

THE CABINET

AGENDA

**Meeting to be held in the Civic Centre (Committee Room No. 1) on
Wednesday, 3rd February, 2010 at 2.00 p.m.**

Part I

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1.	Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on 13th January, 2010, Part I (Copy herewith).	1
2.	Receipt of Declarations of Interest (if any)	
3.	Apologies for Absence	
4.	Report of the Meeting of the Personnel Committee held on 28th January, 2010, Part I (For approval of the recommendations on executive functions and to note the remaining decisions). (Copy to follow).	
5.	Audit Commission Annual Audit Letter – November 2009 Joint report of the Chief Executive and the Director of Resources (copy herewith).	25

**This information can be made available on request in other languages.
If you require this, please telephone 0191 561 1042**

6.  **Silksworth Hall Conservation Area: Character Appraisal and Management Strategy** 57

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive (copy herewith).

N.B. Members are requested to note that copies of the Silksworth Hall Conservation Area: Character Appraisal and Management Strategy document are available for inspection in Members' Services or alternatively the document can be viewed on-line at :-

<http://www.sunderland.gov.uk/committees/CmisWebPublic/Meeting.aspx?meetingID=1603>

7.  **Seafront Regeneration Strategy and Marine Walk Masterplan** 69

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive (copy herewith).

N.B. Members are requested to note that copies of the Seafront Regeneration Strategy and Marine Walk Masterplan documents are available for inspection in Members' Services or alternatively the document can be viewed on-line at :-

<http://www.sunderland.gov.uk/committees/CmisWebPublic/Meeting.aspx?meetingID=1603>

8.  * **Proposed Joint Venture Agreement and Acquisition of Leasehold Interest at Stadium Village, Sunderland** 113

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16. 	Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) 2010-2025	299
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N.B. Members are requested to note that copies of the Children and Young People's Plan 15 Year Strategy and 3 Year Delivery Plan documents are available for inspection in Members' Services or alternatively the document can be viewed on-line at :-

<http://www.sunderland.gov.uk/committees/CmisWebPublic/Meeting.aspx?meetingID=1603>

17.  **16-19 Sub-Regional Commissioning for Learning Providers** 307

Report of the Executive Director of Children's Services (copy herewith).

Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006

The reports contained in Part II of the Agenda are not for publication as the Cabinet is considered likely to exclude the public during consideration thereof as they contain information relating to any individual, which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual, the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information) or to consultations or negotiations in connection with labour relations matters arising between the Authority and employees of the Authority (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A, Part I, Paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4).

Part II

18. **Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on 13th January, 2010, Part II** 315

(Copy herewith).

19. **Report of the Meeting of the Personnel Committee held on 28th January, 2010, Part II**

(Copy to follow).

(For approval of the recommendations on executive functions and to note the remaining decisions).

20.  **Equal Pay and Single Status Issues** 321

Joint report of the Chief Executive, Chief Solicitor, Director of Financial Resources and the Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development (copy herewith).

21.  **Approval of Funding Arrangements with the Homes and Communities Agency and One North East for Strategic Regeneration Purposes** 335

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive (copy herewith).

22.  * **Proposed Joint Venture Agreement and Acquisition of Leasehold Interest at Stadium Village, Sunderland** 341

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive (copy herewith).

 **Denotes Key Decision.**

* **Denotes Rule 15 Notice issues – item which is a key decision which is not included in the Forward Plan.**

R.C. RAYNER,
Chief Solicitor.

Civic Centre,
SUNDERLAND.

26 January, 2010.

CABINET MEETING – 3RD FEBRUARY, 2010

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I

Title of Report:

MINUTES, PART I

Author(s):

City Solicitor

Purpose of Report:

Presents the minutes of the last meeting held on 13th January, 2010 Part I.

Action Required:

To confirm the minutes as a correct record.

At a meeting of the CABINET held in the CIVIC CENTRE (COMMITTEE ROOM NO. 1) on WEDNESDAY, 13TH JANUARY, 2010 at 2.00 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor Watson in the Chair

Councillors Allan, Anderson, Blackburn, Charlton, Gofton, P. Smith, Trueman, D. Wilson and N. Wright.

Part I

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 2nd December, 2009, Part I (copy circulated) were submitted.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Receipt of Declarations of Interest

The following Councillors declared personal interests in the undermentioned reports as Members of the various bodies indicated:-

Item 5 – Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) Reports and Performance Update (April – September)	Councillor P. Watson	Sunderland Partnership, Sunnyside Partnership
	Councillor F. Anderson	Sunderland Partnership, South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Joint Executive Committee (substitute)
	Councillor Blackburn	Tyne and Wear Integrated Transport Authority, South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Joint Executive Committee

	Councillor Charlton	Sunniside Partnership, Sunderland Hospitals Trust
	Councillor Gofton	City of Sunderland College Board of Corporation
	Councillor Trueman	South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Joint Executive Committee
	Councillor N. Wright	Sunderland Hospitals Trust
Item 8 – Significant Partnerships – Annual Report 2008	Councillor P. Watson	Sunderland Partnership, Safer Sunderland Partnership, BSF/Academies Working Group, Sunderland arc, Children’s Trust, Sunniside Partnership, Tyne and Wear Development Co Ltd and its subsidiaries, City Region Partnership
	Councillor F. Anderson	Sunderland Partnership, South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Joint Executive Committee (substitute), Tyne and Wear Development Co Ltd and its subsidiaries
	Councillor Allan	Sandhill Centre, Alternate Director of Tyne and Wear Development Co Ltd and its subsidiaries, NEPO
	Councillor Blackburn	South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Joint Executive Committee
	Councillor Charlton	Sunniside Partnership, Inclusive Communities Partnership, Inclusive Communities Partnership

	Councillor Gofton	Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums Joint Committee, Empire Theatre Trust
	Councillor P. Smith	BSF/Academies Working Group, Children's Trust, Early Years and Childcare Strategic Partnership, Corporate Parenting Board, Sunderland Safeguarding Children Board (observer), 14-19 Steering Group
	Councillor D. Wilson	Joint Committee for the North of England Open Air Museum (Beamish), Empire Theatre Trust, Safer Sunderland Partnership
	Councillor N. Wright	Children's Trust, Sunderland Hospitals Trust
	Councillor Trueman	Corporate Parenting Board, NEPO, South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Joint Executive Committee
Item 10 – Climate Change Action Plan Progress Report	Councillor P. Watson	Sunderland arc
	Councillor Charlton and N. Wright	City Hospitals Trust
	Councillor Gofton	University of Sunderland
Item 13 – Calculation of Council Tax Base	Councillors F. Anderson and Blackburn	Hetton Town Council
Item 14 – Revenue Budget 2010/2011 – Proposals	Councillor P. Watson	Sunderland Partnership
	Councillor F. Anderson	Sunderland Partnership, South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Joint Executive Committee (substitute)

	Councillor Blackburn	Tyne and Wear Integrated Transport Authority, South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Joint Executive Committee
	Councillor Trueman	South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Joint Executive Committee
	Councillors Anderson, Blackburn, Charlton, P. Smith, P. Watson and N. Wright	Members of GMB (in relation to Single Status and Equal Pay)
	Councillor Allan	Member of GMB and Unison (in relation to Single Status and Equal Pay)
	Councillors Allan, Anderson, Charlton, Gofton, P. Smith and Trueman	Local Government Pension Scheme
Item 15 – Revenue Budget and Trading Services Third Review 2009/2010	Councillor P. Watson	Sunderland Partnership, Safer Sunderland Partnership, BSF/Academies Working Group, Sunderland arc, Children’s Trust, Sunnyside Partnership, Tyne and Wear Development Co Ltd and its subsidiaries, City Region Partnership
	Councillor F. Anderson	Sunderland Partnership, South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Joint Executive Committee (substitute), Tyne and Wear Development Co Ltd and its subsidiaries
	Councillor Blackburn	South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Joint Executive Committee

	Councillor Charlton	Sunniside Partnership
	Councillor Gofton	Empire Theatre Trust
	Councillor P. Smith	BSF/Academies Working Group, Children's Trust, Youth Offending Service Management Board, Sunderland Safeguarding Children Board (observer), 14-19 Steering Group
	Councillor D. Wilson	Empire Theatre Trust, Safer Sunderland Partnership
	Councillor N. Wright	Children's Trust
	Councillor Trueman	Corporate Parenting Board, South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Joint Executive Committee
Item 16 – Capital Programme – Third Review 2009/2010, Provisional Resources 2010/2011 and Treasury Management Review 2009/2010	Councillor P. Smith	Early Years and Childcare Strategic Partnership
	Councillor Blackburn	Tyne and Wear Integrated Transport Authority
	In relation to BSF Wave 1	
	Councillor Allan	Governor of Sandhill View School
	Councillor Charlton	Governor of Hylton Red House Academy
	Councillor D. Wilson	Governor of Castle View Academy

In relation to the Primary Strategy for Change Programme (as detailed projects relating to these priorities are being formulated)

Councillor F. Anderson	Hetton Primary	
Councillor Blackburn	Easington Lane Primary, Hetton Lyons Primary	
Councillor Gofton	Hill View Infant	
Councillor P. Smith	St. Leonard's RC Voluntary Aided Primary, Plains Farm Primary	
Councillor Trueman	Blackfell Primary	
Councillor N. Wright	Grange Park Primary	
Item 17 – Updating the Constitution	Councillor P. Watson and D. Wilson	Safer Sunderland Partnership

Councillor F. Anderson and Blackburn declared personal and prejudicial interests in Item 16, "Capital Programme – Third Review 2009/2010, Provisional Resources 2010/2011 and Treasury Management Review 2009/2010", as their grandchildren attended Hetton Comprehensive School. They withdrew from the meeting during consideration of the report.

Apologies for Absence

None.

Report of the Meeting of the Personnel Committee, Part I

The report of the meeting of the Personnel Committee held on 5th January, 2010, Part I (copy circulated) was submitted and consideration was given thereto.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

2. RESOLVED that the report of the meeting held on 5th January, 2010, Part I be noted.

Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) Reports and Performance Update (April - September)

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) to provide the findings from the inaugural Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) and a performance update in relation to those areas identified by the Audit Commission as being the focus of improvement during 2010.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Chairman introduced Messrs. D. Jennings, G. Barker and B. Glaister from the Audit Commission who were in attendance at the meeting to present the findings of the CAA.

Mr. Jennings thanked Cabinet Members for the opportunity to present the CAA findings and briefly explained how the CAA process was undertaken. He advised that the CAA framework comprised an Area Assessment and an Organisational Assessment. He drew attention to the Area Assessment which focused on outcomes in local priorities and future prospects and highlighted that:-

- There were four underpinning themes running through the assessment: sustainability, inequality, vulnerable people and value for money
- Green and red 'flags' signal exceptional performance, improvement or innovation, and significant concerns about future outcomes respectively. In year 1 the Sunderland Strategic Partnership got no red or green flags.
- The judgement was agreed across inspectorates

Mr Jennings then drew attention to how Sunderland's public services were doing in each of their local priority areas

- Prosperous City – The City had a good record of attracting business and Economic Masterplan was looking to future despite a history of low wages levels. The City had prepare a good recession response but there were real challenges to creating higher value jobs.
- Learning City – There had been historic problems with skills, NEETs and attainment. Plans were in place and there were signs of improvement and evidence of a real partnership approach. NEETs were near the red flag level for year 1
- Healthy City – There was a legacy of significant problems and inequalities. It was necessary to ensure all plans were finalised however progress had been clear, but some key targets had been missed.
- Safe City - Crime in the City was lower and reducing and much progress had been made on drugs, safer homes and youth engagement. There were clear plans in place for the future.
- Attractive and Inclusive – The City was 3rd best out of 20 largest cities. Progress had been made in relation to green spaces and information available. Housing in the City was good, but affordable housing was needed. Community cohesion was an issue however there were partnerships in place to address this.

Turning to the Organisational Assessment, Mr. Barker reported that the Council had been assessed having an overall score of 3 out of 4 and described as “performing well.” He explained that the assessment process was much more stringent than previous assessments and was focused more on strategic outcomes rather than processes. He highlighted that:-

- the Council worked well with partners,
- big changes were being delivered,
- it was recognised that the Council got to transform and lead transformation of City,
- Children's Services were performing well,
- Adult social services were excellent,
- there had been a good recession response, and
- there was a clear, long term, shared vision with the Council's partners.

In relation to the Use of Resources Assessment, Mr. Barker reported that the Council had a clear, well managed financial position and a full range of strong governance arrangements with several examples of notable practice which could be shared with partners.

In conclusion, Cabinet Members were advised that in relation to managing resources the Council's policies were still being embedded across the services and it had been noted that the Council would be revisiting its targets for carbon reductions to be more ambitious.

In response to the presentation, Cabinet Members enquired why Sunderland had not achieved a green flag status for its innovations particularly in youth engagement, the XL Village Events which had been recognised nationally and had been taking place across the city and the Sixth Form Colleges. Mr. Jennings explained that the inspection had been a joint process and a number of areas where good progress had been made had been identified but from the Council's starting position and its overall impact had not been assessed as a green flag. He agreed to discuss how the information could be best presented in business cases in the future.

Cabinet Members also referred to the award of green flags to other authorities in the region where Sunderland Council had given equal support in response to the economic downturn.

Councillor Charlton agreed that the assessment process had been much more stringent and, at the end of the day, the Council would be recognised for the excellent services it provided. The City had been well prepared to meet the recession and had an excellent reputation for job creation and attracting investment. He hoped that these issues could be highlighted in the next assessment.

The Leader on behalf of the Cabinet Members thanked Mr. Jennings for the presentations and explanation of the findings of the assessment and also thanked the Director of Financial Resources and the Executive Directors for all their hard work. He assured the Audit Commission that the assessments would be used as a tool for future service improvements.

Consideration having been given to the report and to the presentation, it was:-

3. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) report and the presentations from the Audit Commission on the CAA findings be noted and submitted to Council for consideration.
- (ii) the current performance of the Council and partners in relation to risk areas and improvement activity identified to deliver associated outcomes be noted.

Implementing Key Projects

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which outlined work undertaken to date within four key projects to deliver the Council's improvement agenda and to recommend options to enable the Council to further develop and improve services. This work was within the context of changing customer expectations and the need to deliver increased efficiency and effectiveness.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Allan reported that the Council continued to perform very well in terms of individual services whilst delivering substantial efficiency savings within both the current and previous spending review periods. He added that the environment within which Local Authorities operated was constantly changing and in particular, reflected the increasing expectations placed upon Councils by both its customers and central Government. The improvement agenda was an essential part of the Council's response to these changes, whilst, importantly acknowledging the emerging era of a reduction in public spending. He therefore recommended that support be given to a number of key projects to deliver an improved customer experience, whilst delivering efficiencies across the Council which would require funding of £935,000 from the Capital Programme contingencies for the Business Improvement Programme (BIP) Projects and Core ICT Systems to enable their implementation.

Consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

4. RESOLVED that approval be given for funding of £935,000 from the Capital Programme contingencies for the Business Improvement Programme (BIP) Projects and Core ICT Systems to enable the implementation of a number of improvement projects detailed in paragraph 5.5 of the report.

Strategic Investment Plan – Wind Energy Programme

The Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which requested approval to:-

- (a) access up to £385,000 from the funding provided to support the implementation of the Strategic Investment Plan, to fund the installation of 3 wind turbines at the Venerable Bede C of E, Washington, and St. Robert of Newminster Schools, and
- (b) develop a business case to develop the wind turbine opportunity at Rainton Bridge North Industrial Estate, subject to successful planning approval of St. Robert's wind turbine and confirmation that national Feed-in Tariffs for renewable energy generation come into force from April 2010.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Timmins reminded Cabinet Members that in March 2008, through the Strategic Investment Plan (SIP), the Cabinet had agreed to fund a “Sustainable City” project to provide a visible demonstration of how Sunderland City Council was meeting its own sustainability goals and cutting carbon emissions. He reported that £250,000 of SIP funding was allocated to part finance a wind energy programme and initial scoping work identified several Council sites that had potential to accommodate a range of wind turbines from small models in the range of 6 to 15 kilowatts to medium sized models in the range of 100 – 225 kilowatts.

Cabinet Members were advised that detailed feasibility work had identified that both the Venerable Bede C of E School and Washington School were suitable to accommodate a small sized turbine. St. Robert of Newminster RC School and Rainton Bridge North Industrial Estate could each accommodate a medium sized turbine. Business cases and options for financing the wind turbines at the 3 school sites had been prepared. The project costs stood at £684,245, of which £300,000 had been secured through Department for Children, Schools and Families funding. In addition to using the committed £250,000, it was proposed to release the remaining £134,245 previously allocated in the SIP to the wood fuel project as this project was no longer feasible at this stage.

Councillor Timmins highlighted that the report also presented options for delivering a wind turbine at Rainton Bridge North Industrial Estate and that notwithstanding financing options, each scheme would be required to secure the appropriate planning consents and would be subject to public consultation.

Consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

5. RESOLVED that approval be given for:-

- (i) up to £385,000 of funding from Strategic Investment Plan funds to meet the costs of the Wind Energy Programme, and
- (ii) a business case, to develop a wind turbine at Rainton Bridge North Industrial Estate, subject to the successful development of the St. Robert of Newminster School site to allow the Council to increase its capacity in project managing wind turbine projects of this scale.

Significant Partnerships – Annual Report 2009

The Assistant Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) to provide an overview of the effectiveness of the Council's arrangements to promote better partnership working through the significant partnerships with which the Council was engaged. The report set out the approach to ensuring high standards and robust governance and accountability were in place and details about the performance, including financial performance where applicable, and added value of the significant partnership. The report also informed of the planned review of the Council's current approach to further strengthen and develop partnership working arrangements.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Anderson highlighted that the Council's current corporate framework for partnership arrangements had been identified as best practice by the Audit Commission through its CAA Use of Resources Assessment 2009. She reported that details regarding each significant partnership's performance and added value were attached to the report and they demonstrated that the Council's significant partnerships continued to achieve considerable successes, delivering value for money and adding value. She drew attention to a number of positive outcomes of partnership working for the information of Cabinet Members.

Consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

6. RESOLVED that the arrangements in place and the performance and added value of the Council's significant partnerships be noted.

Adopting a Sustainability Policy for Sunderland City Council

The Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) proposing a Sustainability Policy for the Council, and changes to Council targets on cutting its own carbon emissions.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Trueman reported Sunderland had had an environmental or sustainable development strategy for over a decade, and this strategy had now been fully incorporated into the Sunderland Strategy 2008-2025. He added that the Council also had many programmes and initiatives that aimed to improve the sustainability of the Council itself. However it did not yet have one overall sustainability or environmental policy that applied across the range of services it provided. He explained that the report requested the adoption of a Sustainability Policy for the Council, which would allow it to demonstrate how it managed the economic, social and environmental impacts of all its services. Many programmes already existed to support this Sustainability Policy, for example, the Sustainable Construction Policy, Flexible Working and Wellness programmes, Carbon Plan, Travel Plan, and Fairtrade City status.

Councillor Trueman reported that the policy would also require the Council to improve the sustainability of other Council services, for example, by increasing its carbon reduction targets, introducing Environmental Management Systems to more services and reviewing the ethical policies of suppliers. He added that these improvements were essential if the Council was to continue to improve its performance and reputation regarding sustainability, to the public and to the Audit Commission.

Consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

7. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the Sustainability Policy be adopted, and commitment be given to developing the improvement areas indicated, to support the policy, and
- (ii) increasing carbon reduction targets to 30% by 2020, which will be delivered by a refreshed Carbon Plan in 2011/12 be agreed.

Climate Change Action Plan Progress Report

The Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) to present progress on Sunderland's Climate Change Action Plan and to request approval of the revised carbon reduction initiatives and targets, which was needed for Sunderland to meet the first requirement of the EU Covenant of Mayors initiative.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Trueman highlighted that Sunderland had made several public commitments to tackling climate change, the most recent, and legally binding, being the EU Covenant of Mayors, signed on 14th January 2009. He reported that the Council planned to meet these commitments through its Climate Change Action Plan, adopted in November 2008, as the framework through which Sunderland would work to reduce the City's carbon emissions. He advised that the report summarised the progress made since the Action Plan was developed and refreshed Sunderland's carbon emission reduction targets, in line with new UK targets, and those arising from the EU Covenant of Mayors initiative.

Councillor Trueman reported that significantly, the City's carbon emissions continued to fall with emissions in 2007 being 5.6% below 2005, and that they should continue to fall to 8% below 2005 levels, on the basis of initiatives delivered in 2008 and 2009. He added that looking forward from 2010 – 2020, it was proposed that Sunderland now aimed to cut its emissions by 34%, in line with new UK targets. The revised action plan outlined measures that could reduce the City's emissions by 29% overall, with the shortfall to be found in future revisions of this Action Plan. He explained that, to achieve these higher targets, Sunderland would need to develop the following new initiatives:-

- Ensuring the emerging Economic Masterplan not only developed low carbon industries, but supported all homes, buildings and transport in using low carbon technologies.
- Efforts to insulate every possible home in Sunderland should increasingly focus on programmes to insulate homes with solid wall construction, which was where the greatest potential existed to save energy in the City's existing housing.

Consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

8. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the progress reported against Sunderland's Climate Change Action Plan be noted, and
- (ii) the submission of this Action Plan, and the information contained within, to the EU Covenant of Mayors office be approved.

Procurement of Legionella Risk Assessment, Monitoring and Maintenance Services

The Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) to seek agreement to the procurement of services from specialist water hygiene contractors to ensure the effective control of Legionella bacteria in Sunderland City Council premises.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Allan reported that the Council had a range of statutory responsibilities in respect of property health and safety matters, one of which was to maintain the quality of drinking water in Council buildings. He added that these services were already provided, but there was not one contract in place and over time the scope of the services that were required had changed. He explained that by seeking tenders for the work the continuity of the service could be improved, and value for money could be demonstrated. The services provided would continue to be funded from the Council's existing repairs and renewals budget.

Consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

9. RESOLVED that the Deputy Chief Executive be authorised to seek tenders for the procurement of services relating to the risk assessment, management, monitoring and maintenance tasks required for legionella control in Council buildings.

Provisional Revenue Support Grant Settlement for 2010/2011

The Director of Financial Resources submitted a report (copy circulated) to advise of the Provisional Revenue Support Grant Settlement for 2010/2011.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Allan reported that the Council's increase in general formula grant for next year was unchanged from that announced as part of the three year settlement. He advised that the Council would receive an increase of 1.84% next year and whilst it was disappointing that this is below the national average increase of 2.65%, it was still above the minimum increase 1.5% that Metropolitan and County Councils across the country had been guaranteed.

Councillor Allan outlined that there were a number of technical changes within the settlement and these were fully set out within the report and had been taken into account in the provisional budget proposals which appeared later on today's Agenda. He drew attention to the recent consultation which had been launched by the Government in relation to the provision of free personal care who had assessed high personal needs. The Government was currently consulting on options for allocating grant support to fund this provision and again this was reflected within the provisional budget proposals which appeared later on the Agenda.

Consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

10. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Calculation of Council Tax Base.

The Director of Financial Resources submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided detail on the calculation of the Council Tax Base for 2010/2011 and sought approval to recommend to Council the Council Tax Base for 2010/2011 in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Allan drew attention to the highly technical nature of the report with a multitude of calculations which essentially determined the Council Tax Base for 2010/2011. He reported that the calculations set out accord with the statutory provisions in accordance with those provisions, it was necessary for the Cabinet to recommend the Council Tax Base to Council for approval at its meeting at the end of January.

Cabinet Members having given consideration to the report, it was:-

11. RESOLVED that it be recommended to Council that:-

- (i) report for the calculation of the Tax Bases for the City Council and Hetton Town Council for 2010/2011 be approved, and
- (ii) pursuant to the report, and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as amended by Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2003, the amount calculated by Sunderland City Council

as its Council Tax Base for the year 2010/2011, shall be £80,260, and for the area of Hetton Town Council shall be £4,043.

Revenue Budget 2010/2011

The Chief Executive and the Director of Financial Resources submitted a report (copy circulated) on the provisional budget proposals for 2010/2011, and to seek approval for them as a basis for the continuation of budget consultation, prior to the receipt of the final Local Government Finance Settlement 2010/2011.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Allan highlighted that the report set out the provisional budget proposals for the purposes of ongoing consultation relating to the Revenue Budget for 2010/2011. He reported that this had been a particularly difficult budget, as the economic downturn continued to have a significant negative impact on the Council's position and of course there were a wide range of pressures that the Council wanted to and needed to address. He was particularly pleased to bring forward these provisional proposals which he believed represented an excellent balance between investing in key priority services and maximising efficiency savings through doing things differently to modernise and improve the Council's services.

Councillor Allan reported that this approach had enabled significant redirection of money to support key priorities which had been confirmed through consultation with citizens and stakeholders. He drew attention to the detail of the significant investment in the report and thanked Cabinet colleagues for the positive and constructive way in which they had engaged, with their Directors, in achieving the level of efficiency savings to enable this redirection of resources to these important areas.

Councillor Allan outlined that there were a number of outstanding uncertainties around the financial position and therefore some final decisions remained to be taken, and, of course, the consultation which the Council would be undertaking between now and the February meeting was very important to inform those final decisions. He reported that at this stage it was proposed to consult on a Council Tax rise which should be possible to be set within Government guidelines.

Consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

12. RESOLVED that the provisional budget proposals, be approved as a basis for the continuation of budget consultation, prior to the receipt of the final Local Government Finance Settlement 2010/2011.

Revenue Budget and Trading Services Third Review 2009/2010

The Director of Financial Resources submitted a report (copy circulated) to provide details of the outcome of the Revenue Budget and Trading Services Third Review for 2009/2010.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Allan highlighted that all Cabinet Members would have been briefed and consulted in respect of the position for their Portfolio. He drew attention to the major issues highlighted within the report, namely:

- the pay award for 2009/2010, which was agreed at a lower level than that provided for within the contingency. However, following arbitration the 2008/2009 pay award was in fact greater than had been allowed for by the Council in that year. In overall terms there was a net saving to the Council of just under £¾ million and this was being used to support the provisional budget proposals which were set out in a separate item later on the Agenda.
- the position of utility prices remained volatile and it had been necessary to set aside prudent provision to cater for the potential financial impact of significant increases. It was proposed to transfer a sum of just under £½ million to Directorate budgets to enable them to meet utility prices pertaining in 2009/2010 and prudent provision had been included within the provisional budget proposals for 2010/2011.
- the impact of the economic downturn on the Council's budgets through car parking, planning applications, building control fees, legal fees or rental income. Significant prudent provision had been made in determining this year's budget and it had been necessary to revise those estimates in framing the 2010/2011 budget. These areas would continue to be kept under review.
- Directorate cash limits continued to be under significant pressure, particularly in the areas of Adult Social Care and Children's Services, but taking into account earmarked reserves and provisions and delegated surpluses, it was currently projected that there would be no breach of cash limits for 2009/2010.

Cabinet Members commended the report, it was:-

13. RESOLVED that the proposed contingency transfers and budget adjustments proposed at Appendices B and C, be approved.

Capital Programme - Third Review 2009/2010, Provisional Resources 2010/2011 and Treasury Management Review 2009/2010

The Director of Financial Resources submitted a report (copy circulated) to provide details on the outcome of the Third Review of the Capital Programme for 2009/2010, to show provisional capital resource allocations for 2010/2011 and to provide an update on progress in implementing the Treasury Management Borrowing and Investment Strategy for 2009/2010.

(For copy report –see original minutes).

Councillor Allan, in highlighting the report, advised that Portfolio Holders had been briefed on the variations in relation to their own areas of the Capital Programme. He reported that there was net slippage on the Capital Programme amounting to £11.430 million which meant that the revised Capital Programme for 2009/2010 as reported amounts to £105.990 million.

Turning to the resources available for the 2010/2011 Capital Programme, Councillor Allan drew attention to Paragraph 6 of the report and advised that notifications were still being received. He explained that Cabinet Portfolio Holders would be consulted in relation to new starts for their own specific areas of the Capital Programme and these would be reported through to the February meeting for approval.

Finally, with regard to Treasury Management activity, Councillor Allan was pleased to be able to report the beneficial impact of debt restructuring undertaken during the early part of this year. This had been assessed at just over £1 million this year which would help the Council to address some of those one-off spending priorities which would come forward as part of the Revenue Budget and Capital Programme for next year. Further debt restructuring was in train and should provide financial benefits in due course. He added that the report also highlighted the actions taken by the Director in consultation with himself to vary the Council's lending list as it was important that this area was kept under close review and put the Council in a position to respond between meetings as necessary. The updated lending list was appended to the report for endorsement.

Councillor Allan then having moved that the recommendations be approved, with the exception of the matters in relation to BSF Wave 2 in which Councillors Anderson and Blackburn had declared personal and prejudicial interests, it was:-

14. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) in relation to the Third Review of the Capital Programme for 2009/2010:
 - (a) to approve, and where necessary to recommend to Council, the inclusion of additional schemes for 2009/2010 detailed at Appendix A and associated resourcing of the Capital Programme since the Second Review of the Capital Programme was reported to October Cabinet;
 - (b) to approve the tendering of a contract for the replacement of school windows referred to at paragraph 4.1 within the report;
- (ii) in relation to the Capital Programme for 2010/2011:
 - (a) to agree to the allocation of resources as set out in paragraph 6, subject to any adjustment when final announcements are made;

- (b) to note that Cabinet Members with Portfolios for areas covered by the Children's Services, Adult, Housing, Highways and Other Services Blocks will consider proposals for new starts based on the resource allocations outlined in paragraph 6 in order to incorporate proposed new starts in the Capital Programme to be presented to Cabinet in February 2010;
- (iii) in relation to the Treasury Management Strategy for 2009/2010:
 - (a) to note the progress in implementing the Treasury Management Strategy for 2009/2010;
 - (b) to endorse the amendments to both the Lending List Criteria set out in Appendix B and the Lending List set out in Appendix C.

Councillors Anderson and Blackburn then withdrew from the meeting. It having been moved that the remainder of the report be approved, it was:-

15. RESOLVED that those items in relation to BSF Wave 2 be approved.

Councillors Anderson and Blackburn were re-admitted to the meeting.

Updating of the Constitution

The Chief Executive and Chief Solicitor submitted a report (copy circulated) which proposed amendments to the Constitution.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Allan highlighted that the report sought powers to be given to the Chief Solicitor to take proceedings in relation to Drink Banning Orders (DBOs) under the Violent Crime Act 2006 and Closure notices/orders under new powers in the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003 which had been provided by the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008. He explained that DBOs were Civil Orders made against individuals aged over 16 who had engaged in criminal or disorderly conduct while under the influence of alcohol. DBOs might prohibit individuals from entering pubs or clubs in any given vicinity and a breach of a DBO was an offence.

Councillor Allan advised that Closure Orders could be made in respect of any land or place by the Police or the Council where Anti Social Behaviour had occurred and the use of the premises was resulting in significant and persistent disorder or nuisance. A closure order could last for up to 3 months and it was an offence to breach the Order.

Councillor Allan reported that in both cases, the proposals were supported by the Safer Sunderland Partnership and Northumbria Police who would be consulted before the powers were exercised.

Councillor Allan then referred to the remainder of the report which proposed amendments to the terms of reference to the Development Control Sub Committees in respect of consideration of applications in neighbouring authorities, the Personnel Committee to deal with retirement issues and the Audit and Governance Committee on proposed changes to enhance their work. He also drew attention to amendments proposed to the powers delegated to Chief Officers which related to legislative changes, recently approved policies and tidying up provisions which needed to be recorded to ensure the Constitution was fully updated.

Consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

16. RESOLVED that the Council be recommended to note and endorse as appropriate:-

- (i) that the Chief Solicitor be granted delegated powers to take proceedings in relation to Drink Banning Orders under the Violent Crime Reduction Act 2006;
- (ii) that the Chief Solicitor be granted delegated powers to issue Closure Notices and issue and conduct proceedings in relation to Closure Orders under Part 1A of the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003 following consultation with Northumbria Police; and
- (iii) the additional amendments to the Council's Constitution detailed in this report.

World Class Facilities....Growing the Football Family – A Football Investment Strategy For Sunderland

The Executive Director of City Services submitted a report (copy circulated) to present the Sunderland Football Investment Strategy "World Class Facilities...Growing the Football Family" for adoption and to seek endorsement of the proposed arrangements for investment in order to access an in principle allocation of funds from the Football Foundation.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Blackburn highlighted that the Football Association (FA) had developed a new national Strategy and strategic approach that encouraged local authorities to work with the FA and the Football Foundation (FF), to develop clear area strategies that set out key priorities for investment to improve facilities and encourage increased quantity and quality of participation. He explained that the process of developing a World Cup submission had strengthened links between Durham County FA and other local partners, which had supported the parallel process of developing a detailed Football Investment Strategy and the city's investment aspirations for 2018 and beyond.

Councillor Blackburn reported that the Investment Strategy set out a clear 'vision' for football facilities and the 'player development pathway' in Sunderland, across public, private and school based provision. It established a clear approach to the level of provision including the implementation of local standards for playing fields and ancillary facilities. He advised that all elected Members had been given the opportunity to inform the Strategy, via workshop arrangements and as a result of all consultation a tiered model for provision had emerged. Work had been completed to ensure each site in the city was identified at a specific tier in the model and considered for investment where required.

Cabinet Members having been advised that by adopting the Football Investment Strategy, a framework from which to guide future investment, resources and subsequently increase satisfaction and participation in football and physical activity in the city would be provided, it was:-

17. RESOLVED that the:-

- (i) Football Investment Strategy, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report, be adopted as a citywide document,
- (ii) proposed principles for investment outlined in Section 6 of the report be approved,
- (iii) the Football Foundation Grant be accepted and the Executive Director of City Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder be authorised to develop a portfolio of projects in conjunction with the Football Foundation, and
- (iv) arrangements for the procurement of contractors for projects within the initial project portfolio by the Executive Director of City Services be approved.

Offering a Project Management Service for Self Funded Home Improvements, Adaptations and Repairs (Home Improvement Agency)

The Executive Director of Health, Housing and Adult Services submitted a report (copy circulated) to seek approval to an amendment to the Private Sector Housing Renewal Financial Assistance Policy 2008-2011 which would result in the Home Improvement Agency (HIA) being able to charge for project management services to clients who wished to fund the work themselves.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Trueman reported that the introduction of a project management service into the Home Improvement Agency (HIA) would enable residents who were not eligible for council financial assistance but who wished to pay for improvements, adaptations and repairs using their own finance to purchase a project management service. He explained that the project management assistance available would include, but it was not necessarily restricted to, property survey, preparation of

schedule of works, procurement of a contract and oversight of works to be carried out. He added that to enable the service to be introduced, an amendment needed to be made to the Private Sector Housing Renewal Financial Assistance Policy (FAP) to ensure that the correct legal framework was in place for the service.

Councillor Trueman reported that the HIA was finding that many homeowners who applied for financial assistance but did not qualify still liked to go ahead with the work and pay for it themselves but did not feel confident identifying relevant works in their homes, liaising with contractors and overseeing the work. Therefore the service would have a real positive impact in terms of supporting people to remain in their own homes and would enable the HIA to charge for services, meaning that this would be at no additional cost to the Council.

Consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

18. RESOLVED that the Financial Assistance Policy, as detailed in paragraph 4.9 of the report, be approved to enable the HIA to introduce a stand alone project management service.

Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006

At the instance of the Chairman, it was:-

19. RESOLVED that in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 the public be excluded during consideration of the remaining business as it was considered to involve a likely disclosure of information relating to any individual, which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual, the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information) or to consultations or negotiations in connection with labour relations matters arising between the Authority and employees of the Authority (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A, Part 1, Paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4).

(Signed) P. WATSON,
Chairman.

Note:-

The above minutes comprise only those relating to items during which the meeting was open to the public.

Additional minutes in respect of other items are included in Part II.

CABINET MEETING –3rd FEBRUARY, 2010

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I

Title of Report:

Reports of the meeting of the Personnel Committee, Part I held on 28th January 2010

Author(s):

Chief Solicitor

Purpose of Report:

Presents the reports of the meeting of Personnel Committee, Part I

Description of Decision:

The Cabinet is requested to:-

- (i) note the reports of the meetings held on 28th January 2010
- (ii) approve the content of the Health and Safety Six Monthly Report

Suggested reason(s) for Decisions:

To review progress in implementing our Health and Safety Policy, highlight main risks, outline performance and present recommendations for further reducing health and safety risks and improving overall performance.

Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:

No alternative options

Is this a “Key Decisions” as defined in the Constitution?

No

Is it included in the Forward Plan?

No

Relevant Scrutiny Committee:

Management Scrutiny Committee

At a meeting of the PERSONNEL COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE on THURSDAY, 28TH JANUARY, 2010 at 5.30 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor M. Smith in the Chair

Councillors Fairs, M. Forbes, Gofton, Trueman, S. Watson, A. Wilson and A. Wright.

Part I

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillors Allan, J. Walton and P. Watson.

Receipt of Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Report of the Meeting of the Personnel Committee

The report of the meeting of the Personnel Committee held on 5th January, 2010, Part I (circulated) was submitted and consideration given thereto.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

1. RESOLVED that the report of the meeting be noted, confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Report of the Meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee

The report of the meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee held on 6th January, 2010, Part I (circulated) was submitted and consideration given thereto.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

2. RESOLVED that the report of the meeting be noted.

Health and Safety Six Monthly Report

The Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development submitted a report to review the management of health and safety at work within the Council.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Members were advised that the report covered the period 1st April to 30th September, 2009. Referring to paragraph 4 of the report the Director explained that this paragraph outlined any significant health and safety incidents that had occurred during the six month period together with the action taken to mitigate the risk in the future.

The Director referred to paragraph 6 of the report which gives an overview of the Health and safety management System which is used to report on all the audits undertaken. This will provide for a quarterly action plan to be developed for submission to the Central Health and Safety Forum. Directorates would be asked to outline what action had been taken to address any areas of concern.

Councillor M. Forbes referred to asbestos incidences and queried whether scientific reports on different types of asbestos i.e. white, blue and brown had been carried out detailing differing levels of toxicity and appropriate methods of treatment. The Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development explained that it may be the fibres contained within it not the material itself, which posed a threat and therefore all types triggered investigation however she was not certain. As a result, she would contact the Council's Asbestos Manager and request that information be sent to Members of the Committee.

A discussion then ensued in relation to any liability the Council would face, given the recent weather conditions if someone slipped on a pavement which was Council owned, but had not been cleared. The Deputy Chief Solicitor advised Members that cases such as these would be judged on reasonableness. It was agreed that further clarification be sought from the Risk Management and Insurance Section and information sent to Members, including detail of claims made to date.

Consideration having been given to the matter, it was:-

3. RESOLVED that the contents of the report be recommended to Cabinet for approval.

Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation Order) 2006

At the instance of the Chairman, it was:-

4. RESOLVED that in accordance with Section 100(A)4 of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded during consideration of the remaining business as it is considered to involve a likely disclosure of exempt information relating to an individual or information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual or information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or

contemplated consultations or negotiations in connection with any labour relations matters arising between the Authority and its employees (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A, Part I, Paragraphs 1, 2 and 4).

(Signed) M. SMITH,
Chairman.

Note:-

The above minutes comprise only those relating to items during which the meeting was open to the public.

Additional minutes in respect of other items are included in Part II.

CABINET MEETING – 3 FEBRUARY 2010

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I

Title of Report:

Audit Commission Annual Audit Letter – November 2009

Author(s):

Chief Executive and Director of Financial Resources

Purpose of Report:

To report to Cabinet the Audit Commission's Annual Audit Letter

Description of Decision:

Cabinet is recommended to:

- Note the contents and receive a presentation from the Audit Commission regarding the Annual Audit Letter;
- Refer the report to Council for its consideration.

Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework? Yes/No

If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework

Suggested reason(s) for Decision:

To ensure that the council acknowledges the progress made, and takes appropriate action in relation to those areas requiring further development, as described within the Audit Commission's Annual Audit Letter.

Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:

Consideration of the Annual Audit Letter by Members and its publication are statutory requirements and therefore no alternative options are proposed.

Is this a "Key Decision" as defined in the Constitution? Yes / No

Is it included in the Forward Plan? Yes / No

Relevant Scrutiny Committee:

Management Scrutiny Committee

AUDIT COMMISSION ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER – NOVEMBER 2009

Report of the Chief Executive and Director of Financial Resources

1.0 Purpose of the report

- 1.1 This report details the Audit Commission's (AC) Annual Audit Letter (AAL) covering the year 2008/2009. The letter includes issues arising from the audit of the council's financial statements and the results of the AC's work undertaken as part of the assessment of the council's arrangements to securing value for money in its use of resources.
- 1.2 The former Audit Manager, Lynn Hunt, will attend Cabinet to present a summary of the AC's findings and address any questions Members may have.

2.0 Description of Decision

- 2.1 Cabinet is recommended to:
 - Note the contents of this report and receive a presentation from the AC regarding the AAL;
 - Refer the report to Council for its consideration.

3.0 Introduction / Background

- 3.1 The AC prepares an annual statement which provides an overall summary of the Commission's assessment of the council, drawing on audit and performance assessment work. The statement summarises the findings and conclusions from the statutory audit and covers the period from April 2008 to March 2009.
- 3.2 The AAL summarises the findings of the AC's local risk based work which have contributed to the judgements made in relation to the council's use of resources, value for money conclusion and Statement of Internal Control.
- 3.3 In previous years the AAL contained a summary of the issues arising from the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) including the Direction of Travel judgement. Under the new Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) issues under the Organisational Assessment including Use of Resources judgements were previously reported to Cabinet at its meeting on 13 January 2009. However the AAL also includes the council's Use of Resources 2008/2009 judgements.
- 3.4 In bringing together the audit work for the year many of the issues in the AAL and corresponding improvement activity have been reported previously to Cabinet and will be addressed in the Council's Improvement Programme to improve the performance and reputation of the council.

4.0 Current position

The key issues identified in the AAL include:

4.1 Financial statements and annual governance statement

- 4.1.1 The AAL indicates that the council's 2008/2009 financial statements and working papers were prepared to a good standard, and an unqualified audit opinion was issued. No significant weaknesses in the council's internal control arrangements were identified.
- 4.1.2 In 2007/2008 the AC received a formal objection to the council's financial statements in relation to car parking enforcement. Similar objections have been received at other authorities and therefore the AC is obliged to consider them together and co-ordinate a consistent response. Although this issue is progressing, it remains unresolved.
- 4.1.3 The AC has recently received correspondence from the same objector indicating that he also wishes to object to the 2008/2009 accounts. Until these two objections have been resolved, the AC cannot issue a formal certificate to confirm that the audit has been completed for 2007/2008 and 2008/2009. However, the AC is satisfied that the issues raised do not have a material impact on the financial statements.

4.2 Local risk based work

- 4.2.1 As part of the 2008/2009 audit, the AC focussed on community cohesion and health inequalities (with a specific focus on harm caused by alcohol). The AC has also followed up on the previous year's work on performance management and target setting.

Community Cohesion

- 4.2.2 Promoting equality and diversity is one of the AC's key strategic priorities and is an important component of CAA. The work in this area was undertaken in 2 stages, as follows:
- Phase 1 (2007/2008) – assessing internal arrangements for providing fair access to services, ensuring that the council understands the needs of local people and is taking steps to promote equality and diversity within its own workforce;
 - Phase 2 (2008/2009) – an externally facing review of the council's approach to supporting inclusive communities.
- 4.2.3 The AAL explains that an action plan was agreed with officers in 2007/2008 following the work undertaken as part of Phase 1. The AC is pleased to report that the council has made progress against all elements of the action plan including developing structures and mechanisms to support approaches to cohesion, encouraging partners to adopt equality impact assessments, and working with and through Children's Services to enhance schools duty to promote cohesion.
- 4.2.4 The AAL draws attention that the council and its partners have an agreed definition of community cohesion, which is realistic, clearly articulated and relates well to the local area. Partners understand the specific risks to cohesion in Sunderland, and manage them proactively. However, action plans to support delivery of this strategy have not been developed, and there are insufficient measures in place to gauge progress and outcomes in this area.
- 4.2.5 A summary report providing progress against the action plan agreed at the end of Phase 1, and feedback on Phase 2 has been considered within the Council. The findings were also reported to other organisations in November 2009. All comments have been considered by the Partnership Community Cohesion Working Group and included into existing improvement plans.

Health inequalities in the North East

4.2.6 A joint review was undertaken by the AC and Deloitte with public sector bodies across the North East, as well as the voluntary sector, to consider how organisations are working together to tackle health inequalities. The AC referred to a number of positive findings as follows:

- Good progress is being made in tackling health inequalities through leadership from regional agencies, partnership working between public sector bodies and the voluntary sector at the local level, and by increasing or prioritising funding;
- Life expectancy is increasing and, in most areas, the mortality rate is reducing at a faster rate than nationally, narrowing the gap between the North East and the rest of the country;
- Organisations in the North East need to build on the progress made to date and ensure that they move further and faster to address these inequalities.

4.2.7 The report also refers to alcohol misuse as an important issue for Sunderland. As was reported to Cabinet last month the council and its partners have a range of plans in place to secure improvement including a new Alcohol Strategy is being developed by the Sunderland Partnership, informed by public consultation and the 'Big Drink Debate'. Work is also being undertaken as part of the 'Total Place' pilot, in partnership with Gateshead and South Tyneside Councils. Alcohol Treatment programmes targeted towards violent offenders with alcohol misuse issues started in July 2009.

4.3 Performance management and target setting

4.3.1 The AAL comments that the council's performance management and target setting arrangements have improved since the review undertaken in 2007/2008. The AAL draws attention to some key improvements made including:

- An IT based performance management system (Performance Plus) has been put in place and there is a clearer focus on tackling underperformance;
- Issues of underperformance which require additional financial investment, ICT solutions etc., are addressed through the Business Improvement Programme;
- The council's scrutiny function has been improved during 2008/2009, with increased capacity, officer support and better alignment to corporate objectives. This has enabled members to play a more central role in challenging key decisions and reviewing performance information.

4.4 Use of resources and value for money

4.4.1 The council's use of resources assessment report was presented to Cabinet on 13 January 2010. The main findings are repeated within Appendix 1 of the AAL. The AAL reaffirms that the AC has assessed the council to be 'performing well' in its use of resources and has judged its performance as 3 out of 4,

4.4.2 The AAL indicates that the council successfully integrates service and financial planning and has secured significant efficiency savings in recent years whilst at the same time investing in corporate priorities and improvements for local people. Processes for good governance and internal control are well established and effective.

4.4.3 The AAL also highlights that there are elements of particularly strong performance across a number of the KLOEs, in particular provision of value for money services, especially adult care; risk management arrangements and partnership governance.

- 4.4.4 The council demonstrates examples of best practice in relation to asset management and natural resources and the AC identifies areas where the council has opportunity to improve, for example further embedding sustainability into all of the council's activities and plans.
- 4.4.5 These issues have been included within the council's use of resources improvement plan and the council is already undertaking actions to secure the necessary outcomes. The council has a clearly stated ambition of improving its Use of Resources assessment in 2010, with the ultimate ambition of securing level 4 performance (performing excellently).
- 4.4.6 The AAL refers to the arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the council's use of resources using the nine criteria set out in the key lines of enquiry and concludes that the VFM criteria has been met for each of these. The AC has issued an unqualified conclusion stating that the council had adequate arrangements in place.

5.0 Reasons for the decision

- 5.1 To ensure that the council acknowledges the progress made, and takes appropriate action in relation to those areas requiring further development as described within the AC's AAL.

6.0 Alternative options

- 6.1 Consideration of the AAL by Members and its publication are statutory requirements and therefore no alternative options are proposed.

7.0 Relevant considerations / consultations

- 7.1 Government regulations require the AAL to be published. In addition to publication as part of the Cabinet, Management Scrutiny Committee and Council Agendas, and its publication on the AC website it is proposed to place the full report on the council's website.

8.0 Glossary

AAL	Annual Audit Letter
AC	Audit Commission
CAA	Comprehensive Area Assessment
CPA	Comprehensive Performance Assessment
EMT	Executive Management Team
KLOE	Key Lines of Enquiry

9.0 List of appendices

1. Audit Commission Annual Audit Letter – November 2009

10.0 Background papers

- CAA reports and Performance update (April - September) - Cabinet, 13 January 2010

Annual Audit Letter

Sunderland City Council

Audit 2008/09

November 2009



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Status of our reports

The Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies issued by the Audit Commission explains the respective responsibilities of auditors and of the audited body. Reports prepared by appointed auditors are addressed to non-executive directors/members or officers. They are prepared for the sole use of the audited body. Auditors accept no responsibility to:

- any director/member or officer in their individual capacity; or
 - any third party.
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Key messages

This report summarises the findings from our 2008/09 audit. It includes messages arising from the audit of your financial statements and the results of the work I have undertaken to assess your arrangements to secure value for money in your use of resources.

Audit Opinion

- 1** On 30 September 2009, I issued an unqualified audit opinion on Sunderland City Council's 2008/09 financial statements. No significant issues were identified during the course of our work, and we identified no material weaknesses in internal control.
- 2** On the same day I also gave an unqualified Value for Money conclusion, confirming that the Council had adequate arrangements in place for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

Formal audit powers

- 3** I have received formal objections from a local elector in respect of both the 2007/08 and 2008/09 financial statements. Until these have been resolved I cannot issue my formal certificates to confirm that the audits have been completed. However, I am satisfied that the matters raised do not have a material impact on the financial statements.

Community Cohesion

- 4** Community cohesion is an important component of Use of Resources assessments, organisational assessments, and Comprehensive Area Assessments. The Council and its partners have an agreed definition of community cohesion, which is realistic, clearly articulated and relates well to the local area. Partners understand the specific risks to cohesion in Sunderland, and manage them proactively. However, action plans to support delivery of this strategy have not yet been developed, and there are insufficient measures in place to gauge progress and outcomes in this area.

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Health Inequalities

- 5 Progress is being made in tackling the significant health inequalities in the North East through leadership from regional agencies, partnership working between public sector bodies and the voluntary sector at the local level, and by increasing or prioritising funding.
- 6 But data is not always available to ensure that services are targeted at those who need them most, and value for money and improved outcomes cannot be demonstrated if accountability and performance management arrangements are weak. Agencies need to look for better ways to involve the community and voluntary sectors, and take community views into account when developing high level strategies and service development plans.

Use of resources

- 7 The new national use of resources framework was introduced in 2008/09 and scores are based on the Audit Commission's four point scale. Level 1 represents failure to meet the minimum requirements. Level 4, the highest score, is reserved for genuinely exceptional performance.
- 8 Sunderland City Council scored level 3 overall and has demonstrated strong performance across a number of the Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE). The Council successfully integrates service and financial planning and has secured significant efficiency savings in recent years while at the same time investing in corporate priorities and improvements for local people. Processes for good governance and internal control are well established and effective. Particular strengths were identified in relation to adult social care, risk management and partnership governance arrangements.

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Audit Fees and Independence

9 Audit fees are set out in the table below. These are in line with scale fees published by the Audit Commission and have been discussed and agreed with those charged with governance. The audit has been carried out in accordance with the Audit Commission's policies on integrity, objectivity and independence.

Table 1 Audit fees 2008/09

	Actual	Proposed	Variance
Financial statements, annual governance statement and WGA	£207,780	£207,780	0
Value for money (includes data quality)	£96,320	£96,320	0
Total audit fees	£304,100	£304,100	
Non-audit work - grant claims	£38,000	£38,000	
Non- audit work - challenge and objections	£6,000	£0	£6,000
Total	£348,100	£342,100	£6,000

Actions

10 Throughout the year, I have made recommendations where appropriate to assist the Council in meeting its responsibilities and to help support improvement. Recommendations have been agreed with officers and we will continue to monitor progress as part of next year's work.

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Financial statements and annual governance statement

The Council's financial statements and annual governance statement are an important means by which the organisation accounts for its stewardship of public funds.

Financial Statements and Internal Control

- 11 The Authority's 2008/09 financial statements and supporting working papers were prepared to a good standard and I issued an unqualified audit opinion on 30 September 2009.
- 12 Management had taken action since the draft financial statements were approved in June 2009 to:
 - revise and increase NNDR bad debt provisions to reflect the current economic climate and write offs to date in 2009/10;
 - review the accounting treatment adopted in respect of Newcastle Airport; and
 - make some minor presentational and disclosure amendments to the accounts.
- 13 These changes were approved by the Council's Audit and Governance Committee on 29 September 2009.
- 14 We identified that the prior period adjustment made to the financial statements in respect of FRS17 pension liabilities was not required by CIPFA's 'Statement of Recommended Practice' as the sums involved are not material. In the Council's opinion however the prior period adjustment gives a more complete picture of the impact of the changes, which do affect a number of statements and disclosure note, therefore the accounts were not amended.
- 15 I did not identify any significant weaknesses in the Council's internal control arrangements.

Formal audit powers

- 16 I have:

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- a power to issue a public interest report. I do so when I believe this is necessary to draw a matter to your attention, or to that of the public;
- a power to apply to court for a declaration that an item in the accounts is contrary to law; and
- a power to seek judicial review of a decision made by the Authority.

17 I also have a power to issue an advisory notice. An advisory notice requires the Authority to meet and consider the notice before:

- making a decision that might give rise to unlawful expenditure;
- taking an unlawful course of action that would give rise to a loss; or
- making unlawful entry in the accounts.

18 I received a formal objection to the 2007/08 financial statements in relation to car parking enforcement. Similar objections have been received at other authorities which means we are obliged to consider them together and co-ordinate a consistent response. Therefore, although this matter is being progressed it remains unresolved. Also, I have recently received correspondence from the same objector indicating that he also wishes to object to the 2008/09 accounts.

19 Until these two objections have been resolved I cannot issue my formal certificate to confirm that the audit has been completed for 2007/08 and 2008/09. However, I am satisfied that the issues raised do not have a material impact on the financial statements.

Local risk based work

We undertake local risk based work in order to inform our judgements on use of resources, our value for money conclusion and our audit of the Statement of Internal Control.

Work undertaken in 2008/09

- 20** This year we have undertaken local risk based work on community cohesion and health inequalities, focussing specifically on harm caused by alcohol. We have also followed up previous year's work on performance management and target setting.

Community Cohesion

- 21** Local government is expected to provide community leadership and to work with, and through, partners to promote community cohesion. Cohesion is an important component of Use of Resources assessments, organisational assessments, and Comprehensive Area Assessments.
- 22** Previous years' work has focused on assessing internal arrangements for ensuring that the Council understands the needs of local people, provides fair access to services and promotes equality and diversity within its own workforce. We are pleased to note that the Council has made progress against all elements of the 2007/08 action plan agreed with officers.
- 23** We also reviewed the Council's approach to supporting inclusive communities and found that partners have an agreed definition of community cohesion, which is realistic, clearly articulated and relates well to the local area. Partners understand the risks to cohesion in Sunderland - community tensions are managed proactively, and misconceptions challenged. However, action plans to support delivery of the community cohesion strategy have not yet been developed, and there are minimal measures in place to gauge progress and outcomes in this area.
- 24** Specific action points have also been agreed with officers, as follows:
- 'community impact assessments' are being carried out as part of equality impact assessments, but there is no timetable for the rollout of these assessments across the partnership;

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- the Council and its partners are developing a more localised approach to cohesion, to reflect the different needs, aspirations and make-up of local communities, but this is at a relatively early stage of development;
- there is scope to improve the contribution made towards community cohesion by the voluntary and community sectors and schools; and
- not all councillors understand how cohesion relates to their community leadership role.

Review of health inequalities in the North East

- 25** Our review, completed jointly by the Audit Commission and Deloitte has involved public sector bodies across the North East, as well as the voluntary sector, looking at how organisations are working together to tackle health inequalities.
- 26** We found that good progress is being made in tackling health inequalities through leadership from regional agencies, partnership working between public sector bodies and the voluntary sector at the local level, and by increasing or prioritising funding.
- 27** Life expectancy is increasing and, in most areas, the mortality rate reducing at a faster rate in the North East than nationally, narrowing the gap between the North East and the rest of the country. However, whilst life expectancy is improving, men and women in the North East are still likely to die younger than the national average. Men and women living in the most deprived areas can expect to die on average more than ten years and seven years earlier respectively than their counterparts in the least deprived areas.
- 28** There are also significant issues in the North East around unhealthy lifestyles. For example the percentage of North East women smoking in pregnancy and hospital admission rates related to alcohol are the worst nationally; childhood obesity rates and teenage pregnancy rates are higher than the national average. Organisations in the North East need to build on the progress that has been made to date and ensure that they move further and faster in addressing health inequalities.
- 29** Our North East wide report and local review on alcohol harm and teenage pregnancy highlights a number of key areas that partnerships need to focus on to improve action to address health inequalities:

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- strategic priorities and funding should be aligned. There are significant economic and financial costs associated with health inequalities that can be reduced through successful funding;
- successful targeting of services to those who most need them, based on good data. We found that this data is often not available;
- accountability and performance management arrangements were often weak or not in place, so that those delivering services may not be adequately held to account and value for money and improved outcomes cannot be demonstrated;
- joint working was variable, with some good examples, but also other instances where a lack of partnership working reduces effectiveness. Joint data collection needs to improve, with a lack of shared information systems causing problems;
- agencies need to look for ways to better support and use the resources available in the community and voluntary sector; and
- there was mixed practice in taking community views into account in developing high level strategies and service development plans.

30 Locally, we also carried out a more detailed review of action being taken to address alcohol harm. Alcohol misuse is an important issue for Sunderland. It has a significant impact on crime rates, hospital admissions and deaths. Sunderland is estimated to be the 4th worst local authority area in England for binge drinking.

31 Starting in 2008/09 there has been significant additional financial investment in specialist alcohol advice services, but this investment has been made in advance of an agreed alcohol strategy. Without a clear and agreed strategy partners may not be able to demonstrate that value for money has been obtained from the funding invested in alcohol services or that desired outcomes are being achieved.

32 Commissioning plans are based on identified need following health equity audits. But there is not enough robust data to ensure that services are targeted at those who need them most. In addition to this:

- partners across Sunderland do not as yet understand the specific reasons why large numbers of people in Sunderland misuse alcohol, so resources allocated to preventative and counselling work may be misdirected; and
- there is a commitment to commission from independent, community and voluntary sector providers, but these organisations will need support in terms of both

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business skills and capacity building before they can deliver the proposed level of new services.

- 33** Looking forward, the Council and its partners have plans in place to tackle the issues that we have raised. A new Alcohol Strategy is being developed by the Sunderland Partnership, informed by public consultation and the 'Big Drink Debate'. Work in this area is also being undertaken as part of the 'Total Place' pilot, in partnership with Gateshead and South Tyneside Councils. Alcohol Treatment programmes targeted towards violent offenders with alcohol misuse issues started in July 2009.

Performance management and target setting

- 34** Performance management and target setting has been improved through a more strategic approach based on local area agreements, Sunderland Strategy objectives and the new national indicator dataset. An IT-based performance management system, Performance Plus, is now in place and there is a clearer focus on tackling underperformance through:
- assessment of the impact of failing to deliver targets;
 - review of expected trajectories, as opposed to year to date performance; and
 - focusing on the remedial action being taken.
- 35** Issues of under performance which require additional financial investment, ICT solutions or business process re-engineering are also addressed through the Business Improvement Programme.
- 36** The Council's scrutiny function has been improved during 2008/09, with increased capacity, more officer support and better alignment to corporate objectives. This has enabled members to play a more central role in challenging key decisions and reviewing performance information.

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Value for money and use of resources

I considered how well the Council is managing and using its resources to deliver value for money and better and sustainable outcomes for local people, and gave a scored use of resources judgement.

I also assessed whether the Council put in place adequate corporate arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. This is known as the value for money (VFM) conclusion.

Use of resources judgements

- 37** In forming my scored use of resources judgements, I have used the methodology set out in the [use of resources framework](#). Judgements have been made for each key line of enquiry (KLOE) using the Audit Commission's current four point scale from 1 to 4, with 4 being the highest. Level 1 represents a failure to meet the minimum requirements at level 2.
- 38** I have also taken into account, where appropriate, findings from previous use of resources assessments (updating these for any changes or improvements) and any other relevant audit work. However, the 2008/09 assessment is very different from previous assessments. Judgements are now much more strategic and less detailed, with a focus on outcomes rather than processes. The standard required to merit a level three assessment has been raised, and level four scores are reserved for genuinely exceptional performance.
- 39** The Council's use of resources theme scores are shown below. The key findings and conclusions for the three themes, and the underlying KLOE, are summarised in Appendix 1.

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Table 2 Use of resources theme scores

Use of resources theme	Scored judgement
Managing finances	3
Governing the business	3
Managing resources	2

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- 40 The Council is performing well. It successfully integrates service and financial planning and has secured significant efficiency savings in recent years while at the same time investing in corporate priorities and improvements for local people. Processes for good governance and internal control are well established and effective.
- 41 There are elements of particularly strong performance across a number of the use of resources Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE), in particular:
- provision of value for money services, especially adult social care;
 - risk management arrangements; and
 - partnership governance.
- 42 Some scope for improvement has been identified in respect of asset management and the Council's use of natural resources, but all arrangements have been assessed as meeting expected standards.

VFM Conclusion

- 43 I assessed your arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in your use of resources against criteria specified by the Audit Commission. From 2008/09, these criteria are now aligned to use of resources judgements and the Audit Commission now specify each year which of the use of resources KLOE are the relevant criteria for the VFM conclusion at each type of audited body.
- 44 On 30 September 2009, I issued an unqualified conclusion stating that the Council had adequate arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. My conclusions on each of the relevant areas are set out in Appendix 1.

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Closing remarks

- 45 I have discussed and agreed this letter with the Chief Executive and the Director of Financial Resources. I will present this letter to the Cabinet in January 2010 and have provided copies to all Council members.
- 46 Further detailed findings, conclusions and recommendations in the areas covered by our audit are included in the reports issued to the Council during the year.

Table 3 Audit reports 2008/09

Report	Date issued
Audit Fee letter	April 2008
Health Inequalities Phase 3 (harm caused by alcohol)	May 2009
Detailed opinion plan	July 2009
Community Cohesion report	August 2009
Annual Governance report Opinion on financial statements Value for money conclusion Whole of Government accounts return	September 2009
Use of Resources assessment	October 2009
Annual audit letter	November 2009

- 47 The focus of our local risk based work next year is expected to be workforce planning and management arrangements, which are being assessed for the first time in 2010. We will also follow up progress made by the Council in respect of managing natural resources and sustainability.

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48 The Council has always taken a positive and constructive approach to our work. I wish to thank members and staff for their support and co-operation during the 2008/09 audit.

Steve Nicklin
District Auditor
November 2009

Appendix 1 – Use of resources key findings and conclusions

The following tables summarise the key findings and conclusions for each of the three use of resources themes.

