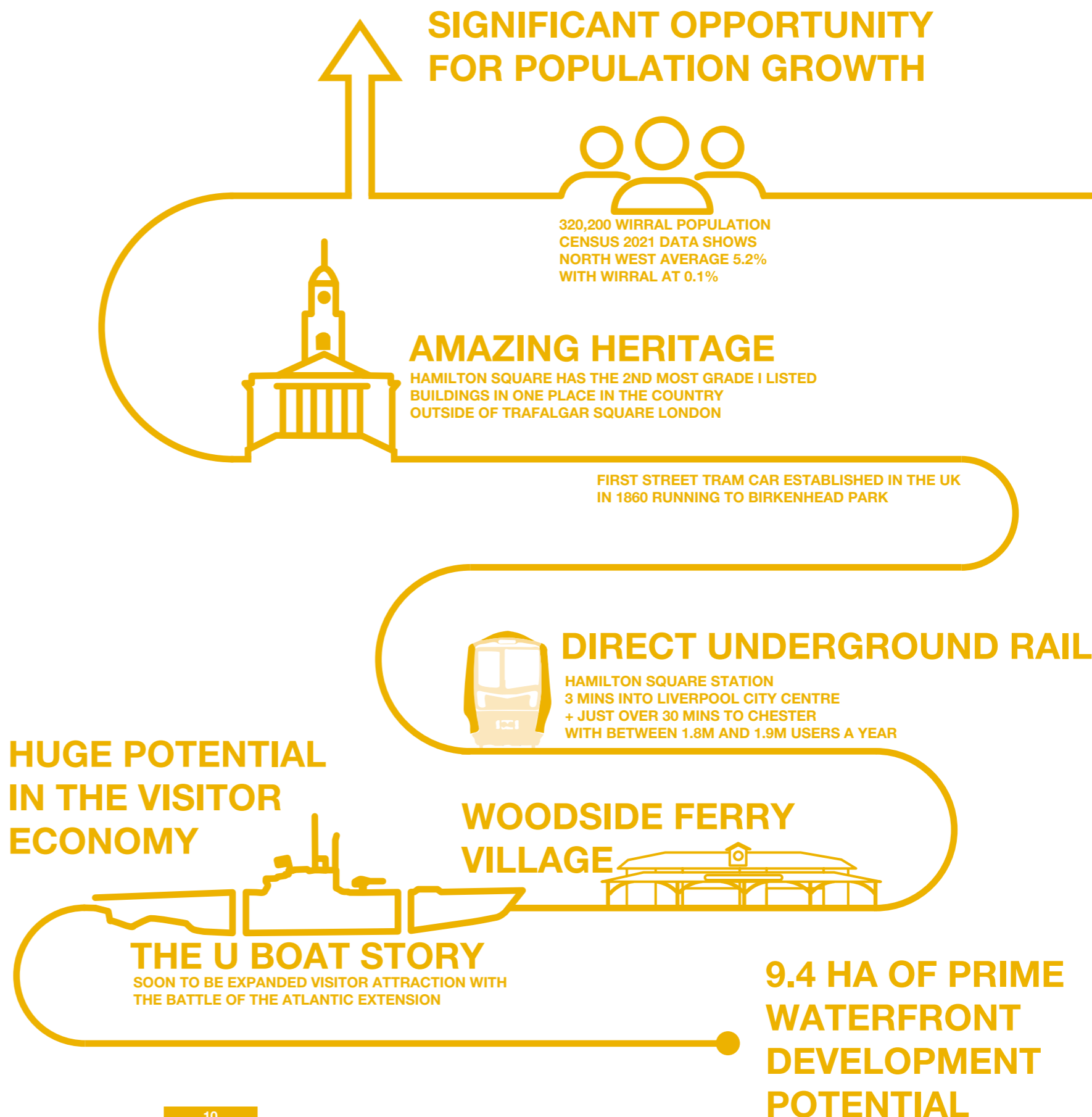




Figure 1.1.2 - Woodside Wharf inlet

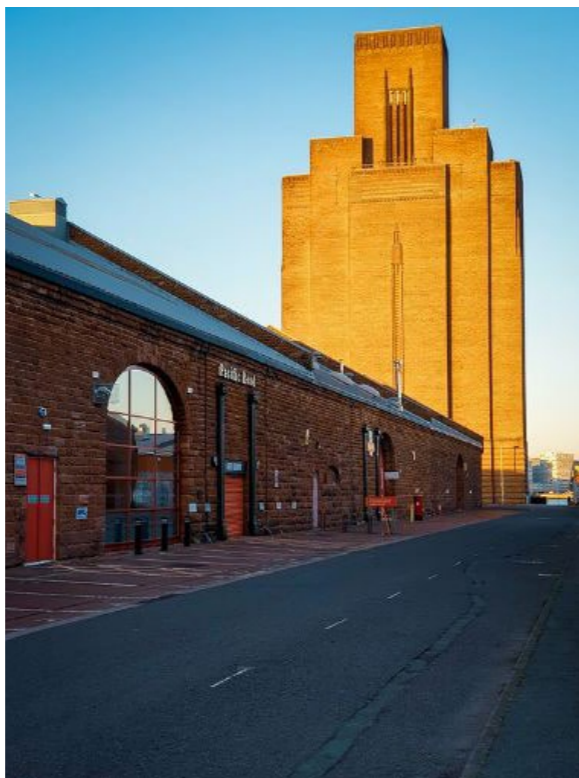


Figure 1.1.3 - Pacific Rd Warehouse and tunnel vent shaft

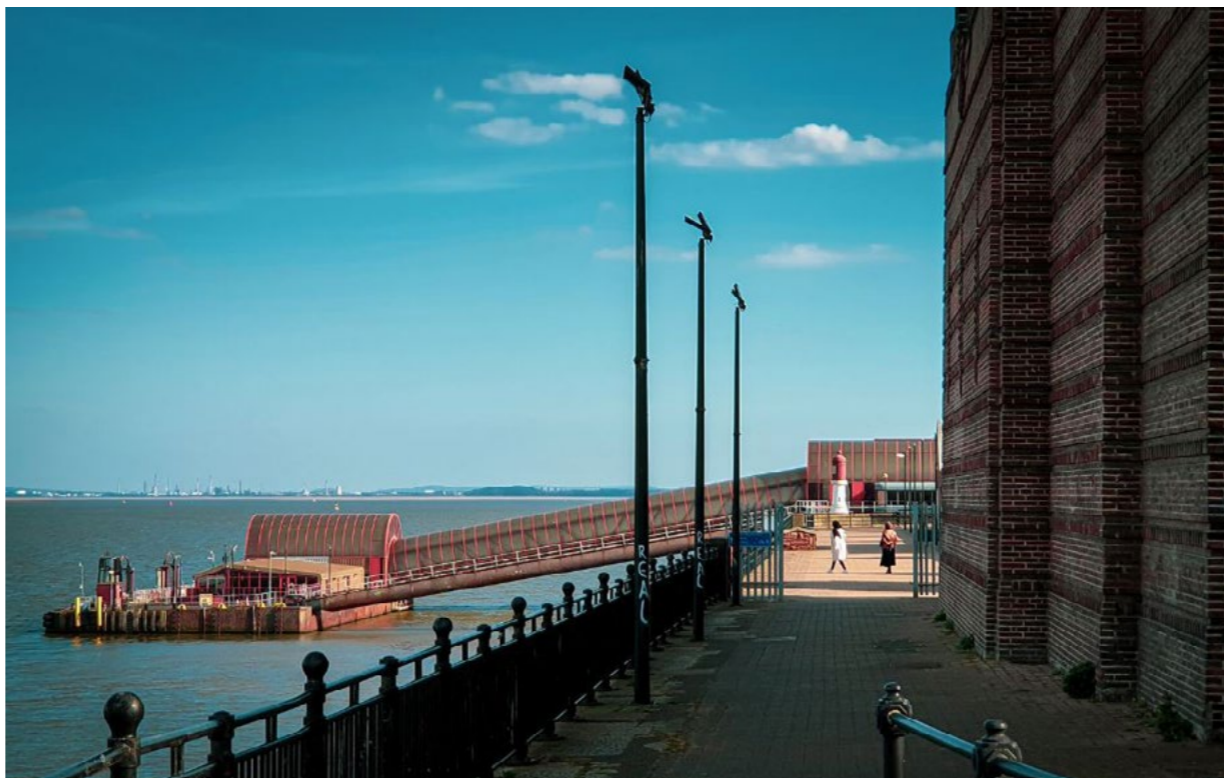


Figure 1.1.4 - Woodside Landing Stage



Figure 1.1.5 - Woodside Ferry Terminal



Figure 1.1.6 - View of Woodside from the River Mersey



Figure 1.1.7 - U Boat Story



Figure 1.1.8 - Reproduction submarine Resurgam



Figure 1.1.9 - Woodside overview



Figure 1.1.10 - Heritage Tram Line

1.2 MASTERPLAN BOUNDARY AND CONTEXT //

The Woodside Masterplan is located within the Birkenhead Waterfront Regeneration Area and is defined within Wirral's Emerging Local Plan under Policy RA3 - MPA-RA3.1. The adjacent diagram (figure 1.2) illustrates the context of the wider defined Masterplans that surround Birkenhead and the docks, as well as proposals for known development.

The focus of the Waterfront Regeneration Area is Woodside identified within the Local Plan as a 'mixed use cultural riverside quarter with superb visitor attractions'.

Key considerations for the Masterplan Boundary are:

- Hamilton Square Conservation Area
- Listed buildings and associated constraints
- Waterfront Development Action Plan context and wider proposals
- Birkenhead 2040 Framework vision for regeneration
- Waterfront Public Realm and Woodside Gyratory reconfiguration works
- Rose Brae development proposals
- Woodside Ferry Terminal / Village
- U Boat Story and Battle of the Atlantic Proposals

The Woodside Masterplan Area (MPA RA3.1) is as shown on the Submission Draft Local Plan Policies Map.

The Town Centre lies to the south of the boundary with its new Commercial and Mixed use Quarter Masterplan Area (MPA-RA4.1). Detailed proposals within this area are set out in the Birkenhead Commercial and Mixed use Quarter Masterplan Area (MPA-RA4.1). Immediately adjacent to this is the St Werburgh's Quarter and the proposed Dock Branch Park Masterplan Area which connections from the Town Centre to Wirral Waters (See Submission Draft Local Plan Policy RA4, (MPA-RA4.3)). This masterplan area will contain a new world-class linear park providing active travel links to Wirral Waters to the North.

The Hind Street Urban Garden Village masterplan area lies immediately to the south of St Werburgh's (see Submission draft Local plan Policy RA5 (MPA5.1)). This will establish a new mixed use residential neighbourhood and help facilitate connections from the Priory into the Town Centre for the first time in over 100 years.

Key

- Landscape/Infrastructure
- Masterplans
- Building Proposals

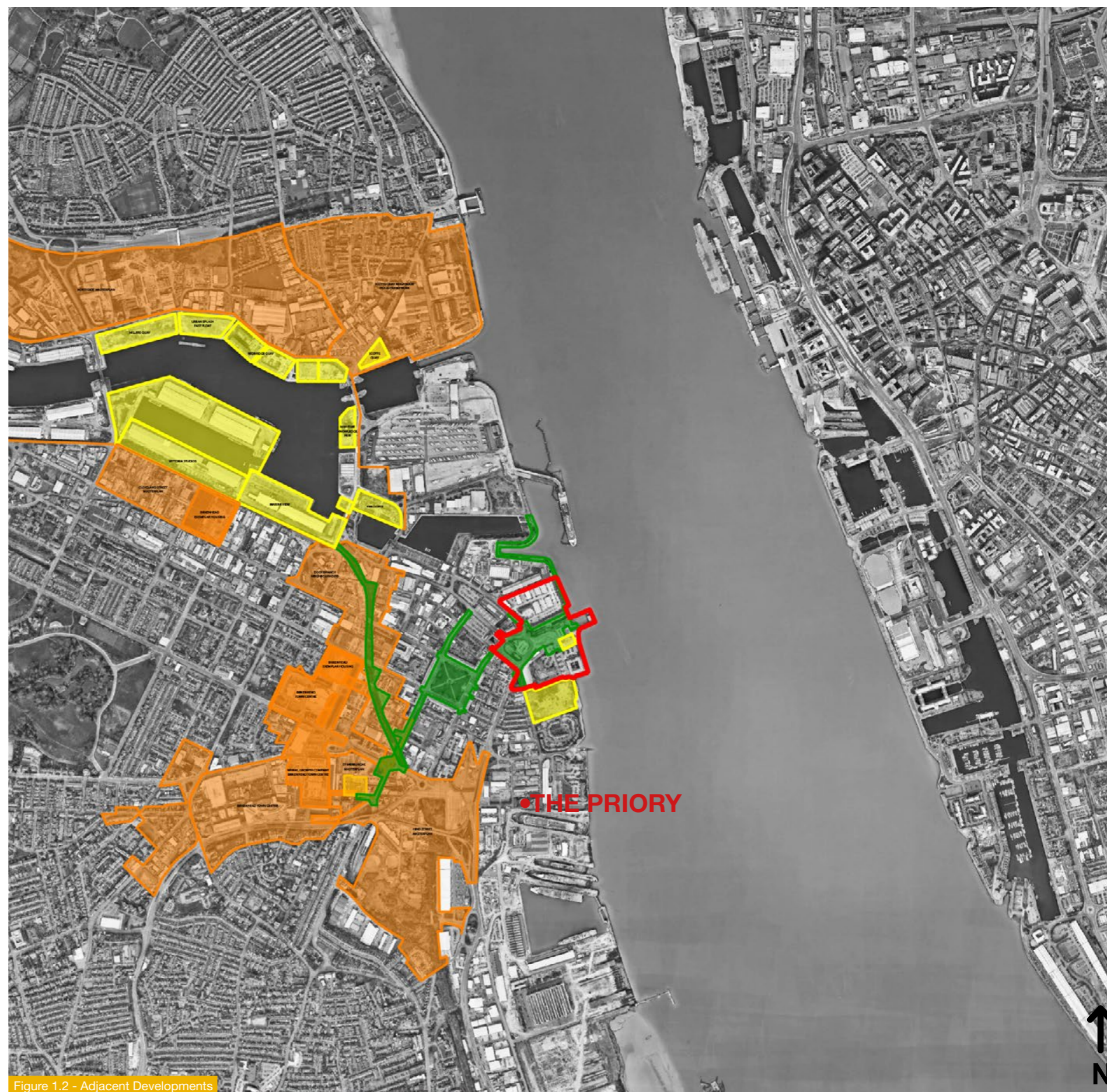


Figure 1.2 - Adjacent Developments

1.3 PLANNING STATUS //

The Masterplan has been prepared with the intention that the document will be endorsed as planning guidance following the adoption of the Wirral Local Plan. The masterplan has been prepared in accordance with Policy RA3 (Figure 1.3 adjacent) and other relevant policies of the Wirral Local Plan Submission Draft (May 2022) (see section 9.3).

Policy RA3 notes that the Birkenhead Waterfront Regeneration Area will be developed as a residential led mixed use area with associated cultural and commercial uses set in a high quality waterside public realm with strong connections to Birkenhead Town Centre, and will provide for approximately 630 new dwellings. The following sites are allocated for residential use within the regeneration area to support the delivery of the development and regeneration strategy set out in Policy WS 1

- RES-RA3.4 Rose Brae, Church Street, Woodside - 1.96 Ha, 180 units
- Other develop-able areas 450 units
- Sites to the North with Twelve Quays, North Morpeth Wharf are identified for B2, B8 / Port related use allocated for employment use

Woodside Masterplan Area (MPA-RA3.1) notes the following:

Development proposals within the Masterplan Area shown on the Policies Map must be in conformity with a Masterplan and Design Code which this document represents and provide, as appropriate, for:

1. The delivery of a high quality, attractive and vibrant residential mixed use neighbourhood of appropriate scale, height and massing which reflects the opportunity of the strategic waterside location;
2. A mix of residential, cultural, hotel, leisure, and commercial uses which are complementary to the regeneration of Birkenhead town centre;
3. The provision of high quality public spaces with riverside access;
4. A shared use road network which ensures safe access for all users and provides a safe pedestrian and cyclist route between Hamilton Square and the waterfront;
5. A range of building heights including taller landmark buildings which acknowledge and respect the Queensway Tunnel ventilation tower and key views from the Hamilton Square Conservation Area.

This document should be used as a guide to the next stage of masterplan development and assist any development proposals contained with the redline of this masterplan report. Such proposals should adhere to both the guidance and strategies contained within this report as well as the accompanying parameter plans which list the suggested range of planning use class for areas and plots as well as suggested storey heights. It is essential that any new development proposal shows conform to both the document and the parameter plans. Should there be any deviation away from this, there needs to be clear justification on why there is a departure with evidence of how this still fits within the masterplan.

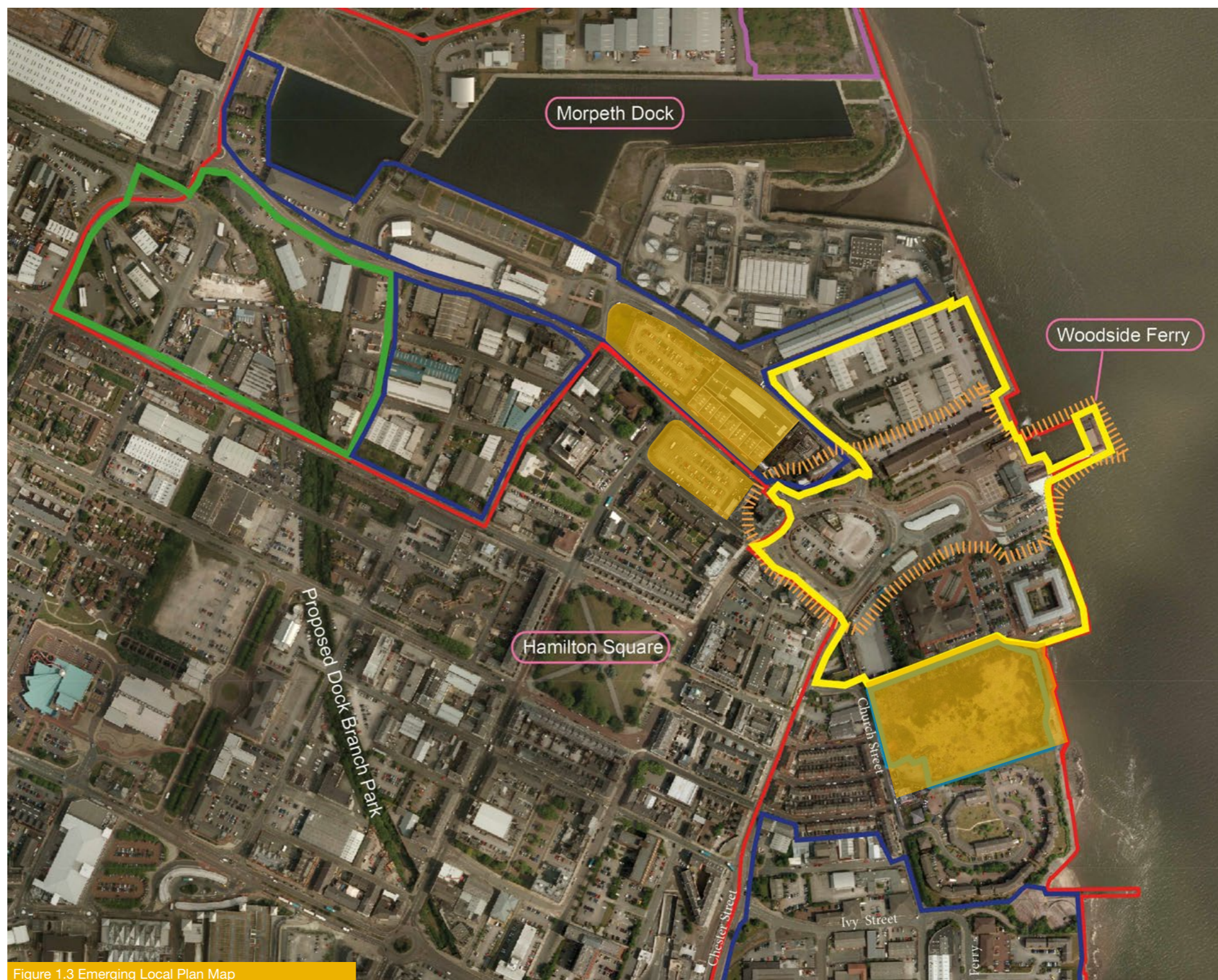
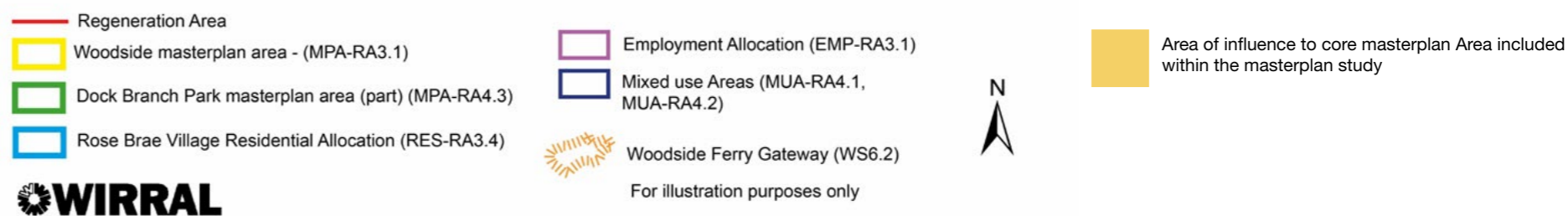


Figure 1.3 Emerging Local Plan Map

RA3- Birkenhead Waterfront



1.4 CONSULTATION //

This site has been previously consulted on and a number of plans and strategies developed over recent years / decades. Key Landowners including; Peel Land & Property, Neptune Developments and Peach - now Boom Developments were instrumental in developing an endorsed development plan in 2005 illustrated in figure 1.4.1 / 2.

Wirral Council, Peel L&P and Boom Developments as major landowners have continued to drive forward major regeneration plans for this area and in 2021 Wirral MBC set out a comprehensive brownfield first development approach with the Birkenhead 2040 Framework.

As part of this Masterplan process a detailed review of the Waterfront Development Action Plan has been undertaken to ensure previous comments received have been captured within this plan.

Key stakeholders consulted as part of this Masterplan process have been:

- Peel L&P
- Boom Developments
- Prima
- Alpha and Wirral Methodists,
- Owners of the Land Registry and CSA Building,
- Merseytravel / Ferries
- Big Heritage
- Wirral Chamber of Commerce
- Woodside Ferry Village
- Wirral Transport Museum - Heritage Tram
- Combined Authority
- United Utilities

This has also included meetings with local ward councillors to present developing proposals ahead of public consultation, and engagement with Council Highways, Planning, Conservation, Urban Design and Regeneration Officers.

Alongside the Masterplan process a separate stand-alone 'Waterfront & Surrounds' highways and landscape public realm piece of work has been commissioned covering highways and footpaths from Argyle Street junction with Grange Road in the Town Centre, through Hamilton Square through Woodside and the waterfront promenade. The extent is indicated in Figure 1.4.7, and the feedback to public consultation events focused on the need for transformation to make use of the view, and re-proportion the space given to vehicles back to public realm and people. It was also noted that the space needed animating to attract people including more restaurants and bars and an attraction.

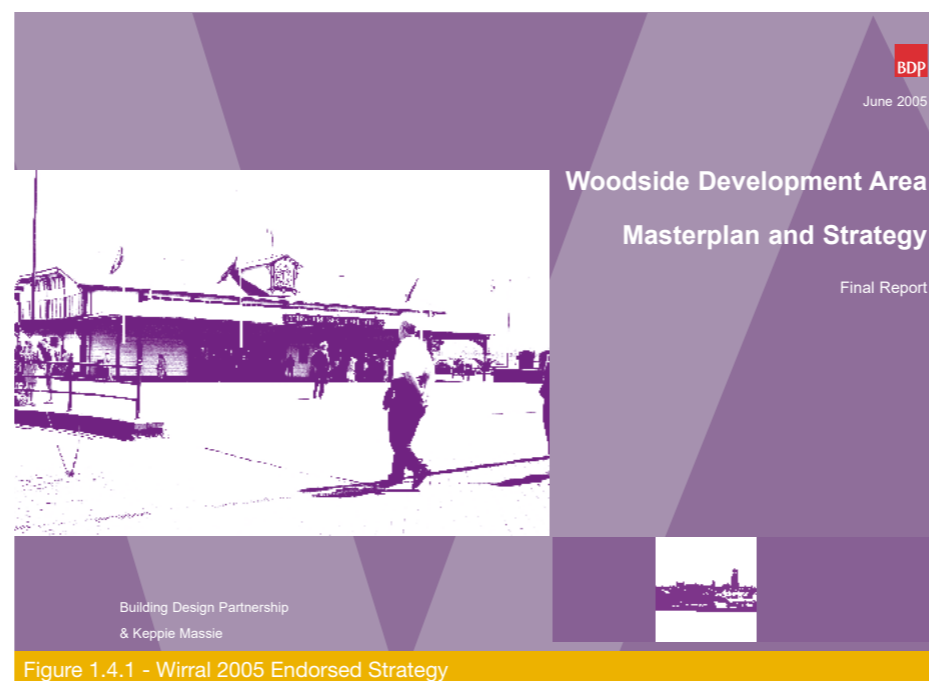


Figure 1.4.1 - Wirral 2005 Endorsed Strategy



Figure 1.4.2 - Wirral 2005 Endorsed Plan

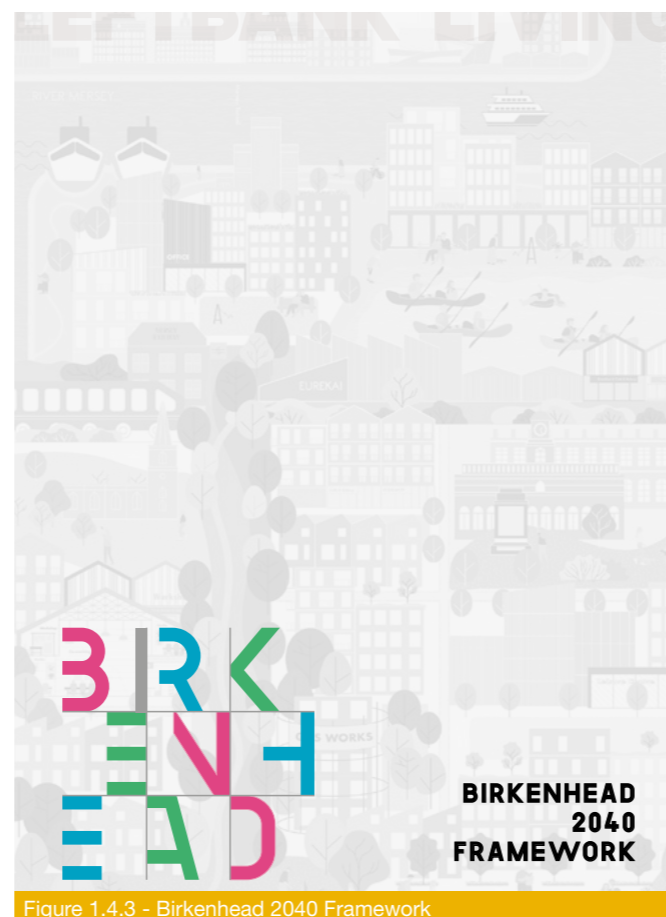


Figure 1.4.3 - Birkenhead 2040 Framework



Figure 1.4.4 - Birkenhead 2040 Framework Masterplan Vision

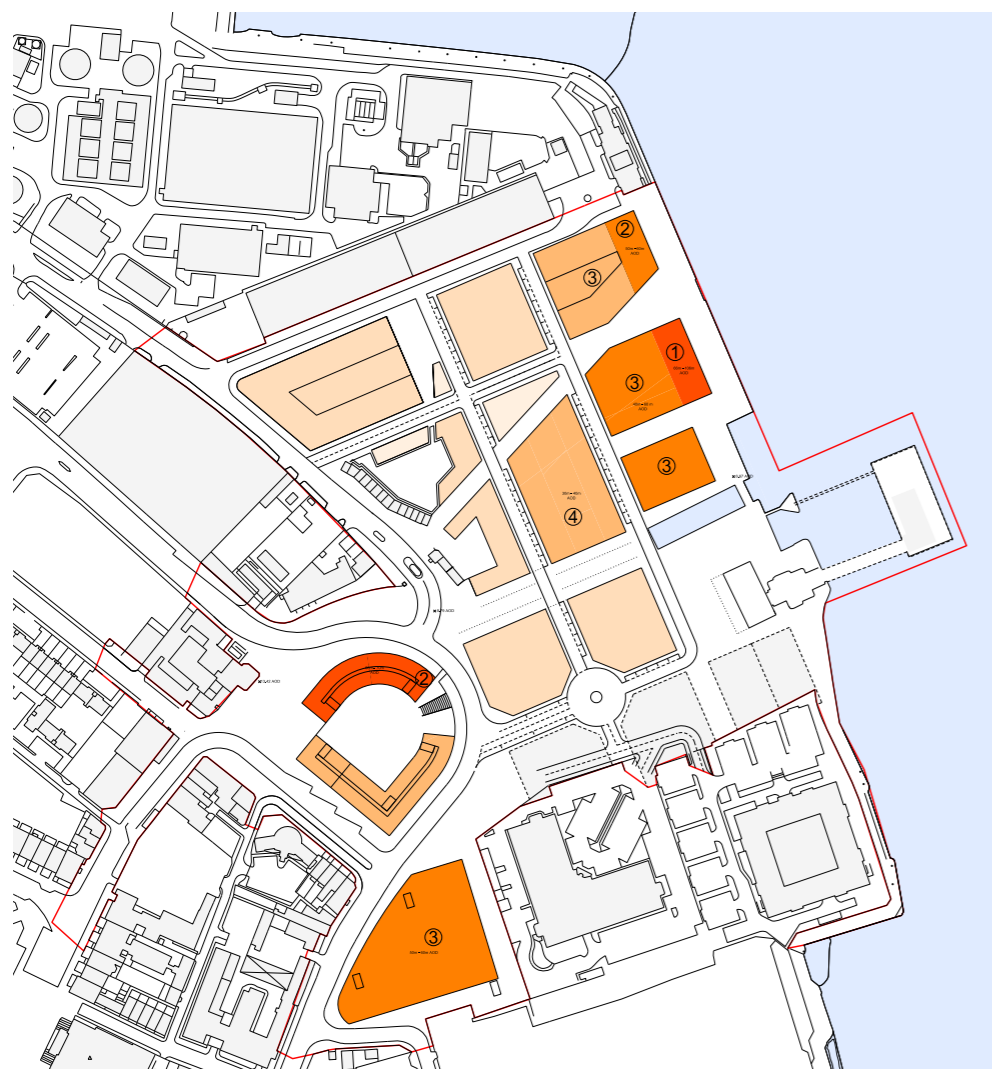


Figure 1.4.5 - 2010 Outline Planning Illustrative Masterplan - not submitted

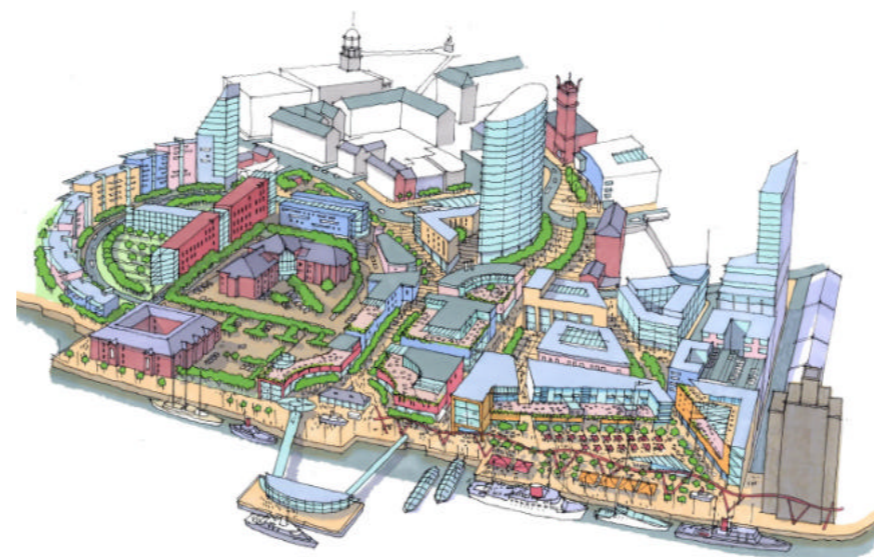


Figure 1.4.6 - Wirral 2005 Endorsed vision



Figure 1.4.9 - Waterfront DAP Vision

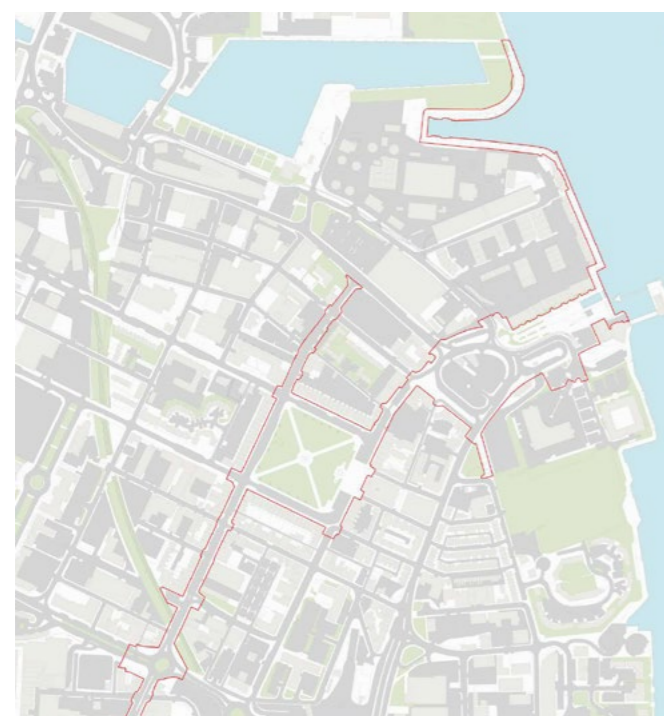


Figure 1.4.7 - Landscape and Highways Extent Plan



Figure 1.4.8 - Landscape and Highways Extent Plan to Woodside Area



Figure 1.4.10 - Waterfront DAP Vision

1.5 PUBLIC CONSULTATION //

A draft of the Woodside Masterplan Report was made available to the public in early 2024, allowing people to engage with the design as well as feed back their views on the proposed regeneration of the area. The document was made available to the public through the 'Have your say' consultation portal between 08 January and 18 March 2024. Paper copies of the survey and assistance completing the survey, were also made available. Two in-person public consultation events were held the first week of March 2024 allowing all those interested to meet members of Wirral council and the design team. This allowed for people to have an open discussion, ask questions, and start a dialogue voicing their view on the proposal.

A number of key stakeholder organisations were also contacted to directly advise them that a consultation was in progress and to give an opportunity for them to provide their feedback. Nine direct representations were received for this consultation.

