

NORTH SHIELDS

Town Centre & Fish Quay Masterplan

Jan 2021



North Tyneside Council

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INTRODUCTION

Introduction

North Tyneside Council has invested in a bold and ambitious masterplan for North Shields, which is demand focused and delivery orientated.

Preparation of the masterplan has been supported and financed using funding received from the North of Tyne Combined Authority (2018), which was directed at generating a better understanding of the current trading position in North Shields and using the evidence from several baseline studies, to refine the Elected Mayor and Cabinet’s ambitions and objectives, which were set out in key Cabinet papers (see list below, Table 1):

The draft masterplan set out in this document, recognises the unique challenges and opportunities facing North Shields and aligns to the key priorities and objectives – as set out in the Cabinet reports listed in table 1.

The Council wishes to support the ambition and innovation of communities and businesses and demonstrate ambition, by working in partnership with others - and engaging with communities - to transform North Shields town centre and the riverside.

This draft masterplan, explains how we hope to help shape North Shields and make sure it is fit for the future.

To achieve this, the April Cabinet report set out a series of priorities and objectives:

We want to work in partnership, to work with the private sector, partners and communities, to develop the outline masterplan and define the key projects for the town centre and the riverside:

- To improve North Shields as a residential location of choice and an attractive, family friendly destination
- To create a smaller but more vibrant, high quality town centre;
- To create more flexible retail opportunities and expand the evening and weekend economy
- To improve public transport and the quality of walking and cycling connections across the town (including better links to Fish Quay);
- To raise and improve the quality of the built environment and the quality of public space in North Shields (with more of it suitable for hosting events and festivals)

To achieve these ambitions and achieve growth and prosperity in North Shields, the masterplan must provide opportunities and projects:

- That are both attractive to investors and aligned to our priorities;
- That will secure the necessary funding and investment to ensure they are deliverable and which;
 - Help to turn around negative perceptions

The draft masterplan has been approved by Cabinet for consultation purposes – to be developed further and developed in line with planning processes (in dialogue with our partners and investors, our local businesses and community).

The intention is that it will ultimately be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and provide further guidance and area specific planning policy.

The adopted masterplan (SPD) will set the context and direction for individual projects and developments, as they come forward and provide the certainty and clarity required by funders and investors.

The North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA) is focused on developing an inclusive and dynamic economy, for us this means becoming the home of ambition and opportunity for all. The Combined Authority believes in opportunity for all, removing the barriers which make it difficult for people to take up employment and training opportunities.

We want to empower our people with the skills and resources they need to take ownership of their futures and secure good jobs with fair living wages.

We will be the home of ambition, where every resident owns their economic future and all young people to have high aspirations, with support to enable them to make good choices.

We will work to increase the earnings, qualifications levels and progression routes accessible to local residents so that every resident has the tools and confidence to access the higher skilled jobs in future.

Our Ambitions for the Inclusive Economy will be embedded and be consistent with our ambitions for North Shields.

Cabinet Report	Item	Title
26 November 2018	6(c)	An ambition for North Tyneside
	6(c) ii	Appendix 1 An Ambition for North Tyneside – Regeneration Strategy: Delivery by Area (South East - Wards of Cullercoats, Tynemouth, Preston, Riverside, Chirton)
	6(c) iii	Appendix 2 Priority Projects for investment and external funding
1 April 2019	6(b)	Ambition for North Shields and the Fish Quay

Table 1: Cabinet Papers outlining the ambitions for North Tyneside, North Shields and Fish Quay



VISION & OBJECTIVES

Masterplan Objectives

The masterplan is fully aligned to the objectives defined by Cabinet in key papers, with the Council's core objectives aligned as a clear demonstration of the links.

Table 2 (opposite) sets out the Cabinet Report Policy Priorities and core objectives for transforming North Shields and Fish Quay.

Key challenges are identified in the baseline study (see appendix A for a summary).

Each of the proposals and projects identified in the masterplan are designed to collectively achieve the Council's Ambitions for North Shields and Fish Quay, by meeting at least one or more objective.

Cabinet Report Policy Priorities

	<p>A smaller but more vibrant and connected, high quality town centre; create a smaller, more vibrant and connected town centre. It should combine living, working and retail with a place that becomes a family friendly destination in its own right, to relax and socialise. In turn it will be connected to an increasingly vibrant Fish Quay. Both of which will be supported by better transport flows, stronger infrastructure and better quality built environment</p>	<p>Council Objectives Aligned with Priority Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A smaller but more vibrant and connected, high quality town centre Consolidation of the centre, combining living, working and retail into an attractive, family-friendly destination
	<p>A connected and vibrant Fish Quay; which supports a developing food and drink offer and a working quay but builds on the Fish Quay's increasing popularity as a destination exploring heritage, cycling, the connections to South Shields as well as the popular night time and weekend economy</p>	<p>Council Objectives Aligned with Priority Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Fish Quay remains a working quay with a more developed food and drink offer The Council will work in partnership to further develop the master plan for the town centre and the riverside.
	<p>Better transport flows and connectivity; making sure traffic flows more effectively, that the Metro Station is connected to the rest of the town, that pedestrians and cyclists can move easily between the town centre and the Fish Quay with an opportunity for something eye catching to make that possible; and weekend economy</p>	<p>Council Objectives Aligned with Priority Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better transport flows and connectivity, making sure traffic flows more effectively. The Metro Station (and Transport Interchange) will be better connected to the rest of the town Improving routes for pedestrians and cyclists, so that they can move easily between the town centre and the Fish Quay
	<p>A better quality built environment; learning from recent projects, and setting high design and material standards for our work.</p>	<p>Council Objectives Aligned with Priority Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher quality public space - more of it and more covered. Support the popularity of Fish Quay (and North Shields) as destinations for exploring (heritage, cycling, walking, etc)

Note: Cabinet report policy priorities extracted from Cabinet Report 1st April 2019 - Ambition for North Shields & Fish Quay
 Supplementary objectives extracted from 6(c) ii An Ambition for North Tyneside – Regeneration Strategy: Delivery by Area (South East - Wards of Cullercoats, Tynemouth, Preston, Riverside, Chirton)

Table 2: Alignment of Council Objectives for North Shields and Fish Quay with Cabinet Report Policies



MASTERPLAN & FRAMEWORK & PROJECTS

Masterplan Framework & Projects

A range of studies have been commissioned to help inform future projects for understand how the town and its people function to help inform future projects.

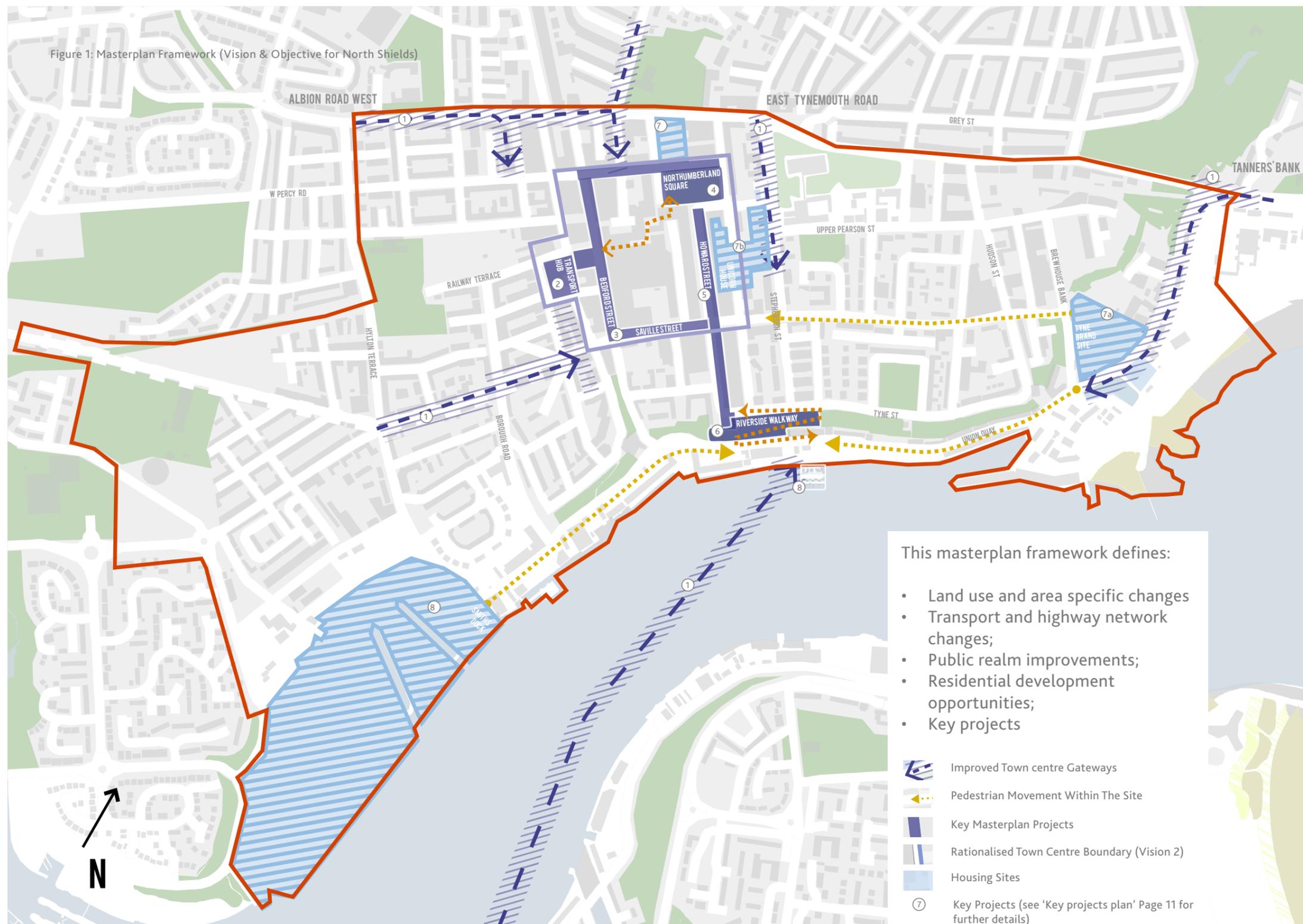
The studies have been focused on transport, housing, public realm and the retail and property market. Several previous studies commissioned by the Council have also been considered in the preparation of the masterplan, The masterplanning team have worked with Council Officers to prepare the Masterplan.

One of the main purposes of the masterplan is to provide a more robust, detailed spatial framework for North Shields, which has been prepared in line with emerging strategy and adopted policy. It helps to define and shape how the individual projects will be expected to be delivered.

It sets out the key interventions, which if implemented, will redefine the role of the town and its visitor offer - meeting the Elected Mayor and Cabinet's objectives and ambitions.