Managing finances

<p>KLOE 1.1 (financial planning)</p> <p>Score</p> <p>VFM criterion met</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p>A comprehensive medium term financial plan is in place and the annual ‘Corporate Improvement Plan’ integrates service plans, corporate strategies and improvement targets with financial budgets and sets out the staffing resources required to deliver the Council’s plans. Budget setting and the medium term financial plan are informed by public meetings and a high profile ‘State of the City’ debate each year. Area based committees have been developed in 2008/09 and ring fenced budgets allocated accordingly. No significant overspends have occurred in recent years despite high levels of delegated budget management, and the Council is well placed in terms of balances and reserves.</p> <p>There has been a sustained focus on achieving priorities by shifting resources from low-to high-priority areas, for example through investment in planning services, libraries, streetscape and recycling. Virements are used proactively throughout the year to reinvest savings in priority areas. This has been reflected in improved BVPI performance, for example on planning where the service leapt from bottom to top quartile within two years. Good financial planning has contributed to improved outcomes on priorities such as the wellness agenda, adult social care and safeguarding children. The review of adult social care provision this year has been identified as a notable practice example of how a local authority can challenge and change established patterns of resource use in consultation with partners. The review has led to a move away from residential provision and greater investment in preventative measures and home based support.</p> <p>The capital programme is well managed, and the Council is successful at securing external sources of finance. Developing the ‘Sunderland Model’ for BSF schools has led to new schools and refurbishments being financed from DCFS grant rather than loans or PFI credits, and the PFI scheme and joint waste strategy being delivered in partnership with Gateshead and South Tyneside MBCs is another example of the Council exploring new ways to deliver priorities and improve value for money.</p>	

Appendix 1 – Use of resources key findings and conclusions

<p>KLOE 1.1 (financial planning)</p> <p>Score</p> <p>VFM criterion met</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p>Charges for services are reviewed each year to ensure they help to deliver financial and social priorities in a strategic way' - for example, fees and charges for sports facilities have been reduced for target groups through the exercise on prescription scheme and a rent concessions policy is in place to attract local businesses to deprived areas of the city.</p> <p>The Council makes extensive use of financial modelling, activity analysis and unit costing, this has been done particularly in 2008/09 to challenge the use of resources in relation to looked after children, leading to a significant reduction in residential provision. Equality impact assessments have been carried out for all key service areas and major projects, and are a compulsory component of the business improvement programme. Financial resources have been allocated to address weaknesses highlighted eg in respect of access to buildings and to improve translation/interpreter services.</p>	
<p>KLOE 1.2 (understanding costs and achieving efficiencies)</p> <p>Score</p> <p>VFM criterion met</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p>The Council has a good understanding of costs, cost drivers, and the relationship between cost and quality of service. There is a significant redirection of financial resources each year - the 2009/10 budget identified £11.67m efficiency savings but also £9.24m improvement funding. All new projects, capital or revenue, are subject to appraisal or a detailed business case for funding. Each policy change is informed by a summary of the financial implications in both revenue and capital terms, then fed into the medium term financial plan, which is regularly updated.</p> <p>The Council prepares an annual value for money self assessment which considers a range of information including spend, investment, improvements to date, residents perception and both national and local indicators, including those within the Local Area Agreement. The Significant Partnership Annual Report sets out both financial and performance information for each significant partnership for both the current and previous years. This report also indicates how the partnership is providing value for money and additional benefits.</p> <p>Costs for key services are benchmarked and demonstrate good value. At an overall level the Council has all CPA assessed services performing well or strongly, with lower median quartile expenditure for above median levels of deprivation. Significant redirection of resources has enabled priority areas to be addressed - the 2009/10 budget process identified £11.670m efficiency savings but also £9.235m improvement funding.</p> <p>Efficiency saving targets are being achieved. £33.12m between 2005/06 and 2007/08 represented 13.2 per cent of spending against a target of 7.5 per cent for the period. The cumulative cash releasing efficiency savings to 31 March 2009 were £13.2m which equates to 4.4 per cent of spending.</p>	

Appendix 1 – Use of resources key findings and conclusions

<p>KLOE 1.3 (financial reporting)</p> <p>Score</p> <p>VFM criterion met</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p>The Council has used citizen’s panel and MORI polls to seek the views of stakeholders about what information is required in its external reporting and has tailored its approach accordingly. Council tax leaflets and the annual report are concise, user friendly documents which include glossaries of technical terms and the use of charts to highlight key figures from the accounts.</p> <p>The most recent published accounts and annual audit letter are available to the public and appear on the Council's website together with equalities information. Information is available in a wide range of formats including foreign languages, braille and voicetape. External reporting includes environmental and sustainability information with an analysis of the Council's environmental footprint.</p> <p>Budget monitoring and forecasting information is reliable and up to date, although reports to members could be streamlined. The council regularly reviews financial performance of significant partnerships, and it shares and acts on these results with partners. All finance reports include forecast information which is subject to risk and sensitivity analysis. The Council's 2008/09 accounts were prepared to a high standard, and officers have responded to challenges such as the drive for faster accounts closure, and improved standards of working papers.</p>	

Governing the business

<p>KLOE 2.1 (commissioning and procurement)</p> <p>Score</p> <p>VFM criterion met</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p>There is a good understanding of local communities and their needs for services through regular consultation with relevant groups. Many services are commissioned jointly with partner agencies and voluntary sector assistance and guidance is being improved. A Joint Needs Self Assessment analysis of Public Health / Adult Services and Children's Services information has been undertaken and informs future commissioning intentions.</p> <p>Actively identifying and implementing new ways of delivering services and working with others is resulting in more efficient working. The South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership and membership of the North Eastern Purchasing Organisation (NEPO) are examples which have realised measurable financial benefits. The Council has also implemented a category management approach to procurement across specific areas of spend. Scoping reports consider alternative procurement options, analysing the current market and soft market testing.</p>	

Appendix 1 – Use of resources key findings and conclusions

<p>KLOE 2.1 (commissioning and procurement)</p> <p>Score</p> <p>VFM criterion met</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p>The Council's Procurement Strategy includes a requirement to periodically explore alternative methods of service delivery across the whole range of services, and the Annual Procurement Plan provides a forward plan of categories of spend and procurement opportunities which are programmed to be reviewed. Procurement strategies require officers to consider equality and diversity issues when awarding contracts and procurement pages on the Council's website provide information for suppliers and tenderers.</p> <p>There is good use of e-procurement techniques, such as online catalogues and particularly e-auctions. E-auction success through use of OGC (20 organisations) for computers yielded a 50 per cent saving on a £15m joint bid. The Council is developing a Supplier Relationship Management (SRM) tool, incorporating electronic catalogues and online approvals which has introduced an improved element of control and evaluation.</p>	
<p>KLOE 2.2 (data quality and use of information)</p> <p>Score</p> <p>VFM criterion met</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p>The Council produces relevant and reliable data and works with partners on the quality of data which is relevant to shared priorities. There is a clear corporate statement on the importance of high data quality standards and guidance on the Council's approach to achieving them, against which directorates are required to demonstrate progress. Members recognise the importance of good data quality and a Cabinet member acts as data quality 'champion'.</p> <p>Responsibility for data quality is defined in strategies and the Council has taken steps to embed these through training and QA by both the corporate improvement team and Internal Audit. The Council is ensuring that appropriate arrangements are in place for the new national data set, including developing a data quality checklist for inclusion into partnership performance arrangements and mapping datasets to the national framework.</p> <p>The Council ensures that decision making is based on robust data. Trend data, performance against target and benchmarking with other authorities are used to support the corporate Value for Money framework and specific resourcing decisions. A robust reporting timetable is in place. Performance management reports have been reviewed during 2008/09 and now show a much clearer link between financial allocations, performance against target, and remedial action required. An IT-based performance management system (performance plus) is now in place. The scrutiny function in the Council is improving in terms of both critical challenge to the Cabinet and review of performance information.</p>	

Appendix 1 – Use of resources key findings and conclusions

<p>KLOE 2.2 (data quality and use of information)</p> <p>Score</p> <p>VFM criterion met</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p>The Council ensures data security and compliance with relevant statutory requirements. There are adequate business continuity and disaster recovery arrangements in place for financial systems, but not for all non-financial data collection systems. We have undertaken spot checks on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NI 132 - Timeliness of social care assessment (adult services); • NI 59 - Initial assessments for children's social care carried out within 7 working days of referral; • NI 173 - people falling out of work and on to incapacity benefits; and • Local PIs on provision of community disability equipment. <p>In all cases we established and evaluated the systems in place to capture the data, checked the basis of calculations and sample tested source data. No errors were identified from this sample testing.</p>	
<p>KLOE 2.3 (good governance)</p> <p>Score</p> <p>VFM criterion met</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p>The Council's constitution clearly describes roles and responsibilities for members and officers. The Constitution is underpinned by a wide range of other supporting guidance, including schemes of delegation, guidance on the discharge of statutory functions and protocols on officer and member relations. The scrutiny function has made some useful contributions to policy development but it does not, as a general rule, challenge cabinet decisions. A working group has been established to address this and all other Council committees appear to be working well. There are constructive working relationships between members, management and staff. The Council provides a wide range of training and development opportunities for members and staff, which balance the needs of the organisation with personal development.</p>	

<p>KLOE 2.3 (good governance)</p> <p>Score</p> <p>VFM criterion met</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p>The Sunderland Community Strategy, and the local area agreement, demonstrate a good understanding of the local area. A multi area agreement is also in place. The Corporate Improvement Plan is focussed on the actions the Council needs to take to contribute towards shared partnership outcomes as well as internal improvement actions. Officers have identified a number of instances where consultation outcomes have influenced important decisions on school meals, school admissions policies and special needs provision. A corporate consultation strategy is in place and the Council engages with local people in a variety of ways, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • area committees, public meetings and the ‘State of the City’ debate; • an interactive website; • citizens panel and MORI polls; and • independent advisory groups representing all identified communities of interest. <p>The Council has adopted codes of conduct for its members and staff, and these are widely publicised. All council members are required to make a declaration that they agree to abide by the code of conduct, and all staff are bound by the Employees’ Code. Policies for whistleblowing and ‘comments, compliments and complaints’ are well publicised and prompt action is taken in response to any allegations made. The Chief Executive has set out clearly, in public documents, its expectation that all elected members will provide visible and credible local community leadership. Registers of interests, gifts and hospitality can be viewed on the Council website.</p> <p>The Council has a comprehensive code of practice for partnerships which has been identified as notable practice. It can evidence examples of this code improving outcomes eg on CRDP and Tyne Wear Sport. There are constructive working relationships between the Council and its partnerships, with data sharing protocols in place to ensure appropriate information is shared in a timely manner. The LSP has been awarded a ‘green’ rating from GONE. The council regularly reviews the effectiveness of its partnership working using a scorecard approach, and an annual report to Cabinet assesses each key partnership in terms of the outcomes achieved and value for money. A voluntary compact is in place with the 3rd sector, underpinned by codes of practice.</p>	

Appendix 1 – Use of resources key findings and conclusions

<p>KLOE 2.4 (risk management and internal control)</p> <p>Score</p> <p>VFM criterion met</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p>Risk Management is fully integrated into all corporate processes and has been used to especially good effect on BSF delivery and in formulating the medium term financial plan. All schools and significant partnerships have their own risk registers. Demonstrating effective risk management has enabled the Council to reduce insurance premiums, increase insurance cover at no extra cost and extend self insurance schemes.</p> <p>A comprehensive code of practice for partnerships sets out expected arrangements for risk and performance management, procurement and value for money and includes template agreements for different forms of partnerships. This is reinforced through training and Internal Audit coverage. Adopting the code has enabled partnerships to improve outcomes and access additional sources of finance. The Council regularly reviews the effectiveness of its partnership working using a scorecard approach, and an annual report to Cabinet assesses each key partnership in terms of the outcomes achieved and value for money.</p> <p>Arrangements for producing the annual governance statement are robust. The statement is underpinned by an annual report from Internal Audit, a detailed risk assessment and an annual review setting out the sources of assurance examined. Any issues arising are incorporated into a corporate action plan but no significant internal control failures have been identified in recent years. The quality and scope of Internal Audit coverage is good. Anti Fraud and Corruption Policy and Whistleblowing Policies are published on the Council's website and intranet. A Money Laundering Policy is also in place and training for staff and members has taken place to reinforce the importance of probity and good governance.</p> <p>There have been no cases of proven fraud or corruption in recent years, except for Benefits claims. The Benefits Investigation Unit has consistently met its targets for successful prosecutions, with 164 cases in 2008. Counter fraud arrangements have been assessed against the newly issued 'red book' from CIPFA, and appear to be meeting all identified criteria. The Council can demonstrate it is creating a strong deterrent effect, by poster campaigns and local press coverage of successful cases of proven benefit fraud.</p> <p>Business Continuity Plans are in place which comply with Civil Contingencies Act 2004 requirements. Corporate arrangements currently being reviewed in line with the new British Standard. A review in March 2008 considered the business continuity of significant contractors and put an assessment matrix, register and additional support in place. Procurement process ensures that potential contractors have adequate insurance and contingency plans to ensure continuous service delivery.</p>	

Managing resources

<p>KLOE 3.1 (use of natural resources)</p> <p>Score</p> <p>VFM criterion met</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p>Sunderland has the 8th lowest per capita consumption of natural resources of all UK cities, is recognised by the Carbon Trust as a national leader in managing carbon emissions, and recently won the LGC and HSJ Sustainable Communities Award 2009 for Tackling Climate Change. The city has had a ‘Sustainable Development Strategy since 2001, and the Council benefits from a dedicated and enthusiastic sustainability team. The need to make effective use of natural resources is clear in corporate strategies and plans, and Sunderland was one of the first local authorities to develop its Ecological Footprint. But this level of awareness is not yet fully embedded across all of the Council's activities, and not always evidenced in departmental service plans.</p> <p>Over the past four years the Council has made significant steps in understanding and starting to manage its use of key natural resources. Sustainability impact assessments and baselines exist for waste, water, energy, road fuels, carbon emissions and travel. Assessments are now part of all major project development and procurement decisions, but have not yet been undertaken across all service areas. To improve further, the baseline of services with indirect impacts such as impact of procured goods and services is to be assessed through the creation of a natural resources register. This aims to help all service areas, understand and contribute more to better use of natural resource.</p> <p>Strategies and programmes are in place to manage and reduce the most significant natural resources and the Council is in the process of consolidating these programmes within an overarching Sustainability Policy which is scheduled to be adopted in November 2009. Management of energy and water consumption is improving through automatic meters, other initiatives such as vehicle tracking are reducing fuel demand, and the Council's biggest waste stream, road planings, are 100 per cent recycled.</p> <p>The Council's is aiming to cut its annual carbon emissions by 10 per cent and business miles by 10 per cent between 2007 and 2012. In the first two years, at the end of 2008/09, the Council has cut carbon emissions by 4 per cent, reduced business travel miles by 3.5 per cent and achieved an 8 per cent drop in lease car CO2 emissions. It appears to be on track to meet its 2012 targets. Sunderland's 10 per cent carbon reduction target allows for an expected 10 per cent increase in carbon emissions during the five years from service expansion such as leisure centre and street lighting provision. Therefore the 10 per cent target, is in reality a 20 per cent cut. But neighbouring councils have set, and appear to be delivering, more challenging targets.</p> <p>Additional dedicated resources have been provided to implement plans for continued improvement during 2009/10. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development of a Waste Plan to set targets for recycling of office and service waste; • creation of a natural resources register to capture key resource consumption areas; and • a joint strategic waste plan in partnership with Gateshead and South Tyneside MBCs. 	

Appendix 1 – Use of resources key findings and conclusions

<p>KLOE 3.2 (strategic asset management)</p> <p>Score</p> <p>VFM criterion met</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p>The Council displays a number of strengths in respect of asset management, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • excellent examples of outcomes from partnership working, most notably the Primary Care centres at Washington and Bunny Hill; • purpose built one stop shops across the City; and • successful delivery of major projects such as the Aquatic Centre and the first wave of (predominantly new build) BSF schools. <p>Appraisal processes to prioritise capital investment are good, and the Council is successful at securing external sources of capital funding. There is good consultation with users and stakeholders on new projects, less so in relation to existing facilities.</p> <p>The Council has considered the use of a Local Asset Based Vehicle to promote economic regeneration, and can point to a number of successful regeneration initiatives, for example at Doxford Park, Sunnyside and Rainton Bridge. Alongside partners, a City-wide regeneration strategy is now being developed to better target outward focused asset management and capital investment.</p> <p>Council property is used to support wider corporate and partnership objectives, for example the use of swimming pools and leisure centres to support the ‘Wellness’ agenda. There is scope to improve the ways in which Council owned commercial property and industrial units are being used to support wider corporate objectives, especially in respect of regeneration and combating the recession.</p> <p>Comparative data and benchmarking are used to assess and help improve value for money. The depot rationalisation programme has been recognised as an example of good practice nationally, and GIS mapping data, shared with partners, has also been used to help rationalise the property portfolio.</p> <p>The estate is fit for purpose in that it meets relevant health and safety standards. The Council has not significantly reduced backlog maintenance on buildings over the past four years, but £1m of additional finance has been allocated to address this, and overall backlog levels compare well with similar authorities. Officers accept there are issues to address in respect of operational property management, for example on the timeliness of rent reviews and tenancy enforcement.</p>	

The Audit Commission

The Audit Commission is an independent watchdog, driving economy, efficiency and effectiveness in local public services to deliver better outcomes for everyone.

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CABINET MEETING – 03 FEBRUARY 2010

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I

Title of Report:

Silksworth Hall Conservation Area: Character Appraisal and Management Strategy

Author(s):

Deputy Chief Executive

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet of the outcome of consultations on the draft 'Silksworth Hall Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy' and to recommend to Cabinet the adoption of the revised document as formal Planning Guidance.

Description of Decision:

Cabinet is recommended to:

- (i) note the outcome of consultations on the draft 'Silksworth Hall Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy'; and,
- (ii) adopt the revised Character Appraisal and Management Strategy as Formal Planning Guidance.

Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework?

*Yes

If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework

Suggested reason(s) for Decision:

To provide the Council with an appropriate basis for the control of development in the Silksworth Hall Conservation Area.

Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:

The alternative option is not to adopt the Character Appraisal and Management Strategy as Planning Guidance. This option would weaken the Council's ability to discharge its responsibilities for the control of development in the Silksworth Hall Conservation Area and result in Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) 219 not being achieved for 2009/2010. It would also hinder the Council's progress to discharging its obligations under the provisions of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Is this a "Key Decision" as defined in the Constitution?

No

Is it included in the Forward Plan?

No

Relevant Scrutiny Committees:

Environment and Attractive City Scrutiny Committee

Planning and Highways Committee

SILKSWORTH HALL CONSERVATION AREA: CHARACTER APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE****1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet of the outcome of consultations on the draft 'Silksworth Hall Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy' and to recommend to Cabinet the adoption of the revised document as formal Planning Guidance.

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF DECISION

- 2.1 Cabinet is recommended to:
- (i) note the outcome of consultations on the draft 'Silksworth Hall Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy'; and,
 - (ii) adopt the revised Character Appraisal and Management Strategy as Formal Planning Guidance.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (LB&CA) Act 1990 defines Conservation Areas as "areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance". The Act stipulates that Local Authorities are under a duty to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of their conservation areas.
- 3.2 The Council also has an obligation under the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) Policy B4 to produce supplementary guidance in the form of character appraisals for conservation areas in the City. This reflects national planning guidance in Planning Policy Guidance Note (PPG) 15 'Planning and the Historic Environment' which encourages Local Authorities to prepare detailed assessments of the special interest, character and appearance of their conservation areas. Such documents may also contain proposals for preserving and enhancing the character of a conservation area.
- 3.3 The Council's performance in preparing up-to-date character appraisals for its conservation areas is currently the subject of a "Best Value Performance Indicator" (BVPI219). The purpose of BVPI219 is to monitor local authorities' performance in relation to Sections 71 and 72 of the above Act.
- 3.4 The Silksworth Hall Character Appraisal and Management Strategy is the tenth in a series of such studies that will address all fourteen of the City's conservation areas. It fulfils the Council's duties and obligations under the Planning (LB & CA) Act 1990. It will also satisfy the above BVPI target for 2009/2010.

4.0 CURRENT POSITION

- 4.1 Silksworth Hall Conservation Area includes the former grounds of Silksworth Hall - originally the seat of Silksworth Manor, the former grounds of Doxford House - now Doxford Park, and the now disappeared medieval village of Silcesworth which developed around the spine of Warden Law Lane. Given the early history of Silksworth, it is likely that the Conservation Area could yield significant archaeological evidence should opportunities arise to investigate this in the future. It is clear that Silksworth has changed significantly throughout its lifetime, and while most physical evidence of the early history is long lost (including all of the medieval buildings), development from the 18th century onwards remains of great interest.
- 4.2 As with other conservation areas in the city, the integrity and character of the area can come under pressure from householder alterations and a desire to further develop land for housing. The Council's planning powers allow it to exercise tight controls over works to Listed Buildings, however, its powers to conserve unlisted structures are less rigorous. A Character Appraisal and Management Strategy (CAMS), adopted as formal Planning Guidance, strengthens the Council's policies for the Conservation Area and helps to protect its special interest (which springs from its historic buildings, significant open spaces and streetscapes) from the potentially adverse effects of property development.
- 4.3 The draft Silksworth Hall CAMS follows guidance set out in the joint Office for the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) (now the Department for Communities and Local Government) / English Heritage publications 'Guidance on conservation area appraisals' and 'Guidance on the management of conservation areas' (2006). Part 1 of the document, the 'Character Appraisal', identifies and appraises the characteristics and features that give the Conservation Area its special interest. Part 2, the 'Management Strategy', addresses in detail the issues raised in the Character Appraisal by establishing objectives and proposals to secure the future preservation and enhancement of the Conservation Area's special character.
- 4.4 The draft document has now been subject to public consultation. Ward Councillors, the Portfolio Holders for Prosperous City and Sustainable Communities, the Historic Environment Champion, and relevant service providers within the Council were consulted on the draft document by memorandum in October 2009 prior to it being issued for public consultation. A copy of the document in compact disc form and a covering letter was then sent to all residents, businesses and other occupiers in the Conservation Area and to a range of other interested parties including English Heritage and national and local heritage societies. Paper copies of the document were also made available on request and available for viewing at the Civic Centre, Silksworth Library, Doxford Park Library and the City Library.
- 4.5 A public exhibition was held at St. Matthew's Church, Silksworth Lane on 1 December 2009 to discuss the document, with particular reference to the proposed Management Proposals.

- 4.6 The period of consultation expired on 11 December 2009. The Character Appraisal and Management Strategy has been modified in light of representations received. A summary of the responses and modifications is given below and detailed in more depth in Appendix 1.

5.0 SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES AND MODIFICATIONS

- 5.1 In all, six written representations have been received out of a total of 96 letters / CDs issued. Thirteen people attended the public exhibition, one of whom completed a comments sheet; notes were however taken of the main issues raised in discussion and are included in the Appendix which follows.
- 5.2 All who responded to the draft document were supportive and expressed interest in and concern for the character and appearance of the conservation area. Various minor additions and amendments have been made to the document in light of the comments received, including modifications to several of the maps to update boundary lines and correct the age of buildings and alterations to some of the text to correct terminology and add new information.
- 5.3 The schedule at Appendix 1 details the responses received and modifications to the document, where appropriate. A list of external consultees is also appended. Copies of the final (revised) version of the Silksworth Hall Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy are available in the Members' library.
- 5.4 Whilst the number of consultation responses is low, this is perhaps a consequence of Silksworth Hall being a long established conservation area that has not been subject to any significant change in the last 20 years and the fact that there is little of a controversial nature in the CAMS.

6.0 REASON FOR DECISION

- 6.1 To provide the Council with an appropriate basis for the control of development in the Silksworth Hall Conservation Area.

7.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 7.1 The alternative option is to not adopt the Character Appraisal and Management Strategy as Planning Guidance. This option would weaken the Council's ability to discharge its responsibilities for the control of development in the Silksworth Hall Conservation Area and result in BVPI 219 not being achieved for 2009/2010. It would also hinder the Council's progress to discharging its obligations under the provisions of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

8.0 RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 **Financial implications** – There are no financial implications for the Council associated with the adoption of the Silksworth Hall Conservation Area CAMS.

8.2 **Legal implications** – The CAMS has been prepared in accordance with the relevant planning legislation and guidelines.

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Adopted City of Sunderland Unitary Development Plan
- Planning Policy Guidance Note (PPG) 15 'Planning and the Historic Environment'
- ODPM / English Heritage publication 'Guidance on conservation area appraisals'
- ODPM/ English Heritage publication 'Guidance on the management of conservation areas'
- Draft Silksworth Hall Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy
- Responses to public consultation exercise

**Appendix 1: Schedule of Consultation Responses and Action Taken –
Silksworth Hall Conservation Area Character Appraisal & Management Strategy**

Consultee	Comments	Action / reason for no action
Heritage Organisations		
English Heritage	No specific comment.	No action required.
County Archaeologist	Commented on a very thorough document, noting that the history and notable connections sections were very interesting, and the photos are very good.	No action required.
	Noted that the text on p.5 states that there is “no evidence of pre-historic settlement”, recommended that this is re-phrased to “no pre-historic finds have been found”. Also suggested referring to HER 159 – Steeple Hill burials.	Text on p.5 amended accordingly. Additional HER entry added to appendix 2.
	Noted that the text on p.6 refers to a Fireplace Tax which was, in fact, a Hearth Tax.	Text on p.6 amended accordingly.
	Noted that the text on p.19 refers to the pump house and the ice house as one structure when, in fact, they are two separate structures.	Text on p.19 amended accordingly.
	Expressed support for the restoration and re-use of the walled garden, and the provision of interpretation boards.	No action required.
	Commented positively on the quality of the archaeology section and suggested an additional line referring to the importance of building recording prior to conversions.	Additional text added to Management Proposal 5a.
	Suggested the addition of UDP archaeology policies to the appendix.	Additional policies included in appendix 1.
	Architects/ developers	
No comments received		
Local Businesses /Residents		
City resident	Overall expressed support for the document.	No action required.
	With regard to the existing boundary of the Conservation Area, stated that the inclusion in the Conservation Area of Silksworth Hall Drive is “unnecessary” but that a meaningful alternative boundary is not obvious. Agreed, therefore, that the boundary should not be altered.	No action required. Silksworth Hall Drive is within the former gardens of Silksworth Hall and, whilst the houses are not of specific historic interest, the space that they occupy is.

	Suggested that the Council should consider taking a more pro-active approach to securing the restoration of Doxford House, by serving statutory notices or preparing a development brief for the building.	The Council's current position on Doxford House, and the powers open to the Council to take future action, are clearly outlined on page 44 of the Management Strategy. No action required.
	Supported the general principle of restoring the kitchen garden in Doxford Park and wider park, suggesting some additions to the walled garden such as a conservatory tea room and plant nursery.	No Action Required. Management Proposals 1b to 1f concern repair, restoration and improvement proposals for the park and include consideration of visitor facilities in the walled garden. It is noted however that these proposals are purely indicative and aspirational and there is no funding in place at the moment to implement any such proposals. They are intended to support any future bid for funding and identify conservation priorities at an early stage, without being overly prescriptive.
	With regard to the limestone walls to Warden Law Lane, fully supported the design guidance in the document but suggested that further protection needs to be given to those parts that are not listed.	Unfortunately, the wall is not listed in its entirety and is unlikely to warrant listing in its own right. The Council could potentially provide additional protection to the remainder of the wall through the making of an Article 4(2) Direction on the properties it bounds, removing their Permitted Development rights to undertake works to the wall without Planning Permission. This would not, however, provide control over minor repair works and there is no evidence to suggest parts of the wall are under threat from demolition or inappropriate replacement works. It is considered therefore that the imposition of an Article 4(2) Direction would be a disproportionate measure. It is hoped that the detailed guidance provided in the CAMS will encourage those responsible for the maintenance of unlisted parts of the wall to undertake works in a sensitive manner in order to ensure its preservation.
Local resident 1	Expressed general support for the conservation and improvement of the Conservation Area.	No action required.
	Noted that Cedar Cottage is a 1960s infill building and that, therefore the notations on the maps on pages 8 and 24 are incorrect.	Maps on pages 8 and 24 amended to reflect this information.
	Noted that the map on page 41 indicates a mature tree in the grounds of Cedar Cottage which was removed around thirty years ago.	Council's Tree Preservation Order data identifies a tree in this location, hence the origin of the error. Map on page 41 and TPO data amended accordingly.
	Commented that some statements in the document are subjective regarding the appearance and standards of private housing.	No action required. Some modern properties have been identified as being of neutral or negative townscape value in the context of the contribution they make to the essential historic character of the Conservation Area. They are not, however, regarded as being of poor quality or in poor condition. The only buildings which have, quite rightly, been identified as being in poor condition are Doxford House, which is on the national English Heritage Buildings at Risk Register, and the recently fire damaged "The Gardens", which is in Council ownership.

	Suggested that the document would have more credibility if it acknowledged mistakes the Council had made in the past relating to Development Control decisions.	No action required. Silksworth Hall Conservation Area was designated in 1973, prior to which much infill development had already occurred. The document does, however, acknowledge that much of the subsequent development on Silksworth Hall Drive was approved at appeal, following the refusal of planning consent.
Local resident 2	Expressed general support for the initiative to conserve the Conservation Area, but expressed considerable concern at the proposal to prevent additional development in the garden spaces to properties on Silksworth Hall Drive.	No action required. Management Proposal 2b, which is designed to prevent any further development of garden spaces, has been formulated to protect the historic layout, essential landscape character and open, green spatial qualities of the Conservation Area. It is a proposal that is commonly applied to Conservation Areas throughout the City and is generally in accordance with UDP conservation policies and national planning policy in PPG15. It is particularly relevant in Silksworth Hall Conservation Area where infill development in the past has substantially compromised its historic integrity and there is a need to prevent any further erosion of character. It is also noted that proposals to develop garden spaces are often contrary to Development Control policies on 'backland development'.
Local resident 3	Fully support the restoration and maintenance of the conservation area. Live outside the conservation area, but adjacent to Doxford Park. Expressed concern that they won't be consulted on plans to improve the park as they don't live within the conservation area.	No action required. Should funding become available in future to undertake works in Doxford Park then any proposals will be subject to a wide degree of public consultation by the Council. Currently, the proposals within the CAMS are purely indicative and intended to support any future bids for funding and identify conservation priorities at an early stage, without being overly prescriptive.
Comments made at public exhibition		
Attendee 1	Noted boundary of garden to Old School House incorrect on plans.	Maps in document altered accordingly.
	Queried the likelihood of improvement proposals for Doxford Park being implemented.	No action required. Management Strategy explains that the proposals for the Park in the document are purely indicative and aspirational and there is no funding in place at the moment to implement any such proposals.
Attendees 2 & 3	Commented positively on quality of document and expressed support for proposals in it.	No action required.
Attendee 4	No comments.	No action required.
Attendees 5 & 6	Queried the likelihood of improvement proposals for Doxford Park being implemented. Expressed concern over the positioning of any play facilities at perimeter of park close to houses due to problems of antisocial behaviour.	No action required. Management Strategy explains that the proposals for the Park in the document are purely indicative and aspirational and there is no funding in place at the moment to implement any such proposals. Attendees advised that in any case the indicative proposals show the potential location of play facilities away from the houses next to the entrance of the park on Silksworth Road, and that they should contact the Council's Parks Department for further advice on the prospect of future provision of play facilities in the Park.

Attendees numbers 7, 8 & 9	No comments.	No action required.
Attendees 10 & 11	Commented on poor quality of environment and parking problems at the turning head at the end of Warden Law Lane adjacent Morrisons.	No action required, land concerned outside boundary of conservation area and beyond scope of document. Issue referred to the Transportation Section of City Services.
	Expressed concern over future of Doxford House.	Issue addressed in Proposal 4b on page 44 of Management Strategy. No action required.
Attendees 12 & 13	Commented on poor quality of environment and parking problems at the turning head at the end of Warden Law Lane adjacent Morrisons.	No action required, land concerned outside boundary of conservation area and beyond scope of document. Issue referred to the Transportation Section of City Services.
	Expressed desire to see water features reinstated in Park. Supported Proposals in document, particularly with regard to limestone walls along Warden Law Lane.	Issue addressed in Proposal 1d on page 38 of Management Strategy. No action required.

Appendix 2 – List of external consultees

National Organisations / local amenity groups	Architects	Residents / businesses
English Heritage	Frank E. Hodgson	All owners and occupiers in the Conservation Area.
Victorian Society	John D. Waugh	
The Georgian Group	Ged McCormack	
Twentieth Century Society	Jane Derbyshire & David Kendall	
Institute of Historic Building Conservation	Mackellar Schwerdt Partnership	
Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings	Mario Minchella Architects	
Department for Culture, Media and Sport	Napper Architects	
Tyne and Wear Archaeology Officer	Red Box Design Group	
Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment	Anthony Watson Chartered Architect	
Sunderland Civic Society	Ward Hadaway Solicitors	
Sunderland Antiquarian Society	Purves Ash LLP	
Sunderland Heritage and History Forum	A.M. Watt	
Grace McCombie	Jeff Park Building Consultancy	
Living History North East	Wearmouth Architectural Design	
History Society of Sunderland	Gray, Fawdon & Riddle Architects	
Friends of Doxford Park	Howarth Litchfield	
Silksworth Local History Society	HLB Architects	
	Planit Design	
	Reid Jubb Brown	

CABINET MEETING – 3 February 2010

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I

Title of Report:

Marine Walk Masterplan and Seafront Regeneration Strategy

Author(s):

Deputy Chief Executive

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to advise Cabinet of the responses received following public consultation on the draft Marine Walk Masterplan and the draft Seafront Regeneration Strategy and to seek Cabinet's approval of the Masterplan as a Supplementary Planning Document and its approval of the revised Strategy as planning and investment guidance.

Description of Decision:

Cabinet is recommended to:

- (i) note the amendments made to the draft Seafront Regeneration Strategy and draft Marine Walk Masterplan in light of responses resulting from public consultation on the documents and other considerations;
- (ii) approve the amended Seafront Regeneration Strategy as planning and investment guidance; and
- (iii) adopt the amended Marine Walk Masterplan as a Supplementary Planning Document.

Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework?

Yes

If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework

Suggested reason(s) for Decision:

The adoption of the Marine Walk Masterplan as a Supplementary Planning Document and the approval of the Seafront Regeneration Strategy as formal planning and investment guidance will help facilitate the planning and regeneration of the seafronts at Roker and Seaburn. The masterplan and strategy will be used by developers as a basis for preparing detailed proposals for the seafront and would be afforded weight as a material consideration when determining future planning applications. In addition the strategy will identify opportunities for public investment in the seafront.

Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:

The alternative option is not to adopt the Marine Walk Masterplan or approve the Seafront Regeneration Strategy as proposed. The consequences of this would be not to have clear guidance from the council as Planning Authority on appropriate forms of development for the seafronts at Roker and Seaburn. This would weaken the council's ability to control the type of development and the design quality of new structures at the seafront and would allow for an ad hoc approach to be taken to the redevelopment of the area. The failure to adopt a strategy or masterplan would result in a lower standard of development than would otherwise be achieved, making the city less attractive to residents, visitors and investors.

Is this a "Key Decision" as defined in the Constitution?

Yes

Is it included in the Forward Plan?

Yes

Relevant Scrutiny Committee:

Environment and Attractive City

Planning and Highways Committee

Prosperity and Economic Development
Scrutiny Committee

SEAFRONT REGENERATION STRATEGY AND MARINE WALK MASTERPLAN

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1.0 Purpose of report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Cabinet of the responses received following public consultation on the draft Marine Walk Masterplan and the draft Seafront Regeneration Strategy and to seek Cabinet's approval of the Masterplan as a Supplementary Planning Document and its approval of the revised Strategy as planning and investment guidance.

2.0 Description of Decision

2.1 Cabinet is recommended to:

- (i) note the amendments made to the draft Seafront Regeneration Strategy and draft Marine Walk Masterplan in light of responses resulting from public consultation on the documents and other considerations;
- (ii) approve the amended Seafront Regeneration Strategy as planning and investment guidance; and
- (iii) adopt the amended Marine Walk Masterplan as a Supplementary Planning Document.

3.0 Background

3.1 At its meeting on 29 July 2009, Cabinet approved the draft Marine Walk Masterplan and draft Seafront Regeneration Strategy for the purposes of public consultation.

3.2 The Seafront Regeneration Strategy provides a strategic platform to guide the regeneration of Roker and Seaburn seafront and deliver the objective set out in the Sunderland Strategy (2028-2025) the overarching strategy for the city which states that: 'by 2025 Roker and Seaburn will have a key role on providing cultural tourism attractions'. The Marine Walk Masterplan is the first in a suite of documents developed in order to deliver the aims and objectives of the Seafront Regeneration Strategy. The masterplan is a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), forming part of Sunderland City Council's Local Development Framework and will be a material consideration when determining planning applications in this area. As such, the document has been taken forward through the statutory planning process in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 (as amended).

3.3 The main proposals contained in the draft Marine Walk Masterplan included:

- New flexible cultural spaces at Holey Rock Corner and the roundabout on Marine Walk.
- Feature lighting in key areas at Roker including the cliff face at Holey Rock Corner, Roker Bridge and Spottee's Cave.
- An interpretation trail covering the length of Marine Walk from Roker Ravine to the Volunteer Life Brigade Museum which may include artwork, vinyls, bespoke display and notice boards, and sculptures.
- New sculptural gates to the pier and the restoration of the lighthouse and resurfacing of the pier.
- A number of new facilities including an education space, a retail space and an information point located in kiosks designed to complement and reflect Roker's rich heritage and attractive natural environment.
- Public realm works including resurfacing of key areas at Marine Walk, the footpaths linking the upper and the lower promenades and the replacement of street furniture.
- The masking of substations and the opening up of Spottee's Cave at the entrance to Roker Park from Marine Walk.

3.4 The main proposals contained in the draft Seafront Regeneration Strategy included the creation of four character areas:

- Ocean Park - which will continue to be central to the resort of Seaburn providing visitors with a range of leisure facilities and complementary uses.
- Seaburn Promenade - which will be enhanced to create a promenade area with a coordinated palate of high quality street furniture, materials and lighting.
- Cliff Park and Recreation Park – which will support landscaping in key areas using plants native to the Durham coast.
- Marine Walk – improvements in this area will enhance Roker's distinctive built heritage and natural assets.

3.5 Other proposals contained in the strategy included:

- Environmental improvements and soft landscaping that integrate with and add to the coastal location and existing green spaces.

- The provision of new street furniture in key areas along the seafront using high quality materials, such as granite, which are able to withstand the marine environment.
- A bespoke range of signs to improve legibility and way finding to and within the seafront including signage to and from Seaburn Metro Station.
- The addition of public artwork along the seafront and the use of feature lighting to enhance key features such as the cliff face at Holey Rock Corner and the old South Pier Lighthouse.
- Improved signage, surfacing and layout of cycle routes along the seafront to attract visitors to the area and promote sustainable modes of transport.
- Guidance on development quality and sustainable design to ensure the unique character of the seafront is enhanced in an appropriate manner.

4.0 Consultations on the draft Masterplan and Strategy

- 4.1 The draft Marine Walk Masterplan and the draft Seafront Regeneration Strategy were the subject of public consultation between 8 August and 18 September 2009.
- 4.2 During this period all information relating to the consultation, including the draft Seafront Regeneration Strategy and the draft Marine Walk Masterplan was available online at www.sunderland.gov.uk/seafront.
- 4.3 Letters were delivered to all households and businesses within the Seafront Regeneration Strategy study area. The letter notified recipients of the consultation period, invited them to see the main proposals plan at exhibitions displayed at the Civic Centre, Seaburn Leisure Centre, Sunderland Aquatic Centre, the Independent Living Centre at Leechmere and the Tourist Information Centre on Fawcett Street, throughout the consultation period. The letter notified them of a 9 hour drop-in session at the Seaburn Leisure Centre, one three hour and one two hour session at Marine Walk in Roker and two three hour sessions on Seaburn lower promenade where they could see the exhibition and discuss the proposals with council staff. Freepost comments cards and summary brochures of the draft masterplan and strategy were available at all venues as well as all local libraries across the city. Responses could also be made by email or by completing an online consultation form at the website www.sunderland.gov.uk/seafront.

5.0 Consultation responses and changes to the Marine Walk Masterplan

- 5.1 50 comment forms were completed and returned by members of the public. In addition 28 emails were submitted. 55 respondents supported the masterplan proposals, 9 objected to the proposals and 14 respondents did not specify if they supported or objected.

- 5.2 Thirteen responses were received from formal consultees. They were generally supportive of the draft Marine Walk Masterplan. Further consideration of representations submitted by Natural England, Northumbrian Water, the Environment Agency and the Sunderland Branch of the Green Party have resulted in minor changes to sections of the Marine Walk Masterplan.
- 5.3 A full list of the representations received, together with the City Council's response and how, if necessary, the masterplan has been amended to reflect the representations are set out in Appendix 1 to this report.
- 5.4 The main comments received are summarised below.
- 5.5 Quality of the plan
Thirteen respondents complimented the quality of the plan and its content. In particular, respondents were in support of the landscaping proposals, including planting of native species in the grass banks at Marine Walk.
- 5.6 Proposal for greater traffic restrictions
The majority of objections related to the proposal in the draft masterplan for greater traffic restrictions on Marine Walk. These restrictions were included in the draft masterplan due to concerns raised in the initial seafront consultation regarding conflict between pedestrians and vehicle users on Marine Walk. Businesses located at the north end of Marine Walk commented that imposing traffic restrictions there would reduce trade and threaten the viability of their businesses. All representations received were fully considered and as a result the masterplan has been amended to allow for vehicular access up to the roundabout on Marine Walk. It is felt conflict between vehicle users and pedestrians can be adequately reduced through greater enforcement of existing traffic restrictions and improved traffic calming.
- 5.7 Toilet facilities
A number of respondents felt there is a requirement for better toilet facilities at the seafront, including improved provision for people with disabilities. Toilet provision was highlighted as a key issue in the initial seafront consultation which took place between 16 February and 3 April 2009. Many people commented that toilets at the seafront should be open throughout the year. As a result the council has secured funding to ensure toilets at Seaburn Shelter, Cat and Dog Steps, Marine Walk and Pier View will remain open throughout the year. Only the toilet located under the tram shelter at Seaburn will close during the winter. The council is now in the process of undertaking a full review of toilet provision at the seafront including disabled facilities, with a view to allocating funding to improve provision as necessary.
- 5.8 Maintenance
Four respondents commented that there is need for better maintenance at the seafront. The council is in the process of reviewing the management and maintenance of the seafront. These comments will be considered as part of this review.

5.9 Roker Pods

Mixed comments were received in relation to the Roker Pods. The pods are kiosks which will contain facilities such as education space, an information point and potentially retail. Three respondents were in favour of the pods, three objected on the grounds of the appearance of the pods and one respondent was undecided. Nobody objected to the principle of providing education facilities and an interpretation point at Marine Walk. The design of the pods shown in the masterplan is a design concept for illustrative purposes. Funding has been secured from the Commission of Architecture and the Built Environment Sea Change fund to deliver a first phase of improvements at Marine Walk, including the pods. A design team will now be established to develop the concept further. The objective of the design team will be to create the required facilities in a structure which is functional, attractive and reflective of the heritage of Sunderland's unique coastline.

5.10 Events

A small number of respondents stated more events should be held at the seafront. Establishing new events at the seafront is outside the scope of the masterplan; however the masterplan does propose the installation of infrastructure which will support the development of the extensive events calendar, including the creation of two flexible event spaces and improved lighting to extend the lifetime of the seafront into the evening. The events team is seeking to build on the existing events calendar to ensure these new spaces will be used to their full potential.

6.0 **Consultation responses and changes to the Seafront Regeneration Strategy**

6.1 87 comment forms were completed and returned by members of the public. In addition 28 emails were submitted. 72 of the respondents supported the proposals and 43 respondents did not specify if they supported or objected. There were no objections to the strategy.

6.2 Thirteen responses were received from formal consultees. They were generally supportive of the draft Seafront Regeneration Strategy. Further consideration of the representations submitted by the Sunderland Branch of the Green Party, the Campaign to Protect Rural England, the Environment Agency and Natural England have resulted in minor changes to the Seafront Regeneration Strategy.

6.3 A full list of the representations received, together with the City Council's response and how, if necessary, the masterplan has been amended to reflect the representations are set out in Appendix 1 to this report.

6.4 The main comments received are summarised below.

6.5 Toilet facilities

A number of respondents felt there is a requirement for better toilet facilities at the seafront, including improved provision for people with disabilities. Toilet provision was highlighted as a key issue in the initial seafront consultation

which took place between 16 February and 3 April 2009. Many people commented that toilets at the seafront should be open throughout the year. As a result the council has secured funding to ensure toilets at Seaburn Shelter, Cat and Dog Steps, Marine Walk and Pier View will remain open throughout the year. Only the toilet located under the tram shelter at Seaburn will close during the winter. The council is now in the process of undertaking a full review of toilet provision at the seafront including disabled facilities, with a view to allocating funding to improve provision as necessary.

6.6 Wet weather facilities

Sixteen respondents commented on the need to provide 'all weather facilities' at the seafront. Similarly there were a number of separate comments about the need to provide 'wet weather' facilities, another eleven comments about the need for play facilities for children and young people and three for family activities. The Seafront Regeneration Strategy identifies that the Ocean Park site presents the opportunity for mixed-use leisure-led development including wet weather facilities. It is proposed that a detailed masterplan is drawn up for Seaburn which will help guide the regeneration of the Ocean Park site.

6.7 Dog litter/dog ban zones

Seventeen comments received related to dogs. Seven of these were opposed to a dog ban on the beaches but supported better enforcement of the existing by-laws, three were against dogs on the beaches, two others raised concerns about the control of dogs, four complained about dog litter and the need for more dog bins and one asked for provision of drinking bowls for dogs. Dog-bans are by-laws and are set out in the councils Coastal Code. It is not the purpose of the strategy to deal with day to day management issues but the comments are noted and will be referred to the relevant Council Directorate. These comments will also be considered in the ongoing review of the management and maintenance of the seafront.

6.8 Quality of the strategy

There were twelve comments praising the strategy and commenting positively about it.

6.9 Maintenance

There were twelve comments about the need for better maintenance of the public realm and seven relating to the need for more litter bins. The council is in the process of reviewing the management and maintenance of the seafront. These comments will be considered as part of this review. The strategy proposes street furniture including litter bins will be renewed. This will be carried out in consultation with the team responsible for the cleansing of the seafront and where necessary additional bins will be provided.

6.10 Copies of the finalised strategy and masterplan are available for inspection in the Members' Library.

- 6.11 The report was presented to Environment and Attractive City Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 18 January 2010, Prosperity and Economic Development Scrutiny Committee on 20 January and Planning and Highways Committee on 26 January.

7.0 Reasons for Decision

- 7.1 The adoption of the Marine Walk Masterplan as a Supplementary Planning Document and the approval of the Seafront Regeneration Strategy as formal planning and investment guidance will help facilitate the planning and regeneration of the seafronts at Roker and Seaburn. The masterplan and strategy will be used by developers as a basis for preparing detailed proposals for the seafront and would be afforded weight as a material consideration when determining future planning applications. In addition the strategy will identify opportunities for public investment in the seafront.

8.0 Alternative Options

- 8.1 The alternative option is not to adopt the Marine Walk Masterplan or approve the Seafront Regeneration Strategy as proposed. The consequences of this would be not to have clear guidance from the council as Planning Authority on appropriate forms of development for the seafronts at Roker and Seaburn. This would weaken the council's ability to control the type of development and the design quality of new structures at the seafront and would allow for an ad hoc approach to be taken to the redevelopment of the area. The failure to adopt a strategy or masterplan would result in a lower standard of development than would otherwise be achieved, making the city less attractive to residents, visitors and investors.

9.0 List of appendices

Appendix 1: Draft Marine Walk Masterplan and draft Seafront Regeneration Strategy public consultation - schedule of representations and City Council responses

10.0 Background Papers

- Marine Walk Masterplan (Supplementary Planning Document) (2010)
- Seafront Regeneration Strategy (2010)
- Sustainability Appraisal of Marine Walk Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (2010)
- Marine Walk Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document: Screening for an Appropriate Assessment (2010)

Draft Seafront Regeneration Strategy public consultation – public responses			
Reference	Support/ Object	Comments	Officer Comment
SRS1	Neutral	I have been reviewing the proposals for the regeneration of the area and overall am pleased with them. However I cannot see what has been proposed for the Seaburn Centre. This building has proved to be a white elephant which seems to provide little use for anyone. The facilities here need improving and the preferred option would be an indoor pool or an ice-rink to give young people something to do on wet days. The ice rink in the Sunderland leisure centre was hugely popular giving children and teenagers somewhere to go in a safe environment, as we have lost this facility in the town centre then I feel that relocating this facility to Seaburn would provide a great attraction for the area.	The Seafront Regeneration Strategy sets out broad principles for the regeneration of the seafront at Roker and Seaburn. A more detailed masterplan will be produced for Seaburn which will provide detailed guidance for new development in this location. Comments noted.
SRS2	Support	These appear positive although public transport and toilet facilities remain an issue.	The management and maintenance of the seafront, including the provision of toilet facilities, is being reviewed as part of a wider exercise within the council. Comments noted.
SRS3	Support	Any move to enhance, augment and improve this area, has, therefore, my unreserved support. 2. Prosaic though they may seem, public conveniences that are pleasant to use, lighting that enhances a feeling of safety and a no tolerance graffiti policy will be extremely popular. 3. Make the seafront accessible to all but include some up-market features. Encourage the establishment of a genuine high-end restaurant in the area. 4. Be bold when it comes to public art.	Point 2: The management and maintenance of the seafront, including toilet facilities and graffiti, is being reviewed as part of a wider exercise within the council. Point 3: During the consultation process the council consulted the Disability Alliance of Sunderland and during the first round of consultation a workshop was held with them. Following the outcome of this and comments received from the public, opportunities to improve wheelchair and pushchair access at the seafront is currently being explored and the strategy has been amended accordingly (page 44). Point 4: The strategy proposes artwork and an interpretation trail which will enhance the local area. Comments noted.
SRS4	Support	The seafront area must be improved to attract more visitors to Sunderland. We must provide various types of activities that will cater for the needs of families, the young adult and the elderly.	Comments noted.
SRS5	Support		Comments noted.
SRS6	Neutral	My concern is the proposed development opportunity of Seaburn camp and playing fields identified on plan drawing on page 43 of consultation draft seafront regeneration strategy. This area of green space is an asset to the area and once green spaces of this nature are lost they are lost for good. The area enhances the open feel of the area and provides a sense of space and leisure opportunity for children, residents and visitors. Also nowhere in the document does the subject of cost arise and how the seafront development is going to be paid for. Again I worry that any development of the seafront is to the detriment of an existing area by a sell off and over development of a green space. There are echoes of the disastrous development of the 1980's which provided an unused fairground, an under-utilised sports centre and a supermarket, as well as a range of other sub-standard facilities. Where we are now is trying to put right this "carbuncle" but not to the detriment of our valuable green spaces.	See SRS7. A detailed masterplan is to be drawn up which will help guide the redevelopment of Seaburn. The strategy has been produced to guide development at the seafront and aid in securing funding for the seafront. Comments noted.

SRS7	Support	1. High-quality amenities needed - not more amusement arcades; good cafes/restaurants - not 'greasy spoons'. No additional bars. No fairground - it would be used only by a small minority and create noise and disturbance. 2. Seaburn Centre is a 'White Elephant'. Use the land and the redundant fairground to build a state of the art leisure pool as an indoor attraction for visitors and residents; an asset for the whole city that would be used as a family attraction all year. 3. Reinstate the burn as a natural feature with landscaping. 4. Provide a top quality campsite so encouraging long-stay visitors. Perhaps a venture with the camping/caravanning Club. Seaburn Camp is already used for caravan/motorhome rallies and would be a possible site. 5. Provide playgrounds for both young and older children. Site it on or near the seafront. The present play area is essentially for young children and is 'hidden' from visitors.	Points 1 & 2: It is proposed that a detailed masterplan is drawn up for Seaburn which will help guide the regeneration of the Ocean Park site. As the strategy identifies this site presents the opportunity for mixed-use leisure-led development including wet weather facilities. The suggested uses may be appropriate on this site and would be considered as a detailed masterplan for Seaburn is formed. Point 3: The strategy proposes landscaping and environmental improvements which will be able to withstand the marine environment. Point 4: The camping and caravanning club currently holds events throughout the year. Point 5: The strategy in general promotes new play facilities. Comments noted.
SRS8	Support	I do support the changes; however I do not support the proposed dog ban. I am a responsible dog owner who cleans up after her dogs; it angers me that the irresponsible few are spoiling this for the rest of us. I would suggest that more dog fouling officers are present, and issue INSTANT fines; at information points dog bags are readily available; would it not be a good idea to get lifeguards involved in reporting dog fouling? I was down the beach this weekend with my dogs, I spotted at least 2 people who did not clean up after their dogs, the lifeguards just walked by, should they not carry some bags and hand them to owners who don't clean up after their dogs? By banning dogs from the beach the cafe at the cat & dog steps will lose trade.	Dog-bans are by-laws and are set out in the councils Coastal Code. It is not the purpose of the strategy to deal with day to day management issues but the comments are noted and will be referred to the relevant Council Directorate.
SRS9	Neutral	It would appear just to be a makeover of the existing features, for instance the Seaburn Centre could be expanded. Its coffee bar certainly needs opening up for bad weather routine. What is happening to the pleasure park area?	See SRS7. Comments noted – these matters will be considered in the preparation of the Seaburn Masterplan.
SRS10	Support	Colourful documents identifying lots of opportunities, but lacking in specific proposals which could be costed. The main feature that is needed is a focal point for the whole front. The obvious place for this is the underused/ underdeveloped Seaburn Centre. With little capital expenditure it could be developed to contain a resorts office, a sub TIC as well as a general visitor's facility including catering. It is already the best exhibition/ events venue in the City but never really promoted to achieve its potential.	See SRS7. Comments noted.
SRS11	Support	Build a central point for water sport activities (including suitable changing facilities and qualified staff) on the seafront to encourage people to learn/ develop surfing; wind surfing; jet skiing etc. - this should attract local people and visitors as well as contributing to promoting healthy living in the borough.	It is proposed that a detailed masterplan is produced for Seaburn. Marine Walk is currently the central focus for water sports and facilities. However it is noted that these facilities could be expanded. Comments noted.
SRS12	Support		Noted.
SRS13	Support		Noted.
SRS14	Support		Noted.
SRS15	Support		Noted.
SRS16	Support	Dog walking should not be banned from the beaches; I feel the current exclusions at certain times of year and on certain parts of the beach are excellent. Do not punish all dog owners for the few who do not care.	See SRS8. Comments noted.

SRS17	Support	Whenever you go to the seafront whether bright and sunny or cloudy and rainy, there are always lots of people walking dogs, enjoying the area with family. However, there are no facilities down there and these people eventually move to places like South Shields who cater for all age groups. How long has Seaburn not had a fair now? Even if it is not replaced, do something advantageous with the area of land!!	See SRS7. Comments noted.
SRS18	Support	Please ensure that whatever ensues that the seafront does not turn out like Blackpool. Get rid of the horrible "Seaburn Hotel" front and multi-coloured, cheap looking frontages of the other establishments. Encompass all the suggestions in the strategy but give the place some CLASS!	Comments noted.
SRS19	Support		Noted.
SRS20	Neutral	Restriction of vehicles into the area only to local residents, utilising modern number plate recognition systems in the Spring/Summer period. Shoppers to Morrisons can use Lowry Road, with improvement of this entrance to the car parks in the area. There are particular problems for vehicles at weekend with queues of traffic all the way along the seafront to Whitburn, use of traffic lights on exits from Bents/South Bents Road ends onto Whitburn Road, with priority given to traffic entering Whitburn Road from these areas. This will help to reduce speedsters along this road. No traffic calming measures to be used on the street, this penalises local residents who have to travel on this road the rest of the year when there is no clash between pedestrians and traffic.	An in-depth speed survey would be carried out before any traffic calming measures or alterations to the highway are made. In addition all local residents will be consulted in writing as part of the survey. Comments noted.
SRS21	Support		Noted.
SRS22	Support		Noted.
SRS23	Support	I would like provision for deck chair hire near Marine Walk - by Holey Rock Corner.	Deckchairs are currently available for hire from the resorts team at Seaburn and Roker. Comments noted.
SRS24	Support		Noted.
SRS25	Support	1. I note that there is a reference to a lack of positive vista when you enter the seafront from South Tyneside and that you propose moving the bus stop on the edge of Pebble Beach further north to improve the view. I am keen to mention that it is not the bus stop that is a problem. It's the lamp posts. I appreciate what you say about the reason that they are so big and that they are recognised now as being part of the seafront, but are they recognised for a good reason or just that you cannot avoid recognising them as they jump into your view. Until replacement is possible would it be suitable to repaint them all to a colour which blends more with the environment or the sky. 2. I am happy that you mention areas where there will be relandscaping and replanting. I see no reference to undertaking the maintenance of these replanted areas. Why bother to expensively replant, if you have not factored in a maintenance cost for people to look after these areas. Surely, someone with responsibility for a particular area could manage them and hopefully prevent vandalism, or neglect which may be detrimental to these areas. The lack of maintenance could undo your good work. This applies to planting in Marine Walk and Ocean Park. 3. I feel the plans are positive overall I would really be cherred if what was undertaken was looked after for the longer term. Those of us who live in these areas would like the improvements to benefit us and our children for the longer, not short or medium term.	Comments noted. Point 1: Preparations to repaint the lamp posts are currently being made. Point 2: The other issues highlighted are to be dealt with as the management and maintenance regime at the seafront is reviewed as part of a wider council exercise. Point 3: Comments noted.
SRS26	Support	I really can't pour enough plaudits on you for an imaginative, very locally distinctive and brilliant scheme. I believe some of the language used could be off-putting to the jargon-weary general public. I'm very excited by the scheme and wish you all the best for it. Please be aware that some people are convinced the scheme will totally pedestrianise the whole seafront.	The strategy does not propose to pedestrianise the seafront. Comments noted.

SRS27	Support	I was highly worried reading a proposal of "complete ban on dogs being on the beach all year round", as a sensible dog owner, who lives locally and uses the beach DAILY. To ban all dogs all year round in my opinion would be a terrible thing; lots of dog walkers use the beach & adhere to the rules. A lot of dog owners, stay on the beach for their breakfast/drinks so we do bring some income in & that would be lost if dogs were banned. I too am annoyed/disgusted when I see dog dirt all over the place, there have been times when I approached owners & force a dog ban on them to pick up after their dogs. The Roker Park office used to give out free dog bags, I suggest that all proposed information points/focal points etc. have a hefty supply of dog bags so they are always at hand, I also think the best idea is to provide extra enforcement & issue on the spot fines.	The Strategy does not propose to ban dogs off the beaches completely. See SRS8. Comments noted.
SRS28	Support		Noted.
SRS29	Support	Living at Cliff Park, I am constantly made aware of the noise and danger caused by speeding cars and motor bikes. I would therefore like to see speed cameras introduced.	There is currently a speed camera located on Whitburn Bents Road which is signposted both north and southbound when traveling along Whitburn Bents Road. A bid has also been made for funding for the installation of two vehicle activated speed signs along the seafront. Before any traffic calming measures are implemented at the seafront a full traffic survey would be carried out. Comments noted.
SRS30	Support	New facilities to include additional coffee/refreshment bars/cafes in which one can relax inside (winter) outside (summer) [such as "The Snow Goose"] Pods look ok but where's the comfort. More/improved dog litter receptacles.	The uses identified are suitable in this area however this will be considered in more detail when a detailed masterplan for Seaburn is drawn up. Comments noted.
SRS31	Support	I work in Sunderland and would like to move to Seaburn/Roker area. There needs to be more affordable housing built along the coast and this will bring more people to the coast in the long-term. I feel there is a demand for a leisure pool at Seaburn and this would give something to do in poor weather. Also need more business activity, theme park/ice-skating rink/climbing wall etc, to cater for what Sunderland doesn't have currently.	See SRS7. Comments noted.
SRS32	Support	I support the proposal for the regeneration of the seafront, an idea, how about a designated Bede's walk from Sunderland to Jarrow?	There are existing designated walks at these locations including Bede's Way which links the cWHS St Peter's Monkwearmouth to St Paul's in Jarrow. Comments noted.
SRS33	Neutral	I have looked at your plans and there is no provision for wheelchair/ pushchair access to Seaburn beach. Also insufficient access between the Cliff Park and the Promenade.	During the consultation process the council consulted the Disability Alliance of Sunderland and during the first round of consultation a workshop was held with them. Following the outcome of this and comments received from the public, opportunities to improve wheel chair and push chair access at the seafront is currently being explored and the strategy will be amended accordingly. Comments noted.
SRS34	Support	All your plans look great, but not a lot for children to do on a cold or wet day, only fish + chips if you want to eat through the day! No fun fair. (Not the one we have) + Please No. Dogs on Cat + Dogs, this is the best part of Seaburn. May - Sept no dogs.	See SRS7. Dog-bans are by-laws and are dealt with as part of the Coastal Code. Dog-bans are outside of the remit of the Seafront Regeneration Strategy and the Marine Walk Masterplan. Comments noted.

SRS35	Neutral	Lack of precise information - have read through strategy several times and still unclear about what is planned, particularly with regard to "Ocean Park" area. There was no clear favoured option in original survey - spread of opinion wide. Therefore views of people who use the seafront REGULARLY and throughout the year should be carefully considered. Re-opening of "fun fair" has not been successful, loud music has been a problem from noon onwards. Final plans need to take account of the fact that Seaburn is a residential area - not the case with South Shields.	See SRS7. Comments noted.
SRS36	Neutral	There are a lot of good ideas in the proposal except I believe that at least 1 beach area should be available to dog owners. I would suggest the beach near to the yacht club.	See SRS8. Comments noted.
SRS37	Support	Sufficient funding must be allocated to provide adequate cleaning services, maintenance, supervision/attendance and policing (not always evident) Crowd are entitled to adequate amenities. Any improvements or new developments should be of high quality in design and construction with due regard to maintenance to ensure the quality of the pedestrian and residential environment be maintained or enhanced is paramount.	See SRS3. Comments noted.
SRS38	Neutral	As a daily walker in the area - happy with the ambience as it is - very natural but obviously feel some general maintenance / cleanliness is required with maximum emphasis on the rebuild/refurbishment of the toilet.	See SRS3. Comments noted.
SRS39	Support	I can not see any proposed activity areas for teenagers, like a skate/bike park, basketball courts. Isn't this age group that people say cause trouble? I think this is because the council never provides them with fun facilities. We are your future so give us a thought in your plans!	There is an existing skate park to the rear of Morrison's and there are basketball and tennis courts in Roker Park. The Marine Walk Masterplan proposes play space and an entertainment plaza catering for people of all ages. A masterplan will be developed for Seaburn setting out scope of further leisure facilities at the seafront. See SRS7. Comments noted.
SRS40	Support (some)	Shrubs on Cliff Park will only collect litter that blows about (i.e. see shrubs in Roker Park) Transport facilities need to be improved on seafront.	Cliff Park would support landscaping in key area based on local ecology, using plants which are native to the Durham coast. A coherent and detailed landscaping strategy will be developed for the upgrading of existing planting before any new planting/landscaping scheme is introduced. Comments noted.
SRS41	Support	Please allow parking on both sides of the seafront between Dykelands Rd and the Marriott Hotel all year round. Also please allow parking on the huge lay-by outside the Pullman Lodge Hotel.	Comments noted.
SRS42	Neutral	Please improve the toilet facilities with an attendant. We also need a Tourist information centre. Education facilities with hands on areas.	See SRS3 and SRS7. As part of the Marine Walk Masterplan a number of 'pods' or kiosks are proposed, including an education pod which would provide facilities/opportunities for hands on learning and education. Comments noted.
SRS43	Neutral	One must never forget that the most important assets are the sands and the sea and the cleanliness of both. Perhaps a few more seats on the lower promenade would be helpful. Also there were many starlings in the bushes next to the Seaburn Hall until they were hacked and the starlings lost their shelters. More bushes and greenery wherever possible would be good for the environment.	Wildlife will be considered when detailed designs of landscaping/planting are drawn up. Comments noted.
SRS44	Support	Build a leisure pool next to the Seaburn Centre. With unpredictable weather a leisure pool with waves etc. would be a great bonus. We need this sort of facility for wet/cold weather days.	See SRS7. Comments noted.
SRS45	Support	I think the renovation of old Sunderland pier should get priority. Traditionally a focal point for Sunderland people and a gateway to the city by sea and first impressions of the seafront. PS. Don't forget the toilets and other normal maintenances.	See SRS3. Improvements to and the resurfacing of the pier are already included in the strategy. Comments noted.

SRS46	Support		Noted.
SRS47	Neutral	Something to attract people to the area - i.e. Chip shops. Could speak to people staying in the 2 hotels on Sunderland seafront on a Saturday and ask people why they visited. Seaburn Centre waste of money, maintenance an issue. Potential wet weather facility? In addition to something which can sustain running the building. Complimentary of flowers along the seafront - should be continued, positive in reference to signs hanging from lamp post - great mean of advertising.	See SRS7. Comments noted.
SRS48	Neutral	Lambton worm and surrounding area infested in rats - health hazard!! Priority. General cleaning up - Emptying bins, dog waste. Plenty of toilet facilities required. Planting needs to be up kept. Waste & rubbish left by Gypsies. MAINTAIN!! Not adequate bins, especially on hot days.	See SRS3. Comments noted.
SRS49	Neutral	This might look very nice but there is still nothing to do. No facilities for children. Suggestion - crazy golf, miniature railway, bouncy castles etc. Indoor facilities for when it rains.	See SRS7. Comments noted.
SRS50	Neutral	1. I would like a bigger better park with grass. 2. On the pier I would like a discovery trail. Better toilets!	See SRS3. Point 1: The strategy proposes an interpretation trail along the seafront. Point 2: There are large areas of green space at the seafront at Cliff Park, Recreation Park and Roker Park. The strategy also proposes that Cliff and Recreation Park will be enhanced. Comments noted.
SRS51	Neutral	I would like in the park a crazy golf.	In principal crazy golf is considered to be a suitable use at the seafront. Comments noted.
SRS52	Neutral	Ice rink would provide 'all year round' entertainment for all ages. Discos used to be great fun (keep kids off streets). Amusements look shabby and tired.	See SRS7. Comments noted.
SRS53	Neutral	Put some chairs in the open area before you enter the sports hall and have a chill zone of a fee for a minimum of 50p per hour.	See SRS7. Comments noted.
SRS54	Neutral	Improvements to Seaburn camp - potentially re-instate camping/caravan facilities (as in vision) or develop some facilities for younger people. Artwork displayed throughout the year along the coastline. Heritage trail drawn out along coastline, specific features identified. Requests for a swimming pool at Seaburn Centre. Multi-use/wet weather facilities for families. Fountain next to Marriott should be removed, reduces visibility for drivers.	Artwork is proposed along the seafront as part of the strategy. See SRS7. Comments noted.
SRS55	Neutral	Please make some facilities & activities for teenagers e.g. youth beach project or clubs. And facilities for younger children 5-11 year olds - Desperate Need.	See SRS7. Comments noted.
SRS56	Support	Please could you clean out the toilets and make them better. Also please change the sand pit to a little pool. If you could put water fountains on the beach. Dogs should be allowed on the beach.	It is proposed that water play is installed in the old paddling pool at Marine Walk. See SRS3 and SRS8. Comments noted.
SRS57	Support	A lot of Sunderland people travel to South Shields for the pleasant seafront, entertainment, plenty cafes and restaurants - all free entertainment. Sunderland has Morrison's! End of story.	There is an existing events calendar which the council is looking to build upon at the seafront. The Seafront Regeneration Strategy and Marine Walk Masterplan propose entertainment areas which can be used to provide entertainment and host events for all ages all year round. Comments noted.

SRS58	Support	I think wet weather facilities would be excellent. Putting green would be good as this wouldn't be expensive for people to use. The toilets need up-grading, need to be open all year as people like to walk along the front on fine winter days. I feel that dogs should not be allowed on the cat-dog head as this is a safe little bay for children. I have seen children running bare footed over sand on which a dog has emptied its bladder; some small children are frightened of dogs. We have a wonderful stretch of coast and it wouldn't take a lot to make it even more appealing. We need a few more seats facing the sea.	See SRS7 and SRS8. Funding has been secured to open the toilets (with the exception of those adjacent to the Seaburn Tram Shelter) through the forthcoming winter season. The toilets are being considered as the maintenance and management regime of the seafront is being reviewed as part of a wider council exercise. Comments noted.
SRS59	Neutral	Dykelands Road, Seaburn the gateway to the beach harbour walk of the "dog clubs" and walk through mere knolls cemetery onto this road and proceed to the beach and all the while the dogs urinate and drop faeces.	See SRS8. Comments noted.
SRS60	Neutral	Could we have some railings at the back of Martinos to Pullmans the Gypsies camping there, Could we have the bins at the back of the Dragon Park emptied? Dog faeces placed in these bins and they stink.	See SRS3. The council is currently exploring the opportunity of installing railings to the rear of Martinos as a short-term measure before a long-term solution can be found. Comments noted.
SRS61	Neutral	Need more bins along the promenade which are full by 4.30pm and the residue is stacked around the bins and blow all over. We need more dog wardens.	See SRS3 and SRS8. Bin provision is to be revised as landscape proposals are developed for the seafront. Comments noted.
SRS62	Support	I attended a forum at Age Concern about the regeneration of the seafront. To be honest, anything (within reason - no more ridiculous fountains). My concern is where do the children go to spend their pocket money, I.e. sweets, buckets and spades. Please look at the start of Shields front. Masses of flowers, impressive lighting - the lamp posts that branch over road and pavement.	The lighting columns along the seafront are due to be repainted. The strategy proposes feature lighting at key points along the seafront which will help increase a sense of safety on an evening. Proposed planting would comprise native grasses and perennial plants. Comments noted.
SRS63	Neutral	I cannot believe you are having these meetings and proposals and there isn't even any money in the pot (we pay enough council tax).	The strategy has been prepared to help support bids for external funding and help guide development proposals at the seafront as they come forward. £1 million has been secured from the CABE Sea Change program plus £500,000 match funding from the council to deliver a first phase of improvements at Marine Walk. A further £100,000 has been ring-fenced from North Area Committee for public realm improvements at Seaburn. Further funding is currently being sought. Comments noted.
SRS64	Neutral	New toilets needed at the cat & dog steps Roker. Dogs kept off the beach at the cat & dog steps people have been complaining about this problem for years, nothing gets done about it. Lots of RATS seen in the play area beside the Seaburn Centre, something needs to be done about it.	See SRS3 and SRS8. Comments noted.
SRS65	Support	Have a ride from Gypsy Green, in South Shields, right along the seafront. Notice coloured paths and flower displays. You'd get some good ideas from there for Sunderland seafront! We don't want black seats along the front - we want colour! We also need plenty of attractions to make it a proper sea-side.	Comments noted.