Key findings of the public survey:

- The questionnaire was responded to by 172 people.
- 37.0% of respondents said that they visit Woodside for leisure / shopping purposes.
- When asked to describe Woodside in one word, 'Potential' was the most common answer, provided by 13 respondents.
- When asked what is special or distinctive about the area of Woodside, the most common answer was 'The view of Liverpool city centre' which shared 19.1% of responses.
- Two thirds (66.7%) of respondents supported the masterplan, 13.5% do not support the masterplan.
- When asked what attractions / land use / building / open space that people would like to see in Woodside, the most common themes included in 11.8% of responses, were 'Food/Drink' with respondents wishing to see more hospitality business in the area, and 'Historical significance' with respondents wishing to see the history of the area commemorated. Many of these responses mentioned the desire for the masterplan to consider tram and ferry services.
- Railway links were deemed the most important travel method in Woodside, followed by walking infrastructure. Cycling infrastructure was ranked as the least important.
- In response to 'More room for pedestrians and cyclists will improve my travel experience around Woodside,' 55.1% of respondents were in agreement with the statement, and 20.4% were in disagreement.
- In response to 'An enhanced Woodside Ferry Terminal and/or its surroundings would improve my travel experience to and from Woodside,' 80.1% of respondents were in agreement with the statement, and 4.8% were in disagreement.
- In response to 'Improved bus waiting facilities would improve my travel experience to and around Woodside.,' 57.2% of respondents were in agreement with the statement, and 11.4% were in disagreement.
- In response to 'We think there may be an opportunity for new landmark tall buildings (8 or more storeys) in Woodside. Do you think this will make a positive contribution to Woodside?,' 57% of respondents were in disagreement with the statement, and 27.9% were in agreement.
- In response to 'The new masterplan for Woodside proposes the idea of a largescale new cultural attraction located on the waterfront (in addition to the upcoming Battle of the Atlantic attraction). Do you think this is likely to attract more people to Woodside?,' 78.2% of respondents were in agreement with the statement, and 10.3% were in disagreement.
- In response to 'Do you agree that Woodside Masterplan should focus on attracting more visitors to Birkenhead and providing a new tourist draw to the area?,' 86.1% of respondents were in agreement with the statement, and 4.2% were in disagreement.
- When asked if there were any other general traffic or transport matters you would like to see improved, the most common theme included in 17.1% of responses, was 'Designated car parks' with respondents wishing to see more car parking in the area. The second largest category of response was 'Trams' with 16.2% of respondents wishing to see trams in the area.
- Respondents believe the attraction most likely to bring visitors into the area, selected by 17.6%, was 'Views to Liverpool', followed by 'Existing tourist attractions (14.6%).'.
- In response to 'The masterplan proposes the creation of new hotels near the Woodside waterfront. To what extent do you agree with the need for this?,' 62.8% were in agreement and 26.2% were in disagreement.
- Alongside a new cultural attraction, respondents believe the masterplan could also include 'Café's / bars / restaurants' with 25.0% of the response share.
- The largest perceived benefit of the Woodside masterplan was 'Contribute to effectively regenerating Birkenhead,' with 14.4% of responses, followed by 'Improve the image of the town', with 14.3% of responses.
- The greatest perceived benefit or opportunity of the masterplan is 'Leisure/tourist attractions (including hotels)' (20.1%), followed by 'improved connectivity to the town, Hamilton square, and the waterfront' (18.9%).
- When asked for concerns regarding the masterplan, the most common response was 'other' with 45.0% of responses, followed by 'Too ambitious/unrealistic' (28.4%). Of the 'other' responses, the largest category of concern was that the project 'won't be delivered', with 15.8% of other responses.
- When asked for additional comments or suggestion, the largest categories of response were Support (13.3%), Improve transport links (13.3%), Dubious it will be delivered (8.6%) and No tall buildings (8.6%)



Figure 1.5.1 - Public Consultation March 2024



Figure 1.5.2 - Public Consultation March 2024

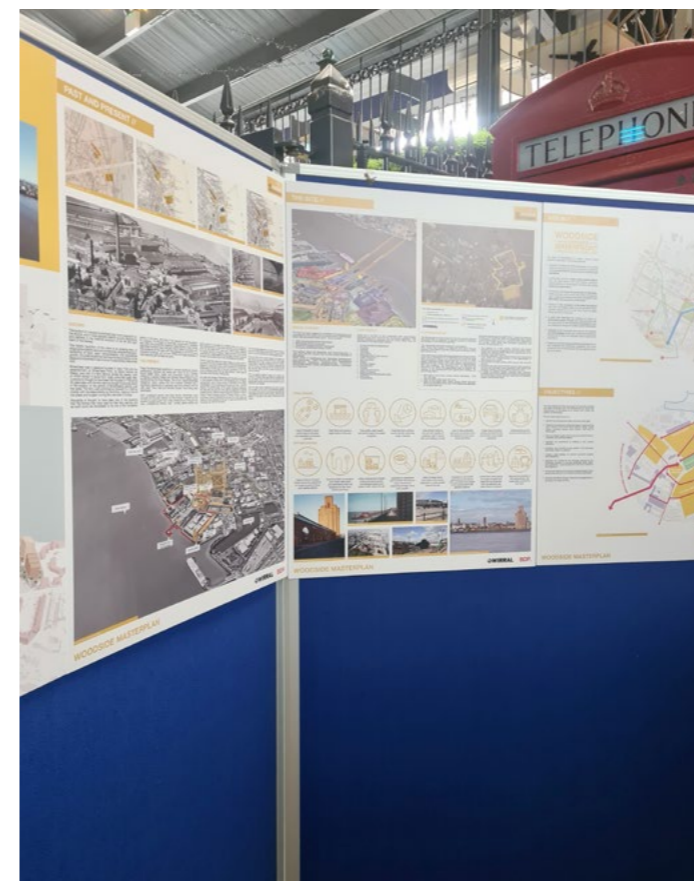


Figure 1.5.3 - Public Consultation Boards March 2024



Figure 1.5.5 - Public Consultation Boards March 2024

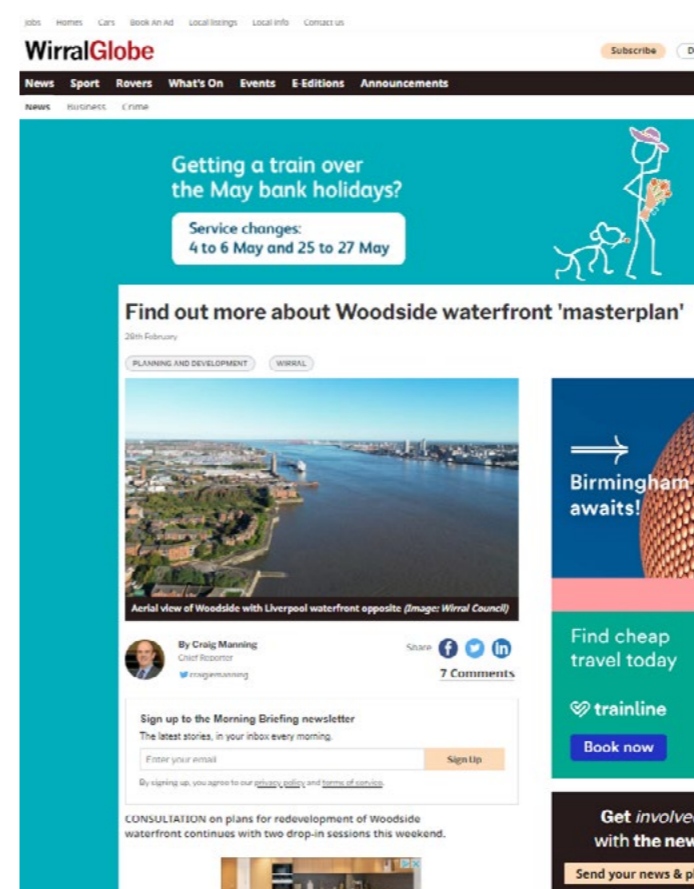


Figure 1.5.4 - Public Consultation Coverage

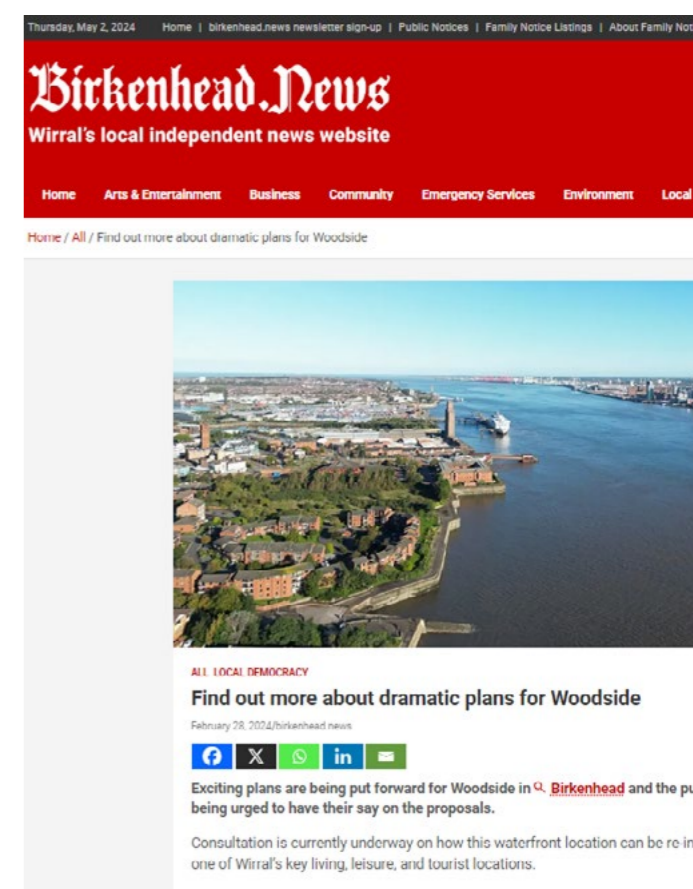


Figure 1.5.6 - Public Consultation Coverage

2

VISION & MASTERPLAN //



WOODSIDE

A VIBRANT EXPERIENCE ON THE

WATERFRONT

A MIXED USE CULTURAL HUB



2.2 OBJECTIVES //

The main objective of this document is to provide a flexible and agile framework that will facilitate the key vision and regeneration of Woodside as a vibrant new mixed use quarter of Birkenhead.

The principle objectives are to:

- Identify key development sites and future land uses
- Improve connections to adjoining areas in particular the Town Centre, Hind Street Urban Garden Village, Argyle Street, Hamilton Square, Dock Branch Park and St Werburgh's
- Set out a design code to inform land-use, street hierarchy, character, and building heights
- Highlight the importance of creating a new cultural attraction
- Establish view corridors to key assets in the local area and wider views to Liverpool
- Create a clear strategy for vehicle movement, access and carparking
- Establish the context for the changes required to the Woodside Gyratory to provide enhanced public realm and pedestrian / cycle access from the Town Centre to the Waterfront
- Utilise the existing heritage assets on site and provide clarity on how these should be addressed

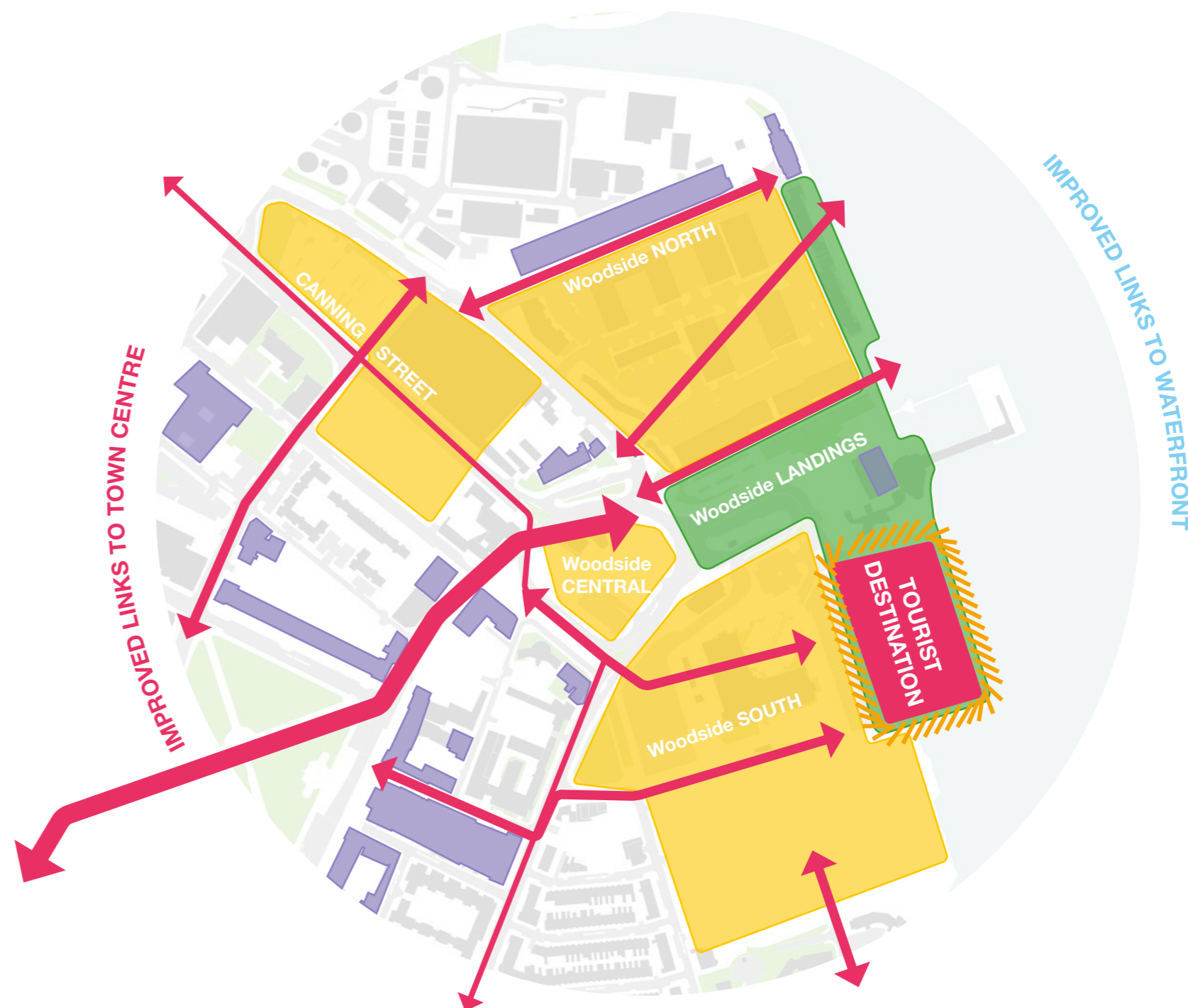
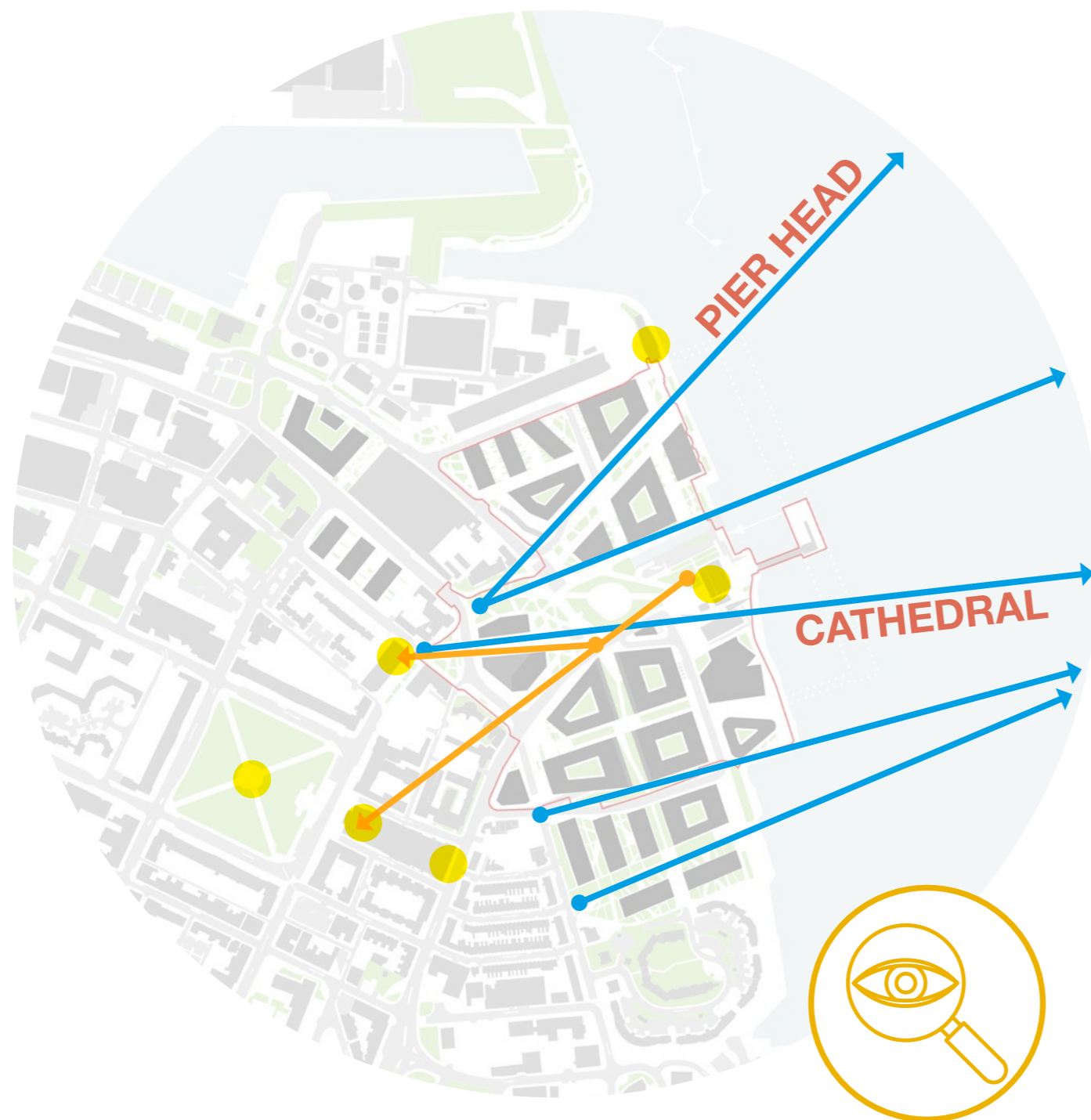


Figure 2.2 - Objectives Diagram

2.3 URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES //



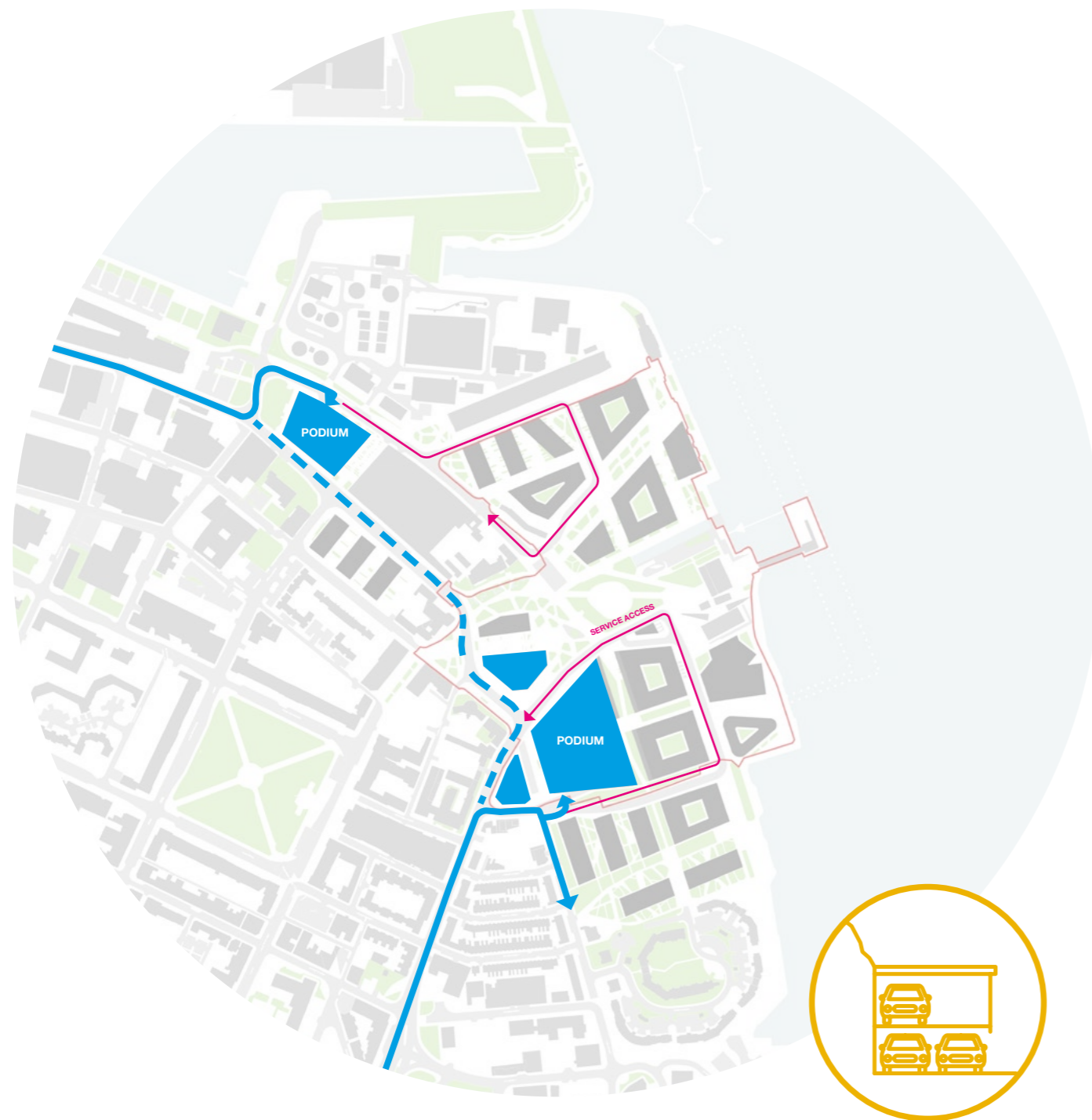
CELEBRATING KEY LANDMARKS AND VIEWS

View corridors are to be protected to capitalise on the unique Woodside landscape both connecting to Liverpool, but also key landmarks such as Hamilton Sq Station and Birkenhead Town Hall. Opportunity to create new view corridors further enhancing the context, including opportunity to create panoramic views from higher levels



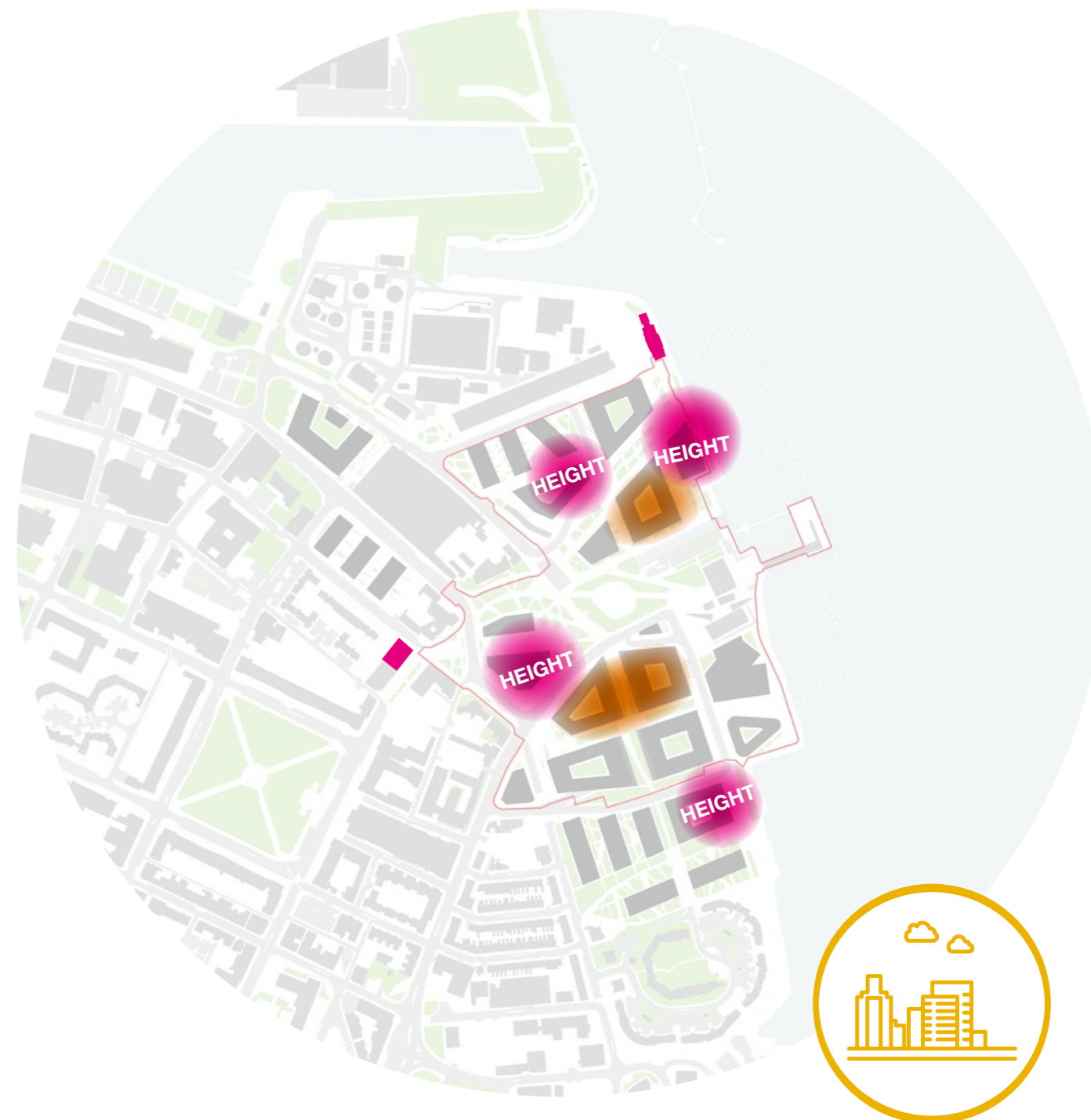
CONNECTING WATERFRONT TO THE TOWN CENTRE

Creating enhanced permeability with new streets and squares connecting into the Birkenhead Grid and creating unique spaces as this turns to connect to the river alignment and surrounding existing streets and communities



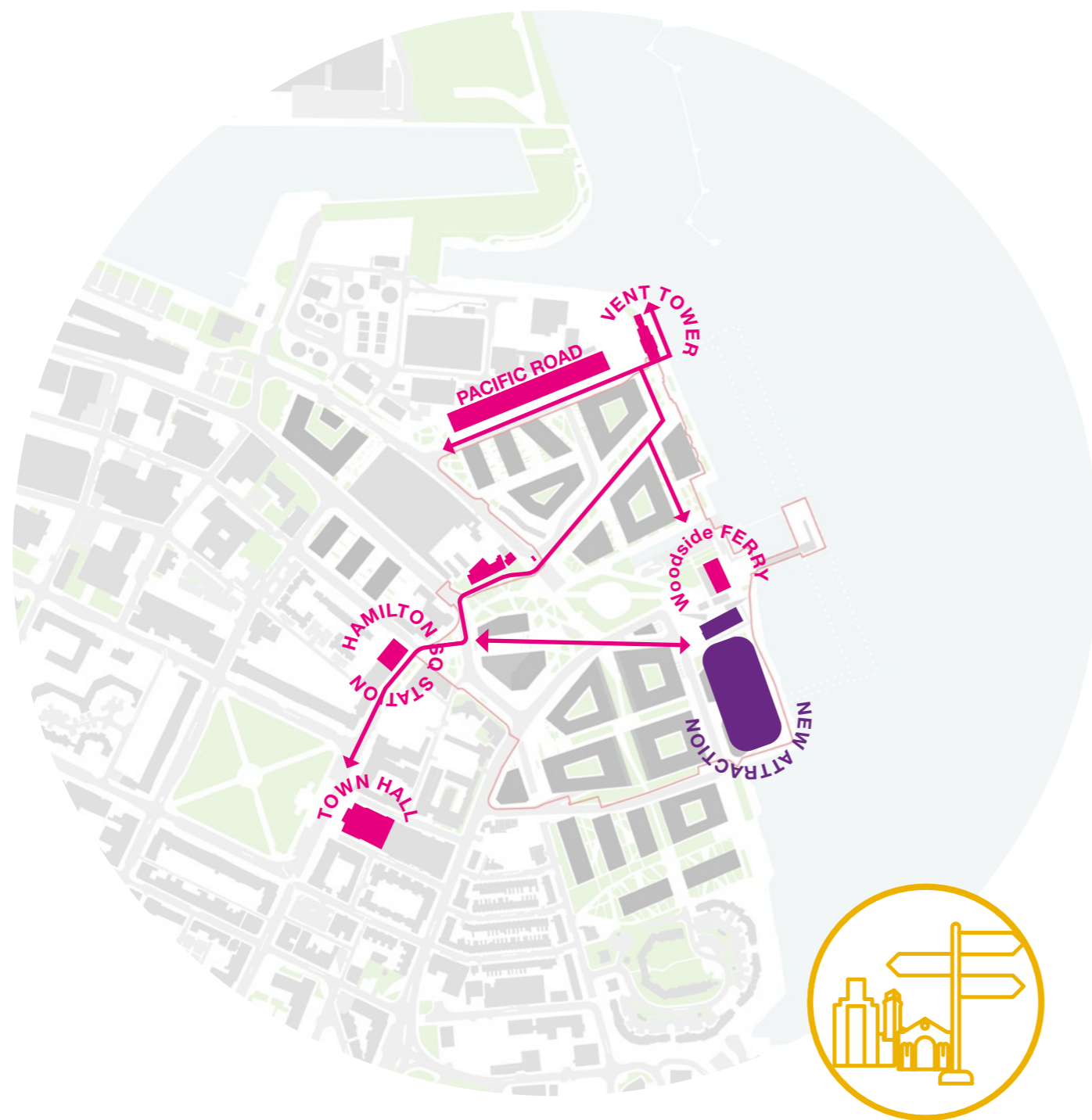
CONSOLIDATED PARKING AND SERVICING

Parking is proposed to be removed from the heart of Woodside with multi-storey carparks being introduced at the edges of the gyratory, utilising existing retaining walls and level changes to hide them from view and maximise public realm



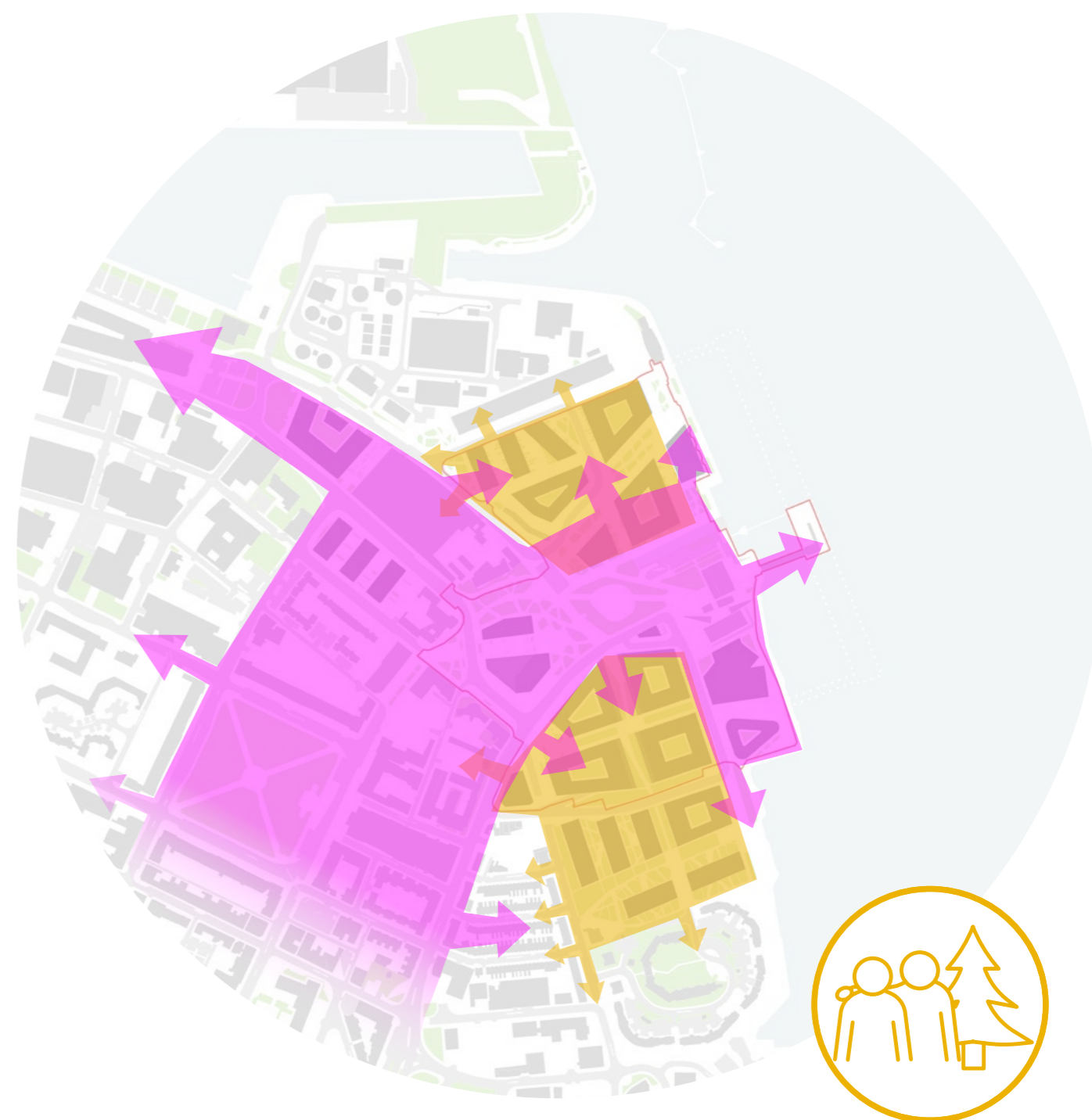
USING HEIGHT TO CREATE A NEW WATERFRONT IDENTITY

New scale and massing will help shape and frame views, creating clear orientation and critical mass to the waterfront location and a new skyline in keeping with Birkenhead's identity and character. Opportunity to create new visitor attraction within existing and proposed architecture, capitalising on the views of Birkenhead and Liverpool created at higher levels



CELEBRATING HERITAGE AND LANDMARKS

Heritage and new landmarks should be used to enhance public orientation, and celebrate the evolution and history of the site.