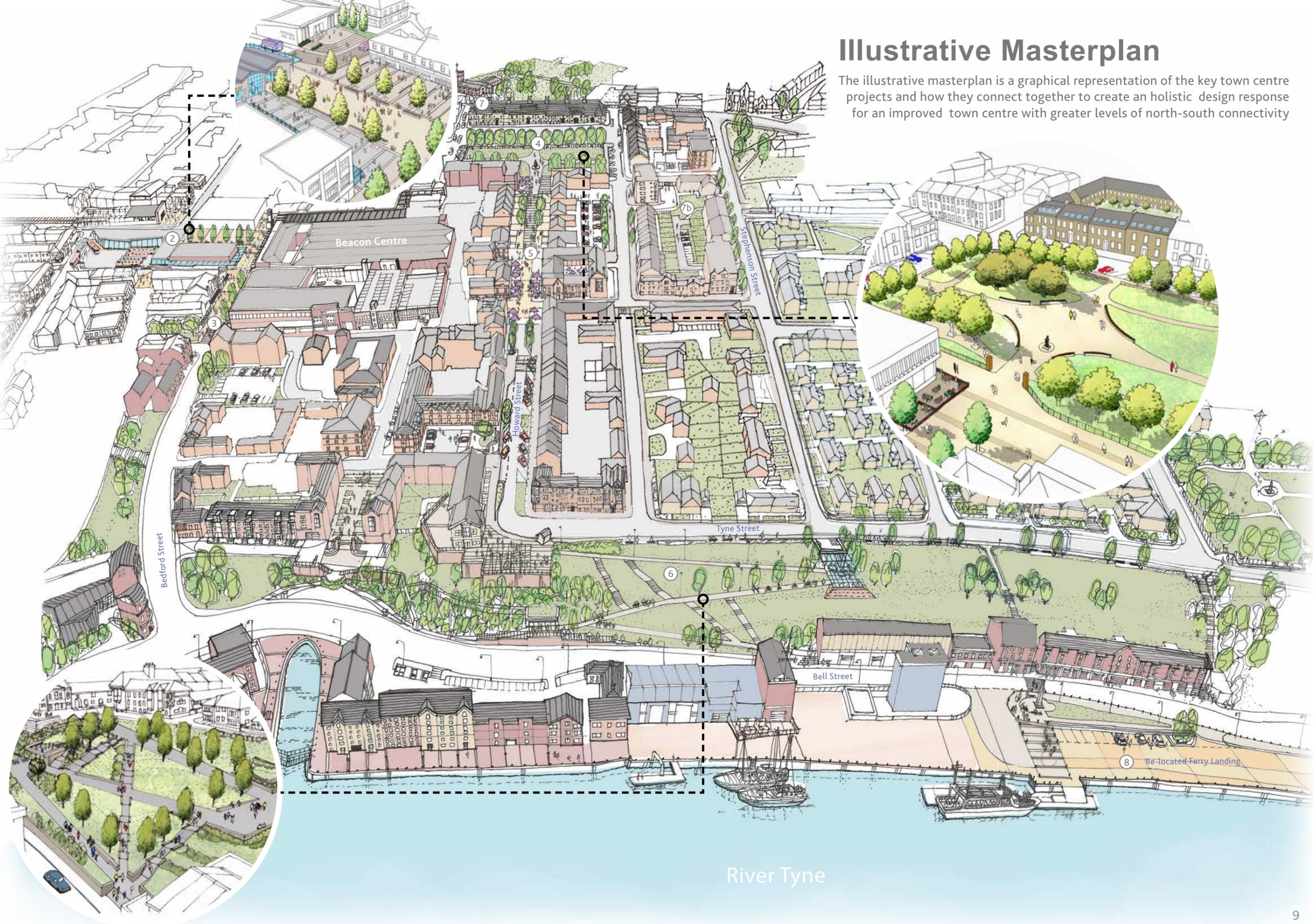
Following further development and engagement, the masterplan and the associated framework plan, will be approved and adopted by the Council as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

Once approved, the SPD will provide material for consideration, when determining future planning applications within the area.



Illustrative Masterplan

The illustrative masterplan is a graphical representation of the key town centre projects and how they connect together to create an holistic design response for an improved town centre with greater levels of north-south connectivity



Cabinet Report Policy Priorities



A smaller but more vibrant and connected, high quality town centre; create a smaller, more vibrant and connected town centre. It should combine living, working and retail with a place that becomes a family friendly destination in its own right, to relax and socialise. In turn it will be connected to an increasingly vibrant Fish Quay

Key Projects

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	7a	7b	8



A connected and vibrant Fish Quay; which supports a developing food and drink offer and a working quay but builds on the Fish Quay's increasing popularity as a destination exploring heritage, cycling, the connections to South Shields as well as the popular night time and weekend economy

Key Projects

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	7a	7b	8



Better transport flows and connectivity; making sure traffic flows more effectively, that the Metro Station is connected to the rest of the town, that pedestrians and cyclists can move easily between the town centre and the Fish Quay with an opportunity for something eye catching to make that possible; and weekend economy

Key Projects

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	7a	7b	8



A better quality built environment; learning from recent projects, and setting high design and material standards for our work.

Key Projects

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	7a	7b	8

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 Gateway Improvements | 6 Riverside Embankment Walkway |
| 2 Transport Hub & New Town Square | 7 Allocated Housing Sites |
| 3 Bedford/Saville St Public Realm | 7a Tyne Brand Mixed Use Site |
| 4 Northumberland Square | 7b Unicorn House Residential |
| 5 Howard Street Culture and Leisure | 8 Relocation Of Shields Ferry |

Table 3: How the projects align with the cabinet report objectives for North Shields

Key Projects

Set out on the accompanying plan are the key projects that will be delivered through the master-plan.



Figure 2: Key Project Plan

Key Projects

1. Gateway Improvements

Improving the image and quality of public realm in key gateway sites into North Shields will enhance the experience for residents and those visiting the town.

These and other gateway improvements will change perceptions, engendering a sense of pride and create positive and lasting visitor experiences from the first impression. Design Standards will be refined for our key gateways which will create a strong and positive sense of arrival and which are consistent with the rest of the Borough.

The proposals:

Three significant gateways into the town centre have been identified, that need to be addressed, as they currently offer very little sense of arrival (both aesthetically or in terms of highway layout):

- East Tynemouth Road and the Law Courts
- South east Fish Quay/Brew House Bank
- West Howdon Road/Coach Lane/Saville Street

The key challenges to be addressed:

To improve the gateways across the town there will be a scheme of highway improvements, integrated with public realm improvements that will offer the opportunity for significant green infrastructure and improved vehicular, cycle and pedestrian links.

We will identify key gateways, where issues are affecting the image and perception of the town. In such locations, we will support change of use, re-purposing, and the potential for redevelopment

(especially where this also supports consolidation of the town centre core and the sustainability of our housing areas and neighbourhoods).

Public transport facilities - such as the Metro / new bus interchange and Shields Ferry terminal - are also seen as key gateways and important locations for carefully designed and well - managed spaces. High quality facilities and public spaces will be created and maintained to ensure positive first impressions and to encourage greater use of the upgraded public transport and walking routes.

Dependencies:

Reducing the amount of vacant retail and underutilised accommodation (at defined gateway locations) will support a set of objectives (a smaller but more vibrant high-quality town centre, with a more diverse offer). Re-located some uses away from key gateway sites will also make way for re-development or more appropriate re use, in the longer term - to either residential or as higher quality office space for start-up / local businesses.

High quality public realm treatments (completed under strand three of the vision) will also help to uplift the quality of the route (west along Saville street) using public realm treatments continued from the central areas, where funds permit. The integrated transport hub, new town square and riverside embankment

walkway (projects 2&6) are also projects which will help raise the quality of gateways and key routes into the town centre.

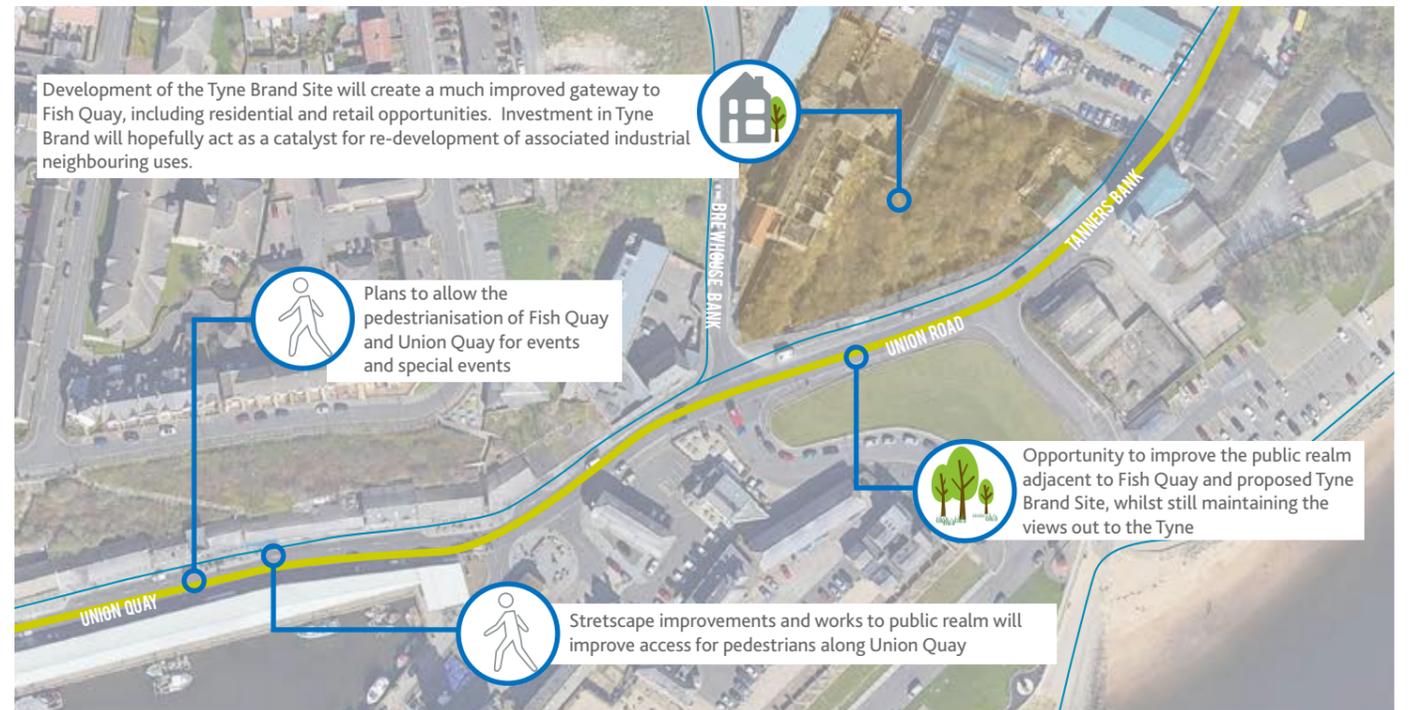
The Tyne Brand site (project 7a) is a key gateway and close to the heart of Fish Quay but its current position is detracting and limiting future growth. The brownfield site has complex issues and constraints and is also in multiple ownerships. The masterplan aims to create a mixed tenure development - led by residential uses - by working closely with land owners.

Highway proposals are currently being developed, for several of the key gateway junctions into the town centre. The below diagrams demonstrate how a combination of sensitive public realm improvements and the key developments identified within future pages of this document will help to develop and improve peoples perceptions as they arrive into the town centre by vehicle.