SRS66	Support	I agree with the proposals, after this wet summer, we need facilities for families at affordable prices, as there is nowhere to go when it rains; and a priority should be more toilets.	See SRS7. The strategy contains both long and short-term plans. However these can only be delivered subject to funding. Funding has been secured to open the toilets (with the exception of those adjacent to the Seaburn Tram Shelter) through the forthcoming winter season. The toilets are to be considered as the maintenance and management regime of the seafront is reviewed as part of a wider council exercise. Comments noted.
SRS67	Neutral	I would like to see more picnic areas at Seaburn and upgrade Roker Park. Years ago there used to be pitch and putt activities at Roker and Seaburn. Returning to the good old days and having the tram back on Seaburn would attract more people.	Comments noted.
SRS68	Neutral	Can you please inform me how your finances will cover all the maintenance work that will be needed for Roker, as the Council has failed to keep Roker promenade and the surrounding area up to the highest of standards expected of any company or professional organisation.	See SRS3. Comments noted.
SRS69	Neutral	Any development of the seafront must be supported but maintenance (litter, weeds, grass, sand in low parks for a few years) security (parking, graffiti, vandalism) and policing (drinking dens, riverside drinking, groups roaming etc.) Use Seaburn camp and field behind - soon!	See SRS7 and SRS3. Comments noted.
SRS70	Neutral	1. The public use both sides of Whitburn Bents Road as a cycle track - residential side should not be used for cycles. 2. Lamp posts are more like pipes from a scrap yard - look at South Shields! 3. Cars/Vans/Lorries are often left for dump opposite Morrison's etc. - FOR SALE! 4. People allowing their dogs to foul footpaths and prom - dogs not on leads. 5. People leave rubbish/broken bottles etc. about prom. 6. Cars/vans drive on pavements - park on double yellow lines. 7. Prom. toilets - Cat & Dog stairs should be open all year. 8. Need a mini roundabout for traffic safety between The Bents and W Bents Rd. 9. Re-surface the prom.	Point 2: The lighting columns were originally installed to support the weight of the illuminations. From the initial consultation in spring 2009 it was found that the columns are popular as they are seen to be a feature of Sunderland seafront and therefore at present there are no proposals to remove the lighting columns. Point 7: Funding has been secured to keep the toilets open over the forthcoming winter season (with the exception of the underground toilets adjacent to the Seaburn Tram Shelter). Point 9: The strategy proposes the resurfacing of the promenade. See SRS3. Comments noted.
SRS71	Support	Overall plan looks great. 2 general comments 1. As good a job as the council do re-trash etc. we really need better bins/collection processes & education of public (i.e. Seaburn, Roker) Not sure if Seaburn/Roker is correct venue but Sunderland could put itself on the WORLD map if they built THE BEST SHIPBUILDING AND COAL MINING MUSEUM ANYWHERE. Our engineering and industrial history could produce one of the best museums in the WORLD.	See SRS3 and SRS7. Comments noted.
SRS72	Neutral	Clear and accurate signs telling visitors that there is FREE car parking at the rear of Seaburn Centre, located on all roads leading onto the seafront. Crazy Golf (maybe the Lambton Worm could be made into a course). Well sign posted. Places and things to do during bad weather. Caravan Park (as long as it's well managed to attract people to the area). Plenty for the children to do e.g. adventure play area, trampolines, play park (Seaburn area). Things need to be near the seafront as people like things close and not having to walk far.	New signage is proposed as part of the strategy. See SRS7. Comments noted.
SRS73	Support	Seaburn Seawall is very nice - could do with some sculpture finish on the surface.	There is potential for artwork on the sea wall. The strategy is to be amended to include this. Comments noted.
SRS74	Support	I am a resident and strongly disagree with further speed restriction. You can't get along the road past walking pace - HUGE TRAFFIC JAMS - DO YOU WANT TO CREATE A ROAD CAR PARK OR EASY ACCESS?!! As a cyclist - some cyclists ride too fast. Some proposals are fine!!	See SRS20. Comments noted.

SRS75	Neutral	What about proper access for dogs to the beach all year round and access for horses?	See SRS8. Noted.
SRS76	Support	Would be handy to have showers or even just foot showers for when you come off the sand. All the planned features look really appealing, look forward to seeing them.	The council is currently not in a position to install showers or foot showers at the seafront however this is something which would be welcomed as part of any future development. Comments noted.
SRS77	Support		Noted.
SRS78	Support	Overall a timely and good strategy. However would like to see firm proposals 1. Morrison's (why has a supermarket got such a prime site?) - occupies a significant part of the "strong sense of place" intended 2. Seaburn Centre - what is it for? - need a better multi-use facility. 3. Accommodation? - need better, more up market provision - even a high quality caravan site.	See SRS7. Comments noted.
SRS79	Support	Original features where appropriate, e.g. Seaburn (Marriott Hotel) shelter/underground toilets should be FULLY RESTORED + OPEN ALL YEAR ROUND. TRADITIONAL railings, seating, street lighting, signage should be used NOT trendy 'contemporary' stainless steel street furniture as at Park Lane. 'Pod' + modern sculptures will be eyesores to most people. Vandalism will be a problem, as usual, given the policy of 'zero maintenance' + non-enforcement of available powers. Boating lake? Miniature railway? Outdoor heated pool? Once complete, bring back the illuminations if possible!	Funding has been secured to keep the toilets open over the forthcoming winter season (with the exception of the underground toilets adjacent to Seaburn Tram Shelter). The issues identified are to be addressed when the Management and Maintenance Regime for the seafront is reviewed. At present it is not financially viable to bring back the illuminations. However the proposals do include feature lighting at key points along the seafront which would be lit all year round. The initial design of the pods is an artist's impression. As funding has now been secured the designs will be looked at in further detail and all comments received will be taken into consideration. Comments noted.
SRS80	Support	The improvements previously made around St. Peter's Campus towards the Marina with an art sculpture trail + interesting gates/railings made from iron oars + rope were excellent. It would be great if any improvements at the seafront were of a similar standard whilst innovative + complimentary to the area's current assets.	It is proposed that an interpretation trail using improved signage and artwork will create a link from the end of the art trail from the marina, through Roker and along the seafront to Seaburn. Comments noted.
SRS81	Neutral	We came here from Pakistan, we have really enjoyed it I appreciate your plan.	Comments noted.
SRS82	Support	I am impressed by the proposals. I believe we must avoid any developments of funfairs/amusement arcades. We are not in competition with South Shields. 1. An extension to the Seaburn Centre to occupy all the area north and westwards between the A183 and Lowry Road. This should contain all weather facilities under cover such as a swimming pool for children, their parents and learners like that at Crowtree. A children's play area, sauna and massage suites, space for a wide range of indoor sports with facilities for both participants and spectators, a cafe/ice cream parlour just inside the seafront entrance. 2. It would be helpful from a safety aspect to ban full size cycles from the lower promenade, the present cycle track is adequate though consideration could be given to a track on the other side of the A183.	See SRS7. There are existing designated cycling routes located on the upper promenade; however it would be difficult to prevent cyclists from using the lower promenade instead of the designated cycle paths. There is potential to better enforce the use of the cycle routes and this will be reviewed as part of an ongoing review of the management of the seafront. Comments noted.
SRS83	Support	The regeneration of Sunderland is progressing well; particular care must be taken with the seafront as it should represent a focal point for tourists and locals alike. Keep it modern and clean lines like Sunnside.	Comments noted.
SRS84	Support	As secretary of Friends of Roker Park we are doing our bit by consulting with the Council to develop the Play Area - much admired but water feature doesn't work. Why is the white, wooden bridge closed off? What plans are there for this feature?	The bridge was deemed unsafe due to vandalism and as such has been closed until this has been rectified. Comments noted.

SRS85	Support	We need an iconic live music centre. Sunderland misses out AGAIN.	Comments noted.
SRS86	Neutral	Supply more rubbish bins, CCTV needed to curb drunks and drug users on grassed areas. Police patrols stopping dangerous drivers speeding along seafront. Get rid of fountain at Marriott Hotel - very dangerous as it blocks view of traffic when driving and is an eyesore.	See SRS3. The installation of CCTV cameras at Roker is currently under consideration. It is anticipated that the introduction of feature lighting, as outlined in the Strategy, will deter anti-social behaviour from the area an increased amount of movement at the seafront will create natural surveillance. Comments noted.
SRS87	Support	Beach needs cleaning up. Free parking is good.	See SRS3. Comments noted.
SRS88	Support	Plans look great.	Comments noted.
SRS89	Support	I would like to see more toilet facilities and these should be man-ed during the busy season. Also, a larger play area with more swings, slides and climbing frames for children. The beaches need to be swept of debris.	More detailed proposals for play space will be drawn up with input from young people with an interest in the seafront. Comments noted.
SRS90	Support	The seafront offers few attractions or family events, particularly on an evening, the airshow being the only event to draw people in. Previously the seafront hosted the illuminations which was a family attraction and worthwhile event. Consideration should be given to reintroducing this event and similar events. Traffic calming should be considered to create a more pedestrian friendly environment + eliminate the evening 'boy racers'. Would it be possible to close the road to traffic on an evening as it is done in Europe?	At present it is not financially viable to bring back the illuminations. However the proposals do include feature lighting at key points along the seafront which would be lit all year round. See SRS20. Comments noted.
SRS91	Support	I think the plans are great. However as a dog walker, I suggest you have water towers - low water towers for dog to drink from. I have to lift my dog into the hand bowl in the toilets at the moment.	Comments noted.
SRS92	Support	Originally from Sunderland we visit often (seafront). Improvements always welcome! Couple of suggestions you need more toilets M+F. More litter bins or larger bins, or more often emptied. Some sort of guidance or controls for speeding cyclists on shared paths.	The strategy proposes a water play feature where the old paddling pool is at Roker. See SRS3 and SRS7. Comments noted.
SRS93	Neutral	Put the little kiosks back and make more public toilets available and a kiddie's paddling pool on the seafront and put the little train back if possible and put illuminations back on seafront and Roker Park.	See SRS90. Comments noted.
SRS94	Neutral	Leisure centre needs to be developed for children - ice skating/roller blading/skating/skateboarding/swimming. Want to avoid "cheap looking developments". Maintenance of area litter/booze etc. needs to be taken into consideration.	There is an existing skate/bike park to the rear of Morrison's. See SRS3 and SRS7. Comments noted.
SRS95	Support	Would be great if we could have the illuminations back on the seafront + park.	See SRS90. Comments noted.
SRS96	Support	The proposals look great.	Comments noted.
SRS97	Support	I think the proposals will improve the seafront and I look forward to many more visits.	Comments noted.

SRS98	Neutral	On the Marine Walk character area is noted a cliff art feature. Firstly a possible contemporary art piece on the cliff wall did not go down well, preferring for the cliff wall to be left natural. And ask that this piece of art would not go ahead. The other view was the support for no more contemporary art which Sunderland has too much of. It is felt that if another piece of art should be placed along the seaside, could we suggest a possible more tradition piece. A bronze or carved stone of L.S. Lowry. Mainly views of Sculpture C were disliked. Cliff Park - information board on historical significance of the surrounding area to Bede's Cross on top of Holey Rock. Gun emplacements should be noted when any enhancement scheme is implemented. Green space north of Morrison's, we would ask this is left as green open corridor, used at present for football and large show ground. Some of the area could be used for caravans or camping, small leisure, boating pond. We would not like to see any buildings on this site.	See SRS7. Comments noted.
SRS99	Support	We were staying at the Marriott Seaburn. We were really impressed with the coastline, toilets every 200 yards, seats. We were with our daughter who loved the days on the beach. We feel this is the best kept secret of the North East. We will definitely be returning without a doubt for weekends and further holidays. The regeneration strategy sounds wonderful. We were so surprised at how much money has been ploughed into Seaburn and Roker Parks children's play area is fantastic. It's a wonderful area here. Having lifeguards on the coastline gave us confidence too.	Comments noted.
SRS100	Support	As for Marine Walk, these proposals are not radical enough. How about creating more reasons to come to Seaburn. Lockable beach huts, crazy golf, rent by the hour water sports and wetsuits, toilets and showers, funfair like at South Shields, beach volleyball nets and competitions.	See SRS7. The council is currently not in a position to install showers or foot showers at the seafront however this is something which would be welcomed as part of any future development. Comments noted.
SRS101	Neutral	Mark out cycle track on prom. Dogs on leads, clean up after dogs. Beach wardens to encourage people to take their litter home or place in bins. Seating from 'shelter' between toilets and first aid. Prom security railings need repairing/replacing - should all be renewed in a more positive way. Prom tarmac is lifted by heavy seas - needs replacing instead of patching up. Vans, motorbikes, cars 'parked' for sale. Cycles use both sides of pavement. Parking on pavement, driving on pavement. Make a mini roundabout - access to Bents Road. Cars/motorbikes speeding, damage to lamp posts.	See SRS3. The strategy is to be amended to clarify the proposals for the street furniture at the seafront. Comments noted.
SRS102	Neutral	Plans don't include somewhere to go when it's raining or bad weather. We need a pool in your plans. You could put a pool in Seaburn centre, add another floor. You cannot play all those games you have mentioned in the rain. My husband and I used to love to walk along the promenade at night, But we do not feel safe now, the noise spoils it. We love music and love to hear it played, but not at the level where you cannot hear yourself speak. I love the Seaburn Centre on a Thursday afternoon to the dance, sometimes people come into the foyer when they hear the music but cannot get a cup of tea.	See SRS7. The introduction of feature lighting along the seafront as proposed would increase feelings of safety and deter vandals from existing dark areas which are hubs for anti-social behaviour. Comments noted.
SRS103	Neutral	More benches on the promenade - facing the sea UNLIKE the row of benches facing away from the sea opposite Gabriele's restaurant? Facing away from the sea? Who decided that? Madness! Leisure pool with waves. Maritime sculptures along the seafront. No more houses/supermarkets/food outlets.	It is acknowledged that there is a large stretch of seating facing away from the sea. However the initial public consultation highlighted that some people liked the angle of the seating as it allowed them to enjoy the sun in the afternoon. In addition if turned around these seats would face the sea wall therefore limiting sea views from this position. However, the strategy does acknowledge the need for additional sea facing seating along the seafront. Comments noted.

SRS104	Neutral	Don't agree that the field behind Seaburn Camp should be developed; it should be left as green space. Businesses should be encouraged to tidy up the front of their properties. Graffiti in skate park? Does this get removed? Toilets - lack of them.	See SRS7 and SRS3. The graffiti in the skate park is a feature of the skate park and as such is not removed. However the area is checked on a weekly basis in order for any offensive material to be identified and removed. Comments noted.
SRS105	Support	Congratulations on your method of public consultation. We originally attended the meeting at Roker and are glad to see that many of our suggestions are included in the masterplan. Again your staff at Seaburn on the 27th August were helpful in explaining the strategy and answering all our questions. In the meantime the Council badly needs to clean up the old fairground site in Ocean park which gives a very poor impression of Seaburn to visitors.	It is proposed that a detailed masterplan is drawn up for Seaburn which will take into account the entire Ocean Park site including the fairground site. This site is considered to be an opportunity for mixed-use leisure-led development including wet weather facilities. Comments noted.
SRS106	Neutral	Seaburn Centre exhibition a farce, why didn't someone sweep the entrance, outside was full of cigarette ends and filth, could have been swept before the meeting, which was something like lego. To regenerate this area you must clean it up first. Major health issues.	See SRS3. These comments do not relate to the strategy and do not identify why the respondent felt that the exhibition was so poor, therefore these comments can not be used to help inform future consultation methods. There has been positive feedback received about the methods of consultation that have been used see SRS109 for example. Comments noted.
SRS107	Support	Colourful documents identifying lots of opportunities, but lacking in specific proposals which could be costed. The main feature that is needed is a focal point for the whole front. The obvious place for this is the underused and underdeveloped Seaburn Centre. With comparatively little capital expenditure it could be developed to contain a resorts office, a sub TIC as well as a general visitor's facility including catering. It is the best exhibition/ events venue in the City but never really promoted to achieve its potential.	See SRS7. Comments noted.
SRS108	Neutral	A pedestrian safety island (or controlled crossing) is needed in Whitburn Bents Road close to the Seaburn camp/bus terminus. With the development proposed for Ocean Park and Seaburn promenade, cross-road visitor traffic will add to what is often, at certain times of the day, a hazardous adventure.	Comments noted.
SRS109	Support	We support the proposals but what Seaburn needs to bring it to its full potential is family friendly things to do. We could have a bowling alley and like Blackpool a pirates themed adventure golf. Also deckchairs the way it used to be.	See SRS7. Deckchairs are currently available for hire from the resorts team at both Seaburn and Roker. Comments noted.
SRS110	Support	a.) News of open all year toilets (and disabled provision) is welcome. b.) I proposed indoor play barn, childrens activities and am sorry that this has not been chosen. Indoor kids area is essential due to coastal weather. Otherwise I support the proposals.	See SRS7. Comments noted.
SRS111	Support		Noted.

Draft Seafront Regeneration Strategy public consultation – statutory consultee responses			
SRS112	North East Planning Body	The North East Planning Body has no observations to make and, therefore, will not be submitting a formal response to assess the conformity of the document with regional planning policy.	Comments noted.
SRS113	RNLI	The design and regeneration realisation look fantastic and I am sure these proposals will be fully embraced by the community and local businesses alike. The RNLI would like to be consulted on the incorporation of any lifeguard units on this beach.	Noted. A procurement process is currently ongoing which will determine if the RNLI take on life guarding duties at Roker and Seaburn seafront over the next 5 years. Should the RNLI be awarded the contract for lifeguarding at the seafront more detailed discussions will take place.
SRS114	Coal Authority	Having reviewed your two regeneration documents, I confirm that we have no specific comments to make on them at this stage. We look forward to receiving your emerging planning policy related documents.	Comments noted
SRS115	Northumbrian Water	Northumbrian Water [NWL] welcomes the Seafront Regeneration Strategy and Marine Walk Masterplan and supports the general principles in the documents for the regeneration of the area. The Company has no comments on the contents of the reports other than to ask for early consultation as the proposals and plans become clearer to ensure adequate water and sewerage infrastructure is available to support the area's regeneration. NWL supports the high level objectives of the Sustainability Appraisal, particularly the need to ensure that all aspects of surface water management are considered in the need to prevent pollution and flooding. It is noted that paragraph 5.4.4 of the Sustainability Appraisal does take into account the representations NWL made in April 2009 on the Consultation Draft Sustainability Appraisal, in particular the acknowledgement that the new Hendon STW and the major sewerage improvements have greatly improved the situation as regards domestic and industrial sewage effluent affecting the coastline. However the end of the paragraph implies that the loss of the blue flag status after the heavy rains in 2007 was due solely to the storm discharges from the sewerage system, whereas in fact the heavy rainfall also increased the amount of surface water run-off from both agricultural and urban areas and any or all these contributed to bacteriological impact on the bathing water quality. It would be helpful to amend the paragraph by mentioning all of these factors, which would tie in with the stated aims in section 6.1 of the Marine Walk Masterplan and other parts of the documents to adopt sustainable water treatments to prevent flooding and pollution from all sources of surface water.	Comments noted

SRS116	Sustrans	<p>Further to the recent receipt of the proposal documents for the above, we have now had the opportunity to review the documents and also visit the study area. We would like to comment as follows: 1. The area around the marina brings cyclists into conflict with anglers. During our site visit the path by the Sunderland Yacht Club was blocked by anglers resting their fishing rods across the full width of the path. The cycle route around the Sunderland Yacht Club was not very pleasant with litter, fire damage to the fencing and poor access due to the steps adjacent the pier. This is shown in the following photographs. 2. The end/starting point of the C2C cycle Route is not very well defined and would benefit from greater emphasis. 3. The NCN Route 1 Cycle Path seems “pinned” against the side of the A183, whereas, there does seem the opportunity for more interesting cyclist routes that would follow the coast/cliff line that would no doubt encourage more family cycling. In addition to the above point, noise from the A183 was ever present and the route would benefit from greater separation away from the traffic. 4. There was a lack of crossing points to the amenities, ie shops, cafes etc across the road from the cycle route. 5. There was a shortage of cycle parking facilities along the route and in particular in areas adjacent to the local amenities. 6. The existing cycle route was disrupted by bus shelters built either on top of the cycle route or immediately adjacent with a novel give-way arrangement. As shown in the following photographs. This brings cyclists into conflict with pedestrians. Overall we welcome the proposals and believe there are opportunities to enhance the cycling facilities along this part of the beautiful northeast coastline. We shall be pleased to partake in the development of the proposals.</p>	<p>Comments noted. Point 1: The strategy proposes to remove vandalised street furniture and improve the ramp access in the area surrounding the yacht club (as shown on Figure 17). Point 2: A piece of artwork named ‘C’ has been installed at Marine Walk to mark the beginning/end of the c2c cycle route. Point 3: Comments noted. Point 4: The strategy proposes to improve existing pedestrian crossing points and identifies opportunities for a new pedestrian crossing along the A183 (as shown on Figure 10). Point 5: Both the Seafront Regeneration Strategy and the Marine Walk Masterplan propose the installation of cycle racks at a number of points along the seafront. Point 6: As shown in section 6.4 of the document the strategy proposes to realign the cycle route which runs along the A183 to ensure that cyclists can use the route without having to dismount.</p>
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SRS117	Sunderland Branch Green Party	<p>The Sunderland branch of the Green Party expresses its approval of the general conception of the plan; renewal and improvement of the seafront would certainly add to the amenity of the city and remove a number of current eyesores. We likewise note with approval the environmental and social Sustainability Appraisal and the concern that is expressed there to ensure that adverse environmental impacts are avoided.</p> <p>In that connection we would stress the following points:</p> <p>1. It is noted in the Appraisal that one result of the improvement would be to attract a greater number of visitors to the seafront (and Roker Park) than is currently the case, with greater pressure from the number of vehicles involved, with all the implications for traffic congestion and pollution and other knock-on effects, and urge that comprehensive steps are carefully planned and taken to counteract these possible consequences. 2. One of these, as noted, is the inevitable generation of additional waste and we are convinced that it will be necessary to do much more than to multiply the number of litter bins and add a greater number of recycling bins, important though that would be. A significant number of litter wardens will be required. 3. A further aspect of this problem relates to the proposal to improve the vegetation and greenery of the seafront. Welcome though this is, it will be important to ensure that what is planted does not become impenetrable hedges or thickets, so that when litter is thrown into them it becomes virtually impossible to recover, as has been the case in certain areas not far from the seafront. 4. The current availability of public transport by road to the seafront area is most unsatisfactory, and we would argue that this issue needs to be addressed. If it cannot be improved through discussions with the current operator the Council should provide its own, in a manner similar to the yellow bus provision in Newcastle. 5. We feel that the possible sources of funding for this ambitious project are left unduly obscure, especially at a time when there is certain to be great pressure on all public finances, and urge that this matter is clarified and expanded. In particular we would strongly oppose any PFI proposal, should that be considered.</p>	<p>Comments noted. Point 1: The strategy has been amended to include text on the requirement to produce a transport assessment, travel plan or transport statement for new developments. A further paragraph has been added to section 3.2 of the strategy. Point 2: It is not within the scope of the strategy to establish the cleansing regime for the seafront. The Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy sets out how waste will be managed in Sunderland, South Tyneside and Gateshead until 2027. In addition as part of a wider council exercise the maintenance and management of the seafront is currently being reviewed. Point 3: As identified in section 6.1 of the strategy any landscaping and planting schemes will be carefully designed to consider such concerns. Point 5: The strategy has been produced to help guide the regeneration of the seafront and offer advice to developers looking to develop in the area. In addition the document is to be used as a tool to bid for funding to regenerate the seafront as identified in the strategy and the soon to be adopted Marine Walk Masterplan. It is anticipated that following the adoption of this masterplan as an SPD a detailed masterplan will be drawn up for Seaburn. There is no PFI proposal.</p>
SRS118	Government Office for the North East	<p>It would be inappropriate to comment on the application itself at this stage, as the Secretary of State has a quasi-judicial role in the planning process and we must not prejudice the Secretary of States position. The Council will wish to consider in due course whether it needs to notify the Secretary of State formally of the application in accordance with one of more of her statutory directions, if it is minded to grant planning permission, so that she may consider whether she should intervene. The council may also need to send the Secretary of State two copies of any environmental impact assessment if the application is classed as EIA development.</p>	<p>Comments noted.</p>

SRS119	Campaign To Protect Rural England (CPRE)	<p>1. We commend the careful consideration to be given to the impact of lighting. We particularly support the seating which faces out to sea. 2. On page 42 of the Seafront Regeneration Strategy mention is made of considering sites for housing. We would fervently hope Ocean Park will not be part of this and all the open space will be retained for recreational and/or tourist uses. 3. Ocean Park is in a unique location close to the seafront which should not be allocated for housing which can use other locations in the City. 4. There is no particular mention relating to the car parking spaces at the top of Pier View by the Bungalow Cafe. We would ask that these be retained as there are not many indoor places with such a magnificent view of the sea which are so close to car parking for those with walking difficulties. 5. The proposals for soft landscaping around Marine Walk and in particular the planting of native species is excellent.</p>	<p>Point 1: The strategy has been amended to state that the impact lighting effects will have on roosting birds and other protected species will be considered when deciding its positioning. Points 2 & 3: The existing open space within the Ocean Park Character Area is currently being considered as part of a wider council exercise in the preparation of the Local Development Framework (LDF). A consultation exercise on the proposals for the LDF is ongoing and CPRE will be consulted as part of this. Point 4: It is not proposed to remove the car parking adjacent the Café Bungalow. Comments noted.</p>
SRS120	One North East	<p>With regard to this latest version of the Draft Strategy, the Agency notes and welcomes the Vision and Objectives outlined in the document. Particularly welcome are the intentions regarding the provision of an attractive environment offering high quality public amenities and events to ensure the seafront area becomes a 'year round' destination.</p> <p>The identification of four distinct character areas together with key gateways within those areas is also welcomed by the Agency. The development in isolation of vacant sites along the Seafront should be avoided and the provision of individual masterplans set against the overall framework of the Seafront Regeneration Strategy should ensure a coherent approach as development proposals arise.</p>	<p>Comments noted</p>
SRS121	Sport England	<p>Sport England supports the recognition of the seafront as providing opportunities in watersports (4.2 Assets); we also support the recognition of improving basic facilities at the watersports hub (6.3 Marine Walk).</p>	<p>Comments noted</p>
SRS122	English Heritage	<p>Because of the volume of work currently generated by the new Development Plan System and the introduction of Strategic Environmental Assessment, English Heritage in the region is finding it necessary to prioritise the consultations on which it responds. In this particular case, we have concluded that engagement is not a high priority. We shall, nevertheless, endeavour to respond to consultations where we consider there to be significant environmental effects on the historic environment.</p>	<p>Comments noted</p>
SRS123	Environment Agency	<p><u>Flood Risk</u> We understand that this Strategy informs the delivery of future development of the coastline in Sunderland, with four key sites including Marine Walk. Page 13 of the Strategy sets out relevant national planning policy in relation to the study area. We support the inclusion of PPS25: Development and Flood Risk, however, we consider that this section creates an opportunity to further investigate the principles of PPS25 in relation to informing the Strategy itself. In guiding development in areas of flood risk, it should be acknowledged that decision-makers should aim to steer development to areas at the least probability of flooding (Flood Zone 1). The study area is at risk of both tidal flooding along the coastline and beaches, as well as fluvial flooding from watercourses such as the Cut Throat Beck and River Wear. In considering the physical opportunities for the study area, as referred to on page 26 / 27, of the Strategy, consideration of the principles of PPS25 should be fully explored within the site proposals themselves, to ensure that flood risk is mitigated as far as possible within any future policies</p>	<p>Comments noted. Flood risk: it is considered that at this stage sufficient reference is made to PPS 25 on page 13 of the strategy and flooding within section 4.1 of the strategy. Biodiversity: PPS 9 has been added to page 13 of the strategy. The impact of feature lighting on roosting birds and other protected species has been added to page 33 of the strategy.</p>

	<p>and proposals. In cases where development must be located in Flood Zone 3, water compatible uses should be encouraged.</p> <p>Increased surface water run-off from impermeable development proposals has the potential to increase flood risk in the study area and wider context, and such proposals should not be permitted. We welcome the incorporation of SuDs and recommend that opportunities for permeable paving are explored within the design proposals in relation to surfacing materials for the four key sites. Any infiltration methods should, however, take into consideration the underlying Aquifer, and where infiltration has the potential to detrimentally affect the Aquifer, alternative methods should be investigated in accordance with Approved Document Part H of the Building Regulations 2000.</p> <p><u>Biodiversity</u> We support the inclusion of the natural environment as the seafront's main asset to be protected and promoted, as referred to on page 26 of the Strategy.</p> <p>The Strategy should be considered in the context of PPS9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation which is not included on page 13, especially given it's location above the Aquifer and the nearby wildlife designations.</p> <p>We understand that lighting forms an integral component of the Strategy to ensure that issues such as fear of crime, safety and aesthetics are addressed. Lighting can however have a detrimental impact upon wildlife and their habitat if designed inappropriately, and we recommend that this consideration is incorporated into any further Masterplan SPDs for the sites and within the Strategy itself where appropriate. Lighting schemes should be designed to ensure that wildlife and their habitat is not disturbed or discouraged from using the area, this includes along river corridors and within designated sites.</p> <p>We appreciate that the proposals within the Strategy have taken into consideration the SSSI and SPA and do not appear to encroach upon these designations. We consider that the potential for disturbance to these areas, however, should form an important element of the proposals set out in the Strategy for each site. This is to inform any SPDs and planning proposals submitted in the future and ensure that the key issue of protection and enhancement of the natural environment identified within the Strategy, is fully addressed within the planning system.</p> <p>We welcome consultation in relation to any of the environmental improvement schemes proposed in the study area.</p> <p><u>Contaminated Land</u> Given the previous commercial uses in the area, it is unlikely that contaminated land should be present. However, due to the sensitive location of the area within the SSSI and Ramsar, above the underlying Aquifer and adjacent to the coast, potential for previously contaminative uses should be investigated on a site-by-site basis, and where necessary, addressed in line with the pre-cautionary approach within PPS23: Planning and Pollution Control.</p>	
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SRS124	Natural England	<p>Point 1: Page 11 Paragraph 1.5/Page 15 Paragraph 2.4 Links could be made here to the proposed Sunderland Green Infrastructure Strategy. Point 2: Page 13 Paragraph 2.1 PPS9 should be included in the list given the range of coastal nature conservation designations present in the area Page 24 Point 3: Paragraph 4.2 Natural Assets Suggest add which is part of the Northumbria Coast SPA..... rather than is a Northumbria Coast SPA. Suggest add 'Part of the Durham Coast SAC'. The area is also part of the Durham Coast SSSI. Page 26/Page 32 Point 4: Paragraph 4.3 Environmental We welcome the recognition that the natural environment is the main asset to be protected and promoted, that any future development needs to work with nature rather than against it, and to avoid environmentally sensitive areas, and that there are opportunities to enhance awareness and understanding through interpretation. Point 5: Page 26/27 Paragraph 4.3 Opportunities Physical We welcome the further consideration of enhancements/linkages to public transport in the area, and the recognition of new development to complement the surrounding landscape. Point 6: Page 31 Planting We encourage any new coastal planting on the grassed banks on the lower promenade and elsewhere to be of locally native species. Existing landscaping particularly including species rich grassland should be managed to maximise its biodiversity interest and potential, and for example allowed to flower and seed, rather than landscaping be removed simply based on contribution to character of the area. This is recognised on Page 38, but should also be emphasised here. Point 7: Page 33 Lighting Any proposed lighting schemes on both buildings and natural features also need to take into account potential impacts on nature conservation interests including birds and other protected species. Point 8: Page 34 Cycling We welcome proposed improvements to cycling routes and facilities in the area and the development of new routes. Point 9: Page 40 General Use. It should be recognised that this area is also part of the designated Durham Coast SSSI. It contains part of the Northumbria Coast SPA rather than the whole of it.</p>	<p>Point 1: Comments noted. Point 2: PPS9 has been added to section 2.1 of the strategy. Point 3: text in the strategy has been altered as suggested. Point 4 to 6: Comments noted. Point 7: section 6.1 has been altered to reflect these comments. Point 8: Comment noted. Point 9: the strategy has been amended as suggested.</p>
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Draft Marine Walk Masterplan public consultation – public responses			
MWM1	Support	<p>1. All developments depend for success on sustainable public transport solutions to the area. 2. Existing car park facilities are insufficient in summer. 3. Soft planting of designated areas will require regular high maintenance. They will also be a trap for the increased litter that is recognised as an inevitable problem. It's also vital that such planting does not obscure scenic views. 4. The conflict between cyclists', pedestrians (including disabled) and fishers' needs is recognised but it remains unclear how this is to be resolved satisfactorily given limited space for widening walkway. 5. Sonic play should be rethought on seafront because of potential nuisance to local residents especially at night through inappropriate use and vandalism. 6. It remains unclear that sufficient toilet facilities will be available to meet increased demand.</p>	<p>Comments noted. 1. A further paragraph has been added to the masterplan setting out how proposals link with the Local Transport Plan. 2. The intention is to promote sustainable methods of traveling to the seafront by highlighting the proximity of the seafront to nearby metro stations (as set out in the Seafront Regeneration Strategy) and enhancing pathways and cycle routes. The masterplan proposes to provide additional parallel on-street parking adjacent the Volunteer Life Brigade building. 3. The management and maintenance of the seafront, including planting, is being reviewed as part of a wider exercise within the council. It is proposed planting comprise native grasses and perennial plants which will not grow at such a height as to obscure views. 4. The south of Marine Walk was highlighted in the initial seafront consultation (16 February to 3rd April 2009) as a main point of conflict between anglers and cyclists. The masterplan proposes to remove damaged street furniture along the c2c cycle route in this location to create a wider cycle way and to install a ramp for cyclists. In the longer term the masterplan proposes to bring the old north pier back into use. This would allow anglers to use the pier as a fishing platform and reduce conflict on the adjacent cycle way and footpath. 5. Local residents have not objected to the proposal to install sonic sculptural play on Marine Walk however proposed sonic play pieces in close proximity to residential premises have been removed from the masterplan. There is the potential for any new facilities at the seafront to be subject to vandalism. Discussions have taken place with the Neighbourhood Inspector for the seafront to identify how the masterplan can deter crime. The masterplan seeks to increase feelings of safety at Marine Walk by encouraging natural surveillance, improving lighting and removing hidden areas e.g. by adding shutters to Roker Seating Shelter an area identified in the public consultation as a hotspots for anti-social behaviour. The masterplan has been amended to include provision of CCTV. 6. See paragraph in main body of the report regarding toilet provision.</p>
MWM2	Support		Noted
MWM3	Support	<p>The Marine Walk Masterplan is a good starting point on which to redevelop the whole of the seafront area. With this first step we can show the doubters that the Roker/Seaburn resorts have a lot to offer all age groups.</p>	Noted
MWM4	Support	<p>1. Can't the WW2 Bunker be incorporated into the regeneration? 2. The climbing frame/slide at Roker Pier is dated but is perfect for toddlers. There is nothing suitable for 1-3 year olds less stable on their feet which is why the frame at Roker Pier should only be replaced with a similarly sized piece. 3. The Pods look ridiculous!</p>	<p>1. Discussions with the County Archaeologist have highlighted that the structure at the end of Roker pier is a WW2 structure not a bunker. The emplacement is a solid structure which has been filled with concrete therefore it will not be possible to open the structure to the public however the masterplan will be amended to state interpretation will be added to the exterior of the structure as part of the proposed interpretation trail. 2. Comments noted and will be considered as detailed proposals for play space are developed. 3. The pods shown in the masterplan are an artist's impression for illustrative purposes. Now that funding has been secured to deliver the pods more detailed designs will be developed.</p>
MWM5	Support		Noted

MWM6	Support	The draft is well thought out.	Noted
MWM7	Support	Again I would like to re-iterate that I do support the changes, however I do not support the proposed dog ban. I am a responsible dog owner who cleans up after her dogs; it angers me that the irresponsible few are spoiling this for the rest of us. I would suggest that more dog fouling officers are present, and issue instant fines. Could lifeguards help to enforce the ban?	Noted. This is a matter which is beyond the scope and remit of the Marine Walk Masterplan. The council's Coastal Code establishes the dog ban zone which operates during the summer months. The council has recently employed additional dog wardens.
MWM8	Object	Some of the proposals are very interesting regarding the lighting effects etc, the other proposals seem to be just signage points and new furniture.	The Marine Walk Masterplan sets out a number of proposals which will help to attract visitors to the area including the creation of a flexible event space, a Plaza including seating and play equipment, an interpretation trail, interpretation point, retail kiosks and an education centre.
MWM9	Support		Noted
MWM10	Support		Noted
MWM11	Support		Noted
MWM12	Support	Excellent, especially impressed with the potential for feature lighting to the cliff face and beach. I would like to see an improvement to The Smugglers pub. Opening of the Pier/tunnel and caves to provide heritage and entertainment opportunities will attract visitors. Overall, it looks like an excellent proposal... my only concern is the council's ability to make it happen.	Noted
MWM13	Support		Noted
MWM14	Support	Dog walking should not be banned from the beaches; I feel the current exclusions at certain times of year and on certain parts of beach are excellent. Do not punish all dog owners for the petty minded few who do not care.	See response to MWM7.
MWM15	Support		Noted
MWM16	Support		Noted
MWM17	Support		Noted
MWM18	Support	I would like a big shoe or a boat that you can play inside.	The Marine Walk Masterplan sets out the location of play space. More detailed proposals for play space will be drawn up with input from young people with an interest in the seafront. These comments will be considered when developing the detailed designs.
MWM19	Support	I am 5. I would like a wooden play lighthouse. I would love a nice café. I would like computers to find information about the history of Roker.	See response to MWM18.
MWM20	Support		Noted
MWM21	Support		Noted
MWM22	Support		Noted

MWM23	Support	This is really wonderful, especially the idea of reinvigorating the entrance to Roker Park. The references to the illuminations and the traditional use of the area for tea dances are genuinely respectful of heritage and locally distinctive. I'm very pleased better interpretation is included. I moved to Sunderland from Whitley Bay a year ago and have often thought this is needed. Given the Council have done this work 'in house' I am very impressed at the talent in my adopted home town. I am also absolutely thrilled to see naturalistic landscaping included as a key feature of the scheme. The design 'palate' for this and the seafront are fantastic and will add a really coherent, modern, yet sensitive feel to the place. I love it. Best of luck, and please contact me if you require any local people to volunteer.	Noted
MWM24	Support	I think the whole revamp of the seafront is a fantastic idea. My only concern is the vandals, with the toilets open all the time this will attract under age drinkers/drug-users. I think the Pods are a fantastic idea and really can't wait to see them in place, I know my 3 yr old niece would love this as well, again I have no worries of them being vandalised/misused. I am merely pointing out what I see when I walk down the beach with my dogs on summer evenings, the shelters beside Smugglers and the beach itself is often filled with drunk kids, throwing cans/bottles about & urinating (which obviously doesn't look or smell nice). I would hope deterrents such as police patrol/CCTV would be an option.	Noted. The pods shown in the masterplan are an artists impression for illustrative purposes. More detailed designs will be developed which take into account the risk of vandalism. Discussions have taken place with police representatives with responsibility for the seafront to identify how the masterplan can deter crime. The masterplan seeks to increase feelings of safety at Marine Walk by encouraging natural surveillance, improving lighting and removing hidden areas. For example by adding shutters to Roker Seating Shelter an area identified in the public consultation as a hotspots for anti-social behaviour. The masterplan has been amended to include provision of CCTV.
MWM25	Support		Noted
MWM26	Support		Noted
MWM27	Support	I would like sandy beaches + big waves!	Noted
MWM28	Support	1. Improved facilities for anglers. Changing/Shower facilities, additional covered seating areas for use in bad weather. 2. Provision of bars/cafes with both indoor and outdoor seating.	1. The masterplan has been amended to include provision of changing and shower facilities. Existing covered seating areas are subject to vandalism and anti-social behaviour. Due to this the masterplan does not propose additional sheltered seating which would be accessible to the public at all times of the day and night. Covered seating would be considered suitable if brought forward as part of a wider scheme in which it would be managed for example as part of a cafe development. 2. The masterplan identifies development sites which could be appropriate locations for food and drink uses subject to detailed design proposals.
MWM29	Support	I accept that our seafront is in need of a facelift. I do hope that one will still have quiet walking areas for people who just want to walk, sit and enjoy the view. Tea rooms would be a great asset.	Noted
MWM30	Support	More toilets between Marina and Morrison's.	See paragraph in main body of the report regarding toilet provision.

MWM31	Support	Really like revamp of entrance to Roker Park on promenade. Pleased that natural environment remains at the forefront of regeneration.	Noted
MWM32	Support	We have had a lovely two weeks staying at Roker, your plan sounds lovely for Roker and Seaburn. I do hope you will have a café at Seaburn, where you can have tea or coffee and out of the wind and watch the sea view. Also please no dogs on the beaches.	Noted
MWM33	Not stated	The pods look like aliens have landed. They look fun but what will they look like along with the historic features you have planned for the seafront.	Noted. The pods shown in the masterplan are an artists impression for illustrative purposes. Detailed designs will be developed which take into account these concerns. The intention is the pods will be constructed of timber using technologies similar to those employed in constructing a boat in reference to Sunderland's rich maritime heritage.
MWM34	Object	I am a regular visitor to Roker beach during the summer months and quite often in winter. After hearing about the plans taking place I am concerned about how I will be able to visit Roker beach due to me being disabled, having no parking.	The masterplan does not propose to remove any disabled parking from Marine Walk. The masterplan has been amended to include provision of some parallel parking along Marine Walk road to make the northern end of Marine Walk more accessible.
MWM35	Object	I work summer + winter at the Marine Walk Café. I am worried for my job if this plan goes ahead. I can say that a lot of customers I serve are in cars and in the winter weekends almost everyone. Also what about the disabled people.	In light of these comments and other comments received the masterplan has been amended to allow vehicular access up to the roundabout on Marine Walk Road. The potential to install parallel parking along Marine Walk Road will also be explored.
MWM36	Not stated	More shrubs, more trees, more plants, wherever they can be fitted in, and wherever they will grow, especially shrubs bearing berries, seeds - attractive to birds.	Noted. The masterplan proposes maritime planting on the edge of existing car parking and planting in the grassed banks on Marine Walk comprising native grasses and perennial plants.
MWM37	Object	I am a floor attendant at Roker amusements and have been for many years, if there is a stop to close parking, I can tell you there will be a huge drop in visitors to my place of work, as business has relied on these persons, how does a person get to the toilets?	See response to MWM35.
MWM38	Object	I would respectfully suggest maintenance to the seafront amenities be a priority, for instance, painting the railings along the length of Cliff Park, also resurfacing the pathway between Pearith Road and Roker Park and Cliff Park, this work is essential for the added beauty of our seafront. Maintenance is sadly lacking in this area.	Noted. The management and maintenance of the seafront is being reviewed as part of a wider exercise within the council.
MWM39	Object	I work as a café assistant at Marine Walk Café. Working the summer season and sometimes in the wintertime if the plan goes ahead to stop visitors driving along Marine Walk, I think it may put my job at risk. There is only the café and the pub here, why cut off this trade lifeline.	See response to MWM35.
MWM40	Not stated	Particularly, I would like to see every effort towards biodiversity at the forefront of habitat creation schemes, native planting with diverse structure, I.e. scrub is very important from the Durham Coastline.	Noted

MWM41	Support		Noted
MWM42	Not stated	1. Please make the toilets clean and useful. 2. If possible make the sand pit into a swimming pool. (Make sure it gets cleaned). We should have more rain shelters and things to look at so our local beach will be known. Write back please.	Noted. 1. The management and maintenance of the seafront, including the toilet provision and cleansing, is being reviewed as part of a wider exercise within the council. 2. The masterplan proposes that water play equipment is installed on the site of the sand pit. The site is not of sufficient size to accommodate a swimming pool.
MWM43	Not stated	1. Not too sure of the use/value of the pods - would need to know more. 2. Like the idea for the cave, but how will it be kept clear of bird droppings? 3. Any planting should be in mind of the bees population decrease.	Noted. 1. The pods shown in the masterplan are an artists impression for illustrative purposes more detailed designs will be developed. It is proposed the pods serve a number of functions including retail kiosks, interpretation points and education spaces. 2. The masterplan proposes the cave is gated off using a reinforced glass panel to prevent access by both people and wildlife. 3. See response to MWM36.
MWM44	Support	I think they are all excellent ideas.	Noted
MWM45	Support	Pleased that something is about to be done. Just get on with it. There are plans for a lot of things in the city, but nothing ever comes of them.	Noted
MWM46	Support	More toilets and bins required.	See paragraph in main body of the report regarding toilet provision. Masterplan states consideration will be given to the need to provide additional waste management facilities.
MWM47	Support	1. I would like to see more disabled toilets and more seats along the sea front. 2. More attractions through the year at Easter and Christmas. I would like to see more charity fun days for local people to get involved in	Noted. 1. See paragraph in main body of the report regarding toilet provision 2. The seafront events calendar is outside of the scope and remit of the Marine Walk Masterplan, however, comments will be passed to the events team.
MWM48	Support	I think the fireworks display on bonfire night and the Christmas lights should also be brought back as they used to be a good attraction.	See response to MWM47 point 2
MWM49	Support	The proposals look really exciting and I look forward to seeing the project.	Noted
MWM50	Support	The proposals look great, the more changes the better.	Noted
MWM51	Support	Yes, plans look great.	Noted
MWM52	Object	Restricting parking will effectively destroy 50% of the existing business on marine walk and put an end to a good proportion of live cultural events in Sunderland.	See response to MWM35.
MWM53	Support	1. Good in so far as it goes - but would like you to add foot-washing facilities beside the steps leading down to beaches. 2. The stairs leading down from the path next to BP garage to river are in a dangerous state.	1. The masterplan has been amended to include foot washing facilities. 2. The pathways leading down from the BP garage are outside the masterplan area. Comments have been forwarded on to the council's Property Services team.
MWM54	Support	Are there going to be toilets not far from the play area?	Toilets are currently located in Roker Park, to the north of Marine Walk adjacent Bellerby's amusements and adjacent the Voluntary Life Brigade building (on the upper promenade). The masterplan proposes a direct pathway linking the upper and lower promenades is installed adjacent Adventure Sunderland. This would make the toilets more accessible from the play space on lower promenade.

MWM55	Not stated	When looking through the plan I noticed the feature lighting which I think is a total waste of money. You could use the money on something more useful, we are always hearing that there's nothing for kids to do so why not do things for them. And do things like Shields, put shows on.	The lighting is just one proposal in the masterplan. The masterplan also proposes that new play facilities are installed, and that an interpretation point, education facility and retail kiosks are developed. Feature lighting is not costly compared to other public realm work. Lighting also has the potential to increase feelings of safety and become a visitor attraction on an evening. Over 120 respondents to the initial seafront consultation (16th February to 4th April 2009) made reference to the Sunderland Illuminations and were in support of a lighting scheme at the seafront.
MWM56		Object to marine walk being closed.	The masterplan does not propose to close Marine Walk.
MWM57	Object	Need more for children like South Shields.	Noted. The masterplan proposes new play facilities are located along Marine Walk.
MWM58	Support	I'm on holiday here and have been impressed with the potential here for a really attractive seaside destination to develop. So I'm very pleased to see you have plans and I look forward to returning in a few years time with my bike.	Noted
MWM59		Why doesn't Sunderland Council support their name sake swimming club and why do we have to put up with idiots in the Aquatic centre, disrupting things, when we pay good money for part of the pool. Why don't you build a play pool with slides etc so they can enjoy themselves?	The management of persons using the Aquatic Centre is outside of the scope of the Marine Walk Masterplan. There is not a site of sufficient size to accommodate a leisure pool at Marine Walk.
MWM60	Support	I strongly support the development plans. Minor suggestions - 1. the pier needs re-surfacing. 2. The access roads around Roker Park are becoming heavily congested by on-road parking - the pressures will increase with these improvements. 3. There are several tarmac areas within Roker Park which detract from its period/historic feel (e.g. football/basketball) 4. I assume new play areas will take account of all age ranges.	1. The masterplan has been amended to include reference to resurfacing Roker Pier. 2. The masterplan in conjunction with the Local Transport Plan 2 seeks to promote sustainable modes of transport, and reduce the need to travel by car to the seafront. 3. This area of Roker Park is outside of the masterplan boundary. 4. The masterplan proposes Marine Plaza is developed as a plaza for people of all ages.
MWM61	Support	Excellent proposals here. The new housing and marine facilities are already well established and well used as a thoroughfare/human presence. Both piers should be restored as major attractions (a la Brighton, Saltburn, Whitby, Southport) All cycle paths throughout city should be surfaced in green tarmac with clear road markings to compliment quality signage mow in place - drivers and pedestrians cant distinguish otherwise.	Noted
MWM62	Not stated	We came here from Pakistan. We have enjoyed and my children. I appreciate you plan and save life in the sea.	Noted

MWM63	Support	My main comments here refer to facilities for cyclists. 1. I would like to see the break in the cycle track on the bridge over the Roker ravine removed since many cyclists use the pavement at this point. 2. The cycle track down to Marine walk from Roker Terrace is steep and should be forbidden to pedestrians who have other paths from which cyclists should be forbidden. 3. It would be good if the cycle track from Roker Terrace could be continued along Harbour View to Dame Dorothy Street to join with the track into the City Centre at this level, well above the C2C track.	1. Covered in Seafront Regeneration Strategy 6.1 Strategic principles 2. This route accommodates both cyclists and pedestrians. Markings on the route establish which side of this route is for cyclists and which is for pedestrians. Adjacent pathways are stepped any may not be suitable for some pedestrians e.g. wheelchair users or people with push chairs. 3. Covered in Seafront Regeneration Strategy 6.1 Strategic principles
MWM64	Not stated	As a frequent visitor to the area, 5-6 times a year, I would like to say that whilst I think that the promenade, toilets, seating and buildings need to be improved, I would hope that the character of the area will not be changed too much by the addition of brightly coloured paint (stainless steel lighting) or very modern sculptures. You have a unique, natural sea front which should be preserved for locals and visitors.	Noted. The Marine Walk Masterplan seeks to build on the areas unique natural environment and rich heritage.
MWM65	Not stated	1. All benches should have back supports. 2. The pods themselves are ok but the framework surrounding the interpretation and retail pods are hideous.	Noted. 1. The masterplan has been amended to specify some seating with back rests will be provided. 2. The pods shown in the masterplan are a design concept. The intention is the pods will be constructed of timber using technologies similar to those employed in constructing a boat in reference to Sunderland's rich maritime heritage. These comments will be considered in the development of the detailed designs.
MWM66	Not stated	You can't do one without the other. Roker does not host the Airshow, charity runs. I am disappointed and feel so let down by this council.	The Marine Walk Masterplan is the first of a suite of documents which will allow the delivery of the Seafront Regeneration Strategy. It is proposed a detailed masterplan will be developed for Seaburn.
MWM67	Support	This sounds fantastic; we are on holiday here and would definitely recommend this area to friends and family. The masterplan sounds and looks great. They play and water area would be lovely for children. New plaza area would be excellent. We will definitely return to this lovely area for weekends and holidays. We were surprised at how much money has already been ploughed into the area and what facilities already exist. The beaches were lovely and clean.	Noted
MWM68	Not stated	Since the inner rocker light house was demolished, I have hoped that it would be rebuilt or replaced with another feature. A lot of money has been spent on sculptures in the riverside area, but the most prominent position has always been avoided. It seems to me that is what is happening with the latest plan.	Old north pier is structurally unstable therefore pedestrian access is currently prohibited. Artwork has not been installed on the pier as it would encourage pedestrians to walk along the pier and risk their safety. The masterplan proposes the pier is repaired and refurbishes, this work would allow the development of artwork on the pier.

MWM69	Support	Having seen the plans and spoken to council reps I would hope that work could go ahead as soon as possible. Having lived in the area all my life and taken my children to Roker and Seaburn on a regular basis and now my grandchildren I would like to see the work done, but as soon as possible, it is badly needed.	Noted
MWM70	Support	The idea of the pods is a good one and taking in the idea of the limestone and being well made with heavy timbers and being energy efficient, but the metal turbines fans on the top of the retail pod and the interpretation pod we believe should not be painted in bright colours and ask if that part of the design could be coloured to blend with the limestone feature of the pods. It was felt that too much colour above the pods would take away the grand impact of the limestone feature of the pods themselves. The education pod on the other hand seems to get an all round thumbs up for design.	See response to MWM65.2
MWM71	Support	This regeneration seems to be just a facelift. How about creating a reason to be in Roker Harbour. Some crazy golf, lockable huts to keep family beach stuff in. Toilets and showers in easy reach of the beach (for small children), a sit down, indoor café and rent by the hour watersports and wetsuits.	The Marine Walk Masterplan sets out a number of proposals which will help to attract visitors to the area including the creation of a flexible event space, a Plaza including seating and play equipment, an interpretation trail, interpretation point, retail kiosks and an education centre. The masterplan proposes a new access is added which will create a more direct route between Marine Walk and the toilet facilities on Roker upper promenade. Lockable huts, watersports and wet suit hire, cafes and family leisure facilities are appropriate uses for Marine Walk. The council would look on proposals from private developers to develop such facilities at Marine Walk favourably subject to the detailed design of proposals.
MWM72	Not stated	1. Mark out cycle track on prom. 2. Dogs on leads, clean up after dogs. Beach wardens to encourage people to take their litter home or place in bins. 3. Seating from 'shelter' between toilets and first aid. 4. Prom security railings need repairing/replacing - should all be renewed in a more positive way. Prom tarmac is lifted by heavy seas - needs replacing instead of patching up. Damage to lamp posts. 5. Vans, motorbikes, cars 'parked' for sale. Cycles use both sides of pavement. Parking on pavement, driving on pavement. 6. Make a mini roundabout - access to Bents Road.	1. The lower promenade on Marine Walk is not a cycle track therefore it would not be appropriate to mark out a cycle route on the promenade. 2. The management and maintenance of the seafront is being reviewed as part of a wider exercise within the council. 3. Depending on the layout of the water play, seating could be accommodated in this location. 4. The masterplan proposes Marine Walk is resurfaced with materials that will withstand the marine environment and that existing street furniture is renewed. 5. This is outside the scope of the masterplan but will be considered as part of the management and maintenance review of the seafront. 6. Comments relate to strategy

MWM73	Support	<p>I think I am supportive of the proposals. I do have concern on the design concept and detail of the proposed pods. Whilst accepting the desirability of small kiosk type structures in principle, the proposed design is not easy on the eye, I doubt whether many visitors will pick up on the design reference to the geology of the seafront. Further, the identifying symbols for both the retail and interpretation pods are more appropriate to a motor racing circuit than the seafront. In what way will they enhance the character of the area? To me they look cheap and tacky. I suggest further consideration needs to be given to their design.</p>	<p>Concern noted. Interpretation will provide visitors to the seafront with information on the pods to ensure they understand the relevance of the design to local geology. The pods will be constructed using high quality materials suited to the marine environment.</p>
MWM74	Support	<p>1. What is the purpose of Sonic Optical Play? If it is to provide information would a traditional information board be more appropriate? 2. A new pathway directly linking Marine Walk to the upper promenade adjacent Bungalow Café would be at a steep incline. It would only be of value to young people. Construction of any sort on the slope may disturb its stability.</p>	<p>1. Sonic and optical play equipment is a term used to describe any play equipment which involves sound or light. For example outdoor musical instruments, such as those recently installed at Roker Park, are classed as sonic play. This form of play equipment need not be technically advanced. When selecting play equipment consideration will be given to the risk of vandalism. The sonic play installed in Roker Park in 2009 has proven to be robust. The masterplan seeks to reduce vandalism at Marine Walk by encouraging natural surveillance, improving lighting and removing hidden areas. 2. Concerns noted. Before any work is undertaken on the pathways linking upper promenade to Marine Walk detailed site survey work will be undertaken to ensure this will not impact on the stability of the grass bank.</p>
MWM75	Object	<p>My business and the Smugglers have survived with the support of customers parking outside on Marine Walk. If the plan is accepted in its present form I know this will probably be the last nail in the coffin, at one time before yellow lines, speed bumps and bollards our business was successful because of the number of visitors parking close to our property in poor weather and in winter. Parking bays at Seaburn have helped traders there. On a normal weather day approx 1 in 10 customers are in cars on an evening and in poor weather 40% of trade comes from adjacent parking. In the winter period the vast majority comes from people who park outside. If this was curtailed I would think I would have to close at this time of the year. Also I would lose elderly, care home and disabled visitors as these would not walk the distance from the car park. Could a number of parking bays be placed between the roundabout and the pier as previously planned? Parking could then be restricted outside the amusements and Smugglers pub at certain times of the day then allowing parking say after 6pm, then lifting the parking restrictions after September as at Seaburn. This would then allow my business and the pub to continue our evening and winter trade.</p>	<p>See response to MWM35.</p>

MWM76	Support	Thanks for the opportunity to comment on the Seafront Strategy and Roker Beach Masterplan. My family and I broadly support the objectives and ideas presented so far. As a landscape architect I'm always on the look out for inspirational places and we recently visited an excellent coastal park in Folkestone Kent, here are a few notes/observations we made: 1. magnificent scenic promenades 2. panoramic views 3. extensive coastal park 4. family-friendly beaches 5. very high standard of management and maintenance 6. cycle routes 7. grand Victorian villas 8. heritage 10. focus on people not cars 11. walks	Noted
MWM77	Support	The grassed area? With sculptures (which have been done by school children) is being used as a dogs toilet. It is the area by the side of the yacht club; it would be nice if it was rectified by having it a pebbled or stone slabbed area.	Funding has been secured from One North East and Sunderland City Council to upgrade the final mile of the c2c cycle route and St Peter's Artwork trail. As part of this work the artwork adjacent the Yacht Club will be refurbished.
MWM78	Support	1. Impressive plans. Time scale? 2. Roker pods are too futuristic.	1. The Marine Walk Masterplan sets out long-term proposals for the seafront. The timescales for the delivery of the masterplan are dependent on funding opportunities and developer proposals coming forward. The initial phase of work will begin in 2010 and be completed by 2011. 2. See response MWM24

Draft Marine Walk Masterplan public consultation – statutory consultee responses

MWM79	North East Planning Body RSS	No comment	Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above planning documents. The North East Planning Body (NEPB) has no observations to make and, therefore, will not be submitting a formal response to assess the conformity of the document with regional planning policy.	Noted.
MWM80	RNLI	Support	The design and regeneration realisation look fantastic and I am sure these proposals will be fully embraced by the community and local businesses alike. The RNLI would like to be consulted on the incorporation of any lifeguard units on this beach.	Noted. A procurement process is currently ongoing which will determine if the RNLI take on life guarding duties at Roker and Seaburn seafront over the next 5 years. Should the RNLI be awarded the contract for lifeguarding at the seafront more detailed discussions will take place.
MWM81	Coal Authority	No comment	Thank you for consulting The Coal Authority on the above documents. Having reviewed your two regeneration documents, I confirm that we have no specific comments to make on them at this stage.	Noted.
MWM82	Northumbrian Water	Support	Northumbrian Water [NWL] welcomes the Seafront Regeneration Strategy and Marine Walk Masterplan and supports the general principles in the documents for the regeneration of the area. The Company has no comments on the contents of the reports other than to ask for early consultation as the proposals and plans become clearer to ensure adequate water and sewerage infrastructure is available to support the area's regeneration. NWL supports the high level objectives of the Sustainability Appraisal, particularly the need to ensure that all aspects of surface water management are considered in the need to prevent pollution and flooding. It is noted that paragraph 5.4.4 of the Sustainability Appraisal does take into account the representations NWL made in April 2009 on the Consultation Draft Sustainability Appraisal, in particular the acknowledgement that the new Hendon STW and the major sewerage improvements have greatly improved the situation as regards domestic and industrial sewage effluent affecting the coastline. However the end of the paragraph implies that the loss of the blue flag status after the heavy rains in 2007 was due solely to the storm discharges from the sewerage system, whereas in fact the heavy rainfall also increased the amount of surface water run-off from both agricultural and urban areas and any or all these contributed to bacteriological impact on the bathing water quality. It would be helpful to amend the paragraph by mentioning all of these factors, which would tie in with the stated aims in section 6.1 of the Marine Walk Masterplan and other parts of the documents to adopt sustainable water treatments to prevent flooding and pollution from all sources of surface water.	Noted. The Sustainability Appraisal paragraph 5.4.4 will be amended to reflect NWLs comments.
MWM83	Sustrans		Further to the recent receipt of the proposal documents we have now had the opportunity to review the documents and also visit the study area. We would like to comment as follows:- 1. The area around the marina brings cyclists into conflict with anglers. During our site visit the path by the Sunderland Yacht Club was blocked by anglers resting their fishing rods across the full width of the path. 2. The cycle Route around the Sunderland Yacht Club was not very pleasant. The end / starting point of the c2c cycle Route is not very well defined and would benefit from greater emphasis. 3. The NCN Route 1 Cycle Path seems "pinned"	Comments noted. 1. The masterplan proposes to remove damaged street furniture along the c2c cycle route in this location to create a wider cycle way and to install a ramp for cyclists. In the longer term the masterplan proposes to bring the old north pier back into use. This would allow anglers to use the pier as a fishing platform and reduce conflict on the adjacent cycle way and footpath. 2. Funding has been secured from One North East and Sunderland City Council to improve the final mile of the c2c route. This work will

			<p>against the side of the A183, whereas, there does seem the opportunity for more interesting cycle routes that would follow the coast / cliff line that would no doubt encourage more family cycling. 4. In addition to the above point, noise from the A183 was ever present and the route would benefit from greater separation away from the traffic. 5. There was a lack of crossing points to the amenities, ie shops, cafes etc across the road from the cycle route. 6. There was a shortage of cycle parking facilities along the route and in particular in areas adjacent to the local amenities. Overall we welcome the proposals and believe there are opportunities to enhance the cycling facilities along this part of the beautiful north east coastline. We shall be pleased to partake in the development of the proposals.</p>	<p>include the refurbishment of the route and installation of signage and interpretation. 3 - 5. Points relate to the Seafront Regeneration Strategy. 6. New cycle racks have been introduced to Marine Walk adjacent the c2c end piece. The masterplan has been amended to state additional cycle racks will be installed in appropriate locations on Marine Walk.</p>
MWM84	Sunderland Branch Green Party		<p>The Sunderland branch of the Green Party has studied the proposals sent out for discussion by Sunderland Council and expresses its approval of the general conception of the plan; renewal and improvement of the seafront would certainly add to the amenity of the city and remove a number of current eyesores. We likewise note with approval the environmental and social Sustainability Appraisal and the concern that is expressed there to ensure that adverse environmental impacts are avoided. In that connection we would stress the following points: 1. It is noted in the Appraisal that one result of the improvements would be to attract a greater number of visitors to the seafront (and Roker Park) than is currently the case, with greater pressure from the number of vehicles involved, with all the implications for traffic congestion and pollution and other knock-on effects, and urge that comprehensive steps are carefully planned and taken to counteract these possible consequences. 2. One of these, as noted, is the inevitable generation of additional waste and we are convinced that it will be necessary to do much more than to multiply the number of litter bins and add a greater number of recycling bins, important though that would be. A significant number of litter wardens will be required. 3. A further aspect of this problem relates to the proposal to improve the vegetation and greenery of the seafront. Welcome though this is, it will be important to ensure that what is planted does not become impenetrable hedges or thickets, so that when litter is thrown into them it becomes virtually impossible to recover, as has been the case in certain areas not far from the seafront. 4. The current availability of public transport by road to the seafront area is most unsatisfactory, and we would argue that this issue needs to be addressed. If it cannot be improved through discussions with the current operator the Council should provide its own, in a manner similar to the yellow bus provision in Newcastle. 5. We feel that the possible sources of funding for this ambitious project are left unduly obscure, especially at a time when there is certain to be great pressure on all public finances, and urge that this matter is clarified and expanded. In particular we would strongly oppose any PFI proposal, should that be considered.</p>	<p>1. Comments noted the masterplan has been amended to include text on the requirement to produce a transport assessment, travel plan or transport statement for new developments. 2. It is not within the scope of the masterplan to establish the cleansing regime for the seafront. The Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy sets out how waste will be managed in Sunderland, South Tyneside and Gateshead until 2027. 3. See response to MWM1 point 3. Text will be amended to clarify a maintenance plan will be produced for new planting to ensure it does not become impenetrable. 4. A further paragraph has been added to the masterplan annex 1 setting out how proposals link with the Local Transport Plan 2. 5. The purpose of the masterplan is to guide development proposals within the study area and to act as a supporting document for future funding bids. £1m in funding has been secured from the CABE Sea Change fund which will be match funded by £0.5m of council funding to deliver an initial phase of the masterplan. There is no PFI proposal.</p>
MWM85	Government Office for the North East	No comment	<p>It would be inappropriate to comment on the application itself at this stage, as the Secretary of State has a quasi-judicial role in the planning process and we must not prejudice the Secretary of State's position. The Council will wish to consider in due course whether it needs to notify the Secretary of State</p>	Noted

			formally of the application in accordance with one of more of her statutory directions, if it is minded to grant planning permission, so that she may consider whether she should intervene. The council may also need to send the Secretary of State two copies of any environmental impact assessment if the application is classed as EIA development.	
MWM86	Campaign To Protect Rural England	Support	<p>1. We commend the careful consideration to be given to the impact of lighting. 2. We particularly support the seating which faces out to sea. 3. On page 42 of the Seafront Regeneration Strategy mention is made of considering sites for housing. We would fervently hope Ocean Park will not be part of this and all the open space will be retained for recreational and/or tourist uses. Ocean Park is in a unique location close to the seafront which should not be allocated for housing which can use other locations in the City. 4. There is no particular mention relating to the car parking spaces at the top of Pier View by the Bungalow Cafe. We would ask that these be retained as there are not many indoor places with such a magnificent view of the sea which are so close to car parking for those with walking difficulties. 5. The proposals for soft landscaping around Marine Walk and in particular the planting of native species is excellent.</p>	<p>1. Comments noted. Masterplan states the impact lighting effects will have on roosting birds will be considered when deciding its positioning. 2 - 3. Comments relate to the Seafront Regeneration Strategy. 4. It is not proposed to remove the car parking adjacent the Café Bungalow. 5. Comments noted.</p>
MWM87	One North East	Support	<p>The Agency welcomes the provision of this masterplan set against the overall framework of the Seafront Regeneration Strategy. The area identified in the Marine Walk Masterplan has important links with the candidate World Heritage Site (WHS) of St. Peter's Church and the Agency endorses the masterplan's intention to take advantage of this important asset in the improvement of the Marine Walk facilities. The seafront's success is also demonstrated by the popularity of the Coast to Coast and North East cycle routes which both involve activity in the study areas. Since the Coast to Coast route alone involves around 15000 cyclists annually, the provision of improved facilities to serve this demand would be of advantage to the seafront area. The masterplan's intention that development of improved facilities for these activities should be pursued is welcomed by the Agency. In this context indications from work studying the potential of sailing activities show that sailing alone could bring around £20 million per annum to the region's economy with other watersports further increasing this spend. The masterplan recognises this potential and identifies Roker as the seafront's hub for watersports based around Adventure Sunderland, the Dive Centre, Marina and the Yacht Club. Development of a specific activity like watersports would be likely to attract visitors from outside of the region by offering an alternative to the passive recreation beaches elsewhere on the North East coast. The masterplan's proposals seek to achieve the regeneration of Roker 'as a thriving seaside resort and reconnecting it within the riverside/coastal trail from St. Peter's to Roker Park and the wider coastal landscape'. The Agency supports the pursuit of the above initiatives which will all contribute towards achieving the wider Seafront Regeneration Strategy's objective to ensure the seafront area becomes a 'year round' destination. The masterplan accords with the RES which identifies the importance of maximising the potential of the region's natural, heritage and cultural assets as a strategic priority. The RES</p>	Noted

			promotes the need for quality of place within existing and proposed development. Agency initiatives include delivering developments/regeneration schemes which demonstrate best practice in areas of accessibility, sustainability, whole life costing and general design standards. With this in mind, One North East welcomes the document's emphasis on the need to improve public realm and achieve high standards of sustainable design within the masterplan area.	
MWM88	Sport England	Support	Sport England supports the recognition of the seafront as providing opportunities in watersports (4.2 Assets); we also support the recognition of improving basic facilities at the watersports hub (6.3 Marine Walk).	Noted
MWM89	English Heritage	No comment	Because of the volume of work currently generated by the new Development Plan System and the introduction of Strategic Environmental Assessment, English Heritage in the region is finding it necessary to prioritise the consultations on which it responds. In this particular case, we have concluded that engagement is not a high priority. We shall, nevertheless, endeavour to respond to consultations where we consider there to be significant environmental effects on the historic environment.	Noted
MWM90	Environment Agency		1. The pier and beach lie within Flood Zone 3, at risk of the 1 in 200 year tidal flood event and are therefore defined as having a high risk of flooding. This potential constraint should be identified within the existing context of the study area. This should also feature as a consideration within the design proposals for Marine Walk. 2. The study area lies in sensitive location in terms of ecological value and we consider that the physical context of the study area in this respect has been characterised sufficiently. However, given this sensitive location, and importantly, the identification of protection and enhancement of the natural environment as a key aspect to be addressed within the overarching Seafront Strategy, we would expect regeneration objectives for the SPD to include for this aspect. Similarly, environmental improvements are proposed at Marine Walk as a preliminary outcome of public consultation for the Seafront Strategy and are included in the Strategy. 3. Paragraph 4.2 of the SPD proposes the use of native grasses to improve the site; however, we consider that greater emphasis should be placed upon protection and enhancement of the natural environment because of the area's high profile and important ecological location. Further options to achieve improvements to biodiversity in the area should be explored. 4. Within paragraph 2.2, reference is made to linkages between the built and natural environment where the two complement each other. We recommend that potential conflicts between the built and natural environment as a result of the proposals are fully explored and addressed within the SPD. In addition, the Appropriate Assessment identifies potential disturbance of the Northumbria Coast SPA from the associated increased use of the beach by dog-walkers should the proposals be implemented. This issue is not addressed within the SPD. The Appropriate Assessment does propose a green corridor to mitigate potential conflicts between the built and natural environment, and this is an option that should be investigated fully. 5. Within paragraph 5.2 of the SPD it states "The sea wall	1. The masterplan has been amended to include reference to flood risk in section 2.2 Physical Context and in 5.8 New Developments. 2. Regeneration objective one of the masterplan has been amended to state 'To develop a sense of place and pride by building on and enhancing the area's rich heritage and natural environment.' 3. The masterplan has been amended to state further options to improve the biodiversity of the area will be explored. 4. Further guidance has been added to the masterplan setting out how development proposals should strive for environmentally conscious buildings, promoting sustainable energy use and sustainable building techniques and take into account the lifetime cost of the buildings. The installation of interpretation and an education facility have the potential to increase awareness of the area's unique environment and encourage people to treat the environment respectfully. The Appropriate Assessment does not propose a green corridor is installed to mitigate potential conflicts between the built and natural environment. 5. The masterplan has been amended to clarify the image of the stairway used within the masterplan is indicative and for illustrative purposes only. At the detailed design stage full consultation will be undertaken with the Coastal Protection Agency (Sunderland City Council) and the Environment Agency. 6. Section 5.8 of the masterplan will be amended to include reference to PPS25.