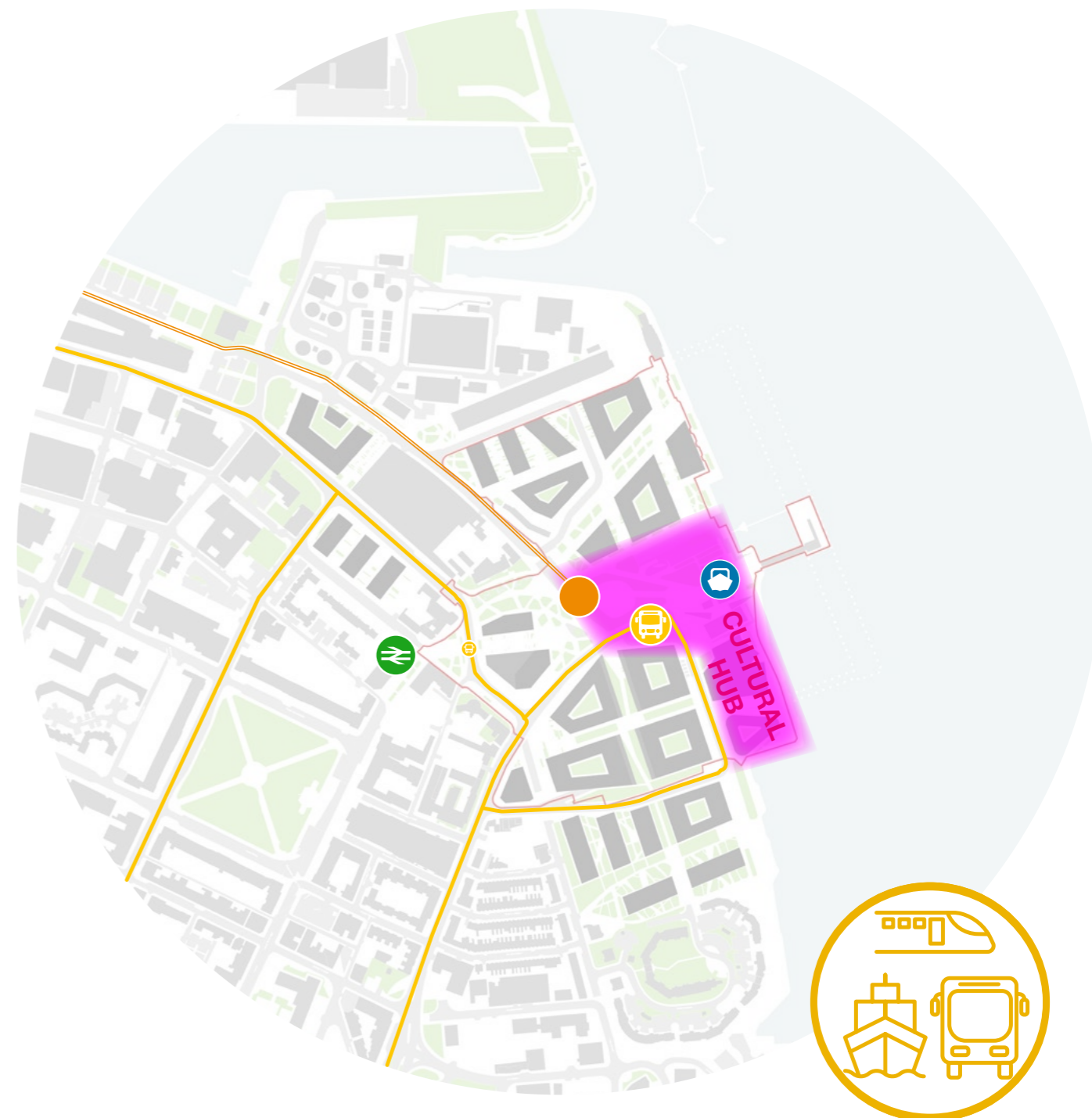
CONNECTING TO EXISTING USES AND COMMUNITIES

The Masterplan is about connecting the waterfront to existing communities and uses and through this drive unique and special new spaces and places



AN ENHANCED PROMENADE

Driving new use of the promenade is key through the creation of spaces that support commercial activity, new restaurants, cafés and terraces to enjoy the view. The identity of this should be drawn into the site to enhance the feeling of space and connection to the waterfront.



A SUSTAINABLE CULTURAL HUB

This is a transport hub, with train, bus, ferry and event heritage tram coming together in this space. Utilising this to capitalise upon the economic potential for cultural transformation is key to the plans and vision

3

SPATIAL CONTEXT, OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS //



3.1 SPATIAL CONTEXT //

The site has been subject to a number of masterplans and consultations with public and key landowners / stakeholders which this document builds upon. These include:

- 2005 Adopted Woodside Masterplan
- Birkenhead 2040 Framework
- Waterfront Neighbourhood Framework
- Emerging Birkenhead Design Guide

The earliest vision for Woodside post industrialisation in 1947 was with the Outline Plan for the County Borough of Birkenhead. This set out a vision for Woodside to become a western end of a European cross channel railway system with hotels and even a 'Crystal Palace' a new civic hub building on the waterfront. This vision was not realised, however it underlines the continued recognition of the spatial importance of this site.

Woodside Development Area Masterplan – 2005 //

The Woodside Development Area Masterplan was endorsed by Wirral Borough Council Committee in August 2005. This plan envisaged the first phase of works to include the creation of a 'development spine' running from the Woodside Ferry Terminal up to the corner of Hamilton Square at its junction with Hamilton Square Station with the core principle of creating a distinctive environment around Woodside, which can draw on the waterfront and the unique views it offers.

This vision still holds true today and is enshrined within policies that have followed and is one that the Woodside Masterplan is adopting. Current ongoing landscape and highway works are looking at realising this early vision principle.

Birkenhead 2040 'Repopulating Birkenhead'

Woodside is one of a number of masterplans being prepared to support the Local Plan. Each will create new residential and mixed use neighbourhoods to repopulate Birkenhead and deliver the housing growth set out in the local plan. Alongside repopulating the town and driving brownfield first principles, one of the key objectives of the Birkenhead 2040 Framework is again to connect the centre of the town to the Waterfront and to existing and new mixed use neighbourhoods created in part through the restructuring of the Town Centre. It captures the key opportunities for the waterfront as:

- Residential-led mixed use area
- Leisure and green
- Establish a waterfront character
- Connect town centre and river

Waterfront Neighbourhood Framework //

The Waterfront Neighbourhood Framework (May 2021) sets out a vision for the area that sees the creation of a "unique place to live, spend time and do business, with a nationally recognised cultural offer within a world class setting."

The Framework also sets out a number of key principals for the area that include improving links to the waterfront, allowing existing neighbourhoods to connect with the waterfront; creating a new arrival to the waterfront that addresses other emerging developments and their connection to the water; animating the waterfront by offering new cultural attractions, public realm improvements and new impact architecture;

Birkenhead Design Guide //

This emerging document yet to be published for consultation, looks to establish the design standards for the town for future planning applications, it characterises the town identifying alongside opportunities for change, transformation and view points to be considered and assessed. The Guide is intended to be used by anyone looking to design in the indicated areas and covers a range of topics including Background, Vision, Policy context. It also sets out comprehensive design principles which are to be addressed by designers. Potential building heights are established, materiality, typology etc.

Woodside is characterised as an area of Transformation - meaning comprehensive redevelopment with scale identified up to 7 stories, but with opportunity for taller buildings of over 8 - 10 stories. The document also outlines the possibility for new potential tall landmark buildings in the area.

Woodside Ferry Terminal is identified as a multi functional civic space with key features being:

- Tram terminus and Woodside Ferry Village
- Bus Stops and Taxi Rank
- A new Square for events, festivals, arrival and orientation
- Museum and artefacts

Buildings to the waterfront are noted as needing to animate and create a recognisable skyline, enhancing the visibility of existing landmarks to strengthen orientation and a sense of place, and to sensitively integrate tall buildings to aid orientation and mark key places.

A minimum density is set at 70 dph which aligns to the Local Plan requirement, however this is not felt to be appropriate to areas other than interfacing with existing family dwellings. Significantly higher densities would be expected here.

Further to this context is the **Hamilton Square Conservation Area //**

The Hamilton Square Conservation Area includes 63 listed buildings, and holds the 2nd highest number of Grade I Listed Buildings outside of Trafalgar Square in London.

The Conservation Area is centred on Hamilton Square and extends across multiple streets, also including the central Woodside Gyratory site.

The Conservation Area Appraisal is a document that provides a detailed appraisal of the townscape features, buildings and spaces, identifying their distinctive character and helps define and designate the extents of the Conservation Area. The appraisal is intended to provide a basis for considering the impact of development proposals on Hamilton Square and the ongoing management of the Conservation Area. The document identifies a number of key views and vistas that define the character of the area and as such serves as an important guide when considering scale and massing in the area.

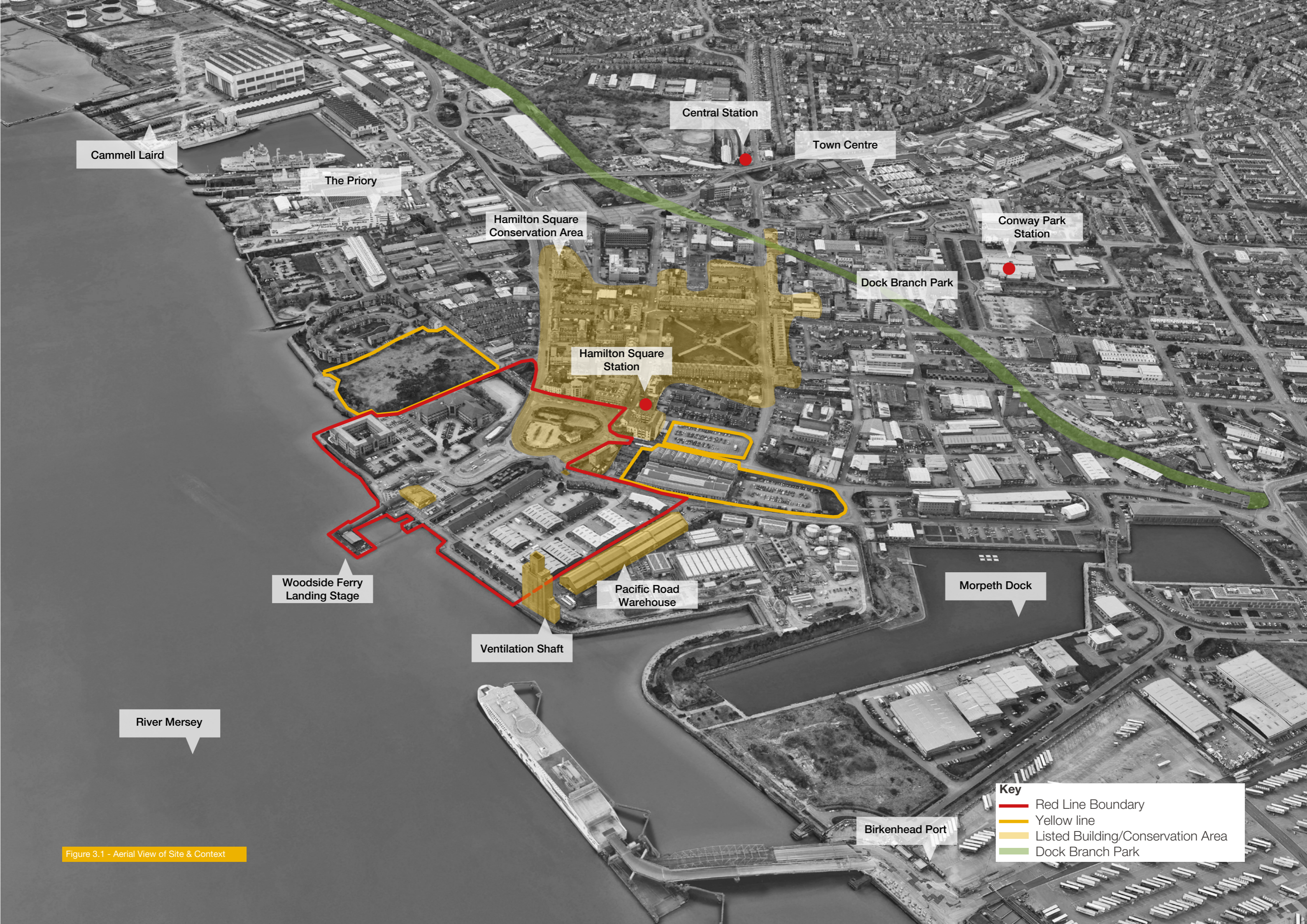
This document is currently being reviewed by Wirral MBC and it has been suggested that the boundary to the Conservation Area is being reviewed to the Gyratory, to take account of the changes to the context and the change in character from Bridge Street to the Waterfront. A Hamilton Square Conservation Area Regeneration plan is also forthcoming.

Woodside Gyratory Landscape and Highways//

The project aims to reduce car dominance in the area, simplify traffic movements and improve access to the waterfront from Hamilton Square and then beyond towards the Town Centre. The design prioritises safe active travel, re-locates layover facilities, Taxi Ranks and de-clutters the streets.

A number of green spaces are introduced, brightening the environment. Wayfinding is set to be improved while maintaining clear views to landmarks.

One design option being considered is a two-way single carriageway route along the south-west of the Woodside Hotel site, aligned via Canning Street. A proposed super crossing is used to connect Hamilton Square with the waterfront and new waterfront landscape.



Cammell Laird

The Priory

Hamilton Square Conservation Area

Hamilton Square Station

Woodside Ferry Landing Stage

Pacific Road Warehouse

Ventilation Shaft

River Mersey

Central Station

Town Centre

Conway Park Station

Dock Branch Park

Morpeth Dock

Birkenhead Port

Key

- Red Line Boundary
- Yellow line
- Listed Building/Conservation Area
- Dock Branch Park

Figure 3.1 - Aerial View of Site & Context

3.2 CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES //

There are a number of key constraints and opportunities identified that have informed the masterplan approach. This section provides a summary and for further detail they are described in Section 11 - Background:

Environmental considerations

- With its river estuary location the site enjoys an open and vibrant environment. The impact of the wind on the site is a key constraint that should be considered in the planning of the spaces. The prevailing wind is North Westerly, but with the nature of the estuary this also serves to funnel wind down across the site creating an exposed environment today with little to screen or shelter external use.
- The water frontages offer huge potential for creating highly attractive sun drenched environments for both active ground floor uses and residential amenity above, however these are spaces that will work predominantly in the morning, whilst the space to the centre of the site offers potential for all day sun access and screening from the wind.
- The water treatment works adjacent to the site produces an odour which with the prevailing wind direction is predominantly blown into the river. Odour impact assessments will be required to be submitted with the planning application as identified in the local validation checklist.
- The river can be a noise generator with shipping use, but this is not a constant issue
- The A Road Chester Street to Canning Street has large vehicle use and can be a noise generator and will need to be assessed.

Flooding

- The site is, in part, identified within Flood Zone 3 by the current Environment Agency maps. This is a key consideration when developing the masterplan approach and the land use options to be explored.
- This could impact both ground floor uses / levels, and upper level use / building escape and emergency vehicle access requirements.

Heritage

- The Hamilton Square Conservation area extends into the masterplan area to the southern edge covering the Woodside Gyratory. This actually extended in 1994 from an earlier much smaller conservation area focused purely around the square.
- Heritage assets within the immediate area of the development site are as below. These should be considered alongside context they sit in:
 - Grade II - Booking hall of Ferry Terminal
 - Grade II - Mersey Tunnel Ventilation Shaft
 - Grade II - Former Police Booth and Gate Piers
 - Grade II - Pacific Road Warehouse
 - Grade II - Shore Road Pumping Station and boundary walls now attached to entrance
 - Grade II - Hamilton Square Station

- Grade II - 23-31 Bridge Street
- Grade II - The River View
- There are also a number of non-designated heritage buildings and features which represent the past industrial landscape which should be considered through any development proposals how these can be incorporated and celebrated wherever possible.
- Wider to the core area is the Priory which is seen as a key asset and part of the story of Woodside, enhancing connections and legibility to this is a key opportunity.
- The Mersey Tunnel Vent Shaft to the promenade is an enticing object that has no public access today, but offers huge potential to draw people from Liverpool to gain a spectacular view if rooftop or a bar was delivered to the top.
- Adjacent to the Masterplan plot and aligned to the Water Treatment Works is Morpeth Lock, now an inlet not used for any purpose other than for the outflow from the treatment works. This offers huge potential for a historic ship to be located here and act as a visitor attraction from Liverpool which today offers not one large ship to visit even with its Mercantile reputation.
- New development within the conservation area and within the setting of heritage assets should, where appropriate, take the opportunity to enhance or better reveal their significance.

Highways

- The A554 and A5139 runs from Birkenhead's Port to Chester Street and beyond to the M53 Motorway. This is defined as a Key Route Networks and provides large scale transport links between areas.
- There are plans being developed to reduce the impact of this carriageway through Woodside by the reworking of the gyratory and creating a single movement corridor, and removing the roundabout feature on site today.
- This road acts as a barrier and potential danger to pedestrian and cycle movement and the planned change presents a significant opportunity to improve this experience.
- Further to the planned change to the gyratory there are developing plans to change the nature of the road outside of the Hamilton Square Station to relocate bus and taxi movements and again look to improve the sense of connection to the waterfront.
- Aligned to this move the large area within Woodside for bus layover is planned to be reduced and re-provided for public realm whilst maintaining the ability to connect the Ferry by Bus.
- Smaller roads serve the main plots within Woodside primarily used by private cars gaining access to the businesses that occupy this space today.
- There is an opportunity to introduce a new connecting road for bus movements into the Woodside Masterplan area, and by doing so reduce the general vehicle traffic

Car parking

- Large proportions of the site are used for surface parking.
- There is little public parking to this space, and quality, access & legibility is unclear with bus movements and the nature of the gyratory movement seemingly speeding traffic through the main access point.
- New Parking should look to keep parking to the edge with access direct from the A554, and deliver a minimum parking provision in-line with the Emerging Local Plan and sustainable principals.
- Wirral Council is developing a new parking strategy that, once developed, aims to help support businesses and communities across the borough, manage traffic, improve current parking facilities, ensure the right type of parking is in the right place for residents and local people and improve access to and the ability to use more sustainable modes of transport
- With the large topography change from the road to the foreshore, and the historic remnants of railway cuttings still strong features of the site today these could be capitalised upon to screen consolidated parking locations and support a last mile hub.

Pedestrian and Cycle access

- The Promenade provides an amazing asset with over 420 linear meters of waterfront views to Liverpool in a key location. However the public realm quality and activation by cafés, bars and restaurants is lacking other than to a small area by the Woodside Ferry Village.
- Access to the waterfront is impacted by the severance provided by the roads, general street clutter, and surface parking.
- There is little in the way of signage to direct visitors to Hamilton Square and to the Town Centre which presents a key quick win opportunity
- The Wirral Circular Trail is a well recognised walking and cycling route to the promenade, however as with the note about quality of environment the Woodside section lacks use through awkward access and lack of passive surveillance.
- Cycling connections back up the hill towards the A554 and onto Hamilton Square / the town centre are lacking and this is a challenge to the success of the areas today.

Public Transport

- Woodside could be considered to be a transport hub, with fantastic public transport; Ferry services to Liverpool - via the River Cruiser service today, but with the potential in the future subject to demand for a reintroduction of the commuter service, Trains via Hamilton Sq, and Bus services from the Gyratory.
- The weakness of this amazing offer is disconnected from some of the services and the lack of demand that is currently placed upon it at Woodside. This is an a clear opportunity to drive change and enhance the user experience based upon sustainable transport and reducing the need for carparking.

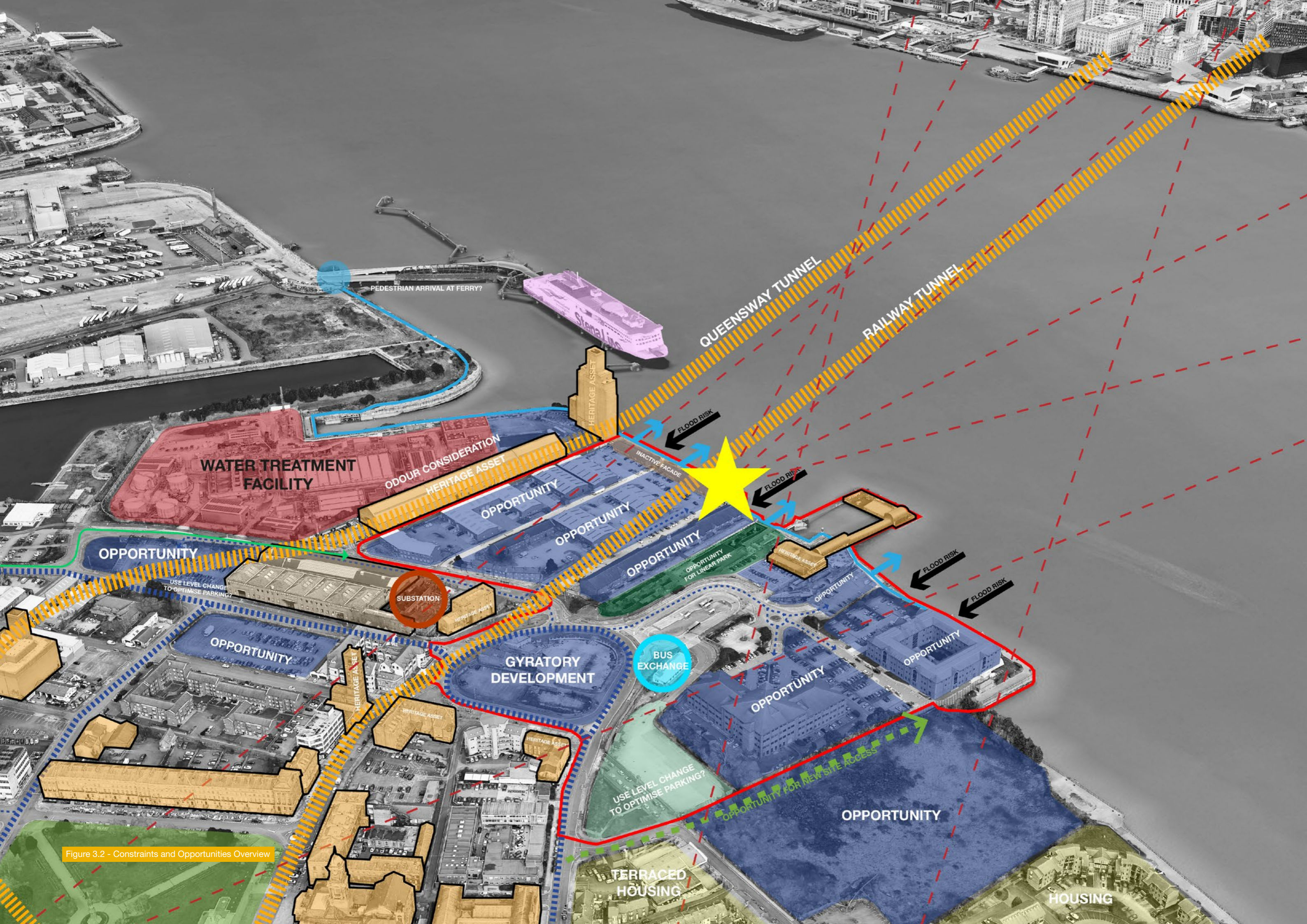


Figure 3.2 - Constraints and Opportunities Overview

View Corridors

- There are a number of view corridors which cover or are in close proximity to the site. These are set out within the Emerging Birkenhead Design Guide and Liverpool Council's Local Plan. Views should be assessed against their respective drivers and set out clear justification for change.
- Further site specific view corridors have been identified specific to Woodside which draw out the site's unique character and identity. Whilst there are not wider town / city perspectives it is important that these are treated in a similar manner and the relevance for any schemes agreed with Planning and Conservation Officers.
- Hamilton Square Conservation Area sets out a number of views which are also captured to be assessed from the perspective of impact on the setting of the Conservation Area / Listed Buildings within.
- There is an opportunity to establish new visual connections across the site and enhance permeability through building form and massing of new proposals

Skyline

- Woodside's identity today is characterised by the tunnel ventilation shaft, Hamilton Sq tower, and the Town Hall spire. Surrounding this is in general an exposing of land being underutilised for the amazing context it looks out onto.
- Creating a skyline identity at Woodside is a key opportunity, one that draws more people to this special place, but also preserves what makes it unique today.
- Delivering buildings or functions that can attract is a key opportunity

Building Heights

- The emerging Birkenhead Design Guide sets the area as a 7 storey context height with potential for higher elements. This needs to be considered against the view corridors identified.
- Any building over 7 stories needs full assessment under WS7.5
- Opportunity for tall / super tall buildings within Woodside's context has been identified where used for enhancement of the skyline, legibility of space hierarchy and user orientation is required.
- Respect of the heritage and view corridors is key consideration.

Infrastructure/Services

- There are a number of below ground services that have established the baseline of the Masterplan development parcels. Key below ground services considered have been the foul / combined sewer, and electrical cables.
- The North of the gyratory is particularly defined by historic drainage and cable runs, and as such has been considered to be fixed at Masterplan stage.

- There are a number of electrical substations located within the masterplan area. There is a large Primary Substation evident to Shore Road and what would appear to be a smaller one to Church Street. There are a number of secondary substations. No capacity or checks on what is served by each has been undertaken. Acoustic assessments and proximity assessments should be undertaken as part of Planning Applications

Tunnels

- Two live tunnels run through or in close proximity to the site. The Queensway Road Tunnel and the Hamilton Square to James Street Rail Tunnel. Both are key considerations in the planning of the site and the constraints they apply to development.
- A historic rail tunnel is located to the rear of the site Woodside Railway Station Tunnel. There is no intended future function to this, but there may be some potential for sustainable technologies to take advantage of the subterranean space that is created.

Land Contamination / below ground structures

- Given the industrial nature of the land and former dock use it would be expected that a number of constraints will be expected in the ground. Further survey / analysis is required by a specialist to advise, and early engagement with the Environment Agency alongside the Wirral Council EHO will be required.
- The land is in part reclaimed and as such contamination would be expected
- Given the historic nature of the site, there may in part need to be desktop and Archaeological watching briefs to be agreed with the Planning Authority.

Visitor Economy

- The Mersey Ferry is a key anchor to Woodside and an upgraded pontoon and ticket office works are being proposed to maintain its role in the town and the River Cruiser Service which is the highest paid visitor attraction in Liverpool.
- A new Battle of the Atlantic Museum is proposed to extend the offer at the existing U-Boat Story, and there are plans to offer linked trips from the Ferry to Western Approaches in Liverpool and also Wirral's Transport Museum.
- Woodside Ferry Village provides a food hall style offer opening out to a dining terrace. There are plans to improve its offer and access to the external space aligned to the reworking of the Ferry Terminal Building and Ferry Ticketing Office to suit the Battle of the Atlantic Proposals.
- Birkenhead Port is an international arrival point to the UK operating 14 passenger services per week to Belfast and Dublin, but today has no engagement with Woodside. There is an opportunity to create a new pedestrian connection to Woodside as a Transport Hub and a place of arrival to Merseyside.

- Wirral council is developing a wayfinding strategy as part of the Birkenhead 2040 Framework that aims to address the clear need to improve wayfinding and connectivity to and between Birkenhead's culture and heritage assets.

Neighbouring Development sites

- There are a number of developments in close proximity to the site that will have a direct impact on the character of the area.
- Rose Brae is a significant development site and Prima Housing are proposing to bring forwards a residential led mixed use development
- The carpark site to Cheshire Lines is a similar former railway cutting as per Woodside Station and presents a key development opportunity, this also applies to the Bridge Street carpark which provide station parking, but offers more potential over time for development perhaps still retaining station parking services.
- Whilst Hamilton Square is not a development site, it is somewhere that is itself slowly changing from the old business district offer it once held to now a more residential focus. There are two key sites within this zone; the police station to Chester Street, and the vacant plot to Hamilton Street opposite from the Station entrance.

Land Use

- The Emerging Local Plan has identified the delivery of a high quality, attractive and vibrant residential mixed use neighbourhood. It adds a mix of residential, cultural, hotel, leisure and commercial uses which are complementary to the regeneration of Birkenhead town centre should be delivered at Woodside
- Policy RA3 The Emerging Local Plan sets out that the Birkenhead Waterfront Regeneration Area which includes a wider boundary to Woodside, should deliver 630 new dwellings

Sustainability

- The site is inherently sustainable with its proximity to Birkenhead's Town Centre and Liverpool city centre and the amenities on offer, however today it feels disconnected by highways and poor public realm.
- Clearly wind is a key constraint on the site, but also an opportunity to capitalise upon for sustainable energy creation.
- The water bodies of the adjacent docks provide an excellent opportunity for sustainable water sourced heat pump networks and a localised district heating system creation. Wirral's Local Plan has set out an ambition to deliver a Heat Network which is important to investigate with any detailed proposals being brought forwards.
- The River Mersey has one of the largest tidal ranges and offers huge potential for energy creation
- The Woodside Tunnel is a unique asset which is unlikely to have any future rail use, but could offer potential for ground source / air source heat generation.



Scale



Environment



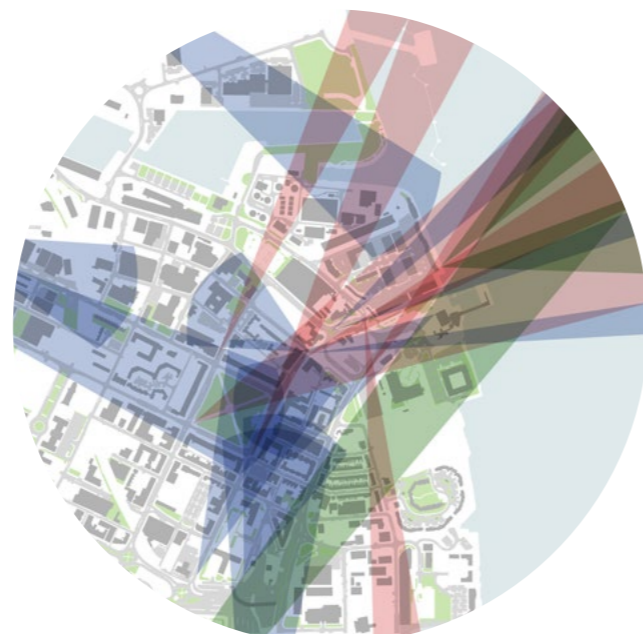
Tidal Flooding



Public Transport



Heritage



Views



Roads

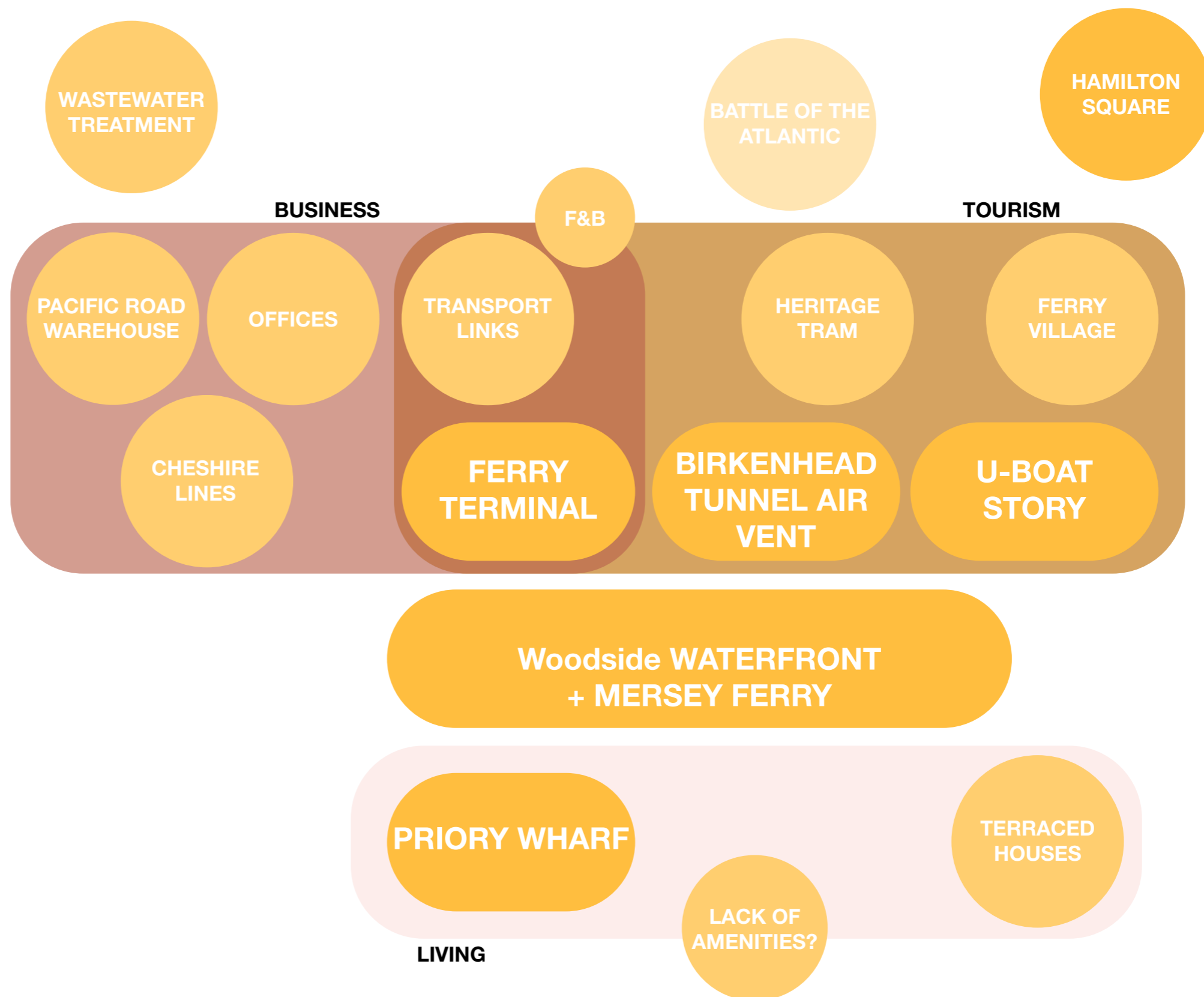


Utilities

3.3 LAND USE STRATEGIES //

3.3.1 Current Land Use

The adjacent conceptual diagram is intended to capture the current land uses on site. The following page identifies the potential opportunities for additive components of what may benefit a sustainable Woodside of the future in the context of both the vision and wider Birkenhead Regeneration to ensure this is a unique offer and complementary to the whole.

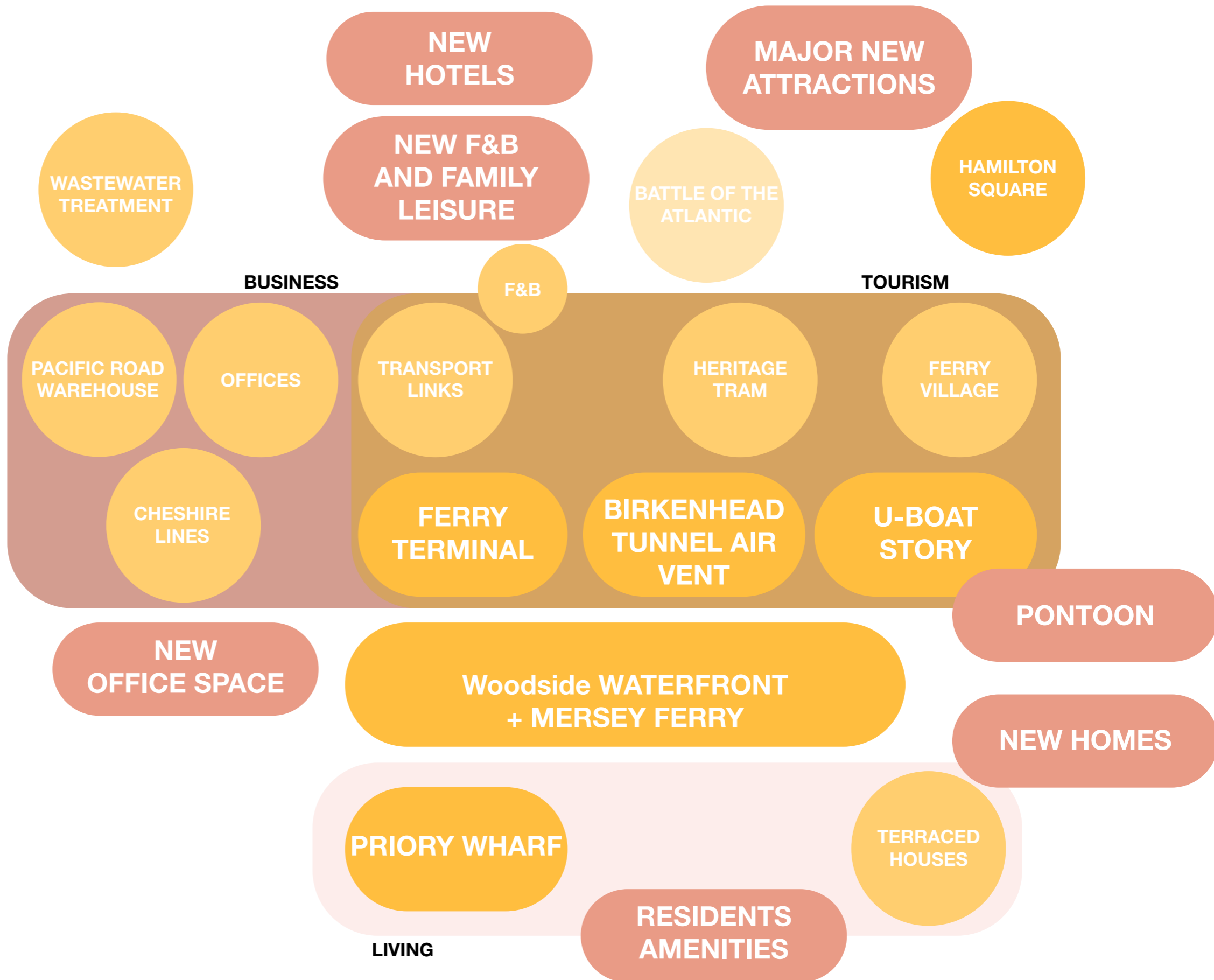


3.3.2 Potential land use

The site holds so much potential, but key to delivering a sustainable and resilient community that supports the wider town regeneration is somewhere that brings people to this unique place in the UK.