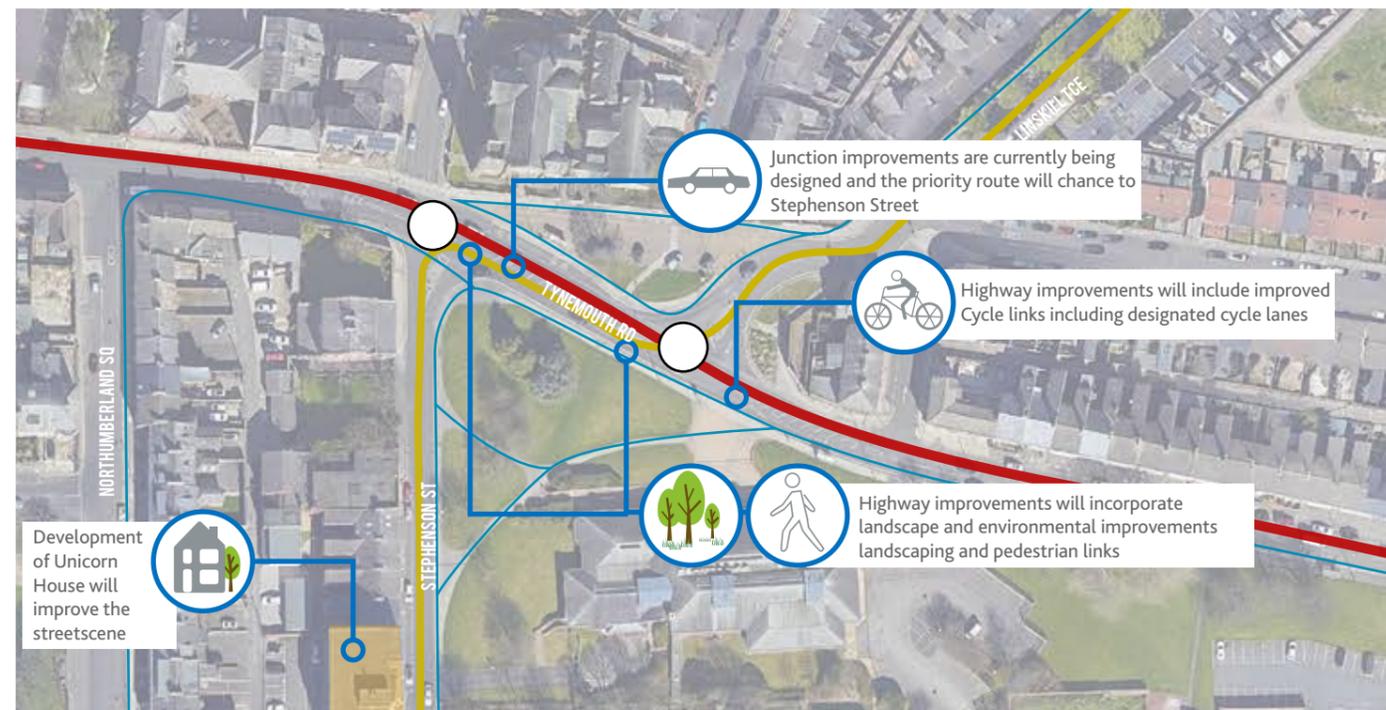
These improvements will also allow the careful consideration of pedestrian and cycle links into the town centre ensuring that new provision is fully integrated into the streetscape.

- Primary Vehicular Route
- Secondary Vehicular Route
- Pedestrian Route

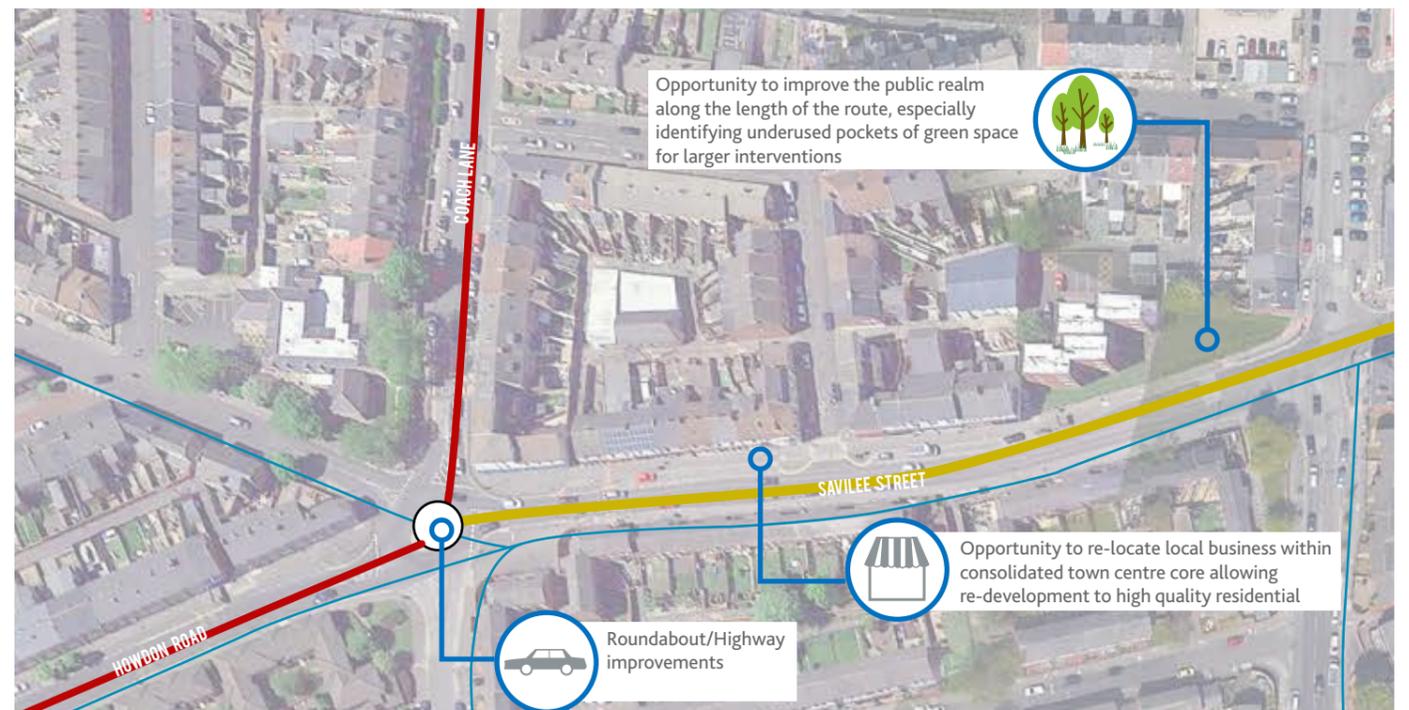
South east Fish Quay & Brewhouse Bank



East Tynemouth Road & the Law Courts



West Howdon Road, Coach Lane & Saville Street



Key Projects

2. Transport Hub and Town Square

The improvement of North Shield's public transport offer is a key foundation to the successful regeneration of the town centre. It will provide customers with an improved quality of service, giving access to a sustainable and high quality public transport network, which is well used and connected to the major centres.

The proposals will:

- Improve the image and quality of the public transport network and enhance the experience of visitors to the town with bus facilities vastly improved.
- Increase usage of both the Metro and bus facilities in the town.
- Expand footfall around the recently re-developed, metro station, which is well located as a key gateway into the town centre retail area.
- Provide a high-quality public transport infrastructure which will be a well-used, accessible and affordable alternative to private transport.
- Maintain accessibility to the Fish Quay and dramatically improve pedestrian and public transport connectivity between the town, the Fish Quays, and beyond.
- Provide a new gateway public realm, directly connecting the transport hub / town square to the core shopping area of Bedford Street.

Challenges to be addressed:

Existing bus stops, which are spread out across peripheral locations can be more centrally located and arranged closer to the key facilities.

Interconnections between modes of transport can be simplified by the new proposals, to create better pedestrian links between the Metro and bus concourse - to generate significant benefits (i.e. greater usage and more inter modal trips).

Vehicle and pedestrian conflicts around Nile Street/ Railway Street can be improved by careful location of the new bus facility and attention to design, which could include a covered pedestrian through- route linking more directly to Bedford Street.

Creating a more vibrant destination at the transport hub / town square, which is at an important, central location in the town, where people should be encouraged to stay for longer.

Maximising opportunities for commercial activity/ retail frontages in the vicinity of the transport hub / town square (or within the bus concourse itself).

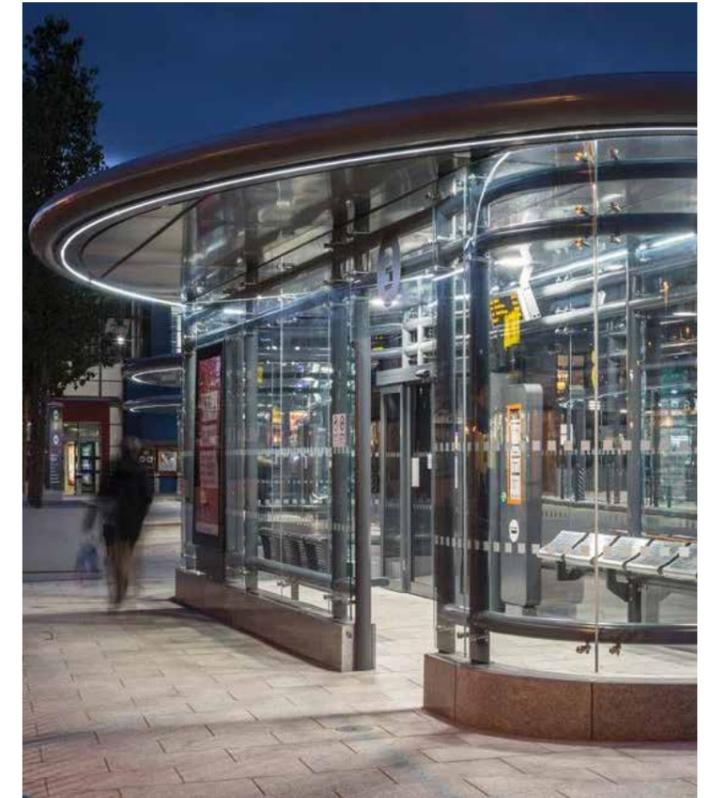
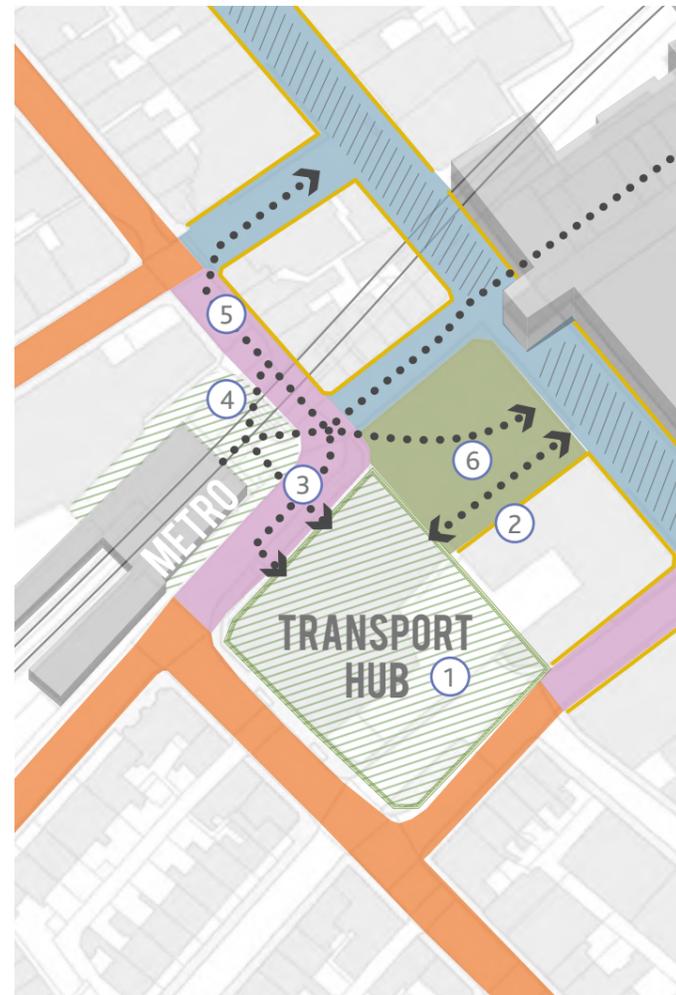
Dependencies

The project's success will also depend upon investment and funding – for improving pedestrian routes through the town, which are designed to ensure safe and attractive streets with access across the town, at all times of the day and evening.