			<p>will be replaced with a sweeping stairway and ramp designed to allow the sand and sea to wash into the area, creating the sense of the park spilling out on to the beach". It is unclear whether the existing sea wall serves any purpose in terms of mitigating flood risk and / or coastal erosion in the area. Should the wall serve as a flood defence, any changes to the existing feature would need to be undertaken in full consultation with the Coastal Protection Agency (Sunderland City Council) and the Environment Agency. Importantly noted within paragraph 6.1, SMP2 policy is to "hold the line" in this area. Should the wall impact in any way on coastal erosion processes in the area, potential impacts of the proposals will need to be fully investigated within the SA for the area. 6. Paragraph 5.8 is in relation to new developments coming forward in the area. We consider that proposals will need to consider location (i.e. in areas at the least risk of flooding) as a means to achieving environmental sustainability, in accordance with the principles of PPS25.</p>	
MWM91	North East Planning Body	No comment	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above planning documents. The North East Planning Body (NEPB) has no observations to make and, therefore, will not be submitting a formal response to assess the conformity of the document with regional planning policy.</p>	Noted.
MWM92	Natural England	Object	<p>1. The relationship between the various documents needs to be clearly outlined within each document, and its role in relation to the Local Development Framework made clear. 2. Figure 5 This should also show Durham Coast SSSI and Durham Coast SAC. 3. (4.2/5.1/5.5) Opportunities Culture and Heritage We would recommend that the cave area, ravine should be surveyed for the presence of protected species (bats) prior to any proposed use for art installations and performances, and proposed new lighting schemes. 4. (5.4) Roker Pods - We would initially expect any adverse impact of these pods as illustrated to be minimal but would recommend that detailed design, placing and use takes account of use of the area by important and protected birds. In our response to the HRA (Annex 3) we recommend a bird study of the area, this study should also inform pod design if any conflict is identified. 5. (5.7) We encourage any new coastal planting on the grassed banks on the lower promenade and elsewhere to be of locally native species; species appropriate to distant areas of the country can adversely affect locally distinct habitats. The introduction of trees and shrubs, including juniper and Scots pine to amenity grassland in this area is inappropriate. These grasslands can be enhanced with appropriate planting and management of species rich grassland which will provide botanical and wildlife interest in the summer and continues to provide feeding and roosting for migrant and overwintering birds, eg Turnstone, in autumn and winter. 6. (5.8) We welcome the recommendation to include green roof technology for new/refurbishment projects in the area. 7. (6.1) We suggest the text for HRA to read 'the function of the Habitats Regulation Assessment is to enable the Planning Authority to ascertain that no adverse effect on the integrity of a European site will result from implementation of the plan or project' rather than 'to ensure the masterplan will not negatively impact on sites of international nature conservation importance'. 8. (6.1) Refers to avoidance of impact on nesting</p>	<p>1. The masterplan text has been amended to more clearly illustrate the role and relation of the masterplan and Seafront Regeneration Strategy to the UDP and LDF. 2. Figure 5 amended to show the Durham Coast SSSI and Durham Coast SAC. 3. Spottee's cave (highlighted in the masterplan as an area for illumination and interpretation) was last opened regularly in the early 1990's for the Sunderland Illuminations. Since this time the cave has been secured using a roller shutter. It is considered unlikely it will be a habitat for bat species; however, basic survey work will be undertaken once design proposals are clarified. The masterplan text will be amended to clarify this. 4. The pods shown in the masterplan are an artist's impression for illustrative purposes. Detailed designs will be developed which take into account Natural England's concerns. Masterplan text will be amended to clarify this. 5. Comments noted. At this stage it is not necessary to set out which specific species will be planted. Natural England's comments will be considered when a planting scheme is produced. 6. Comments Noted. 7. Masterplan text amended to reflect this. 8 Masterplan text amended to reflect that birds use the coastline for more than solely nesting. 9. Annex amended to include reference to PPS9</p>

			birds but the timing is confused. Please see our comments in Annex 3 (HRA) regarding impacts on both wintering and breeding birds. 9. PPS9 should be included in the list given the range of coastal nature conservation designations present in the area.	
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Marine Walk Masterplan SPD: Screening for an Appropriate Assessment

January 2010



Prepared for:





Revision Schedule

Marine Walk Masterplan and SPD: Screening for an Appropriate Assessment

January 2010

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Rev	Date	Details	Prepared by	Reviewed by	Approved by
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1 Introduction

Sunderland City Council has developed a Seafront Regeneration Strategy and Marine Walk Masterplan. As part of this process an issues and options report was published in December 2008¹, and the public were invited to comment on these issues between 16 February 2009 and 3 April 2009. The comments received have been used to create a vision for the seafront and development of a draft Seafront Regeneration Strategy and separate Masterplans for seafront sites in Roker and Seaburn.

This screening document has been produced to accompany the Masterplan for the Marine Walk which will become a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) within the Sunderland City Council Local Development Framework (LDF). An SPD for Seaburn will be developed at a later date depending on the timescales of the core strategy.

This report considers the nature and scale of the effects of the Masterplan proposals upon the important wildlife features of international importance present along the shore. This process is known as a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) or Appropriate Assessment (AA). A separate document will be produced to accompany the Masterplan for Seaburn. An informal draft of this document was circulated to Natural England, RSPB and Durham Bird Club in May 2009. Following receipt of comments from RSPB and Durham Bird Club this document was amended.

1.1 Habitats Regulations Assessment and Appropriate Assessment (AA)

1.1.1 What is Appropriate Assessment (AA)?

AA provides an assessment of the effect of a plan or project, alone or in combination with other plans or projects, on sites considered to be of European importance for their nature conservation value.

European sites are areas identified as Special Protection Areas (SPA), designated under the Conservation of Wild Birds Directive (79/409/EEC) ("The Birds Directive"), and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) designated under the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora and Fauna Directive (92/43/EEC) ("The Habitats Directive"). These sites collectively contribute to the Natura 2000 network of protected sites, which are of international importance. PPS9 also recommends that sites designated under the Ramsar convention should be afforded the same level of consideration as European sites. In practice most Ramsar sites are also SPA.

Whilst many European sites overlap with Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), AA relates only to the qualifying interest features of the European site.

¹ Sunderland City Council, December 2008

The ‘assessment’ proper is a *statement* that says whether a plan does (or does not) affect the integrity of a European site². But, the *process* of determining whether or not the plan will affect European sites is also commonly referred to as ‘appropriate assessment’. To avoid this confusion some organisations refer to the process as the “Habitat Regulations Assessment”, limiting the term “Appropriate Assessment” to assessing the impact of a policy/plan upon the integrity of a site (see Stage 2, section 1.1.5 below).

AA is only considered for plans or policies that are not connected with or necessary to the management of European sites. The Marine Walk Masterplan and accompanying Seafrost Regeneration Strategy is not connected with or necessary to the management of any European sites, and hence under Article 6 (3) of the Habitats Directive (see Section 1.1.2), requires consideration for its likely effects on such sites.

European sites that lie within the plan boundary, and European sites that lie outside the boundary, but within the zone of influence of any changes brought about by the plan, must be considered. No definitive buffer distance has been prescribed as the potential effects on a site are influenced by the reasons for which the site has been designated and the type of changes arising from the plan.

1.1.2 Legal basis for AA

The Habitats Directive provides legal protection for habitats and species of European Importance. The Habitats Directive requires member states to identify and conserve sites, which contain these species/habitats. Collectively they are known as Natura 2000 sites. In the UK they include Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA).

The requirement for AA is established through Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive:

“Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site’s conservation objectives. In the light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.”

The European Court of Justice ruled, in October 2005, that the UK had failed to correctly transpose the provisions of Articles 6(3) and 6(4) (which addressed issues connected to alternative solutions, the test of imperative reasons of overriding public interest and compensatory measures) into national law. Land use plans do not in themselves authorise development, but were deemed by the Court to have a significant influence on development decisions and therefore should be subject to an appropriate assessment. The position was clarified in UK law by Section 85 of the Conservation (Natural habitats, &c.) (Amendment) Regulations 2007 and the requirement for an AA must be considered

² Scott Wilson *et al*, 2006

for any policy, project or plan that may have a significant effect on one or more European sites and which is not necessary for the management of that site.

1.1.3 Who carries out an appropriate assessment?

The responsibility for carrying out an appropriate assessment lies with the competent authority, i.e. the organisation that consents the activity to take place. For the Marine Walk Masterplan this responsibility lies with Sunderland City Council. A competent authority must consult with Natural England, and take its views into account when forming a decision about the impact of proposals.

1.1.4 What Is a Significant Effect?

An AA is required where *significant* effects upon the notified interest features of a European site are likely. Significance is defined in terms of the designated interest features and conservation objectives of the site and the test is to ensure that the policy/plan does not affect the integrity of the site. Integrity is defined by the European Commission as: “*The integrity of a site is the coherence of the site’s ecological structure and function, across its whole area, or the habitats, complex of habitats and/or populations of species for which the site is or will be classified.*” It further states: “*a site can be described as having a high degree of integrity where the inherent potential for meeting site conservation objectives is realised, the capacity for self repair and self renewal under dynamic conditions is maintained, and a minimum of external management support is required.*”

English Nature (now Natural England) guidance indicates that any effect that compromises a site’s ability to support and sustain the features for which it has been designated is likely to be considered significant, excluding trivial or inconsequential effects³.

In determining the likely “significance” of an effect, the EC recommends considering “*the probability, of the impact; the duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact.*” (EC, 2000, page 35).

If it is not possible to clearly rule out a significant effect, based on objective information, then further assessment is required, in line with the precautionary principle. This view has been supported by recent European case law⁴. That is, it is necessary to demonstrate that significant effects are *not* likely.

1.1.5 Stages in the Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) process

The AA process can be considered as comprising four main stages⁵:

Stage 1 – Screening both identifies if there is likely to be an impact on the site, and the determination if any likely effect, alone or in combination with other plans and projects, will be significant, and thus a Likely Significant Effect (LSE). If no LSE are identified there is no need to progress to stage 2 but reasoned and justified report of stage 1 must be

³ English Nature. 1999. Habitats Regulation Guidance Note 3: The Determination of Likely Significant Effect under the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) Regulations 1994

⁴ ECJ. 2004.

⁵The DCLG Guidance groups these actions into three tasks, combining stages 3 and 4 as a single item

completed to demonstrate how the Authority is able to ascertain no adverse effect on integrity of a European site.

Stage 2 – *Appropriate Assessment* considers the impact (LSE) on the integrity of any European site, with regard to its conservation objectives. Where adverse effects are recognised mitigation is assessed.

Stage 3 – *Assessment of alternative solutions*

Stage 4 – *consideration of imperative reasons of over-riding public interest (IROPI)*: Generally, only policies and plans that do not affect the integrity of a European Site are allowed to proceed. But under certain, limited circumstances, (assessed using the IROPI test), a policy or plan may be allowed to proceed, providing adequate compensation is provided.

The best method for ensuring that integrity will not be impacted by proposals is to identify sources of possible impacts early in the planning process, and design the plan to avoid these. Where adverse effects on European sites are identified during the AA process, it is necessary to apply adequate mitigation measures to remove these. If no further mitigation can be applied, but adverse impacts are still likely, then the plan is rejected. At this point it may be necessary to consider alternative solutions or to consider compensatory measures to address the remaining adverse effects. There are strict rules under which compensation is allowed, including an absence of alternative solutions and the plan is required for imperative reasons of overriding public interest.

1.2 This Report

This report is a screening for the requirements of appropriate assessment for the Marine Walk Masterplan located on the coast at Roker in Sunderland. The Marine Walk Masterplan will be taken forward as an SPD under the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) policies NA26 (Coastal and Seafront Zone), EC8 (Tourist Facilities) and EC9 (Tourist Facilities) until a relevant policy in the emerging Core Strategy is taken forward. As a statutory land use plan there is a requirement to consider the need for appropriate assessment.

The document explains how Sunderland City Council has determined whether the Masterplan for the Marine Walk is likely to have a significant effect upon adjacent nature conservation sites of European importance, and identifies any areas of uncertainty that require further investigation to complete the AA. It forms stage 2 of the process highlighted in section 1.1.5. A separate screening and assessment will be required to cover the proposed Masterplan located at Seaburn.

An initial stage 1 or screening report was produced to accompany the Issues and Options report for the Seafront Regeneration Strategy⁶. That considered broad issues associated with upgrading the seafront at both Roker and Seaburn, and was based on three options that formed the basis for public consultation. The initial screening concluded that given the nature of the options and their proximity to European sites, significant impacts upon the

⁶ Sunderland City Council, December 2008

European sites could not be ruled out, and that further consideration of effects was necessary.

This screening document, which reports this more detailed consideration of impacts associated with the Masterplan, has been produced to:

- ensure that Sunderland City council complies with the requirements of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC as implemented by the Conservation (Natural habitats, &c) Regulations 1994 and subsequent amendments;
- identify any aspects of the proposals that are likely alone, or in combination with other policies or proposals, to have a significant effect on sites of European importance;
- identify whether any further, stage 2 appropriate assessment is required; and
- advise what further work would be required in a stage 2 assessment if one is required.

This document will be issued to Natural England for formal advice, as required by the Habitats Directive. Other interested bodies are also invited to provide comments on the issues raised in this document.

1.3 Relationship between AA and Sustainability Appraisal/ Strategic Environmental Assessment

The requirements for AA and Sustainability Appraisal/ Strategic Environmental Assessment are governed by different pieces of legislation.

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (PCPA) 2004 requires an assessment of the sustainability of Development Plan Documents (DPDs), such as the Marine Walk Masterplan. The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 sets out the statutory requirement for local authorities to carry out an SEA of planning and land use documents. The regulations transpose the requirements of the SEA Directive.

The Government's preferred approach is to combine SEA and SA into one unified process that considers economic and social, as well as environmental effects. To this end, in November 2005, the Government published guidance⁷ on undertaking SA of Local Development Documents that incorporates the requirements of the SEA Directive ('the Guidance'). The combined SA / SEA process is referred to in this document as Sustainability Appraisal (SA).

A separate Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Sustainability Appraisal (SA) have been undertaken of the Marine Walk Masterplan. This has been undertaken in parallel with the AA, and information from the SEA/SA has informed the AA screening and vice versa.

⁷ ODPM (2005) Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents, London

1.4 The Process

Scott Wilson became engaged in the development of the Seafront Regeneration Strategy at the Issues and Options stage, which enabled it to identify potential risks and conflicts between particular Options and European sites, and to suggest mechanisms or policy considerations that would enable such impacts to be avoided as far as possible.

The need for formal Appropriate Assessment is being determined at the Masterplan Options stage as draft policies are required for the determination. This document will be circulated to Natural England, and other interested parties, during the public consultation on the Seafront Regeneration Strategy and Marine Walk Masterplan Options, but is only able to provide detailed comment on the Marine Walk Masterplan SPD. A separate document will be produced to accompany consultation on the Masterplan for Seaburn.

Once comments have been received the document will be amended, as necessary, to comply with legislation, and to take account of any changes in the Marine Walk Masterplan arising from the consultation process.

1.5 Structure of this Document

This document comprises the following sections:

- Section 2 summarises the methods that have been used in undertaking the assessment, including sources of data;
- Section 3 describes the European sites potentially affected by the Marine Walk Masterplan and includes details of their conservation importance and identifies the types of activity likely to significantly affect the qualifying interest features of the sites (site sensitivity);
- Section 4 provides details of the proposals included in the Marine Walk Masterplan, focussing upon those aspects that might give rise to significant effect upon the designated features of the European sites;
- Section 5 identifies other projects and plans that may contribute to “in combination” effects;
- Section 6 considers the significance of potential effects that have been identified in Sections 4 and 5;
- Section 7 draws together the conclusions of the assessment and any next steps required.

2 Methods

2.1.1 Guidance

Case law and best practice of the application of AA to Land Use plans is still evolving, and there is no single agreed approach. The methods used in this document are designed to be compliant with the draft guidance issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) (August 2006⁸) and “*Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites*” produced by the European Union⁹.

The approach is based on current best practice gleaned from a review of current AA documents produced for a selection of regional spatial plans and has been informed by a variety of guidance including advice for local authorities prepared by Scott Wilson *et al*¹⁰, advice commissioned by Natural England¹¹, and advice published by the RSPB¹².

2.2 Information sources

Information to assist with the assessment process has been sought from internet sources (e.g. websites of the Joint Nature Conservation Committee, and Natural England), Natural England and Sunderland City Council. Information obtained during the Appropriate Assessment of the UDP, Alteration No. 2 conducted in 2007 has also been drawn on, which included information on bird populations obtained from the website of the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), and through consultation with the Durham Bird Club.

2.3 Identification of relevant European sites

The purpose of the screening and assessment is to identify any European sites that are likely to be adversely affected by the Marine Walk Masterplan (SPD). This requires the identification of:

- those European sites not affected (i.e. no further assessment required);
- European sites for which there may be an effect, but modification of a policy within the Masterplan would remove this effect; and
- Any European site(s) for which further information is required in order to determine the significance of an effect.

The location and interest features of European sites within the vicinity¹³ of the plan area were identified using information provided by Natural England¹⁴, and information available from the Natural England website, including details about their current condition.

⁸ DCLG, 2006

⁹ European Communities, 2002.

¹⁰ Scott Wilson *et al* September 2006

¹¹ Tyldesley and Associates, August 2006

¹² RSPB 2007

¹³ It is a requirement of the legislation that effects on European sites outside the boundary of the plan area should also be considered.

¹⁴ CD of relevant information to help inform Appropriate Assessments provided by Jenny Loring, Natural England

2.4 Assessment of vulnerability to effects

Following the identification of European sites within the zone of influence of the Marine Walk Masterplan, the conservation objectives for each site were reviewed to identify the types of activity that might influence their conservation status. Information about the current condition of each feature was collated, either from published information collected during Site Condition Monitoring exercises conducted by Natural England, or information on bird statistics collated by the JNCC and the British Trust for Ornithology.

2.5 Masterplan analysis including identification of options or aspects that might impact on European sites

The aim of plan analysis is to determine whether the Marine Walk Masterplan may affect the key environmental conditions that need to be maintained or improved in order to preserve the integrity of European Sites¹⁵.

The approach taken is based on guidance produced by Scott Wilson *et al* (2006), and focuses upon a consideration of the total impact of a plan upon the notified interest features.

2.6 “In Combination” Effects

The appropriate assessment is required to consider the potential effects of a proposed plan alone and “in combination” with other plans and projects. These other plans have been identified from a review of the type of documents considered for the SEA/SA and comments received from Natural England.

New documents and plans are constantly being produced, and it may be that there are additional documents that should also be considered “in combination” with the Marine Walk Masterplan. It is hoped that any relevant additional documents will be identified through the consultation process.

¹⁵ Scott Wilson *et al*, 2006

3 European sites

3.1 Sites within the zone of influence of the Marine Walk Masterplan

Two European sites may potentially be affected by the Seafront Regeneration Strategy and the Marine Walk Masterplan (SPD):

- Durham Coast Special Area of Conservation (SAC), designated for its vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic Coasts; and
- Northumbria Coast Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site, designated for populations of breeding little tern (*Sterna albifrons*), wintering turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*) and wintering purple sandpiper (*Calidris maritima*).

Both sites are fragmented, comprising discrete portions of the coast north and south of the Wear Estuary. Whilst both sites also cover the same area as the Durham Coast Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), there are some small differences in the boundary of the SAC and SPA. Principally, the area known as Parson's Rocks, which lies just north of Sunderland Port is included within the SPA boundary, but is excluded from the SAC boundary (see Figure 1).

The interest features of these designations are summarised in Table 1 and a map of the area is shown in Appendix 1. Table 1 also identifies the key environmental conditions required to maintain the integrity of the European sites. These have been extracted from a variety of sources¹⁶. A brief description of the factors that may impact upon the integrity of each site is provided in sections 3.1.1 and 3.1.2, with a fuller description of the cause of these factors provided in Section 3.2. Further comments on the important features and their sensitivity are given below. Natural England has sub-divided the Durham Coast SSSI (and hence the Durham Coast SAC & Northumbria Coast SPA/Ramsar sites) into a number of management units. One of these, Parson's Rocks, is located within the influence of the Marine Walk Masterplan. Comments on the current condition of the SAC and SPA features are also included below.

¹⁶ e.g. "Northumbria Coast European marine site. English Nature's advice given under Regulation 33(2) of the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994", published information on management of the Durham Coast SSSI (which underpins the SAC/SPA)¹⁶, results of site condition monitoring contained on the Natural England¹⁶ website, generic information related to habitat management on the JNCC website or are based on the consultant's interpretation of likely risk to the interest features. (English Nature, 6 November 2000)

Table 1. Summary of interest features for SPA and SAC

European Site	Reasons for which the site has been designated (Qualifying Features)	Objectives for management	Sub-features identified by Natural England as key ecosystem elements that need to be maintained if management objectives are to be met	Potential hazards
Durham Coast SAC	Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts	<p>To maintain in favourable condition the habitats for the populations of Annex 1 species (Little tern, purple sandpiper, turnstone and knot) of importance, with particular reference to: Intertidal sand and mudflats, sand dunes and coastal waters.</p> <p>Subject to natural change, to maintain, in favourable condition, the: vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic Coasts.</p>	<p><i>Extent of cliffs</i> <i>Vegetation structure</i> – showing zones and transitions <i>Indicators of local distinctiveness</i> - e.g. notable species.</p>	<p>Loss of habitat, changes in flushing regime (both quantity and quality of water), changes to geomorphological processes (e.g. introduction of sea defences), changes to grazing regime, changes to trampling regime (recreation)¹⁷.</p>
Northumbria Coast SPA/Ramsar	<p>Wintering - <i>Arenaria interpres</i> (Turnstone) Wintering - <i>Calidris maritima</i> (Purple sandpiper) Breeding - <i>Sterna albifrons</i> (Little tern)</p>	<p>To maintain the condition of the habitats (sub-features) used by the qualifying species (interest features)</p>	<p>For the wintering birds: <i>Rocky shores with associated boulder and cobble beaches</i>, which are used as feeding areas <i>High tide artificial roost sites</i> e.g. piers at River Tyne South Pier and Seaham Harbour Pier.</p> <p>For the breeding birds: <i>Sandy and shingle beaches</i> above the high-tide mark, which are used by nesting little terns. (Sandy beaches adjacent to the Long Nanny at Low Newton are the key area.) <i>Shallow inshore areas</i> used by little tern for foraging. (Waters off Long Nanny and inshore waters.) Most feeding occurs offshore.</p>	<p>Potential hazards identified by Natural England for interest features & sub-features that <i>may</i> be relevant for the Seafront Regeneration Strategy/ Marine Walk Masterplan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effects on hydrodynamic regime especially with respect to silt/sand movements along coast & effect on beaches (little

¹⁷ Determined by consultants, based on Common standards of monitoring proforma “Maritime Cliff and Slope Habitats” extracted from JNCC website

			<p><i>Disturbance</i> - the birds are vulnerable to disturbance.</p>	<p>tern)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toxic contamination (pollution risks) (little tern, turnstone, purple sandpiper) – Tyne listed as greatest potential risk • Disturbance (all spp.) • Habitat loss (all spp.)
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3.1.1 Durham Coast SAC

The Durham Coast SAC is valued as the only example of vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic Coasts on magnesium limestone in the UK¹⁸. Based on the management statement published by Natural England and the monitoring objectives for coastal cliffs published by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee¹⁹ (see Annex 3), the notified interest features of the Durham Coast SAC are vulnerable to:

- loss of habitat e.g. as a result of natural erosion processes being constrained;
- loss of habitat, particularly related to changes in vegetation composition and structure e.g. as a result of changes in grazing, fertiliser application and/or trampling pressure from people and wildlife.

Parts of the SAC are considered to be in unfavourable condition due to bonfires and littering (Natural England website).

The Durham Coast SAC does not extend into the area directly affected by the Marine Walk Masterplan, but does about the area in Seaburn that is subject to a separate Masterplanning process.

3.1.2 Northumbria Coast SPA / Ramsar

The main breeding area for little tern, Low Newton, ca. 40 miles to the North, is considered to be beyond the influence of the Marine Walk Masterplan.

Rocky shores with associated boulder and cobble beaches are important feeding areas for purple sandpiper and turnstone. Parson's Rocks, which lies to the north of the study area, is used by turnstone and is assessed by Natural England to be in favourable condition for its value for purple sandpiper²⁰. Both purple sandpiper and turnstone will forage on intertidal habitats and grasslands outside the boundary of the SPA.

Bird Survey reports for the SPA²¹ suggest that purple sandpiper numbers are in decline within the Northumbria Coast SPA, and the British Trust for Ornithology has issued a species alert for this species. Alerts indicate species that have undergone major declines in numbers. The species is considered to have suffered substantial declines within the Northumbria Coast SPA since the late 1980s, attributed, in part, to increased recreational disturbance. Turnstone numbers may also be decreasing, but only in line with national trends. No specific reasons for these trends are identified within the BTO report.

3.1.3 Important Habitats for Qualifying Species of Interest for the Northumbria Coast SPA

As mentioned in section 3.1.2, there are three bird species of qualifying interest for the Northumbria Coast SPA:

¹⁸ Magic Interactive Resource [accessed 2008] Available at: <http://www.magic.gov.uk/website/magic/>

¹⁹ JNCC, 2004

²⁰ Extracted from Condition of SSSI units included on Natural England's website & updated 2nd October 2007

²¹ BTO, 2005

- Little tern

Breeding little tern is a qualifying species of interest for the Northumbria Coast SPA. Little terns nest in coastal areas on sandy or shingle spits, usually close to sheltered, shallow marine or estuarine feeding areas. Little tern breeding colonies are vulnerable to disturbance by humans and dogs, depredation by foxes, crows, gulls and kestrels and also by blowing sand and flooding by spring high tides. The breeding little tern colony is located ca 40 miles north of the proposed development site at Low Newton. This breeding site is considered to be beyond the influence of the Marine Walk Masterplan and therefore little terns are not considered further in this report.

- Turnstones

During the winter period Turnstones are found exclusively along coastlines, on sandy beaches, estuaries, and especially the intertidal area of rocky shores. During periods of extreme storms they may also feed up to a few hundred metres inland on grassland such as playing fields.

- Purple Sandpiper

Over the winter period, purple sandpiper primarily inhabits rocky seashores, and will also sometimes occur on sandy beaches close to rocky shores. Their preferred habitat is exposed shallow-sloping rocky shores where they forage over bedrock and among stones and cobbles (Summers *et al.* 2002c).

3.2 Site Sensitivities

Factors that are likely to give rise to significant impacts upon the integrity of the two European sites are coastal processes and the hydrodynamic regime, direct damage of habitats (both intentional and unintentional), disturbance and pollution. These factors are now described in more detail.

3.2.1 Coastal processes and hydrodynamic regime

Coastal processes (including erosion and accretion) and the hydrodynamic regimes are important in ensuring that areas of rock are maintained for bird feeding and roosting, and also that sediment patterns are maintained. Changes in sea defence mechanisms or dredging are activities that may impact upon the notified interest features.

3.2.2 Direct Damage of Habitats

Habitats may be damaged as a result of littering, removal of land or bonfires. Natural England considers that part of the SAC is currently in unfavourable condition due to littering of materials and the occurrence of bonfires.

There may also be unintentional changes in habitat quality, caused, for example, by changes in grazing or trampling pressure. Such changes may arise as a result in changes in the number of people following a particular route along the cliff.

3.2.3 Disturbance

Many bird species, including coastal species, are vulnerable to disturbance, particularly from people walking with dogs. The disturbance can limit the time available for birds to feed, reducing their energy intake. Alternatively, disturbance whilst roosting requires birds to use extra energy at a time of year when opportunities for feeding may be limited by short day length. Disturbance of nesting birds increases the chances of other species preying on the eggs, and reducing breeding success.

3.2.4 Pollution

Changes in coastal water quality could affect the availability of food for bird species and the clarity of the water.

3.3 Marine Walk Development Site

The existing site at Marine Walk, Roker, is comprised of sandy and rocky coastline adjoining small areas of grassland, which leads onto a developed urban area consisting of a mixture of houses and other buildings. The mouth of the River Wear marks the southern end of the development area and the Sunderland City border marks the northern limits of the development area.

The area of coastline within the development footprint is comprised of intertidal sandy habitat with several rocky outcrops. There are exposed rocks adjacent to the New South Pier, along the South pier and also at Bede's Cross, at the location of the Old South Pier Lighthouse. The area of coastline within the proposed development area is approximately 1.05 km².

4 Plan analysis

This section reviews the Marine Walk Masterplan to identify any aspects that might influence the environmental conditions required to maintain the integrity of European sites.

4.1 Preferred options

The Seafront Regeneration Strategy options and issues report, which was issued for consultation, identified three broad options for the Roker study area:

- A place for passive recreation;
- A place for beach play; and
- A place for sports.

Based on responses received, a Masterplan has been developed that incorporates elements of all three options. A copy of the Masterplan is contained in the consultation document that accompanies this report. The proposed vision is: “Building on its unique natural environment and rich heritage, the seafront at Roker will be an attractive, safe, clean and accessible destination for all residents and visitors, of which the people of Sunderland can be proud. It will be a welcoming place to enjoy all year round, offering activities and events for everyone and supporting Sunderland’s aspiration to be the UK’s most livable city.” Seven objectives are proposed:

1. To develop a sense of place and pride by building on and enhancing the area’s rich heritage and attractive natural environment
2. To create an attractive environment where both residents and visitors can relax
3. To create a family friendly area which is safe and clean
4. To provide high quality public amenities
5. To offer high quality and affordable activities and cultural events throughout the year
6. To create an area which is physically and intellectually accessible
7. To maximise the impact and improve the economic vibrancy of the area

In response to the public consultation, which highlighted desires to make the most of the area for relaxation, protecting the natural environment, and improving what is on offer for families, the Masterplan focuses on passive recreation; improving and upgrading the existing facilities; it will create improved access and quality of the landscape. The location and nature of the current seawall will remain unchanged, other than to lower a short length to create a ramp, and to install new wooden steps over the wall.

4.2 Aspects of the Marine Walk Masterplan that might impact on the integrity of the European sites

The assessment of aspects of the Marine Walk Masterplan that might impact upon the integrity of the European sites is based on a consideration of the site sensitivities identified in Section 3.2.

4.2.1 Coastal processes and hydrodynamic regime

Coastal processes (including erosion and accretion) and the hydrodynamic regimes are important in ensuring that areas of rock are maintained for bird feeding and roosting, and also that sediment patterns are maintained. Changes in sea defence mechanisms or dredging are activities that may impact upon the notified interest features such as purple sandpiper and turnstone.

Maintenance of the sea wall is a requirement of the Shoreline Management Plan 2²², which has undergone a separate Appropriate Assessment process. This concluded that SMP policy is largely focussed on maintaining or pursuing measures which will either maintain or enhance the features of International sites and as such is unlikely to have an adverse impact on the integrity of the local International designations.

4.2.2 Direct Damage of Habitats

The scheme is not likely to result in any direct damage to habitats of the Durham Coast SAC, which is considered to be beyond the zone of influence of the Marine Walk Masterplan, and Parson's Rocks, part of the Northumbria Coast SPA also lies beyond the study area. The proposals will not require any changes to be made to the rocky shores.

4.2.3 Disturbance

Two aspects of disturbance have been considered: disturbance during construction works for the upgrading of the promenade and implementation of the Marine Walk Masterplan; and disturbance resulting from any increased usage of the area as a result of the new facilities. Disturbance is a potential issue, and has been considered in more detail in Section 6.2.

4.2.4 Pollution

The Marine Walk Masterplan will not result in any significant works within the inter-tidal zone, and hence there is minimal risk of any pollution. Works to improve the promenade etc. will be subject to construction best practice guidance following guidance PPS23: Planning and Pollution Control, and the risk of any pollution incident is considered to be low, and impacts upon the integrity of the SPA are not likely.

If however, there are works proposed in the inter-tidal zone, pollution incidents may arise from direct release of pollutants into the water column or through the disturbance of contaminated sediments carried to areas of interest by longshore drift. If there is any planned work within the inter-tidal zone it will be necessary to assess whether sediments in

²² North East Coastal Authorities Group. 2007. Shoreline Management Plan 2. River Tyne to Flamborough Head. 9PO184

the development footprint are contaminated and also to determine the direction of longshore drift to examine potential impacts of contaminated sediments on areas of interest.

4.2.5 Loss of Foraging Habitat

Loss of foraging habitat may occur as a result of the proposed works which may impact on the qualifying species of interest for the SPA. Habitats that need to be assessed for their importance for winter foraging by turnstone and purple sandpiper include the rocky foreshore habitats and coastal amenity grassland that exist within the area of proposed development.

4.2.6 Inland bird feeding and roosting sites

Data on supra-tidal or inland feeding and roosting sites is virtually non-existent and it appears that this aspect of bird behaviour is poorly documented in the area. One record of two turnstones at 'Seaburn Links', a grassy habitat above the high tide line, suggests that these birds were recorded outwith the intertidal zone, but such 'bird club' records are sometimes ambiguous and this record could just as easily pertain to birds on the beach close to the Links.

This assessment cannot fully address this phenomenon at present without further information.

5 Other plans and projects contributing to “in combination” effects

The following documents have been reviewed for consideration of “in combination” effects:

- The Sunderland Strategy 2008 – 2025
- Local Area Agreement 2008 – 2011
- Sunderland Local Development Framework evolving options
- Sunderland UDP Alteration No. 2
- Shoreline Management Plan 2 River Tyne to Flamborough Head
- Wear Catchment Flood Management Plan (Scoping phase August 2005)
- Tyne & Wear Strategic Flood Risk Assessment July 2007
- Local Transport Plan Tyne & Wear 2006 – 2011
- Regional Planning Guidance for the North East (RPG1), November 2002
- “Leading the way” Regional Economic strategy 2006 – 2016
- North East Tourism Strategy 2005-2010
- Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East
- Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 for coastal land
- “The North East England Regional Housing Strategy 2007
- North East Regional Renewable Energy Strategy, March 2005
- Rural Action Plan, 2002
- Emerging Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East
- LDF Core strategy issues and options report for Chester-le-street
- County Durham structure plan saved policies
- District of Easington LDF (evolving papers)
- City of Durham Development Control policies preferred options, LDF (evolving policies)
- South Tyneside LDF Core Strategy, adopted June 2007
- North Tyneside LDF Core Strategy Options and Issues report (policies not yet available on website)
- Durham Heritage Coast Management Plan
- Local Area Agreement

- Sunderland Climate Change Action Plan
- The Seafront Strategy
- Gateshead UDP

Appropriate Assessment has been undertaken on some of these plans at the time they were prepared (e.g. the Shoreline Management Plan), whilst others, such as the LDF Core strategy that is being developed for Sunderland is still undergoing development, but will be subject to its own AA.

The Marine Walk Masterplan forms part of the Seafront Regeneration Strategy, which also includes a proposed Seaburn SPD. Key elements of the Seafront Regeneration Strategy are included within the Marine Walk Masterplan, and so are not considered separately within this report. The Seaburn SPD has yet to be developed, but will also be subject to Habitats Regulations Assessment.

Table 2 sets out the proposals within these plans that could contribute to “in combination” effects on European sites. Three of these plans contain policies/proposals, which require further consideration in terms of potential “in combination” effects on European sites. These are:

- Local Transport Plan Tyne & Wear
- “Leading the way” Regional Economic strategy
- NE tourism strategy

The combined effect of these policies and those arising from the Marine Walk Masterplan on the notified interest features of the European site are considered in more detail in Section 6.

Table 2. Analysis of other plans that may give rise to “in combination” significant effects upon European sites

Plan/Document	Aim and purpose of the plan/document	Possible aspects of the plan that could contribute to “in combination” effects
Sunderland Strategy 2008 - 2025	Sets out how the people who live, work and study in Sunderland would like to see the City evolve by 2025.	Contains five broad aims, including one to promote a strong culture of sustainability. No adverse impacts likely.
Local Area Agreement 2008 - 2011	Sets out the long term aims and key objectives identified in the Sunderland strategy and identifies related priority improvement indicators that will be used to set a focus for activity and provide the basis for measuring progress towards the vision in the short term.	None.
Sunderland Local Development Framework (LDF) evolving options	Establishes the planning framework for the City. Preferred options are still being developed, but likely to include policies relating to access to and enjoyment of the coast, and protection of biodiversity assets.	Acts as the framework for the Marine Walk Masterplan, and will require its own HRA/AA.
Sunderland UDP Alteration No. 2	Provides the planning framework pending development of the LDF. Includes policies for protection of biodiversity assets, and has been subject to its own AA.	None.
Shoreline Management Plan 2 River Tyne to Flamborough Head	The plan establishes management policies over three time periods.	The proposals include options for hard sea defences, potentially in part of the SPA, and allowance of natural erosion, which could lead to a loss of coastal habitat. Scheme specific AA suggests that following inclusion of mitigation measures no adverse impacts are likely.
Wear Catchment Flood Management Plan (Scoping phase August 2005)	The plan aims to reduce the risk of flooding, to work with natural processes, to support the implementation of International and national legislation and policies, to promote sustainable flood risk management and inform and support the development of planning policies and plans.	None
Tyne & Wear Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, July 2007	Provides a planning tool and reference document which identifies the extent and severity of flood risk within the Tyne and Wear catchment area. This document will help to guide development towards areas of low flood risk and	This document classifies the proposed development area as a High Flood Risk area. However, given the already developed nature of the area it is not thought that further development at the proposed level will

Plan/Document	Aim and purpose of the plan/document	Possible aspects of the plan that could contribute to “in combination” effects
	will help avoid unnecessary development within high flood risk areas, other than exceptional cases and support the development of planning policies and plans.	worsen the hydrodynamic processes of the coastline and therefore the SFRA contains no aspects that will cause ‘in combination’ effects.
Local Transport Plan Tyne & Wear 2006 - 2011	The aim is to support and enhance regeneration and greater economic prosperity in the region through maintaining and improving linkages within and beyond the area, ensuring transport systems are safe and secure, improving efficiency of transport, and reducing the environmental impact of transport.	The Sunderland Strategic Corridor, linking the A19, the city centre and the docks, including the Sunderland Arc regeneration area is identified as a focus for growth over the next five years. The Core Strategy covers aspects of this development; possible impacts on the European sites are related to increased recreational use of the coast and possible disturbance of wildlife.
Regional Planning Guidance for the North East (RPG1), November 2002	Provides a vision and strategy to achieve sustainable development of the NE region based on four themes: acceleration of the renaissance of the Tyne, Wear and Tees conurbations; provision of job opportunities and support of communities in the former coalfield areas; adaptation and revitalisation of the region’s town and city centres; and securing rural regeneration. The need for a strategic employment site north of Sunderland is identified. Targets for new housing and the generation of renewable energy are included.	Implementation of the plan will be realised through documents produced by Sunderland City Council e.g. UDP Alteration No. 2 and this core strategy. No additional possible impacts are identified upon the European sites.
“Leading the way” Regional Economic strategy 2006 – 2016	Sets out priorities to achieving sustainable economic development. Includes targets for the creation of new jobs and businesses.	Plan includes recommendations for improvement to transport infrastructure, which could have knock-on effect on access to the coast and disturbance.
North East Tourism Strategy 2005-2010	Establishes ten objectives for promoting tourism in the North East area. The focus is on increasing visitor numbers, improving investment, improving the visitor experience conserving the region’s resources. Coastal areas are seen as a priority, together with improving transport links for visitors.	Increased recreational use of parts of the coast could lead to elevated levels of disturbance, particularly to bird populations, and damage to habitats.
Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East	Sets out a long-term strategy for the spatial development of the North East. Four objectives are identified: economic prosperity, sustainable communities, enhanced environment and improving connectivity. Economic development and development of retail	Sunderland City Council will achieve implementation of key areas through the LDF core strategy, UDP Alteration No. 2 and other policy documents. Main impacts on European sites could arise from increased disturbance and damage to coastal habitats arising

Plan/Document	Aim and purpose of the plan/document	Possible aspects of the plan that could contribute to “in combination” effects
	opportunities in Sunderland are promoted. Targets for allocation of employment land and dwelling provision within the Sunderland area are also included. Other key elements include support for regeneration of the River Wear corridor, growth of the Port, development of small-scale urban windfarms, development of the Sunderland Strategic Transport Corridor and the Sunderland Southern radial route.	from increased population numbers and better road access to the coast.
Marine and Coastal Access Bill	Sets out a vision for improving recreational access to the English Coast by introducing new powers to extend access to the English coast and enable the creation of a continuous access route around the English coast.	Increased recreational use of parts of the coast could lead to elevated levels of disturbance, particularly to bird populations, and damage to habitats.

Key:

	Objective for which no significant impacts upon European sites are anticipated
	Objective for which significant impacts upon European sites cannot be ruled out at this stage

6 Significance of effects

6.1 Durham Coast SAC

The Durham Coast SAC is vulnerable to direct damage of habitat and trampling pressure, but is considered to be located at a sufficient distance from the Marine Walk to be unaffected by the proposals.

Works will be undertaken within the intertidal zone through the construction of stepped access to the beach. Works carried out in this area, should consider the possibility of contaminants entering the water column or transfer of contaminated sediments to areas of interest via longshore drift. To assess if contamination as a result of longshore drift will cause significant impacts it will be necessary to establish firstly if sediments are contaminated in areas of proposed works and also patterns of longshore drift off the Roker coast.

It is unlikely that there will be impacts from the proposed development at Roker from increased numbers of visitors due to it being located at a suitable distance from the development area. However, further analysis is required to establish if there will be any impact from pollution events from the proposed development.

Measures have been set out in the SPD in order to reduce possible pollution events such as the installation of sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS). Such measures would aim to reduce any impacts of pollution within the coastal zone.

6.2 Northumbria Coast SPA

Disturbance to notified bird interest features has been identified as a possible effect of the implementation of the Marine Walk Masterplan and “in combination” effects with other policies and plans (see sections 4.2.3 and 5). Whilst purple sandpiper and turnstone are most numerous within the SPA, birds that form a notified interest feature of the SPA may spend some of their time outside the SPA boundary, and disturbance to them at these other locations should be considered.

Sources of disturbance include work to upgrade the Promenade and Piers and other associated construction works to implement the Masterplan and as a result of increased usage of the area once the facilities have been completed, including the effects of alterations to or introduction of artificial lighting along the shoreline.

The impacts of lighting on birds will be given consideration during the course of the detailed planning stage and lighting will be planned to minimise negative impacts on the qualifying bird species utilising the coastal area.

6.2.1 Disturbance during construction

Implementation of the Masterplan will require a variety of engineering work including re-surfacing, installation of new features, and construction of new access points. All the

areas to be affected are located away from Parson's Rocks, and therefore will not disturb roosting and feeding birds at this section of the SPA.

The majority of works are likely to take place above the high water mark, away from areas that are likely to be used by significant numbers of the notified bird interest features. To ensure that the risks of disturbance to breeding and wintering birds are minimised, it will be necessary to examine detailed design plans on a case by case basis as they are developed and implement appropriate mitigation measures for breeding birds and overwinter birds to minimise any negative impacts at appropriate times of the year. .

6.2.2 Disturbance as a result of the use of new facilities

It is often difficult to demonstrate that even high levels of disturbance impact adversely on bird populations, so a precautionary approach is often taken to manage the possible impacts from recreation²³.

A variety of recreational activities currently take place along the coast, but the location of each is regulated through a zoning programme. Parson's Rocks are excluded from the use zones, and motorised and non-motorised activity is located at some distance from the Rocks. Greatest use of the coastal area for activities is confined to the summer months, minimising interaction between coastal users and the notified bird interests.

The aim of the Marine Walk Masterplan is to improve the quality of recreational experience as well as increase visitor numbers. Other policies such as the North East Tourism Strategy also encourage use of the coast, but such use is likely to be predominantly focused on the summer months.

The Masterplan study area is situated away from Parson's Rocks, and so impacts upon birds in this area due to construction are considered unlikely.

Sunderland Council already implements a Coastal Code²⁴, which encourages responsible access and use of the coast. This includes provisions for dog prohibition areas during the summer months but not the winter months which are most critical for the bird interest along the coast, including SPA qualifying species turnstone and purple sandpiper.

The Masterplan proposals include provision for interpretation signage, which will make users more aware of the bird interest of the area and how to minimise disturbance to it e.g. by keeping dogs on leads near flocks of birds near important habitats and locations for birds such as Parson's Rocks.

Improved lighting is also a feature of the Masterplan proposals. Artificial lighting can impact upon the normal roosting and feeding behaviour of a range of bird species. Details of the lighting are not yet available, but are likely to include elements of ground level lighting, and illumination of key landscape features. The extent and nature of light spill onto the beach area will be a material consideration in the design of the lights.

²³ English Nature, 1995

²⁴ The Coastal Code. Sunderland City Council.

It is stated in the Masterplan that the impact lighting will have on roosting birds will be considered when designing its position. This approach will act to minimise any potential effects of lighting on the qualifying species of interest.

6.3 Desk Study Data

Durham Bird Club

Bird data for the period 2006 to 2009 was obtained from Durham Bird Club. The data comprises anecdotal records of roosting and feeding by waders collected at sites along the coastline between Roker and Seaham. The data is shown in Table 3 below.

The data was not collected as part of a systematic survey and therefore cannot be considered as a comprehensive representation of how birds utilise the Sunderland coastline but is merely indicative.

Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS)

WeBS data was provided by the BTO for the count section between River Weir to South Bents. WeBS is a systematic and standardised survey and for regularly monitored sites can provide mean counts of birds which is more useful in determining bird use of wetland habitats. The standard analysis is to use five year peak mean counts. However, for the River Weir to South Bents count section only 3 years of data are available at present and therefore caution is required when assessing the data. WeBS is not a comprehensive survey for some waterbird species due to varying constraints, e.g. survey coverage does not generally cover stretches of open coast but focuses on estuaries, reservoirs, lakes and ponds, and therefore data are unlikely to represent a comprehensive count of the birds using this section of coastline.

6.3.1 Purple Sandpiper

The data provided by DBC and BTO identified several feeding and roosting areas along the Sunderland coastline that are outside of the Northumbria Coast SPA but which are used by waders during the winter period. The records show that Sunderland Harbour provides feeding and roosting habitat for purple sandpipers. Purple sandpiper is a qualifying bird species for the Northumbria Coast SPA. However, the Durham Bird Club data indicates that there are only low numbers of this species feeding and roosting around the area of Marine Walk, Roker. All the purple sandpiper records provided by the Durham Bird Club for Roker and the surrounding area are ranked by number of birds in descending order in Table 3. The birds recorded within these areas are also shown as a percentage of the total number of birds within the Northumbria Coast SPA.

Even though numbers of purple sandpiper appear low this does not mean that this area is not an important feeding and roosting resource for these birds as birds tend to disperse to obtain suitable feeding and roosting resources and the species concerned typically occur at low density over wide areas. The numbers using the area may therefore make up part

of other smaller groups that have dispersed along the coastline and are therefore part of a larger important population.

Table 3. Purple sandpiper records collected by Durham Bird Club at sites along the Sunderland coast from 2006 to 2009, ranked in descending order

Site	Numbers of Purple Sandpiper	% Northumbria Coast SPA Population (787)	Date
Sunderland Harbour	16	2.0	28/12/2009
Seaham	9	1.1	05/04/2006
Salterfen Rocks	8	1.0	16/04/2006
Roker and Harbour	8	1.0	12/02/2006
Salterfen Rocks	7	0.9	06/01/2009
Roker and Harbour	7	0.9	15/01/2006
Salterfen Rocks	6	0.8	21/04/2007
Roker North Pier – Feeding on rocks	5	0.6	14/11/2007
Sunderland North Dock/Roker Beach – On the new south pier	3	0.4	05/01/2008
Roker Beach	3	0.4	12/03/2006
Sunderland North – Dock/Roker Beach – on the small beach at the south of the North Pier	1	0.1	31/12/2007

Small numbers of purple sandpiper use the area around Roker for feeding and roosting with a maximum count of 16 at Sunderland Harbour on 28 December 2009 over the period between 2006 and 2009. There are no extensive stretches of suitable habitat for these birds along the seafront at Roker. There are small areas of rock outcrop, however these areas would not be able to support significant numbers of the notified bird species of interest, however it is not known at this stage how important these areas are for purple sandpiper as a feeding and roosting resource during the winter period. There is an existing but at present not quantified level of human disturbance, including pet dogs, along this stretch of coast. However, in the absence of disturbance this section of coastline provides very limited feeding and roosting habitat for purple sandpiper.

Furthermore, WeBS records from River Wear to South Bents (Table 4) support that there are low numbers of purple sandpiper utilising this stretch of coast as count numbers remained small from 2004 to 2007, reaching a maximum of 8 during the winter period of 2005-2006, however, as described in section 6.3 this data is unlikely to be a comprehensive representation of how birds use this area of coastline. .

Table 4. WeBS count data for purple sandpiper from 2004 to 2007, provided by Durham Bird Club for the areas between River Wear to South Bents. .

Date	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
2004-2005	-	4	3	-	-	3	-
2005-2006	-	1	8	7	8	3	-
2006-2007	-	2	-	-	-	-	-

6.3.2 Turnstone

Records from the Durham Bird Club show that turnstone use this section of coast in a similar way as purple sandpiper. Both species use rocky shore habitat for feeding and roosting, but turnstone will also utilise a wider variety of habitats such as beaches, shingle and amenity grassland. Numbers of turnstone recorded by the Durham Bird Club are slightly higher than those recorded for purple sandpiper. All turnstone records provided by the Durham Bird Club for Roker and the surrounding area are ranked number of birds in descending order in Table5.

Table 5. Turnstone records provided by Durham Bird Club from 2006 to 2009 ranked in descending order.

Site	Numbers of Turnstone	% Northumbria Coast SPA population (1739)	Date
Sunderland South Pier	100	5.8	11/02/2006
Sunderland North Dock/Rocker Spread around both north and south piers and also new south pier	40	2.3	05/01/2008
Sunderland Harbour	40	2.3	20/02/2007
Roker Beach	35	2.0	29/08/2006
Sunderland Harbour	33	1.9	28/12/2008
Salterfen Rocks	30	1.7	06/01/2009
Sunderland North Dock/Roker Beach	30	1.7	24/01/2008
Roker and Harbour	30	1.7	12/02/2006
Sunderland North Dock	28	1.6	29/12/2007
Roker and Harbour	27	1.6	08/04/2006
Sunderland Harbour	25	1.4	20/12/2008
Sunderland: North Dock/Roker Beach	20	1.2	31/12/2007

Site	Numbers of Turnstone	% Northumbria Coast SPA population (1739)	Date
spread about the harbour area			
Hendon	17	1.0	30/01/2009
Sunderland North Dock/Roker Beach	14	0.8	01/01/2009
Roker north pier	9	0.5	14/11/2007
Sunderland north pier	8	0.5	07/01/2009
Roker	6	0.3	09/09/2006
Sunderland Glass Centre	2	0.1	07/01/2009
Sunderland Glass Centre	2	0.1	11/12/2008
Seaburn Links	2	0.1	11/12/2008

WeBS records in Table 6 for Turnstone from River Wear to South Bents show similar activity levels from 2005-2007.

Table 6. WeBS count data for turnstones from River Wear to South Bents, 2004 to 2007, provided by Durham Bird Club.

Date	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
2004-2005	112	19	19	48	1	11	7
2005-2006	7	21	35	14	30	3	27
2006-2007	11	24	6	-	-	-	-

The Northumbria Coast SPA is designated partly for its internationally important population of overwintering turnstone with a 5-year mean peak count of 1,739 birds.

The detailed design for Marine Walk has not yet been determined, however in order to maintain the site as a feeding and roosting resource for the qualifying species of birds it is recommended that any proposals preserve the existing rocky habitat along Roker beach and Sunderland harbour and Pier and disturbance around these areas is kept to a minimum during construction and operation by implementing careful visitor management during the winter months.

However, one potential development site has been identified and is located to the north of Adventure Sunderland. This site is informally used as a car park. The development of this site would not affect the existing rocky habitat along this section of the coastline however, it is likely to attract additional visitors to the area.

Until the detailed design stages are known and how visitors to the site are going to be managed the precise impacts of the proposed developments cannot be assessed accurately at this stage.

Increased visitor numbers in combination with other developments as a result of the Masterplan may lead to increased disturbance of the shoreline in the absence of mitigation. This will have to be assessed as other developments become known

7 Summary and Conclusion

Two European sites lie in the vicinity of the Marine Walk Masterplan; Durham Coast SAC and Northumbria Coast SPA and Ramsar site.

No significant impacts upon the Durham Coast SAC are likely owing to the nature of the Marine Walk Masterplan proposals, and the distance between the SAC and the proposals.

Possible effects upon the notified interest features of the Northumbria Coast SPA and Ramsar site have been considered in more detail.

There are several potential significant effects on the qualifying bird species that cannot be ruled out at this stage. These are:

- Disturbance caused by dogs on the beach
- Disturbance by increased numbers of people accessing the beach
- Lighting
- Construction

Although purple sandpiper and turnstone are mainly present during the winter period when recreational activity is lower than during the summer, disturbance during winter could be more significant in terms of winter survival, particularly disturbance during periods of cold weather. Therefore it is not possible at this stage to determine whether or not the development will have a significant impact on the qualifying species of interest for the SPA without more detailed proposals. Analysis of the detailed design for Marine Walk and field work to assess the use of the site by turnstone and purple sandpiper will allow determination of the effects of the proposed development.

The main areas where increased recreation are likely to occur are at some distance from the SPA; however the qualifying species do use the coastal area at Marine Walk for foraging and roosting purposes and so any effect on these birds at this site has the potential to effect the SPA populations.

The Masterplan states that studies will be undertaken to determine any sensitive areas where construction should be timed according to sensitivity. These studies will identify any potential impacts on the qualifying bird species of the SPA and appropriate mitigation measures can be formulated to reduce any potential impacts that may be identified.

The national populations of turnstone and purple sandpiper have declined in recent winters and the reasons for this are unclear but climatic factors have been implicated. However, any development should endeavour to prevent or mitigate any further negative impacts on these species.

It is recommended that ornithological studies of the area are undertaken to determine use of the area by birds and existing distribution levels on birds by human activity before proposals are finalised and developed and the results should be used to identify and

quantify likely disturbance by development including use of wind power generation, lighting of the area and areas of sensitive recreational use.

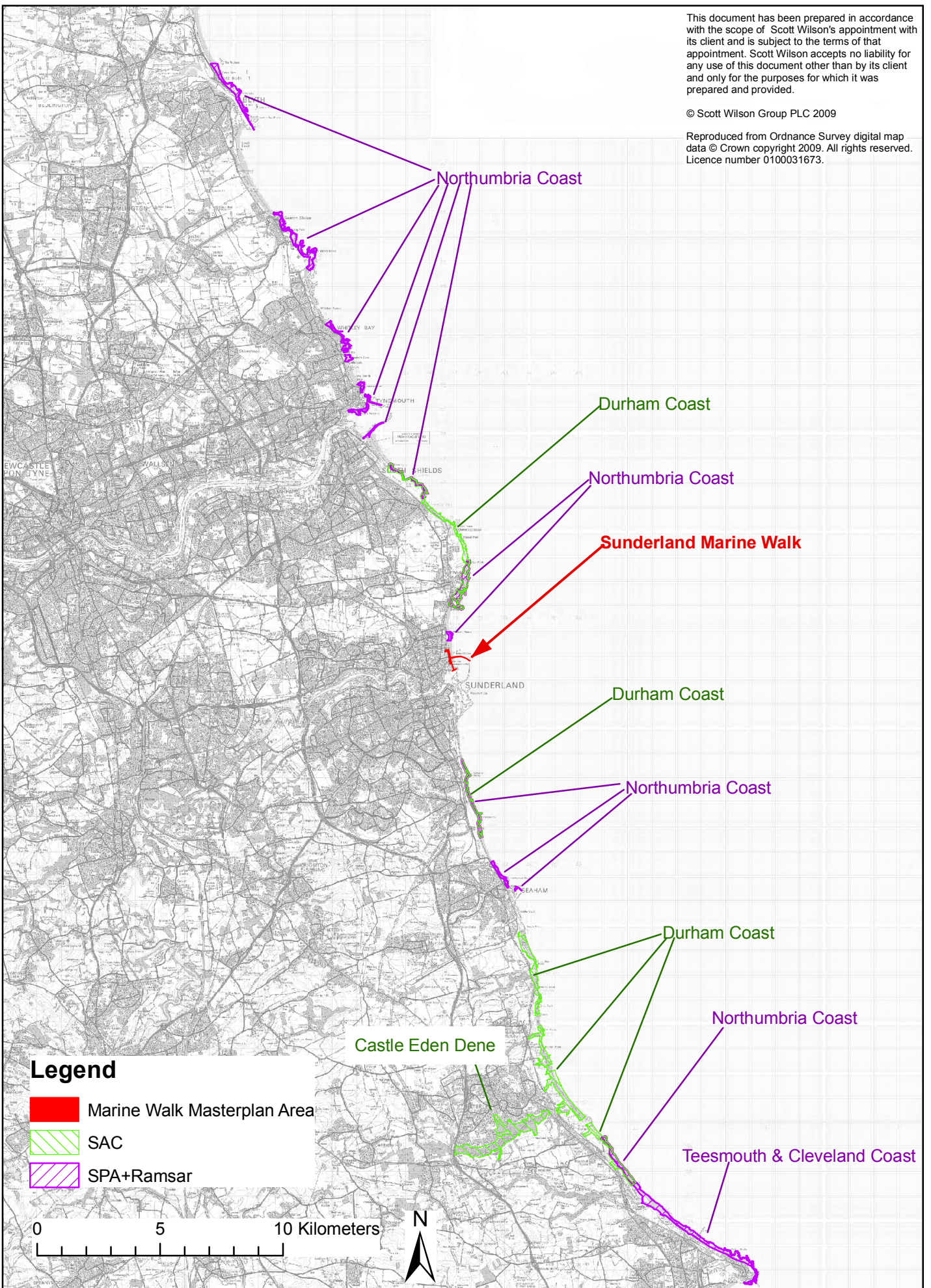


Appendix 1

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Project Title	SUNDERLAND MARINE WALK AA			FIGURE 1		
	Scale at A4: 1:200,000					
Drawing Title	EUROPEAN DESIGNATIONS IN WIDER AREA			Drw: ND	App: JS	Rev:
				Chk: JS	Date: 09.12.2009	Date:



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Appendix 2

SPD Consultation Responses

Consultation Authority	Section/Paragraph	Comments	Response/Action – Agree/Disagree
Green Party	General	Made no comments relating to the Appropriate Assessment	
Environment Agency		Lighting used as part of the Strategy implementation to ensure that issues such as fear of crime, safety and aesthetics are addressed should also consider the potential detrimental impact on wildlife and their habitats.	The impact of lighting on the notified features of interest of the Natura 2000 sites has been considered within the screening report at this stage and recommendation of mitigation measures have been proposed to reduce any impact. However, these are factors that would be considered at the detailed design stage rather than at the plan stage as it currently stands.



Consultation Authority	Section/Paragraph	Comments	Response/Action – Agree/Disagree
		<p>The potential for disturbance to these areas should form an important element of the proposals set out in the Strategy for each site.</p>	<p>Areas important to the bird species of notified interest for the Northumbria Coast SPA have been identified by obtaining bird records from the Durham Bird Club. Impacts of disturbance on feeding and roosting birds for these areas have been considered and recommendations for mitigation measures have been discussed within the report. However, these are factors that would be considered at the detailed design stage rather than at the plan stage as it currently stands.</p>
		<p>Potential for previously contaminative uses should be investigated on a site-by-site basis, and where necessary, addressed in line with the pre-cautionary approach PPS23: Planning and Pollution Control due to the sensitive location of the area within the SPA and Ramsar site.</p>	<p>Recommendations for best practice and reference to PPS23: Planning and Pollution Control is made within the screening document to ensure good site management and mitigation which would minimise the risk of detrimental impacts occurring at the detailed design stage.</p>
		<p>Reference is made to linkages between the built and natural environment where the two compliment each other. The EA recommend that potential conflicts between the built and natural environment as a result of the proposals are fully explored and addressed within the SPD.</p>	<p>It is felt that the AA screening report explores all potential impacts as a result of implementation of the masterplan</p>
		<p>The issue of potential disturbance by increased use of the beach by dog-walkers should the proposals be implemented is not addressed within the SPD.</p>	<p>It is not thought that there will be an increase in the number of dog walkers as a result of implementation of the masterplan. Disturbance is likely to increase during the summer as more people will be attracted to this area however, it is unlikely that levels of disturbance will increase during the winter months.</p>



Consultation Authority	Section/Paragraph	Comments	Response/Action – Agree/Disagree
		The Appropriate Assessment does propose a green corridor to mitigate potential conflicts between the built and natural environment, and this is an option that should be investigated fully.	Provision of a green corridor is not proposed in the Appropriate Assessment Screening report.
Natural England	General	In response to the HRA, NE recommend a bird a bird study of the area, this study should also inform pod design if any conflict is identified.	Bird data has been obtained from the Durham Bird Club. This data includes WeBS data from 2005-2007 in addition to observations reported to the bird club form 2006 to 2009 at important feeding and roosting sites along the Sunderland coast. This information has been incorporated into the report in order to assess any potential effects of disturbance on birds at the planning stage.
	6.1	NE suggest that the text for the HRA to read “the function of the Habitats Regulation Assessment is to enable the Planning Authority to ascertain that no adverse effect on the integrity of a European site will result from implementation of the plan or project” rather than “to ensure the masterplan will not negatively impact on sites of international nature conservation importance”	
	5.4 Roker Pods	We would initially expect any adverse impact of these pods as illustrated to be minimal but would recommend that detailed design, placing and use takes account of use of the area by important and protected birds. In our response to the HRA (Annex 3) we recommend a bird study of the area, this study should also inform pod design if any conflict is identified.	These are factors that would be considered at the detailed design stage rather than the plan stage as it stands currently. Clarification that this approach will be taken should be clarified in the text.

Consultation Authority	Section/Paragraph	Comments	Response/Action – Agree/Disagree
	<p>Comments on AA 1.2</p>	<p>Refers to both the Marine Walk Master Plan and the Seafront regeneration Strategy but it is not clear what the relationship is between the two documents, either here or within the two documents. NE would look to see the Assessment of the Seafront Master Plan at this stage, for consideration with the consultation draft. Each document should be recognised in the other as 'other plans and projects'</p>	<p>Paragraph will be written to explain relationship.</p>
	<p>3.2.2</p>	<p>Damage to habitats – relates to dumping and burning. The site assessments specifically refer to littering and bonfires.</p>	<p>This wording has been altered in the text.</p>
	<p>6.1 Sustainability</p>	<p>Pollution should recognise chemical and biological contamination and sediment load, which carry in longshore drift to impact on interests away from the study area. This would be particularly relevant should any alterations be made to the sea wall frontage.</p>	<p>The potential impact on the Natura 2000 sites and notified features of interest from chemical and biological contamination and sediment load has been discussed in the screening report. Consideration of these potential impacts will be considered further during the detailed design stage.</p>
		<p>Figure 1 does not show the relationship to sites south of the study area, i.e. areas which might be impacted by long shore effects.</p>	<p>Map has been amended to show full extent of areas that may be impacted by long shore effects.</p>
		<p>NE are concerned that this assessment confines consideration to the designated areas of the European sites within the study area. The assessment does not address areas of functional importance to the integrity of the sites such as any inland feeding and roosting sites used by birds. This should be recognised as Turnstones are likely to feed on amenity grasslands.</p>	<p>Information from the Durham Bird Club on feeding areas on inland sites has been incorporated into the report to highlight areas that may be important to feeding turnstones, for example.</p>

Consultation Authority	Section/Paragraph	Comments	Response/Action – Agree/Disagree
	Section 4	Plan analysis should recognise the nature of the foreshore areas as this relates to the use of the area by wintering birds, i.e. how rocky shore and sandy shores are used differentially and how these will be affected by the proposals for development and access. This is not demonstrated in the assessment of the regeneration strategy itself.	The foreshore habitat has been assessed in the screening report for its importance for feeding and roosting birds from the SPA. Records from the Durham Bid Club have been used to assess the use of the notified bird species of interest along this stretch of coastline and potential impacts at the planning stage have been considered.
	Section 5 – Table 2	Need to include projects including planning applications and granted permissions with likely significant effect., alone or in combination, on the integrity of the sites, both within and outwith the current plan area. As the screening document for assessment of the Marine Walk master plan this table should include the 'Seafront Regeneration Strategy' as a separate document.	EP to get more details.
	Table 2	Table 2 has identified a number of issues that could contribute to in combination effects however the Appropriate Assessment stage of the Habitats Regulations Assessment has not addressed all these, in particular it is not recognised that increased access in the master plan area could result in increased access to the SPA areas outwith the study area, this should be addressed and any necessary solutions embedded in the plan.	
	Significance of effects AA stage	Durham Coast, should consider any effects from release of sediments along the coast as part of construction and use of development.	Recommendations for best practice and reference to PPS23: Planning and Pollution Control is made within the screening document to ensure good site management and mitigation which would minimise the risk of detrimental impacts occurring at the detailed design stage.