This conceptual diagram identifies strategically a number of opportunities to create a mix of uses aligned to the Emerging Local Plan and the potential of the site:

- New leisure tourism offer to add to the mix of uses at Woodside and diversify the uses and dwell times. A new Boat Museum to be known as 'Battle of the Atlantic' is being proposed and this could add real benefit to the mix of uses, but perhaps there is more potential here again.
- Food & Beverage (F&B) and entertainment business use at active ground floor spaces to capitalise on the waterfront location, significant numbers of visitors and again to diversify the dwell times. This could also add residential amenities to the existing community which is today poorly served.
- New residential homes capitalising on the amazing waterfront / dock setting. These could offer a high quality family / retirement potential to maximise both values and community creation
- New Commercial workspace to replace the existing, low quality offering, but also to respond and support the existing Cheshire Lines and Pacific Road Warehouse creative workspace offer that works so well in those historic settings.
- Potential for additional high quality tourism orientated hotel offer capitalising on the new tourism and leisure offerings and offering views across to Liverpool.
- Addition of a new Maritime community to the dockside with new a new pontoon, perhaps an opportunity to allow visitors to board active ships before they are to be serviced.



3.4 KEY CHALLENGES //



Lack of footfall to drive active uses in the area and capitalise on tourism potential



Tidal flood risk across a large portion of the site



Poor public realm quality and lack of space for people to gather



Protected view corridors across the site restricting form and scale / massing



Little identity today for the site with majority of buildings under 3 stories with few buildings of scale



Lack of clear pedestrian and cycle connections from the waterfront to the Town Centre and Priory



Large areas of surface parking dominate the site and provide a poor quality experience



Existing below ground services restrict plot form

3.5 KEY OPPORTUNITIES //



Opportunity to increase height along the waterfront to create a point of focus and skyline identity



Improve public connections and create clear paths and destinations from the Waterfront to the Town Centre and Priory



Utilise existing level changes across the site to screen consolidated parking and reduce traffic within the site



Capitalise on established view corridors and improve visual connections celebrating heritage wherever possible



Utilise heritage assets and create a new tourist destination to draw footfall towards the area



Capitalise on the footfall generated by the Mersey Ferry and draw more people to this special place with Maritime features



Create open green spaces for people to gather and linger that are protected from the elements and frame views to Liverpool



Maximise the potential of this transport hub, and create clear connections from each

4

WOODSIDE MASTERPLAN //



4.1 DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES //

There are a number of development opportunities within the Woodside Masterplan Boundary MPA-RA3.1 Figure 4.1 sets out each potential development parcel which aligns to building ownership / logical combined plot boundaries:

- 1 Central to both the site and the development potential is the creation of a major new piece of public realm connecting Birkenhead and the Waterfront, and framing protected views to the Liverpool Skyline. This area of land holds the Heritage Tram and some other heritage artefacts to be considered in development proposals.
- 2 Woodside Business Park is the largest single land owning in the Masterplan area and is owned by Peel Land and Property representing a large expanse of comprehensive future development. The buildings here are seen as being out of context with the potential of the area, and the density this would drive for a diverse mix of uses whilst retaining business space within the development area. There are existing businesses that would look to be retained in the area. There is a small run of non-designated heritage terraced buildings and a separate gatehouse within the development zone. Retention is proposed here with some alteration to open up and frame view corridors / improve permeability.
- 3 The Woodside Hotel or Gyrotory Plot is under three ownerships, with Martin Lowe being part of the design development of numerous masterplans up to this point, and more recently joined by Alpha Living and Wirral Methodists looking to bring forwards comprehensive development of their sites. This site is covered by the Hamilton Square Conservation Area, with two existing buildings within.
- 4 The Child Support Agency Building is a 3 - 4 storey commercial office building surrounded by surface parking, to the rear is Merseytravel's Bus layover space and periodic Woodside Drive In Cinema and Diner. Merseytravel own the rear site running into the historic railway cutting / Woodside Station, and a private investor owns the CSA Building. Combined these represent a significant development site.
- 5 The area of the Woodside Tunnel is currently fenced off and is subdivided by a disconnected road bridge running across at Church Street. It is currently used as an adhoc uncontrolled carpark. The land is unregistered below and running up to the tunnel mouth, but is assumed to be within the ownership as such of Network Rail. As with the Merseytravel land is an area of cutting and offers potential for development to more actively engage with the street as well as potentially to hide subterranean development utilising the existing asset of the sandstone retaining walls.
- 6 The Land Registry building is a 3 storey commercial office building with a prime waterfront location, as with the CSA it represents a significant future development potential opportunity in single government ownership, again surrounded by surface parking. This site has a pronounced visibility with the nature of the promenade cutting back to the adjacent Rose Brae site.
- 7 The U Boat Story and planned expansion for the Battle of the Atlantic is identified to use the existing public carpark, and the Woodside Ferry Terminal Building is proposed to be adapted to align to the access solution as per Liverpool's Pier Head allowing public to move along the promenade continuously with out the current blockage provided by the gangway.

There is also a retaining wall from this plot to the adjacent Rose Brae Prima site, which also adds to the potential opportunity for screening subterranean development.

Key

- Development Parcels
- Listed Buildings
- Key Buildings
- Site Boundary

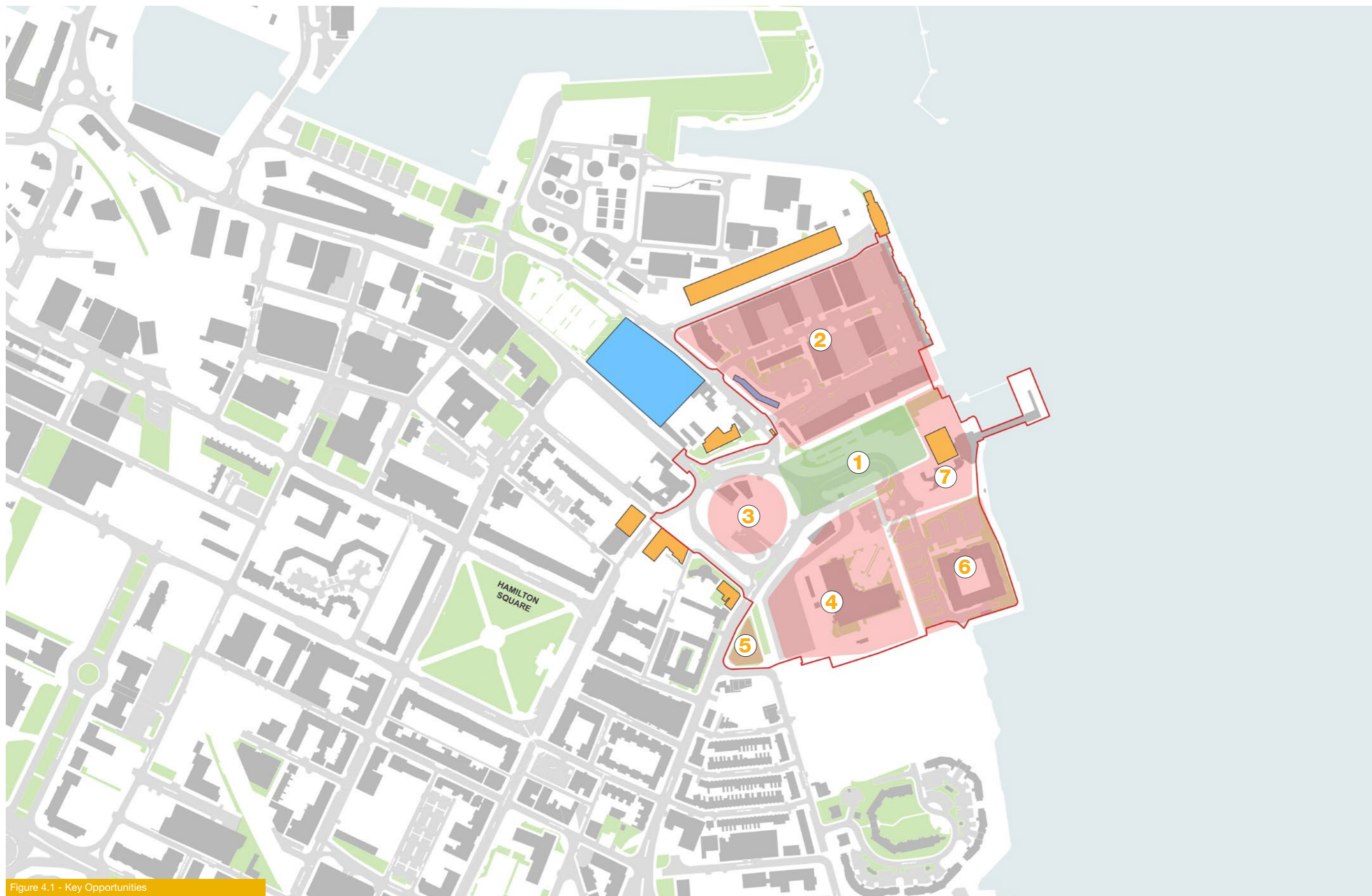


Figure 4.1 - Key Opportunities

4.2 WIDER OPPORTUNITIES //

Immediately outside of the Masterplan Boundary there are a number of key areas of influence highlighted with an orange boundary line, that have impact on the success of the Masterplan Boundary. These are identified to illustrate the potential and not require development to support the Masterplan Vision:

- A** Potential future parcel to the rear of the vent shaft subject to availability and agreement with United Utilities Water Treatment Works. The site offers potential to create an enhanced public realm route around the vent shaft, and also onwards to Morpeth Locks and the Ferry Port. This space is impacted by the environmental smell - plus outflow pipe location, potential noise conditions, road tunnel alignment and as such is not felt to be a building development site opportunity.
- B** The Tunnel Vent shaft is a unique structure and offers its own potential to act as a more significant attractor from Liverpool. It is already clearly visible, but public access is today not possible. There may be potential to provide access for public experiences or something more involved such as a bar or roof top dining terrace to capitalise on the height and view it can offer.
- C** Morpeth Lock is a redundant shipping inlet to Morpeth Dock no longer connected, but still directly connected to the Mersey and one that is today hidden from many views unless using the Wirral Circular Trail. It could hold the potential for future ship related use focused towards the creation of an attraction or as part of the Port if appropriate aiding the facility to enhance the connection to Woodside.
- D** Pacific Road Warehouse is today used by the Chamber of Commerce for creative workspace within a heritage building. The Great Northern Warehouse is located opposite and has a good active frontage with glazed openings into the heritage railway building now being used for office workspace. The space between these two buildings offers huge potential to reinforce a unique workspace offer and a landscape that has both the Heritage Tram running through it and a somewhere for workers to dwell and enjoy lunch and drinks / food after work.
- E** The Cheshire Lines building has a surface car park to the a former railway cutting / goods yard. This is accessed via Shore Road, and has an interesting heritage elevation facing onto the carpark today offering potential to be more engaging with a public realm setting. The carpark offers the potential for an increased quantum of parking to be delivered screened from Canning Street, Whilst at street level there is the potential for ground floor active frontages to Canning Street with new homes above. The rear aspect to Shore Road is towards the opposite Water Treatment Works, and any development here will need to respond appropriately ensuring aspect and quality of environment for any homes / other uses proposed is ensured.
- F** The Bridge Street surface carpark has been a vacant plot for a significant amount of time. It is today in essence a park and ride facility for Hamilton Square Station, but offers potential development opportunity to enhance the street scene to both Bridge Street, Canning Street and Argyle Street.
- G** Rose Brae is named after a former road that used to run through the site over the Woodside Station to the rear elevation of the current CSA building and on towards the gyratory. it was lost when Clover's Graving Docks were expanded on the current over grown site to deliver reportedly at the time one of the worlds largest graving docks. The remnants of this can still be seen today. This is a significant development site which could look to integrate into the Woodside Masterplan Area and also serve to connect for pedestrians the adjacent Priory Wharf residential enclave which today feels detached from its surroundings.

Key

- Development Parcels
- Listed Buildings
- Key Buildings
- Site Boundary

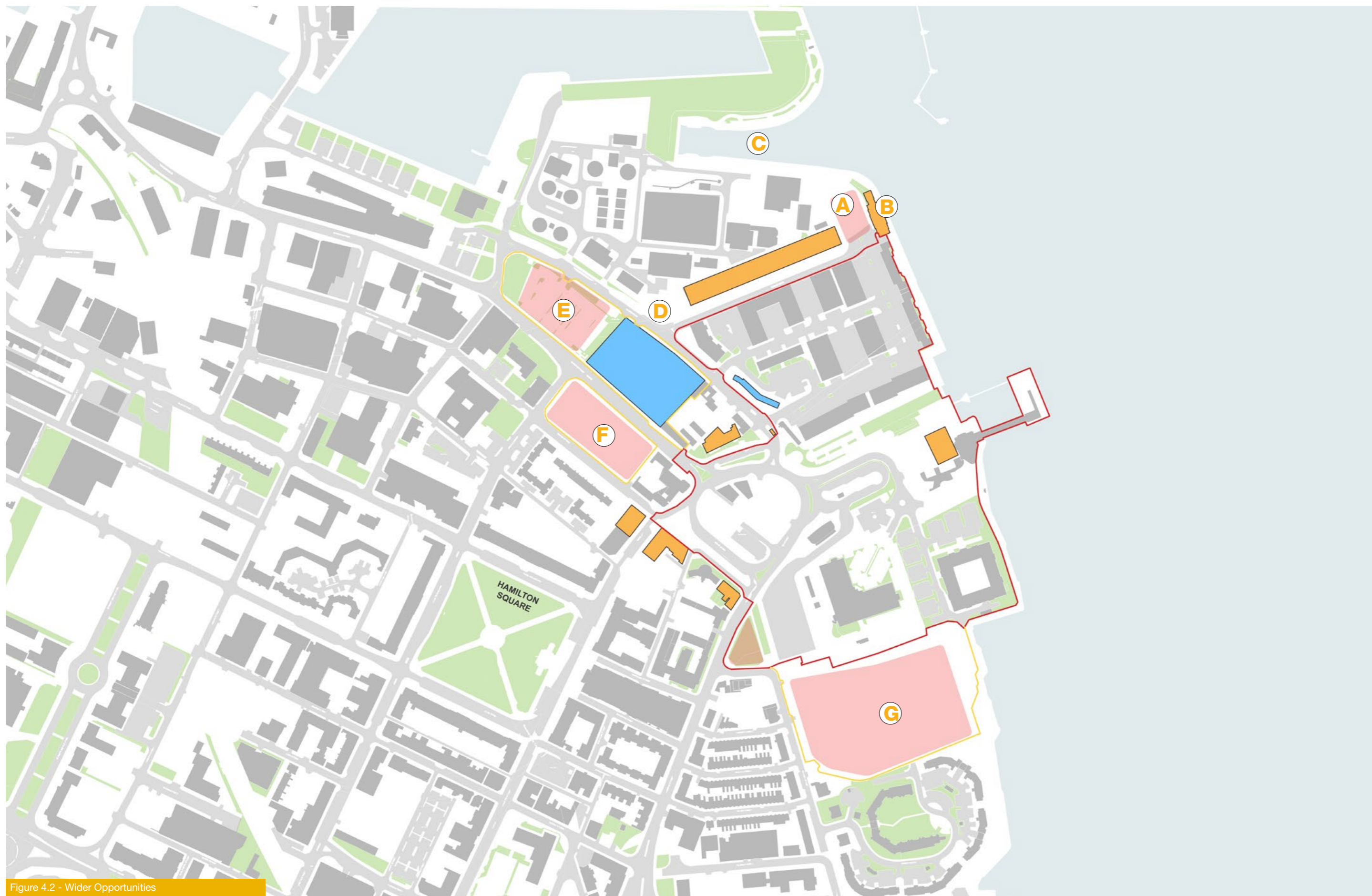


Figure 4.2 - Wider Opportunities

4.3 THE BIG PICTURE //

This diagram presents what we feel is the 'big picture' opportunity at Woodside and is intended to illustrate the areas of change and intervention required to provide the Woodside Masterplan area with the greatest integration to the wider context and the success of the uses within:

- Provide strong integration into the Birkenhead grid iron street plan, and knit waterfront and town back together and drive significant new footfall to this area.
- Frame views to Liverpool and Birkenhead Skyline Landmarks to create a unique sense of place. Opportunity to create new views including panoramic views from tall buildings.
- Enhance the Wirral Circular Trail and permeability/connections to the Priory.
- Capitalise upon the listed and non-designated Heritage Assets within the area to help reinforce the history and importance of this place.
- Support the rationalisation of the gyratory and minimise the dominance of roads and traffic movement.
- Capitalise upon the transport hub offer at Woodside with Ferry, Train and Bus integrating with enhanced cycle and pedestrian facilities, and explore the potential for connections to the Port Ferry services.
- Integrate Woodside into the immediate context and existing communities, create opportunity for development on adjacent surface parking sites, and sensitivity to existing residential streets.
- Create a context for a major new cultural hub of national importance on the waterfront, supporting existing plans and the potential for a cultural trail from Waterfront into Hamilton Square, museums and the Priory.

Key

- Potential Sites
- Listed Buildings
- Key Buildings
- Site Boundary
- Key Junctions
- Landmark
- Gateway Site
- Waterfront path

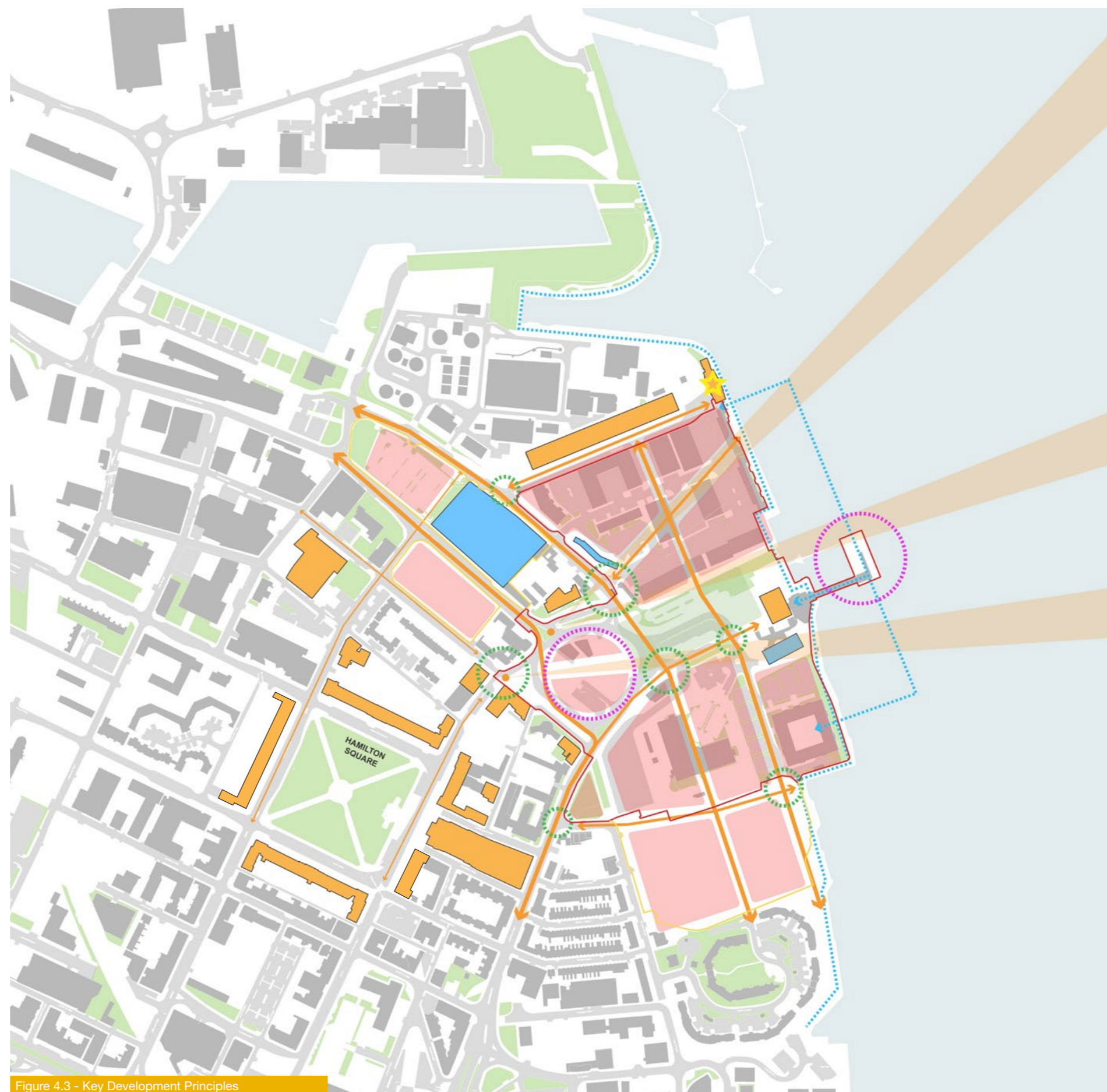


Figure 4.3 - Key Development Principles

4.4 MASTERPLAN //

The Masterplan figure ground plan presented here in figure 4.4 is an illustration of the design principles brought together from the vision, objectives, constraints, opportunities and challenges identified. It is intended as a framework and not prescriptive plan to be implemented. The following sections will illustrate and set out the design drivers that future development should be assessed against captured within this to ensure that the area maintains its vision and ethos, but is flexible and adaptable to change.

Woodside Masterplan is a key piece in the reconnection of a wider townscape, and this plan is seen as both a distinct character area in its own right but also an enabling development to a wider waterfront and town centre regeneration.

The pages that follow describe the strategies that form the masterplan and describe how the masterplan is designed and how it functions.



Figure 4.4 - Illustrative Masterplan

4.5 APPROACH TO STREET CHARACTER + IDENTITY//

The street hierarchy proposed is in-line with the approach set out within the National Model Design Code for Town Centres and the Emerging Birkenhead Design Guide - yet to be published for consultation.

The variety in streets and spaces planned is core to the integration into the Birkenhead Grid Iron and surrounding streets, formation of clear hierarchy, legible user orientation and memorable welcoming spaces.

The Woodside Area is an extension to the original Grid Iron town planning and it can be seen to shift to meet the river or adapt to suit the previous industry that was once housed there. All proposed street layouts are indicative and show the masterplan approach to street hierarchy.

Primary Streets

These streets are intended to have a clear legibility of being important through scale and use. They have a clear relationship to the core of the Grid Iron Birkenhead plan meeting Hamilton, Argyle and Chester Street. Canning Street picks up two of these two key streets in Birkenhead, with the Town Hall and Hamilton Square station on one, and the town Centre and Birkenhead Central Station on the other. Chester Street flows into the site seemingly directing movement towards the Mersey Ferry Terminal, but as a strategic A road serving the near by Port changes direction to meeting Canning Street.

The primary streets are intended to draw people from the Town Centre to the site, and from the waterfront to the town. They use views to the Liverpool Skyline and key movement generators of the ferry terminal, train station to enhance their importance.

Secondary Streets

These streets play a more functional role, still having importance in the general movement around the area, but also as a way of distinguishing vehicle movement corridors. As with the Primary Streets existing heritage features and skyline views have shaped their locations and the supporting active frontages illustrated on the following page.

Tertiary Streets

These streets are intended to be focused on pedestrian and light vehicle movement, more domestic in their quality to allow small scale workspace and ground floor residential uses to inform the character of the streets.

Key

- █ Primary Routes
- █ Secondary Routes
- █ Tertiary Routes
- █ Waterfront



Figure 4.5 - Illustrative Masterplan Street Hierarchy

4.6 ACTIVE FRONTAGES //

Woodside is an area that should attract a high footfall of both local and wider tourism focused use. As such delivery of active ground floors is a key characteristic of the Masterplan.

This can be achieved in a number of ways with primary and secondary favouring commercial use; local amenity retail, tourism focused retail, leisure, restaurants, cafés and bars, as well as workspace, whilst tertiary routes would be anticipated to provide ground floor residential use in the form of town houses with apartments over to create active, vibrant and diverse streetscapes that have a distinct identity and use.

The magenta lines in the image opposite represent where active frontages are required for commercial use noted above. It is expected that there will be some element of service functions required such as bin stores, or plant rooms, but these should be minimised on the elevations and screened in keeping with the buildings to ensure they do not dominate the street scene.

The base to buildings should provide active frontage in the form of shop fronts, glazed workspace, amenity spaces, windows, doors and shop / bar / cafe / restaurant frontages. Entrances should be emphasised and boundaries should not be de-marked with walls / fencing to create a sense of a cohesive town centre.

Key

- █ Active Frontages
- █ Active Streets

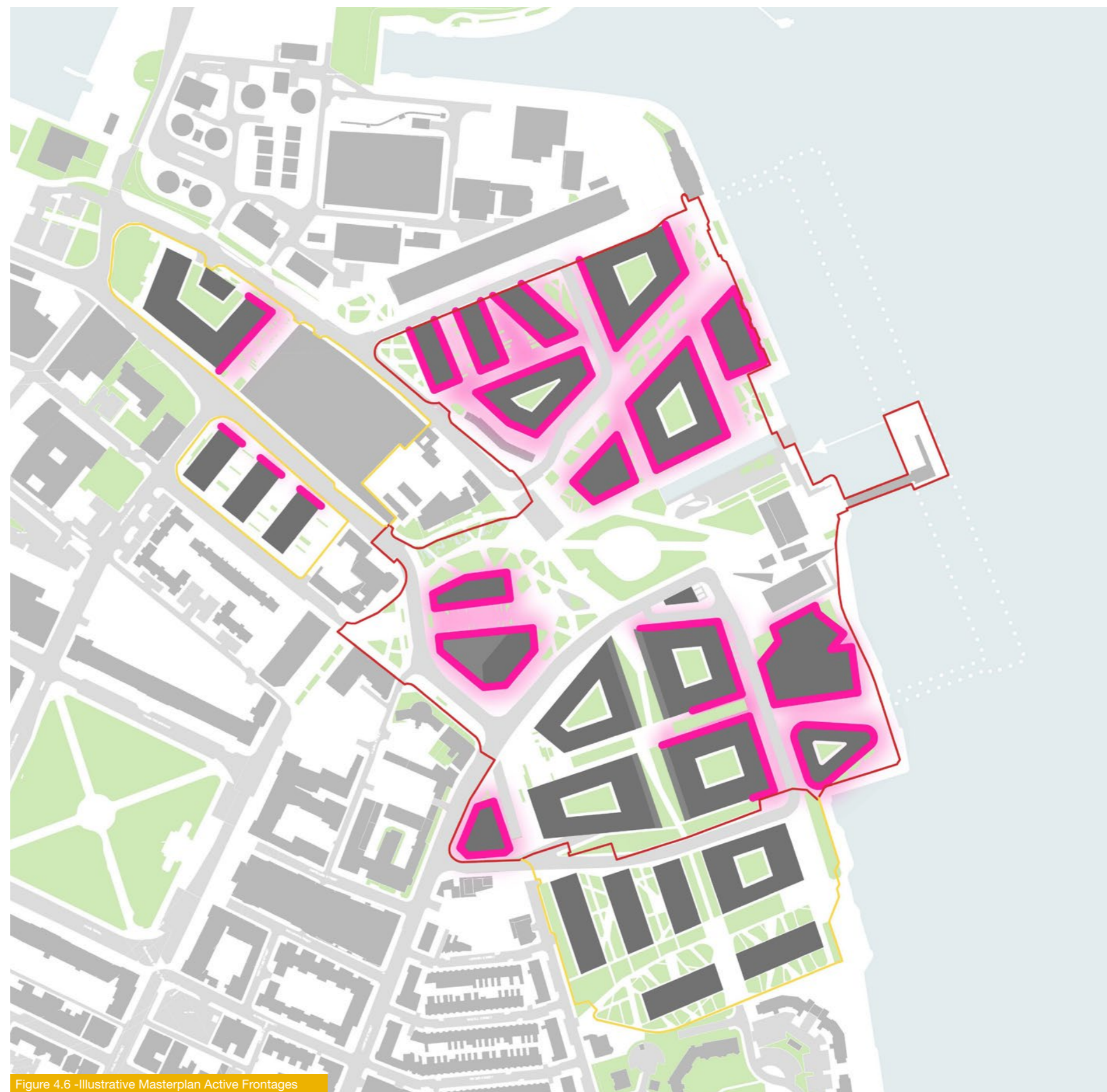


Figure 4.6 -Illustrative Masterplan Active Frontages

4.7 SPACES + INTERFACES //

In principle the Masterplan proposes one key external space - **Woodside Landings** which is intended to draw the river promenade within the site via a series of spines, pulling the maritime dockside identity back to the historic foreshore and the connection with Hamilton Square and the route to the Priory. It is intended that this will drive new permeability, views and spaces to suit the potential sub character areas held within.

Held within Woodside is **The Landing Stage** a new cultural hub, reinterpreting the historic identity of this space, and act as a key point of arrival, a destination with the best view of Liverpool, and a place that expresses the people of Wirral and Birkenhead.

This is a place that the Ferry, Heritage Tram, buses and people should meet with culture and a large scale space for unique events capitalising on the amazing backdrop of Liverpool and Birkenhead. Aligned to this it is intended that this space should also provide space to dwell for families, young and old - a space for all.

Bridge Street Place is somewhere that should create a new transport hub, with framed views to the skyline of Liverpool bringing together bus and rail passengers and new cycling infrastructure.

Pacific Road Yard is intended to reinforce the commercial workspace community and create a distinct identity and sense of focus around the amazing characterful heritage railway and tram buildings and infrastructure.

Morpeth Lock has been identified as a unique opportunity to become part of the cultural hub offer for Wirral and Merseyside of the Left Bank. The historic redundant lock offers potential to host a large scale ship to act as a visitor draw and aid the engagement with the vent shaft today synonymous with the skyline of Birkenhead.

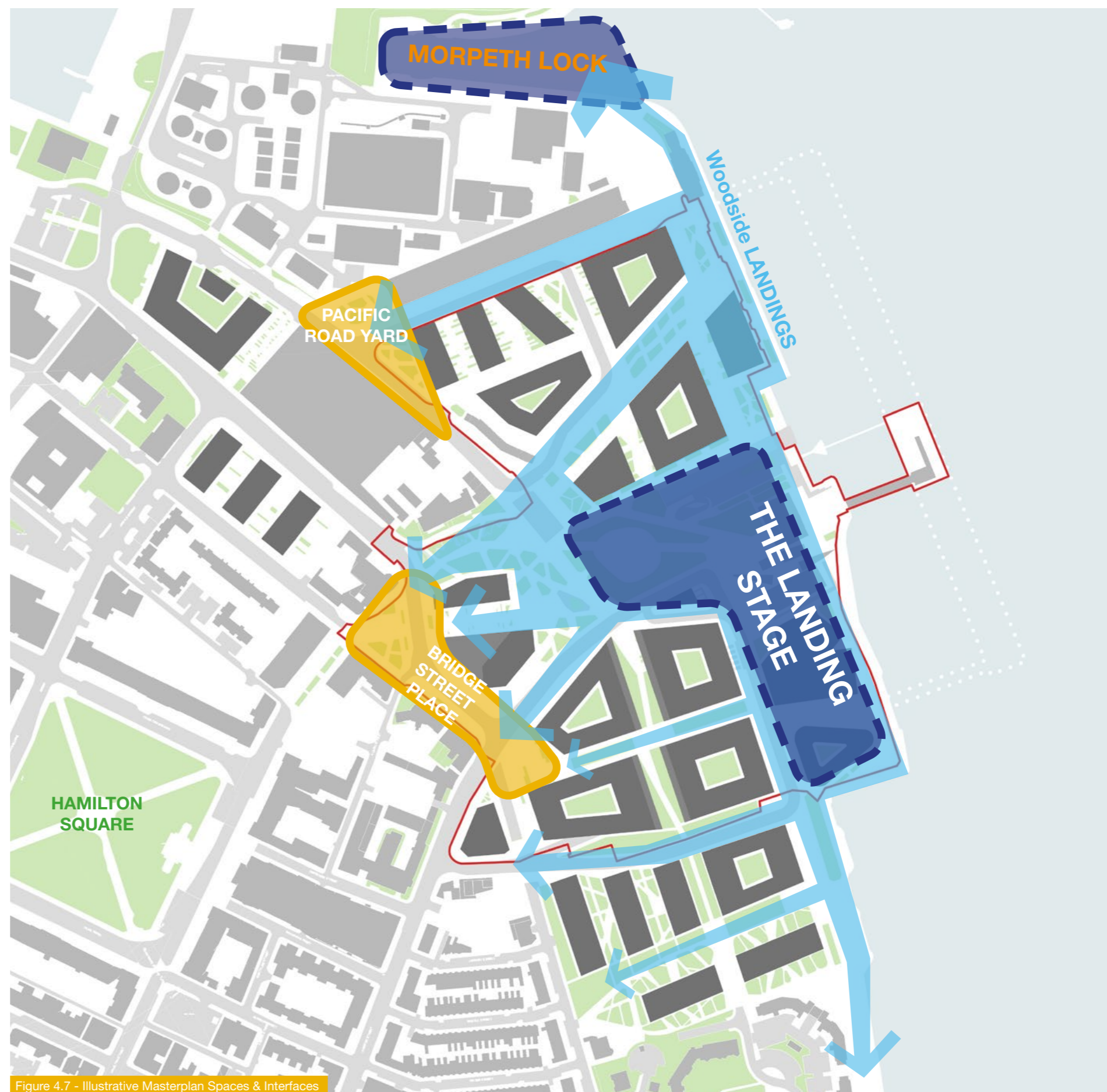


Figure 4.7 - Illustrative Masterplan Spaces & Interfaces

4.8 LANDSCAPE MASTERPLAN //

The Landscape Masterplan should deliver the spaces and interfaces set out previously and should create a landscape environment that is unique to Woodside, its history and Maritime quality.

The landscape Masterplan is illustrative to provide an indication of the importance of public realm and the sense of connection that must be achieved in order to promote strong movement within the site and inwards to the Town Centre and the Priory.



Figure 4.8 - Illustrative Landscape Masterplan

4.9 PEDESTRIAN & CYCLE MOVEMENT //

Enhanced permeability is at the heart of the Masterplan proposals, with the masterplan driving new connections and utilising key visual landmarks to draw people through the site to both engage with the waterfront, but also increase footfall towards the Town Centre and engagement with the heritage anchor of the Priory. Improving wayfinding and enhancing visual connections to heritage assets should also improve connectivity and enhance visitor experience.

Gateway Spaces have been identified at a number of locations to ensure that regardless of the varying approaches taken by people to arrive at Woodside, there is a sense of arrival and a sense of destination. These are identified at key movement locations such as crossing the new super crossing to the consolidated gyratory, or where framed views occur - the 'sweet spot' where scale and massing of existing features on site or landmark views are framed.

Ensuring the movement to key transport hubs is at the heart of the proposals. It is proposed that Chester and Canning Street provide dedicated cycle lanes to connect to the wider dedicated cycle network, and link key transport hubs, workplaces and education hubs such as Wirral Metropolitan College. Within Woodside it is proposed that this becomes a shared surface route to ensure movement is slowed and placemaking is maximised over transit corridors.