The Council will seek funding support to create well-connected and attractive streets leading from the transport interchange, with the pedestrian circuits designed to be safer and more attractive, to encourage customers to fully use the services - including the evenings See public realm projects (3,4,6).

Transport Hub and Town Square Design Elements:

1. New bus station location
2. Covered link from bus station to Bedford Street
3. Pedestrian priority link to existing Metro station
4. Re-designed public realm outside Metro station
5. Improve the public realm of Nile Street, creating a safer pedestrian environment
6. New Town Centre Square



The space allocated for the Transport Hub allows flexibility of the design. The images shown here are just a few of the possibilities.



Artists impression showing the proposed transport hub / new town square and the opportunity to create a 'gateway' public square into North Shields shopping core.

Key Projects

3. Bedford Street and Saville Street Public Realm Improvements

The proposals will improve the quality of the tired public realm, using a distinctive, high quality design to soften the street scene and animate the spaces and encourage freer, unimpeded movement.

Improving the appearance and functionality of the town centre is a key strand of the Town Centre regeneration.

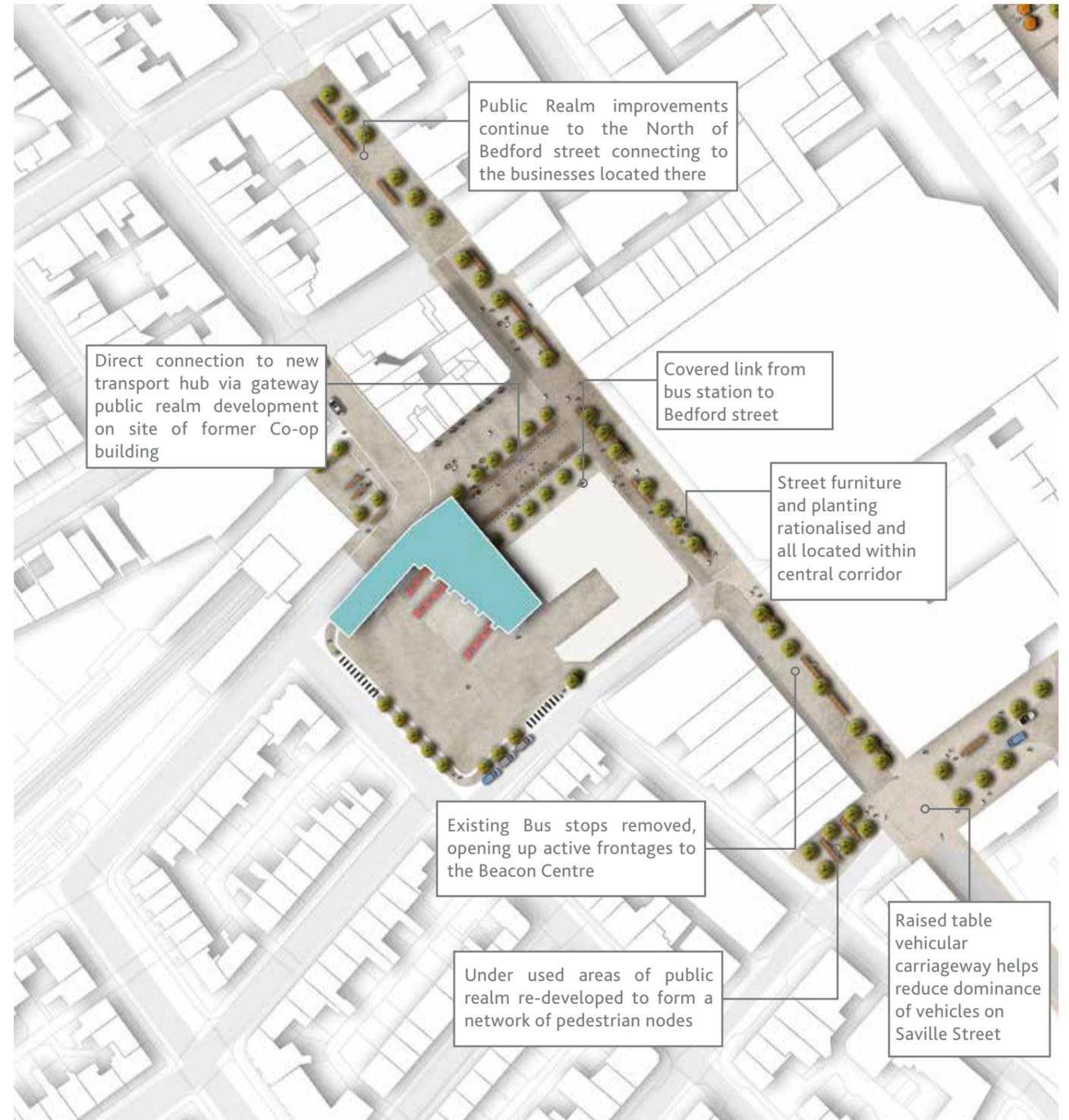
Providing an enhanced and well-designed public realm in the heart of the town centre will create an attractive shopping and leisure destination for visitors as well as a high quality residential environment for those living in the town centre.

Defining our spaces and celebrating our key buildings and the town's built heritage will be key in transforming the appearance of the town and creating a new visitor offer which reflects a new chapter in the town's rich history.

The town centre has many notable and well-appointed buildings, especially in and around the Howard Street 'new town' area which is a designated Conservation Area. Improving their setting and creating a series of public spaces for activities and events will enliven the town centre attracting greater visitor numbers and footfall. Ensuring high quality design in the public realm will create economic, environmental and social value and will give confidence to those wishing to invest in the town centre.

The proposals will re design the character of the streets to make them more attractive and by de cluttering the streets (reducing the quantity of street furniture/

1. New gateway public realm to Bedford Street
2. Remove street clutter and unnecessary structures
3. New bus interchange allows for removal of existing bus stops on lower Bedford Street
4. Public realm improvements continue onto Saville Street including raised table carriageway to reduce vehicular dominance.
5. Improvements connect with Howard Street improving town centre connectivity.
6. Key Buildings in Council ownership offer opportunities for complimentary change of use.
7. Existing pockets of underused public realm are to be developed to create pedestrian nodes and areas to rest en route.
8. New improved route through Beacon Centre
9. Potential to introduce covered walkway to Bedford Street.
10. Re-provided taxi rank at the heart of the town centre.



shelters/ planters etc) help people to navigate and move more freely around the town.

These two important streets (and their adjoining spaces) will be redesigned to form a well-connected pedestrian and cycling route across the town to Howard Street; with further public realm improvements envisaged to connect with the riverside embankment walkway (see project No6).

The material palette for the public realm works will be used to unify and link the routes together - extending the public realm network outwards from the transport hub/ new square, down to Bedford Street and Saville Street.

The existing bus stops on lower Bedford Street will be removed once the new bus interchange has been opened.

The proposals the proposals will re-provide taxi ranks at the heart of the town centre and close to / in line of sight of the transport interchange. The route to the proposed taxi rank will be much improved by these works. It will be attractive, safe and well sign posted.

The Council will work closely with the owners of the Beacon Centre – to encourage more active uses to be accommodated along Bedford Street –which is currently an underutilised frontage.



Re-invigorating pockets of underused public realm, combined with redeveloped tree lined streets will create a strong network of easily navigable streets. Removal of bus stops, opens up access to the Beacon Centre.

Challenges to be addressed:

Materials will be carefully chosen to meet several objectives:

- Must be high quality but also functional, easily managed and maintained;
- Must respond to the local character and complement the design and setting of important local buildings
- Modern materials and a contemporary approach can also be used to complement the historic townscape of the town;
- 'Street Trees, planters and furniture' used sparingly and to define spaces and routes thereby improving connectivity between existing areas and helping to improve navigation for visitors
- Coordinated management and maintenance of the enhanced streets – to cater for a more diverse of activities and uses in the town centre, which will extend the length of visits (by more residents and commuters) into the evenings.

Dependences:

Public Realm proposals will be more effective with an improved connection though the Beacon Centre –which also remains open into the evenings - when the centre is traditionally shut. This would help support the evening economy (allowing visitors to pass through to the transport hub / town square and potentially use the centre’s car parking facility).

Creating well-connected and attractive streets – as intended by this project also supports our ambitions to diversify uses and re purpose areas within it to encourage growth in the evening economy. High quality public realm is something which residents will benefit from as well as local businesses, as it helps to attract more visitors and customers to their premises. The improvements also go towards creating a better, more memorable visitor experience. We will work with existing building owners to secure property improvements to ensure the buildings and frontages compliment the quality public realm.



Proposals will create clutter free, easily navigable high quality public realm as seen here at Jameson Street, Hull

Bedford Street Shop frontage Improvements

Whilst fulfilling the role of the key shopping street within North Shields and providing access to other areas within the town, it is essential that Bedford Street remains an attractive destination for businesses and visitors to the town centre.

By redesigning the public realm, not only will the appearance of the street be significantly improved, it will also improve its functionality by providing flexible space that can be used to host a variety of events and activities that will help drive footfall including market stalls and entertainment.

Working with land owners we will also seek to secure property and shop front improvements which will further enhance the street-scene and will improve the visitor experience.

Proposals will include new surfacing materials and street furniture as well as the introduction of canopies to provide shelter for visitors. Providing legible and well signed routes to other parts of the town will improve connectivity between the commercial core and areas such as the Fish Quay and Smiths Dock and will help promote sustainable travel patterns in and around the centre.

The image below shows Bedford Street as seen today.



The intention of the masterplan is to introduce the changes described above, in a way which also gives greater prominence to the shops, which are currently hidden behind a dull brick colonnade.

The improvements can be achieved by working with the building owners and tenants – to explore different options as illustrated in the figures opposite:

- The shops themselves, could be extended to remove the colonnade and provide greater visibility to the shops
- Each shop could be branded – rather than uniformly treated – by the tenants themselves;
- Canopies will be introduced at important locations or to connect important routes;
- Key outdoor spaces could be covered – or large parasols introduced along with other public realm / street furniture improvements and canopies;
- A new covered route will be opened-up to link with the proposed new interchange



Examples of potential canopy designs.



Canopies will be incorporated at important locations or key routes.



The shops themselves, could be extended to remove the existing colonnade and provide greater visibility to the shops.

Key Projects

4. Northumberland Square

By continuing to invest in the restoration of Northumberland Square we will help to revitalise the wider area, using the stunning centre piece at the heart of a well connected, sustainable Conservation Area, to attract new uses and more visitors into North Shields.

In the future, as in the past, the town's urban grid and fine Georgian square can be used to ensure the town remains a location for commercial activity and a popular destination.

Northumberland Square was the focus of John Wright's 'new town' in the early 18th century and is one of only a few Georgian squares still in existence in Tyneside today.

The indicative proposals - shown in the masterplan - will sympathetically re-develop Northumberland Square, taking a lead from the historic layout, whilst creating a multi-functional space suited to events, themed markets, music events, or similar.