Consultation Authority	Section/Paragraph	Comments	Response/Action – Agree/Disagree
	6.2.1	Avoidance of disturbance of wintering birds due to construction need not be onerous. Studies can be carried out to determine any sensitive areas where construction should be times according to sensitivity. Timing of works should also recognise impacts on any birds breeding in the area (protected under Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended, rather than subject to the Habitat Regulations) and birds for which the SSSI is notified, it is important that all aspects are integrated in establishing the masterplan and unnecessary constraints can be avoided.	Bird data has been provided by Durham Bird Club and this has been used to determine sites along the coastline that are important for feeding and roosting birds outside of the SPA. These sites are discussed in the screening report in addition to mitigation to avoid disturbance during construction work.
	6.2.2	Studies of bird use of the area before proposals are finalised and developed should be used to identify likely disturbance including use of wind power generation, lighting of the area and areas sensitive to recreational use.	It has been stated in the screening report that bird surveys are recommended at the detailed design stage and this will help to inform mitigation measures to reduce/prevent significant impacts.
		This refers to the coastal code including dog prohibition areas during the summer months, this does not resolve the issue of critical disturbance to feeding and roosting birds during autumn and winter.	It is not thought that the Marine Walk masterplan will increase the level of disturbance already experienced along marine walk during the winter months as plans are for summer month activities and this will not affect the wintering bird population. This is discussed further in the screening report. However, it has been recommended that signs are put up in the area to encourage dog owners to practice responsible dog ownership during the winter months in order to minimise any potential disturbance to over wintering birds.

Sunderland City Council

Marine Walk Masterplan SPD: Screening for appropriate assessment



Consultation Authority	Section/Paragraph	Comments	Response/Action – Agree/Disagree
	7.2	The conclusion as stated is not clear and does not show that the council has ascertained that this SPD will not result in a n adverse effect on the integrity of a European Site. Until this is established the SPD cannot be adopted.	The information from the Durham Bird Club has been incorporated into the report and this has allowed the site to be assessed for its importance for over wintering birds. It is felt that at this stage there is adequate data to allow conclusions to be drawn for potential impacts at the planning stage.

Sunderland City Council
Marine Walk Masterplan and SPD
Scoping for an Appropriate Assessment
Comments from Natural England December 2009

1.1.5

I am concerned that the process is not correctly described. Please refer to: '**Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC**'

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/art6/natura_2000_assess_en.pdf ie :

Stage 1 - *Screening* both identifies if there is likely to be an impact on the site, and the determination if any likely effect, alone or in combination with other plans and projects, will be significant, and thus a Likely Significant Effect (LSE). [If no LSE are identified there is no need to progress to stage 2 but a reasoned and justified report of stage 1 must be completed to demonstrate how the Authority is able to ascertain no adverse effect on integrity of a European site.]

Stage 2 – *Appropriate Assessment* considers the impact (LSE) on the integrity of any European site, with regard to its conservation objectives. Where adverse effects are recognised mitigation is assessed.

Stage 3 - *Assessment of alternative solutions*

As the process with regard to LDF documents may not proceed to stage 2 it avoids confusion to refer to the process as Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) rather than AA which is only one stage of the process.

Table 1

Apologies if Conservation Objectives for Durham Coast have not been provided previously I have copied the exiting document as Annex 1.

4.2.4 Welcome the recognition to determine if contaminated sediments might be released from development of the plan area and how this may be carried by longshore drift. If this is likely the AAP must ensure that contaminated sediments are contained.

5 Consideration of "in combination" effects should recognise other plans likely to affect the integrity of the identified European sites (not just within or close to the current plan area) and should thus consider plans and projects in Northumberland, Tyne and Wear, Durham and Tees Valley. To this end it is valuable to look at HRA screening / reports for plans and projects in these areas and consider the LSEs identified which could contribute to an 'in combination' effect.

6.2

Should also address access to the foreshore from the master plan area resulting in access to and thus disturbance of SPA species along the coast. How far people travel along the foreshore from point of access should be considered recognising that access with dogs along the coast can be particularly significant in disturbing birds feeding and roosting in winter. It is not clear in 6.2.2 if it is intended or recommended to exclude dogs from sensitive areas in winter, keeping dogs on leads may not prevent disturbance.

That existing levels of dog walking keep feeding or roosting numbers low should be addressed if possible to secure feeding and roosting areas for these important species, rather than cited as a reason why the area is not of importance.

Some clarification may be useful here. It is not relevant to directly compare the numbers of turnstone and purple sandpiper using the area as the population sizes in the UK and Europe are distinct; this is indicated in the SPA qualification reasons :

“Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*, 763 individuals representing at least 1.5% of the wintering Eastern Atlantic - wintering population (5 year peak mean 1991/2 - 1995/6)

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*, 1,456 individuals representing at least 2.1% of the wintering Western Palearctic - wintering population (5 year peak mean 1991/2 - 1995/6)”

Population numbers also vary with time, with tide, across the season and from year to year. Ranking by absolute numbers is not necessarily appropriate and the report does not explain the relevance of including this information.

The report goes on to state that the birds at Marine Walk Roker do not comprise a significant proportion of the numbers found in the SPA, It must be clear that this does not mean they can be disregarded as many areas within the SPA may support similar numbers and ‘in combination’ contribute to the significance and integrity of the European site.

7 summary recommends that mitigation measures are implemented. These should be set out and embedded in the AAP to secure delivery before the Authority can ascertain no adverse effect on the integrity of the European sites will result.

8 Conclusions and Appropriate Assessment

Where LSE have been identified the Appropriate Assessment (stage 2) should be carried out in advance of summary and conclusions and provide more detailed assessment of relevant issues. The conclusion suggest the creation of new areas of suitable habitat, the feasibility of this is not addressed and, if it is possible, such measures must be in place before any development commences and should be secured in the Masterplan. These issues should be addressed more fully in an earlier Appropriate Assessment stage rather than introduced in the closing paragraphs of the Report.

8.2 concludes that no significant impacts are likely to result. This does not concur with the need for mitigation identified in 7 Summary, when as commented above the mitigation has not been set out and embedded in the Masterplan.

This opinion is based on the information provided by you, and for the avoidance of doubt does not affect our obligation to advise on, and potentially object to any specific development proposal which may subsequently arise from this or later versions of the plan or programme which is the subject of this consultation, and which may despite SA/SEA and HRA have adverse effects on the environment.

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Marine Walk Masterplan



Marine Walk Masterplan

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Introduction



1.0 Introduction

1.1 Approach

The purpose of the Marine Walk Masterplan is to support and supplement the requirements of the Unitary Development Plan 1998 (UDP) policies NA26 (Coastal and Seafront Zone), EC8 and EC9 (Tourist Facilities). It is intended to provide additional guidance setting out the key parameters and development principles, which are necessary and appropriate in order to achieve the proper planning and redevelopment of Marine Walk.

The UDP is the adopted Development Plan that guides new development and decisions on planning applications in the city under the Town and Country Planning Act (1990). The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) brought major changes to the planning system including the replacement of UDP's with a series of documents collectively called a Local Development Framework (LDF).

The Marine Walk Masterplan is a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), forming part of Sunderland City Council's Local Development Framework. As such the document has been taken forward through the statutory planning process in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 (as amended). In addition under the requirements of the European Directive 2001/42/EC a Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment have been prepared alongside the SPD. Both documents are available at www.sunderland.gov.uk/seafront. Both the Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment have been subject to a 6 week consultation process in conjunction with the masterplan.

The Marine Walk Masterplan SPD is a material consideration when determining planning applications in this area.

The masterplan is the first in a suite of detailed documents developed to deliver the Seafront Regeneration Strategy. The strategy provides a strategic platform to guide the regeneration of Roker and Seaburn seafront and deliver the objective set out in the Sunderland Strategy (2008-2025) the overarching strategy for the city which states that: 'by 2025 Roker and Seaburn will have a key role in providing cultural tourism attractions.'

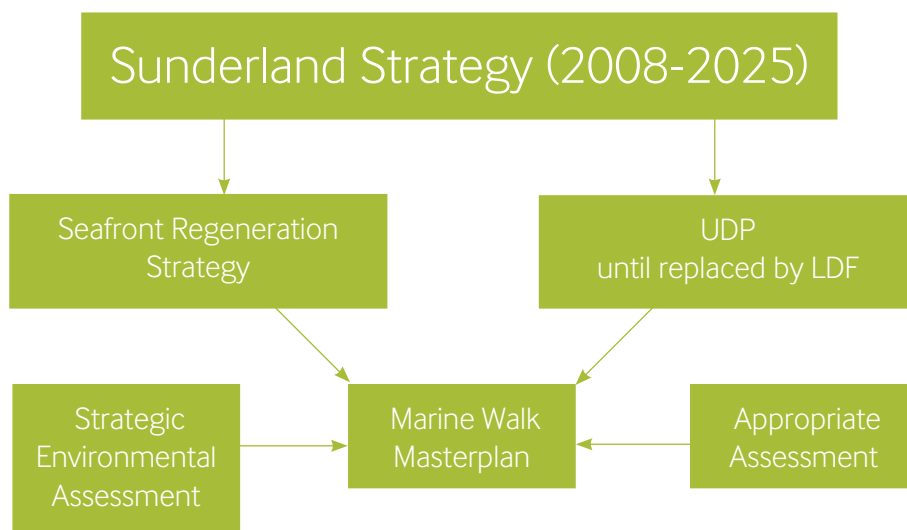


Figure 1. Relationship between Masterplan and other documents

Scope of the masterplan

The remainder of this masterplan sets out:

- a description of the site and its importance (Section 1)
- the site context including the historical, physical, social and policy context. (Section 2)
- an analysis of the site including land use, movement and public consultation findings (Section 3)
- a summary of the constraints and opportunities of the site (Section 4)
- proposals including the development principles and parameters which will ensure the proper planning and comprehensive redevelopment of Marine Walk (Section 5)



Roker pier and lighthouse



1.2 Location of the study area

Marine Walk (Roker's lower promenade) is located in St Peter's ward in Sunderland's North Area. Much of it lies within Roker Park Conservation Area and it has strong linkages to Sunderland city centre by road, pedestrian and cycle routes via Wearmouth Bridge.

To the north, Roker is well connected to Seaburn and South Tyneside's coast via

the A183 but the River Wear separates Roker from Sunderland's port and coast to the south.

The extent of the study area for this masterplan is shown in figure 3. The study area extends north along the lower promenade from the Old North Pier to the mouth of Roker Park, and includes the Grade II Listed Roker pier and lighthouse and grassed banks linking the area to Roker Terrace.



Figure 2. Regional Location Plan



Figure 3. Marine Walk Masterplan Boundary

1.3 Importance of the seafront to the city

Sunderland seafront at Roker and Seaburn (hereafter referred to as the seafront) is fundamental to the delivery of the strategic policies of the council and its regeneration partners.

The Sunderland Strategy (2008 – 2025) provides a framework for the Sunderland Partnership, working together to improve quality of life in Sunderland by 2025. It states by 2025 the seafront will have a key role in providing cultural and tourism attractions, creating an attractive, accessible and desirable destination. The

Sunderland Image Strategy emphasises the role the seafront has to play in promoting Sunderland as a liveable city which offers a high quality of life. Nurturing the seafront’s natural beauty and heritage to create an attractive, accessible and desirable destination will be key to attracting visitors and residents to the city as a whole.

In 2002 the council and its regeneration partners (One North East and English Partnerships now the Homes and Communities Agency) set up an urban regeneration company (Sunderland arc) to guide and deliver the physical regeneration of large areas of the River

Wear corridor. The river corridor is seen by Sunderland arc as a key asset of the city, and riverside sites are at the centre of the arc’s regeneration strategy. Having an attractive seafront with a variety of leisure opportunities in close proximity to the city centre is a unique selling point, which will aid Sunderland arc in delivering its key projects by attracting new residents and businesses to the city. As these long term projects develop, links along the river corridor to the seafront will be enhanced further if the proposed pedestrian bridges across the river connecting Vaux to Stadium Village and St Peter’s to Pann’s Bank are delivered.

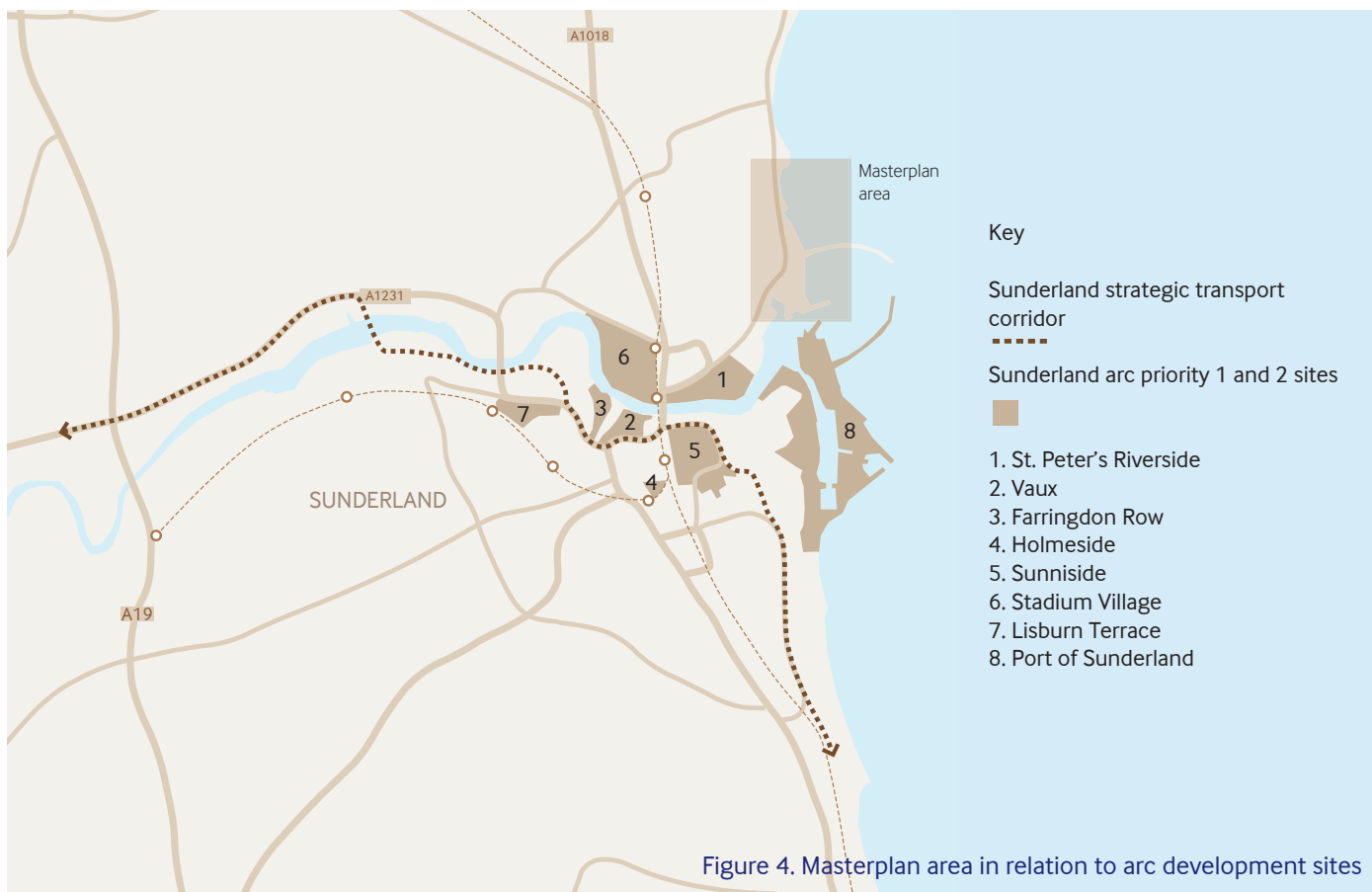


Figure 4. Masterplan area in relation to arc development sites

National Glass Centre



1.4 Importance of the seafront to the region's heritage

As the North East England Tourism Strategy (2005-2010) highlights, the region's beautiful coast and rich heritage is key to attracting domestic visitors to the area. Roker seafront offers both of these attractions, containing a Conservation Area, Registered Historic Park and several structures of note including a Grade II Listed pier and lighthouse, all located on a striking stretch of coastline with beautiful natural assets. Roker seafront makes an important contribution to the region's heritage and tourism offer.

emphasises the importance of enhancing the link between St Peter's and the sea. Physically, the candidate World Heritage Site is linked to the seafront via a 1km riverside footpath, incorporating St Peter's sculpture trail which is a popular environment for pedestrians and cyclists. From this route it is possible to follow Bede's Way cycle route and footpath – connecting St Peter's to St Paul's in Jarrow – which runs along Roker and Seaburn seafront.

The seafront is within close proximity to some of the region's main heritage attractions, including Penshaw Monument and Arbeia Roman Fort as shown on Figure 4. The seafront has particularly strong physical and historical linkages with St Peter's church and former monastic site (dating from 674AD). St Peter's church together with St Paul's in Jarrow forms the twin Anglo-Saxon monastery of Wearmouth-Jarrow, the UK's nomination for UNESCO World Heritage Site status in 2011. The seafront is integral to the vision for the development of the candidate World Heritage Site. Sunderland and South Tyneside Councils are working jointly to deliver the Landscape Vision for Wearmouth-Jarrow (2008) which

St Peter's Church and former monastic site



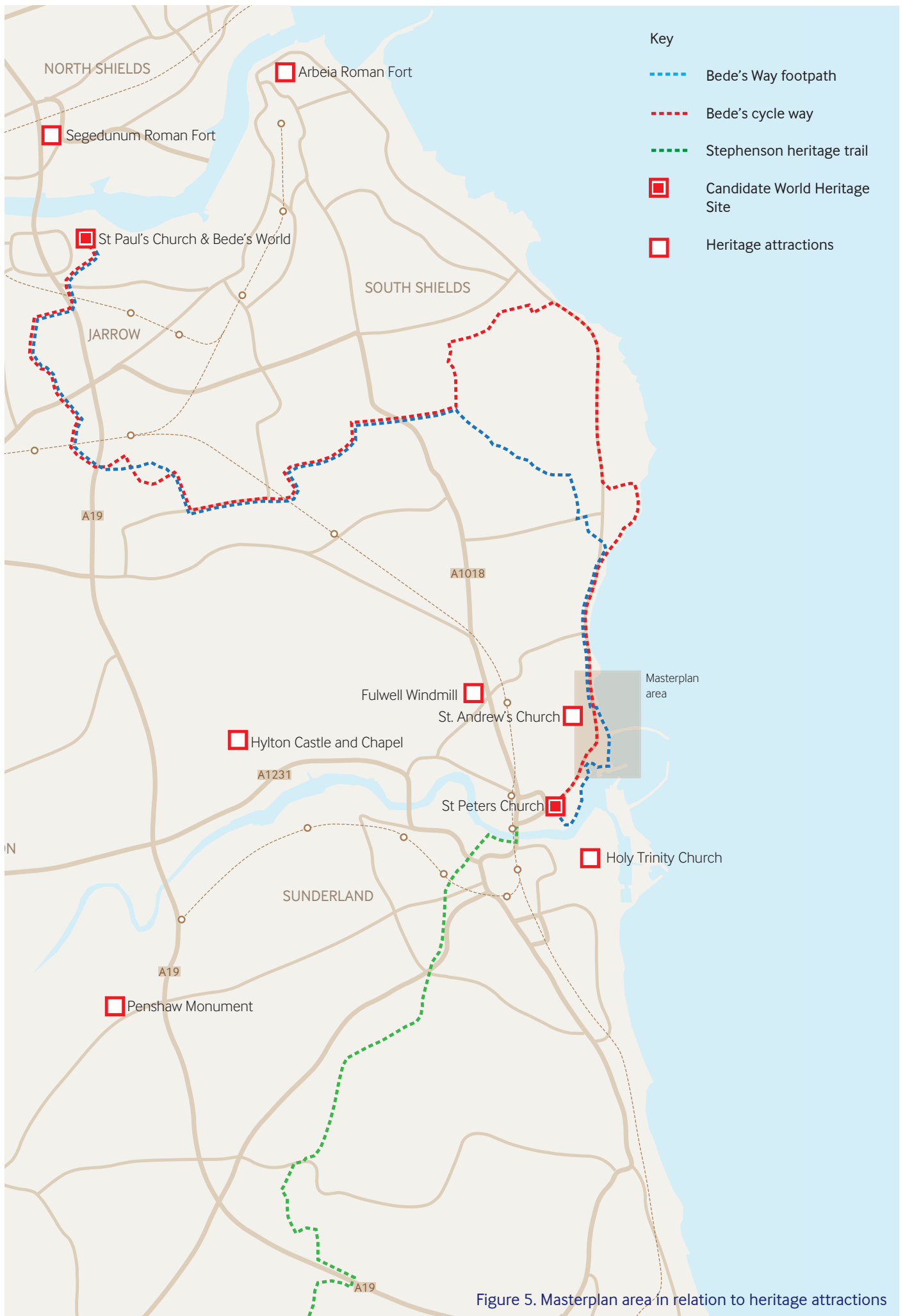


Figure 5. Masterplan area in relation to heritage attractions

1.5 Importance of the seafront to the region's other cultural attractions

The value of coastal tourism to the North East is estimated to be between £400 million and £450 million, equivalent to over one fifth of the value of tourism to the region as a whole. The Regional Spatial Strategy, Regional Economic Strategy and Regional Cultural Strategy all acknowledge the seafront's role in promoting a positive image of the North East to attract visitors and investors to the region. As shown in the previous section Roker has strong physical links to the region's heritage attractions. Figure 6 highlights the strong physical links between the seafront and the region's other cultural attractions both within Sunderland and the surrounding area. The seafront is linked via St Peter's Artwork Trail to one of Sunderland's main cultural attractions, the National Glass Centre, a centre of national excellence supporting the production, exploration and enjoyment of contemporary glass.

Sunderland is committed to its role in the Area Tourism Partnership (ATP), Tourism Tyne and Wear, which aims to ensure visitors enjoy the best possible experience when they visit the North East, and that destinations within Tyne and Wear are promoted effectively and attract day and overnight visitors. Sunderland is working with the ATP to develop the seafront as an attraction which offers a contrast to neighbouring resorts. Roker seafront promotes its heritage offer and attractive natural environment which complements the more family entertainment focus at neighbouring resort South Shields.

Future projects of the ATP include the Tyne and Wear Legibility Project which will seek to improve connections within the region further. Sunderland seafront is already well connected to South Shields seafront in South Tyneside – the coastal road and cycle route connecting the two destinations offers impressive views of the North East coast making it a popular route for both drivers and cyclists. This coastal route receives the most use during the Pier to Pier run, a 7 mile run between South Shields Pier and Roker Pier which takes place every May. Sunderland City Council and South Tyneside Council are working jointly to deliver the Legibility Project to further enhance links between the two resorts and provide a complementary tourism offer.

Empire Theatre



Winter Gardens



National Glass Centre artwork





Figure 6. Masterplan area in relation to regional Cultural Tourist Attractions

1.6 Complementary projects

Marine Walk is set within an area which has been transformed by considerable investment in recent years. The delivery of this masterplan will complement key regeneration projects including:

- The preparation of a Regeneration Strategy for the seafront (Roker and Seaburn) to ensure a co-ordinated approach to its regeneration.
- St Peter's Riverside, one of the flagship projects of the former Tyne and Wear Development Corporation (TWDC). The project included extending North Dock, originally constructed by Brunel in 1837, to provide a modern marina incorporating a marine activities centre and residential development.
- TWDC enhanced links between the marina and Wearmouth Bridge with the development of St Peter's riverside sculpture trail in 1997. Artists collaborated with the local community to create a trail influenced by the area's social and cultural heritage. The trail is being refurbished in 2009.
- Improvements to the end section of the St Peter's Sculpture Trail along the Sea to Sea (c2c) cycle route, a 140 mile cycle route from the Cumbrian coast, has been completed in 2009. A quarter of a million pounds was secured from One North East and Sunderland City Council to install new waymarkers and artworks along the final mile of the route. Key pieces on this trail include the sculpture 'Second Sun' and the end piece 'C' a large granite monolith, which frames the view of Roker Lighthouse and creates an end point for cyclists as they finish this challenging and exciting journey.
- The investment of £200,000 of the government's Play Pathfinder funding in the redevelopment of Roker Play Park, which uses maritime heritage and coastal geology themes to provide unique and innovative play opportunities. Since opening in 2009 the refurbished play park is proving a popular attraction, drawing families to the park and seafront.
- Sunderland City Council, Sunderland arc and Sunderland University are working jointly to develop and deliver the regeneration of St Peter's Riverside which includes the candidate World Heritage Site (cWHS). Preliminary work has begun on a planning framework which will ensure new development is carefully balanced with the need to protect and enhance the cWHS, and its buffer zone.

Sunderland Marina



'Talking Flight' St. Peter's Riverside Sculpture Trail



1.7 Project background

In recent years there has been an acknowledgement by the Government and advisory bodies such as English Heritage that the decline of the tourism industry and the rise of cheap foreign travel has created deep-seated economic and social problems for coastal resorts. In 2001 the English Tourism

St Peter's Riverside Sculpture Trail



Red Arrows flying over lighthouse on Roker Cliff



Council first drew attention to the neglect of seaside resorts, despite the enormous contribution they have made to the cultural identity of England. In light of this, the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) and English Heritage published the report 'Shifting Sands' focusing on the need to regenerate seaside resorts with high quality buildings and public spaces.

Sunderland seafront like many coastal resorts saw a decline in its tourism industry in the 1960s. Despite this the seafront remains a much loved and used asset for local residents and visitors. Sunderland City Council's 2007 Community Spirit Summer Survey collected opinions from a cross-section of Sunderland residents. The survey found the seafront to be the most visited and most important green space in the city, with 94% of respondents stating it was important to their quality of life. The seafront was also identified as the second green space in the city most in need of improvement, after Barnes Park.

The wishes of the community to see improvements at the seafront and the increasing acknowledgement of issues faced by coastal resorts led to the decision by the council to establish a Seafront Project Group comprising council officers and a Seafront Members' Steering Group comprising elected Councillors to drive forward the regeneration of the seafront. The need for an overarching regeneration strategy to guide the regeneration of the seafront and detailed masterplans for Marine Walk and Seaburn was identified. To inform the development of these documents a city-wide public consultation was undertaken between 16 February and 3 April 2009 to find out what the people who live in, work in and visit Sunderland feel should be the vision for the future of the seafront. People were asked whether the vision should be a seafront to go to for a quiet walk, family fun, watersports, great events or any

other suggestions they had. Almost 2,700 people participated in the consultation. This is one of the highest response rates the council has ever received. A summary of the consultation findings is included in the analysis section of this masterplan.

The results of the consultation informed the development of the vision for the future of Marine Walk, and the following regeneration objectives:

The vision:

'Building on its unique natural environment and rich heritage, the seafront at Roker will be an attractive, safe, clean and accessible destination for all residents and visitors, of which the people of Sunderland can be proud. It will be a welcoming place to enjoy all year round, offering activities and events for everyone and supporting Sunderland's aspiration to be the UK's most liveable city.'

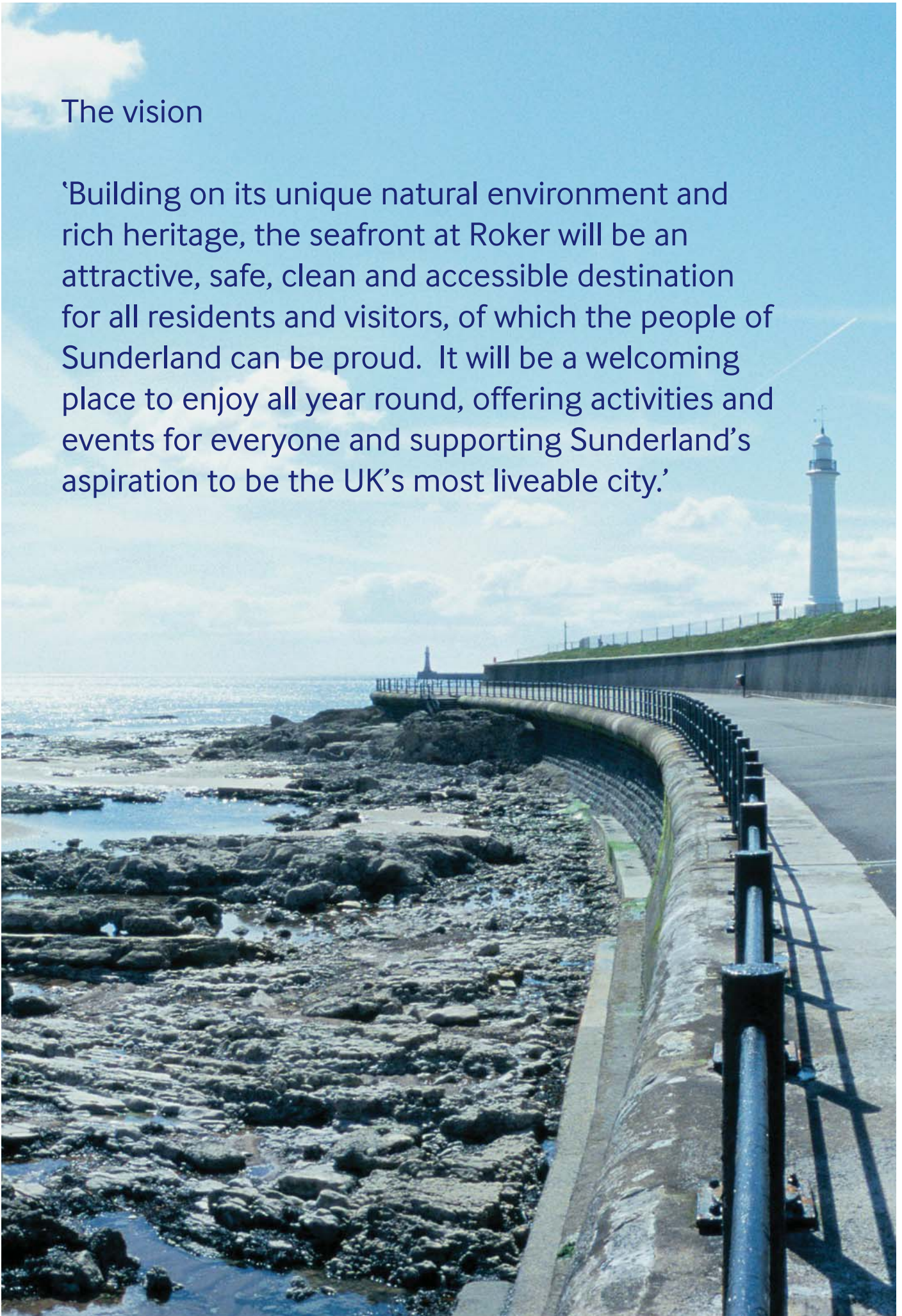
Regeneration objectives:

1. To develop a sense of place and pride by building on, protecting and enhancing the area's rich heritage and attractive natural environment
2. To create an attractive environment where both residents and visitors can relax
3. To create a family friendly area which is safe and clean
4. To provide high quality public amenities
5. To offer high quality and affordable activities and cultural events throughout the year
6. To create an area which is physically and intellectually accessible
7. To maximise the impact and improve the economic vibrancy of the area

Following the public consultation a multi-disciplinary design team comprising landscape architects, planning officers and artists was established to develop a masterplan which would deliver the vision and objectives for the area.

The vision

‘Building on its unique natural environment and rich heritage, the seafront at Roker will be an attractive, safe, clean and accessible destination for all residents and visitors, of which the people of Sunderland can be proud. It will be a welcoming place to enjoy all year round, offering activities and events for everyone and supporting Sunderland’s aspiration to be the UK’s most liveable city.’



Context



2.0 Context

2.1 History and culture

Roker and its surrounding environs are steeped in history and local culture, both from geological and built heritage perspectives, and in terms of the traditions and activities associated with its function as a coastal resort.

Although there are no designated archaeological sites within the study area, prehistoric and Roman objects have been recovered from the beach, including roman coins and an antler harpoon.

The area's geology dates back some 238 million years to when the famous 'cannonball' rocks first started forming in the sea bed when tropical seas lapped upon the shores. The most imposing part of Roker Cliffs, known as Holey Rock, was famous for resembling an elephant and is a well-remembered landmark. Its name derives from the numerous caves and passageways that honeycombed this section of Roker Cliffs to create a natural beauty spot that was especially popular with children who saw it as something of an adventure playground. Unfortunately, much of Holey Rock was demolished in 1936 due to concerns over the stability of the structure and the consequent safety fears.

Roker Ravine and road bridge (c1920)



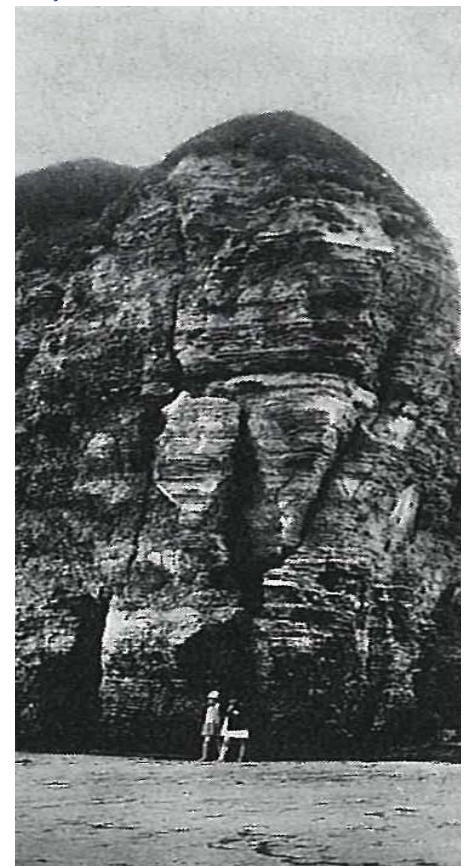
Nestling within the cliffs in the ravine to Roker Park are a series of caves. The largest is known as Spottee's Cave after a French vagrant sailor who supposedly lived in the cave in the eighteenth century. Legend has it that Spottee lured ships on to the rocks at Roker by lighting fires and fooling sailors into believing they were heading towards Harbour lights, then looting the wrecked vessels.

The cave is reputed to extend hundreds of metres along a system of underground tunnels (legend has it) all the way to St Peter's Church and Wearmouth Monastery – the candidate World Heritage Site that is of outstanding universal cultural and heritage value – and even possibly to Hylton Castle. It is rumoured that the tunnels were used by fishermen, keelmen and bargemen to smuggle illegal goods ashore in the 17th and 18th Centuries;

Archaeologists also suspect the cave may have attracted prehistoric settlers as it would have been an attractive habitat for hunter-gather groups, providing shelter, abundant local water and benefiting from a broad spectrum of maritime resources to fill shortages left when meat was not plentiful. Archaeological investigations are on-going to try and find evidence of any prehistoric settlement in the cave system.

The earliest recorded built development took place at Roker in the 1840s when Roker Terrace was built on the cliff tops. The area only began to develop after the opening of Roker Park in 1880 when Sir Hedworth Williamson and the Church Commissioners donated land for the development of a park on the condition the Sunderland corporation build the road bridge to span Roker Ravine.

Holey Rock (c1920)



Roker pier (c1903)



By 1885 the construction of the lower promenade (now known as Marine Walk) and Roker Pier along the line of a natural rocky outcrop had commenced, undertaken by Sunderland Corporation as an employment creation scheme during the recession of 1885-6. The Pier was completed 18 years later in 1903 and was acclaimed an engineering wonder. The huge crane used to construct the Pier was a feature of Roker seafront for nearly two decades and is still well remembered.

Around the turn of the 20th century development intensified considerably as Roker grew in popularity. By 1907 Roker had become a thriving seaside resort. The promenade and sands were an obvious attraction and were often crowded with visitors. Roker Spa Hotel, designed by John Dobson in 1842, also drew many visitors to the seafront.

Bedes Cross under construction (1904)



Another key feature, the Bede Memorial, a beautifully sculptured cross dedicated to Sunderland's most famous son, the Venerable Bede, was erected in a prominent position on top of Roker Cliffs in 1904. The cross is placed along the path of Bede's Way, the route along the seafronts of Roker and Seaburn that 7th century pilgrims walked between the twin Monkwearmouth and Jarrow Anglo-Saxon Monastic Sites. These sites of immense cultural and heritage significance, are intrinsically linked to the seafront.

Roker Park, which had also been laid out by the Corporation in the 1880s, provided an important and distinctive link with the promenade, not just with regard to its physical attractiveness but also in terms of the linkages created to offer a range of activities and attractions to visitors, with the daily bandstand shows, bowling greens and boating lake complementing the attractions of the lower promenade.

In its heyday the lower promenade was an arena for cultural and leisure activities including various forms of entertainment, such as the Holey Rock Dance and Tea Gardens and the Jumbles Pierrot Troupe. The promenade was often covered in tents and stalls and crowded with visitors who enjoyed the various shows, beach cafes, ice cream parlours, children's rides and miniature railway, all of which made the promenade a focus of local culture.

Roker Hotel (c1920)



Holey Rock Corner (c1904)



During this period of popularity the twin resorts of Roker and Seaburn became known as 'the playground of the people', highlighting the importance of the seafront to the city's people and their cultural history.

Roker is also renowned for its marine heritage. The former Volunteer Life Brigade Watch Tower and Rocket House, built circa 1905, are prominently located on the upper promenade. The former is now a museum dedicated to the history of the Volunteer Life Brigade and their heroics in saving over 700 lives from the dozens of ships that were grounded off the Roker-Seaburn coastline in the late 19th and first half of the 20th century. On Marine Walk, the Sunderland Lifeboat Station and the recently built Marine Adventure Centre continue the area's marine tradition.

Roker remained a holiday resort well into the 1960s but by then growing prosperity and mobility had given holidaymakers wider choice. Roker now tends to attract day trippers rather than long stay holiday visitors. Traditional seaside uses such as hotels are increasingly under threat from developers wishing to take advantage of the location for residential development.

The characteristic timber framed structures that lined the lower promenade are long gone and have been replaced by poor forms of modern development that detract from its unique and distinctive natural and built assets. The promenade, whilst still busy in the summer months with beach users, no longer acts as a focus for cultural activities in the manner in which it was historically utilised. The return of the Sunderland Illuminations in the late 1980s briefly drew masses of visitors back to the resorts of Roker and Seaburn, but this was relatively short-lived.

During the 1990s the land around the 'listed' North Dock (designed by world famous engineer Isambard Kingdom Brunel and built 1834-8) was transformed by the Tyne and Wear Development Corporation and North Haven Developments to provide a marina, riverside housing and St Peter's riverside sculpture trail. The land that

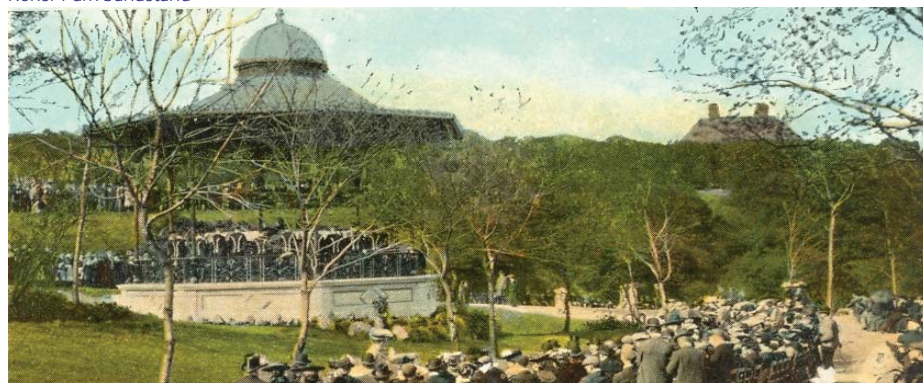
was excavated to form the North Dock in the 1830s was used to construct the grassed embankment between the upper and lower promenades on Roker seafront. The artworks for the sculpture trail are informed by the history and culture of the area and provide the local community with a strong sense of ownership.

In 1995 Roker Park Conservation Area was declared in recognition of its architectural and historic interest. The Conservation Area is centred upon Roker Park, a registered Historic Park and Garden, that opens out on to the lower promenade, and includes the Ravine and part of the lower promenade at Marine Walk. The Conservation Area displays many fine examples of Victorian and Edwardian architecture and includes the historic seafront properties of Roker Terrace. The Conservation Area was extended in 2007 to encompass the majority of the promenade, Roker pier and lighthouse whilst also incorporating buildings of importance to the marine heritage of Roker and the city, such as the Volunteer Life Brigade Museum. The Conservation Area includes several individual structures of note within the Masterplan area, such as the Grade II Listed pier and lighthouse, and Roker Bridge which spans the ravine that links Roker Park to the lower promenade and beach.

Lower promenade (1920)



Roker Park bandstand



2.2 Physical context

The Marine Walk Masterplan area has a unique environment of considerable heritage, geological and ecological value. The area contains and is set within a variety of distinctive and hugely impressive natural and built assets that combine to create an environment quite unlike any other stretch of the North East coastline. Such assets range from the naturally formed features of Roker beach, cliffs and ravine, to the planned Victorian 'Roker Park' and other man-made structures such as the road bridge spanning the ravine and the 'Listed' Roker pier and lighthouse. These assets are identified in figure 7.

In ecological terms Parson's Rocks to the north of the study area forms part of the Northumbria Coast Special Protection Area (SPA), and have been designated as a Ramsar site under the European Convention of Wetlands of International Importance, reflecting their importance as a bird habitat for wintering Turnstone, wintering Purple Sandpiper and breeding Little Tern. The individual areas that make up the Northumbria Coast SPA are also designated as sites of special scientific interest (SSSI) notified for habitat, bird and geological interest.

The area's geology is hugely significant dating back some 238 million years. Roker cliffs create a dramatic end point to the lower promenade providing shelter and interest. The rock face of the cliff is magnesian limestone and features the rare 'cannonball' rock formations. At first glance the rocks look man-made, like odd-shaped cannonballs stuck together, but are actually unusual carboniferous limestone rocks of very hard, large spherical concretions, preserved for millions of years. In recognition of this the cliff has been classified as a Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI).

The ravine that cuts through the cliffs and links Marine Walk with Roker Park is a place of natural beauty and drama with its steep rock sides providing a strong feeling of enclosure and the series of caves provide a sense of mystery and excitement. The sides of the ravine are made up of a pale soft stone called Roker Dolomite, deposited some 238 million years ago when the area was under the shallow waters of the Zechstein Sea. The ravine was formed 10,000 years ago, at the end of the last ice age, when glacial streams cut down through the weakest part of the rock to the sea.

The imposing sandstone road bridge and timber footbridge that span the ravine add to its sense of enclosure and drama. The footbridge is notable for being the first creosoted bridge in the world, reinforcing the uniqueness and distinctiveness of the area's built and natural environment.

Cannonball rock formations



Roker Park ravine



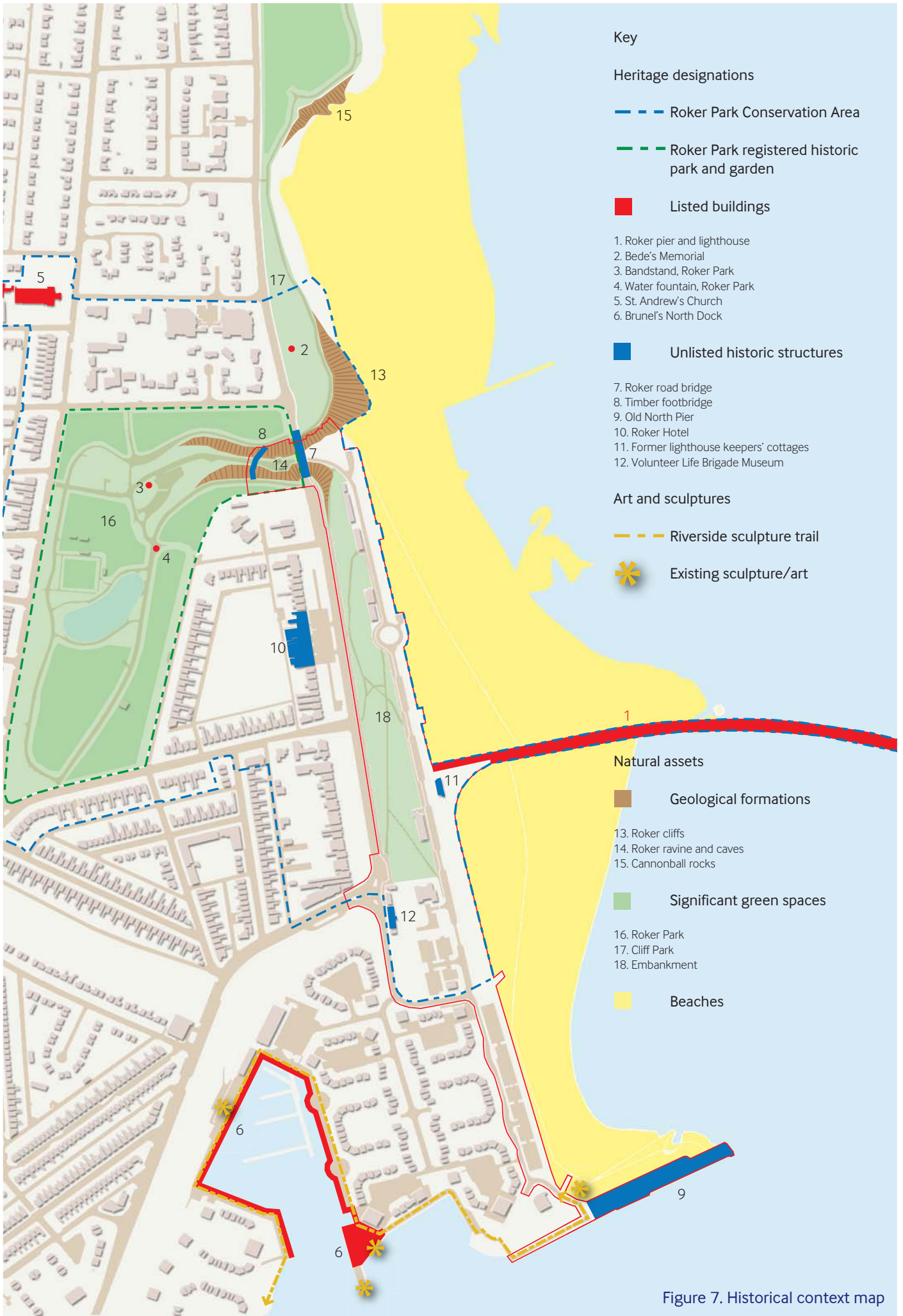


Figure 7. Historical context map

The Ravine leads to Roker Park, which is of considerable interest in itself, being registered as a historic park and garden. The park is easily accessible from the beach and promenade through the ravine and provides a pleasant backdrop to the study area. The park's attractive lush green environment contrasts with yet complements the harsh ruggedness of the cliffs and ravine and the fine golden sands of Roker beach.

Roker pier is another imposing man made structure, a key landmark that frames the natural environment of Roker and facilitates excellent panoramic views of the beach and cliffs. The pier provides a continuity of built form with the lower promenade along Marine Walk, having been constructed at the same time as part of a co-ordinated building programme. At the south end of Marine Walk the old north pier, whilst nowhere near as imposing as Roker pier, provides a definite edge or 'book end' to the masterplan area.

Looking back from Roker pier the steep embankment acts as a green wedge between the lower and upper promenades. Roker Terrace sits on top of the upper promenade, providing an attractive historic background to the masterplan area. Views from the sea and Roker pier reveal an expansive townscape of characteristic Victorian seafront properties of varied building styles and heights that are unified by a consistency of materials and boundary walls.

Traditional seaside uses in Roker Terrace, such as hotels and guest houses, have declined over the last few decades and the area has become increasingly attractive to developers seeking to capitalise on the seafront location for residential developments. This has facilitated the repair and restoration of numerous historic properties for conversion into apartments, enhancing the area's townscape in the process.

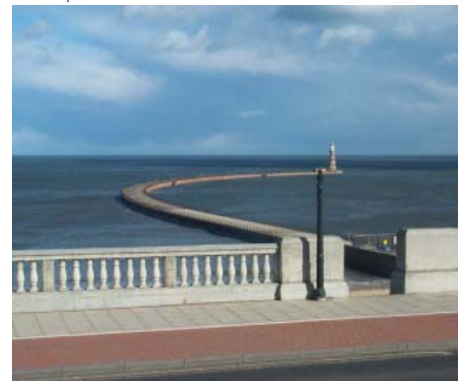
The townscape of the lower promenade (Marine Walk) is less characteristic. The original timber-framed buildings that characterised the historic promenade are long gone and the area now contains a mismatch of unsightly modern buildings and structures. Some historic buildings remain, such as the former Roker lighthouse keepers' cottages, and the recent development of Adventure Sunderland has provided a distinctive, high-quality modern building on Marine Walk that should set the standard for future development.

In summary, it is the complementary relationships between the built and natural assets of Roker – the upper and lower promenade, the beach and grassed embankment, the cliffs, ravine and the road bridge – that give it such a diverse, distinctive and unique character and make Roker one of the most striking and attractive natural environments in Sunderland and in its wider context along the North Eastern coastline.

Roker beach



Roker pier



2.3 Social context

The seafront has a reputation for successfully hosting cultural and sporting events dating back to the 1900s. The seafront's modern events calendar began in the 1980s when the council introduced the Sunderland Illuminations and the Sunderland International Airshow. The illuminations took place each autumn and consisted of spectacular light displays centred around Roker Park and along the length of Roker Terrace and Whitburn Road. The International Airshow is now the largest free airshow in Europe, and in 2007 the event won a gold Enjoy England Award for Best Tourism Experience of the Year.

Marine Walk plays an important role in the seafront's popular cultural events calendar. In 2005, as part of the International Festival of River and Seas, Sunderland hosted a free arts and music festival at the seafront. The festival included live music, dancers and artwork referencing the seafront's heritage, all focused at Marine Walk. More recent additions to the seafront's events calendar include heritage open days, historic re-enactments by the Heritage and Maritime Society, sailing championships, Sunderland Live music festival and the Great Women's Run – which in 2009 became the Great North 10k Run – attracting elite runners from all over the world as well as local enthusiasts. During the summer there is a regular programme of family orientated events at Marine Walk including story telling, magic workshops and promenade games.

International Airshow



Punch and Judy show



Festival of rivers and the sea



2.4 Policy context and status

The regeneration of Sunderland's seafront sits within the context of local, regional and national policy. Figure 7 illustrates how the Marine Walk Masterplan strategically fits within the policies of the council, partner organisations, the Regional Development Agency One North East (ONE) and Government Office for the North East (GONE). To summarise, the policy context emphasises the role the seafront has to play in enhancing both

the image and offer of Sunderland city and the wider region, through tourism and culture led-regeneration which builds on the seafront's heritage, cultural events calendar, and attractive natural environment. A Seafront Regeneration Strategy has been developed to ensure development at the seafront is cohesive and joined up. The Marine Walk Masterplan is the first stage in delivering this strategy and realising the culture-led regeneration of Sunderland seafront.

It is proposed the Marine Walk Masterplan is taken forward as a Supplementary Planning Document to Unitary Development Plan policies NA26 (Coastal and Seafront Zone), EC8 (Tourist Facilities) and EC9 (Tourist Facilities). These policies and an overview of the national, regional and local policy context are set out in annex 1.

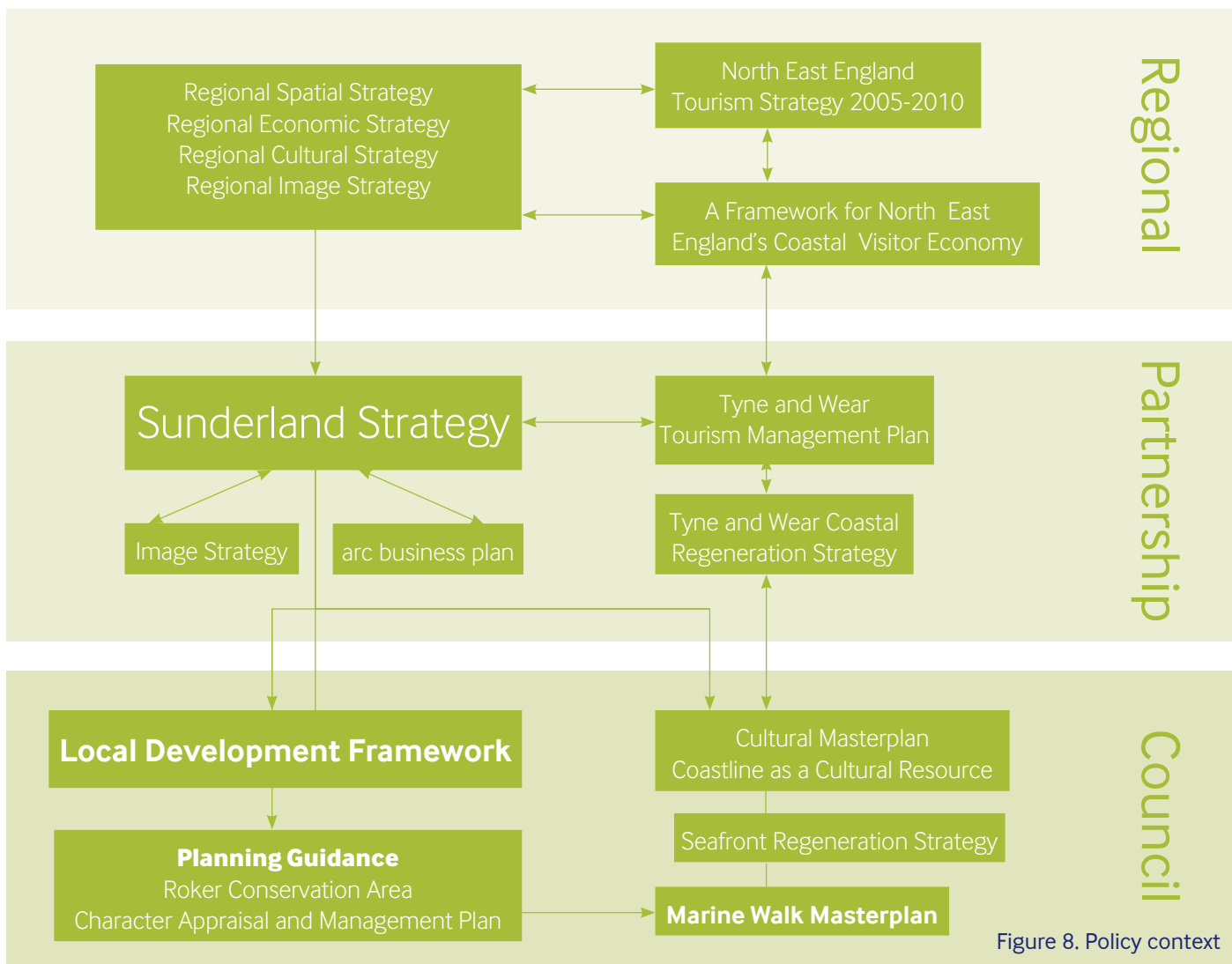


Figure 8. Policy context

Analysis



3.0 Analysis

Frequently received comments from the seafront consultation:

‘Sunderland has a rich history in shipbuilding; visitors to the area should be given the opportunity to learn about the history of Sunderland.’

‘Some imaginative and artistic features and better landscaping.’

‘Provide more information about the pier and its history.’



3.1 Land use

Roker primarily serves as a recreational area for residents of Sunderland. Its role does, however, extend to providing some activity for visitors. The beach serves as the end point to the Sea to Sea (c2c) cycle route. There are some fragmented areas of local interest such as the lifeguard museum and Roker is a 'hub' for watersports, with facilities such as Sport England's Adventure Sunderland, Sunderland Yacht Club and a diving centre which is located in the former lighthouse keepers' cottages. Marine Walk includes a council resort office, a pub and amusement arcade. The remainder of the built-up area behind the seafront is in private residential use with clusters of hotels, guesthouses and residential care homes. Figure 9 illustrates the land uses in this area.

Sue's Cafe and Adventure Sunderland



Lighthouse keepers' cottages



Lifeguard museum





Figure 9. Land use plan

3.2 Movement, arrivals and connections

As figure 10 illustrates, movement into and across the Marine Walk Masterplan area can broadly be separated into two areas – vehicular movement along Harbour View on the upper promenade and pedestrian and cycle movements along the lower promenade. Vehicles can access the lower promenade via Pier View, a small road linking the upper promenade with car parking and Marine Walk. Marine Walk road runs along the lower promenade to the south to a car parking area and to the north to a roundabout, after which the road is access only. Integration between vehicular, cycle and pedestrian traffic has proved unsuccessful resulting in a number of points across the masterplan area where significant conflicts between users occur, particularly at the southern end of the study area.

c2c cyclist



The area hosts a number of regional and national cycle and pedestrian routes including the Sea to Sea Cycle Route (c2c), Route 1 of the National Cycle Network (The East Coast Cycle Route), the Bede's Way cycle and pedestrian route and the St Peter's Sculpture Trail. This makes the masterplan area a popular location for both pedestrians and cyclists. However, the need to adequately accommodate day to day vehicular traffic and access as well as other leisure and recreation uses, in addition to the above, demonstrates a clear potential for conflict to occur. At present, conflict exists between people wishing to fish along the sea wall (who require large areas of space in order to rest fishing poles) and cyclists. Similar conflicts also exist between pedestrians using the lower promenade to walk along the sea front and vehicular users using the road which runs the length of the lower promenade.

As a consequence of all of the above factors, the masterplan area suffers from a lack of legibility offering no priority to any given user. Footways and surfaces in a poor state of repair limit access between the upper and lower promenades for those who are less mobile or disabled. Poor signage and the lack of a route hierarchy cause confusion to the user and increase the opportunity for conflict to occur. Gateways do not create a sense of arrival into the masterplan area.

Footpath between the upper and lower promenades



Vehicles on the lower promenade





Figure 10. Movement analysis plan



3.3 Consultation findings

Extensive consultation on the future of the seafront was undertaken in early 2009 leading to one of the highest response rates to a public consultation the council has ever received. In total 2,455 people completed a seafront consultation form and 13 consultation workshops took place involving almost 200 people. Views of a cross-section of the community were collected. Planning Aid, an independent organisation funded by the Royal Town Planning Institute, undertook 6 workshops with members of the public across the city, including the Youth Parliament. Meanwhile, Sunderland City Council undertook 9 workshops with the Disability Alliance of Sunderland, the Older People Independent Advisory Groups and other key stakeholders including businesses, interest groups and voluntary organisations focused at Marine Walk.



The findings of the consultation are summarised below but are also available in full in a Seafront Consultation Findings Report which can be found at www.sunderland.gov.uk/seafront.

Respondents who completed a consultation form were asked to select the three aspects that they would most like to be included in the vision for Roker. The responses are shown in the pie-chart below. 'Make the most of the area for relaxation' emerged as the aspect the majority of respondents would like to be included in the vision followed by 'protect the natural environment' and 'improve what's on offer for families'.

During the consultation, people were invited to give their comments on the seafront at Roker. A common theme of the comments included a call for more to be made of Roker's heritage.

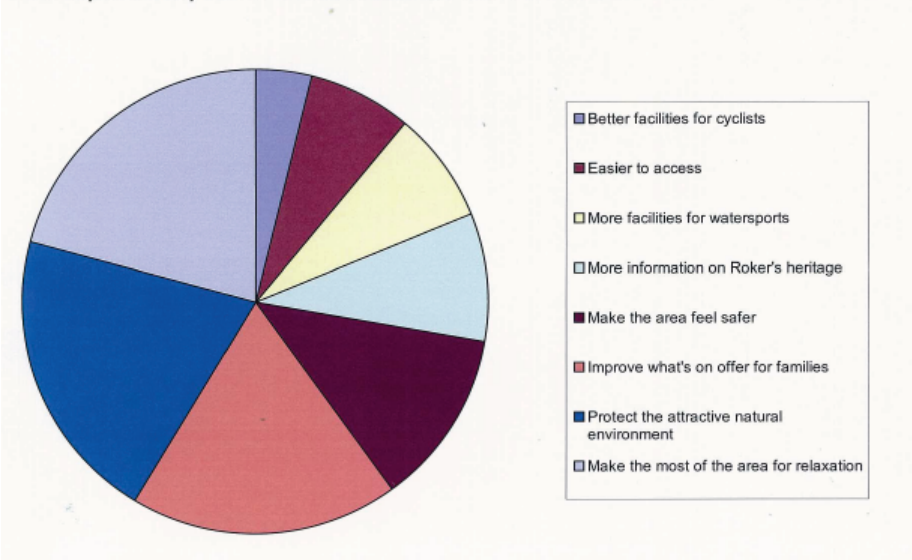
'Higher profile to the heritage of the seafront!'

'More information on what can be seen in the area - park information boards on birds etc to be seen in the area. Some heritage information - the area has changed over the last 100 years.'

'More effort made to preserve the old stone walls and structures so important to our heritage, and to make the public more aware of natural gems such as the tufa deposit and the outcrop of the 'cannonball' limestone.'

Planning Aid analysed the workshop findings and produced an image (Figure 11) which sets out the community's vision for the seafront at Roker. This image again highlights the need to give Roker back its sense of place by highlighting its history and attractive natural environment.

Most important aspects to be included in the vision for Roker



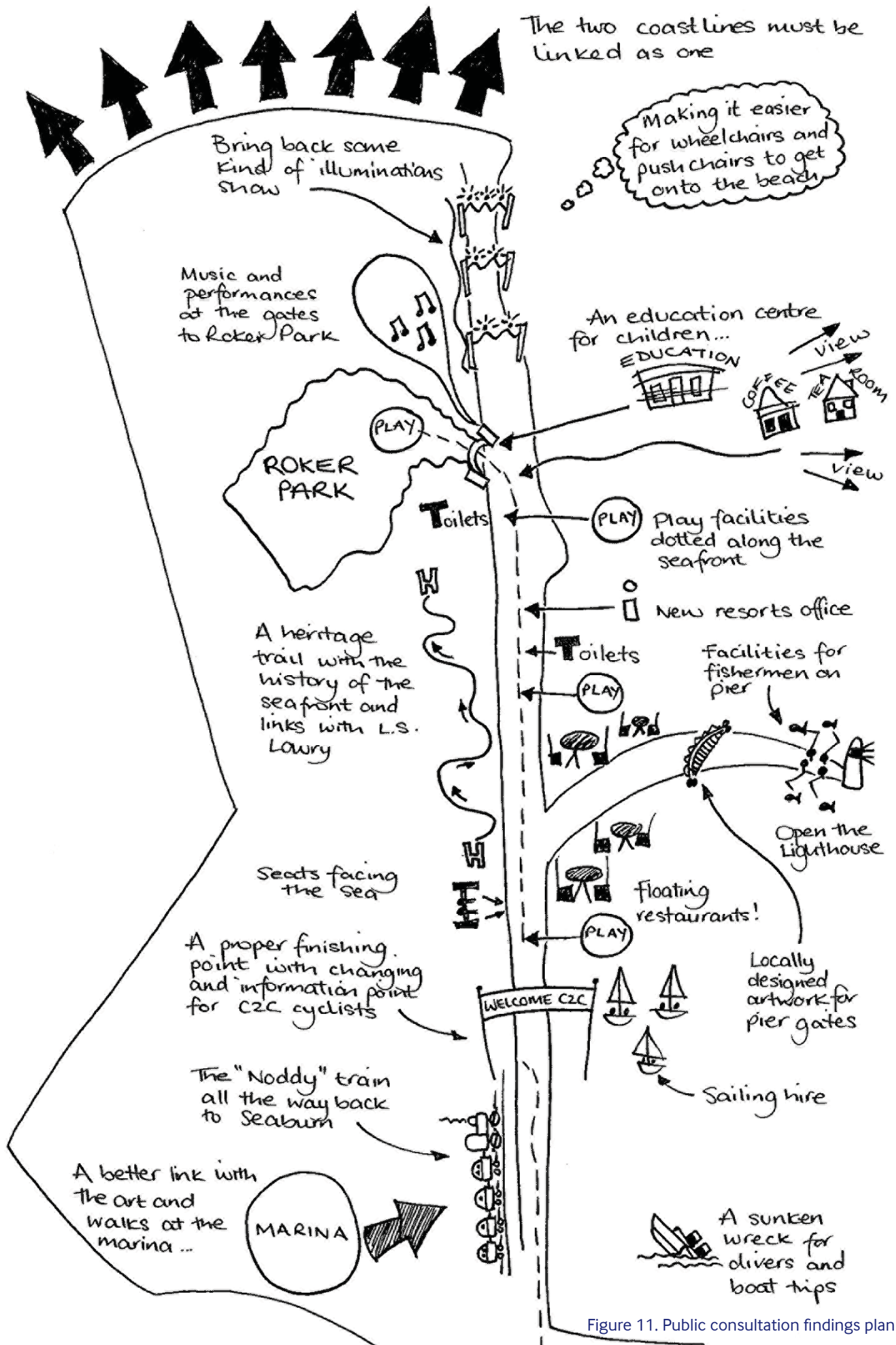


Figure 11. Public consultation findings plan

Issues and opportunities



4.0 Issues and Opportunities

4.1 Issues

Overall the physical environment of Marine Walk has endured widespread decline which has diminished the performance of this area as a successful civic space. Overall the area has lost its historic 'sense of place' as a focus for local culture.

Legibility

Marine Walk is adjoined by a number of key destinations such as Roker Park to the northwest and St Peter's riverside to the southwest. Consequently the masterplan area shares a linked network of footpaths and cycle routes with these spaces.

However despite sharing these physical links and the area's strong heritage, Marine Walk has a poorly defined and often concealed identity. When accessing Marine Walk from Roker Park for example, unattractive substations and an inadequate level of signage do little to identify the gateway to the beach and promenade.

Similarly the entrance to Marine Walk from St Peter's Riverside Trail is a narrow corridor dominated by street furniture that impedes pedestrian and cyclist movement into the area and serves to weaken what should be a strong gateway between these cultural destinations.

Movement

Movement across Marine Walk currently presents a major barrier to the area becoming a successful cultural destination. Conflicts occurring between vehicular and pedestrian traffic and the previous attempts to remedy this conflict have resulted in an environment which is cluttered and lacks a clear hierarchy of routes. An additional conflict is encountered between cyclists and anglers particularly on the stretch of the c2c cycle route in the south of the study area.

Furthermore the presence of gates, fences and balustrades throughout Marine Walk serve to further fragment routes and limit access to key destinations and landmarks.

Entrance to Roker Park



St Peter's riverside leading to Marine Walk



Footpath linking the upper and lower promenades



Landscaping

Overlapping and isolated landscaping schemes and programmes of public realm improvements have produced a pedestrian experience which has a rundown appearance and does little to aid cohesion and movement along the route of cultural facilities found within Marine Walk.