Figure 4.9 - Pedestrian Movement Strategy

- KEY**
- Primary Route
 - Cycle Route
 - Waterfront path
 - Secondary Routes
 - Tertiary Routes
 - Periphery Routes
 - Transport Link
 - ⊙ Gateway
 - ⊙ Existing Landmarks/
Focal Points
 - ⊙ Proposed Landmarks/
Focal Points

4.10 VEHICLE MOVEMENT //

Reducing the dominance of vehicles at Woodside is a key objective. This is proposed through the location of two centralised Multi Storey Car Parks (MSCP) adjacent to Canning Street and Chester Street to pick vehicles up as quickly as possible from the main A road, and remove the vast majority of general vehicle movement from within the site.

Both potential MSCP locations have been identified to suit the opportunity that historic railway cutting retaining walls provide as screening to the parking, and it would be intended to provide parking up to ground floor level (at their highest point) with development delivering active ground floor functions over a podium of parking.

Vehicle routes are identified within the sites to serve the plots with the intent that one way traffic is favoured where possible to reduce the dominance of roads and maintain refuse / emergency vehicle access without large carriageways / turning heads.

A new spine road is proposed to the Rose Brae site allowing access to be created from Chester Street, and offer the potential for bus use providing access to the waterfront and Ferry Terminal via a bus gate to stop any unwanted through traffic.

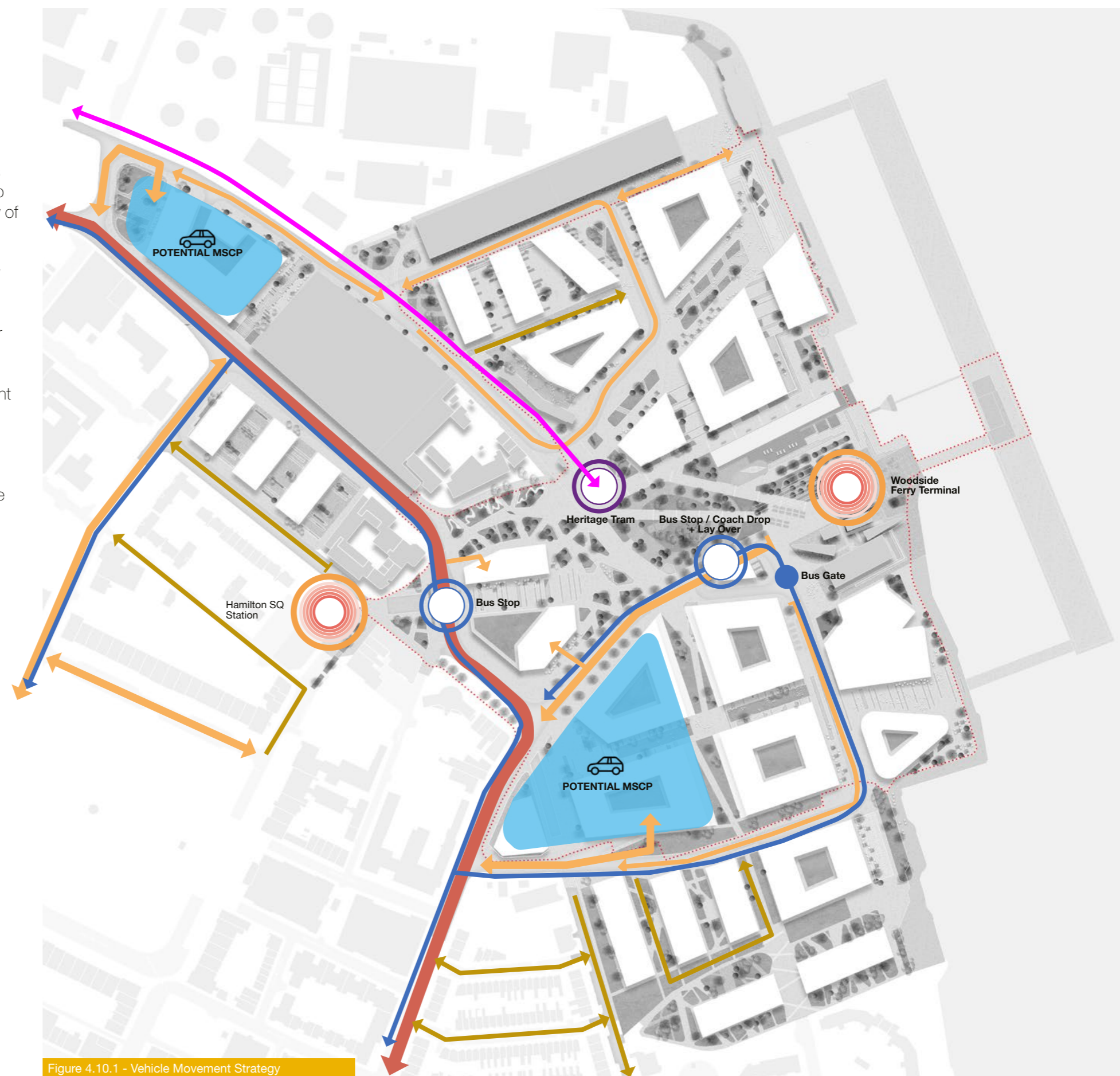


Figure 4.10.1 - Vehicle Movement Strategy

- KEY**
- █ Primary Route
 - █ Secondary Routes
 - █ Heritage Tram
 - █ Buses
 - █ Tertiary Routes

The Woodside Masterplan is currently illustrating a road realignment option that introduces a new two-way carriageway on the south side of the gyratory. This has been through public consultation as part of the Birkenhead waterfront and surrounds landscape proposals with consensus agreeing that this is the preferred strategy minimising highways movements and offering a pseudo bus interchange outcome with an improved Bridge Street Hamilton Station relationship. This is not a concluded exercise and is subject to technical and land ownership constraints, and as such an alternate strategy illustrating the retention of the gyratory to the north is also included to highlight the principle and the implications of this approach.

To note - the illustration presented opposite and alternative arrangements above were part of the consultation exercise undertaken by Wirral Council.

Option 01 depicts Bridge Street and Hamilton Street becoming a public space, with vehicles travelling northbound only to Bridge Street. The option severs the traffic link from the A554 to Hamilton Street, removing buses from Hamilton Street. Instead, buses would utilise the A554 via Canning Street for access to and from the Waterfront.

Option 02, and the option depicted in this document, depicts Hamilton Street becoming a public space, with vehicles travelling northbound only to Bridge Street, and the traffic link from the A554 to Hamilton Street is severed. A one-way link to Albion Street is provided from the A554 as a left-turn in link.

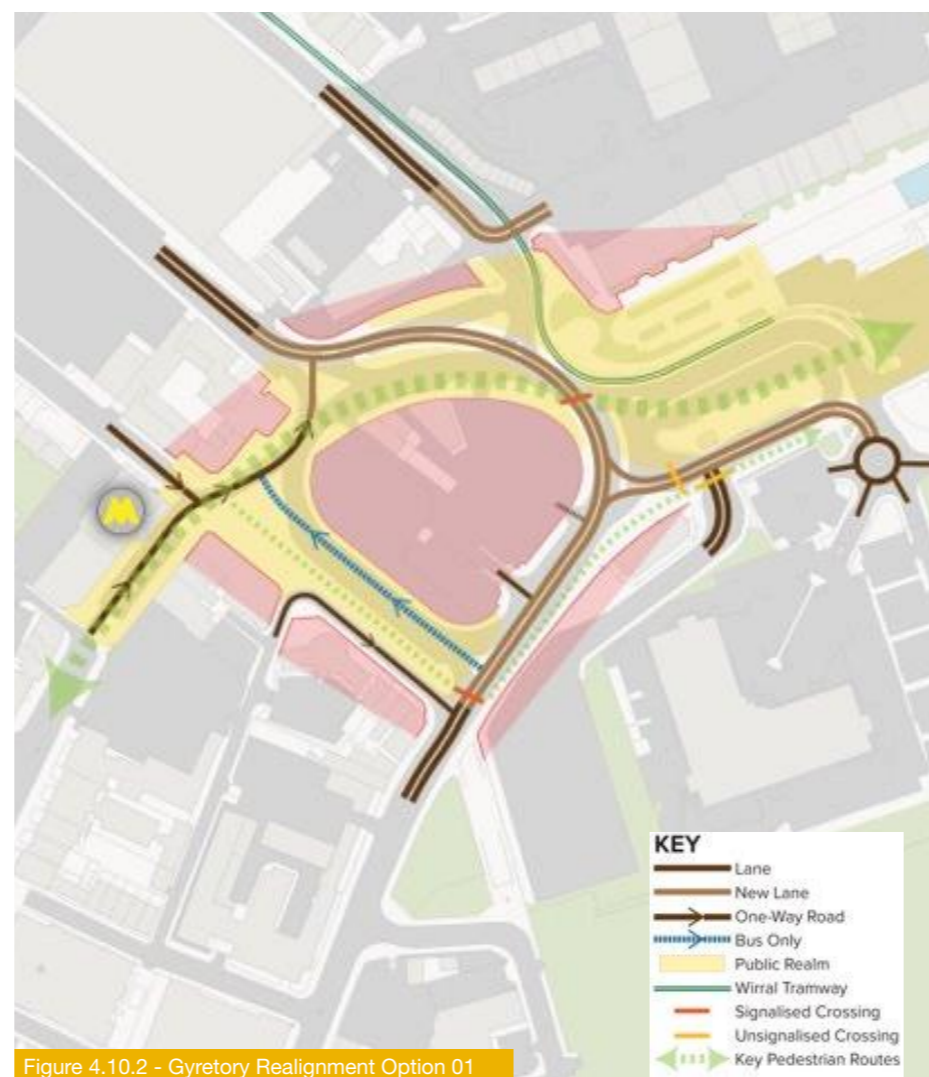


Figure 4.10.2 - Gyretory Realignment Option 01



Figure 4.10.4 - Gyretory Realignment Option 02



Figure 4.10.3 - Option 01 Space Allocation



Figure 4.10.5 - Option 02 Space Allocation



Figure 4.10.6 - Masterplan Gyretory Option 01



Figure 4.10.7 - Masterplan Gyretory Option 02

4.11 PUBLIC REALM DESIGN PRINCIPLES //

1. Maritime Character

A place which reflects the nature of the past, the passing ships and river life which permeates through the spaces.



Figure 4.11.1 - Wirral Metropolitan College by BCA



Figure 4.11.2 - Sydney Opera Landscape

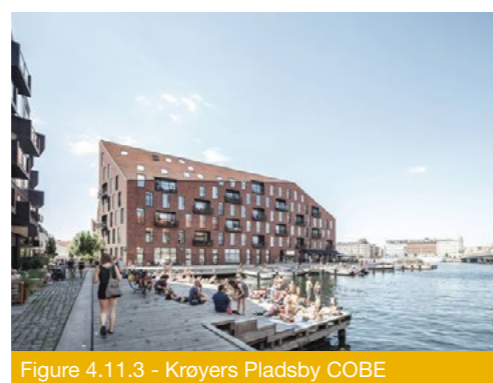


Figure 4.11.3 - Krøyers Plads by COBE

2. Vertical punctuation reflecting the skyline

Spaces that incorporate vertical emphasis to reflect the skyline of Birkenhead and draw visitors through a sequence of spaces. Places that work well in the day and at night



Figure 4.11.4 - Schouwburgplein (Rotterdam)

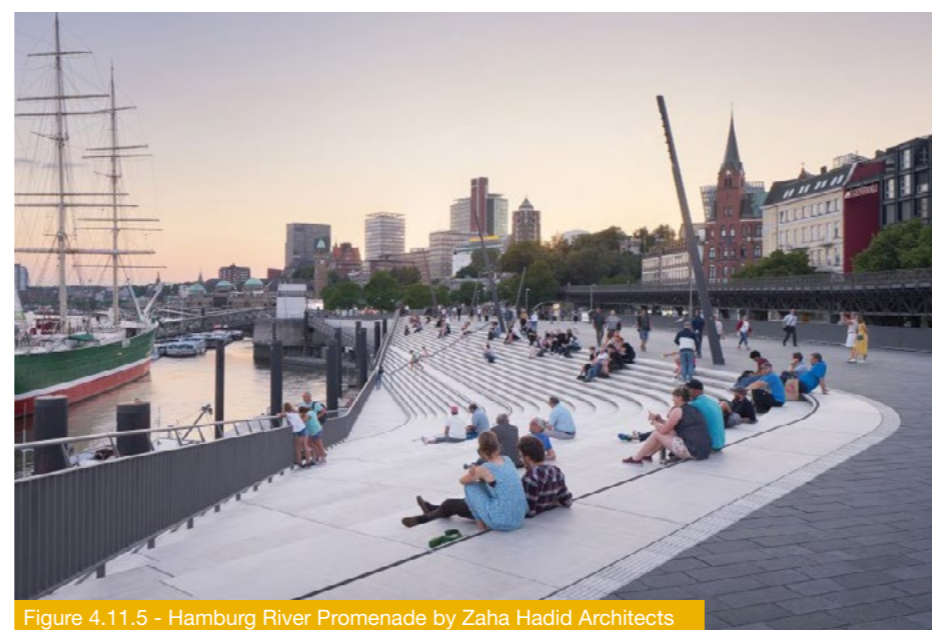


Figure 4.11.5 - Hamburg River Promenade by Zaha Hadid Architects

3. Enhancing the waterfront sense of arrival

Create a clear sense of arrival at the waterfront and within the main central space. A place that drives new connections for walking and cycling linking the town centre to the waterfront.



Figure 4.11.6 - City Hall by Foster + Partners

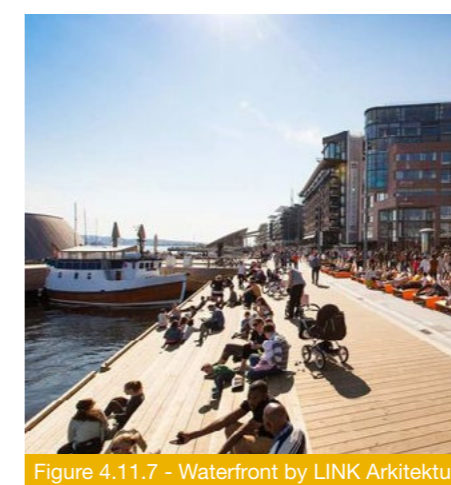


Figure 4.11.7 - Waterfront by LINK Arkitektur



Figure 4.11.8 - The Edge in Williamsburg

4. Contextual greenspace

Sustainable greenspace that reflects the maritime quality, but creates unique new habitats and eco systems - responsive to flooding and high footfall and use.



Figure 4.11.9 - Expo by Berger Partnership



Figure 4.11.11 - Westminster Pier Park



Figure 4.11.10 - The West Harlem Piers Park by W-Architecture

5. Cultural and play

This is a space that should reflect its cultural importance to Merseyside and the Wirral, big, bold, dramatic and fun for all the family



Figure 4.11.12 - Sydney Opera Landscape

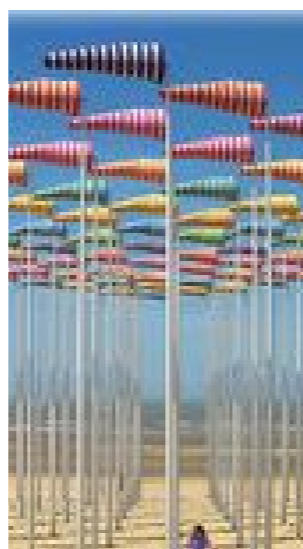


Figure 4.11.13 - Daniel Buren

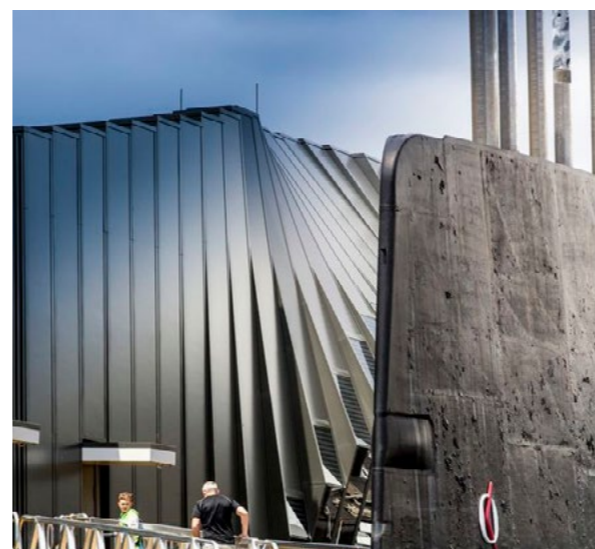


Figure 4.11.14 - The Waterfront Pavilion by FJMT Studio

6. Flexible space to reflect on the views

Creation of a space that is flexible to the seasons and events that can be held here. A space that encourages reflection of the water, the skyline and the role of this space, but also one that capitalises on the view of Liverpool and the cinematic gold it could offer to this space.

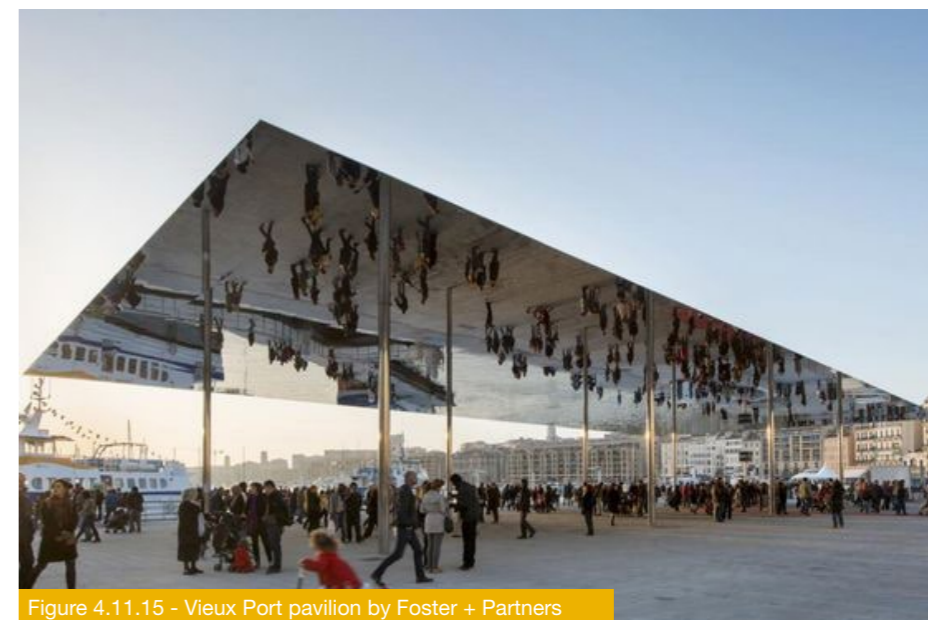


Figure 4.11.15 - Vieux Port pavilion by Foster + Partners



Figure 4.11.16 - Granary Square in King's Cross

4.12 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER //

General Character principles //

The centre of the Woodside area is focused on active and vibrant public use, as with the waterfront promenade integrating to the key gateway into the town centre Hamilton Square. To the north is an opportunity to integrate into an existing creative reuse of heritage buildings for workspace, and to the south an established residential area.

Maritime identity should permeate through Woodside, but be responsive to these sub characters and need to integrate into its surroundings to connect the whole. The illustrative Masterplan reflects the principle of the waterfront public realm consultation information, What is shown to the central space is park like, but this should be adapted to suit these principles at the following stage including shaping spaces to ensure these are aligned to allow view corridors to be created and easily maintainable. Key principles of this are:

- Maritime,
- Planting to represent and express the elements
- Big and Bold,
- Strong framed view corridors,
- Industrial,
- Heavy use of texture,
- Strong vertical emphasis on lighting, wayfinding and planting

The Landing Stage //

Use: to allow for flexible events, play, culture and art use. This has the potential to provide a significant sized piece of public realm that could host unique large scale gatherings with a world class backdrop. Significant visitor numbers are to be anticipated within the design, and robustness of materials and planting is to be considered to provide an attractive setting for both small and very large groups.

Commercial Edge //

Use: to express the character and identity of the heritage buildings surrounding and the commercial nature within. Public realm should facilitate strong commercial frontages for commercial workspace, retail and other supporting uses. Where residential is provided at ground level this should have its own distinct identity with clear defensible spaces that create a unique maritime quality.

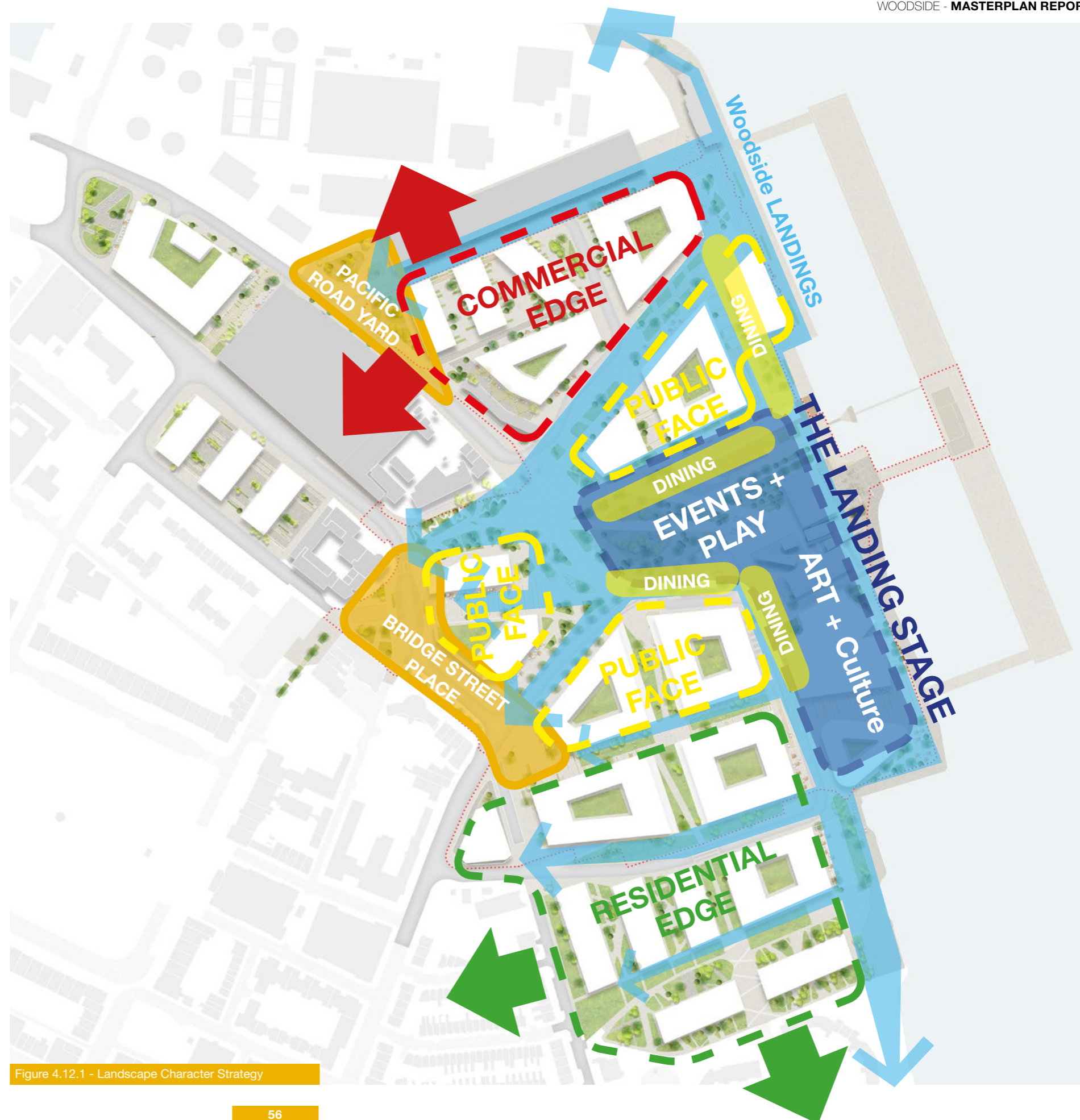


Figure 4.12.1 - Landscape Character Strategy

Public Face //

Use: public realm around the Landing Stage should be focused on public use, with strong shop front integration, and levels design that facilitates excellent external dining and drinking space with framed views and sheltered from the wind - whilst capturing the sun. Vertical elements of planting structure - raised beds and integrated planting should be used to create a distinct identity within the whole maritime character.

Residential Edge //

Use: This area should feel the greenest and softest on the site. Planting should be lush and verdant, with a post industrial quality where like Rose Brae today planting has taken back the site and the new use is integrated within this. The Maritime quality should still permeate and influence this area and provide strong links back into the core of the site.

Pacific Road Yard // is intended to act as a comprehensive space that connects heritage buildings together and draws in new builds to provide a critical further active edge. In order to facilitate this it is proposed that the walls surrounding the Pacific Road Warehouse carpark should be removed and parking should be reorganised to allow a new public space to be formed. This should be seen as a potential night time economy square with a sense of containment and intimacy.

Bridge Street Place // is a high footfall transit space, with buses, train station connection, taxi ranks and cycle lanes all being brought together. This should be a busy an active space with opportunity for high quality retail and leisure space to activate the frontages. The framed view to the Anglican Cathedral should create a compelling draw, and the space delivered should be an extension of the maritime landscape but through this area start to adapt to become more civic in nature.



Figure 4.12.2 - Masterplan Waterfront Visual



Figure 4.12.3 - Chicago River-walk by Sasaki



Figure 4.12.4 - Oslo Waterfront Promenade by Link Landskap



Figure 4.12.5 - Wirral Waters by BCA Landscape



Figure 4.12.6 - Domino Park, Brooklyn New York by Field Operations

4.13 ACTIVE GROUND FLOORS //

Residential Ground Floors

1. Street level entrances and thresholds - Introducing unit entrances at ground floor can help activate the facades. Duplex units can be utilised along with ground floor apartments facing tertiary streets.

2. Residential Stoops - Residential stoops can help ease the transition between home and the public realm. They also help link the living space to the wider context. The stoops can manifest in a number of ways incorporating steps, set back entrances or greenery.

3. Residential Amenity - Offering ground floor amenity for residential blocks can boost permeability to the public realm. This offering also increases passive surveillance to streets and can link block residents to the wider community.



Figure 4.13.1 - Eddingtonby Wilkinson Eyre



Figure 4.13.3 - Goldsmith Street



Figure 4.13.4 - Cobalt Place, London



Figure 4.13.6 - Ducie St by Archer Humphryes



Figure 4.13.7 - Duet by Sheppard Robson



Figure 4.13.2 - Smith's Yard, Manchester



Figure 4.13.5 - Eddingtonby Wilkinson Eyre



Figure 4.13.8 - Redchurch Townhouse by 31/44 Architects

Commercial Ground Floors

1. Cafes, restaurants and bars - A commercial offering such as this can boost street activity and create an opportunity for active uses to spill onto the pavement. Signs, awnings and temporary fixtures also contribute to the feeling of active streetscape



Figure 4.13.9 - Cuttingroom Square



Figure 4.13.10 - Kampus by Mecanoo

2. Studios, crafts and small business - A variety of small retail offerings with a mix of studio and exhibition spaces can add to the visual interest of the street and offer glimpses into a mix of occupied spaces



Figure 4.13.12 - Roseberry Mansions by Maccreanor Lavington



Figure 4.13.13 - 4 Pancras Square



Figure 4.13.14 - Nightingale Ballarat Resi.

3. Creating space for people - The overall building design should consider introducing spaces that are suitable for people to linger. Stepping back from the building line on ground floor and utilising balconies and platforms can help add to the identity



Figure 4.13.15 - New Islington Marina

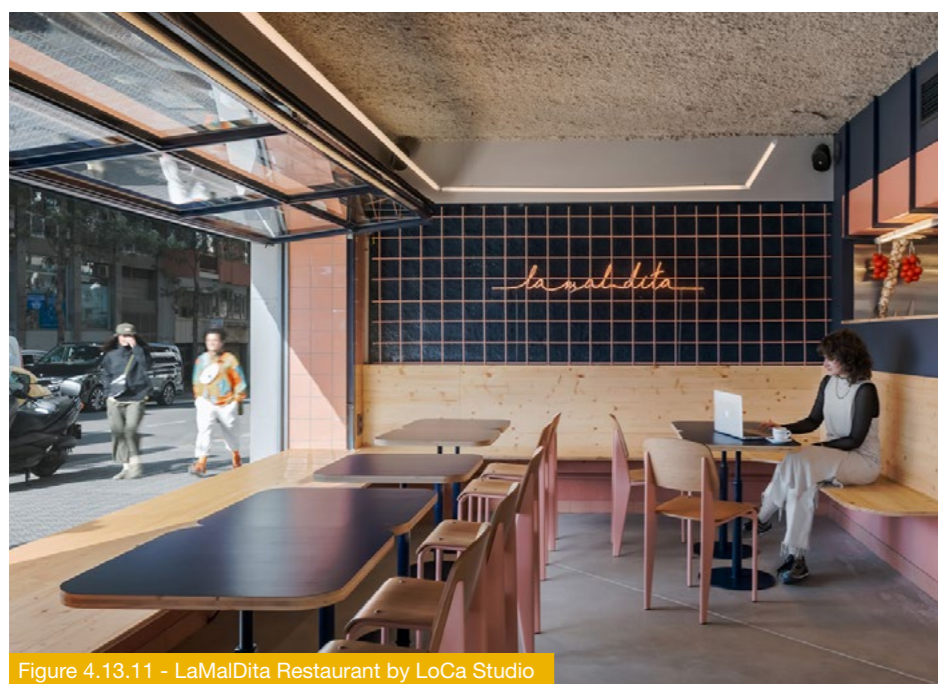


Figure 4.13.11 - LaMalDita Restaurant by LoCa Studio



Figure 4.13.16 - Lokdepot 123 by Robertneun

4.14 WAYFINDING //

Wayfinding is a key part of what defines the way in which we interact with a place and our experience of an area. It helps us navigate through cities, both familiar and not, it can help tell the story of a place, and map out an experience and journey through an area, helping craft a narrative through the spaces we occupy that is lasting and meaningful.

The masterplan approach to wayfinding considers signage holistically, using signage alongside other public realm features such as public art, lighting and street furniture, texture and accessibility, but also the scale of buildings, and framing of views of landmarks to help create a rich environment that is legible for all.

Woodside holds a key opportunity for the wider town to both greet people at this important 'front door' location and share in its history and landmark views, but also to connect and direct new increased footfall to the wider town centre, historic landmarks such as the Priory, cultural attractions like the Wirral Transport Museum, and amazing Birkenhead Park driving economic and social benefits for the wider town.

At the heart of the wayfinding requirements should be the need to direct people to the transport hubs, and landmarks, amenities, and street names. However, in addition to this there should be consideration of opportunities for the introduction of interpretation points to tell the physical and social history of the place and its role in the wider Merseyside. The view of Liverpool skyline is a key draw, and the waterfront should include areas to guide visitors on what they are experiencing and use art to create exciting and captivating moments that draw visitors.

Woodside is a distinct place, but consistency with Wirral Council standards and signage approach should be key to consider to ensure this is a cohesive experience with the wider town.

Core Wayfinding Principles

1. Use scale on strategic plots to lead to key locations and attractions across the site, directing movement of people in tandem with traditional forms of wayfinding such as signage.

2. Enhance and improve movement and circulation of people by create clear walking and cycling routes within the neighbourhood.



Figure 4.14.1 - View of Deansgate, Manc.



Figure 4.14.2 - Chelsea Barracks, Chelsea



Figure 4.14.3 - Liverpool One



Figure 4.14.4 - Jubilee Square



Figure 4.14.5 - Wayfinding arrow



Figure 4.14.6 - Wayfinding Arrow

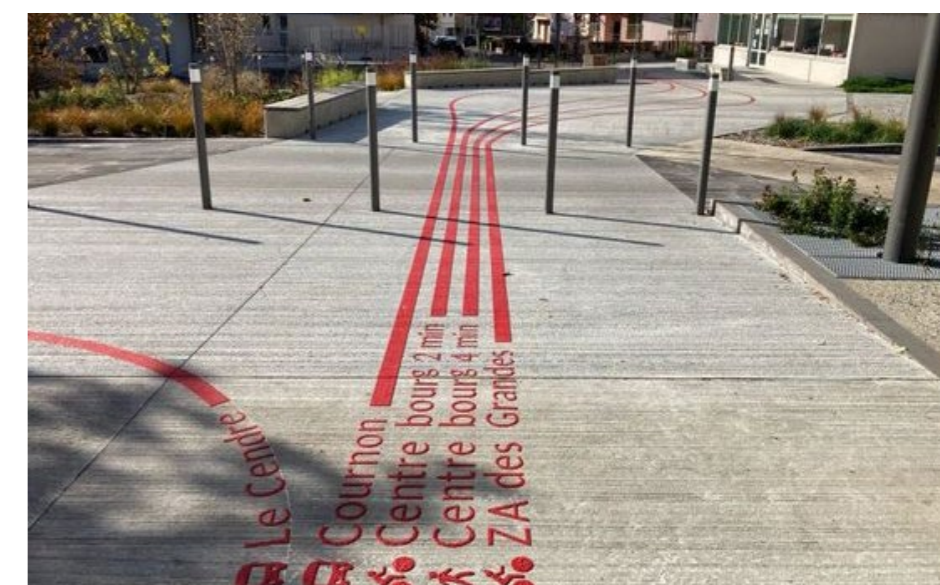


Figure 4.14.7 - Wayfinding Arrows and paths

4. Wayfinding should enhance the local character and distinctiveness, as well as being used for navigation; Establish coherent strategy, visual language and 'brand' that make reference to the history of the area and applies to both wayfinding and the broader marketing of the area.

5. Establish a clear narrative that links spaces together taking into account how a locals and visitors arriving via different modes of transport may experience the area differently.

4. Signage and wayfinding should be accessible to all. Contrasting colours, illuminated signs, simple and clear language along with tactile lettering can be beneficial.

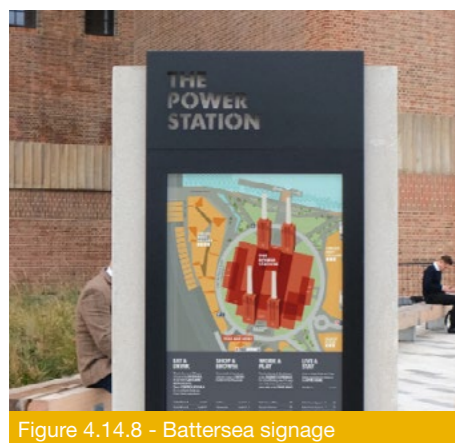


Figure 4.14.8 - Battersea signage



Figure 4.14.11 - Ghost River signage



Figure 4.14.13 - Wayfinding around post



Figure 4.14.14 - Path map



Figure 4.14.17 - Tactile map



Figure 4.14.18 - Tactile lettering



Figure 4.14.9 - Branded Signage



Figure 4.14.15 - Embedded paths and signs



Figure 4.14.16 - King's Cross signage



Figure 4.14.19 - Simple and legible sign



Figure 4.14.20 - Tactile map



Figure 4.14.10 - Decorative



Figure 4.14.12 - History plaque



Figure 4.14.21 - Tactile signage

4.15 SUSTAINABILITY //

Sustainability Vision //

Future proposals should consider their impact on the environment and should be encouraged to comply with key sustainability design principles

- The sites location adjacent to a number of key public transport stations minimises the need for the use of personal vehicles, promoting walking and cycling, and should improve air quality and also serve to maximise the use of existing infrastructure helping overall viability and vitality.
- Located adjacent to Hamilton Square Station and Woodside Ferry Terminal as well as sitting in close proximity to a number of bus routes enables the use of sustainable and affordable public transport. The masterplan could bring enhanced use of the public transport assets, boosting connections to transport links and enhancing the sustainability of the network providing the opportunity for residents to have a wider connectivity to major surrounding cities whilst enjoying a high quality living environment in Birkenhead.
- New cycling routes should be integrated into the landscape design of the area, linking existing cycle paths and boosting the cycle network.
- Where parking is provided, EV charging options should be provided. The scheme proposes a number of multistorey car park serving the site. Those can act as 'mobility hubs' allowing vehicle parking, charging, car club provision and last mile transport hubs with EV bikes and Scooters.
- Creation of new employment opportunities with commercial, retail and leisure space within the development should create pedestrian focused commuting, boosting the viability of the wider amenities within the town centre.
- Future District Heating Network (DHN) is planned for Birkenhead. This should be utilised and incorporated in proposed designs
- Any proposed development should sit in-line with the objectives outlined in Wirral's Climate Change strategy 'Cool 2.