The Proposals

The indicative proposals envisaged for the square assume:

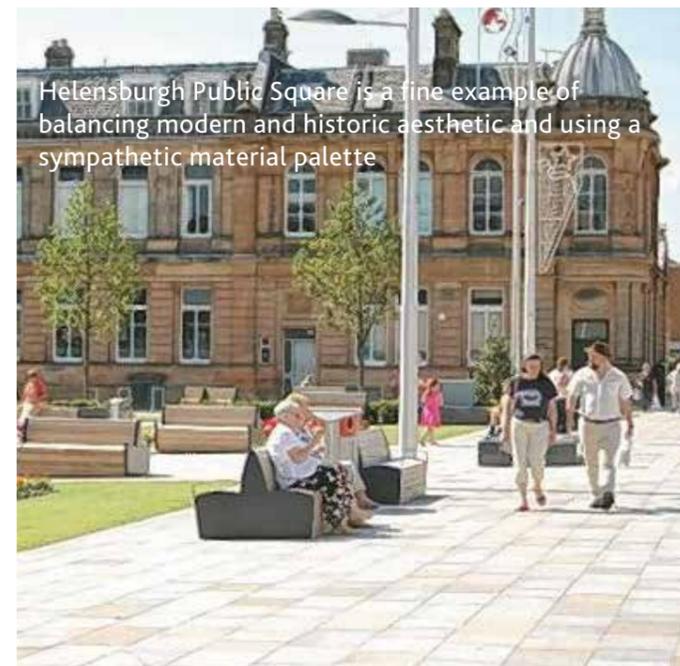
- Management of mature perimeter trees;
- Rationalisation Reinstatement and simplification of the park's original footpaths network;
- Creation of a greater link between the Customer First Centre and Beacon Centre entrances to the south of the park
- Development of a high quality, hard wearing material palette sympathetic to the square's heritage.

A high- quality setting:

- For emerging new leisure uses (A3 cafes and restaurants etc) which will help to diversify the town's offer beyond just retail; with
- Complementary changes of use in the streets surrounding the square (see following project) that will help to re-establish the square's importance – as a focal point – for residents and visitors.
- The images shown in the masterplan are for illustrative purposes only. Further work will be required engaging with Historic England who may provide specialist research support.

Challenges to be addressed:

The designs will be informed by further historic research with options prepared, which address conservation needs and respond to the area's unique character and culture – recognising its importance as defined in the Northumberland Square Conservation Area. This provides a massive opportunity to set the tone for the regeneration work over the term of the masterplan



Helensburgh Public Square is a fine example of balancing modern and historic aesthetic and using a sympathetic material palette



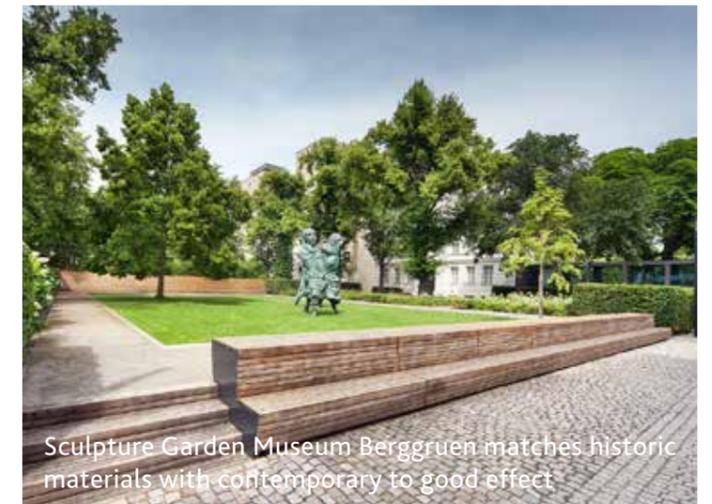
Reinstatement of historic footpath arrangement combined with radical tree thinning, creates large areas of open grass for events

'Wooden Dolly' Statue remains within the park

Connectivity of Northumberland Square and adjacent library and Beacon Centre improved



Proposals will be sympathetic to the squares heritage whilst creating a flexible environment for events



Sculpture Garden Museum Berggruen matches historic materials with contemporary to good effect



Northumberland Square, is a key location to deliver townhouses and apartments whilst accentuating its best features to draw people to Howard Street and it's developing café culture.

The £5.6 million scheme has been completed to restore a row of terraced properties on the north of the square to their original use of homes.

The redevelopment has a total of 28 new build houses and apartments, with secure courtyard parking and gardens.

Artists impression of the rejuvenated Northumberland Square, where proposals will be developed to facilitate more flexible use of the town centre, creating a focal point for the development of the Howard Street cultural and leisure offer.

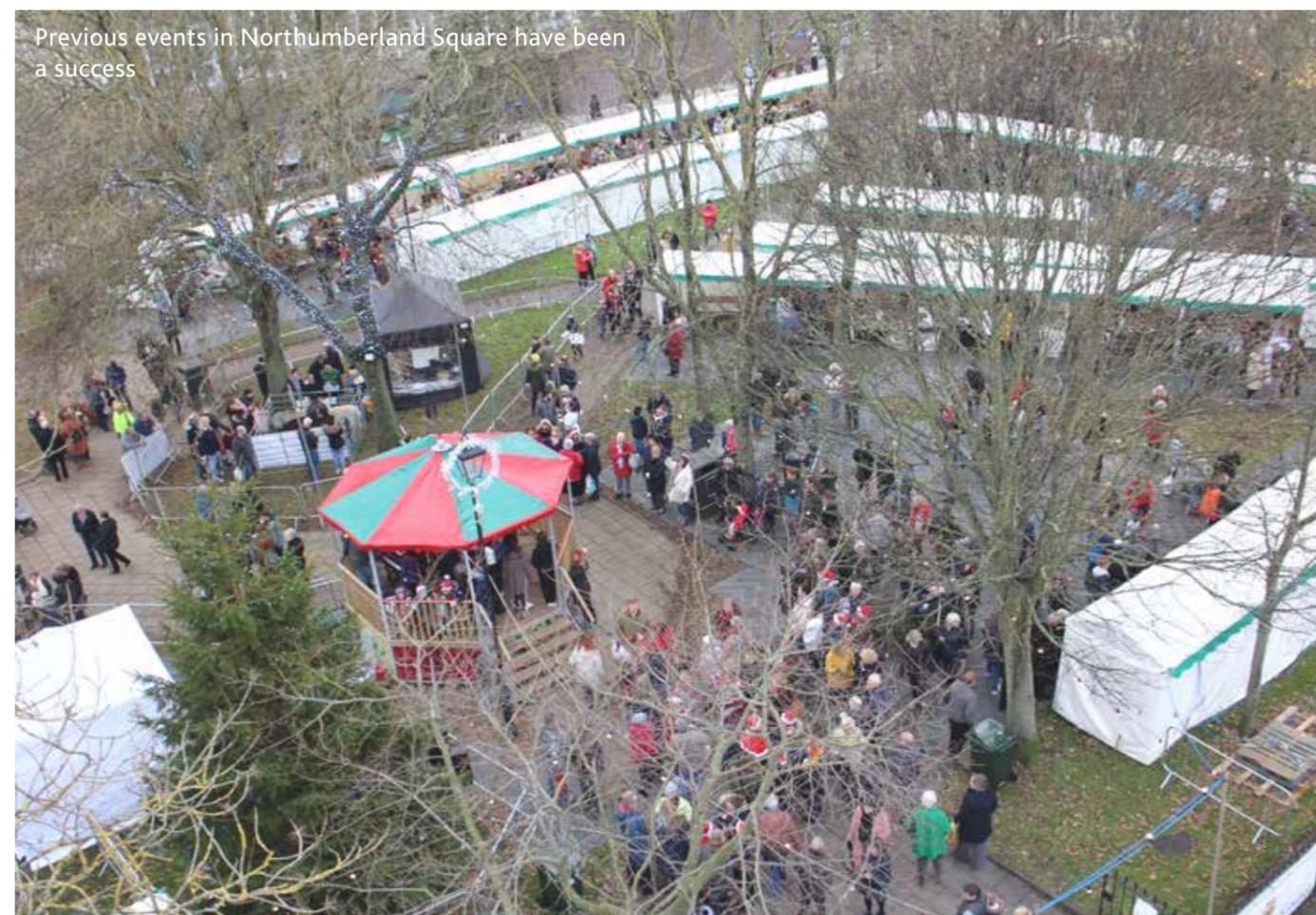
Flexibility for the space is a key design consideration and whilst it is important that the square re-discovers its heritage, the area must also work for the modern demands of North Shields.

North Shields has a strong reputation for delivering high quality local events, markets and concerts. Northumberland Square, when combined with the improvements to Howard Street will provide the perfect location to build on these already popular events.

Landscape management within the square allows for greater flexibility of use, creating a large central area which is free of obstacles. Although the area

is predominately grassed, it can be reinforced and protected during any event. Similarly, any furniture that is suggested can be removable to ensure the space is maximised and free from clutter.

The pedestrianisation of Howard Street also offers the perfect setting to provide a complimentary location to Northumberland Square. Its generously proportioned streets with newly developed evening economy would be a perfect location for markets and events.



Previous events in Northumberland Square have been a success

Dependencies:

Public realm proposals at Northumberland Square need to ideally be combined with an improved link through the Beacon Centre – further increasing the extent and quality of the proposed pedestrianised routes.

Implementation of this project will improve the quality and character of the public realm – enhancing connectivity and improving access for visitors and residents.

By restoring the square – in keeping with its surroundings, we will create a focal point that supports further diversification of uses around it. The proposals also help to uplift the visitor experience as well as the quality of the town centre offer.

The market study has examined the area around Northumberland Square and Howard street, identifying the area's strong sense of culture and heritage as an asset, which can be used to attract other uses into the area, helping to create a more diverse town centre offer.

The initial work has helped to identify some potential 'key' properties, which could be targeted for acquisition to initiate the integration of different uses into the area.

Adding leisure- based outlets and operations and creating more of a café culture across the area, will strengthen the appeal of the area.



Re-working the space will allow for greater flexibility for future events

Key Projects

5. Howard Street Culture and Leisure Quarter

North Shields will have a revitalised town centre that is an attractive and vibrant place to visit, with Howard Street seen as a focus for leisure focused uses, cafés, restaurants and culture destinations, both in the day time and into the evening.

High quality public realm proposals will be introduced at Howard Street to help achieve these aims.

North Shields historically has a rich heritage of culture, arts, and performance and it is key that the town centre embraces this. Widely successful musicians such as Sam Fender, still use the neighbouring Fish Quay and the wider town as inspiration for their music and as a base for their recording studio.

A key focus for the Howard Street development will be the junction/intersection with Saville Street as this will be a key zone for integrating the proposals into the wider movement strategy for the town centre.

As shown in the plan below, this intersection benefits from several key buildings, including some of the finer examples of architecture within the town centre. The Exchange Building is already an established music,

arts and leisure venue and will act as an anchor for the re-alignment of the area and several other complimentary units including the former Globe Gallery, and the Business Factory sit within this intersection.