Sense of place

Marine Walk encompasses a variety of attractions including the Grade II Listed pier and lighthouse, Volunteer Life Brigade Museum and a variety of play spaces and gathering places. The lack of prominent signage, access and identification of these attractions alongside a widespread need for maintenance, has resulted in Marine Walk exhibiting a weak sense of place.

Generally play spaces are underused and require renewal or revitalisation to become successful public spaces. Benches and gathering spaces follow a similar trend and lack a cohesive appearance.

Surface materials on Marine Walk



Unused former paddling pool



Gates to Roker pier



4.2 Opportunities

Following a detailed physical analysis of the area and an analysis of the findings of the public consultation, a long list of opportunities for Marine Walk was identified. The longlist of opportunities has been considered against the vision for Roker, and a shortlist of opportunities is set out below:

Culture and Heritage

Open up the caves in Roker Ravine to the public as a space for temporary arts installations and performances

Open up the tunnel inside the pier as part of other events or heritage open days.

Explore the re-opening of the old pier as a viewing platform and fishing area.

Legibility

Introduce an interpretation trail to celebrate key points of interest, for example Roker Ravine, Spottee's Cave, Roker pier and lighthouse.

Improve the entrance to the pier by removing the existing gates and introducing a more sympathetic solution.

Public realm and landscaping

Introduce new feature lighting, for example light up the cliff faces, the ravine, promenade and beaches with low-level LED feature lighting.

Holey Rock Corner



Introduce a more sympathetic pallet of street furniture which is durable and low maintenance appropriate to the coastal location. Replace broken surface materials with new materials suitable for the Marine Environment.

Consider sympathetic development opportunities and temporary uses for the derelict site adjacent to the Adventure Sunderland building.

Introduce soft landscaping, for example to the grass banks. The introduction of native coastal grasses would break up the large area of mown grass and create opportunities for habitat creation.

Movement

Improve the links between Marine Walk and Roker Park and St Peter's Riverside.

Consider opportunities to remove non-essential traffic at the northern end of the promenade. This would allow the roundabout to be removed and the space used for events and other cultural activities.

Play

Create new play facilities on the promenade opposite Adventure Sunderland and introduce a 'play journey' between this area and the new Roker Park play area.

Facilities

Explore opportunities to introduce new facilities and improve existing facilities on Marine Walk. Work with existing businesses

Entrance to Spottee's Cave



to help them explore new business opportunities and ensure their longevity.

Consider sympathetic development opportunities and temporary uses for the derelict site adjacent to the Adventure Sunderland building.

Accessibility

This masterplan presents an opportunity to improve the accessibility of Marine Walk by promoting access to the seafront by sustainable modes of transport. This will be supported by and complement the delivery of the Local Transport Plan 2 (LTP2), which establishes how transport patterns and routes will be developed across Tyne and Wear over the period 2006 to 2011.

Marine Walk is well connected to pedestrian and cycle routes. St Peter's artwork trail connects Marine Walk to the riverside and Bede's Way footpath and cycle route connects the area to St Peter's and St Paul's in Jarrow. As stated in section 3.2 Roker is well connected to the national cycle network forming part of the c2c cycle route, Walney to Wear route and National route 1.

Public transport links to Marine Walk could be better promoted. The closest metro station, St Peter's, is located approximately 1 mile from Marine Walk, but there is no signage to indicate this. Bus routes to Marine Walk could also be better promoted. Every 20 minutes a bus runs from the city centre to Harbour View road (the main access road to Marine Walk) and buses travel to nearby Sea Road every 10 minutes. By providing public transport information at Marine Walk and improving footpaths and cycle routes the masterplan will contribute to the delivery of one of the main elements of the LTP2 implementation plan: 'To improve facilities for sustainable transport modes, especially walking and cycling, and create high quality continuous and legible networks across Tyne and Wear.'

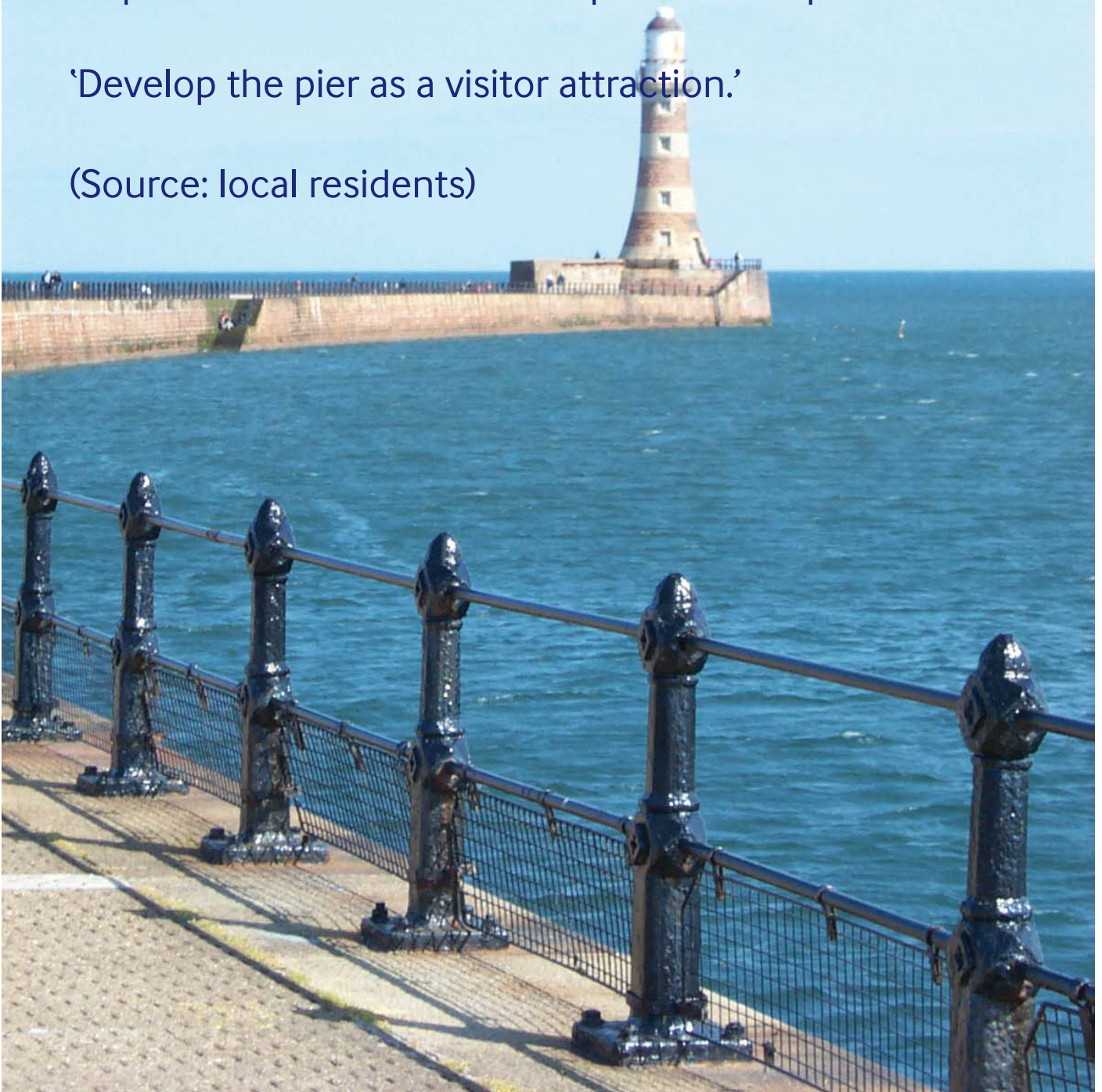
'More events that attract people to visit the seafront.'

'It should be a place of adventure and interest.'

'Improve the entrances to the pier and the park.'

'Develop the pier as a visitor attraction.'

(Source: local residents)



Proposals



5.0 Proposals

5.1 Introduction to design themes and concepts

“Reviving Roker as a thriving historic coastal resort.”

In its heyday in the early to mid 20th century, Roker (along with Seaburn) became known as the ‘Playground of the People,’ an arena for cultural and leisure activities, events, traditions and passive recreation. Nowadays, however, it has lost its historic ‘sense of place’ as a focus for local culture (as described in section 2.1). Developments to the south (the Marina, North Haven housing scheme and the Riverside Sculpture Trail), and the focus on the candidate World Heritage Site of St Peter’s, along with the recent improvements to Roker Park play area to the northwest, have left Marine Walk as something of a missing or ‘forgotten’ link on the most attractive and historically and culturally significant route along Sunderland’s riverside and coastline.

The masterplan has been devised with the objective of regenerating Roker as a thriving seaside resort and reconnecting it within the riverside/coastal trail from St Peter’s to Roker Park and the wider coastal landscape. In particular, the masterplan proposals aim to revive Roker’s rich cultural heritage in a contemporary and innovative manner building on and taking inspiration from its unique and distinctive built heritage and natural assets.

Spottee’s Cave



Roker’s heritage, culture and geology are inextricably linked in the way in which Marine Walk (in particular the lower promenade adjacent the cliffs) has been historically used. The proposals aim to revive this tradition by focusing on providing people with an environment and experience that builds upon and interprets Roker’s cultural history and built and natural features. This will be achieved by providing a range of innovative forms of interpretative material, features and artwork at key points of reference from Roker Ravine to the south end of Marine Walk, creating an ‘interpretation trail’ that is inspired by the area’s heritage, cultural and geological assets and its links with the candidate World Heritage Site.

The interpretation trail will be complemented by the use of high quality surface materials and bespoke innovative forms of street furniture and lighting. A key and ‘unique’ element of the proposals is the use of timber ‘Pods’. Designed to reflect the famous cannonball rocks these innovative and distinctive man-made features will provide flexible multi-user facilities at various locations along Marine Walk and will have a striking visual impact on the area.

Example of feature lighting

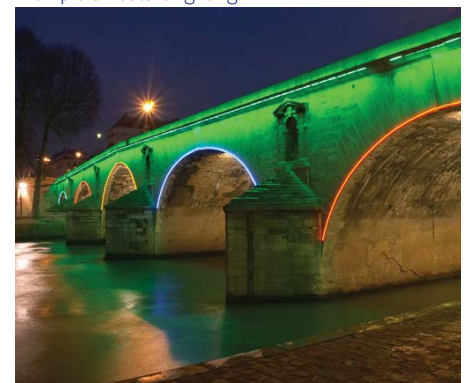


Particular emphasis will be given to Roker Ravine and the large space (historically known as Holey Rock corner) that it leads onto beneath Roker Cliffs. This is the most distinctive and impressive part of the masterplan area with unique geological and built assets. This area will be the focus for innovative forms of artwork and interpretation, and a striking lighting scheme to illuminate the Ravine, caves, cliffs and bridges in all their glory. This will include a multi-functional interpretation Pod on Holey Rock corner that will light the cliffs.

Through the combination of the above ‘linked’ proposals the masterplan will aspire to create an environment and experience for all members of the community unlike anywhere else on the north eastern coastline, a unique and stimulating environment with a choice of attractions inspired by the area’s distinctive natural and built assets and rich cultural heritage.

Figure 12 illustrates the masterplan proposals for Marine Walk.

Example of feature lighting





- Key
- Pods
 - * Sites for interpretation/ panels / artistic interventions
 - Sites for sonic and optical play features
 - ★ Play facilities: beach football and volleyball
 - Seating
 - Lighting
 - - Improved promenade railings
 - New planting: trees, shrubs and grasses
1. New flexible space, including new stairs to beach
 2. Sub-stations to be masked and caves opened up
 3. Re-use of 1930s seating shelter
 4. Site of temporary summer water play
 5. Flexible cultural space
 6. Improvements to footpaths between upper and lower promenade
 7. Parking for permit holders only beyond this point northwards
 8. New sculptural gates to pier
 9. Restoration of lighthouse and resurfacing of pier
 10. Development opportunity/ temporary car park
 11. New access/ stairway
 12. New plaza including play
 13. Narrowing and re-alignment of promenade road
 14. Improvements to public facilities
 15. Improvements to car park including disabled parking
 16. New parallel on-street parking
 17. Improvements of gateway space including ramp to beach
 18. Maritime planting on edge of car park
 19. Repair and refurbish historic North Pier
 20. Widening of C2C ramp
 21. Removal of broken benches and resurfacing of footpath/ cycleway

Figure 12 Masterplan

Roker seating shelter with display panels



5.2 Key spaces

Detailed designs have been produced for three key spaces on Marine Walk – Roker Ravine and Holey Rock Corner, Spottee’s Plaza and Marine Plaza. All of these spaces, though historically important to the seafront, currently feel bland and lack identity.

Roker Ravine and Holey Rock Corner

Marine Walk is remarkable as being perhaps the only location where it is possible to walk from a Registered Historic Park through a ravine directly on to a seafront promenade. The lush green of the park contrasts with the rugged steep sided ravine creating a sense of enclosure and drama. Once at the foot of the ravine the area suddenly opens up to reveal what would be striking views of the beach, but

the impact is muted by the visual clutter of the substation and beyond this the sea wall. To restore the sense of connectedness between the park and beach these barriers will be removed or masked. The sea wall will be replaced with a sweeping stairway and ramp designed to allow the sand and sea to wash into the area, creating the sense of the park spilling out onto the beach. Detailed designs will be developed in consultation with the Environment Agency and the Coastal Protection Agency (Sunderland City Council).

In its heyday the lower promenade was an arena for cultural and leisure activities. Although the seafront still has an extensive cultural events calendar the existing spaces are poor. Redesigning this space will provide a much improved setting for existing cultural activity, including the

Roker cannonball pods, and create the opportunity to develop further planned events returning the area to its former glory as a location for tea dances, shows and the many other events that have taken place over the years in this dramatic setting.

Mirroring this, the heritage of the area will be opened up to the public both physically and intellectually. The gates of Spottee’s cave will be removed and the original entrance opened up and a reinforced glass panel installed to allow people to view the illuminated cave and find out about its interesting history. The cave will be surveyed for the presence of protected species prior to any work being undertaken. The interpretation Pod, providing information on the rich history of the seafront, its environment and geology will be located in Holey Rock Corner. This will encourage people drawn to the seafront from Roker Park to spend time in the area exploring its many assets.

In the evening, lighting will transform Roker Ravine and Holey Rock Corner into an area with a magical quality, reminiscent of the Sunderland Illuminations. Feature lighting which is sympathetic to the surrounding natural environment will be used to highlight Roker Cliff, Spottee’s Cave, Roker Bridge and the promenade shelter. This will encourage people to explore the seafront, whilst increased footfall and improved illumination increase the feeling of safety.





Substations masked



Lighting to Roker cliff





- Key
-  Interpretation point
 -  Play feature
 -  Illumination feature
 -  Seating

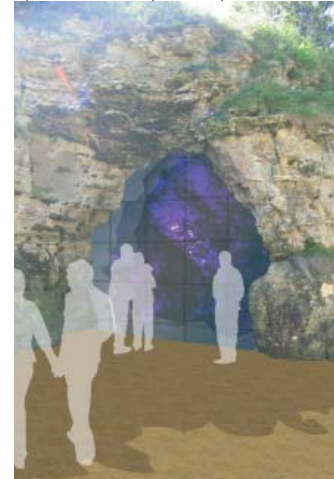
1. Interpretation and feature lighting of caves
2. Sub-stations masked and used for interpretation
3. Artistic illumination of cliffs under bridge
4. Installation of new seating
5. Portable flexible retail pods
6. Flexible cultural space
7. New granite curved steps linking beach and promenade

Figure 13 Holey Rock Corner and Roker Ravine

The former seating shelter will also be brought back into use. Whilst the longer term aspiration is to bring an active use back to the shelter the council will consider temporary short-term uses. To give the shelter a face-lift, panels displaying interpretation and promotional material will be installed. The image (on the page before last) shows how the shelter might look. In addition lights will be installed to illuminate the building at night.

Figure 13 illustrates the proposals for Roker Ravine and Holey Rock Corner.

Spottee's cave opened up



Holey Rock Corner - indicative image for illustrative purposes



Spottee's Plaza

The roundabout on Marine Walk is currently a poor use of space which demonstrates the way in which the area has come to favour the car over the needs of pedestrians.

The roundabout will be transformed into a further flexible cultural space to add to and complement that of Holey Rock Corner providing a further focal point for Marine Walk's events calendar. The opportunity to introduce amphitheatre seating at different levels will allow the provision of a more formal space compared to Holey Rock Corner that can also be used informally day-to-day as a place simply to sit and watch the sea. Spottee's Plaza and Holey Rock Corner can be used independently or together depending on the size of the event. When not in use as a performance space the plaza could also be populated by the Roker Pods and provide a further focal point along Marine Walk which together add to the visitor

experience along the coastline. Having this flexible space with the necessary infrastructure will allow the existing events calendar of family entertainment, historical re-enactments and live music to be built on in imaginative ways.

The name 'Spottee's Plaza' has been chosen as a working title for the area. As part of the next steps for the project the public will be asked to come up with a suitable name for this space.

Spottee's Plaza



Marine Plaza

Marine Plaza is the main gateway for people driving and cycling to Roker seafront. Visitors using this gateway are currently welcomed to the area with obscured views of the seafront and a bland area of public realm. This area will be opened out into a Plaza for people of all ages. The sculpture 'C' which marks the end of the sea to sea cycle route will be the focal point surrounded by an area of seating where people can relax and enjoy views of the attractive natural environment and Roker pier and lighthouse. Facilities for cyclists, such as secure cycle storage will be focused in this location

Existing play on Marine Walk which currently obscures views of the sea will be removed and replaced with modern play equipment in keeping with the new Roker play park. Sonic sculptural play pieces will be located along Marine Walk to encourage children and families to travel from the park along the promenade. Play equipment will be installed on the sand and access to the beach will be improved, once again extending the Plaza on to the beach to remove the feeling of separation between the promenade and sand.

The steep pathways between Roker Terrace and Marine Walk make the two areas feel remote. Access between the two will be improved with a new stairway creating a direct link adjacent Bungalow Café.

The existing car park will be made more welcoming with soft landscaping and new surface materials. The vacant development site will be tidied up and turned into a temporary car park in the short-term whilst redevelopment opportunities are explored.



Key	
	Pods
	Sites for interpretation/ panels / artistic interventions
	Sites for sonic and optical play features
	Play facilities: beach football and volleyball
	Seating
	Lighting
	Improved promenade railings
	New planting: trees, shrubs and grasses



5.3 Interpretation trail

The interpretation trail is shown in figure 14 with the key points of interest identified, including features such as Roker Ravine, Spottee's Cave, Roker Cliffs, Lower Promenade, Roker pier and lighthouse, Old North Pier and the Volunteer Life Brigade Museum.

Forms of interpretation may include bespoke display and notice boards, panels, signs, vinyls, artwork, sculptures, carvings and etchings in surface materials and other structures (both existing and new). A brief summary of the various points of historic, cultural and geological interest on the interpretation trail and the means by which these may be interpreted is given below:-

1. Roker Park - At the point at which one passes from Roker Park into the Ravine, directional signage, display boards and possibly artwork will be provided, welcoming and guiding users to the Ravine and Roker beach and, conversely, to Roker Park depending on the direction in which they are travelling. Interpretation and maps of Roker Park and the Ravine/ Marine Walk (possibly incorporating the interpretation trail route) will be provided on the display boards.
2. Ravine/Spottee's Cave – The substations which are currently eyesores in the Ravine are to be clad to improve their appearance, probably in timber (to reflect driftwood), and feature artwork/ display signs and interpretation of the Ravine's geology, bird life and history, provided, with particular reference to Spottee's Cave. The cave itself may incorporate artwork/lighting which could potentially be viewed through a glazed screen in its opening.
3. Holey Rock Corner – The large space at the base of Roker Cliffs on the lower promenade (which was historically an arena for events and entertainment shows and is proposed in the masterplan as a key flexible activity space) presents a key opportunity for a Pod installation and associated artwork and interpretation. This may be inspired by and interpret the rich cultural history of the space and the well-remembered Holey Rock that was a landmark feature of Roker Cliffs.

C2C way marker



4. Lower Promenade – The shelter on the lower promenade has been identified by the Resorts Team to be utilised as a storage facility in the short term. It is proposed to apply vinyl panels to the blocked-up openings and entrance door featuring montages of historic images of the area and/or advertisements of events and shows on Marine Walk and the wider seafront.
5. Roker Pods – A group of Pods is proposed around the flexible activity space that will replace the current roundabout on Marine Walk. These Pods will reflect the unique Cannonball Rock formations and provide appropriate interpretation of the geology.
6. Upper promenade/embankment – A viewing platform is proposed along the pathways on the embankment just below the upper promenade. This will include interpretation boards/artwork possibly making reference to the John Dobson designed Roker Hotel on Roker Terrace above and its historic links to Marine Walk via the pumping of water from the sea for its Spa Baths. Reference may also be made to how the embankment's formation used the earth excavated to form Brunel's North Dock.

7. Roker Pier – At the entrance to Roker pier the current unsightly gate and fence is proposed to be replaced with a major new gateway art feature, possibly inspired by the mighty 'Goliath' crane that was a landmark on the pier during its 18 years of construction.
8. Roker Lighthouse - An interpretation board will be displayed at the end of Roker pier to provide information on the history of both the Grade II listed lighthouse and the WW2 defence structure which is attached to the base of the lighthouse.
9. Volunteer Life Brigade Museum – At the southern end of the upper promenade, external signage / interpretation is to be provided at the Volunteer Life Brigade (VLB) Museum (formerly the VLB's Watch House) to highlight the history, courage and achievements of the VLB and the significance of Roker's marine heritage generally.
10. c2c endpoint art feature – This feature, titled 'C', has been located on the promenade near to Adventure Sunderland to mark the start/end of the c2c cycle route. The work has been inspired by ideas relating to Bede, Europe's greatest 8th century

scholar, who calculated the motion of the Sun and the Moon to set the date of Easter, the method which is still in use today. Designed as a large granite monolith, the work frames the view of Roker lighthouse and places the end of the route firmly in Sunderland. The mirror-polished finish, reflecting surroundings and people nearby, has star constellations etched into the surface.

11. Car park gateway – Signing/ interpretation will be provided adjacent to the car park at the main vehicular gateway to Marine Walk.
12. North Pier – Signing/interpretation will be provided to mark the end of Marine Walk and the main gateway to the seafront for cyclists. Interpretation will also be provided for the existing artwork features on the beach and adjacent the yacht club.

Interpretation on the seating shelter



c2c end point art feature



Gates designed by artist Matthew Fedden



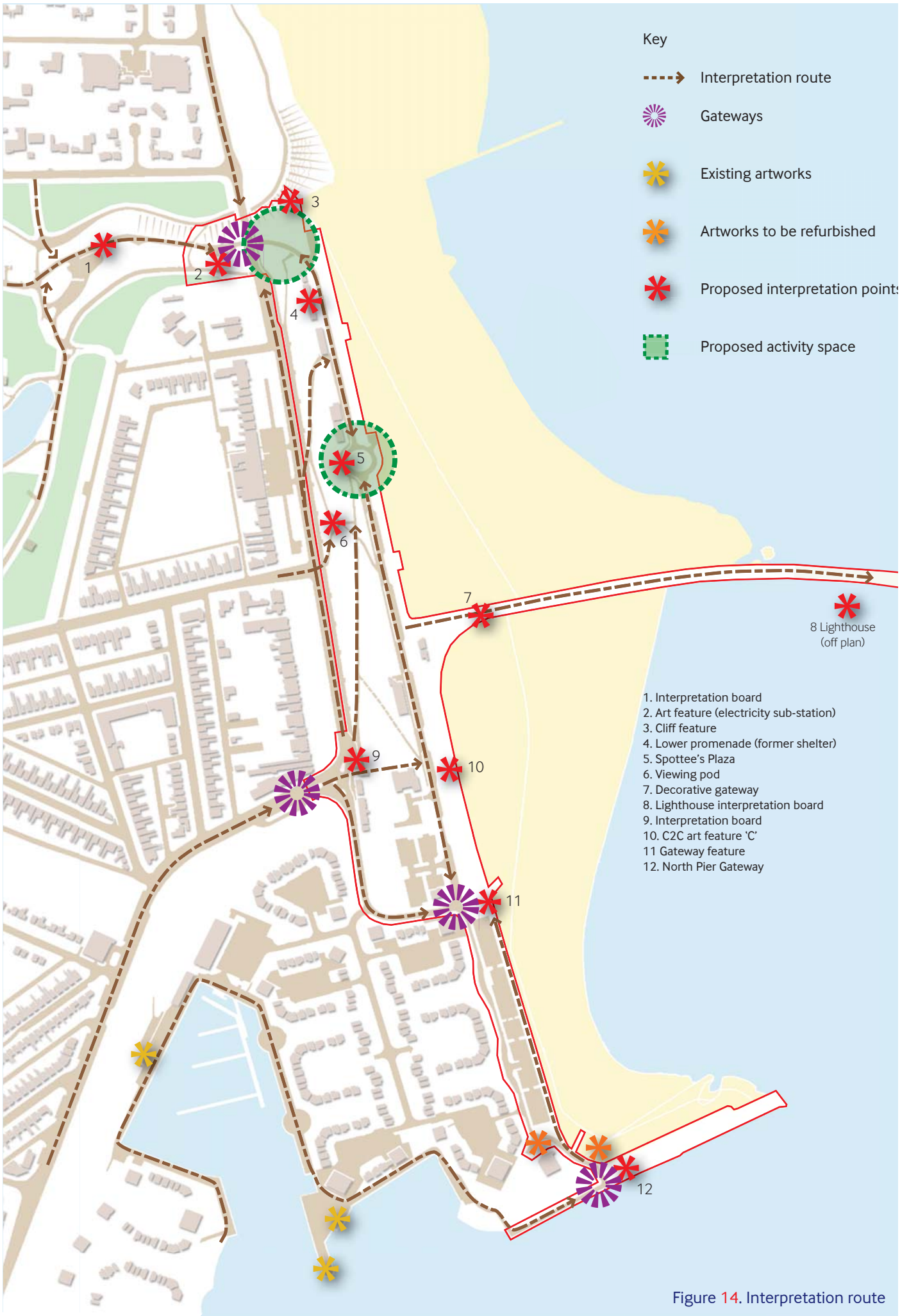


Figure 14. Interpretation route

Roker Pods

5.4 Roker Pods

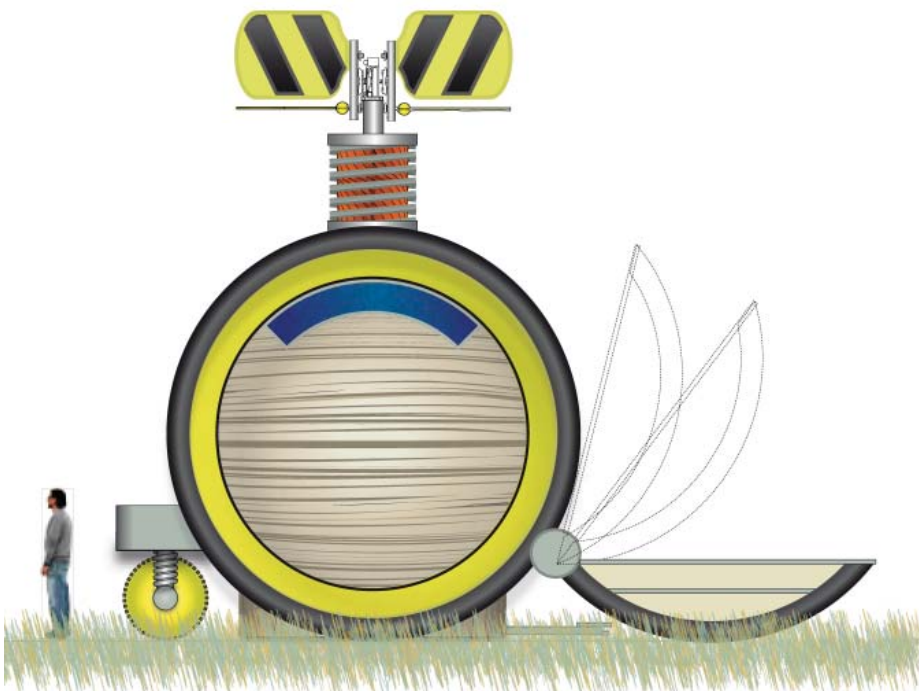
The seafront public consultation highlighted the need for additional amenities at Roker seafront, including retail and an educational centre for children. Many people also commented that more interpretation is needed to promote the seafront's rich history and attractive natural environment. The concept of the Roker Pods has been developed as a way of providing these amenities in a way which responds to the unique natural and industrial heritage of Sunderland's coastline.

The 'Roker Pods' are kiosks which will be designed to reflect the formations of rare 'cannonball rocks' which spill from the cliffs onto the beach. These rocks are of considerable geological interest being found only in Sunderland and New Zealand.

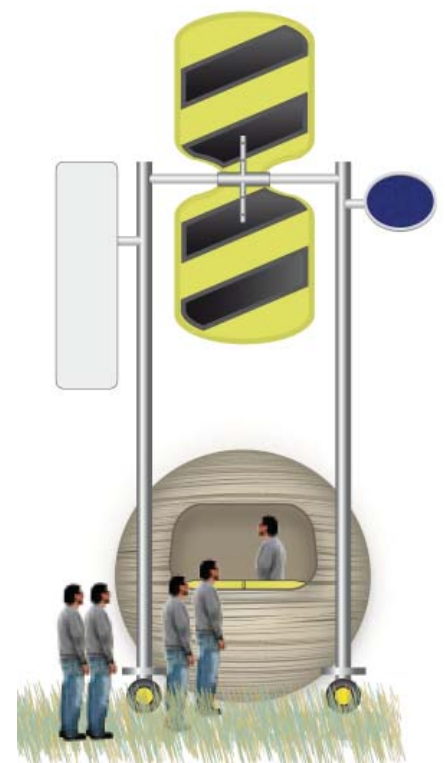
It is envisaged the pods will be constructed of materials reflective of the maritime heritage of Sunderland. Heavy timbers and boat building technologies will be used to give the pods a robust weather resistant surface which will ultimately be enhanced by the inevitable weathering which occurs in coastal locations.

As part of the first phase of the Marine Walk Masterplan it is proposed a pilot series of mobile pods are developed which will be added to sustainably over time as the resort further develops. The pods will populate the coastline in the same way that people do: moving up and down the promenade and spilling onto the beach; and like a crowd constantly changing in their distribution and the activities they are 'engaged' in. One way of keeping a place interesting, currently and critically 'in use' is by keeping it changing, growing and developing in response to an evolving need, a special event or function: if it is in some sense 'new' on each visit.

Education Pod (Artists impression)



Information pod (Artists impression)



Roker Pods

Sustainability

It is essential that any new structures should aspire to the highest contemporary design standards and the pods therefore will be developed with a zero carbon aspiration in mind. The pods have the potential to incorporate on site renewable energy such as wind turbines and photovoltaics. Preliminary research suggests this will generate sufficient energy to power the pod and also project lighting from the pod onto surrounding features creating a sustainable light display.

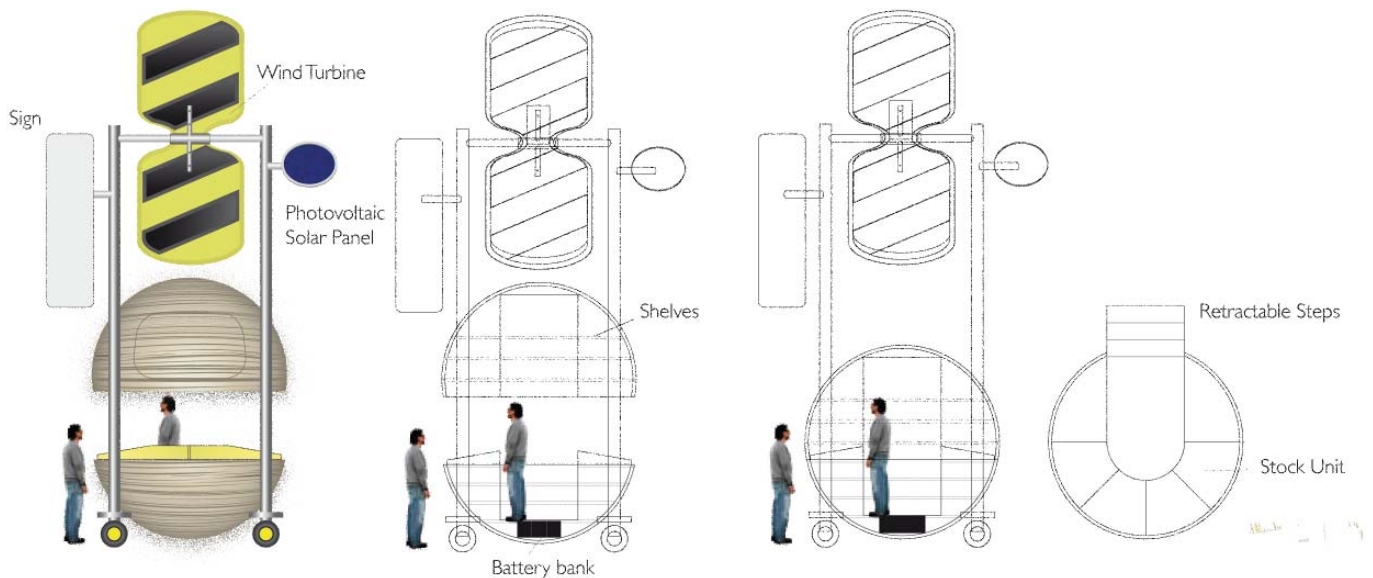
Lighting

By night the pods will provide illuminations: sparkling with LED's and directional spot and subtle flood lighting inserted into and on the timber surface of the spheres, to create a more intimate ambience evocative of perhaps warmer climes. This will extend the 'life' of the resort into the evenings with street style cafe bars, board walks and restaurants populated by a diverse population including families who have spent the day enjoying a range of activities facilitated by the Roker Pods. Any adverse impacts the lighting may cause to biodiversity will be mitigated.

Retail pod

Retail pods selling refreshments or souvenirs will populate Marine Walk. Soft market testing indicates there is currently demand for a small number of retail pods. As the project develops and the popularity of the area increases potential for additional retail pods will be explored further.

Retail Pod (Artista impression)



Roker Pods

Interpretation pod

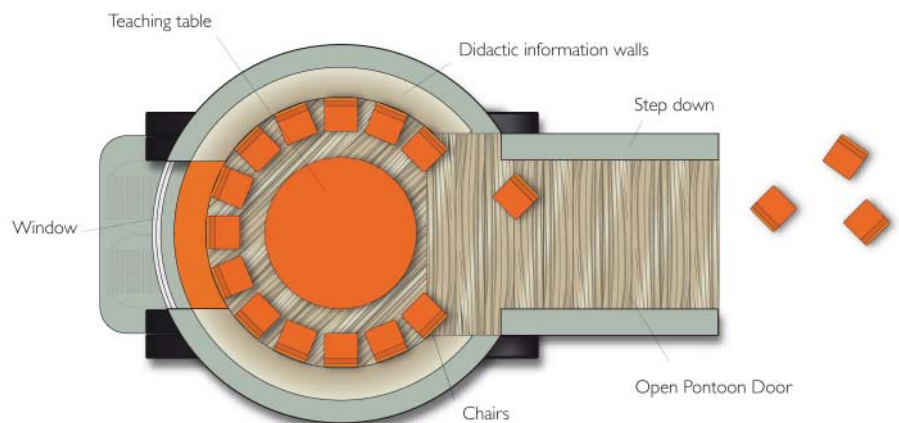
Visitors to Marine Walk will be greeted by an interpretation pod providing information on the areas rich cultural history and distinctive natural environment. This will increase visitors awareness of Roker's many attractions and encourage them to spend longer exploring the area.

Education pod

Education has always been central to the envisioned uses for the pods: both for organised groups of school children and students studying marine life, local heritage and engaging in outdoor sporting and water-sports activities. Marine Walk is a popular area for local school groups who visit the area to learn about water safety, the marine environment and geology. An education pod which will act as an onsite learning centre will encourage more school groups to visit Marine Walk and learn about the area's distinctive natural environment.

The pods will also provide informal education: The pods give all visitors a direct experience of contemporary design and will hopefully help promote desirability around it and the use of ecological technologies.

Information Pod (Artists impression)



5.5 Lighting

Street lighting

Street lighting is an important part of any public space. Poor lighting can detract from an area whilst good street lighting can add to the character, attractiveness and function of a place or space. Designs and proposals for new street lighting on Marine Walk should consider how they fit with the wider design proposals for the area and how they can add to the character, function and attractiveness of the area both during the day and after dark.

Feature lighting

The seafront has a history of hosting spectacular light displays. Many people fondly remember the Sunderland Illuminations which centred around Roker Park and along the length of Roker Terrace and Whitburn Road.

Feature lighting can reveal structures, buildings, landscape and topographical features; it can help define routes and emphasise views and features. The creative possibilities offered by lighting, including colour, projection and movement are limitless.

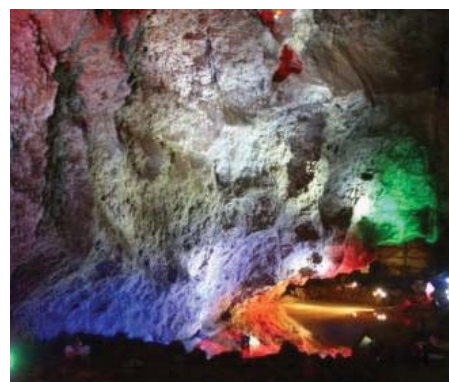
The introduction of new lighting can also help improve the safety of an area at night time. The need to improve the feeling of safety along the promenade was highlighted in the public consultation. Within the masterplan area there is a number of opportunities to introduce feature lighting as part of wider improvements. Lighting of natural and man made features on Marine Walk, such as the cliff face at Holey Rock Corner, Roker Bridge, Spottee's cave and the sand will create drama. The impact lighting effects will have on roosting birds will be considered when deciding on its positioning. Other opportunities for feature lighting along Marine Walk include

burying spot LEDs randomly along the promenade, as the numbers of visitors using the promenade; varies then the intensity, colour and number of lit LEDs could react in a differing way at each visit, thereby making each visit a unique experience. As each phase is designed in detail the design team will work with lighting artists to incorporate feature lighting.

Sustainability of lighting

Energy consumption, sky glow and the cost of maintenance and equipment disposal are all by-products of any lighting scheme. Any new lighting proposals and installations will be required to consider:

- the use of high efficiency luminaires with high performance optical systems with reduced light spill and light trespass
- the use of high efficiency lamps and LED's
- the use of energy efficient electronic control gear
- the use of flexible control systems



5.6 Public realm

A well designed public realm can help create a sense of place, reinforce pedestrian routes and link areas and destinations. The continuity of streetscape design, quality of materials and how well they are maintained can encourage people to extend their visit and explore different parts of an area.

A comfortable and stimulating public realm that encourages social interaction requires detailed attention to the structure, materials and layout of a public space.

Street furniture

Recognising the coastal location of Marine Walk, any street furniture must be chosen having considered the following criteria:

1. All products/designs must be sympathetic to the coastal location and fit with the masterplan vision and objectives for the seafront at Roker.
2. All products/designs must be durable and able to withstand day-to-day uses, events and seawater from storm conditions.
3. All products/designs must consider ongoing maintenance requirements and where possible be low maintenance/maintenance free
4. All products/designs must consider the comfort of the user.

New seats and cycle racks have recently been introduced as part of the c2c end piece. These were chosen having considered the above criteria and are both sympathetic to their surroundings and durable in terms of the materials used. The corten steel and heavy timber slats will weather naturally and don't require high maintenance.

Similar seats could also be used that fit with wider design proposals for the area.

Consideration will be given to the need to provide additional waste management facilities, including where relevant recycling facilities and dog waste bins.

Surface materials

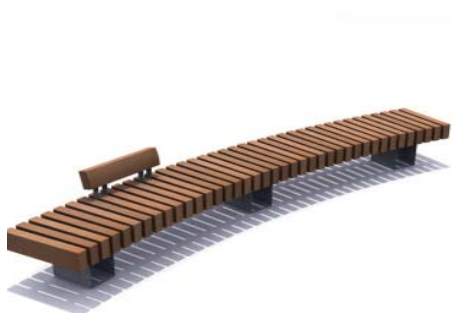
Surface materials that are used in this coastal location must be durable and able to withstand flooding from the sea during winter storms. In addition attention must be paid to how materials are laid in this area, appropriate foundations must be designed and laid to ensure materials don't fail due to heavy use or sea water damage during storm conditions.

Large areas of Marine Walk are currently surfaced with exposed aggregate which has withstood the demands placed on it; it is both durable and has a natural seafront feel. Similar materials would be appropriate in this area.

In key spaces it may be appropriate to use higher quality materials, for example, granite sets. Granite sets have recently been used as the setting for the c2c end piece. This material is both durable and attractive giving a quality feel to the area.

The images show examples of street furniture and surface materials that might be appropriate for this area.

The masterplan seeks to increase feelings of safety and reduce crime at Marine Walk by encouraging natural surveillance, improving lighting and removing hidden areas. It is also proposed consideration will be given to providing CCTV in areas which suffer from anti-social behaviour.



5.7 Soft landscaping

In order to create a more natural coastal feel to Marine Walk it is proposed to introduce additional soft landscaping.

Planting is to be introduced to the surrounds to the car parks and the edge of Marine Walk to give a softer coastal feel to the area. Planting is to comprise native grasses and perennial plants. Further options to improve the biodiversity of the area will be explored. A maintenance plan will be produced for new planting to ensure it is well maintained.

There is an opportunity to introduce planting to the existing grass bank which at present is a large expanse of mown grass. Sections of the steeper sided banks are to be maintained as neutral unimproved grassland by cutting and removal of arisings.

Small areas of tree and shrub planting will also break up the uniformity of the banks with the use of Scots Pine and Juniper, the latter of which is native to the Durham coast.

The images show examples of beach grasses and other landscaping.



5.8 Development principles and parameters

The following section sets out a framework of development principles and parameters for the Marine Walk Masterplan area. They should be considered and fully reflected through the formulation of detailed proposals for both new development and the redevelopment of existing buildings within this site. The Marine Walk Masterplan identifies the vacant site north of Adventure Sunderland as a potential development site. Should developers wish to put forward other potential locations for development the council will consider the suitability of these locations against the principles set out below. The Sequential Approach (i.e locating development in the lowest flood risk areas) will be adopted in line with Planning Policy Statement 25 when considering the suitability of sites.

Mix of uses

Developments at Marine Walk must complement adopted planning and design policy which sets out a desire to achieve a range of cultural and tourism uses to provide a safe and pleasant environment for all. As stated in UDP policy NA26 (Coastal and Seafront Zone) the coastal zone, incorporating Marine Walk, will be developed and enhanced to accommodate a range of indoor and outdoor facilities providing a focus for

leisure activity and tourism. Uses which are likely to help activate Marine Walk and its environment i.e. cafes and restaurants which provide outdoor seating etc, will also be encouraged to help reinforce the connectivity between buildings and the public realm. The council will actively encourage opportunities for new tourist initiatives, especially when they are near existing areas of visitor interest. The council will look favourably on development proposals incorporating amenities which support the recreational use of the seafront, for example changing, showering and foot washing facilities.

Design

In terms of the design of the scheme(s) brought forward on the site, all development proposals are required to:

- Take an innovative approach to the design of new buildings that reflects and reinforces the area's distinctive character, conservation area status and beach front location
- Take influence from the best elements of the surrounding built form and incorporate contemporary architecture that responds to the locality
- The scale and massing must respond to the surrounding development and landscape. Building heights should be no higher than the existing built form

- Respond to Marine Walk's landscape context and take advantage of its coastal location

Maximise coastal views

- Respond to the setting of the listed buildings in and around the SPD area, including the Grade II Listed Roker pier and lighthouse
- Form a high quality and active edge to the coast, animating the promenade through windows and other features
- All development proposals should consider the risk of flooding to premises and people and be designed to mitigate flood risk by incorporating sustainable drainage systems and where necessary, flood resilience measures
- Overall, development proposals should promote a sense of security through good natural surveillance and a high quality lighting strategy



Materials

For any proposals it is a requirement that materials:

- Demonstrate a careful consideration of the existing character of the area and ensure appropriate materials are chosen which allow new buildings to integrate and add to the overall character of the seafront
- Designs could suitably draw inspiration from the timber framed buildings that characterised original forms of development on the promenade as a reference to the area's history, albeit in a contemporary design
- Utilise high quality, durable and aesthetically pleasing natural and manmade materials which are able to withstand day-to-day uses and the marine environment including seawater from storm events
- All buildings should be designed to maximise energy efficiency and reduce maintenance

Access and servicing

In respect of access and servicing, development should adhere to the following principles:

- Utilise existing vehicular routes and car parking wherever possible
- to avoid the establishment of an environment that is dominated by parked vehicles. Parking requirements should be established with the City Council through discussions at the pre-application stage
- Development must seek to be inclusive, as a minimum complying with the standards set out in the Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- Discretely accommodate service access, cars and bicycles. Where possible service areas should be concealed from view and secured by walls and or gates

Sustainable development

All design solutions should strive for environmentally conscious buildings, promoting sustainable energy use and sustainable building techniques and take into account the lifetime cost of the buildings. Development proposals should, therefore:

- Be designed so that their orientation maximises solar gain, to provide protection from prevailing winds and to respect the landscape and townscape context
- Give consideration to the use of design materials from renewable sources and should have "low embodied energy"
- Sourced materials locally where possible
- Consider low energy solutions and alternative energy solutions
- Use daylight or natural light (to minimise artificial lighting) through well designed windows and roof lights
- Incorporate recycling storage facilities for waste as integral parts of the buildings including potential for composting facilities.
- Consider the potential of the proposed development to generate additional waste from increased visitor numbers and how this can be mitigated
- Consider the use of water conserving devices and rainwater recycling as part of the building;
- Consider sustainable urban drainage systems (in accordance with Regional Spatial Strategy policy)
- Consider the inclusion of green roof technology. Not only do green roofs have environmental benefits they can also have visual benefits reducing the impact of development in sensitive locations
- Consider habitat creation and incorporation of bird and bat boxes

Delivery

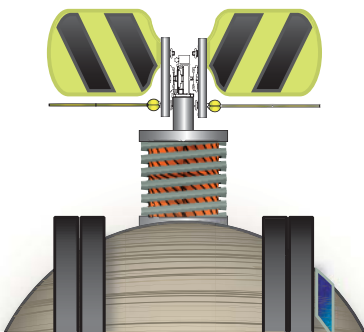


6.0 Delivery

6.1 Sustainability

Sustainability has been integral to the development of the Marine Walk masterplan. Sunderland City Council commissioned consultants Scott Wilson to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal, incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment, to identify the likely significant social, economic and environment effects of the Masterplan and the extent to which it will meet sustainability objectives. The recommendations of the Sustainability Appraisal have been integrated into this masterplan. In addition Scott Wilson undertook a Habitats Regulation Assessment to enable the Planning Authority to ascertain that no adverse effect on the site will result from implementation of the masterplan.

Wind turbine



Solar panel



Measures will be taken to ensure delivery of the masterplan will not impact on bird species that nest on the Roker and Seaburn coastline. Studies will be undertaken to determine any sensitive areas where construction should be timed accordingly. Timing of works will recognise impacts on any birds breeding in the area (protected under Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981) and birds for which the SSSI is notified.

To ensure increased use of the coast line does not lead to disturbance to wintering birds Natural England will be consulted as detailed designs are developed, and if necessary wintering bird surveys will be undertaken.

Particular consideration was given to flood risk and coastal erosion which are key issues as our climate changes and sea levels rise. In March 2006 JBA Consulting was commissioned by Sunderland City Council, in partnership with regional councils, to undertake the Tyne and Wear Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. The assessment highlighted areas which would be at risk of flooding over the next 50 years. The Shoreline Management Plan 2 for Sunderland has a long term policy of holding the line with regard to the sea wall defences along Marine Walk. To enable this policy to be adhered to the Whitburn Bay to Ryhope Coastal Strategy Review is to be undertaken, which will include developing a 5 year priority works plan with costs and programme. In developing the masterplan specialist guidance on flood risk and coastal erosion has been sought to ensure the masterplan mitigates flood risk to premises and people.

All new development proposals should achieve high energy efficiency and minimise energy consumption. Accordingly, as a minimum, 'very good' ratings should be achieved in any new buildings, when measured against BREEAM standards. Wherever feasible, 'excellent' ratings should be achieved. Any new development proposal should achieve 10% of its energy supply from renewable sources embedded within the development unless it can be demonstrated, to the satisfaction of the City Council, that this is not feasible.

All new buildings, retail facilities and public conveniences along Marine Walk should adopt sustainable water treatments if possible and ensure no waste water is discharged directly into coastal drainage channels. Sustainable drainage measures (SuDS) should be used along Marine Walk to prevent localised flooding of the pathways and subsequently an uncontrolled, potentially polluted, runoff during high rainfall events.

The council will explore with local bus operators opportunities to improve bus links to the seafront. Pedestrian and cycle routes will be enhanced and signing at nearby metro stations will be improved to encourage people to travel to the seafront using sustainable forms of transport.

This masterplan has been informed by soft market testing, and workshops have been undertaken with local businesses, to ensure proposals are economically sustainable. All development proposals must be subject to a robust business plan.

6.2 Equality and diversity

A key objective of this masterplan is to create an area which is physically and intellectually accessible. The design team sought to go beyond the minimum standards of accessibility as set out in the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005. To ensure the masterplan will improve access to the seafront, guidance was sought from Sunderland's Independent Advisory Groups (IAG). There are seven IAGs in Sunderland representing 'hard to reach' groups. The Disability Alliance of Sunderland (DAS), Youth Parliament and Older People IAG expressed an interest in participating in the consultation. This led to a number of workshops taking place including a site visit to Marine Walk with the DAS and the design team responsible for developing the masterplan. This allowed the design team to better understand the issues disabled people face when visiting the seafront.

Sunderland City Council undertakes Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) on new and existing services, functions, major projects and policies to demonstrate equality in everything it does. In keeping with this policy the Marine Walk masterplan has been subject to a full EIA which will be continually reviewed and updated as the project develops.



6.3 Timescales and phasing

The draft masterplan underwent public consultation during August and September 2009. Following the consultation all comments received were considered and the masterplan was amended as necessary before being taken forward for adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document. The adopted masterplan will be a material consideration when assessing development proposals at Marine Walk. The masterplan will ensure a co-ordinated approach is taken to the redevelopment of Marine Walk, which will kick-start the wider regeneration of the seafront.

An indicative phasing plan is shown in figure 15. It is proposed the initial phase of development will be undertaken at Roker Ravine and Holey Rock corner, to build on the improvements which have already been undertaken to Roker Play Park, creating an attractive and unique route which draws people down to the seafront. Following this phase 1B will address the roundabout shown as Spottee's Plaza on the masterplan. Later phases of work will move progressively from north to south down Marine Walk finally linking with St Peter's Sculpture Trail.

The council is actively pursuing both internal and external funding opportunities to ensure the delivery of each phase. As the delivery mechanism becomes clearer a detailed plan will be set out.



6.4 Maintenance

High quality and robust materials suited to the coastal environment will be used which require minimal maintenance. A maintenance plan will be developed to accompany detailed proposals for each phase of works. Operatives will be trained where specialist maintenance is required.

The council is investing in the maintenance and refurbishment of existing artwork, including St Peter's Sculpture Trail. It is proposed a separate maintenance budget will be established to maintain artwork throughout the city.





Phase 1a

Phase 1b

Phase 2

Phase 3

Phase 3

Figure 15. Phasing diagram

6.5 Delivery vehicle

This document sets a framework for the regeneration of the Marine Walk Masterplan study area. Developers should take note of the key principles that are contained within the masterplan, and ensure that they are fully reflected in all subsequent planning applications for development in this area.

This masterplan gives specific guidance in relation to the form, use, nature and quality of development. This will ensure that high quality development is delivered, capable of raising the profile of the seafront and improving the economic vibrancy of the area. It also provides the link to and expands upon the overarching provisions of the relevant policies in the Sunderland UDP.

This masterplan is to act as a supporting document for funding bids, guiding investment at the seafront to ensure the regeneration of Marine Walk is undertaken in a cohesive and joined up manner.

Pre-application discussions

Pre-applications discussions are encouraged to resolve any issues arising from this guidance. Developers are encouraged to engage in positive dialogue with the City Council throughout the pre-planning process.

Planning application requirements

Planning applications within the study area are to be accompanied by documentation which fully assesses the implications of the development upon the physical, historic and natural environment. The Tyne and Wear Validation Checklist sets out the relevant supporting documentation which will be required (this document can be accessed at www.sunderland.gov.uk via the Development Control web page).

Planning applications may need to be accompanied by the following, however this should be verified by consulting the Tyne and Wear Checklist:

- A Design and Access Statement indicating how the proposal fulfils the requirements of this masterplan
- A Transportation Assessment and Travel Plan
- A Sustainability Statement including energy assessment and renewable energy study
- A Consultation Statement
- A Noise Assessment
- A site investigation report to assess ground stability and the potential for mine gas in accordance with PPG14
- A Flood Risk Assessment to assess the risks of all forms of flooding to and from development in accordance with PPS25
- A landscape design strategy
- A health impact assessment

Design and access statement

In accordance with government guidance, a Design and Access Statement is required to accompany most new planning applications. The purpose of Design and Access Statements is to describe and illustrate the design thinking behind a proposal and to explain how the proposed design solution has been informed by the key principles of good design. Design and Access Statements for development within the masterplan area should set out the way in which a development will contribute towards meeting the requirements of current policy, frameworks and guidance, including this masterplan. In particular, the Design and Access Statement should clearly demonstrate that the development proposal has had regard to the design principles set out in Section 5. All Design and Access statements should be prepared in line with the City Council's Design and Access Statement Supplementary Planning Document. Further advice can be provided by the City Council on request or through pre-application discussions.

Heritage statement

For applications that involve the physical alteration of historic buildings/structures or changes to the settings of listed buildings or the Roker Park Conservation Area; a written Heritage Statement will be required. The Tyne and Wear validation checklist provided by the County Archaeologist is a good guide to what should be within a heritage statement. This should include plans showing historic buildings/ structures that may be affected by the development (both within and outside of the application site) including listed buildings, and an analysis of the significance of affected building(s)/ structure(s). The Statement should clearly articulate the design principles for the development and set out how the development has responded to the

physical fabric and/ or setting of the affected building(s). The scope and detail of the Heritage Statement will vary according to the particular circumstances of each application. Applicants are strongly advised to discuss proposals with a planning officer and/or a conservation officer before any application is made; the council may ask other relevant parties such as English Heritage to join these discussions. A full archaeological desk-based assessment will also be required for any development proposals which will impact on the caves, the Bungalow Cafe, the Life Brigade Watch House or the two piers. Further advice can be obtained from English Heritage's 'A Charter for English Heritage Advisory Services' and the joint English Heritage and CABI guidance 'Building in Context' available from the following website. www.english-heritage.org.uk

Transport assessment and travel plan

A Transport Assessment will be required for development proposals which are likely to have significant transport impacts. Its purpose would be to quantify and assess the impact of the proposals on traffic movement and highway safety; to assess how the development could be accessed by alternative transport modes and how such alternative modes would be promoted.

A Transport Statement will be required when the development is expected to generate relatively low numbers of trips or traffic flows with minor transport impacts. Its purpose would be to cover matters such as trip generation resulting from the development, improvements to site accessibility, car parking provision and internal vehicular circulation, traffic impacts of servicing requirements and the net level of change over any current development within the site.

A Travel Plan is a report outlining the way in which the transport implications of the development are going to be managed in order to ensure the minimum environmental, social and economic impacts.

The need for a Transport Assessment, Transport Statement or Travel Plan should be ascertained in pre-application advice, having regard to the thresholds set out in section 36 of the document 'The Validation of Planning Applications in Tyne and Wear.' available from www.southtyne-side.info/search/tempDocuments/tmp_53381.pdf

Consultation statement

Applications should be accompanied by a Consultation Statement, which sets out the methods and nature of pre-application consultation with residents and stakeholders. The Consultation Statement should set out how the methods employed comply with the provisions of the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

Developer contributions

Developers will be encouraged to engage with Sunderland City Council at an early stage to negotiate the need for planning obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). Planning obligations that benefit the sustainability of the proposed scheme will be discussed, including any necessary infrastructure requirements.

Review

There is a need for the Marine Walk Masterplan to be periodically reviewed as circumstances dictate. This will allow amendments to be made to reflect future changes in national or regional planning guidance, local planning, economic and

Annex 1 Policy Context

National policy

The government has prepared Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG) and Planning Policy Statements (PPS) to provide guidance to local authorities on national planning policy. PPG20 on Coastal Planning relates specifically to the seafront and emphasises the importance of reconciling development requirements with the need to protect, conserve and where appropriate improve the landscape, environmental quality, wildlife habitats and recreational opportunities of the coast. It states that planning policies should improve the attraction of resorts by designating land for new functions and activities, whilst avoiding putting development at risk from erosion or flooding.

PPS9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation sets out the Government's vision for conserving and enhancing biological diversity in England. To ensure planning decisions on biodiversity and geological conservation are fully considered, local planning authorities must consider the environmental characteristics of their area and ensure appropriate weight is attached to designated sites of international, national and local importance and protected species. Plan policies should promote opportunities to incorporate beneficial biodiversity and geological features within the design of development.

PPG15: Planning and the historic environment states there should be

effective protection for all aspects of the historic environment: the formulation of planning policies and delivery of the development control function by local planning authorities should afford this objective 'special consideration'. Grade I and II* Listed Buildings are of particularly great importance to the nation's built heritage and their significance is generally to be beyond question; nonetheless there is a presumption that all Listed Buildings are to be preserved and enhanced, regardless of grade. The PPG also provides guidance on the assessment, designation and management of change in conservation areas.

PPG17: Planning for open space, sport and recreation acknowledges some sporting activities rely on particular natural features and water. Local authorities should ensure access for sport and recreation purposes is not restricted and where possible enhanced, whilst ensuring the visual amenity, heritage and nature conservation value of water resources are protected.

PPS25: Planning and Flood Risk was published in 2005 in light of the potential consequences of future climate change. To ensure development is sustainable PPS25 states land which is at risk of flooding should be identified, and undergo a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment as part of the Sustainability Appraisal. Development should only be permitted in flood risk areas when there are no reasonable available sites in areas of lower flood risk and benefits of the development outweigh the risk from flooding.

The government produced the Good Practice Guide to Tourism to ensure planners understand the importance of tourism and take it fully into account when preparing development plans. The guide states planning should take a proactive role in implementing development that ensures the tourism industry can develop and survive by considering market demand, sustainability, environmental impact, transport and accessibility, regeneration benefits, labour supply and functional links. Planning authorities need to engage the tourism industry and community in consultations to ensure that there is a need for new facilities. New development should be attractive and in keeping with the local context.

On 4 December 2008 the Government introduced the Marine and Coastal Access Bill into Parliament. The Bill helps fulfill the Government's 2005 election manifesto commitments to introduce a new framework for the seas based on marine spatial planning, that balances conservation, energy and resource needs, and to improve access to the English coast. Part 9 of the Marine and Coastal Access Bill places a duty on the Secretary of State and Natural England to secure a long distance route ("the English coastal route") and land available for open-air recreation accessible to the public around the coast of England. In doing so the Bill amends existing legislation – namely the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.



The Shoreline Management Plan acknowledges that between South Tyneside and Sunderland there is increasing pressure on sea defences, with the potential threat of the low water moving landward and causing steepening of beaches, increased pressure on sea defences and loss of amenity. The plan recommends the need to build greater width into the defence systems to take account of this; either, in the case of areas of Sunderland, by allowing or looking for opportunity to create width for retreat of defences or, in the case of north Sunderland, by attempting to manage the beaches to greater effect. Where feasible, the plan has recommended no further construction of defences, allowing the cliffs to erode naturally, but this requires full involvement with the planning authorities in controlling land use.

Policies which impact on the Marine Walk Masterplan area:

- 6.1 Whitburn Cliffs - no change
- 6.2 The Bents - provide additional near shore protection
- 6.3 South Bents/Seaburn - maintain defences and improve beach control.
- 6.4 Parson's Rock - eventually removing defences
- 6.5 Marine Walk - maintain defences and improve beach control

Regional Policy

The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) sets out a long-term strategy for the spatial development of the north east. It provides a spatial context for the delivery of other regional strategies, in particular, the Regional Economic Strategy, Regional Image Strategy and Regional Cultural Strategy. The intrinsic quality of areas such as the north east coast are considered critical to ensuring an increase in domestic

and overseas visitors to the region. Policy 16 of the RSS states strategies, plans and programmes should develop policies to promote culture and tourism, by:

- a) Improving the first impressions gained by visitors arriving and passing through the region
- b) Ensuring that the development of culture and tourist facilities and attractions protects, enhances and maintains the region's natural, built and heritage environments
- c) Encouraging cultural and tourism developments that benefit the local economy, people and environment without diminishing the attractiveness of the place visited
- d) Ensuring that the identification and development of cultural and tourist facilities is guided by the principles of sustainability and information on market demand
- e) Encouraging the protection, enhancement and investment in the region's existing facilities, particularly the intrinsic natural qualities of the North East's, landscape and wildlife
- f) Ensuring all major cultural and tourism attractions and services are accessible by a range of transport modes to improve links to develop the region as an integrated visitor destination
- g) Encouraging the creation of concentrations of culture and tourism related development within sustainable locations to contribute to wider regeneration objectives

The North East Tourism Strategy 2005 - 2010 has been prepared on behalf of the region by the North East Tourism Advisory Board. The coastline with its distinctive landscape and heritage is identified as being key to growing the region's domestic market. Heritage and coast is therefore one of four themes which

will be used to promote tourism in the North East. Actions to improve the tourism offer specific to Sunderland include building on the events calendar, improving public realm and promoting iconic public art at key gateways.

In 2006, to enable the delivery of the Tourism Strategy, ONE commissioned consultants to develop a vision and high level action plan to guide tourism development along the region's coast, this was set out in the document 'A Framework for North East England's Coastal Visitor Economy.' The Framework identifies opportunities specific to Sunderland. It recommends Sunderland builds on its track record of organising events by creating a heightened programme of small scale events to be complemented by the provision of seafront facilities and improved infrastructure. Investment in art and heritage was seen as a way to strengthen Sunderland's market.

The Local Transport Plan 2 (LTP 2) provides a strategic response to the spatial and transport patterns of the Tyne and Wear area from 2006 to 2011. The LTP 2 seeks to deliver the following strategic objectives:

- Maintaining and improving levels of personal accessibility and linkages within, between and beyond the boundaries of Tyne and Wear
- Ensuring transport systems, especially public transport networks, are safe, secure and free from the fear of crime whilst reducing the incidence and severity of transport-related accidents and casualties
- Tackling transport inefficiency arising from excessive demands and operational constraints on transport systems by delivering sustainable measures to combat congestion

- Reducing the adverse impacts of transport on our environment, especially with regard to air quality, noise and its contribution to climate change and resource consumption

Partnership Strategies

Tyne and Wear Coastal Partnership, comprising representatives from Sunderland City Council, North Tyneside Council and South Tyneside Council, commissioned consultants to produce the Tyne and Wear Coastal Regeneration Strategy in 2004. This report summarises the main findings and conclusions from an extensive process of research, analysis and consultation aimed at identifying the extent to which tourism impacts on the local economy and the options for future development of the sector. The study found the Tyne and Wear coast is mostly visited by regional day visitors; however, there is a small core of high value visitors.

The Strategy outlined the main areas for action being image, transport, jobs and skills, partnership working and complementary product development. The main recommendations of the report are to concentrate on the development of key tourism products, based on:

- Maritime and coastal activities
- History and heritage
- Events and sport
- Business tourism
- Developing a range of niche tourism products

This informed the development of the Tourism Management Plan 2008 - 2011 by the Area Tourism Partnership for the Tyne and Wear sub-region, as an action

plan for organisations and businesses involved in the management, development and promotion of Tyne and Wear's visitor experience. The Management Plan seeks to deliver the North East Tourism Strategy at a sub-regional level. The renaissance of Sunderland is seen as having huge potential in building Tyne and Wear's visitor economy. The vision is: *Tyne and Wear's visitor destinations will be renowned for the cultural experience, the city experience and the coastal experience they offer, attracting leisure and business visitors from all over the UK and from overseas.* This brings economic benefit through expenditure and jobs and - just as importantly - provides a major contribution to the regeneration, quality of life and pride of our communities.

The Sunderland Strategy 2008 – 2025, the overarching strategy for the city produced by the Sunderland Partnership, states by 2025 Roker will have a key role in providing cultural and tourism attractions, creating an attractive, accessible and desirable destination.

The Sunderland Image Strategy 2008 - 2025 sets out Sunderland's brand values – life enhancing, smart and balanced. It recognises the seafront as an underused resource. Sunderland is to be promoted as a city by the sea offering a high quality of life. The Sunderland arc business plan 2008 outlines Sunderland's Urban Regeneration Company's overarching strategies to regenerate the city attracting new residents, investors and visitors, to create a sustainable Sunderland.

The Durham Biodiversity Action Plan (DBAP) was produced in June 2007 by the Durham Biodiversity Partnership. The DBAP contains a series of work-plans to help species and habitats in the Durham Area that are considered to be under threat locally, nationally or internationally.

Local Strategies

The Local Development Framework (LDF) is the spatial planning mechanism to help deliver the Sunderland Strategy. It will ultimately replace the currently adopted Unitary Development Plan. The council is currently consulting on the issues and options stage of the Core Strategy, which will lie at the heart of the LDF setting out the overarching strategic planning framework for the city up to 2021.

The relevant saved policies of the adopted Unitary Development Plan (UDP) apply to the seafront until superseded by policies in the LDF. It is proposed that the Marine Walk Masterplan will be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document to UDP policies NA26, EC8 and EC9, as set out below.

NA26 (Coastal and Seafront Zone) The seafront zone between the river mouth and the city boundary with South Tyneside will be developed and enhanced to accommodate a range of indoor and outdoor facilities providing a focus for leisure activity and tourism serving the region. Any new development should, by the quality of its design, retain and if possible enhance the underlying character of the zone. The following measures will be undertaken:

- Within the coastal zone, defined as that area to the east of the A183 the existing open spaces and associated areas will be retained for passive recreational use; the zone will be protected and enhanced by environmental improvements which retain unspoilt views. Coast related commercial or leisure development will be allowed within the zone in accordance with policy EN13, if it utilises an existing structure surplus to requirements or is in locations at the north dock or Marine Walk

- b) New development elsewhere within the seafront zone will be allowed as follows:
- Commercial/leisure development will be limited to locations in the vicinity of the Seaburn Centre and at Queen's Parade.
 - The existing open space/parkland areas at Roker Park, Seaburn Park and Seaburn Camp will be further upgraded.'
 - Conversions of large houses to other uses will be given favourable consideration provided that they:
 - 1 Will make a positive contribution to the tourism/recreational development of the seafront
 - 2 Can be satisfactorily accommodated without detriment to the amenity of adjacent properties or the general environment
 - 3 Have due regard to the character of the Roker Park Conservation Area

EC8 (Tourist Facilities) – The council will support the expansion of activities catering for tourists and other visitors by:

- I. Identifying, consolidating and safe-guarding attractions
- II. Refusing proposals which would have an adverse impact on tourist attractions
- III. Actively encouraging opportunities for new tourism initiatives, especially where they are near existing areas of visitor interest
- IV. Providing cycle and car parking for visitors, and footpaths and interpretative facilities at tourist attractions

EC9 (Tourist Facilities) – Hotels, conference centres and similar facilities will normally be permitted on sites well related to the primary road network, and in association with major recreational and leisure developments.