Figure 4.15.1 - Aerial Photograph

Key design principles //

- Designs should create strong connections to the new proposed green spaces as well as connect to the Woodside Waterfront and Hamilton Square
- The built environment should deliver durable, flexible solutions that can respond to changing conditions
- Developments should aim to achieve 'net zero' carbon and must align with wider sustainability goals set by Wirral Council
- Renewable energy and low carbon technologies should be assessed and incorporated where feasible
- Proposals should take into consideration the flood risk in the area and design with awareness of these conditions
- Landscaping and building materials should be durable and carbon-conscious.
- Future proposals should deliver a robust and future-proofed sustainable drainage strategy (SUDs) that responds to local context as well as the flood risk in the area.
- Proposals should address the minimum 10% biodiversity net gain ('BNG') requirement outlined in the Environment Act 2021.
- Developments should be accessible to all and resilient over time.
- New developments should have regard of site specific environmental conditions and should address microclimate and noise conditions.



Figure 4.15.2 - Aerial Photograph

5

**LAND USE, DESIGN PRINCIPLES
+ DESIGN CODE //**



5.1 LAND USES – GROUND FLOOR //

The Woodside Masterplan area is a place that should feel at the heart of Merseyside, active and vibrant, with a diverse mix of uses and users creating a place that is economically sustainable and through a focus on culture and leisure should drive wider regeneration benefit.

The river promenade should feel engaging with ground floors focused on commercial activity - cafés, restaurants and bars, tourism or independent focused retail. There should not be any competing retail within this space that could be allocated within the town centre, but satellite offers as linked trip generators may be considered. These should draw back into the site around the central Landing Stage space and create active frontages to take advantage of the protected aspect from prevailing or estuary winds and the good solar aspect.

A key ground floor use proposed to the Masterplan is a major new cultural attractor - this could be a mix of facilities but should be something of the highest design quality, be engaging at all aspects to the street and create a major footfall generator with benefits to commercial use considered surrounding.

Other ground floor spaces would be intended to provide active frontages through a variety of means either ground floor duplex apartments to create the impression of town houses with apartments over predominantly to the south, or workspace aligning to the adjacent historic industrial buildings to the north. Given the potential scale of development at Woodside it is also felt to support local health uses; GP surgeries, dentists, gyms as part of the mix of uses and vibrancy and sustainability this can add.

It is anticipated that Hotels could form part of the mix to take advantage of the world class view, and with them bring their own ground floor restaurant and bar / amenity offer.

Where level change is required for protection against tidal flooding it is proposed through the masterplan to lift level and create terraces and landscaped steps / ramps - to mask the increase in ground floor levels to adjacent plots. The landscape should be designed for high footfall, with ground floor space to street / terrace dining focused on the river promenade and south facing spaces looking out over the Landing Stage central space.

Residential entrances should be located to create active frontages and where possible on busy commercial frontages located to quieter side streets. There is the potential for high quality residential amenity spaces to be provided at ground floor levels to provide an element of active frontage.

Provision of parking in this location would be considered against the sustainable location with excellent cycle and footpaths connecting to train stations, Mersey Ferry and to bus routes. As such a low car ownership model would be supported with parking integrated within plots in podium structures hidden from street view, or as the centralised parking strategy set out in section 4.10.



Figure 5.1 - Illustrative Masterplan Ground Floor Land-use Plan * key is included within the Parameter Plan in section 11.0

5.2 LAND USES – UPPER FLOOR //

Predominant uses at upper floor levels would be residential with the potential for hotel use, commercial office use and or landmark visitor facilities - such as roof top bars / upper level restaurants with a view.

The residential offer is intended to provide a new mix of homes for the town, with high quality purpose built apartments compliant with the Local Plan Design and Affordability Standards, and capitalising on the view and amazing location. Driving enhanced density is considered positive bringing people into a sustainable location, and driving active frontages below.

Hotel use on upper levels would offer significant potential to drive enhanced footfall into the town's local economy and provide sustainable active frontages throughout the seasons.

Facades should be designed to provide active frontages in response to this with balconies maximising on quality private external amenity, but responsive to the micro-climate.

Based on the scale and quantum of development indicated, in summary the masterplan could deliver in the region of:



c.1700 homes within the Masterplan redline and c.2560 in total including the areas outside of the redline masterplan.

2 new hotels, but potential for more.

11,300 sqm of active ground floor uses including workspace, Food and Beverage, Leisure and health.

2 new multistorey carparks supporting a centralised parking solution - 1 within the masterplan boundary

Opportunity for a major new cultural attraction

Enhanced public realm

New External Event Space

Improved Cycleways and enhanced connections to public transport and the town centre



Figure 5.2 - Illustrative Masterplan Upper Floor Land-use Plan * key is included within the Parameter Plan in section 11.0

5.3 SCALE AND MASSING //

It is intended that Woodside is an area of Transformation as set out within the Emerging Birkenhead Design Guide (yet to be issued for consultation). Scale would be in general Mid Rise 7 stories with opportunities for Tall and Super-Tall buildings shaped by view point and landmark orientation analysis. Detailed analysis across a number of views is set out within section 9 of the Report and should form the basis for agreeing scheme specific view points when developing proposals analysis / design development. The scale of buildings within Woodside is intended to also fall within the parameters set out in the Wirral Tall Buildings Guide.

The setting of the Hamilton Square Conservation Area is a key consideration with developing proposals to assess the impact on the conservation area. There are also a number of listed buildings and other heritage assets within the site which may also require assessment to be agreed with the Local Authority Planning and Conservation Officers.

View corridors have been identified on the plan which should be considered for any Planning Applications. Townscape Visual Impact Assessments for any buildings of scale would be required to support planning applications utilising these views points as a starting point. Detailed view points will need to be agreed with the Wirral Planning team.



Figure 5.3.1 - Map Showing Proposed and Existing tall Structures

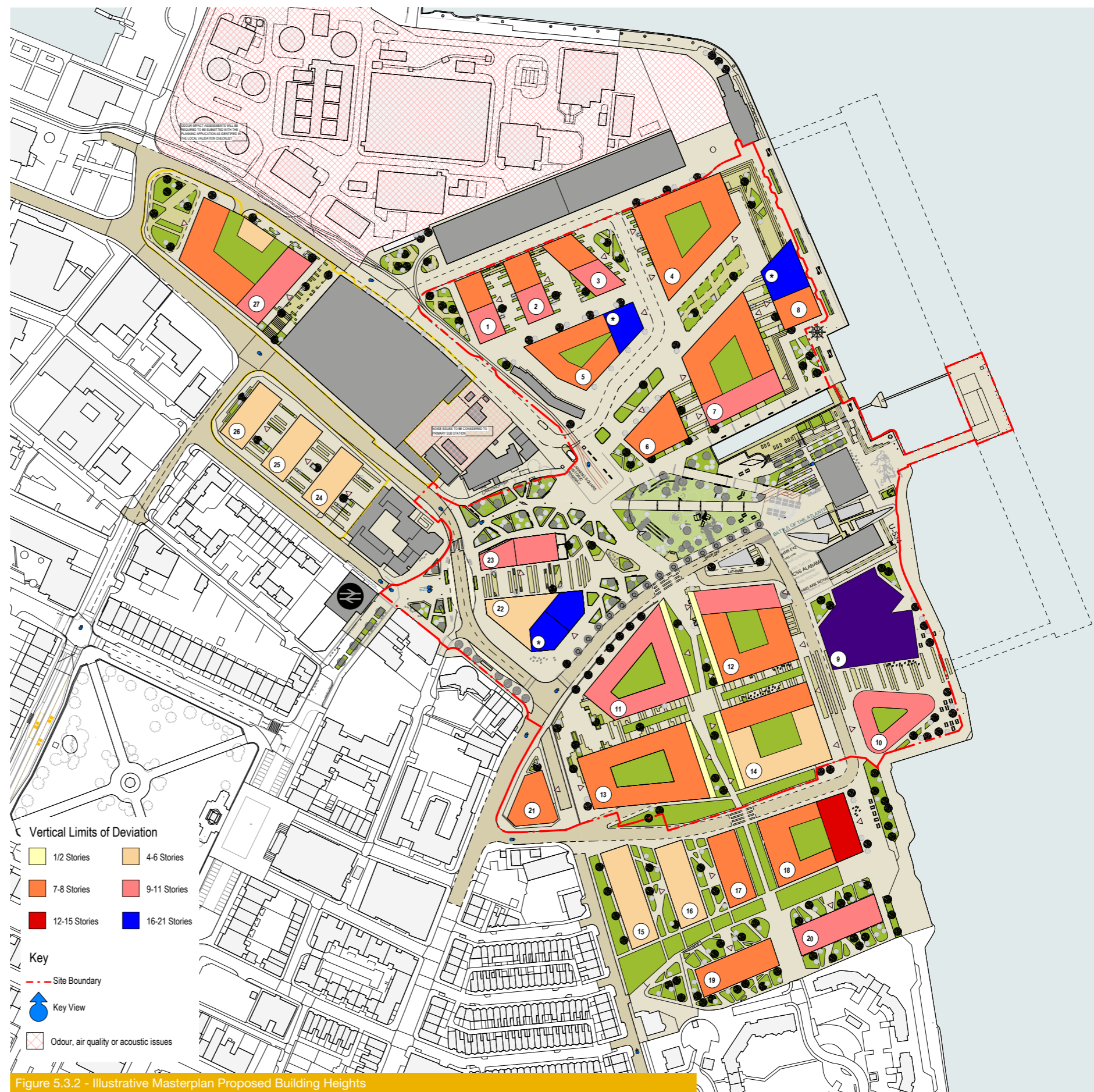
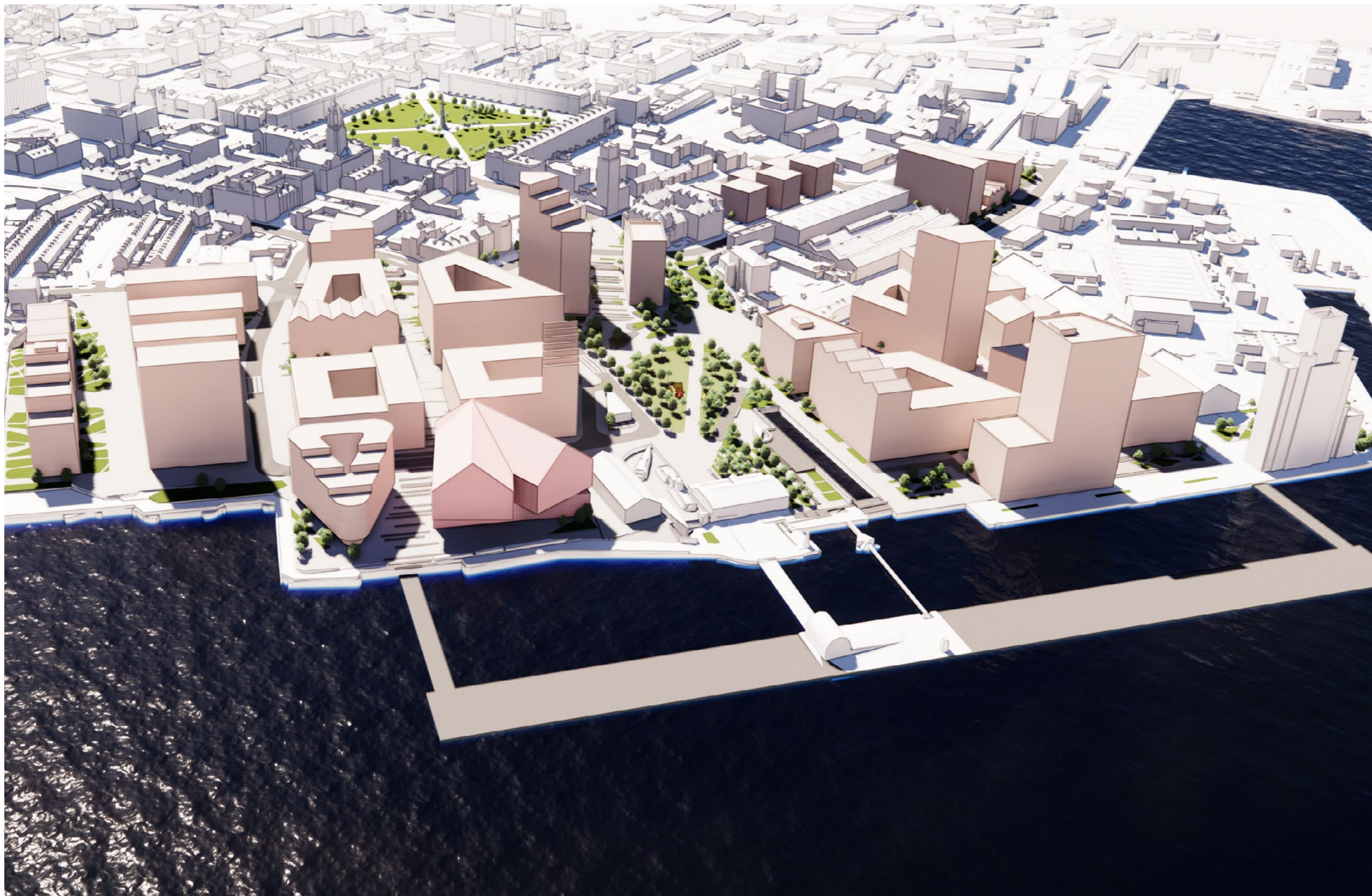


Figure 5.3.2 - Illustrative Masterplan Proposed Building Heights



5.4 OPPORTUNITY FOR A TALL BUILDING //

Tall building policy

The Local Plan defines a tall building in the context of Wirral as anything over 8 stories. With use identified as a means of landmarking locations, enhancing land use adjacent to public transport hubs, but with care required to heritage settings. The Left Bank is identified as a potential location for the use of tall buildings as either singular or clusters of buildings.

Policy WS 7.5 states that tall buildings must adhere to the following principles, any proposal which does not address these will be refused; Design must be exceptional and of the highest quality, grounded in context. It should:

- i. Add to local distinctiveness, identity and place-making; acknowledge and respect the heritage context; and activate the street-scape; and
- ii. Make positive contributions to public space and the environment at ground floor level. Provide high quality private and communal space and public realm including the use of outdoor space.

The design must be inclusive in design enabling use and occupation by all generations and demonstrate positive consideration of:

- i. Scale;
- ii. Form and massing;
- iii. Proportion and silhouette;
- iv. Detailed surface design;
- v. Facing materials;
- vi. Relationship to other structures;
- vii. Impact on street scape, near and approach views;
- viii. Impact on cityscape, local and distant views; and
- ix. Impact on the skyline.

Townscape and impact assessments will be required with proposals

that identify the impact of the structure and assess harm against any public benefit. They should demonstrate how the structures will enhance navigation, way-finding and landmarking where appropriate, and facilitate permeability of the townscape.

Micro-climate assessments will be required which demonstrate that the proposal either as stand-alone or as part of a cumulative series of buildings, will not damage local environmental conditions. These are to include wind modelling, shadow/light issues, noise, air quality, privacy and amenity.

Fully detailed proposals demonstrating the quality of finish, servicing, ventilation, structure, car parking and other logistical matters should be provided rather than dealt with as part of Reserved Matters applications.

Wirral Tall Buildings Guide is a document published in 2023 that clearly sets out how the Tall Buildings Policy should be applied. A methodology diagram in the guide is provided which summarises the approach that the Local Plan will take to analyse tall buildings proposals.

Impact Assessment - The potential location of tall buildings has been developed in order to respond to the location of landmarks in both immediate and distant context. With the use of tall or taller buildings within the context of Birkenhead a series of view points have been identified against which proposals should be assessed. It is intended that the Wirral 3D Model is utilised for this purpose and any proposals developed should be considered against this context.

A full Townscape Visual Impact Assessment should be considered as part of any proposal in line with industry guidance and the Local Plan.



Statement of Common Ground between the Council and Historic England here -

https://www.wirral.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-03/WBC009%20Statement%20of%20Common%20Ground%20between%20WBC%20and%20Historic%20England_1.pdf

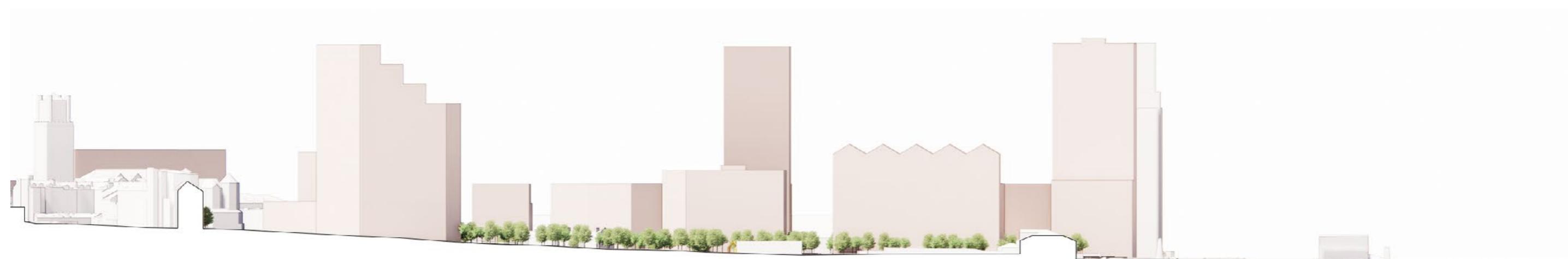


Figure 5.4 - Section through Illustrative Masterplan Massing

5.5 SKYLINE //

There is a clear and acknowledged opportunity for Woodside to provide a transformational impact on Birkenhead's skyline identity. Figure 5.5.2 below illustrates the lack of development in this space even in the general context height of Hamilton Square beyond. The most recognisable features are the Town Hall, Hamilton Square Tower, two tunnel vent shafts, and often the Stena Line Ferry moored in the foreground. The priority is lost as an outlier set within an industrial area today and does not feel connected to the area it was once so fundamentally linked. Historically, the part of the site was also occupied by a tall chimney that is no longer standing.

The proposed massing illustrated within figure 5.5.1 looks to maintain the visibility of the key landmarks in the main, albeit one of the vent shafts set back within the town is absorbed and is felt to be appropriate given their function, whilst the other heritage features are incorporated within the massing as key orientation devices.

However, an expansive river view is not experienced as a singular event, rather as a series of kinetic views as you move along the waterfront. The following page provides an illustration of this principal and how the proposed massing has, and should to be considered by future tall and super tall building proposals to ensure that the best comprehensive skyline can be created. Utilising the Birkenhead 3D Model should be a requirement of any planning application to allow detailed consideration by the Planning, Urban Design and Conservation Officers.

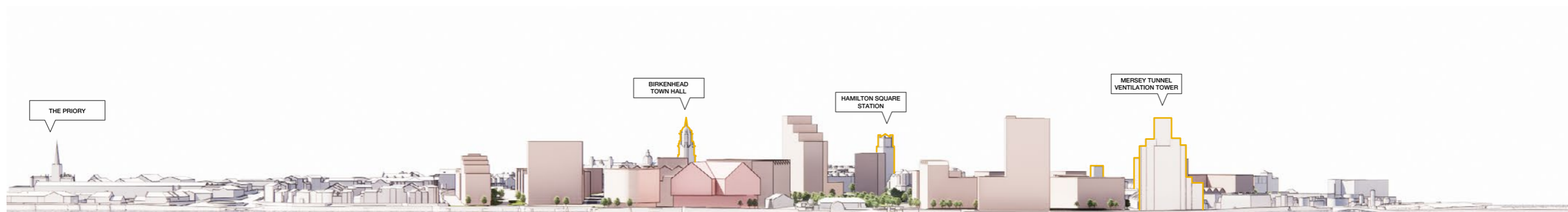


Figure 5.5.1 - View of Illustrative Masterplan Skyline utilising the Birkenhead 3d Model



Figure 5.5.2 - Google Earth Skyline view

5.6 A KINETIC WATERFRONT //

The views identified are not intended to be prescriptive, but as an illustration of the importance of the kinetic aspect of the view from the Liverpool foreshore to Woodside, and the role of the historic landmarks that the skyline today is created by.

New viewpoints should be selected taking these as a starting point with Planning and Urban Design Officers, and a narrative over impact / proposed enhanced skyline should be provided as part of any building application within the Masterplan boundary.



Figure 5.6.7 - Google Earth view illustrating viewpoints and river promenade

EXISTING



Figure 5.6.1 - View from Kings Parade and Coburg Wharf



Figure 5.6.2 - View from Kings Parade and Half tide Wharf



Figure 5.6.3 - View from Kings Parade and Dukes Dock

MASTERPLAN



Figure 5.6.1a - View from Kings Parade and Coburg Wharf



Figure 5.6.2a - View from Kings Parade and Half tide Wharf

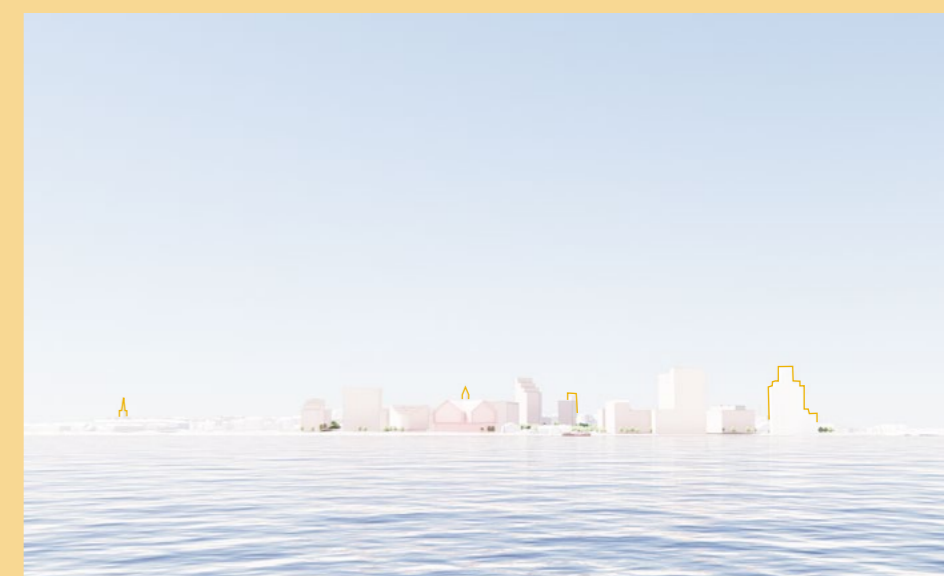


Figure 5.6.3a - View from Kings Parade and Dukes Dock



Figure 5.6.4 - View from Kings Parade and Canning Dock bridge

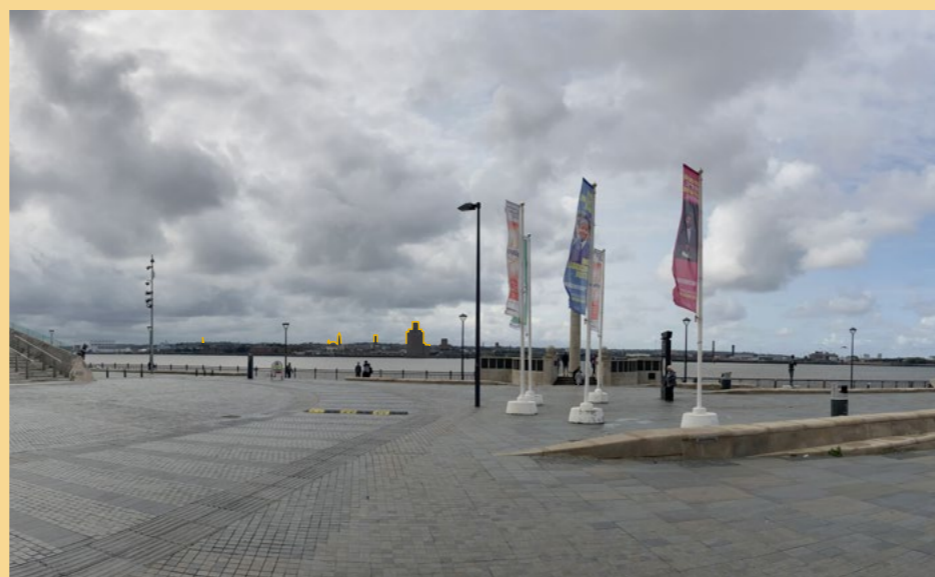


Figure 5.6.5 - View from Pier Head and Museum of Liverpool



Figure 5.6.6 - View from Pier Head and Ferry Terminal

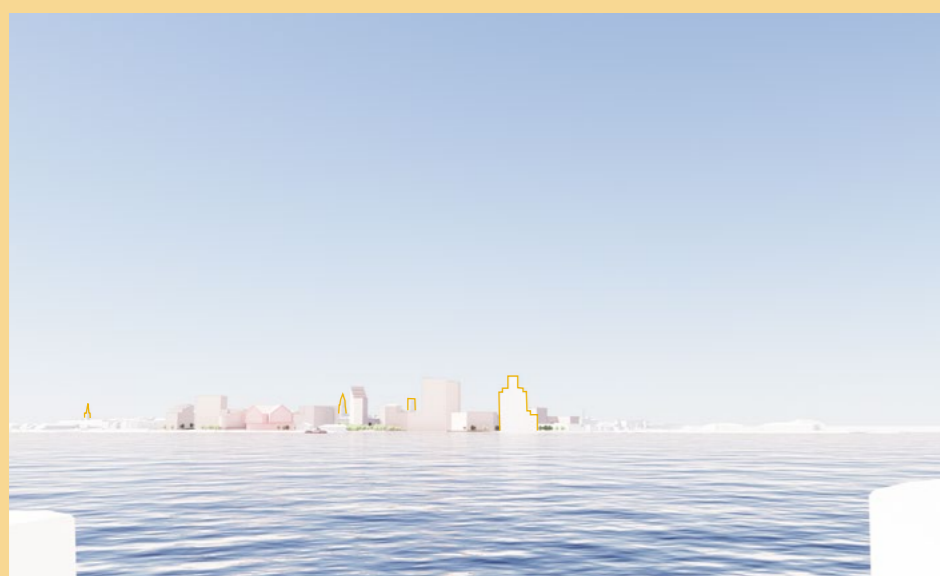


Figure 5.6.4a - View from Kings Parade and Canning Dock bridge

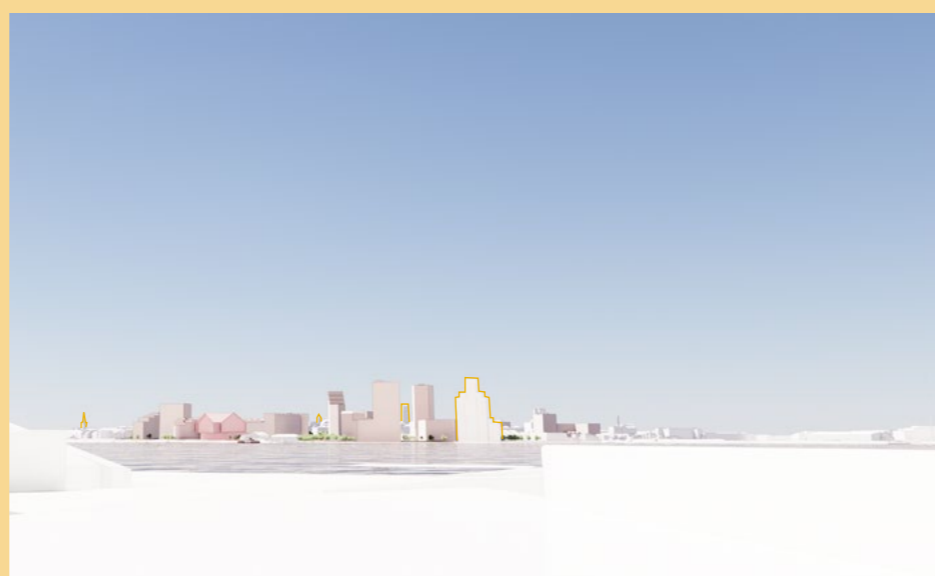


Figure 5.6.5a - View from Pier Head and Museum of Liverpool



Figure 5.6.6a - View from Pier Head and Ferry Terminal

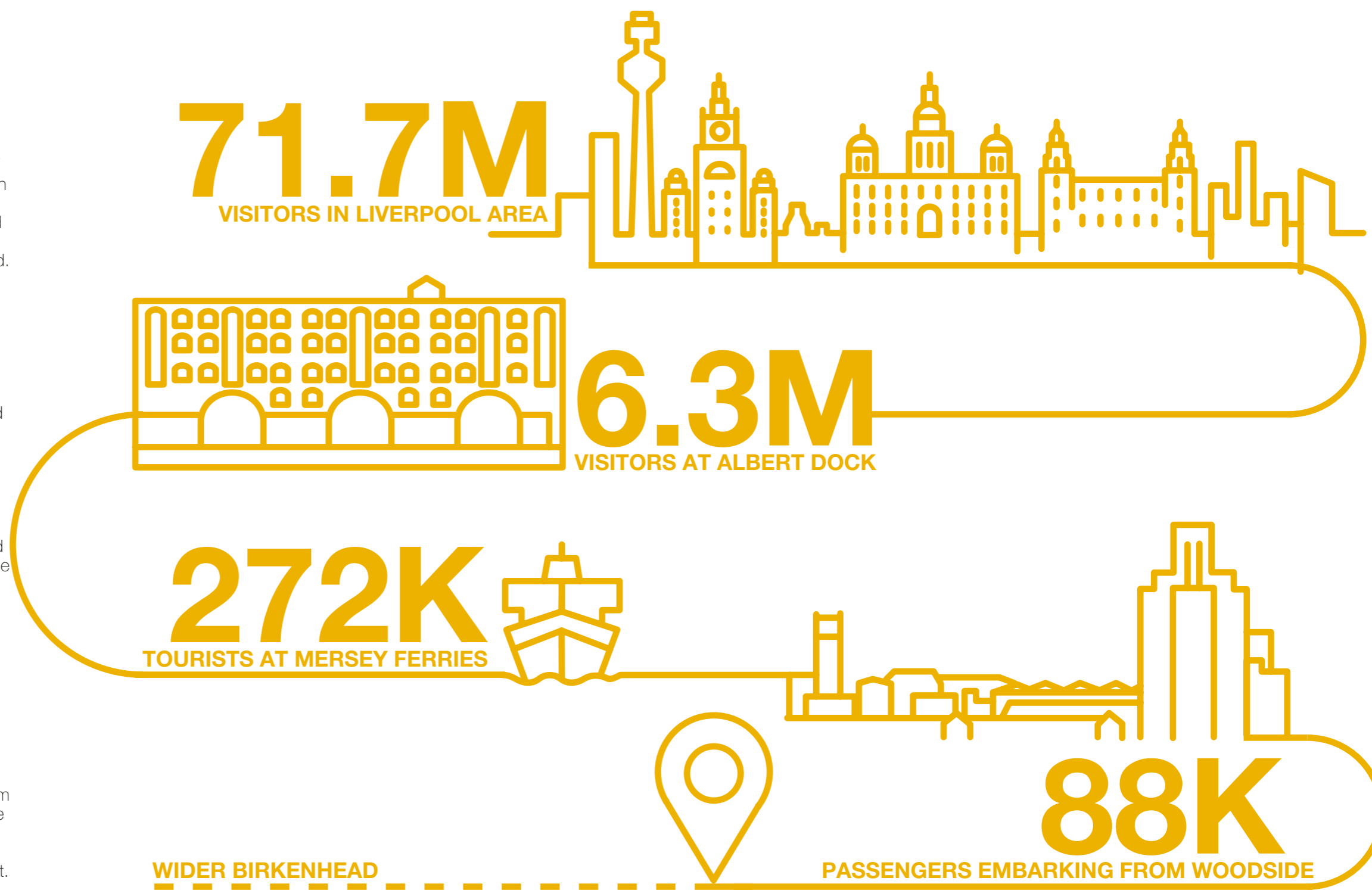
5.7 OPPORTUNITY FOR TOURISM //

Liverpool is a major draw of visitor economy in the UK and yet Wirral sees very little of this activity or spend today. Woodside is seen as a key part of changing that relationship benefiting both the Wirral with new tourism led economic benefits, but also enhancing the experience to visitors to Liverpool with a presentation of the world famous view in a high quality context, and with a major new visitor attraction giving people a reason to make the journey across the Mersey on either the world famous ferry, or via the train which takes just 3 minutes from Hamilton Square to James Street and the Pierhead.

The proposed masterplan should look to deliver a reinvigorated tourism strategy and provide a further opportunity for Wirral Council to work with partners to improve the tourism offer by building on existing visitor attractions such as:

- Woodside Ferry Village – home to local eateries and bars with seating for over 150 people inside and a further 150 providing the perfect place to view the world’s greatest skyline.
- The decks of the world-famous Mersey Ferry which currently offer the best way to see the city’s world-famous skyline.
- The planned refresh of the historic Woodside based U-boat Story attraction and expansion with the Battle of the Atlantic Museum.
- Woodside Ventilation Tower projection and light show - promoting Eurovision 2023, offering opportunities for Birkenhead-based creative technology companies and shining a light on the regeneration of Birkenhead.

The masterplan should offer an unmissable opportunity to direct attention across the Mersey and showcase Wirral’s industrial and historical waterfront. As regeneration could transform the Woodside area it is imagined that the area could become a focus for tourism by promoting a mixed-use regeneration of the waterside and driving architectural quality of building design, seeking to facilitate attractions and support the creative industries in order to realise a vibrant and diverse district.



A key part of the concept at Woodside is to capture the idea that the Left Bank is part of a wider whole with Liverpool:

- Creating a series of cultural and leisure attractions that capitalise on the River Mersey view from both sides of the water
- Act as a generator to wider linked trips and visits to other connected cultural and leisure attractors within the Town
- Drive economic benefits from sustained increased visitor numbers, local spending and attraction of wider regeneration
- Celebrating Woodside's post-industrial heritage
- Create and maintain green recreational landscapes - healthy places that supports sustainable development.
- New destinations + leisure spaces which will draw visitors across the Mersey to visit Birkenhead
- An extension to the existing Liverpool Tourist Trail

Woodside could be the first major leisure led mixed use destination on either bank of the Mersey that is purpose designed to maximise views across to one of the world's most recognisable skylines. In doing so it could also create a high-quality point of arrival into Birkenhead acting as a catalyst for the revival of a much wider area.