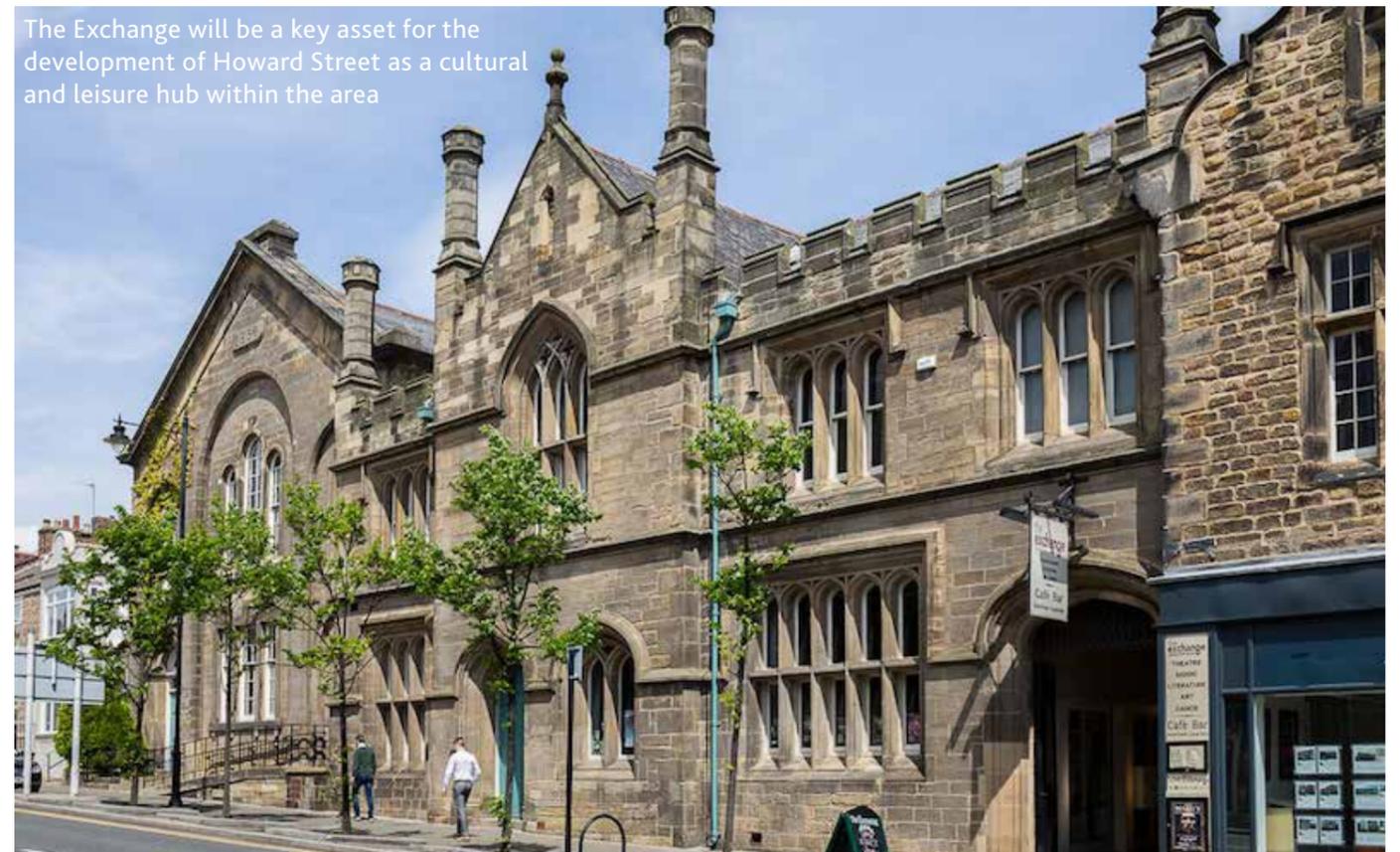
These existing facilities and the proximity to the re-focused leisure offer of Howard street can lead to this area becoming a hub for cultural activity within the town centre complimenting the offer of both Howard Street and the Fish Quay.

The development of this area and it's facilities can be a key driver for the local economy, creating new jobs and business opportunities. The existing Business Factory is ideally located to continue to support in this

transition, guiding and steering new initiatives and business to take up premises within this intersection and Howard Street as a whole.



The Business Centre



The Exchange will be a key asset for the development of Howard Street as a cultural and leisure hub within the area

The indicative proposals shown in the masterplan are designed to accentuate the area's special character and create the spaces required to support the introduction of different uses in the area.

The proposals will improve the quality of the public realm. High quality materials will be used to create pedestrian -friendly/ pedestrian only spaces, with suitable street trees introduced along with seating and street furniture to soften the character of the streets and create the ambience required.

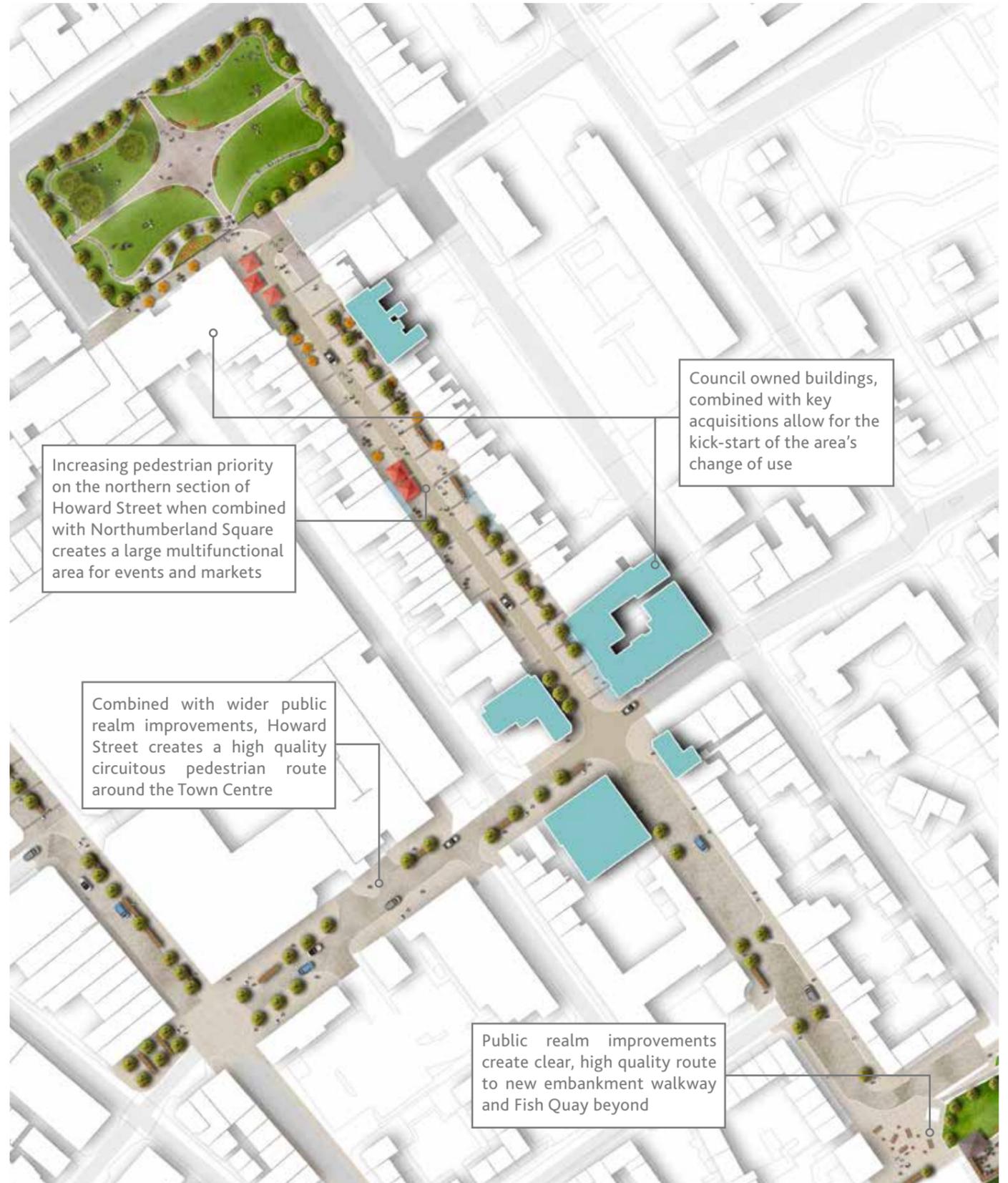
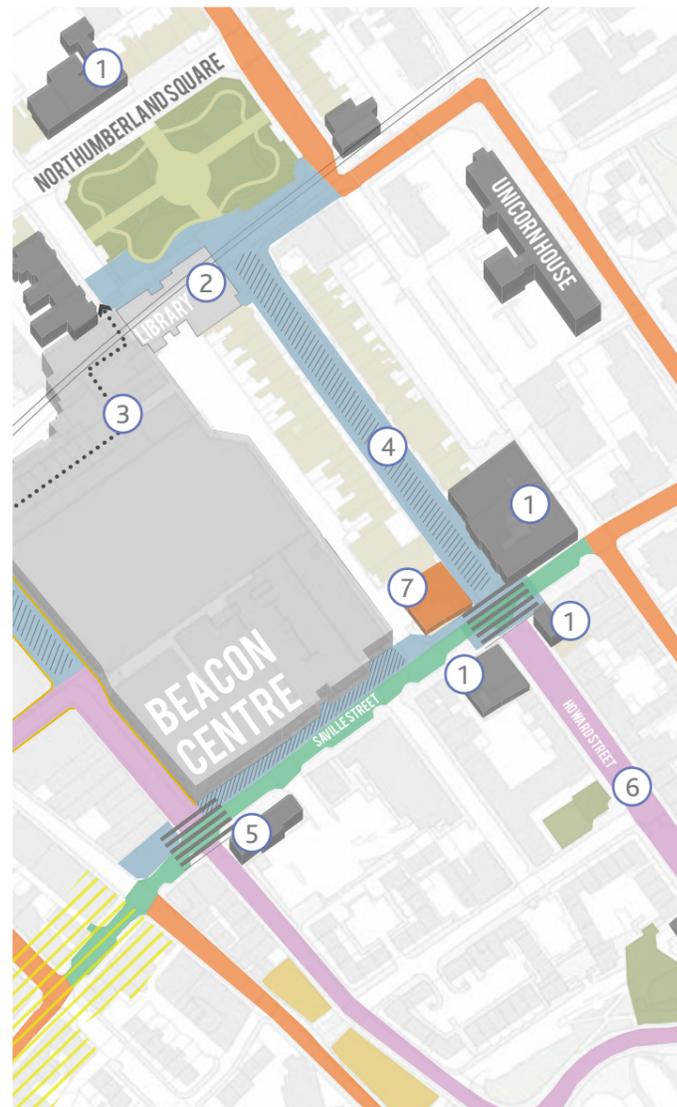
Vehicular dominance in the area will be reduced. The improved pedestrian environments created will support the development of a café culture and a food and drink offer, which will be complimentary that found at Fish Quay and elsewhere in the town.

Challenges to be addressed:

The over-arching aim is to increase the quality and extent of the pedestrian only areas. As such, the indicative proposals developed in the masterplan aim to rationalise and reduce vehicular dominance within the area -showing what may be possible.

We recognise the importance of maintaining adequate on-street parking at key locations, but this may also mean making more use of nearby car parking facilities. The designs as developed, will need to include suitable access for service and emergency vehicles. Traffic in some areas may need to be maintained. In these locations:

1. Key, council owned buildings anchor the proposals
2. Integrate the library into Northumberland Square
3. Maintain strong pedestrian link through the Beacon Centre, including outside of retail hours
4. Improved Public realm including pedestrian priority street design.
5. Key, council owned buildings on Saville street can continue the offer to the west, creating a link to Bedford Street improvements.
6. Improvements will create a strong pedestrian link to Fish Quay.
7. Key located third party property.



- A raised table road surface will be introduced, surfaced in a similar material to the adjoining pavements.
- We aim to reduce the overall impact of cars whilst still maintaining a more flexible shared environment;
- The streets could also be closed off (at certain times or if required for events etc) with traffic re-directed to the neighbouring parallel streets.

The generous proportions of the street means we can set aside space for tree planting – and possibly create a formal tree-lined boulevard along the length of Howard street.