In 2007 the council adopted the Roker Park Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy (CAMS) as planning guidance. Roker Park Conservation Area was designated in 1995, in recognition of the area's architectural and historic interest, and further extended in 2007 as described below and in section 2.1. In line with PPG15 the CAMS has been produced to provide a framework against which development proposals can be assessed for their appropriateness in the historic environment. It sets out seven management objectives which are outlined below.

Objective 1: To make the extent of Roker Park Conservation Area more meaningful so as to encompass related heritage assets and areas intrinsically linked to the special interest of the Conservation Area, by extending its boundary eastwards to include Roker pier and lighthouse; and southwards to include the whole of Marine Walk, and land to the east of Pier View.

Objective 2: To manage and enhance the special historic interest of Roker Park in accordance with its 'Registered' status. The council will investigate, in conjunction with local amenity groups, sources of funding to assist with the repair, restoration and in reinstatement of features of historic interest in the Park.

Objective 3: To ensure the preservation of the architectural integrity of the terraces around Roker Park for the future via Article 4(2) Directions, which remove certain permitted development rights.

Objective 4: To preserve the historic integrity and garden settings of villas within the Conservation Area, the council will resist proposals for the redevelopment of historic villas and their grounds, in the interest of preserving the key contribution they make to the area's built and landscape character.

Objective 5: To secure the conservation of historic properties and features on Roker Seafront to preserve and enhance its essential character as a Victorian seaside resort, the council will encourage proposals to restore, adapt and convert historic properties along Roker Terrace and South Cliff into acceptable alternative uses, particularly where this includes the restoration of building facades.

Objective 6: To secure the appropriate enhancement of the lower promenade as an area of activity and distinctive character through high quality and innovative building designs and high quality, co-ordinated environmental improvements in all development proposals for Marine Walk.

Objective 7: To ensure the survival of key historic features in any development proposals for the Backland Area and to secure distinctive forms of buildings that enhance the area, the council will require a comprehensive, co-ordinated and innovative design approach to the area's development which satisfies design requirements outlined in the management strategy.

The council has also produced a number of policy documents which directly influence the management of the seafront, including Sunderland's Cultural Masterplan sets aims and objectives which will contribute to establishing Sunderland as a city with a distinct identity in the region. Seaburn and Roker will contribute to this identity through their development

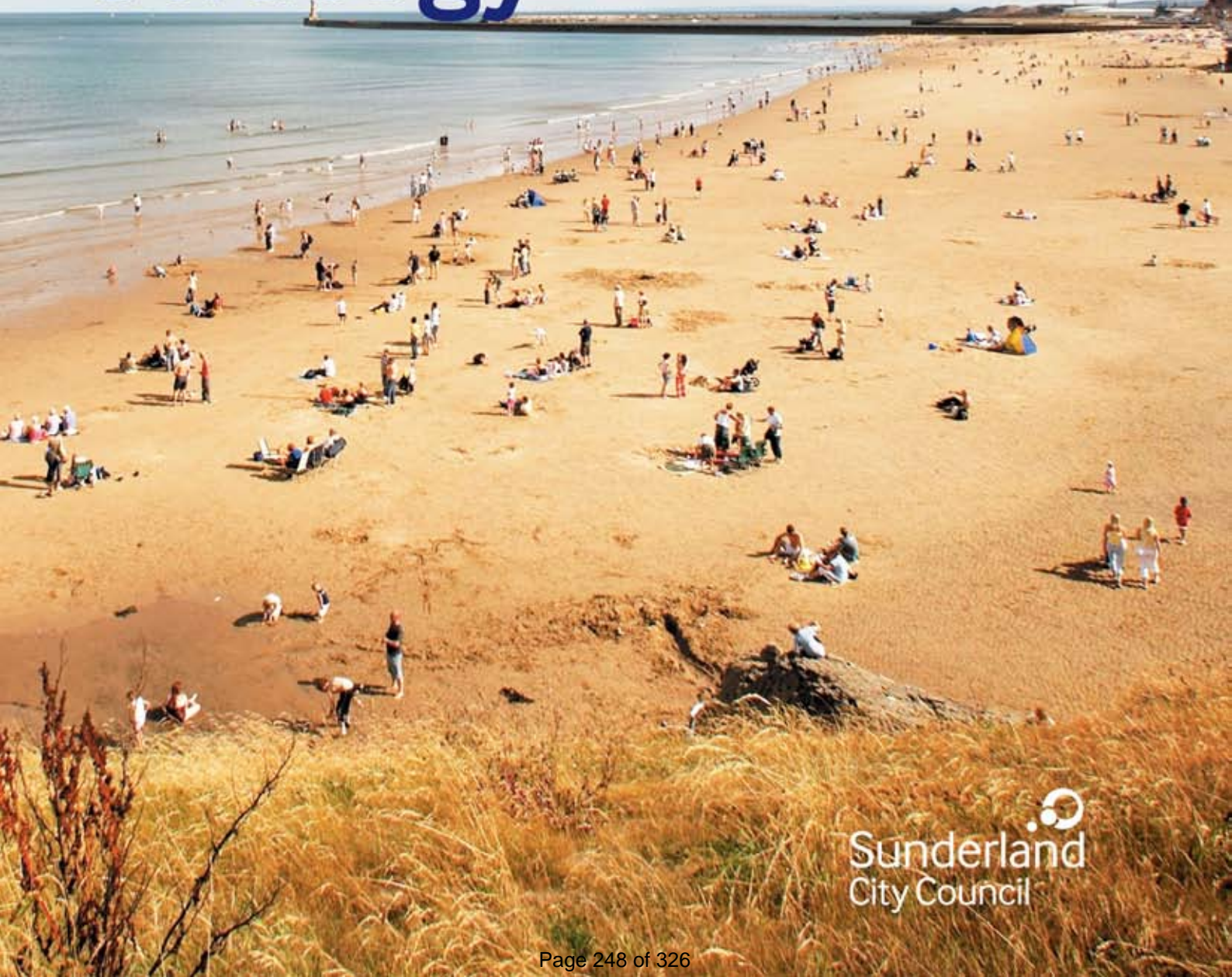
and maintenance as clean and attractive resorts. Following on from this a public consultation on the seafront was carried out in 2004 which informed the report "The Coastline as a Cultural Resource". The report gave recommendations on how to improve the seafront, including enhancing the environmental quality and attractiveness of the seafront, better security and signage.

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Seafront Regeneration Strategy



Seafront Regeneration Strategy

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Seafront Regeneration Strategy

The Seafront Regeneration Strategy is an overarching document to guide the regeneration of Roker and Seaburn seafronts and deliver the objective set out in the Sunderland Strategy (2008-2025), the overarching strategy for the city which states that: ‘ by 2025 Roker and Seaburn will have a key role in providing cultural tourism attractions.’

In order to deliver the aims and objectives of the Seafront Regeneration Strategy it is intended that a number of detailed documents are produced. The first of these documents is the Marine Walk Masterplan which has been prepared in conjunction with this strategy. This masterplan has been prepared as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and when approved will be a material consideration when determining planning applications and provide specific guidance on the regeneration of the seafront at Roker. A detailed masterplan for Seaburn will also be prepared.

The Unitary Development Plan 1998 (UDP) is the adopted Development Plan that guides new development and decisions on planning applications in the city under the Town and Country Planning Act (1990). The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) brought major changes to the planning system including the replacement of UDPs with a series of documents collectively called a Local Development Framework (LDF). Supplementary Planning Documents for the seafront will form part of Sunderland City Council’s Local Development Framework.

In addition to the Marine Walk masterplan a Promenade Public Realm Strategy and a Seafront Management Plan will be produced in order to help coordinate the delivery of the Seafront Regeneration Strategy.

The council recognises that the seafront at Roker and Seaburn (the seafront) is an area with unfulfilled potential. To inform the future direction of the seafront a city wide public consultation was undertaken between 16 February and 3 April 2009 to find out what the people who live in, work in and visit Sunderland feel should be the vision for the future of the seafront. The results of this consultation – contained in the Seafront Consultation Findings Report (May 2009) available at www.sunderland.gov.uk/seafront – have informed the development of this Regeneration Strategy (the strategy).

The strategy has a number of purposes:

- To establish an agreed vision and regeneration objectives for the seafront
- To act as a supporting document for future funding bids
- To ensure development at the seafront is cohesive and joined up
- To pull together and supplement the various policies relating to the seafront in emerging Development Plan Documents as part of the Local Development Framework process

In this section the strategy highlights the rich history of the seafront and its importance to both the city and the region.

Subsequent sections set out the policy context for the regeneration of the seafront, the results of public consultation, significant issues faced at the seafront, a vision and regeneration objectives for the seafront and, finally, how this can be delivered.



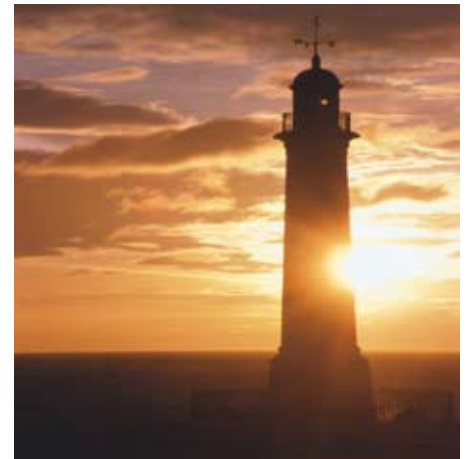
Roker Beach

1.2 The study area

This strategy focuses on the twin resorts of Roker and Seaburn, which stretch along 2.5km of coastline from Whitburn Bents in the north to the mouth of the River Wear in the south. The seafront occupies a relatively narrow strip astride Whitburn Road and Roker Terrace (the A183) which separate commercial and residential areas from the largely undeveloped cliff-top open spaces, the promenades and sweeping beaches. Figure 2 indicates the extent of this area.

1.3 Location of the seafront

Roker is located in St Peter’s Ward and Seaburn in Fulwell Ward on the north east edge of the city, in Sunderland’s North Area. The seafront has strong linkages to Sunderland city centre by road, pedestrian and cycle routes via Wearmouth Bridge. To the north, the seafront is well connected to South Tyneside’s coast via the A183. The River Wear separates the area from Sunderland’s port and coast to the south.



Old South Pier Lighthouse



Figure 1. Regional location of seafront strategy area



Figure 2. Seafront strategy area boundary

1.4 History of the seafront

The seafront has a rich and interesting history. The geology of Roker and Seaburn is hugely significant, dating back some 238 million years to when the famous 'cannonball' rocks first started forming in the coastal magnesian limestone cliffs. Archaeologists believe that Roker seafront may have been settled in prehistoric times, when the caves at Roker offered an attractive habitat for hunter-gatherer groups. This theory is supported by the prehistoric and Roman finds which have been recovered from Roker beach, including an antler harpoon and Roman coins.

The earliest recorded built development took place at Roker in the 1840s when Roker Terrace was built on the cliff tops. The suburb only began to develop after the opening of Roker Park in 1880 when Sir Hedworth Williamson and the Church Commissioners donated land for the development of a park on the condition the council build the road bridge to span

Roker Ravine. In 1885 the construction of Roker Pier – along the line of a natural rocky outcrop – and the lower promenade (now known as Marine Walk) commenced.

By 1907 Roker had become a thriving seaside resort. The promenade and sands were an obvious attraction and were often crowded with visitors. Roker Spa Hotel, designed by John Dobson in 1842, also drew many visitors to the seafront.

Seaburn's reputation was not established until the 1930s with the construction of seafront promenades, Seaburn Hotel, Queens Parade shops and Seaburn Hall. Seaburn quickly became a popular resort for North Eastern holidaymakers and local day-trippers, as well as visitors from further afield, including Scotland and the North West. One of its most famous visitors was the artist L.S. Lowry, who regularly stayed in the Seaburn Hotel and painted local scenes, including the beach.

The popularity of Roker and Seaburn has declined since the 1960s as growing prosperity and mobility has given holidaymakers wider choice. The 1980s and early 1990s saw major changes at Seaburn with the construction of a supermarket, the Pullman Lodge restaurant, bar and motel and the council's Seaburn Leisure Centre, as well as the relocation of the fairground. It was at this time the council reintroduced the seafront illuminations and launched the annual Sunderland International Airshow, still the largest free airshow in Europe. More recently the area has hosted sporting events and Sunderland Live Music Festival. These events attract many visitors, often with considerable success – the Airshow recently won an Enjoy England Award for Excellence. However, other popular events such as the seafront illuminations no longer take place.

Parson's Rock



Roker Hotel (c1920)



Sunderland International Airshow



1.5 The importance of the seafront today

Quality of life

Sunderland’s seafront is highly valued by the city and region as a whole. In 2007 Seaburn Beach came third in an online Pride of Place Poll for top beauty spots in the North East, just behind Durham Castle and Cathedral World Heritage Site and Penshaw Monument. Ninety four per cent of respondents to the Sunderland Community Spirit Summer Survey 2007 considered the seafront to be the most important green space in the city, being very or fairly important to their quality of life. It is noteworthy that Sunderland’s coast is one of the green spaces identified to be most in need of improvement in addition to being the most used and most important green space.

Attracting investment to the city

Having an attractive seafront with a variety of leisure opportunities in close proximity to the city centre is a unique selling point, which will aid Sunderland arc (the city’s Urban Regeneration Company) in delivering its key projects by attracting new residents and businesses to the city. The river corridor is seen by Sunderland arc as a key asset to the city and riverside sites are at the centre of the arc’s regeneration strategy. The arc is developing regeneration plans for several key sites including Stadium Village on the north of the river, Vaux, Farringdon Row and Holmeside to the south.

These former industrial sites, once among the economic drivers of the city until the decline of heavy industry in the 1980s, will now be developed to create new employment opportunities – including office, leisure (hotel and sports facilities) and high-quality retail – as well as city centre housing that will be attractive to those working in these new jobs. This will be complemented by regeneration to key city centre sites, including Holmeside Triangle and the historic heart of the city centre in and around Sunnyside. As these projects develop, links along the river corridor to the seafront will be enhanced further if the development of proposed pedestrian bridges connecting Vaux to Stadium Village and St Peter’s to Panns Bank, are realised.

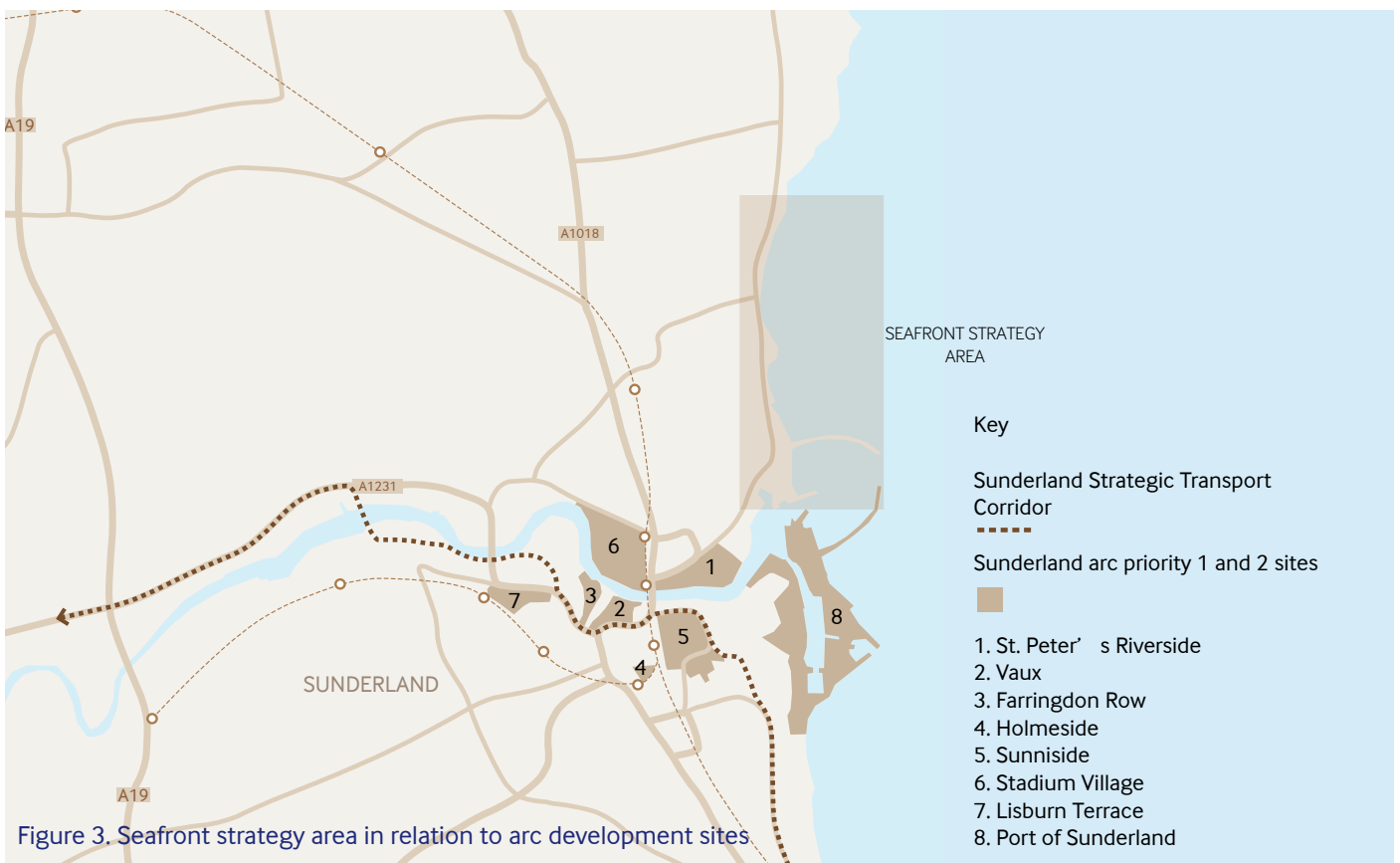


Figure 3. Seafront strategy area in relation to arc development sites

Attracting visitors to the region

The value of coastal tourism to the North East is estimated to be £400-£450 million, which is equivalent to over one fifth of the value of tourism to the region as a whole. The Regional Spatial Strategy, Regional Economic Strategy and Regional Cultural Strategy all acknowledge the seafront's role in promoting a positive image of the North East to attract visitors and investors to the region. Sunderland's seafront has many unique attractions which bring visitors and investment to the region.

Roker seafront is unique as the only place where three national cycle routes converge, making it a major gateway to the region. The Walney to Wear route, National Route 1 and the popular Sea to Sea (c2c) route draw both out-of-region and near-to-home visitors to the North East. In addition the North Sea cycle route, stretching 6,500km through seven countries, draws cyclists from around the world to Sunderland's seafront. In 2006 241,000 trips were made on the c2c alone, generating over £10million in spending and safeguarding 173 full-time equivalent jobs. In 2006 the c2c, Coast

and Castles, Hadrian's Wall cycleway and Pennine cycleway generated £4.2million in tourism income for the region. (The Economic Impact of Cycle Tourism in North East England, 2007, One Northeast and Sustrans).

The watersports hub located at Roker, comprising the marina, Adventure Sunderland, yacht club and North East Diving Academy also plays an important role in attracting watersports enthusiasts to the region.

The seafront has strong physical and historical linkages to two of Sunderland's main cultural attractions – St Peter's Church and former monastic site (dating from 673AD) and the National Glass Centre, a centre of national excellence supporting the production, exploration and enjoyment of contemporary glass. St Peter's and St Paul's in Jarrow form the twin Anglo-Saxon monastery of Wearmouth-Jarrow, the UK's nomination for UNESCO World Heritage Site status in 2011. The seafront is integral to the vision for the development of the candidate World Heritage Site. Sunderland and South Tyneside Councils are working

jointly to deliver the Landscape Vision for Wearmouth-Jarrow (2008) which emphasises the importance of enhancing the link between St Peter's and the sea.

Physically, the candidate World Heritage Site is linked to the seafront via a 1km riverside footpath and the St Peter's Sculpture Trail which is a popular environment for pedestrians and cyclists. From the route it is possible to follow Bede's Way, which runs along Roker and Seaburn seafront into South Tyneside and then on to St Paul's in Jarrow.

Sunderland's seafront impacts most notably on the region's tourism economy during the annual Sunderland International Airshow. The Airshow takes place on the last weekend of July and over two days attracts around a million spectators, leading to a significant increase in spending in local restaurants and cafes and a considerable rise in demand for accommodation.

c2c cyclist



St Peter's Riverside Sculpture Trail



National Glass Centre



2.0 Policy context

The regeneration of Sunderland’s seafront sits within the context of national, regional and local policy. This section provides a brief outline of policies that have informed the preparation of the Seafront Regeneration Strategy.

2.1 National planning policy

Planning Policy Statements (PPS) and Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG) provide Government guidance on planning policy.

- PPS 1: Delivering Sustainable Development sets the Government’s overall objectives for planning. This identifies ‘sustainable development’ as the core principle underpinning the planning system, whereby planning should ensure a better quality of life for everyone, both now and for future generations
- PPS9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation sets out the Government’s vision for conserving and enhancing biological diversity in England. To ensure planning decisions on biodiversity and geological conservation are fully considered local planning authorities must consider the environmental characteristics of their area and ensure appropriate weight is attached to designated sites of international, national and local importance and protected species

- PPG 15: Planning and the Historic Environment requires local authorities to designate areas of “special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”
- PPG 20: Coastal Planning emphasises the importance of reconciling development requirements with the need to protect and conserve the natural environment
- PPG 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation urges local authorities to recognise the actual and potential recreational value of natural features whilst minimising the impact of activity on those features. Where possible, access to natural features for sport and recreation purposes should be enhanced
- PPS 25: Planning and Flood Risk guides development in areas of flood risk
- The Good Practice Guide to Tourism encourages planners to engage with the tourism industry and public to ensure development maximises the many benefits of tourism
- The Marine and Coastal Access Bill seeks to improve access to the coast of England and to introduce a new framework for the seas based

on marine spatial planning which balances conservation, energy and resource needs

CABE and English Heritage have published a number of documents including Shifting Sands (2003) and Regeneration in Historic Towns (2007), demonstrating that high quality design, open spaces and enhancing the historic environment can radically regenerate seaside resorts.

2.2 Regional policy context

The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) sets out a long-term strategy for the spatial development of the North East. It provides a spatial context for the delivery of other regional strategies including the Regional Economic Strategy, Regional Image Strategy and Regional Cultural Strategy. In relation to the seafront, RSS Policy 16 proposes that investment is directed at improving existing facilities, attractions and accommodation.

A range of regeneration and cultural strategies have been produced relating to the seafront including the Regional Cultural Strategy (2005) by Culture North East; North East Tourism Strategy (2005-2010) and a Framework for the North East’s Coastal Economy (2006) both commissioned by One North East. These strategies see the potential to build on the North East’s distinctive character and attractive coastline to improve quality of life in the region and benefit the local

The Red Arrows flying over the Old South Pier Lighthouse



Sunderland International Airshow



Artwork ‘Taking Flight’



economy. It is proposed that Sunderland improves its tourism offer by developing its existing events calendar, improving linkages to the hinterland, and investing in art and heritage.

Environmental guidance includes the Wear Estuary Management Plan and the Shoreline Management Plan 2, which states that beach control should be improved and defences maintained at Seaburn and Marine Walk, Roker.

2.3 Partnership policies

In 2004 the Tyne and Wear Coastal Partnership, comprising representatives from Sunderland City Council, North Tyneside Council and South Tyneside Council, commissioned consultants to produce the Tyne and Wear Coastal Regeneration Strategy (TWCRS).

The TWCRS outlined the main areas for action as: image, transport, jobs and skills, partnership working and complementary product development. The main recommendation of the report is to concentrate on the development of key tourism products, based on:

- Maritime and coastal activities
- History and heritage
- Events and sport
- Business tourism
- Developing a range of niche tourism products

This informed the development of the Tourism Management Plan 2008-2011 for the Tyne and Wear sub-region by the Area Tourism Partnership. This serves as an action plan for organisations and businesses involved in the management, development and promotion of Tyne and Wear's visitor experience. The renaissance of Sunderland is seen as having huge potential in building Tyne and Wear's visitor economy. The vision is that Tyne and Wear's visitor destinations will be

renowned for the cultural experience, the city experience and the coastal experience they offer, attracting leisure and business visitors from all over the UK and from overseas.

The Sunderland Strategy 2008– 2025 is the overarching strategy for the city, produced by the Sunderland Partnership. The strategy states that by 2025, Roker and Seaburn seafront will have a key role in providing cultural and tourism attractions, creating an attractive, accessible and desirable destination.

The Sunderland Image Strategy 2008-2025 sets out Sunderland's brand values as: "life enhancing", "smart" and "balanced." It recognises the seafront as an underused resource and states that Sunderland is to be promoted as a city by the sea with a high quality of life to offer.

The Sunderland arc business plan 2009 outlines Sunderland's Urban Regeneration Company's overarching strategies to regenerate the city, attracting new residents, investors and visitors to create a sustainable Sunderland.

The Durham Biodiversity Action Plan (DBAP) was produced in June 2007 by the Durham Biodiversity Partnership and includes Sunderland. The DBAP contains a series of work-plans to help species and habitats in the Durham Area that are considered to be under threat locally, nationally or internationally.

2.4 Local policies

The Local Development Framework (LDF) is the spatial planning mechanism to help deliver the Sunderland Strategy. Once adopted the Core Strategy will lie at the heart of the LDF, setting out the overarching strategic planning framework for the city up to 2021. The currently adopted Unitary Development Plan (UDP) continues to apply to the seafront until its

relevant policies are superseded by those in the LDF. In summary, UDP policies seek to pursue recreational opportunities at the seafront to serve local, city-wide and regional needs; conserve the environment; preserve and enhance the character and appearance of listed buildings and conservation areas; and maintain and improve accessibility to the seafront.

Other local policy documents considered in this report include the Legible City Framework which sets out a range of projects to improve the legibility of Sunderland; the Play and Urban Games Strategy setting out a strategic approach to play; CultureFirst - the cultural masterplan for the city; Coastline as a Cultural Resource which sets out recommendations on how to improve the seafront; and the Roker Park Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan which guides development within the conservation area.

The council is preparing a Greenspace Strategy which will include a quantitative and qualitative assessment of existing open space, sport and recreational needs. Local standards for quality, quantity and accessibility will be adopted.

2.5 Summary

The policy context emphasises the role the seafront has to play in enhancing the city and its image through tourism and culture-led regeneration, which builds on the seafront's heritage, cultural events calendar and attractive environment. A sustainable approach should be taken to providing opportunities for passive and active recreation.

3.0 Research and analysis

3.1 Land use

Figure 4 on page 16 sets out the land uses at Roker and Seaburn seafront. Commercial activity is concentrated at Seaburn, the focus of which is the Pullman Lodge hotel, amusement arcades and Morrison's supermarket. Restaurants, bars and the Marriott (formerly Seaburn) Hotel extend further south along Whitburn Road. There are also a number of council leisure facilities at Seaburn including the Seaburn Leisure Centre, children's play facilities and the recently completed skate park. Open space at Recreation Park and Seaburn Camp, and the vast area of car parking behind the Seaburn Centre, are used during event days on an occasional basis, but remain relatively under-used during the remainder of the year.

Roker, in contrast, primarily serves as a passive recreational space for the local community. The area is popular with walkers, cyclists starting and completing the C2C cycle route, surfers and other watersports enthusiasts. A hub for watersports has developed, comprising a popular Marina and Marine Activities Centre, Sport England's Adventure Sunderland and a commercial diving centre. Roker has a rich heritage, containing areas of historical interest such as the lifeguard museum and Roker Conservation Area, which includes Roker Park and the Grade II Listed pier and lighthouse. A cluster of hotels and guesthouses can be found along Roker Terrace. Although several large houses have been converted into residential care homes, the majority of the built-up area behind the seafront is in private residential use. Marine Walk contains a number of commercial buildings and council facilities including the resort office, The Smugglers pub and Roker Amusements.

Marriott Hotel



Adventure Sunderland



North East Diving Academy





Figure 4. Land use plan for the seafront strategy area

3.2 Movement, arrivals and connections

Figure 5 on page 18 illustrates movement along Sunderland seafront is broadly separated into two areas – movement along the upper promenade (A183) and the lower promenade. The upper promenade is a popular coastal route for both vehicles and cyclists, and runs along Sunderland seafront to South Shields in South Tyneside. In contrast the lower promenade is more of a pedestrian oriented environment which is divided by Roker Cliff into two district area known as Marine Walk (Roker lower promenade) and Seaburn lower promenade.

In Roker the upper and lower promenades are linked via steep and uneven pathways which make the two areas seem remote from each other. At Seaburn the lower promenade is more accessible due to the lower gradient.

Within the study area there are areas where pedestrian and vehicular movement overlap, which is generally a source of conflict. Vehicles can access the lower promenade at Roker via Pier View, a small road linking the upper promenade to Marine Walk Road. Once on Marine Walk Road vehicles can travel south to car parking or north to a roundabout, after which it is access only. This can result in an environment that is difficult for pedestrians and cyclists to navigate.

Similar conflict exists at Seaburn. The busy A183 serves as a barrier to movement between Ocean Park and the amenities to the west of the study area, and the lower promenade and beaches to the east.

St Peter’s, Stadium of Light and Seaburn metro stations are all located within walking distance of the seafront. Poor signage directing people to and from these stations and the seafront is proving a missed opportunity to promote this sustainable mode of transport and the service it offers in terms of access to the seafront and direct services into Newcastle and the airport as discussed in more detail in Section 6.7.

This strategy presents an opportunity to improve the accessibility of the seafront by promoting access to Roker and Seaburn by sustainable modes of transport. This will be supported by and complement the delivery of the Local Transport Plan 2 (LTP2), which establishes how transport patterns and routes will be developed across Tyne and Wear over the period 2006 to 2011.

The seafront is a popular environment for cyclists. The Walney to Wear route, National Route 1, c2c route and Bede’s Way route draw many cyclists to the area. Although the cycle route along the upper promenade is well established, there are points of conflict elsewhere between pedestrians and cyclists.

As discussed in more detail in section 6.0 there are six main gateways into and within Sunderland seafront - Seaburn metro station, Whitburn, North Haven, Harbour View, Ocean Park, Recreation Park and Cliff Park. These gateways currently do little to create a strong sense of arrival and do little to maximise views of the seafront.

Illegal parking on Marine Walk



A183 a barrier to pedestrian movement



Steep pathways linking Roker lower and upper promenades





Figure 5. Movement analysis plan of the seafront strategy area

3.3 Public consultation

To inform this Strategy Sunderland City Council undertook a city wide consultation between 16 February and 3 April 2009. The purpose of the consultation was to find out what the people who live in, work in and visit Sunderland feel should be the vision for the future of the seafront. People were asked whether the vision should be a seafront for a quiet walk, for family fun, for watersports, for great events or any other suggestions they may have.

Data was collected using two methods - a survey (seafront consultation form) and workshops. The survey formed part of the Community Spirit Spring Survey 2009 and was also made available at:

- All libraries across the city
- The Resort Office on Marine Walk
- Exhibitions in the Sunderland Aquatic Centre, Civic Centre main reception and Central Library
- Drop in sessions held in the Mobile Customer Service Centre at Marine Walk and Market Square (in the city centre) during the consultation period

The survey could be completed online at www.sunderland.gov.uk/seafront. A copy of the survey was posted to all businesses and residents within the study area and it was printed in the Sunderland Echo on Wednesday 25 March 2009.

Workshops were undertaken by the council with the Disability Alliance of Sunderland (DAS) and the Older People Independent Advisory Group (IAG). City wide and Youth Parliament workshops were undertaken by Planning Aid, an independent organisation which offers free planning support, advice and training to communities. The results of these workshops are available in a separate report produced by Planning Aid. A summary of the consultation findings are set out in the Seafront Consultation Findings Report available at www.sunderland.gov.uk/seafront.

The consultation received a high response rate, emphasising the importance of the seafront to the people of Sunderland. 2,455 people completed the survey and over 200 people participated in workshops. In summary the consultation found that respondents favoured separate visions for Roker and Seaburn seafronts. Whilst it was felt that the three most important aspects in a vision for Roker should be to make the most of the area for relaxation, protect the natural environment and improve what's on offer for families, it was felt that the three most important aspects in a vision for Seaburn should be the provision of more wet weather facilities, more high quality restaurants and cafes and improved outdoor facilities for families. Therefore whereas it was felt Seaburn should be more of a resort offering activities for families, Roker seafront should be somewhere to go and relax and enjoy the natural environment. Images produced by Planning Aid to illustrate the results of the public consultation are shown on pages 20 and 21.

Seafront workshop - outcomes



Consultation drop-in session, Marine Walk



Site visit with Disability Alliance of Sunderland



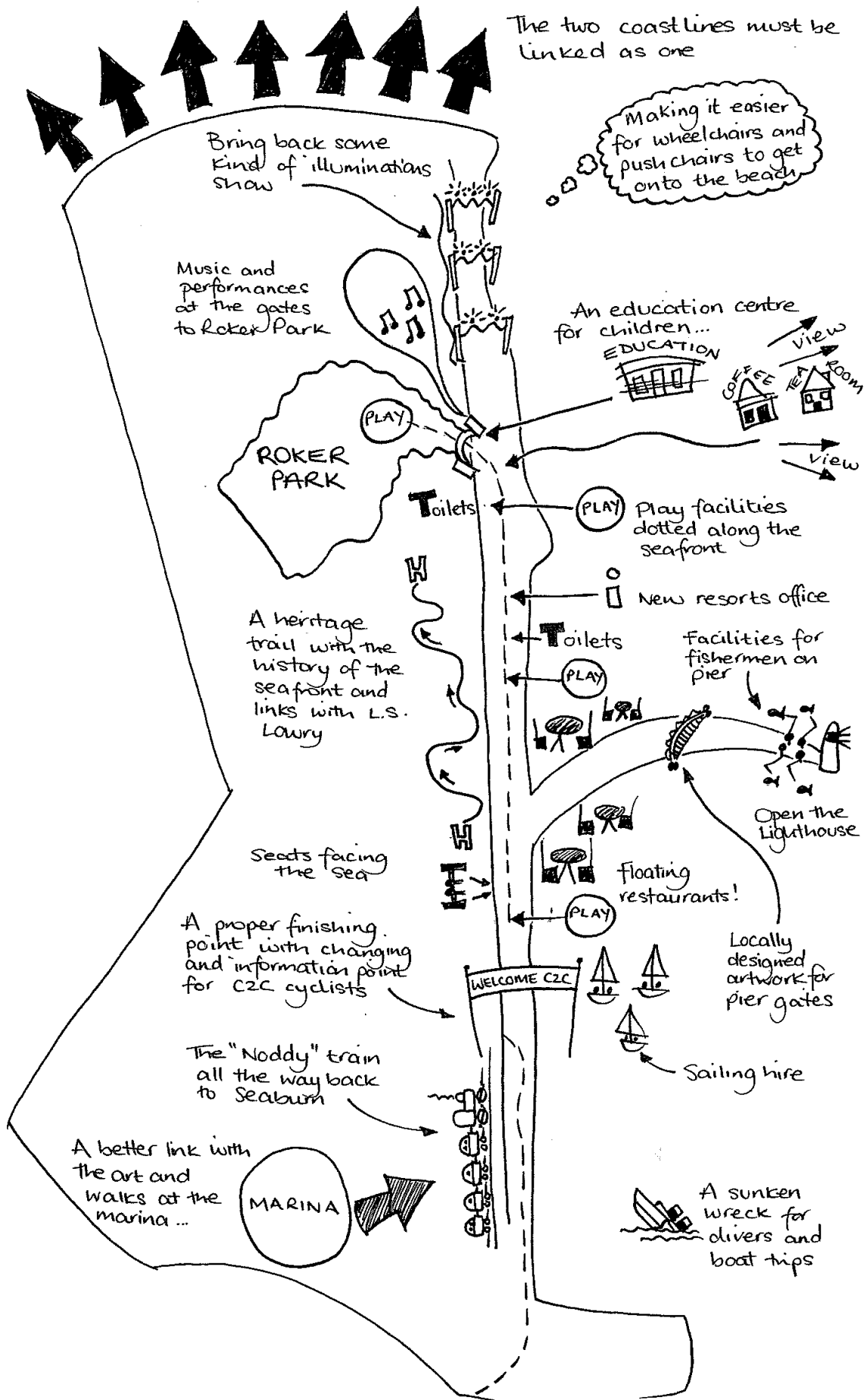


Figure 6. Public Consultation findings plan - Roker (Produced by Planning Aid)

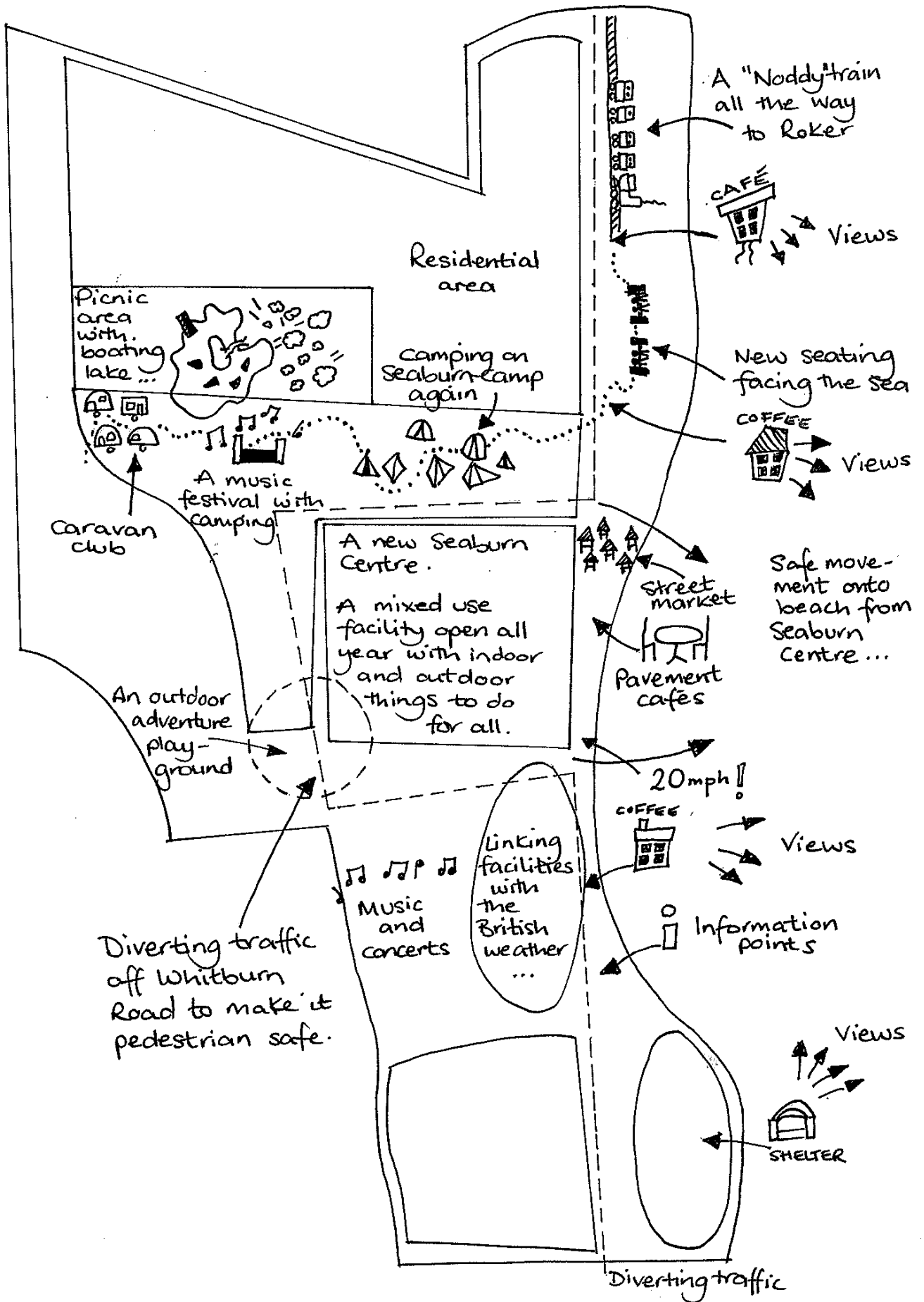


Figure 7. Public Consultation findings plan - Seaburn (Produced by Planning Aid)

4.0 Issues and opportunities

4.1 Challenges

Environmental

Flood risk and coastal erosion are important issues which need increasing consideration as our climate changes and sea levels rise. The 2006 Tyne and Wear Strategic Floodrisk Assessment highlighted areas which would be at risk of flooding over the next 50 years, including within Roker, the Marina and land adjacent to Holey Rock, and within Seaburn, the lower promenade and Cut Throat Dene. Linked to this the public realm at the seafront degrades at a faster rate in the marine environment meaning the area requires considerable maintenance. The existing maintenance budget for the seafront is not sufficient to meet the maintenance requirements of this area.

Social

The seafront at Roker and Seaburn attracts a large number of visitors during the summer months and on events days. This increased footfall can place strain on existing facilities. The seafront public consultation highlighted that a major issue at the seafront is the lack of adequate toilet facilities. Existing toilet facilities do not meet demand as they are insufficient in number, do not open frequently enough and do not provide modern facilities such as changing areas. The attraction of a large number of people also leads to increased generation of litter. On particularly busy days there are an insufficient number of bins adjacent to takeaways to hold the amount of litter generated, meaning bins overflow.

Certain areas of the seafront attract anti-social behaviour and vandalism. This is a particular issue on areas of the lower promenade which receive little footfall and are relatively concealed. The seating shelters at Roker and Seaburn were highlighted in the seafront public consultation as being the focus of anti-social behaviour. Both shelters are empty and seating has now been removed due to vandalism. The knock-on effect of this is that people are deterred from visiting these areas at certain times of the day and evening, which reinforces the perception that these areas are unsafe.

Physical

Despite the seafront's proximity to the city centre and transport routes, connections to the remainder of the city are poor. The majority of visitors wishing to travel to the area by bus must first travel to the city centre before changing bus service.

Although there are two metro stations within walking distance of the seafront (St Peter's and Seaburn metro stations), this is not promoted. There is a lack of any signing, artwork or reference to the seafront at either station meaning visitors may be unaware that the city boasts fine beaches.

There are a number of barriers to movement within the study area. Uneven surface materials, steep pathways and a lack of drop kerbs create difficulties for wheelchair users and pushchairs. Illegal parking on areas of paving both at Marine Walk and Ocean Park at peak times can also make the area difficult for pedestrians to navigate.

Roker lighthouse in stormy seas



Crowds on Airshow day, Seaburn



Steep and uneven pathways, Roker



A major point of conflict for cyclists is the Marina to the south of the study area where the C2C route passes an area which is popular for fishing. At this point fishing poles block much of the cycle route.

Another barrier to movement is the area adjacent Ocean Park at Seaburn. Car parking and the majority of amenities are located to the west of the A183, meaning pedestrians must cross this busy road to access the lower promenade and beach. Although a light-controlled crossing is located adjacent to the Seaburn Leisure Centre there is little to direct people to this crossing point and the crossing itself has a very short crossing time, which causes difficulty for the less mobile.

The quality of the built environment varies greatly throughout the seafront. Although there are many buildings of architectural merit, particularly within Roker and Whitburn Bents Conservation Areas, the majority of modern development lacks character and does little to integrate with the surrounding area. The result is an area lacking in a sense of identity. This lack of identity is exacerbated by poor gateways into the area at Harbour View and Ocean Park .

Economic

As with many British coastal resorts the popularity of Roker and Seaburn as a holiday destination declined in the 1960s as growing prosperity and mobility gave holiday makers wider choice. This has led to a decline in many of the seafront's attractions. Previous attempts to create new attractions, such as a golf driving range and zoo, have not been long lived leaving a number of redundant spaces which create a poor image for visitors to the area. With the exception of the small number of hotels and guesthouses the majority of the seafront comprises uses aimed primarily at the community, such as the supermarket, restaurants and housing. The seafront is not fulfilling its potential to attract visitors to the city and bring investment to Sunderland's economy.

Poor quality buildings at Marine Walk



Restaurants at Seaburn



4.2 Assets

Heritage

The seafront is steeped in local culture and history dating back to prehistoric times. Many prehistoric objects have been recovered from the beach, suggesting that the caves in this area at one time hosted hunter-gatherer groups. Many local legends have developed around the caves at Roker. It is reputed that Spottee's Cave at the mouth of Roker Park extends hundreds of metres along a system of underground tunnels all the way to St Peter's Church – the candidate World Heritage Site that is of outstanding universal cultural and heritage value – and possibly even to Hylton Castle. It is rumoured that the tunnels were used by fishermen, keelmen and bargemen to smuggle illegal goods ashore in the 17th and 18th Centuries; indeed, Roker ravine was also known as 'smugglers haunt'.

Throughout their history Roker and Seaburn have been linked with many individuals of note and considerable talent. Isambard Kingdom Brunel famously designed the North Dock at Roker and John Dobson was the architect behind Roker Spa Hotel. Both structures can still be seen today. More recently, Lowry famously stayed in Seaburn Hotel and painted many pictures of this stretch of coastline. These are just some examples of the points of interest which makes Roker and Seaburn seafront so unique.

Roker Hotel



Built environment

The coastal zone at Roker and Seaburn contains many noteworthy structures and buildings, the majority of which are located in the two Conservation Areas. Roker Park Conservation Area, in 1995, is located to the south of the study area, and displays many fine examples of Victorian and Edwardian architecture, Grade II Listed Roker Pier and Lighthouse, St Andrew's Church - known as the 'Cathedral of the Arts and Craft Movement' and Roker Bridge - one of Roker's earliest man-made structures. Whitburn Bents Conservation Area is located to the north of the study area at the gateway to Sunderland seafront. The Conservation Area was designated in 1970 and features a concave terrace of early 20th century cottages built on the site of earlier fisherman's cottages, and a former eighteenth century farmstead, all of which add to the appeal and character of the seafront.

Roker pier at Marine Walk



Natural environment

The seafront has an attractive natural environment of considerable ecological and geological value. The geology of the seafront dates back some 238 million years, and contains some rare examples of geological formations including the 'cannonball' rocks which are found only in Sunderland and New Zealand. This rock formation is concentrated at Parson's Rock, which is part of the Northumbria Coast Special Protection Area, and has been designated as a Ramsar site under the European Convention of Wetlands of International Importance, reflecting its importance as a bird habitat for wintering Turnstone, wintering Purple Sandpiper and breeding Little Tern part of the Durham Coast Special Area of Conservation is located to the north of Parson's Rock at Whitburn Bents. The area is valued as the only example of vegetated sea cliffs off the Atlantic and Baltic Coasts on magnesian limestone in the UK. The seafront environment creates drama and interest, giving Sunderland seafront a diverse and unique character.

Parson's Rock



Existing events calendar

The seafront has a reputation for successfully hosting events which began in the 1800s when performances and tea dances regularly took place around Holey Rock Corner. Since this time the seafront has hosted a wide range of events including the Sunderland Illuminations, Great North Women's Run, Sunderland Live and the festivals of Rivers and the Sea, as well as regular summer programmes of family activities and live music. Sunderland International Airshow, the seafront's most well known event, remains the largest free airshow in Europe. In 2008 the Airshow was voted the best tourism experience in the Enjoy England Awards. The seafront events calendar continues to develop; in 2009 it hosted the first Great North 10k run.

Dancers at the Festival of the Rivers and the Sea



Cycle links

The seafront is unique as being the only place where three national cycle routes meet; the Sea to Sea Cycle Route (c2c), Route 1 of the National Cycle Network (The East Coast Cycle Route), the Bede's Way Cycle Route and the St Peter's Sculpture Trail. In 2006 241,000 trips were made on the c2c alone, generating over £10 million in spend and safeguarding 173 full-time equivalent jobs.

Watersports facilities and accommodation

Roker and Seaburn seafront is increasingly used for watersports such as surfing and sea kayaking. A hub of watersports facilities has developed at Roker, centred around Adventure Sunderland, the Marine Activities Centre, the Marina and the North East Diving Academy. These facilities receive considerable use. The availability of these activities in close proximity to the city centre is a key asset which can be used to promote Sunderland as a place to live which offers a high quality of life where a balance between work and leisure time can be achieved.

The majority of Sunderland's visitor accommodation is located at the seafront. Hotels, guesthouses and B&Bs are an important tourism asset.

The Marina



Links to Sunderland's cultural assets

Sunderland seafront is well connected to Sunderland's main cultural attractions - the National Glass Centre, a national centre of excellence for the development of contemporary glass and St Peter's Church which, with St Paul's in South Tyneside, forms the twin Anglo-Saxon monastery of Wearmouth-Jarrow: the UK's nomination for World Heritage Site inscription in 2010. Both of these attractions are within walking distance of the seafront via the St Peter's Artwork Trail, an attractive environment popular with both cyclists and pedestrians.

Links to the region's heritage and cultural assets

The region's main heritage and cultural attractions are also well connected to Sunderland's seafront, including Arbeia Roman fort. Sunderland seafront is well connected to South Shields seafront in South Tyneside – the road and cycle route connecting the two destinations offers impressive views of the North East coast making it a popular route for both drivers and cyclists. This route receives the most use by runners during the Pier to Pier run, a 7 mile run between South Shields Pier and Roker Pier. Both Sunderland and South Tyneside Councils are working to deliver the Legibility Project to further enhance links between the two resorts and provide a complementary tourism offer.

St Peter's Church



4.3 Opportunities

Environmental

The natural environment is the seafront's main asset to be protected and promoted. The Seafront Regeneration Strategy presents an opportunity to ensure that future development at the seafront works with nature rather than against it. This can be achieved by making people more aware of the area's natural assets, for example through interpretation, and by focussing development away from areas which are environmentally sensitive, or at risk of flooding or coastal erosion.

There is an opportunity to replace elements of the existing public realm with durable materials and robust street furniture that is better suited to the marine environment. Materials on the lower promenade must be carefully selected to ensure they are able to withstand flooding from winter storms and will weather naturally. In addition, attention must be paid to how materials are laid in this area; appropriate sub-bases must be designed and laid to ensure materials don't fail due to heavy use or sea water damage during storm conditions.

Social

This strategy presents an opportunity to consider the provision of amenities at the seafront comprehensively and to consider where new and upgraded amenities will be required as regeneration proposals progress.

Crime and the fear of crime can be reduced by good design. Implementing the Seafront Regeneration Strategy has the potential to increase feelings of safety by improving lighting, bringing vacant buildings back into use and increasing footfall.

Physical

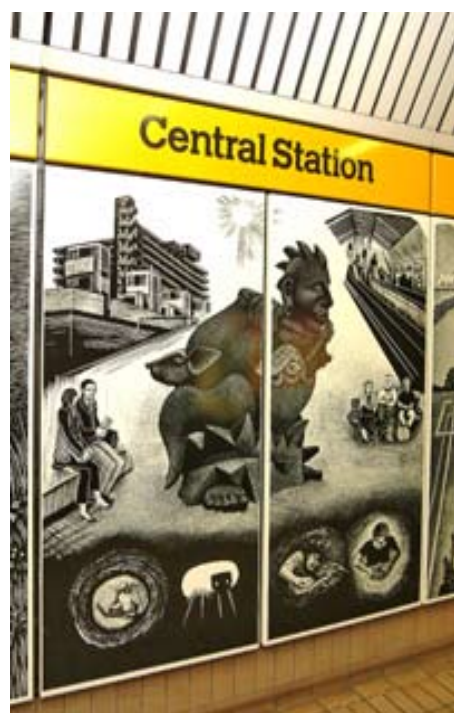
Delivering the regeneration of the seafront has the potential to attract a greater number of visitors to the area and create demand for public transport links which may not currently seem viable. There is an opportunity for the council to work with bus operators to explore demand for improved bus links to the seafront, in particular a bus route which will link Sunderland's main cultural attractions - St Peter's, the National Glass Centre and the seafront.

There is also the opportunity to work with NEXUS to explore ways in which links from St Peter's and Seaburn metro stations can be promoted to encourage more people to use sustainable modes of transport to travel to the seafront. Promoting metro links will have the added benefit of reducing traffic congestion and the need for additional car parking.

Promenade improvements Cleveleys' New Wave,' Lancashire Midland Hotel, Morecambe



Art on the Metro



A high level of vacant land within the seafront is under the ownership of the council. This gives the council control over the quality of development coming forward, both in the nature of the development and the design quality. The council will ensure that future development proposals are of a high quality, reflective of the importance of this key location. New development must take influence from the best aspects of the existing built environment and must complement the surrounding landscape.

Prior to any new developments taking place consideration of the principles of PPS25 must be fully considered in order to ensure that flood risk is mitigated as far as possible.

Economic

There is a growing trend for domestic holidays due to the current UK recession and, to a lesser extent, increased environmental awareness which is encouraging holiday makers to consider more sustainable holidays options. In the present climate there is an opportunity for the seafront at Roker and Seaburn to adapt and promote itself once again as a destination with a rich heritage and attractive natural environment, with links to some of the region's main attractions. The seafront's reputation as an events location, growing watersports hub, with a popular marina and gateway to the region's main cycle routes will be key to promoting this area in the future.

Promenade improvements at Bridlington



Promenade improvements at Cleveleys, Lancashire



5.0 The vision and objectives

5.1 The Vision

Building on its unique natural environment and rich heritage, the seafront will be an attractive, safe, clean and accessible destination for all residents and visitors that the people of Sunderland can be proud of. Roker and Seaburn will once again be ‘a playground for the people.’ Whilst Roker seafront will be an area to relax and enjoy the attractive natural environment, Seaburn will be a family focused resort offering high quality indoor and outdoor facilities. It will be a welcoming place to enjoy all year round, which offers activities and events for everyone, supporting Sunderland’s aspiration to be the UK’s most livable city.



5.2 The objectives

1. To create an attractive environment where both residents and visitors can relax
2. To develop a sense of place and pride by building on the area's rich heritage and attractive natural environment
3. To create a family friendly area which is safe and clean
4. To provide high quality public amenities
5. To offer high quality and affordable activities and cultural events throughout the year
6. To create an area which is physically and intellectually accessible
7. To maximise the impact and improve the economic vibrancy of the area



6.0 The framework

6.1 Strategic principles

Planting

Salt air and wind in coastal locations create difficult conditions for even the hardiest plants to establish themselves. It is therefore unsustainable and uneconomic to introduce large areas of new soft landscaping along the seafront. However, it is proposed that a greater variety of coastal planting be considered for the grassed banks on Roker’s lower promenade to give the area a more natural feel. Additional planting should be considered where appropriate as part of wider improvement schemes and any new developments to add to the character of the area.

Existing soft landscaping should be well maintained and not left to detract from the character of the area. Where landscaping is no longer adding to the character of an area it should be removed and more appropriate planting or hard landscaping introduced.

Hybrid sage



Street furniture

The age, design and materials of existing street furniture are inconsistent along the length of the seafront. There are multiple styles, types and ages of seats, litterbins, planters and railings, all in varying condition.

In order to create an attractive location for visitors to enjoy, the ad hoc nature of street furniture must be replaced with a more consistent approach.

Innovative, multifunctional, items of street furniture should be considered at key locations and public spaces, for example information boards that are linked to public art, while incorporating lighting and seating.

All street furniture and fittings must be robust, resistant to vandalism and capable of coping with the coastal environment.

The recent public realm works undertaken to provide a setting for the c2c art feature have included new timber and corten steel seats and cycle stands. These materials have been chosen to fit within the coastal environment providing a robust and attractive solution. These products are a good example of street furniture that is suitable in a coastal location.

Cycle racks at Marine Walk



Surface materials

Footpath and promenade surface materials along the length of the seafront have deteriorated in a number of locations and are not coordinated. Concrete surfaces are used in some areas, whilst exposed aggregate, paving and tarmac surfaces are used elsewhere.

New surface materials must be durable and in certain locations be able to withstand flooding from the sea. Attention must also be paid to how materials are laid to ensure they don’t fail due to heavy use or sea water damage.

In key spaces it may be appropriate to introduce higher quality materials such as granite sets, which have recently been used as a setting for the c2c art feature. In other areas the use of exposed aggregate or resin bonded gravel would provide an appropriate surface for the coastal location.

It may also be appropriate to introduce timber board walks in key areas to provide interest to otherwise bland hard surfaces, to create accent areas and informal seating spaces. The use of board walks must be carefully considered and used only where they can be protected from direct wave impact.

Resin bonded gravel



Where appropriate all surfaces must be designed to highway standards and, where appropriate vehicular and emergency access loadings must be taken into account.

Masterplans for Roker and Seaburn should consider how street furniture and surface materials can be rationalised. As part of any future improvements consideration should be given to preparing a more detailed public realm strategy for the seafront, providing design codes for each character area to inform the design process.

Legibility and wayfinding

The existing provision of wayfinding and other information along the seafront is haphazard and in need of improvement.

As part of wider efforts to improve legibility and wayfinding in the city the form, design and content of the information should be addressed in an integrated fashion for the seafront as part of this wider strategy. Clear, well located and accurate signs should be provided to guide visitors.

The range of new signs selected should be considered within the context of existing and proposed street furniture, maintenance considerations of the coastal location and the overall image and identity of Sunderland.

A bespoke range of signs could be commissioned within the context of the wider Sunderland legibility project, which could strongly reinforce the identity of the seafront and become a marketing tool. A more cost effective solution would be to procure existing commercially available signs and add some limited customisation for the seafront. This option is widely available from many suppliers and can be a good compromise solution.

Any new signs must be selected as part of a family with consistent materials, sizes and shapes. Designs must be clear and engaging (with provision for blind and partially sighted users).

Consideration should be given to introducing a range of new interpretation boards and trails covering a range of topics including heritage, wildlife and local history.

High quality seating solutions



Simon Ringe, Wildspace Network - sign



Example of an illuminated bridge



Lighting

The seafront has a history of hosting lighting events, most notably the Sunderland Illuminations which stretched along the length of the seafront, until the 1980s. Street lighting and feature lighting are an important part of the identity of the seafront and careful consideration shall be given to their use to maximise impact.

Street lighting: The existing street lighting along the seafront (with the exception of the lower promenade at Roker) was installed in the 1980s. The columns were designed to bear the weight of the illuminations and although the Sunderland Illuminations no longer take place the columns remain. The public consultation feedback suggests that many people associate the columns with the identity of the seafront and careful consideration should be given to any proposals to replace them. Any new columns should also add to the identity of the seafront and be sympathetic to the existing character of the area. Whilst it may be appropriate to introduce one style of column along the whole of the seafront it may be appropriate to introduce a different style of column along the lower promenade at Roker, which has a very different character to the upper promenade and Seaburn. The existing columns along the lower promenade are a mix of styles and of varying quality. Priority should be given to their replacement as part of any wider improvements to the area.

Spirit of the Staithes, Blyth



Feature lighting: Feature lighting can enhance structures, buildings, and landscapes. Lighting can also help to define routes and emphasise views and vistas. Modern lighting techniques offer almost unlimited opportunities to introduce additional lighting along the seafront. These opportunities include the lighting of natural features such as the cliff face at Holey Rock Corner, Seaburn and Roker beaches and built features such as Roker Pier and Lighthouse, Old South Pier, Roker Bridge and the old South Pier Lighthouse in Cliff Park.

The impact the lighting effects will have on roosting birds and other protected species will be considered when deciding on its positioning.

Safety: It is important to recognise that the introduction of lighting in an area can also improve the feeling of safety in an area, reducing opportunities for crime and reducing the fear of crime. The need to improve safety along the lower promenade at Roker was highlighted in the public consultation.

Public artwork, Cleveley Promenade



Sustainability: The introduction of new lighting can have an environmental impact in terms of energy consumption and sky glow. Careful consideration must be given to this potential impact and the following should be considered:

- The use of high efficiency luminaires with high performance optical systems with reduced light spill and light trespass
- The use of high efficiency lamps and LEDs
- The use of energy efficient electronic control gear
- The use of flexible control systems

Public art

There are a number of existing pieces of public art along the seafront, although many of them are not celebrated and can often be overlooked.

Public art can play an important role in improving the appearance and character of the seafront as part of an integrated approach with enhancement of the public realm and new lighting.

Existing artworks should be better celebrated by installing new interpretation material.

c2c sculpture, Whitehaven



Any new works should be a celebration of the distinctiveness of the seafront and add to its character and identity, providing constant year-long interest through temporary as well as permanent works that set international standards of quality and showcase local talent. Public art can also be a medium through which local people can be engaged, such as through local schools, higher and further education institutions and voluntary organisations.

Public art does not have to be sculptures or installations; it can also be part of the urban fabric, for example street furniture, signs, lighting or even buildings. Where opportunities exist to integrate artworks into wider improvements and new development, consideration should be given to working with artists as part of the wider project design team.

Reference should be made to the council's emerging Public Arts Strategy when considering any proposals for public art.

Cycling

Cycling at the seafront is an important activity with a number of national cycle routes passing along and ending/starting at the seafront (including National Route 1, the c2c and Walney to Wear routes). Whilst generally the quality of the routes along the seafront is good there are a number of areas where routes are poorly designed and laid out, bringing cyclists into conflict with street furniture, pedestrians and other users.

Covered depot building, Hornsea



When designing improvement schemes and new developments the opportunity to introduce new cycle routes and facilities, and improve existing routes and facilities must be considered.

All improvements must be in keeping with the objectives of the Sunderland Cycling Strategy (available at www.sunderland.gov.uk/cycling). Specifically proposals must help to achieve the following policies as set out in the Sunderland Cycling Strategy (2002):

C2: Route networks will achieve high standards of coherence, directness, safety, attractiveness and comfort. Design and layout of routes and associated cycling facilities will take account of guidelines published in Supplementary Guidance to the UDP. The City Council will aim to ensure that development does not sever or prejudice accessibility to cycle routes.

C5: The City Council will endeavour to secure the provision of cycle routes and other facilities within or adjacent to new developments through planning permissions and agreements.

C6: The City Council will aim to ensure that cycling is fully integrated with public transport to facilitate cycle use as part of longer journeys.

C7: The City Council will integrate measures to facilitate cycling with measures to aid pedestrians and people with mobility difficulties.

Example of improved cycling routes



C8: The City Council will ensure adequate cycle parking is provided in new development. Opportunities will also be taken to encourage provision in existing development, particularly for employees and customers.

The design of cycling infrastructure must be in keeping with the principles set out in Note 2/08 Cycling Infrastructure Design, which is available on the Department for Transport website.

Public conveniences

The recent public consultation highlighted the public's concerns regarding the provision and condition of public conveniences at the seafront. The council intends to undertake a more detailed analysis of this issue before making recommendations for improvements. As part of any wider improvements at the seafront, detailed consideration should be given to opportunities to improve existing facilities and explore alternative options for provision.

It was identified during the public consultation that showers and foot showers are needed at the seafront. The council will seek to deliver these facilities and will look favourably on development proposals incorporating amenities which support the recreational use of the seafront, for example changing, showering and footwashing facilities.

Solar panels, Barcelona



Car parking

There is currently a good provision of public car parking at the seafront with surface car parks available at Roker and Seaburn in addition to on-street parking along Whitburn Road at Seaburn.

The provision of parking at the seafront should balance the needs of residents, visitors and businesses alongside the need to minimise any impact on the character of the seafront.

Any new car parking should be carefully integrated into the street scene to ensure that it does not adversely impact on the appearance of the area or reduce the quality of the pedestrian environment.

Whilst there is good provision of free car parking, there is a particular problem at Roker of drivers choosing not to use public car parks and instead parking on grass verges and footways. This not only creates problems for other visitors but also detracts from the overall appearance of the area. These problems must be tackled as part of any improvements and also be addressed through the preparation of a management plan for the seafront to ensure that adequate numbers of enforcement officers are available in the area to control illegal parking.

Example of landscaped car-parking



Development quality

The city council is committed to achieving high standards of design quality for any new developments in the city. At the seafront this should both reinforce the distinctive character of the area and positively contribute to its wider regeneration, helping to deliver the vision.

By Design - Urban Design in the Planning System: Towards Better Practice (prepared by the DETR/CABE) sets out seven key design objectives for the planning system in fostering a sense of place:

Character - A place with its own identity

Continuity and enclosure - A place where public and private spaces are clearly distinguished

Quality of the public realm - A place with attractive and successful outdoor areas

Ease of movement - A place that is easy to get to and move through

Legibility - A place that has a clear image and is easy to understand

Adaptability - A place that can change easily

Diversity - A place with variety and choice

East Beach Café, Littlehampton



Any new development must carefully consider the existing character of the area and ensure that appropriate materials are chosen which allow new buildings to integrate with and add to the overall character of the seafront and wider area.

Sustainable design

The Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East places the delivery of sustainable communities at the heart of strategic policy. Sustainability should be promoted through design, construction and location in order to deliver a range of environmental, social and economic objectives. Sustainability and sustainable construction should underpin any development proposals at the seafront.

A key tool for the assessment of the sustainable credentials of new non-residential developments is provided by the use of the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM). This assesses the performance of buildings against a wide range of environmental criteria covering issues such as energy use, materials, water, ecology and pollution. Performance is rated within bands, with buildings being awarded a pass, good, very good or excellent rating.

The council will seek to ensure that any new development achieves a BREEAM rating of 'very good' or higher.

Solar-heated showers, Bridlington



6.2 Character areas

Roker and Seaburn seafront were historically known as the 'twin resorts' due to their complementary nature. Whilst Roker over the years has been a place for relaxation, Seaburn has always been the more commercial resort and the main focus of leisure activity. The complementary nature of the two seafronts will be built upon to develop resorts that are tailored to meet the needs of different visitors, widening the seafront's appeal. Four main character areas have been identified:

Marine Walk

Cliff Park and Recreation Park

Ocean Park

Seaburn promenade

The extent of these areas can be viewed on Figure 8.