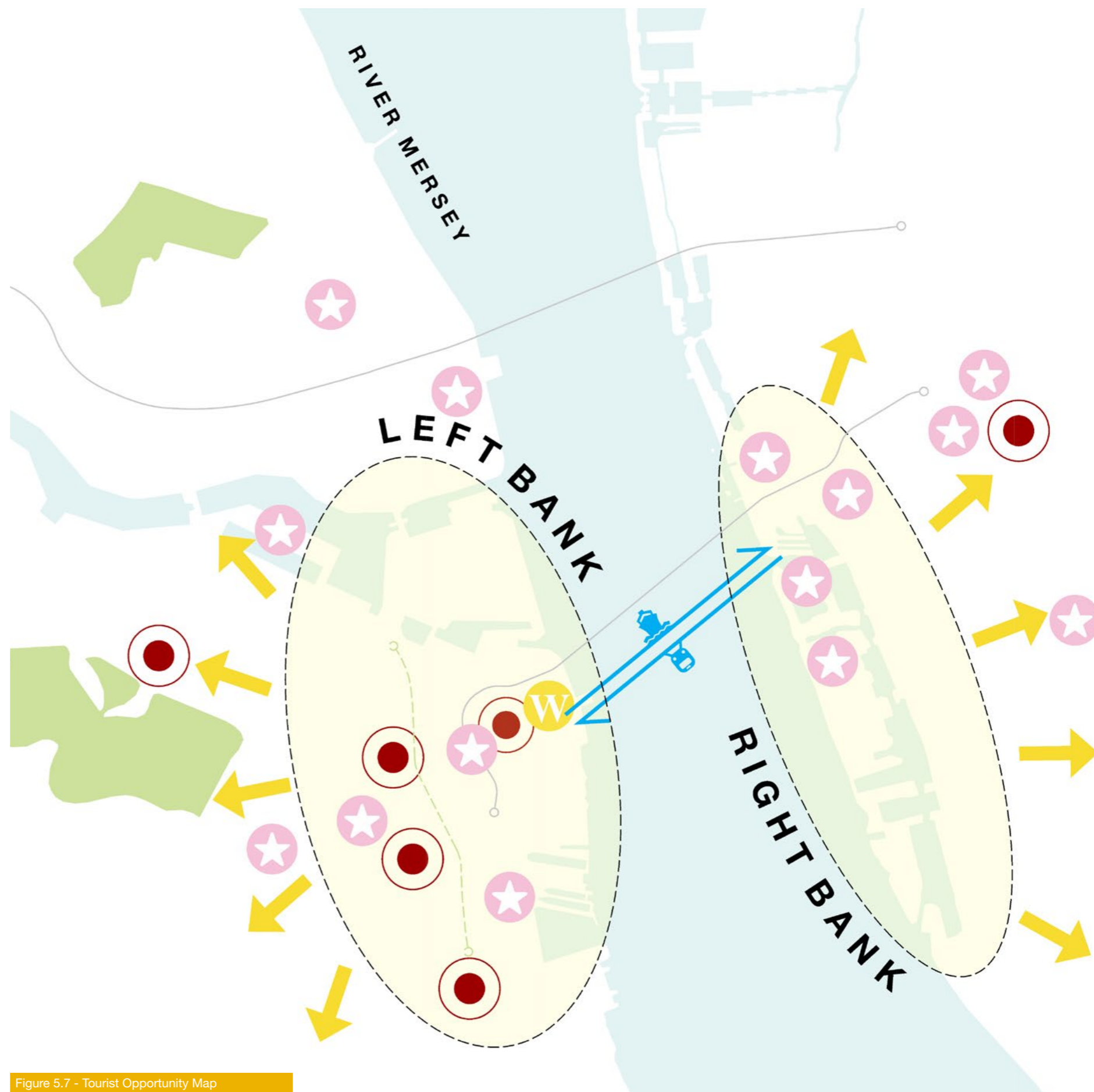


Figure 5.7 - Tourist Opportunity Map

5.8 CULTURE LED REGENERATION //

Underpinning regeneration with culture in waterfront locations is a tried and tested approach. It can be seen in places such as Gateshead in Newcastle with first the Baltic Flour Mill Centre for Contemporary Art and later the Sage, The Guggenheim in Bilbao, The Opera House in Hamburg at Hafen City, the Opera House in Oslo, O2 Arena in London, or in closer context with The Lowry and Imperial War Museum in Salford, and the Museum of Liverpool just over the water.

Woodside is as identified at the heart of a cultural trail of visitor experiences including Hamilton Square, U Boat Stody, Eurkea, Wirral Transport Museum and forthcoming Battle of the Atlantic Museum, and the potential NML Transport Shed. However, the environment and landscape to Woodside offers so much potential to add to this mix of experiences and create a unique new asset for Merseyside.



Figure 5.8.2 - Gateshead Waterfront

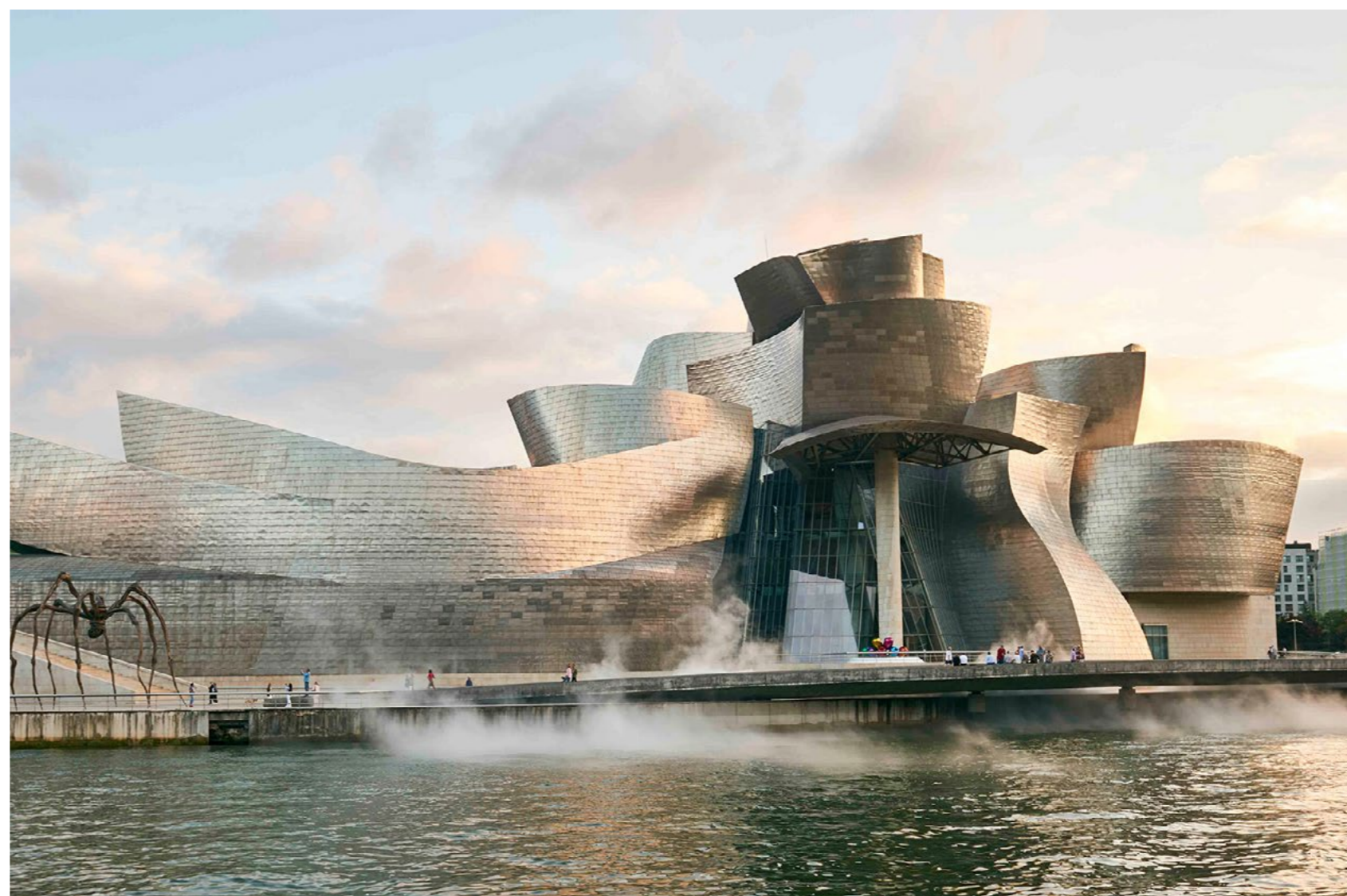


Figure 5.8.3 - Guggenheim in Bilbao by Frank Gehry

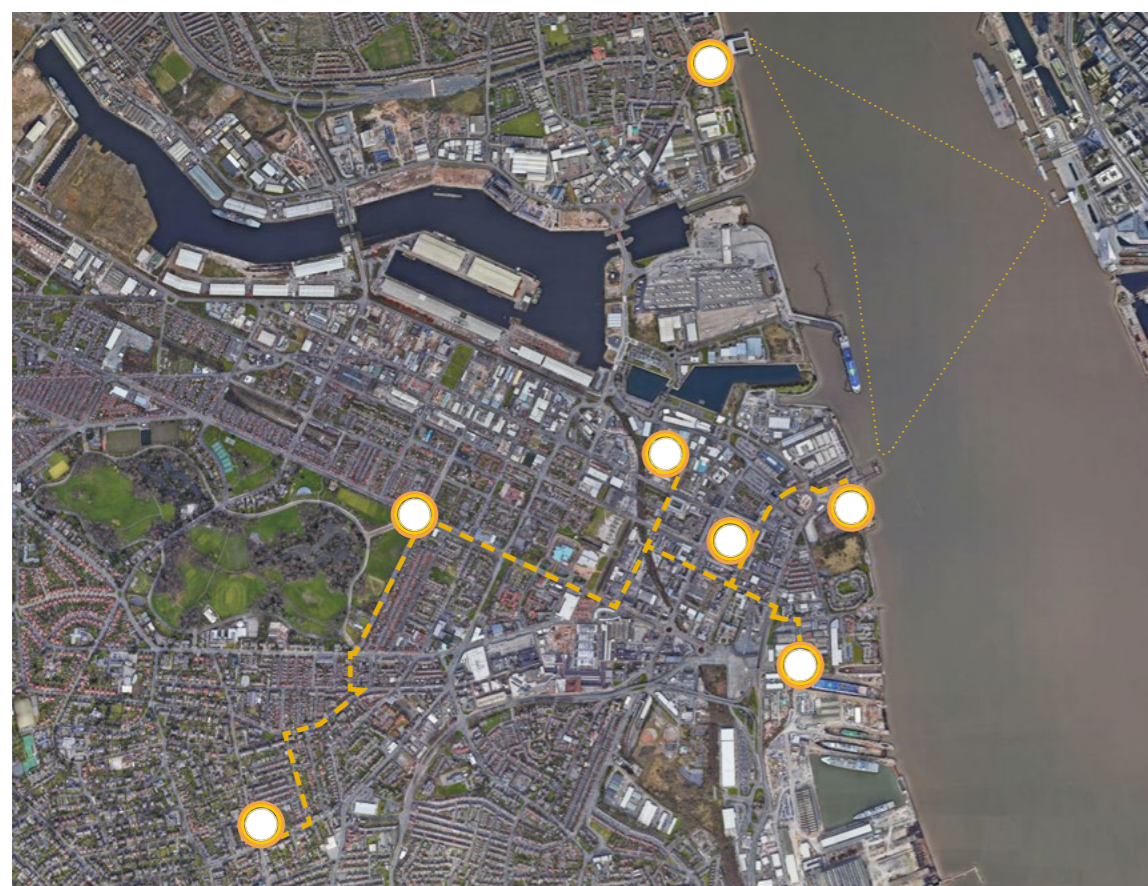


Figure 5.8.1 - Map of existing Birkenhead Tourist attractions



Figure 5.8.4 - O2 in London by RRSP



Figure 5.8.5 - Design District London



Figure 5.8.6 - The Imperial War Museum Salford Quays

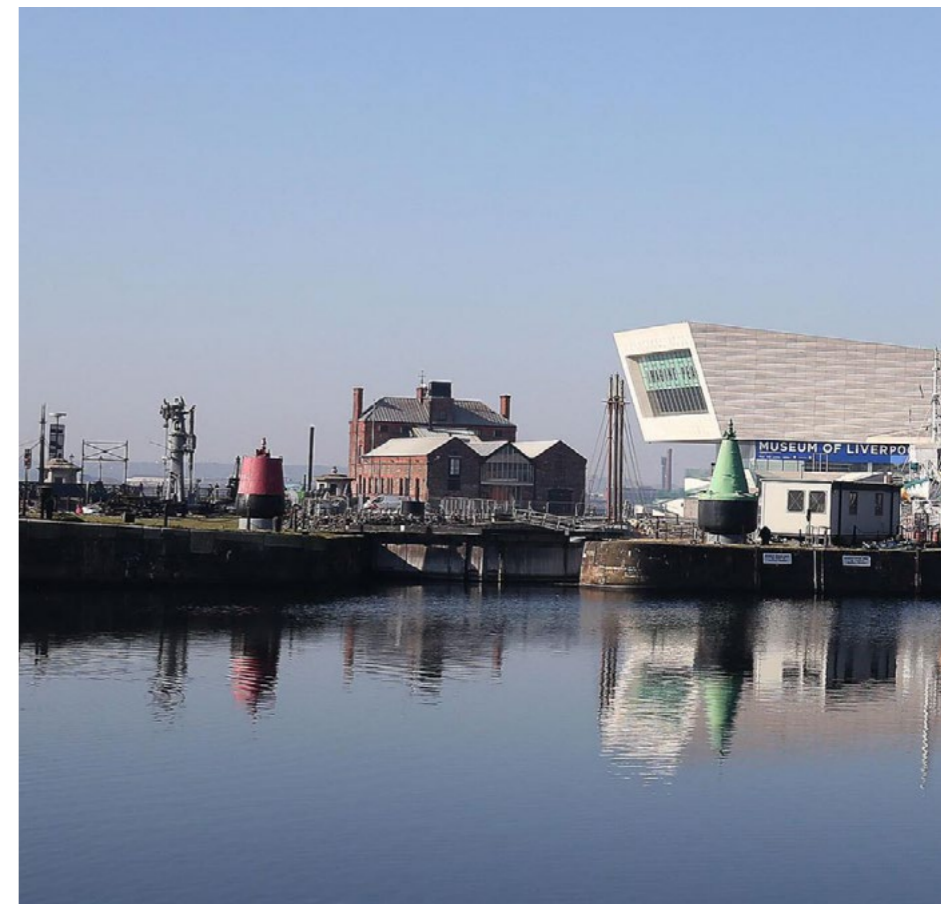


Figure 5.8.7 - Museum of Liverpool - Pier Head by 3XN



Figure 5.8.8 - Hamburg Opera House, Hafenspeicher by Herzog de Meuron

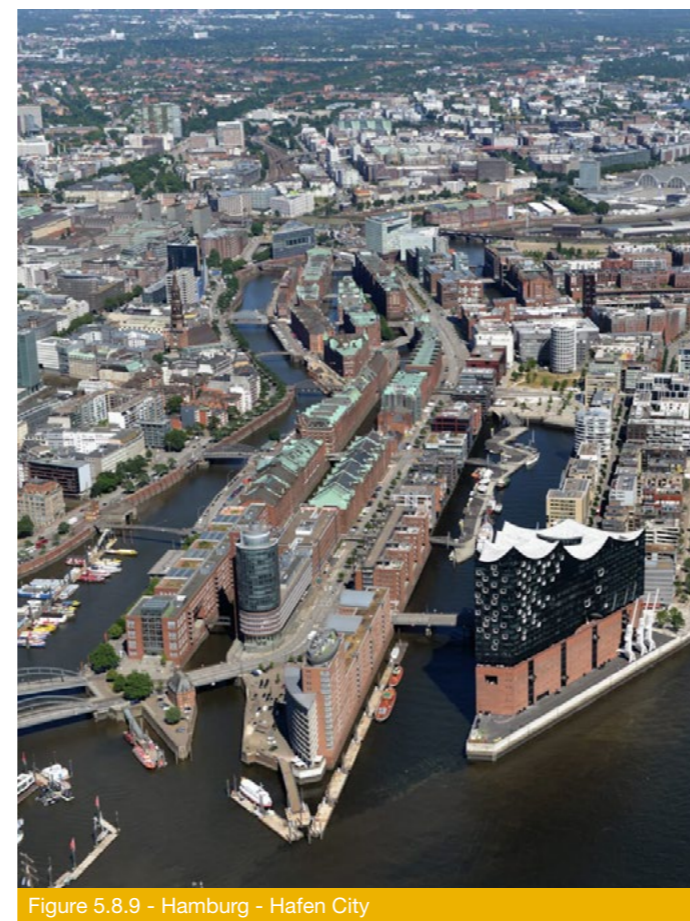


Figure 5.8.9 - Hamburg - Hafenspeicher

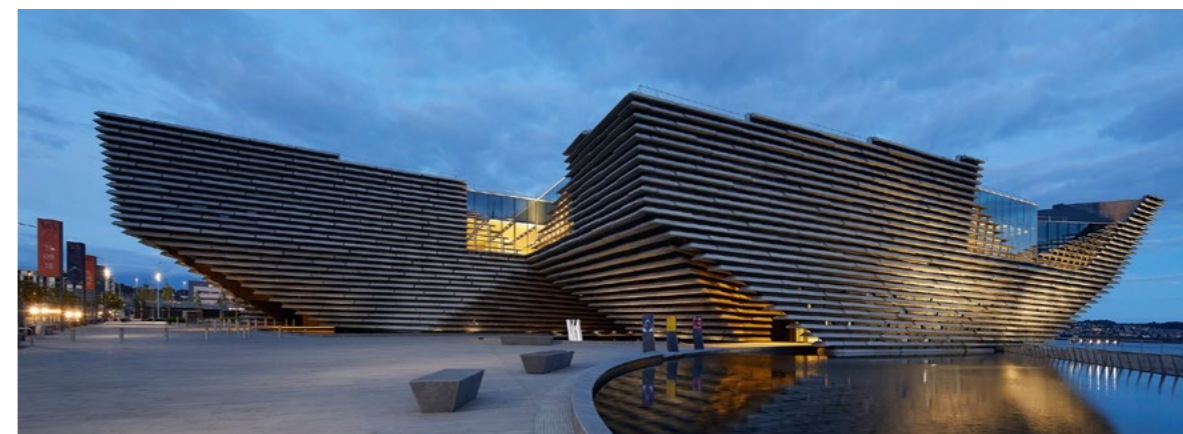


Figure 5.8.10 - V&A Dundee by Kengo Kuma



Figure 5.8.11 - Opera House Oslo by Snohetta

5.9 CELEBRATING HERITAGE //

Heritage is an intrinsic part of area's identity and is a key consideration when planning for Woodside's future. Multiple heritage assets are located within the site or sit adjacent to it, including both listed assets and heritage buildings and features of the past identity. Part of the Woodside site also falls within the Hamilton Square conservation area.

These historic elements help define the unique character of Woodside. They ground the area and connect it to its origin rooted in maritime trade and transport. Preserving and celebrating these connections within the masterplan ensures that the area remains true to its history and that proposals serve as a way to continue the legacy of Woodside rather than erase it.

While much of the area has changed over the years two historic transport services continue to run to Woodside. Mersey ferry was first established in the early 13th century and was a key factor in the development of the Birkenhead Waterfront. The Birkenhead Tram was the first street tramway in Britain, and remains as a tourist attraction today linking to the Wirral Transport Museum.

Heritage Tram

The heritage tramway was opened in the 1990's and connects from Woodside Ferry Terminal to the Wirral Transport Museum. In 2023 tramway services were temporarily suspended due to issues with the trams and damage being caused by the track radius.

The Heritage Tram is seen as an important part of the future of the area, and the introduction of a new museum to the waterfront, and a planned expansion of the Wirral Transport Museum offer lasting cohesive appeal. This asset should be celebrated in the landscape and the wayfinding strategy.

The masterplan and separate landscape proposals consulted on, propose pulling back the last stop of the tramway away from the Ferry building, removing the track radius issues, and situating it closer to the train station and in direct view of both visitors coming from the ferry and Hamilton Square station. This move also puts the stop along the axis of one of the most prominent pedestrian desire lines within the masterplan red line.

The new heritage tram stop is proposed to be located next to the Grade II Listed Former Police Booth and Gated Piers and opposite the listed Shore Road Pumping Station. This should further connect the heritage assets in Woodside and can serve as a celebration of the Woodside Heritage.



Figure 5.9.1 - Map of heritage tram path showing new Woodside stop location



Figure 5.9.2 - Heritage Trams parked in Pacific Road Warehouse



Figure 5.9.3 - Heritage tram



Figure 5.9.6 - Historic photo of the Birkenhead tram

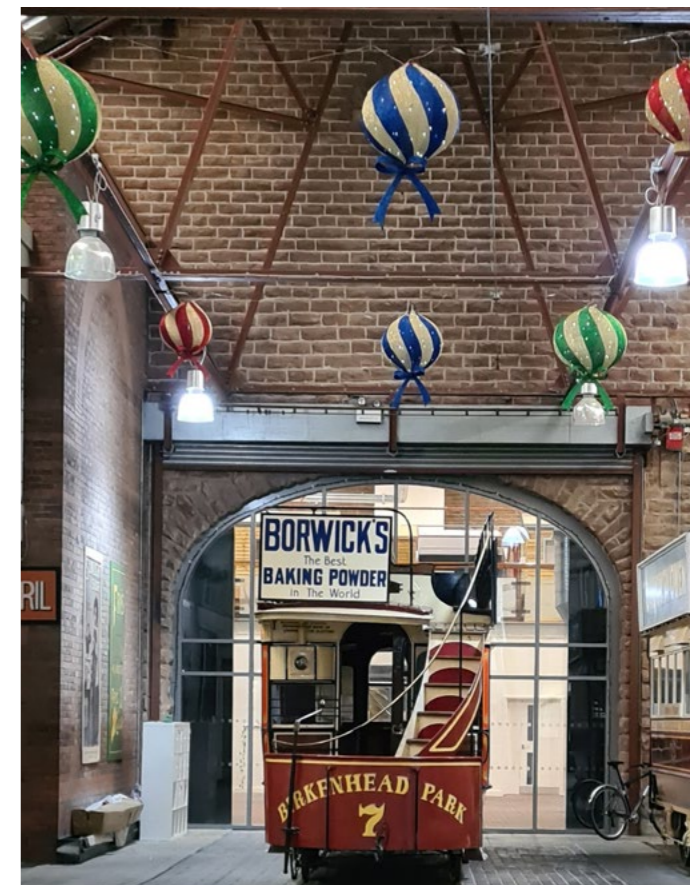


Figure 5.9.7 - Heritage tram parked in Pacific Road Warehouse



Figure 5.9.4 - Current final stop of the Woodside Tram



Figure 5.9.5 - Former Police Booth and Gate Piers



Figure 5.9.8 - Historic drawing featuring the Birkenhead tram



5.10 PUBLIC OPEN SPACE //

The Masterplan should provide compliance with Policy WS 5.2 - Open space Provision. The proposed approach at Woodside would be to deliver full compliance with both LEAP and LAP provision, and justify on the grounds of proximity to a river promenade that the NEAP provision is not appropriate in this location. This is intended to ensure an increase of public open space in the area.

Indicative locations are identified for the provision of LEAP and LAP within the Masterplan. Whilst the LEAP provision is intended to be prescriptive in its general location, the LAP provision are to be taken as illustrative only and subject to detailed planning in terms of location and numbers to be provided.

In line with WS 5.2 item J as a regeneration area the provision of public accessible open space can be provided through alternative well designed, high quality open space, which may include access to formal or informal areas for local recreation or play, waterfront access, treelined streets, green roofs, access to community growing areas, bespoke approaches to community involvement in maintenance and improved access to appropriate strategic provision.

Key

-  Public Open Space - LAP (0.01ha local area for play)- within 100m of each dwelling (Small area of open space specifically designated and primarily laid out for very young children)
Secondary Public Realm Space
-  Public Open Space - LEAP (0.04ha locally equipped area for play)- within 400m of each dwelling (Open space specifically designed and laid out with features including equipment for children who are beginning to play independently)

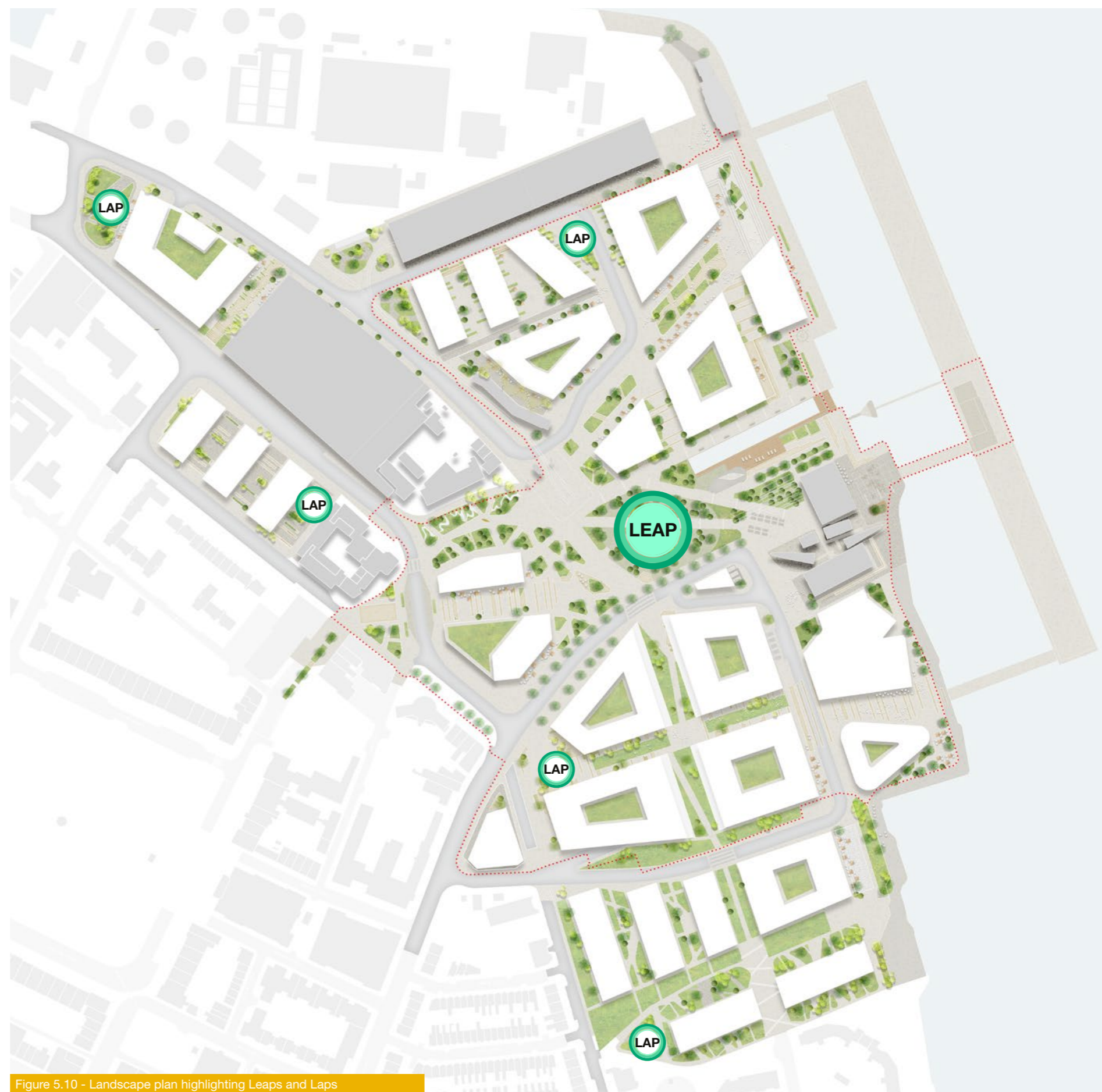


Figure 5.10 - Landscape plan highlighting Leaps and Laps

5.11 SUB CHARACTER AREAS //

It is felt that Woodside should have a singular identity which should be created by a consistent approach to public realm, wayfinding signage, external lighting and street furniture, and use of this design code.

However, given the scale of development and the context of the site the masterplan lends itself to being subdivided down into a series of sub-character areas to suit context and potential land use / ground floor active frontage typologies.

The Landing Stage

This is an intended to be focused on cultural and active ground floor uses focused on street dining, independent / local retail, hotels and other supporting leisure uses.

Woodside South

This area interfaces with two existing residential communities with Priory Wharf and the terraced housing off Chester Street to Church Street. This area would be seen as being more residential in nature with ground floor residential uses and streets that provide enhanced links for wider residents into this area and potential for use on towards the Priory as part of a heritage trail around the town. Edge to the promenade offer hotel use potential with commercial ground floors.

Woodside North

With the context of Pacific Road Warehouse and the Great Northern / Cheshire Lines Building use as commercial workspace with a logical creative element to it given their heritage features and restrictions, this creates an opportunity to reinforce this community with supporting new workspace and residential uses and again hotel use to the key spine.

Woodside Central

This is a key interfacing site with Hamilton Square and directing people who arrive at Woodside on towards the Town Centre. As such this is seen as offering the potential for higher density uses above ground floor leisure uses creating an active and vibrant impression when arriving at this point. This site offers an opportunity to create a tall element that serves as point of wayfinding and offering panoramic views at upper levels.

Canning Street

This is an area of split potential with both residential and creative workspace neighbours. It more directly interfaces with the Hamilton Square identity and as it moves towards the town will become more sensitive to development use and scale.

The following Design Code sets out the approach as per these character areas.

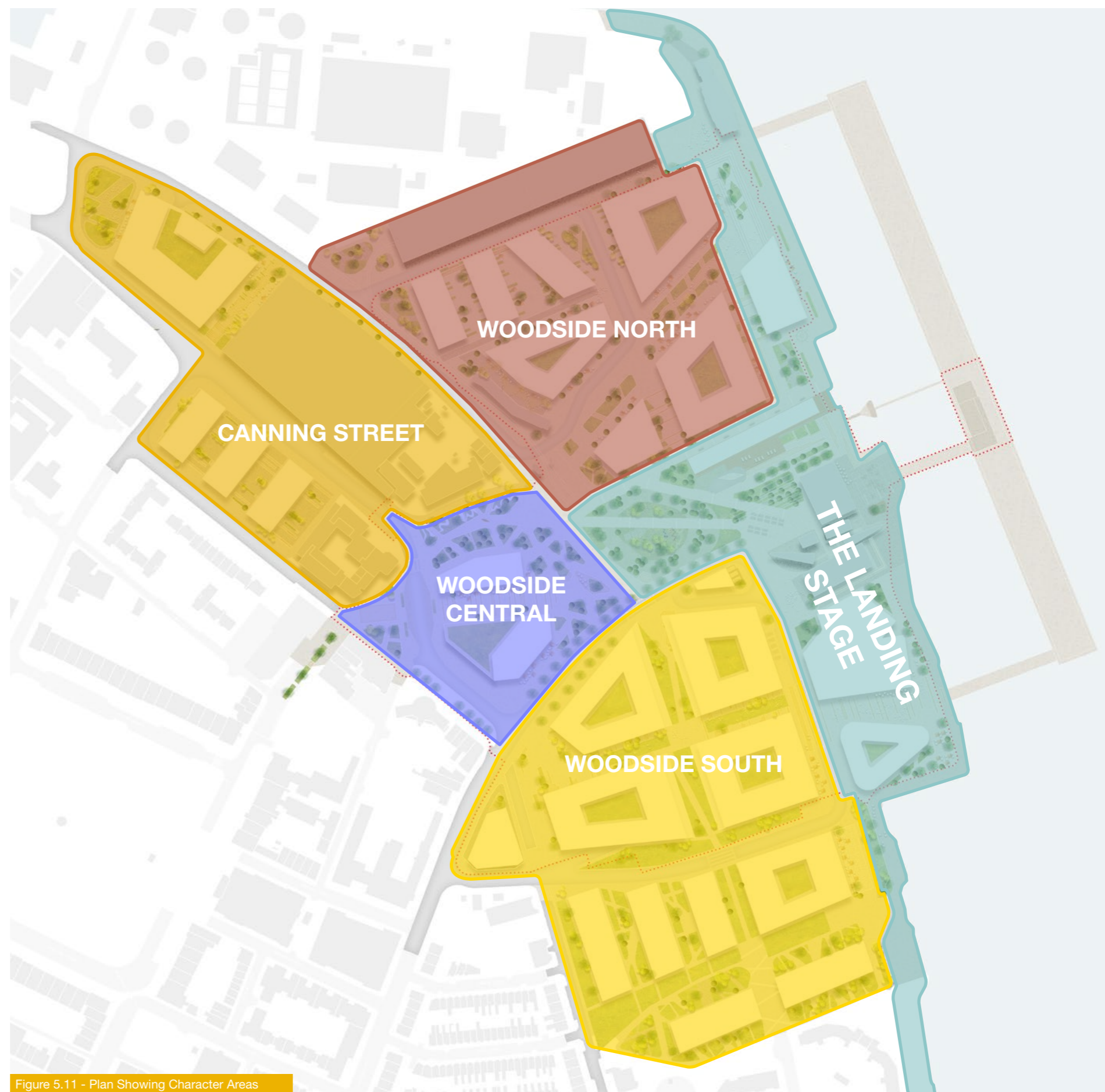


Figure 5.11 - Plan Showing Character Areas

5.12 FUTURE CONTEXT //

Woodside is at the heart of wider regeneration plans, and as such ensuring the proposed masterplan complements and supports their integration and growth is key to the proposals achieving their objectives.

Figure 5.12.1 sets out the proposed masterplan figure ground plan within the Waterfront Development Action Plan Masterplan.

The following page of images illustrate wider development proposals that also offer the potential to influence the design of Woodside. These include:

- Wirral Waters
- Hind Street
- Dock Branch Park & The Transport Shed
- Dock Branch Park Neighbourhood
- St Werburghs's Masterplan
- Town Centre Masterplan



Figure 5.12.1 - Proposed Masterplan set within Waterfront DAP



Figure 5.12.2 - U-Boat story



Figure 5.12.3 - Redbridge Quay in Wirral Waters



Figure 5.12.4 - Wirral Waters



Figure 5.12.5 - Hind Street Urban Village



Figure 5.12.6 - Dock Branch Park

6

DEVELOPMENT SITE AREAS + SITE-SPECIFIC GUIDELINES //



6.1 DEVELOPMENT PARAMETERS - THE LANDING STAGE //

Ground Floor Use: The Promenade is a key asset to maximise the value of the view towards Liverpool and the Mersey. At the heart of these uses is a new highly visible cultural attraction - the exact function of this is to be determined, but should act as a key tourism draw of regional / national significance.

Supporting uses should be focused on: Restaurant, Bars and Cafés - including Hotel receptions or residential amenity space, tourism / independent retail, leisure. Blank frontages are to be minimised for any large scale leisure use to avoid impacting on the creation of an active street scene.

Residential entrances should be located to the new side streets to maximise commercial frontage, but also in response to the flood risk identified to allow for level to be increased.

With level changes it is important that this does not introduce blank frontages of walls or zones of grills etc. Any level change should be carefully integrated into the building design and create dynamic terraces for capitalising on the views available.

Upper Floor Use: The cultural attraction should be highly visible during both the day and night, and scale should be over at minimum 3 stories or two very large stories.

In supporting buildings within this zone buildings should be focused on residential and hotel use. There would be an ambition for some element of the upper level of the buildings to provide public access; roof top terrace, bar / restaurant, etc.

There is an ambition that the Grade II Listed vent shaft should allow for some form of managed public access. Subject to detailed agreement this could offer dramatic views across the area and the Liverpool Skyline and may be a 'quick-win' intervention to drive new footfall.

Density: Residential Density would be expected to significantly exceed a minimum of 70dph in-line with the emerging Local Plan Policy WS 3.2 - Housing Density Grain: Buildings should ensure that the building alignment

allows the view corridors to be maintained as identified.

Response to neighbouring buildings: There are a number of neighbouring Grade II Listed buildings to be responsive within the immediate context of this zone.

The Tunnel Vent shaft has particular prominence on the existing promenade, given its location set to the rear of the walkway, as such this is a fix and building adjacent to this should be respectful of its continued role.

Pacific Road sits immediately behind the vent shaft and as a two storey high structure it is important that buildings visibly step down to this location.

Woodside Ferry Terminal sits at the heart of the site and is a focal point to visitors experience. This building offers a food-hall style offer as a focal point and there are developing proposals to add a new museum to extend the attraction of the current U Boat Storey. Today the U Boat location compromises the listed buildings setting and it is identified that over time the U Boat should be relocated away from this building as a preferred strategy.