Such a feature will create a visual link and a physical connection between Northumberland Square and the riverside embankment, where a new walkway is proposed (see project 6) which will connect to a new walkway to the south and the Fish Quay beyond.

The material palette will be simple and high quality, reflecting the history, character and architectural vernacular of the area.

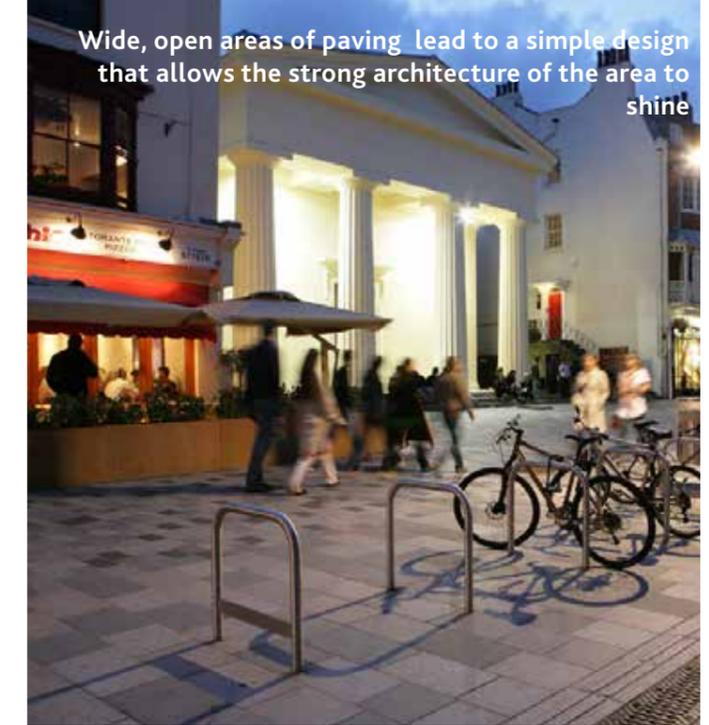
The architectural fabric, proximity to the town centre and unique character provides a real opportunity to help reinvent this area as a place to live and visit.

The proposals will be centred around these key buildings and seek to acquire and re-develop buildings at key locations that at present detract from the overall aesthetic.

Dependencies:

Public realm proposals need to be combined with a new link through the Beacon Centre, further increasing the extent and quality of the proposed pedestrianised routes.

Implementation of this project, to improve the quality and character of the public realm, supports our objectives of the vision (creating well-connected and attractive streets) and strand two; enabling diversification of uses within a consolidated town centre, helping to uplift the visitor experience and quality of the town centre offer.



The pedestrianised tree lined street of the north of Howard Street will create a strong back drop for the development of an in town food and drink offer that is flexible to deliver markets and events.

Key Projects

6. Riverside Embankment Walkway

The town centre will link to the surrounding area, including the Fish Quay, which will increase in popularity with continued heritage led regeneration that will support the local economy.

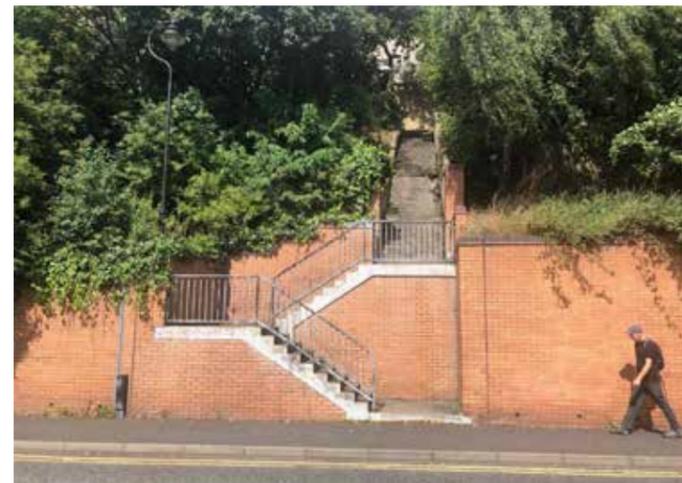
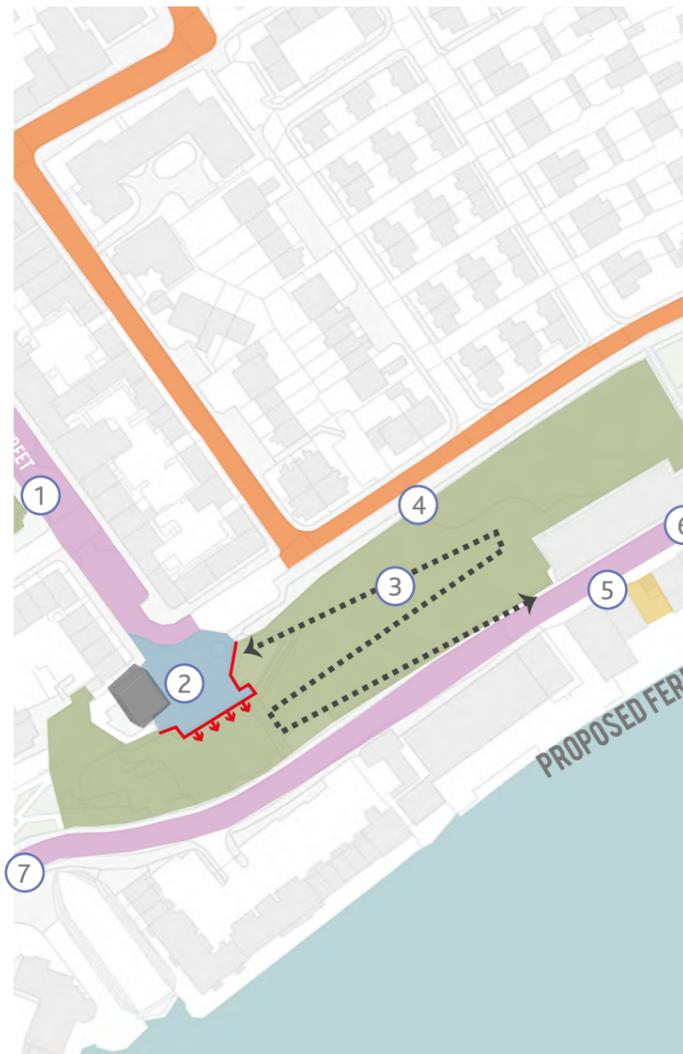
The Proposals:

The proposals will address the connectivity issues, creating a safe, interesting gateway to Fish Quay and beyond whilst also creating a destination that maximises the key opportunities of the area, including the views of the River Tyne.

In recent years, with significant support and investment from North Tyneside Council, Fish Quay has successfully redeveloped itself as a leisure and cultural destination.

North Shields town centre has the opportunity to directly connect itself to this Fish Quay and develop complimentary leisure and evening entertainment facilities.

1. Connectivity to the new improved public realm of Howard Street
2. Integration with existing square and Registry Office
3. Potential for step free access
4. Potential to manage existing vegetation, opening up more views of the River Tyne and South Shields Beyond.
5. Proposed location of the new ferry terminal, opportunity to create direct link to the town centre
6. Link to Fish Quay
7. Link to emerging residential developments to the west



Existing stepped access from Union Quay to Howard Street

Challenges to be addressed:

At present North Shields is bisected by a steep level change between the town centre core and the riverside. This level change has been a barrier to development historically and several examples of historical steps can still be found that sought to address the connectivity issues.

Whilst obviously the significant level change poses challenges for connectivity, it also offers fantastic opportunities including 180-degree views of the River Tyne from key locations at its highest point.

The rationalisation and management of the existing vegetation not only opens views up to the River Tyne and beyond, but also creates a more open, safer access route with greater levels of natural surveillance.

The proposals create step free access with a series of interconnecting ramps and wide-open landings with areas for rest. These ramps will be designed to have a shallow gradient as possible, but further study and investigation will be required to understand the limitations.

Dependences:

Implementation of this project – to improve the quality and character of the public realm - supports strand Three of the vision (creating well-connected and attractive streets) and Strand Two – enabling diversification of uses within a consolidated town centre, helping to uplift the visitor experience and quality of the town centre offer.



Wider Connectivity:

The proposed embankment walkway will be part of a wider improvement to pedestrian movement along the fish quay and beyond. The Fish Quay, at present, has direct connections to Tynemouth to the East, but this plan shows the potential for improving elements of the existing pedestrian route to make the journey shorter or more accessible.



Plateaus within the design offer the opportunity for rest and to experience fantastic views of the Tyne



The design allows for a combination of both stepped and ramped routes

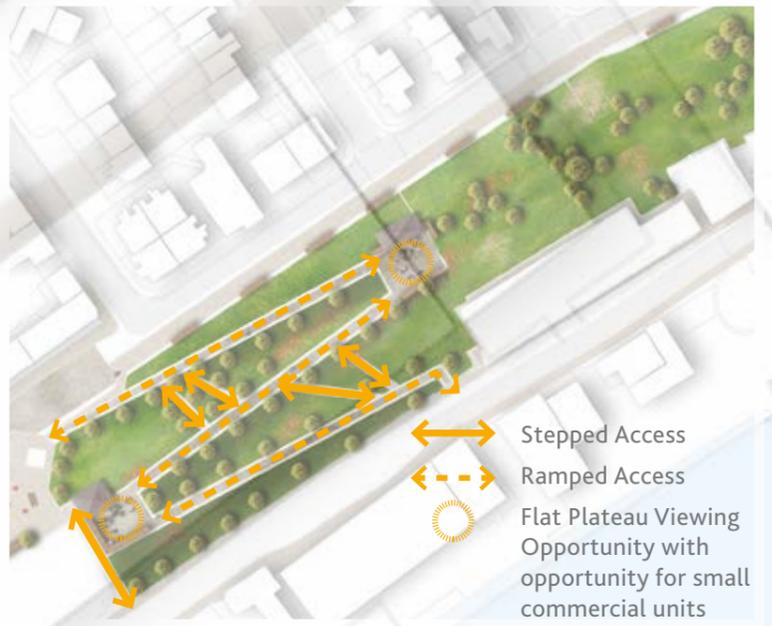


Existing vegetation managed and rationalised to maintain biodiversity and ecological value whilst maximising views of River Tyne

Level plateaus offer areas for rest and seating to maximise views of River Tyne and also offer the opportunity for small commercial units

Clear open views create a safer access route with greater levels of natural surveillance & security

Proposals tie into existing square and wider public realm improvements



Stepped Access
Ramped Access
Flat Plateau Viewing Opportunity with opportunity for small commercial units



Artists impression of the Riverside, Embankment Walkway that connects the newly improved public realm of Howard Street with Fish Quay to the South. The design of the pathway will need further study to ensure the best possible gradient is achieved, making the pathway as welcoming accessible as possible.

Key Projects

Creating a Vibrant and Attractive Town Centre Housing Market

There is a wide range of housing choice, quality and value in North Shields, from the traditionally higher quality areas towards Tynemouth, to areas of housing requiring improvement to the west. The biggest area of development has been along the riverside, where apartment developments have been developed on the banksides of the Fish Quay along to the ongoing development of Smith's Dock, buoyed by the fantastic river vista's and the ever-improving choice of food and drink offerings.

As North Shields Town Centre repositions itself in terms of its visitor offer, there is an opportunity to further develop a more diverse and balanced housing offer which sees North Shields being promoted as an exciting place to live with the benefits of a town centre coupled with access to the riverside and coast.

The masterplan identifies key housing interventions that are detailed in the following pages. These interventions support several of the key vision strands, not only improving residential areas, but due to their location they will also significantly improve key gateways into the town.