Marine Walk character area



Cliff Park and Recreation Park character area



Ocean Park character area



Seaburn Promenade character area



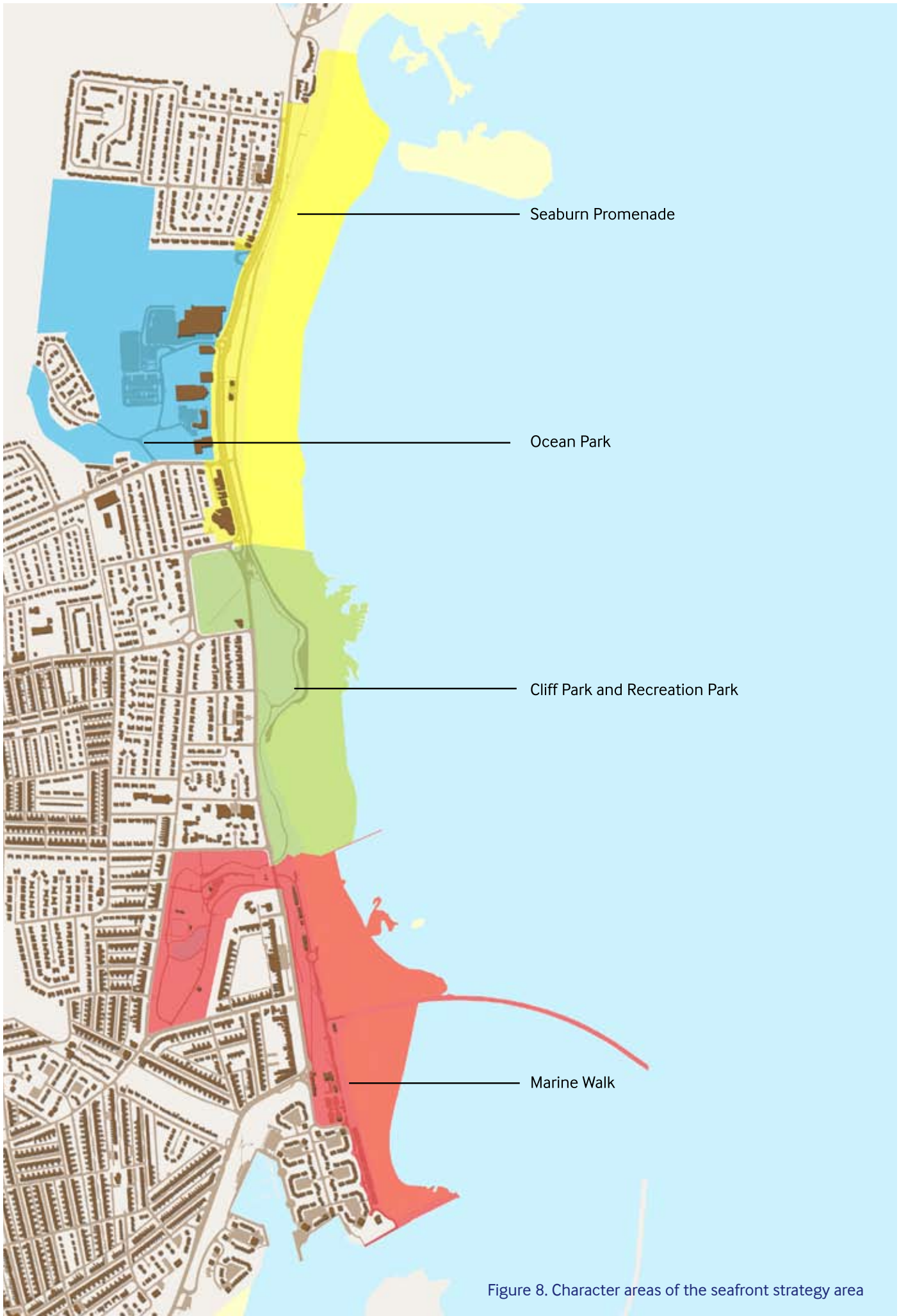


Figure 8. Character areas of the seafront strategy area

6.3 Marine Walk

Roker’s heritage, culture and geology are inextricably linked to the way in which Marine Walk has been historically used. Marine Walk will provide people with an environment and experience that builds upon and interprets Roker’s cultural history and natural features. A coordinated palette of high quality street furniture, materials and lighting will restore Marine Walk’s sense of place.

General use

Marine Walk is valued by residents and visitors as an area to relax, whether this is by sitting enjoying views of the attractive natural environment, walking, cycling or taking part in watersports. The area’s recreational value will be built upon by creating opportunities to learn about the rich history and unique environment through interpretation and educational facilities.

The existing watersports hub and leisure facilities will be supported and complemented by improved basic facilities. In particular provision will be improved for cyclists who come to the area having completed the c2c cycle route.

There is the potential for some additional development north of Adventure Sunderland. Any proposals coming forward must be well designed to integrate with the surrounding area and take influence from the best aspects of the existing built environment. Height and overall form should fit into the surrounding landscape, as should the choice of materials. Developments must provide complementary uses to the existing leisure offer.

Landscape design

Public space will be enhanced in a way which complements Marine Walk’s attractive natural environment and unique built heritage. A co-ordinated palette of materials, street furniture and planting will be established to give Marine Walk a distinct identity. Street furniture will be made of durable materials which will weather naturally. Surface materials will be equally hard wearing as they must withstand potential flooding. High quality materials such as granite will be used in key locations.

Works will be integrated with the refurbishment/replacement of the sea wall and will accommodate access for the future maintenance of it.

Planting of native grasses and perennials will give Marine Walk a softer coastal feel. Planting of trees and shrubs which are native to the Durham coast will help to enliven the grass banks.

Key spaces

The dramatic setting of Roker Ravine and Holey Rock Corner will be enhanced with lighting and public realm improvements to make the area more of a feature.

The installation of the sculpture ‘C’ marking the end of the c2c cycle route will be a focal point and point of celebration to the south of the promenade. The sculpture will be complemented with public realm improvements and the installation of modern play equipment.

Access and linkages

Key gateways will be enhanced. Narrowing and realignment of the promenade road will provide a more attractive traffic calming solution which will reduce conflict between vehicles and pedestrians. Marine Walk will become more of a pedestrian-orientated environment.

Linkages between the upper and lower promenades will be enhanced with improved footpaths and an additional direct access between the two.

Linkages will also be enhanced between Roker Park to the north of Marine Walk and St Peter’s Artwork Trail to the south. This will be achieved by improving signs throughout the area and removing barriers to access.

New ‘C’ sculpture, Marine Walk



Cleveleys New Wave, Lancashire





Cliff art feature

Local landmarks to be emphasised

Opportunity for environmental enhancement scheme (Roker Park)

Refurbishment of existing promenade

Opportunity for environmental enhancement scheme

Refurbishment of pier and lighthouse with landmark entrance

Potential development opportunity

Installation of c2c art feature adjacent to Adventure Sunderland

Primary gateway

Improved re-alignment to cycleway

Potential refurbishment of pier

Existing art works to be improved

Primary gateways

Figure 9. Marine Walk character area

6.4 Cliff Park and Recreation Park

General use

Cliff Park and Recreation Park are open landscaped areas which provide attractive views over the North Sea. Parson's Rocks which lie below Cliff Park are of considerable ecological value, containing part of the Northumbria Coast Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site, designated due to populations of breeding Little Tern, wintering Turnstone and wintering Purple Sandpiper. Both areas are used throughout the year for passive recreation and during summer months for hosting events. In addition this area forms part of the designated Durham Coast SSSI.

Both Cliff Park and Recreation Park are allocated as open space in the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) for Sunderland. Policy L7 of the UDP states that development will only be allowed in this area if it can be demonstrated there will be no significant effect on the amenity, recreational and wildlife value of the site. Policy NA30.1 of the UDP states that sea views along Roker seafront will be protected and where possible enhanced. In keeping with these policies Cliff Park and Recreation Park will be enhanced but the nature of these areas as open space will not be significantly altered.

There is an opportunity to improve existing facilities and amenities which are already located on Seaburn lower promenade adjacent the 'Cat and Dog' Steps.

Landscape design

The nature of this site would support landscaping in key areas based on the local ecology, using plants native to the Durham coast. A coherent landscaping strategy will be developed for the upgrading of existing planting, paving, lighting and signs. The boundary treatment of Recreation Park will be enhanced.

Key spaces

There are two focal points located on Cliff Park: the Grade II* Listed lighthouse and Grade II listed Bede's Cross. The lighthouse was constructed in 1856 for the Old South Pier and transferred to Cliff Park in 1983. The lighthouse is constructed of wrought-iron plates painted white, creating an impressive landmark. Bede's Cross was erected on Cliff Park in 1904 in memory of the Venerable Bede. The cross is located on the route of the Bede's Way cycle and pedestrian routes which link the twin-monasteries of Wearmouth-Jarrow. More sympathetic landscaping treatments to their immediate setting will enhance and highlight these two landmarks which are of key importance to the seafront's heritage.

Access and linkages

A footpath runs diagonally through Recreation Park, marking a desire line from Sea Road in the direction of Ocean Park. Enhancements will be made to the footpath to improve and formalise this route.

Existing pathways which run along the edge of Cliff Park and provide attractive views of the North East coast will be improved and maintained.

The cycle route which runs along the A183 will be realigned to ensure that cyclists can travel along the route of the A183 without having to dismount. Opportunities to enhance linkages between Marine Walk and Seaburn lower promenade will be explored. An assessment will be made of the potential effect this could have on the SPA and Ramsar site.

Interpretation route, Hornsea



Knapweed



Red Hot Poker





Figure 10: Cliff Park and Recreation Park character area

6.5 Ocean Park

Ocean Park will continue to be central to the resort of Seaburn, providing visitors with a range of leisure and complementary uses that build upon the area's existing leisure facilities and natural assets.

Linkages between any new development will be enhanced and the Seaburn promenade area and set within a coordinated palette of high quality street furniture, materials and lighting giving Ocean Park a strong sense of place.

General use

Ocean Park currently provides visitors with a range of leisure facilities and open space. The existing range of facilities will be improved by creating opportunities to develop additional cafés, restaurants, wet weather facilities and outdoor facilities for families which complement the existing offer. Areas of open space will be redesigned and enhanced, providing an improved quality of public realm for local residents and visitors.

Any mixed use development must contain similar levels of open space laid out to increase the accessibility and attractiveness of the area.

The UDP allocates a large area of Ocean Park as open space. However, as a result of wider statutory work into the preparation of the Local Development Framework and more specifically, the identification of new housing sites for the city, consideration is being given to the site's potential to accommodate areas of new housing development. It is not the purpose of this Strategy to change the land use allocations for the area, however, the Strategy does acknowledge that land uses in this area are being reconsidered as part of the preparation of the Local Development Framework and may be amended in the future.

Any proposals coming forward must be well designed to integrate with the surrounding area, and take influence from the best aspects of the existing built environment, adding to the character of the immediate and wider area.

Landscape design

Public space will be enhanced in a way which complements the wider Seaburn area. Hard landscaping will be of a high quality in key spaces complementing the soft and hard landscaping in adjoining areas. High quality materials such as granite will be used in key locations. A range of soft landscaping solutions will be introduced that integrate with and add to the coastal location and existing green spaces.

Key spaces

At present Ocean Park lacks any real focal points and the sense of arrival is particularly weak. Whitburn Road currently creates a barrier between Ocean Park and Seaburn promenade. The seafront public consultation highlighted the difficulties pedestrians experience in crossing the road. The opportunity to narrow the carriageway, reduce traffic speeds and increase crossing times should be considered to give greater priority to pedestrians and provide better integration between Ocean Park and Seaburn promenade. As part of these works an opportunity exists to introduce a key space at the front of Ocean Park stretching across Whitburn Road to unite this area with Seaburn promenade to provide a focal point for Seaburn and create a new flexible public space.

Opportunities to introduce additional public spaces that are both hard and soft landscaped should be considered as part of any wider development/ improvement proposals.

Access and linkages

Policy NA40 in the UDP states that traffic management measures will be introduced on the A183 at the seafront between its junction with Seaburn Terrace and Lowry Road to reduce potential conflict between pedestrians and vehicles.

Opportunities to improve access and linkages should be considered as part of any wider improvement proposals.

Da La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill-on-Sea



Marine Mosaic, Bournemouth





6.6 Seaburn promenade

General use

Seaburn promenade will continue to give visitors the opportunity to walk and cycle along the seafront, enjoy the natural environment and provide a link to the wider coastline to the north and south. The area will also continue to be an important venue for events such as the annual International Air Show.

Improvements will be made to create a promenade area that has a coordinated palette of high quality street furniture, materials and lighting giving a strong sense of place and increasing visitor satisfaction and enjoyment. In addition opportunities exist for the addition of sculpture or artwork along the sea wall at Seaburn.

Key spaces

The main focal point for the Seaburn promenade area is the former seating shelter. Whilst the shelter continues to provide toilet facilities, an opportunity exists to consider additional commercial or resort uses that would bring the shelter back to life and provide further activity along the promenade.

The roof of the shelter also provides a focal point on the upper promenade footpath and cycleway. This could, however, be much improved as part of the creation of a larger public space. As set out in the Ocean Park character area, the opportunity exists to provide a multi-functional space that can be used flexibly for events. The creation of an enlarged focal space would add to the character of the area and generate a much stronger sense of place. In addition the opportunity to narrow the carriageway, reduce traffic speeds and increase crossing times should be considered to give greater priority to pedestrians and provide better integration between Ocean Park and Seaburn

promenade.

Other buildings along the promenade will be maintained and, where viable, opportunities explored to bring vacant buildings back into use to create new business opportunities such as additional cafés or restaurants and other facilities for visitors.

Access and linkages

Opportunities to enhance pedestrian and cycle linkages between Seaburn promenade and the wider area will be explored to maximise the overall visitor experience.

The recent public consultation highlighted that there is insufficient pushchair and wheelchair access from the upper promenade to the lower promenade and from the lower promenade onto the beach at Seaburn. Opportunities will be explored to improve the existing ramps from the upper to the lower promenade and incorporate ramped access into an existing set of steps from the lower promenade to the beach.

Southern Gateway, Blackpool

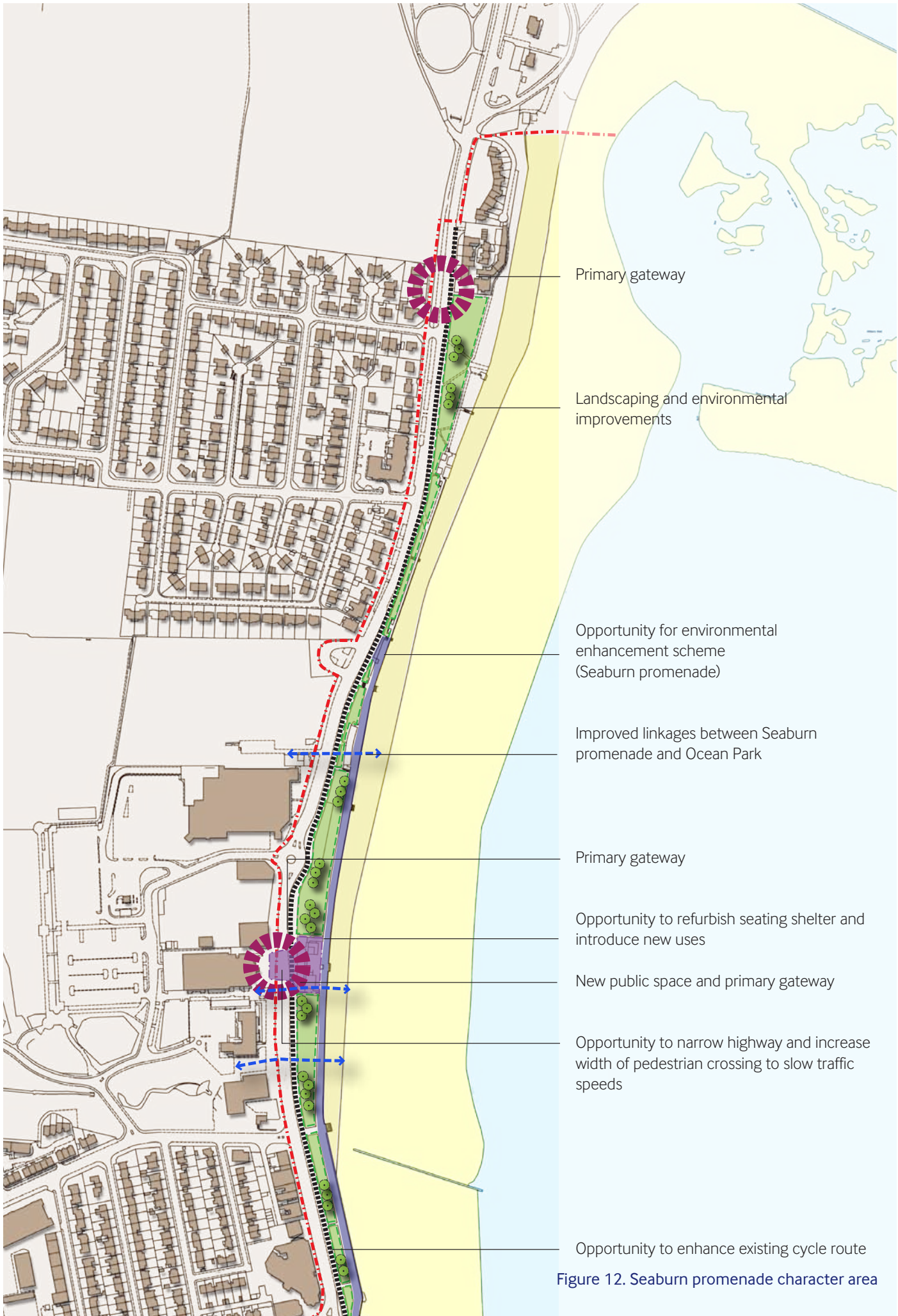


Headland Café, Bridlington



Tern Project, Morecambe





Primary gateway

Landscaping and environmental improvements

Opportunity for environmental enhancement scheme (Seaburn promenade)

Improved linkages between Seaburn promenade and Ocean Park

Primary gateway

Opportunity to refurbish seating shelter and introduce new uses

New public space and primary gateway

Opportunity to narrow highway and increase width of pedestrian crossing to slow traffic speeds

Opportunity to enhance existing cycle route

Figure 12. Seaburn promenade character area

6.7 Gateways

Gateways to the seafront should create a distinctive, high quality arrival experience for local people and visitors. They can help aid legibility to those moving into and across the site as well as creating a positive first impression to those visiting the area for the first time. A number of primary gateways have been identified as part of the Seafront Strategy with a view of ensuring gateways complement their setting and location. The location of these gateways can be seen on Figure 5.

Gateway One - Whitburn

Whitburn Road is the primary Northern gateway into the Strategy Area and the main arrival point for those entering the seafront from Whitburn and South Shields. Prior to entering the Strategy Area, Whitburn Bents Road travels along the coast offering glimpses of the coast and sea at varying points along the way. Upon reaching this gateway, the road dips down and joins the coastline, offering the first panoramic views of the entire Seaburn seafront.

The gateway currently lacks definition with large areas of open agricultural land to the northwest and bland public amenity space to the south-east. The views offered at this location are blocked by street furniture such as a bus stop and the space lacks any sense of arrival to Sunderland's seafront.

Indicative proposals for the gateway

site centre around emphasising the role of the space as a primary gateway and ensuring that a sense of arrival is apparent to people passing through. Both vehicular and pedestrian surface materials should be upgraded at the gateway. Views should be framed through the use of strategic tree planting and landscaping along the northwestern edge of Whitburn Bents Road. Both factors should then draw attention to the newly established views of Seaburn seafront, which should be assisted by relocating any street furniture that currently impedes views and creating a newly landscaped recreational space to the southeast. Further emphasis could be added by placing artwork or another form of landmark feature which could help to provide the gateway with an identifiable character.

By relocating the bus stop, a substation positioned behind the existing bus shelter would be exposed and would become visible from the road, particularly when approaching Seaburn from the north along Whitburn Bents Road. In order to disguise this it is possible for the substation to be masked and incorporated into a landmark or art feature in this position.

View from Whitburn gateway, facing north



View from Whitburn gateway, facing south



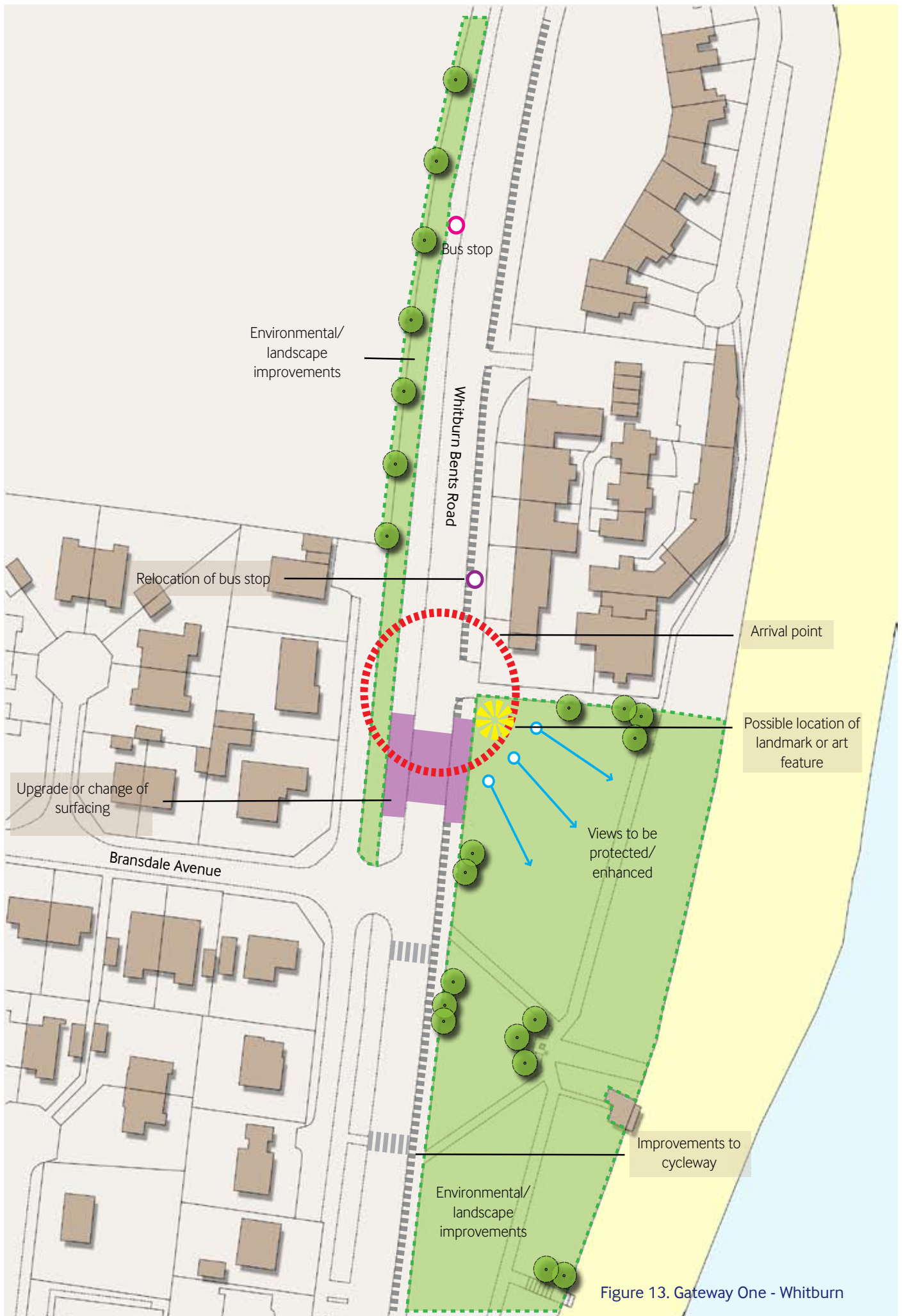


Figure 13. Gateway One - Whitburn

Gateway Two – Harbour View

Harbour View (A183) is the main vehicular corridor linking the Seafront Strategy Area to Sunderland city centre and the south, and as such is likely to be one of the most heavily used of the primary gateways. It is also a primary gateway for those using public transport to get to the seafront, with the area hosting a number of direct bus routes into Sunderland. The gateway's location at the top of the Roker Embankment, which separates the upper and lower promenades, also offers large panoramic views of Roker seafront, the piers and the lighthouse.

Public footpaths connecting Roker Terrace to Marine Walk are in a poor state of repair and a large area of open land running along the southern edge of Harbour View does little to complement the area. Cars and vans are frequently parked along Harbour View, blocking what would be impressive views of the seafront and marina.

It is proposed to create a sense of arrival at the gateway to enhance the views on offer. Improvements to, or upgrading of the road and pavement surface should be implemented in the area of the roundabout to help reduce traffic speeds. This can be undertaken in conjunction with the siting of either art or other landmark features on the roundabout itself or on the adjacent area of open land. These factors combined should help give a greater sense of arrival into the strategy area as well as giving the gateway an identity which should help complement the wider Marine Walk Character Area.

View from Harbour View gateway, facing east



View from Harbour View gateway, facing west



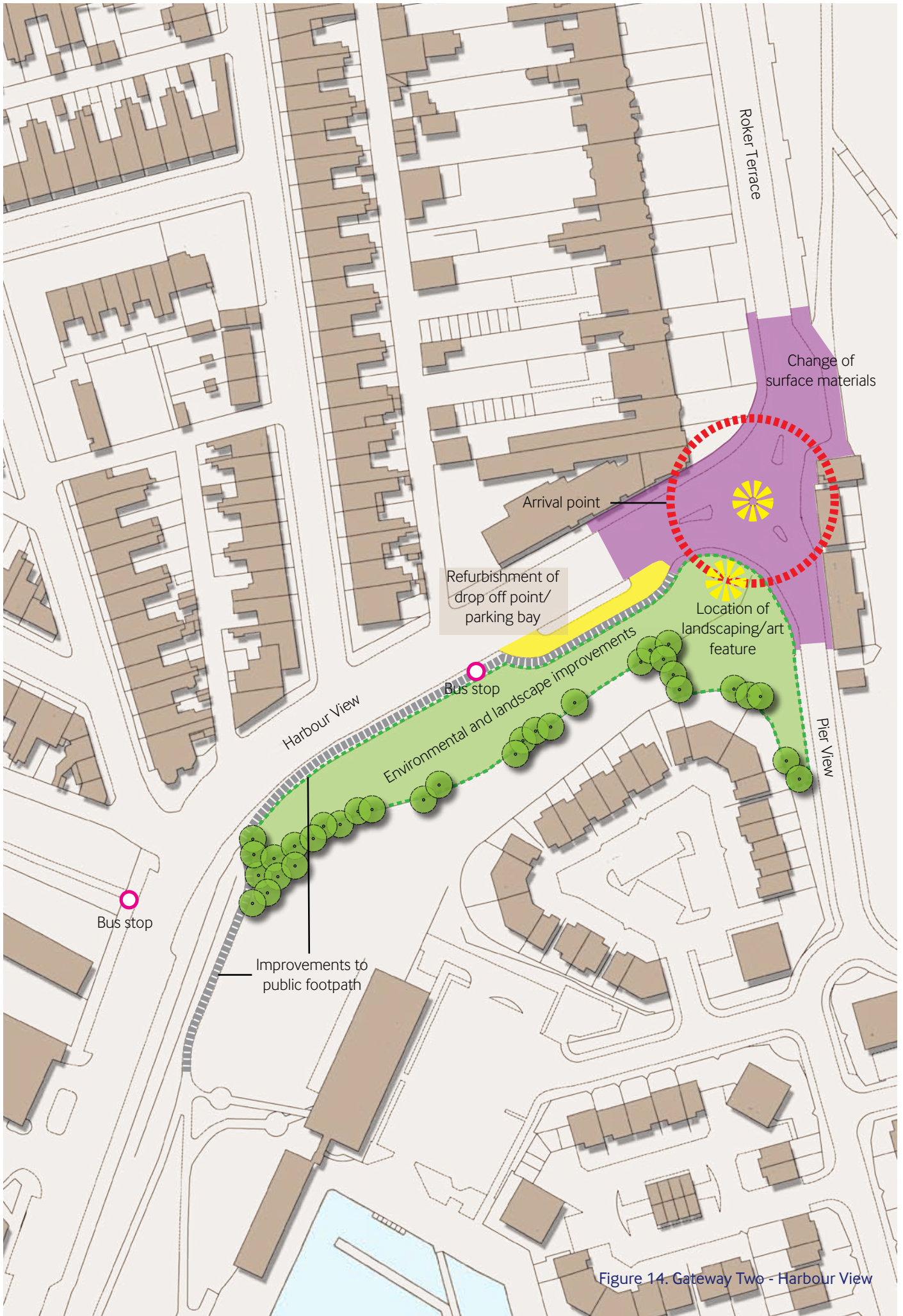


Figure 14. Gateway Two - Harbour View

Gateway Three – Recreation Park and Cliff Park

Although it is not located on a major thoroughfare, the Seaburn Park Gateway - on Sea Road/Chichester Road - acts as a primary gateway for those entering the strategy area from local areas such as Fulwell and Seaburn. It also offers the most direct vehicular route for visitors travelling in from the Newcastle Gateshead area and those using the Tyne Tunnel. It is also the point at which Sea Road opens out, offering strategically important views of the seafront which are protected in local planning policy.

Given its suburban location, the Seaburn Park gateway is currently in the best condition of the six primary gateway sites identified in the strategy. Nonetheless, opportunities exist to further enhance the quality of the gateway to help aid legibility and provide a sense of arrival.

Proposed improvements include the upgrading of both road and footpath materials surrounding the roundabout to help reduce traffic speeds and provide a feature to make the user aware of the gateway. There is also a small memorial park to the northwest of the gateway which could benefit from environmental/landscape improvements to channel views towards the sea. The placing of public art or other landmark features on the roundabout could help to complement this objective and give the gateway its own individual identity.

View from Recreation Park, facing east



View from Recreation Park, facing west





Figure 15. Gateway Three – Recreation Park and Cliff Park

Gateway Four – Ocean Park

Ocean Park is in close proximity to a large area of car parking, the majority of which currently serves Morrisons supermarket. The crossing adjacent the Seaburn Leisure Centre is a primary gateway for those parking in this area and crossing Whitburn Road to access Seaburn beach.

This crossing point is currently dominated by high levels of on-street parking. Areas of soft landscaping are bland. There is a large viewing area located on the top of Seaburn Shelter to the east of Whitburn Road. This seating area is also in a poor state of repair and in need of an improved maintenance regime.

There is the potential to improve this area by providing a shared surface crossing area, which would involve changing both road and footpath surface materials. This should reduce the traffic speeds, help to break up large areas currently dominated by on-street parking and provide a safer and more pleasant setting for pedestrians crossing Whitburn Road. This will be complemented with artwork and planting to create an attractive and welcoming environment.

View from Ocean Park gateway, facing east



View from Ocean Park gateway, facing west



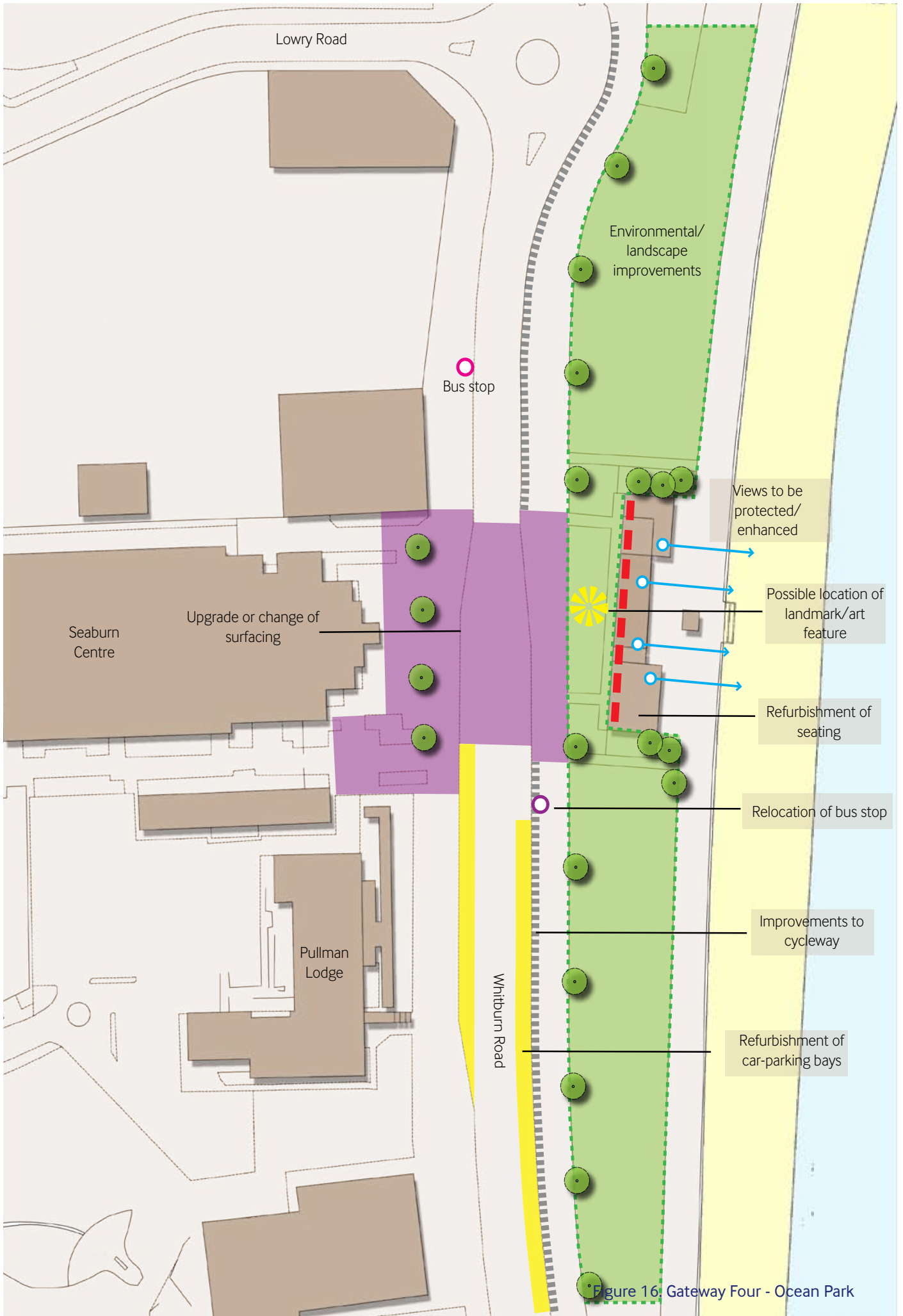


Figure 16: Gateway Four - Ocean Park

Gateway Five – North Haven

Although it is one of the smallest of the primary gateways into the Seafront Strategy Area, the North Haven gateway has the potential to have the biggest influence on how people perceive the area, given its role and how it is used. As well as being a busy pedestrian gateway into the site for people using the St. Peter's Riverside Artwork Trail, the gateway also hosts the popular c2c cycle route which attracts visitors from all around the country. As a consequence, this gateway plays a fundamental role on not only how the Seafront Strategy Area is perceived locally, but also nationally as a tourist attraction.

Currently the gateway is in a poor state of repair and requires significant improvements. There are conflicts between both local people using the site for recreational fishing and cyclists using the c2c. Surface materials do not emphasise the area's role as a gateway and cycle ramps are in need of refurbishment to make them more user-friendly to the numerous tourists that use them on a regular basis. The presence of a number of poorly maintained art features and the lack of any significant landscaping gives the area a poor aesthetic appearance not always welcoming to the user.

Indicative proposals focus on improving the quality of the environment to reduce conflicts between people using the area for varying uses. Initially improvements will include refurbishment of existing art features and soft landscaping to improve the aesthetic appearance of the area. Provision should be made for pedestrians and cyclists, including widening ramps and improving surface quality and materials. Redundant street furniture should also be removed to allow greater flexibility of the space and reduce the potential for conflicts. The long term strategic vision for the area also includes the restoration of the former North Pier, so that it may be opened for public access and to improve first impressions of the area, emphasising its role as a primary gateway.

View from North Haven gateway, facing east



View from North Haven, facing north



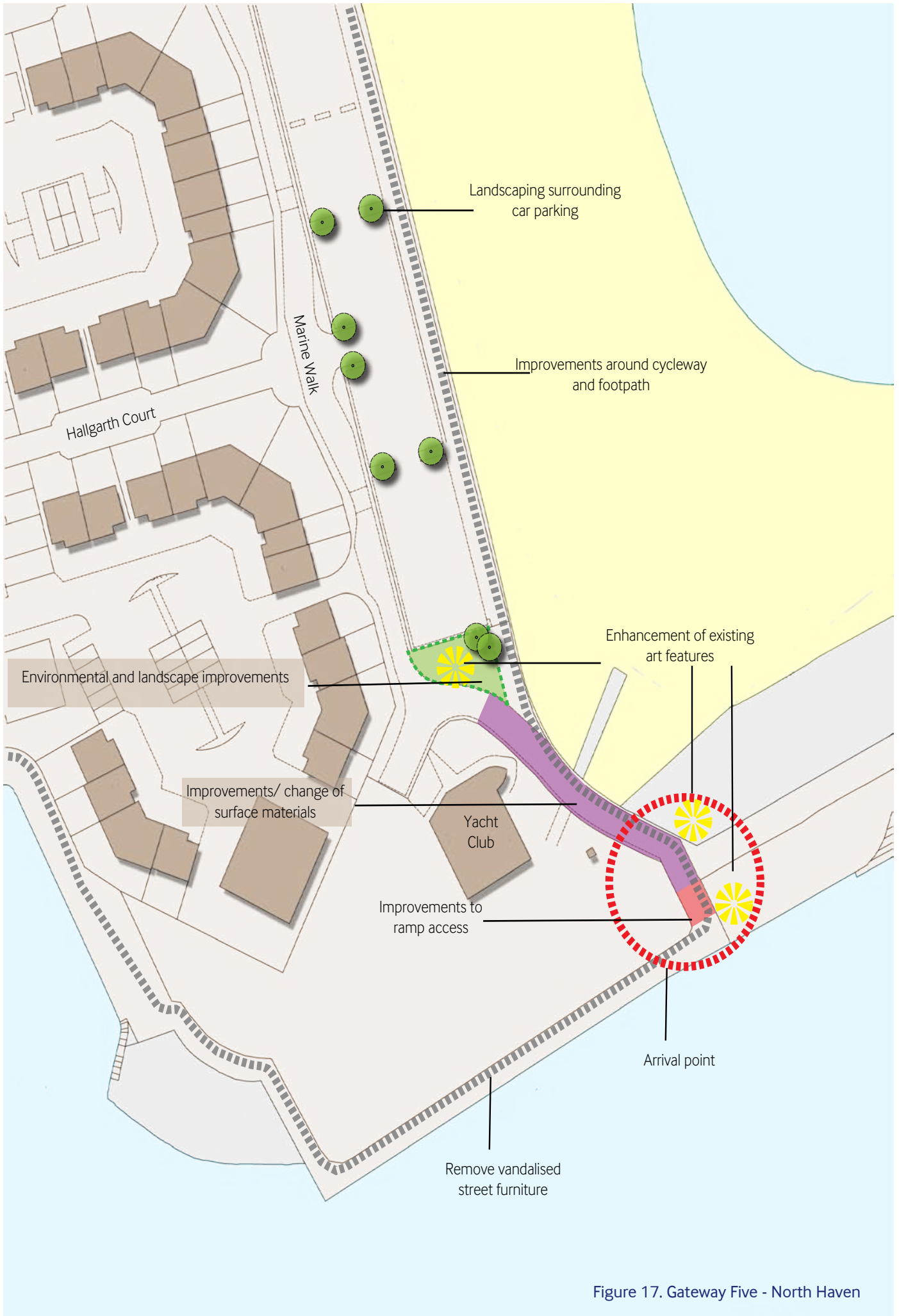


Figure 17. Gateway Five - North Haven

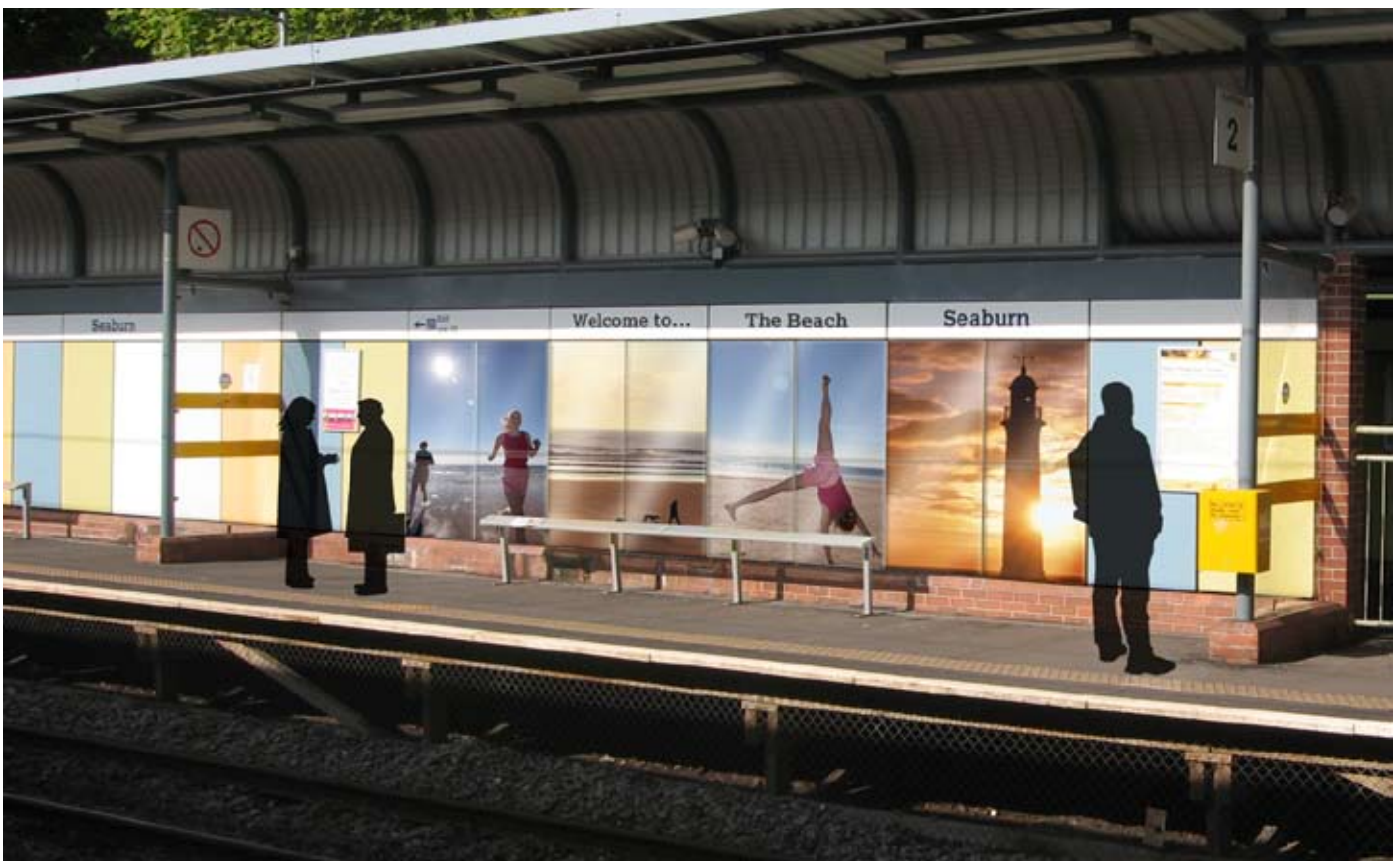
Gateway Six – Seaburn Metro Station

Seaburn metro station is the closest metro station to the seafront; located only 1km away. The metro offers regular services to Sunderland and South Hylton to the south and Newcastle, North Tyneside and Newcastle Airport to the north. The station therefore plays a fundamental role not only as a gateway for those travelling to the seafront but also as a point of promotion emphasising the close proximity of the station to the seafront.

There is currently no acknowledgement of the proximity of the station to the seafront, demonstrating a missed opportunity in promoting the seafront as an accessible tourist attraction.

As illustrated below, the strategy aims to remedy this issue by rebranding the metro station as a means to promote the seafront. Although this area is different to other gateways in that no physical changes are proposed, it is the intention that through relatively minor re-branding exercises the role of a major gateway into the seafront can be established.

Illustrative proposals for re-branding Seaburn Metro Station



7.0 Management issues

7.1 Management issues

The public consultation highlighted various issues relating to the management of the seafront. A comprehensive management plan will be developed for the seafront addressing the following issues:

Issue	Description	Required Outcome
Toilets	The consultation highlighted that toilet provision at the seafront is not sufficient.	Since the end of the public consultation arrangements have been made to keep all of the toilets, at the seafront open throughout the winter season, with the exception of the underground block adjacent to the Seaburn tram shelter. Funding will be sought to provide higher quality toilets including a Changing Places facility.
Litter	Litter was highlighted as a problem - particularly around takeaways.	Increased cleansing at seafront during peak times. Bins which are better designed for the environment i.e. to keep out seagulls.
Dogs	Dog fouling particularly on the beach was highlighted as an issue.	Greater staff resources to allow the enforcement of dog bylaws. Increased signage to increase the awareness of the existing coastal code ' dog ban' zones at the seafront.
Maintenance	Surface materials and street furniture show signs of wear and tear giving the seafront a rundown appearance.	Maintenance plan and greater budget to maintain public space, coastal defences and street furniture. Longer term replacement of existing public realm with higher quality durable materials which reduce need for maintenance.

A number of additional issues were highlighted in the consultation which the council must work with its partners to resolve:

Issue	Description	Required Outcome
Bus links	It was felt that more direct buses are needed linking the seafront to the remainder of the city. Many people commented that a bus link which connects Sunderland' s main attractions (i.e. St Peter' s Church, the National Glass Centre) and the seafront would be well used.	Work with bus operators to encourage the development of viable bus routes which will increase the accessibility of the seafront.
Safety	Specific areas of the seafront were highlighted as being or feeling unsafe at certain times of the day. In particular the seating shelters at Seaburn and Roker were highlighted as being centres for anti-social behaviour.	Work with local police to design out crime as far as is possible, and increase police presence where necessary.

8.0 Next steps

8.1 Next steps

Following a second round of public consultation on the draft Seafront Regeneration Strategy in summer 2009 the document has been amended as necessary before being taken forward for adoption. Once adopted this document will set out the council's ambitions for the seafront at Seaburn and Roker. The council will be active in working with the private sector and pursuing funding opportunities to allow the delivery of this Strategy.

To deliver the Strategy a suite of detailed documents will be produced, these are:

- Marine Walk Masterplan (Supplementary Planning Document);
- Seaburn Masterplan (Supplementary Planning Document);
- Promenade Public Realm Strategy and;
- Seafront Management Plan

The Marine Walk Masterplan has been prepared and consulted on in conjunction with this Strategy. Following this consultation the Masterplan has been amended as necessary. This Masterplan is to be taken forward as a Supplementary Planning Document which will guide the development of Marine Walk, a detailed masterplan for Seaburn is to follow.

Dog walking along the beach



Yachts at Marine Walk



Beach frisbee



For further details and copies in large print and other languages please contact:

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CABINET MEETING – 3rd February 2010

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART 1

Title of Report:

Proposed Joint Venture Agreement and acquisition of leasehold interest at Stadium Village, Sunderland

Author(s):

Deputy Chief Executive

Purpose of Report:

To seek agreement to the Council entering into a Joint Venture Agreement (JVA) with One North East (ONE), the Homes and Community Agency (HCA) and Sunderland Arc in respect of the development of Stadium Village, and to acquire the leasehold interest of industrial units at Hay Street Industrial Estate, Sheepfolds.

Description of Decision:

It is recommended that;

- the Council enters into a JVA with ONE, HCA and Sunderland Arc in respect of the development of Stadium Village.
- the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Director of Financial Resources, the Chief Solicitor and the relevant Portfolio Holders be authorised to agree the terms of the Joint Venture Agreement.
- Authority be delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Director of Financial Resources, the Chief Solicitor and the Portfolio Holder for Resources to acquire the leasehold interest in Hay Street Industrial Estate, which is required to assemble the proposed development known as Site C, and to acquire property interests as appropriate, within the boundary of the JVA.

Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework? Yes

If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework

Suggested Reason(s) for Decision:

To enable the Council to formally engage with public sector partners in progressing the development of Stadium Village and to provide an appropriate degree of confidence to the private sector.

To progress the assembly of site C Stadium Village for future development.

Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:

The Council could decide not to enter into the proposed JVA. This would require the Council outside the terms of a JVA to consider how best to transfer its relevant land holdings required to progress the regeneration aspirations if it was so minded. More significantly, it would signal that the Council was not able to commit to a formal partnership with its public sector partners with the common aim of bringing forward the development of the site.

The Council could enter into the JVA but decide not to acquire the leasehold interest in the Hay Street Industrial Estate. This would however add greater uncertainty to the land assembly of Site C making it a less attractive option for any prospective developer.

Is this a “Key Decision” as defined in the Constitution?

Yes

Is it included in the Forward Plan?

Yes

Relevant Scrutiny Committee:
Management

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive

Proposed Joint Venture Agreement and acquisition of leasehold interest at Stadium Village, Sunderland

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To seek agreement to the Council entering into a Joint Venture Agreement (JVA) with One North East (ONE), the Homes and Community Agency (HCA) and Sunderland Arc in respect of the development of Stadium Village, and to acquire the leasehold interest of industrial units at Hay Street Industrial Estate, Sheepfolds.

2.0 Description of Decision

- 2.1 It is recommended that:

- the Council enters into a JVA with ONE, HCA and Sunderland Arc in respect of the development of Stadium Village.
- the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Director of Financial Resources, the Chief Solicitor and the relevant Portfolio Holders be authorised to agree the terms of the Joint Venture Agreement.
- authority be delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Director of Financial Resources, the Chief Solicitor and the Portfolio Holder for Resources to acquire the leasehold interest in Hay Street Industrial Estate on the southern part of site C, which is required to assemble the proposed development known as Site C, and to acquire property interests as appropriate, within the boundary of the Stadium Village development site as defined in the JVA.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 Sunderland Arc's business plan (2009) proposes that the Stadium Village area (edged in bold on the attached plan) is developed for a mixed-use leisure-led development.

- 3.2 Cabinet approved the Stadium Village Development Framework at its meeting on the 4th November 2009. This sets out the proposals for Stadium Village which include sports and leisure facilities, offices, homes, a hotel and educational facilities.
- 3.3 The Development Framework identifies a number of sites, shown as A to I on the plan attached to this report. The Council has already made a significant commitment to the area with the construction of the Sunderland Aquatic Centre.
- 3.4 Both the Council and ONE own the freehold interest to several sites within Stadium Village. One of the Council owned sites is the Hay Street Industrial Estate which is shown on the attached plan. The area shown as hatched, measuring approximately 1.78 acres, comprises of 8 industrial units and is subject to a long lease of 125 years from 1st April 1986 to the Tyne & Wear Development (Land) Company Limited (TWEDCO).

4.0 Principles of the Joint Venture Agreement

- 4.1 The proposed JVA will provide that the Council, ONE, HCA and Sunderland Arc agree to promote the development of the Stadium Village area with a general mutual obligation for all parties to cooperate in order to achieve successful delivery. The JVA will be an over arching agreement under which several development agreements will be entered into for the various sites within Stadium Village. Agreement of the terms of such agreements will be delegated to the appropriate officers in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holders.
- 4.2 The JVA site boundary will cover the Stadium Village area (with the exception of the Aquatic Centre) and be for a term of 25 years with periodic options for the partners to withdraw from the agreement.
- 4.3 The Council's principal contribution will be the value of any land assets within the Stadium Village site boundary. The terms of the JVA would not allow the Council to dispose of any interest in these assets without the consent of the JVA partners.
- 4.4 ONE will contribute its land assets that are within the Stadium Village site boundary and will provide funding.
- 4.5 HCA currently does not own any assets within the site and has not so far contributed any funding. However it is important that the HCA is part of the agreement to document its commitment and provide the legal vehicle to provide funding in later phases of the scheme.

- 4.6 Each partners` contribution will be determined by the open market value of their land acquired prior to the Sunderland Arc inception date in 2002 or by funding provided into the scheme between the Arc inception date and determination of the JVA. These contributions will be used to calculate the proportionate share of any capital generated from the scheme.
- 4.7 Sunderland Arc will be responsible for leading on project management, marketing, negotiations with developers, and acquisitions on behalf of the partners.
- 4.8 It is proposed that, to provide additional funding for the scheme, any existing or future income produced from the assets within the JVA will be ring fenced and reinvested in the scheme as it moves forward. Such income will be included in the calculation of the partners' contributions. Any capital receipts in the event of a disposal of any part of the project site will be divided proportionally between the partners.
- 4.9 The Council, ONE and HCA will consider the use of their respective Compulsory Purchase Powers as appropriate and subject to the usual approval processes.
- 4.10 The Council shall undertake the property management role in respect of the land and buildings owned by the partners within the JVA site boundary. A reasonable management fee will be paid to the Council for these services to cover the costs incurred.
- 4.11 In order to expedite matters where necessary, it is proposed that the acquisition by the Council of property interests within the JVA site boundary be delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Director of Financial Resources, the Chief Solicitor and the Portfolio Holder for Resources.

5.0 Acquisition of leasehold interest in Hay Street

- 5.1 Sunderland Arc proposes to market site C in early 2010 for expressions of interest from prospective developers.
- 5.2 It is recognised that in order to make the site attractive to potential developers it is necessary to assemble the majority of the site for development.

5.3 Terms have therefore been agreed with TWEDCO for the purchase of its leasehold interest in the site and these are set out in Part 2 of this agenda.

5.4 The proposed acquisition accords with the criteria set out in the recently approved Land Acquisition Policy.

6.0 Reason for Decision

6.1 To enable the Council to formally engage with public sector partners in progressing the development of Stadium Village and to provide an appropriate degree of confidence to the private sector.

6.2 To progress the assembly of site C Stadium Village for future development.

7.0 Options

7.1 The Council could decide not to enter into the proposed JVA. This would require the Council outside the terms of a JVA to consider how best to transfer its relevant land holdings required to progress the regeneration aspirations if it was so minded. More significantly it would signal that the Council was not able to commit to a formal partnership with its public sector partners with the common aim of bringing forward the development of the site.

7.2 The Council could enter into the JVA but decide not to acquire the leasehold interest in the Hay Street Industrial Estate. This would however add greater uncertainty to the land assembly of Site C making it a less attractive option for any prospective developer.

8.0 Financial Implications

8.1 Independent agents have been instructed to value the current open market value of the Council's land interests that will be contributed to the JVA.

8.2 The value of those land interests owned by the Council and any return to the Council as part of development proposals going forward, will be reflected in the business cases for the individual development proposals themselves, and will be governed by the JVA.

9.0 Consultations

- 9.1 The Director of Financial Resources and Chief Solicitor have been consulted and their comments are contained in the body of the report.

10.0 Background Papers

- 10.1 Stadium Village file: held in Property Services, Office of the Chief Executive.





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Stadium Village J.V.A

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Date:	19.01.2010
Map Ref:	NZ 3957 NW
Scale:	1:5000



CABINET MEETING – 3 FEBRUARY 2010

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I

Title of Report:

‘Six Lives – The Provision Of Public Services To People With Learning Disabilities’: A Report By The Parliamentary Health Service Ombudsman In Conjunction With The Ombudsman For Local Government

Author(s):

The Chief Executive and the Executive Director of Health, Housing and Adult Services

Purpose of Report:

‘Six Lives: the provision of public services to people with learning disabilities’ is a report by the Parliamentary Health Service Ombudsman in conjunction with the Ombudsman for Local Government published in March 2009. The publication contains investigation reports relating to six people with learning disabilities who Mencap believed died unnecessarily as a result of receiving worse healthcare than people without learning disabilities.

The purpose of the report is to report to Cabinet, Sunderland’s response to the recommendations outlined in the Ombudsman’s report.

Description of Decision:

Cabinet is asked to note the content of the report and agree to receive an annual report from the Learning Disabilities Partnership Board on learning disability issues.

Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework? *Yes/No

If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework

Suggested reason(s) for Decision:

Recommendation 1 of the Ombudsman’s report is that all NHS and social care organisations in England should review urgently:

- The effectiveness of the systems they have in place to enable them to understand and plan to meet the full range of needs of people with learning disabilities in their areas, and
- The capacity and capability of the services they provide and/or commission for their local populations to meet the additional and often complex needs of people with learning disabilities, and

- Should report accordingly to those responsible for the governance of those organisations within 12 months of the publication of the report

Therefore, Cabinet are requested to receive this report in line with this recommendation.

Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:

There are no alternative options

Is this a “Key Decision” as defined in the Constitution? No

Is it included in the Forward Plan? No

Relevant Scrutiny Committee:

Health and Well-being Review Committee

**REPORT BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
OF HEALTH, HOUSING AND ADULT SERVICES**

**‘SIX LIVES – THE PROVISION OF PUBLIC SERVICES TO PEOPLE WITH
LEARNING DISABILITIES’: A REPORT BY THE PARLIAMENTARY
HEALTH SERVICE OMBUDSMAN IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE
OMBUDSMAN FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 ‘Six Lives: the provision of public services to people with learning disabilities’ is a report by the Parliamentary Health Service Ombudsman in conjunction with the Ombudsman for Local Government published in March 2009. The publication contains investigation reports relating to six people with learning disabilities who Mencap believed died unnecessarily as a result of receiving worse healthcare than people without learning disabilities.
- 1.2 The purpose of the report is to report to Cabinet, Sunderland’s response to the recommendations outlined in the Ombudsman’s report.

2. DESCRIPTION OF DECISION

- 2.1 Cabinet is asked to note the content of the report and agree to receive an annual report from the Learning Disabilities Partnership Board on learning disability issues.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In March 2007, Mencap published the report 'Death by Indifference', which set out case studies relating to six people with learning disabilities who Mencap believed died unnecessarily as a result of receiving worse healthcare than people without learning disabilities.
- 3.2 Following this publication, an independent inquiry into access to healthcare for people with learning disabilities was carried out. The inquiry found convincing evidence that people with learning disabilities have higher levels of unmet need and receive less effective treatment than those without learning disabilities. To address this, 'Healthcare for All' was published in 2008 which set out 10 principal recommendations to improve health service provision to people with learning disabilities.
- 3.3 Mencap, on behalf of the six families involved, then requested that the Health Service and Local Government Ombudsman investigate complaints about all six cases, three of which spanned health and social care.

- 3.4 *'Six Lives: the provision of public services to people with learning disabilities'* is a report by the Parliamentary Health Service Ombudsman in conjunction with the Ombudsman for Local Government and was published in March 2009. The publication contains investigation reports into each of the six cases and they illustrate some significant and distressing failures in services across both health and social care, leading to situations in which people with learning disabilities experienced prolonged suffering and inappropriate care.
- 3.5 The investigations found maladministration, service failure and unremedied injustice in a number, but not all, of the 20 bodies investigated (three Councils, 16 NHS bodies and the Healthcare Commission).
- 3.6 The report highlights the following complaints that were upheld against two Councils:
- Arrangements for the transition from residential school to adult care fell significantly below reasonable standards;
 - Some of the maladministration was for disability related reasons;
 - Failure to live up to human rights principles of dignity and equality;
 - Poor complaint handling;
 - Public service failure which resulted in an avoidable death;
 - Failure to provide and/or secure an acceptable standard of care and consequently the care home resident's safety was put at risk;
 - Less favourable treatment for reasons related to disability.

4. THE OMBUDSMAN'S RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The specific areas of concern reported in the Ombudsman's Report are:
- Communication – specifically around the familiarity of legislation and guidance amongst non specialist professionals; how information is disseminated throughout organisations; the training and support available to staff to assist with the implementation and how accurately information is passed between professionals and the family.
 - Partnership working and co-ordination – professionals not working together or making use of the skills and expertise of different disciplines, particularly across the boundaries of health and social care. There was evidence of poor transition and discharge co-ordination and planning and a lack of a designated professional to act as a co-ordinator to ensure effective planning and implementation.

- Relationships with families and carers – family members were not recognised for their knowledge of the person concerned and care workers were not treated as part of the team, leading to families and carers feeling excluded and ignored.
- Following routine procedures – in complex situations standards and guidance were not followed therefore significantly increasing the risk to vulnerable individuals.
- Quality of management – lack of personal accountability at management level and no senior support for staff trying to challenge poor practice and inadequate systems.
- Advocacy – there was no evidence of the availability or use of independent advocates in any of the six cases, which could have provided an additional safeguard for the rights of very vulnerable people.
- Complaint Handling – the investigation found evidence of poor complaint handling, including failure to understand complaints, little effort to clarify matters, fragmented systems, poor investigations with little rigorous testing of evidence, defensive explanations and a failure to address the complaint with a reluctance to offer apologies.

4.2 The Ombudsman's report therefore makes the following three recommendations:

1. All NHS and social care organisations in England should review urgently:
 - The effectiveness of the systems they have in place to enable them to understand and plan to meet the full range of needs of people with learning disabilities in their areas; and,
 - The capacity and capability of the services they provide and/or commission for their local populations to meet the additional and often complex needs of people with learning disabilities; and,
 - Should report accordingly to those responsible for the governance of those organisations within 12 months of the publication of the report.
2. Those responsible for the regulation of health and social care services (specifically the Care Quality Commission, Monitor and Equality and Human Rights Commission) should satisfy themselves, individually and jointly, that the approach taken in their regulatory frameworks and performance monitoring regimes provides effective assurance that health and social care organisations are meeting their statutory and regulatory

requirements in relation to the provision of services to people with learning disabilities and that they should report accordingly to their respective Boards within 12 months of the publication of the Ombudsman's report.

3. That the Department of Health should promote and support the implementation of these recommendations, monitor progress against them and publish a progress report within 18 months of the publication of the Ombudsman's report.

5. SUNDERLAND'S FINDINGS

5.1 Led by the Learning Disability Partnership Board, Sunderland has reviewed the 7 areas of concern in line with Recommendation 1 and the findings relating to the local authority are detailed below:

5.1.1 **Communication:** within Health, Housing and Adult Services there are a number of mechanisms for disseminating information about policy, guidance and legislative developments, including:

- A fortnightly Document Alert system to inform the Directorate Management Team of all new policy, guidance, legislation, briefings and relevant reports;
- Policy briefings to the Senior Management Team as and when new policy is published;
- Workshops are held with frontline Managers to debate, discuss and understand emerging policy developments;
- Core Brief items are published to inform all staff across the Directorate of any new policy developments;
- The Learning Disability Partnership Board is made aware of any learning disability specific policy developments and these are reviewed in order to understand local implications and how the policy will be translated into practice;
- The Directorate has invested in workforce development including Learning and Development Co-ordinators who are attached to each service area, including learning disabilities. These Co-ordinators facilitate learning sessions with frontline staff around subjects including Personalisation and Individual Budgets;
- Sunderland's Learning Disability Partnership currently operates a single management structure, in which Social Workers and Community Nurses are managed by Health, Housing and Adult Services' General Manager for Disabilities Service. This enables effective communication amongst staff groups and across

organisations and the sharing of information and knowledge. This in turn supports better communication between professionals and families.

5.1.2 **Partnership working and co-ordination:**

- As previously mentioned, Sunderland's Learning Disability Partnership currently operates a single management structure. This structure ensures consistent leadership across staff groups with professionals working together for the best interests of individuals without the barrier of organisational boundaries.
- 'Futures', a person centred transition team has recently been established to support young people with disabilities and their families seamlessly and smoothly through the transition into adulthood.
- As part of the city's Resettlement Programme, a Learning Disability Resettlement Operational Team exists within Health, Housing and Adult Services to support people living in NHS accommodation to move into more appropriate individualised supported accommodation. The Council works extremely closely with Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Trust to progress this "Campus Re-provision". The Team ensures that families, individuals and their carers, Providers and other stakeholders are involved in this activity.
- Both the Futures Team and the Learning Disability Resettlement Operational Team exist to ensure that there is effective co-ordination and planning of care around the needs of individuals, their families and carers and across organisations.
- The Learning Disability Partnership Board, Chaired by the Head of Adult Services has demonstrated successful partnership working since its inception in 2001. The Board includes stakeholders from a range of agencies and people with disabilities and family carers and it oversees all activity and developments in learning disabilities services. The Board reports to the Adult Social Care Partnership Board.
- From 1 April 2009, the Local Authority is now responsible for commissioning community services for people with learning disabilities in Sunderland and this will strengthen the already very successful partnership working and co-ordination that exists.

5.1.3 Relationships with families and carers:

- As referred to in the developments above, families and carers are central to the process of assessing, planning and co-ordinating the care of individuals, as it is recognised that carers have an immense contribution to make in terms of the knowledge they have about the person with a learning disability they care for as they know them best.
- One of the principal aims of Sunderland's multi-agency Carers Strategy is to ensure that carers are recognised and listened to as an expert care partner and the strategy identifies staff training around the role of carers and their contribution as the key to making this a reality.
- At a strategic level, Sunderland has a good history of involving carers in service planning and developments, through working groups and Boards such as the Learning Disability Partnership Board and its sub groups, Older Family Carers Group and General Managers and Carers Representative Groups. This involvement ensures that families and carers are involved in service developments, which results in improved involvement at an individual level.

5.1.4 Following routine procedures:

- There are a range of different types of small group living schemes for people with learning disabilities. Some are registered and need to comply with standards and regulations; these are monitored by the regulator CQC (Care Quality Commission). Supporting People schemes also have a national framework that sets out standards and quality monitoring. Locally, the Directorate has a Social Care Governance Team which monitors quality standards and advises whether these are being met or not. This includes looking at the quality of the policies and procedures the organisation has in place and monitoring how organisations implement their policies.

5.1.5 Quality of Management:

- As previously described the single management structure operating within the Learning Disability Partnership aims to provide consistent quality management and leadership across learning disability services.
- The Council has invested hugely in supporting and developing managers through offering the Sunderland Leadership Programme. This is a core management development programme designed to support the vision of a one council approach.

5.1.6 **Advocacy:**

- Health, Housing and Adult Services has for a number of years commissioned SAFE (Sunderland Advocacy for Empowerment) to provide independent advocacy for people with learning disabilities and more recently expanded to include people with physical disabilities. The support provided by SAFE is independent of statutory services, is a free confidential service, and is based on empowering people to have a voice and recognises the right of each individual to take control of his/her own life.

5.1.7 **Complaint Handling:**

- The issue of the accessibility of the Directorate's complaints procedures was considered some years ago by the Council as part of promoting good practice. In respect of social care complaints, a range of information is available informing people about the procedure and how to make a complaint. This includes a leaflet and a procedure arranged in an accessible format. The Complaints Team have worked with Sunderland People First (a self advocacy group), to ensure that the information is suitable for people with a learning disability. Further work is being carried out to make this information accessible to people using self directed support.
- Work has commenced to review complaints information and PALS procedures across the NHS to make sure that it is made much more straightforward. The council is engaged in discussion with Health to support a co-ordinated approach to this area.
- Although not for individual complaints, the Local Involvement Network commissioned by the local authority exists to ensure that users of care services and carers have a voice in influencing and scrutinising services, particularly where there are areas of concern in service delivery. On a wider level, this can provide a mechanism for highlighting and addressing areas of poor practice or concern.
- Sunderland's Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board comprises of agencies and organisations who work closely together to safeguard adults who, because of their dependency on others, are more vulnerable and therefore at greater risk of abuse. This includes people with learning disabilities. This multi-agency forum has the strategic lead for safeguarding and all agencies are required to work in line with the Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Procedural Framework. These ensure that any concern or allegation of abuse is taken seriously and dealt with sensitively and professionally and in a way that is appropriate to the needs of the individuals.

6. NEXT STEPS

- 6.1 Reporting to the Adult Social Care Partnership Board, the Learning Disability Partnership Board has tasked the multi-agency Learning Disability Health Sub Group to oversee progress against the recommendations in detail.
- 6.2 The three NHS trusts are progressing much of this work through their 'Healthcare for All' action plans which are reported to NHS North East (Strategic Health Authority) on an annual basis.
- 6.3 It is proposed that Cabinet receive an annual report on learning disability issues in Sunderland.

7. REASONS FOR DECISION

- 7.1 Cabinet are requested to receive this report in line with Recommendation 1 of the Ombudsman's report.

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 8.1 There are no alternative options

9. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

People with learning disabilities
Family carers
Learning Disability Partnership Board
Learning Disability Health Sub Group
South of Tyne and Wear NHS Trust Board
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Trust Board
City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust Board
Adult Social Care Partnership Board

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

'Healthcare for All: Independent inquiry into access to healthcare for people with learning disabilities', Sir Jonathon Michaels, 2008

'Six Lives: the provision of public services to people with learning disabilities' is a report by the Parliamentary Health Service Ombudsman in conjunction with the Ombudsman for Local Government , 2009