The Battle of the Atlantic Museum is intended as a new visitor attraction and is considered to be an important part of the future cultural importance of Woodside, however this building should be designed to facilitate either expansion of a major new facility to be added to capitalise upon its location and draw people to the area creating huge economic potential.

Heights: Existing buildings in the area range from 2 storeys to the tunnel vent shaft at approximately 21 stories. In general outside of the new cultural attraction buildings are identified to be in the Mid Rise to Tall Building classification ranging from 7 - 8 and up to 15 stories. The scale of these buildings is explored through the view corridors within Section 9 of this document.

It is important that the scale and massing of buildings creates a clear space between taller elements to retain Birkenhead's townscape skyline identity with a series of taller elements set against a relative consistent scale backdrop.

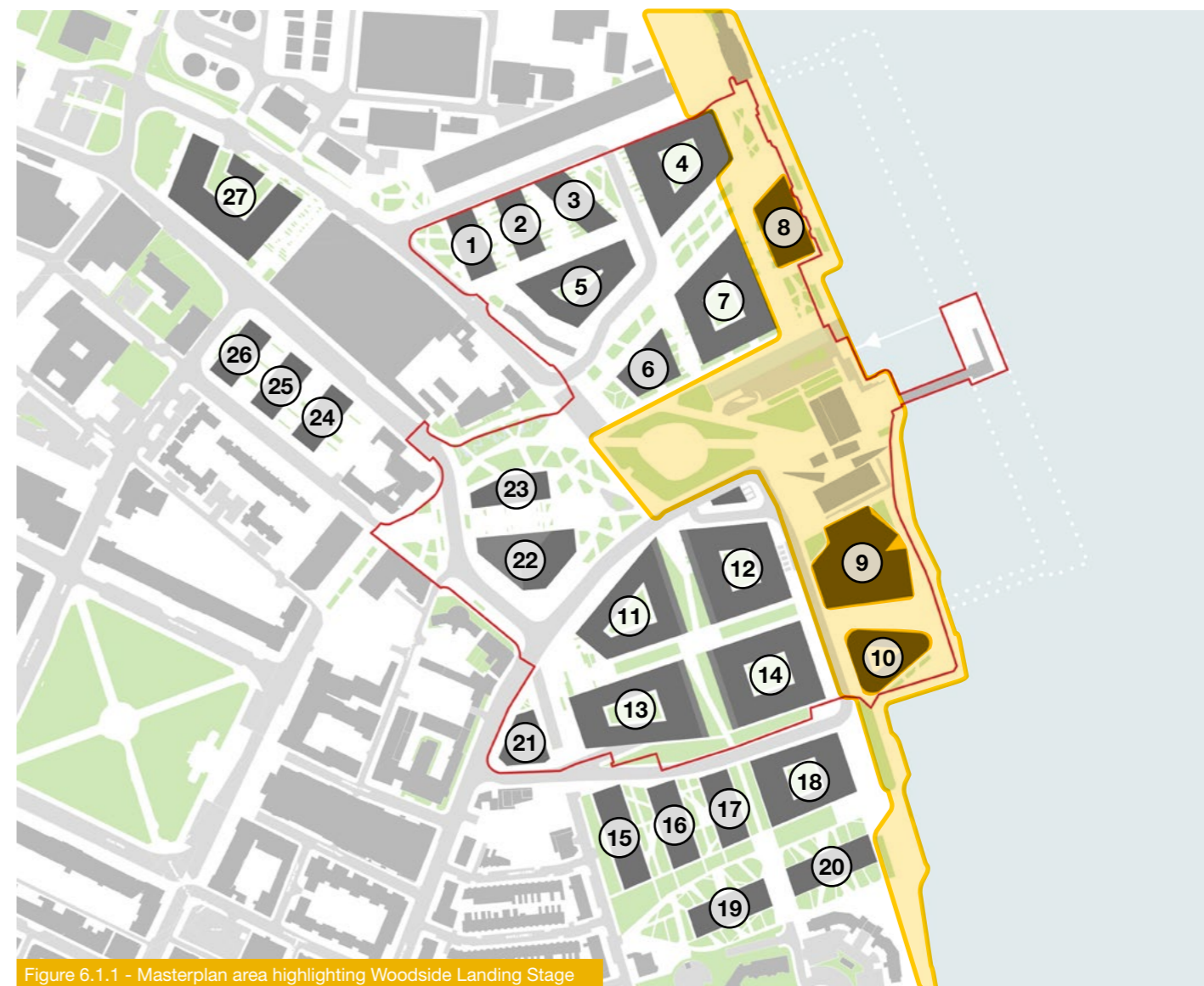


Figure 6.1.1 - Masterplan area highlighting Woodside Landing Stage

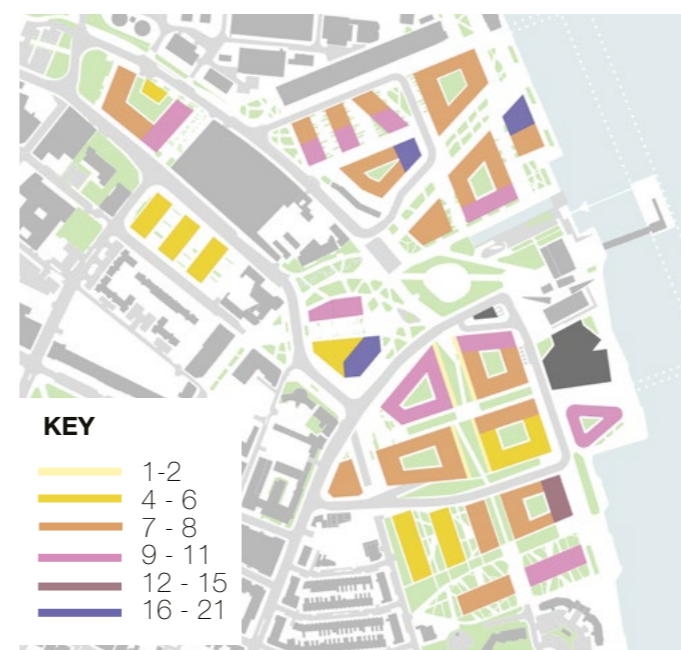


Figure 6.1.2 - Proposed building heights

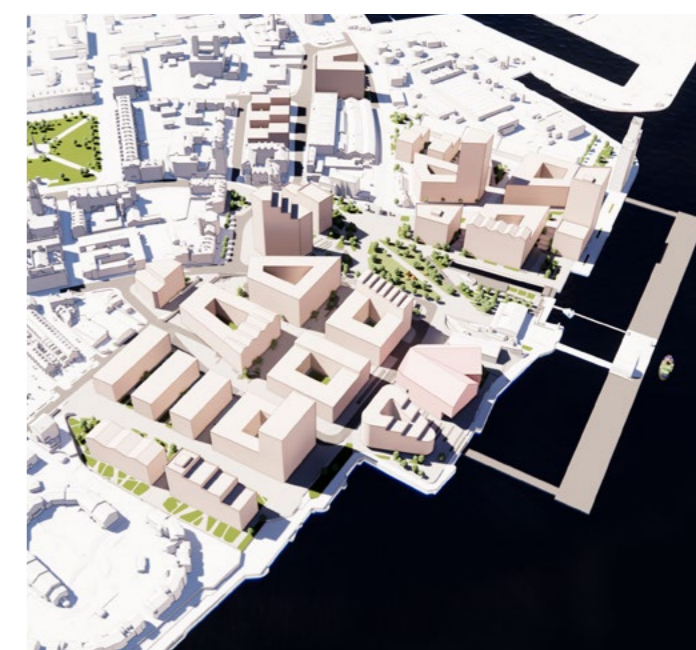


Figure 6.1.3 - Aerial view of masterplan



Figure 6.1.4 - Masterplan Woodside illustration



Figure 6.1.6 - The Wren Hotel, by BDP, Dublin



Figure 6.1.7 - The Sage by Foster and Partners, Gateshead



Figure 6.1.9 - National Museum of United States Navy by BIG Architects, Washington DC



Figure 6.1.5 - Brooklyn Bridge Park, New York



Figure 6.1.8 - Transport Museum by Zaha Hadid, Glasgow



Figure 6.1.10 - Battersea Power Station Lift



Figure 6.1.11 - Guinness Factory Storehouse, Dublin

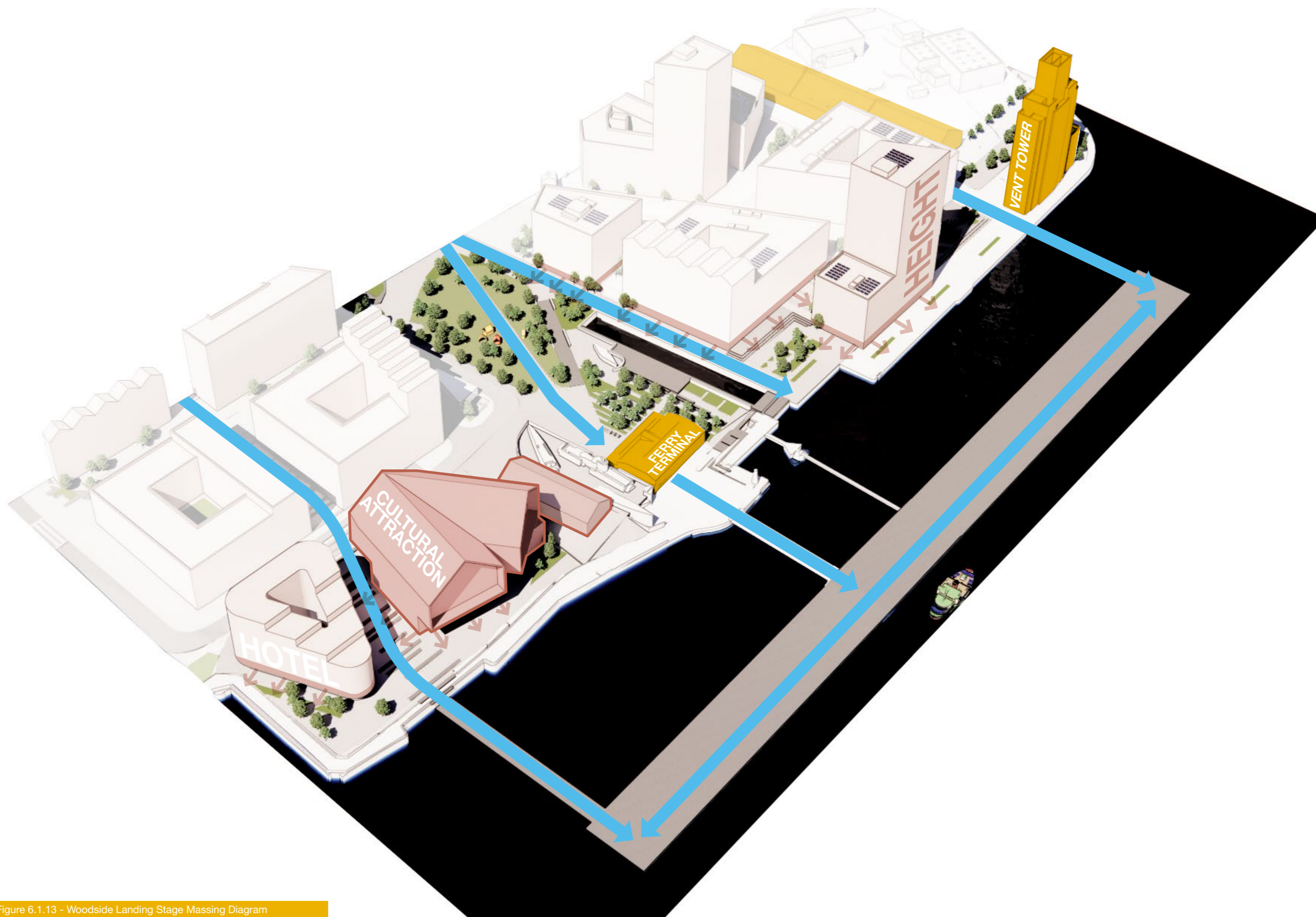


Figure 6.1.13 - Woodside Landing Stage Massing Diagram

Woodside STAGE POLICY REVIEW //

A Visitor Attraction (likely to fall within Use Class F1) is proposed for this Parcel.

Woodside is identified in the adopted UDP as falling within a Primary Industrial Area.

Were the Masterplan Proposal to come forward now, it would be assessed against adopted UDP Policy EM8 (Development within Primarily Industrial Areas), which advises E(g)(i) Offices, B2 General industrial and B8 Storage or distribution, together with the reconstruction, extension or expansion of existing businesses (only) will be supported.

As such, a Visitor Attraction would be deemed contrary to adopted policy.

Given the advanced nature of the emerging Local Plan, the document would be a material consideration, which would likely carry significant weight

Parcel 7 is identified within the emerging Local Plan as falling within the Birkenhead 2040 Framework Boundary, the Birkenhead Waterfront Regeneration Area and as forming a part of the Woodside Masterplan Area.

Woodside Masterplan Area (MPA-RA3.1) identifies that the Council will endorse proposals including for a mix of residential, cultural, hotel, leisure, and commercial uses. Given a Visitor Attraction would be deemed cultural use, the principle of the Masterplan proposal, when assessed against the emerging Local Plan, is deemed to be acceptable.

EMERGING POLICY APPRAISAL, APPLICABLE TO THE MASTERPLAN PROPOSALS //

Policy RA 3 (Birkenhead Waterfront Regeneration Area) recommends adequate boundary treatment and screening from port uses.

Plots 3, 4, 6 and 7 fall within a gateway area, where Policy WS 6.2 (Gateway Areas) encourages new

landmark buildings of exceptional quality, which help to define or emphasise the significance of the gateway.

Policy WS 3.2 (Housing Density) advises that residential development should seek to achieve a minimum density of 70 dwellings per hectare.

Policy WS 3.4 (Housing Mix) advises that, within the identified Regeneration Areas, a minimum of 30% of market dwellings will be developed for larger dwellings of three or more bedrooms. A lower threshold would only be accepted, where it has been demonstrated:

- the resulting development will be appropriate to the character of the surrounding area;
- the resulting development would fulfil other identified aspirations of the Council, including the need to support a viable form of development to secure necessary social, economic and environmental benefits; or
- local evidence of housing need and demand indicates that an alternative mix of housing would be more appropriate to secure; or
- alternative provision would meet another aim of the Council, such as provision for elderly persons or other specialist housing needs and a proportion of the site can still be developed as family housing.

The above policy is applicable to C3 dwellings only. It is not applicable to assisted living / care facilities, where it can be clearly demonstrated that these fall within Use Class C2. The majority of commercial uses falling within Use Class E are deemed main town centre uses, in particular Use Class E(a) Retail, for the sale of goods, other than hot food.

The Masterplan site falls outside the Town Centre – it is an edge-of-centre and out-of-centre site. As such, were any retail use to exceed 1,500 square metres (gross), Policy WS 11.3 (Town and Local Centre Impact Assessments) advises that a Sequential Assessment and, possibly, a Town / Local Centre Impact Assessment would be required to demonstrate no alternative, suitable sites are available within the Town Centre, nor would they undermine the vitality and viability of existing centres. The 1,500sqm threshold, therefore, should be given careful consideration.

Policy WS 5.2 (Open Space Provision) advises that all new residential development will be required provide 37sqm per person or 80sqm per dwelling of publicly accessible open space.

Where new on-site provision cannot be achieved, an equivalent financial contribution will be required to secure improvements to existing local facilities and / or access to strategic provision, within the catchment of the development proposed.

Within Regeneration Areas, strategic provision should be identified within an appropriate master plan or neighbourhood framework. Where appropriate on-site provision would not be achievable, alternative well-designed, high quality open space must be provided, which may include access to formal or informal areas.

Policy WS 7.4 (Parking) advises that, in highly accessible areas where alternative modes of transport are available that can meet the likely demand and where mitigation measures are introduced, the acceptable levels of car parking may be below the parking standards.

For the Woodside Masterplan site, therefore, there is not a set parking standard.

Appendix 8 (Parking Standards, Transport Assessment and Travel Plan Thresholds) confirms the above, stating that, within Regeneration Areas, the Council will support flexible and innovative approaches to car parking where supported by investment in sustainable transport, parking beat survey evidence, management mechanisms and robust travel planning.

The Tall Buildings Policy (WS 7.5) does not set any specific thresholds in terms of maximum heights or locations. Any submission would need to demonstrate consideration of scale; form and massing; proportion and silhouette; detailed surface design; facing materials; relationship to other structures; impact on streetscape, near and approach views; impact on cityscape, local and distant views; and impact on the skyline.



6.2 DEVELOPMENT PARAMETERS – WOODSIDE NORTH //

Ground Floor Use: This area has two key interactions, one with the public facing promenade and new internal streets framing views towards and from the skyline of Liverpool and commercial use potential, and the other with the existing workplace use within the heritage buildings of the Pacific Road Transit Warehouse and Great Northern / Cheshire Lines Warehouses. The ground floor offers huge potential to capitalise upon both uses and drive street character from these.

With the south facing aspect and shelter to the Landing Stage, potential uses should be focused on: Restaurant, Bars and Cafés - including Hotel receptions or residential amenity space, tourism / independent retail, leisure. Blank frontages are to be minimised for any large scale leisure use to avoid impacting on the creation of an active street scene. Within the area there are also opportunities for lifestyle and well-being offers including doctors, dentists, gyms, etc to support a sustainable community and benefit the immediate context. Further to this there is also residential ground floor potential to the side streets away from the primary and secondary routes identified.

This site is identified as a flood risk and the masterplan has proposed a strategy of lifting the levels, but this should be developed through detail design proposals. The principal required is for active frontages to be delivered and where level change is required to mitigate risk, landscaping should be used to form terraces and inviting environments allowing access throughout. With level changes it is important that this does not introduce blank frontages of walls or zones of grills etc.

The Heritage Tram stop is intended to be relocated as part of the landscaping works and with this brings the opportunity to cluster public tourism facing uses.

Upper Floor Use: Upper levels within this area should deliver a mixed use development with potential for homes, hotels, and a small provision of workspace aligned to the existing buildings identified. This area is not intended to be a competitor for the Town Centre commercial district, but elements of workspace should be integrated within the development proposals to create a mixed use environment or a one off Head Quarters facility located to capitalise upon the amazing view and setting.

Density: Residential Density would be expected to significantly exceed a minimum of 70dph in-line with the emerging Local Plan Policy WS 3.2 - Housing Density Grain: Buildings should ensure that the building alignment allows the view corridors to be maintained as identified.

Response to neighbouring buildings: There are a number of neighbouring Grade II Listed buildings to be responsive within the immediate context of this zone.

The Tunnel Vent shaft has particular prominence on the existing promenade, given its location set to the rear of the walkway, as such this is a fix and building adjacent to this should be respectful of its continued role.

Pacific Road sits immediately behind the vent shaft and as a two storey high structure it is important that buildings visibly step down to this location.

Woodside Ferry Terminal sits at the heart of the site and is a focal point to visitors experience. This is a low scale building at two storeys and it is important that space is given to this building to allow opportunity to breathe - which today the U Boat location compromises. It is identified that over time the U Boat should be relocated away from this building to a new home as a preferred strategy.

To the rear of Pacific Road Warehouse is the UU Water Treatment works and is an air quality / odour constraint that will need detailed assessment. In addition, the plant poses an acoustic issue and a detailed acoustic survey and assessment are also needed.

Shore Road provides a lower scale to the Great Northern Warehouse and the commercial workspace context, alongside a run of heritage terraces.

Two tunnels run through this area. The road tunnel runs alongside / under Pacific Road Warehouse, and the rail tunnel through plots 6, 7 and 8. Engineering solutions and consultation with Network Rail / Mersey Tunnel will be required.

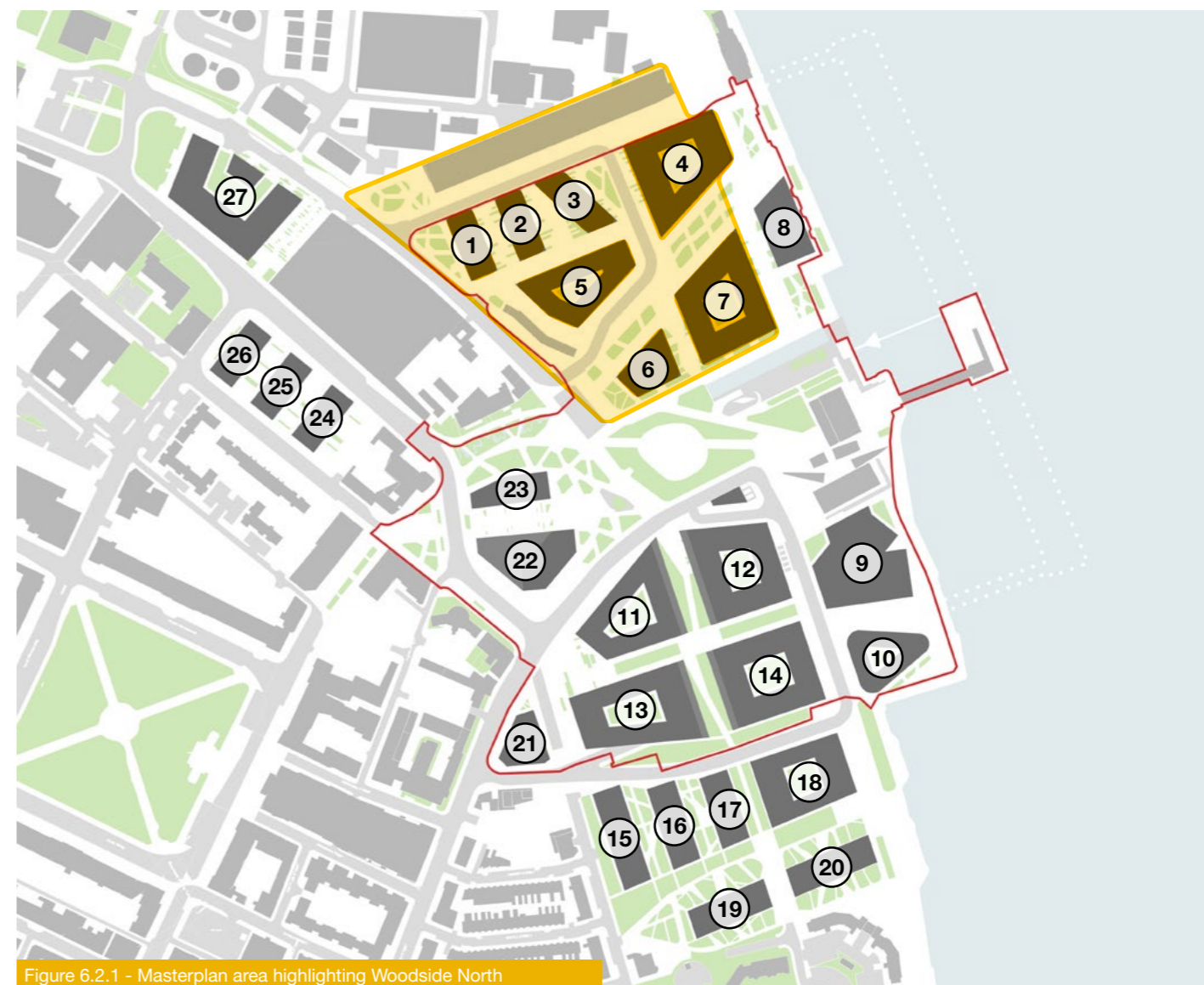


Figure 6.2.1 - Masterplan area highlighting Woodside North



Figure 6.2.2 - Proposed building heights

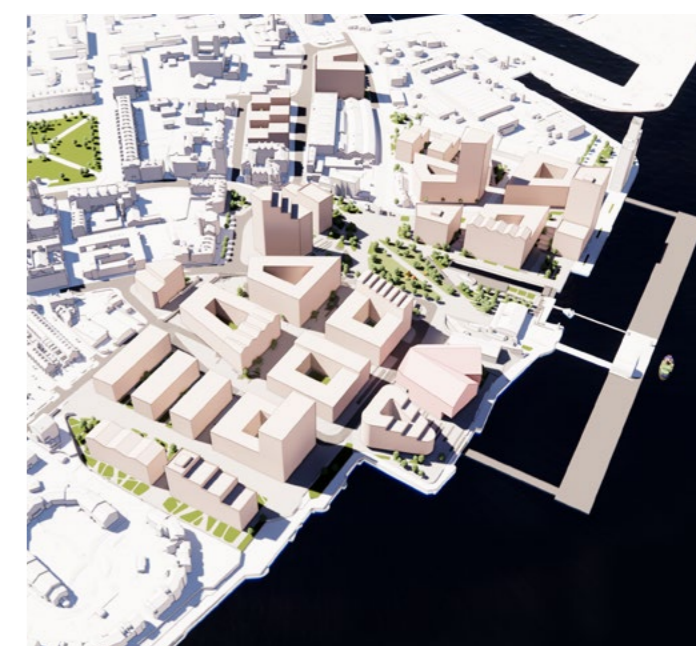


Figure 6.2.3 - Aerial view of masterplan



Figure 6.2.4 - Masterplan Woodside illustration



Figure 6.2.7 - Lower March by Kyson

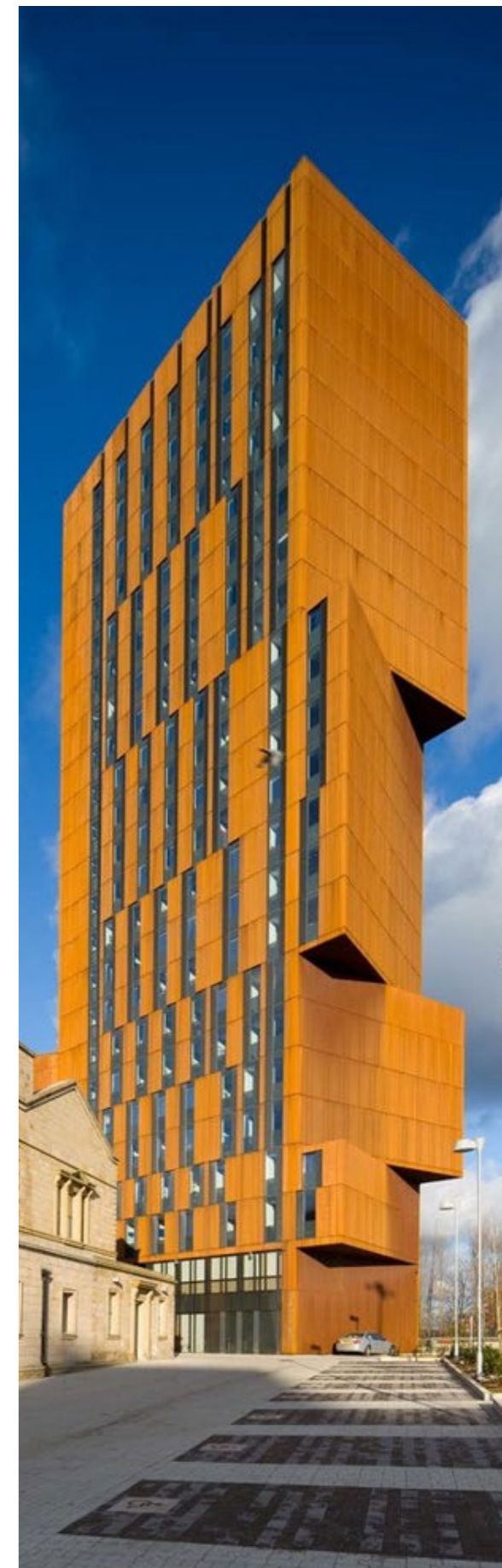


Figure 6.2.9 - Broadcasting Place by Feilden Clegg Bradley



Figure 6.2.5 - Cuttingroom Square, Manchester



Figure 6.2.6 - Kampus, Manchester

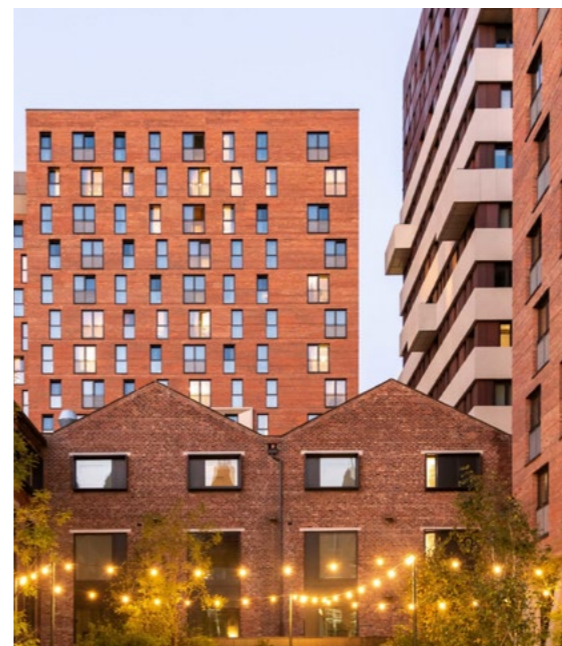


Figure 6.2.8 - Kampus by Mecanoo

Heights: Existing buildings in the area range from 2 storeys to the tunnel vent shaft at approximately 21 stories. This area is intended to provide a key part of the new townscape skyline context, and as such transformation is proposed with Mid Rise to Tall Building classification ranging from 7 - 8 and up to 20 stories. The scale of these buildings is explored through the view corridors within Section 9 of this document.

It is important that the scale and massing of buildings creates a clear space between taller elements to retain Birkenhead's townscape skyline identity with a series of taller elements set against a relative consistent scale backdrop, and also to be respectful of the heritage listed and non listed context.

Roofscape: This should be a varied area of roof forms providing a collection of building of different styles as is the immediate context prior to dropping into the established Laird James Gillespie Hamilton Square Context.

Active Frontages: The frontages are described within the ground floor uses, but this should also be considered with upper floor uses including balconies, winter gardens and windows that allow excellent views both in and out of the development. With increased scale these buildings could be subject to harsh environmental conditions and the quality of external private amenity space provision for residential / hotel uses should be given clear consideration.

Base of the building and Thresholds: With the introduction of tall buildings and the exposed nature of this area on the site, environmental modelling is important to avoid any impact on the external environment surrounding; wind, down draught, glare and solar studies will be required to support applications.

The buildings should provide a clear relationship to the street with strong active frontages. Residential entrances should be located away from commercial frontages, but where possible provide active ground floor functions themselves with amenity spaces and active lobbies. Hotels should provide active ground floor functions with entrance lobbies, amenity spaces and restaurants opening to the street.

As noted stark level changes to avoid flood risk from buildings to landscape should be avoided to mitigate the risk of inactive frontages being created. Level changes should be dealt with through a comprehensive landscape strategy to create seamless integration with the surrounding existing topography fixed by the existing buildings / structures.

Design Quality: As noted given the landmark nature of this site and proposals for Tall Buildings, and skyline identity, design quality should be a key consideration. Scale alone should not be considered as a key requirement for the site, rather it is important that the highest quality facade approach is developed that is unique and contextual, and one that sets a new benchmark for the area. This means the use of external facing materials that will not be impacted by the Marine Environment - stone, natural metal finishes, brickwork or glazing, and integration of ventilation systems etc so that these are not design features. Materials that will suffer marine degradation should be avoided.

Key Masterplan Development Principles:

- Skyline role to frontage
- Landmark building location supporting Tall Buildings.
- Key view corridor considerations with framing of view to Liverpool's Pierhead.
- Listed Building Context.
- Full redevelopment potential, but with retention of heritage terrace.
- Highest Design and material quality expectations
- This site is allocated to provide new homes as part of the Emerging Local Plan.
- Active ground floor uses responding to a high footfall future context, and ground / first floor commercial workspace to Shore Road and Pacific Road context.
- A mix of new homes, high quality upper mid tier hotel, and new leisure spaces to the ground floor with frontages minimised to allow the maximum commercial frontage.
- Opportunity for landmark HQ building
- New enhanced public realm to capitalise on the view to the Liverpool Skyline and Mersey.
- Public realm space should be designed to allow external dining space to be created with clear demised lines associated to units.

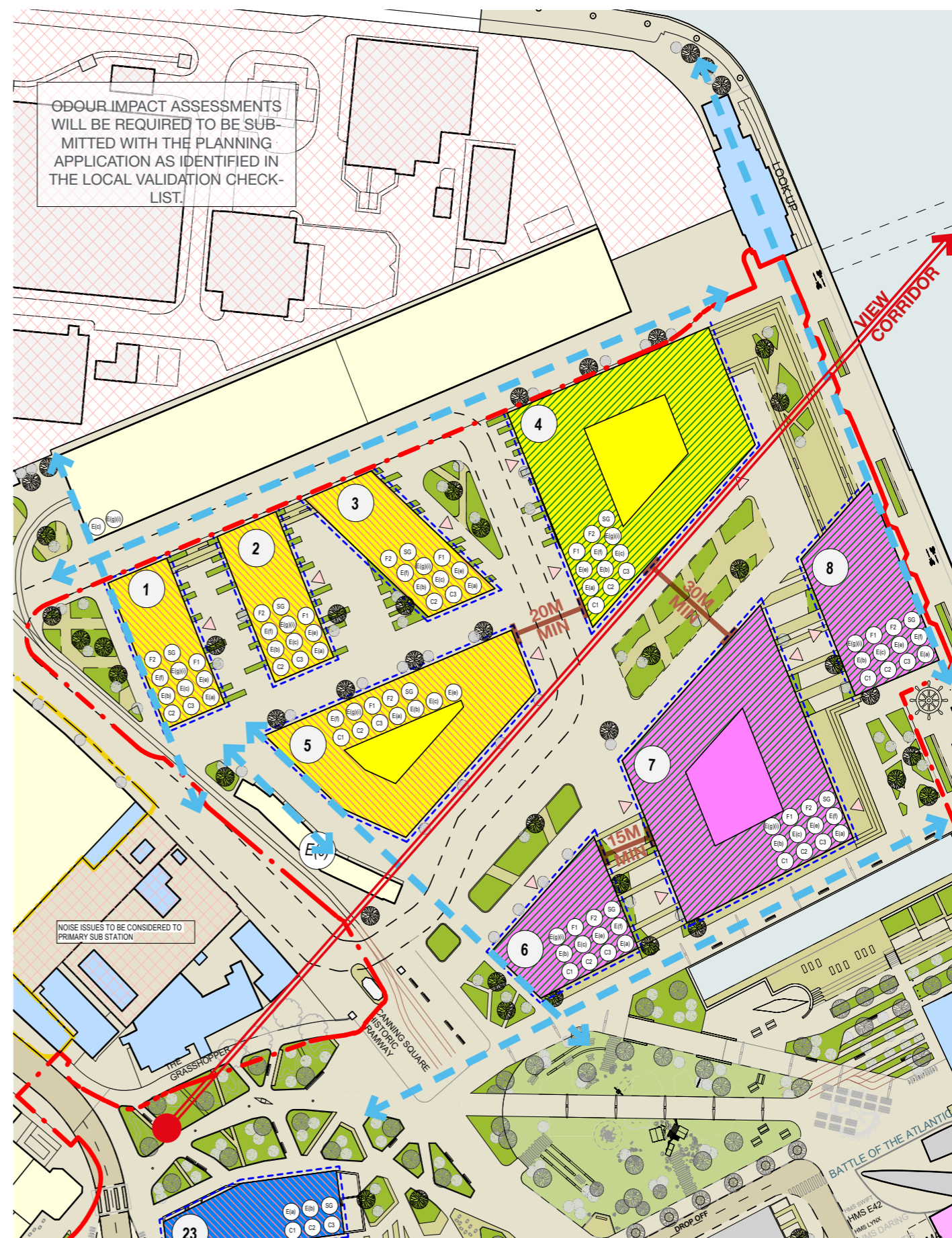


Figure 6.2.10 - Illustrative Masterplan Parameter Land use Plan