7. Allocated Housing Sites

Circa 2.7 Ha of targeted allocated housing sites that strongly support the aspirations of the masterplan.

The Proposals:

The masterplan has identified two key areas for long term targeted housing regeneration that also support wider elements of the masterplan vision, including creating an improved town centre core and improving key vehicular gateways.

Challenges to be Addressed:

The identified areas are complex and under several ownerships but are located so that they have the potential to have a great impact on the revitalised town centre.

To support the retail core we wish to promote retail centrally within the town centre. This will also help facilitate better connectivity with other areas. Fundamental to the sustainability of the town centre, a multitude of smaller individual traders that can contribute to the diversity and vitality of the retail centre.

The removal of these smaller retail units allow a more holistic approach to housing interventions within these areas and can provide much needed housing within walking distance of the town.

Dependences:

The development of both sites is already in progress and they are key developments for the town centre.

The improved pedestrian access offered by the Riverside Walkway (project 6) will be key to improve the pedestrian access of Smiths Dock to the Town Centre.

The re-development of Howard street and Northumberland Square (projects 4 & 5) will be important contributors to creating a much improved setting for the proposed renovations and developments at Northumberland Square.



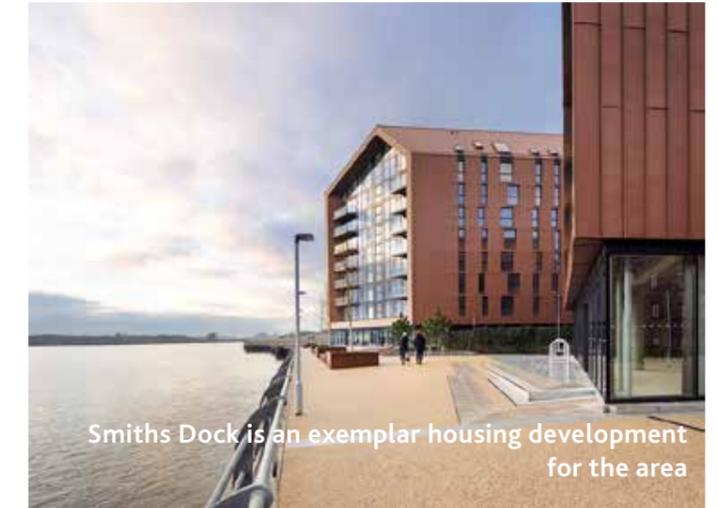
High quality housing interventions could be developed in close proximity to the town centre similar to the award winning Anne Mews scheme shown here

Two further sites, Tyne Brand and Unicorn House, are currently subject to ongoing feasibility work to bring them forward for residential development.

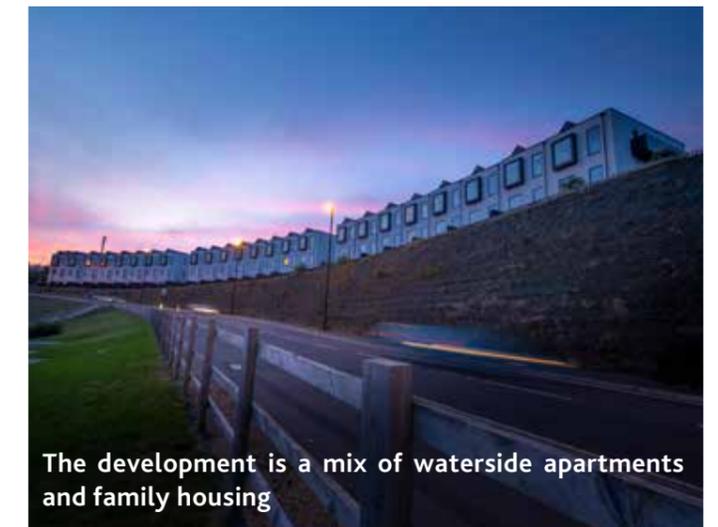
A high-quality design response will be required for each, to ensure an aspirational development suiting the location and delivering the values required to support development at these challenging sites.



Northumberland Square is currently being sympathetically re-developed for housing



Smiths Dock is an exemplar housing development for the area



The development is a mix of waterside apartments and family housing

7a. Tyne Brand Site

The Proposals:

This site is one the barometers of the regeneration of the town, and could yield a significant site of 1.7 hectares, that taken with Smith's Dock, would cement the regeneration of the quaysides in North Shields.

The proposed residential development would provide a considerable opportunity for business and services within Fish Quay. A range of uses are envisaged including leisure, enterprise and residential development at scale. These together would increase the footfall in the area and drive up demand for ancillary uses.

Challenges to be Addressed:

The site is in several ownerships that has deterred development as no one party could acquire on a piecemeal basis without certainty as to outcome.

The challenge of fragmented ownership is likely to be compounded by some adjoining commercial uses, and their inclusion within any acquisition should be considered. Initially acquisition should be attempted by negotiation, but Compulsory Purchase is a potential option to place the land in a single interest.

Additionally the historic industrial use will have led to contamination of the site, and early assessment in establishing the extent of the remediation work is required.

Dependences:

As stated there are a number of interests on the site.

1. **Proposed Development would improve the gateways into the Fish Quay area**
2. **Opportunity for leisure/retail active frontage along the boundary of the proposed development that would compliment the leisure offer at Fish Quay**
3. **Potential to include additional land within a wider redevelopment scheme to create a better holistic development.**
4. **The crescent will be retained as public open space and not developed to create a better placemaking solution for the area.**
5. **Proposals seek to pedestrianise the Fish Quay for key events or Markets**



The Tyne Brand Site has the Opportunity to offer unique housing adjacent to Fish Quay with a mix of leisure and office accommodation

7b. Unicorn House

Redevelopment of Unicorn House, Suez Street, in combination with adjacent Council owned land.

The Proposals:

In early 2020 NTC completed purchase of the Unicorn House site allowing the promotion of a holistic redevelopment incorporating the wider site (e.g. additional residential new build) to deliver an aspirational scheme in line with the aspirations set out for the Howard Street area (Project 6: Howard Street Cultural and leisure Quarter)

The proposals seek to provide circa 29 units across a mix of family houses and apartments. The scale of the proposal sits modestly between the more dominant Northumbria House Flats to the north and the Bell and Bucket Public House building to the south.

Although the site falls outside of the Northumberland Square conservation area, material choices are to take careful consideration of the surrounding architecture.

Challenges to be Addressed:

The identified areas are complex and under several ownerships but are located so that they have the potential to have a great impact on the revitalised town centre.

The adjacent conservation zone will ensure that any design proposals must be high quality and sympathetic. The adjacent Northumbria House must be carefully considered within any design, particularly its scale and a interface with any proposed development.

Dependences:

Delivering a high quality aspirational scheme in line with the objectives of the masterplan will be achieved through careful consideration of urban design issues at an early stage having regard to the character of the adjacent conservation area.

The gateway junction improvements at East Tynemouth & Law Courts (project 1) are important to ensure ease off access for any new proposed developments within this area.



Indicative draft layout and elevations for the scheme



Key Projects

8. Relocation of the Shields Ferry

The masterplan supports relocation of the Shields Ferry to a central location at Fish Quay as one strand of a comprehensive public transport network, which will lead to the long term and sustainable transformation of North Shields.

Proposals:

The masterplan includes bus routing improvements and access improvements between the quay and the upper town, which are designed:

- to encourage a greater number of lengthier visits to the town;
- to switch potential users to more sustainable forms of transport; and
- to create memorable and experience-enriched visits

Challenges:

The masterplan supports the relocation of the shields ferry and assumes that it will be relocated. However, the project is at an early stage, with a business case strategy under preparation, which will explore the viability of options and identify key risks and challenges.

There are several key challenges to the proposal, including the need to integrate the ferry landing within the existing working Fish Quay whilst not prejudicing the operation of a working quay.

It is also important to ensure the jetty's do not project significantly into the channel which could impact on the ability of larger cruise (and other) vessels to successfully navigate the bend in the river and access Tyne Commission Quay.

Dependencies:

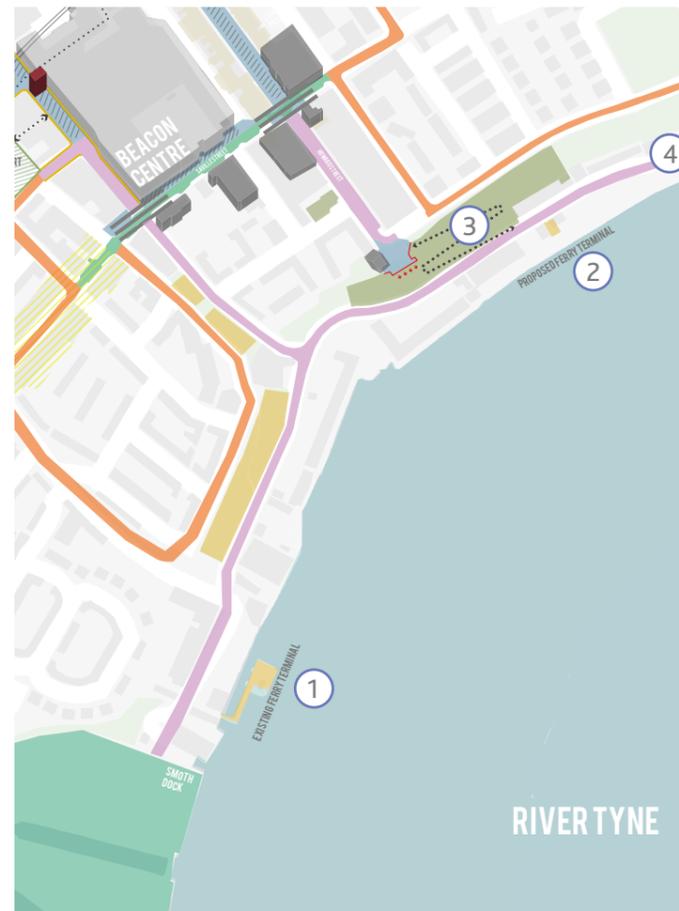
There is an important synergy between the ferry re-location and the improved pedestrian route formed to the town centre. Projects 7 (riverside embankment walkway) and project 6 (Howard Street Improvements) are key to forming this improved route for pedestrians. The ferry re-location will be at the foot of the embankment walkway and this safe, welcoming route will encourage visitors to explore the wider town centre as opposed to the majority using the Fish Quay at present.

Existing Service Arrangements

The Shields Ferry transports passengers across the Tyne throughout the year and plays a role in connecting the districts of North Tyneside and South Tyneside. The ferry service operates on a half hour frequency, with the average journey time of the crossing lasting seven minutes. The service commences at 06:45 Monday to Saturday and at 10:15 on a Sunday. The number of crossings varies depending on the day of the week. Operation ceases at 20:00 Monday to Wednesday with 40 crossings per day, 22:50 Thursday to Saturday with 49 crossings per day and 18:00 on Sunday with 24 crossings per day.

The ferry is well connected with public transport in north shields with the ferry landing here being connected to the bus network. The Ferry link 333 is a free shuttle bus service for ferry passengers which is secured by Nexus using funding from the Ferry budget and operates in sync with the ferry timetable, arriving at the North Shields landing at the same time as the Ferry. The service connects the ferry landing with North Shields town centre, North Shields Metro and the Fish Quay. we will review vehicle movements for commercial vehicles associated with the operation of the Fish Quay whilst ensuring public transport accessibility

1. Location of existing ferry terminal
2. Proposed new ferry terminal location
3. New location will have direct links to the town centre via the proposed Riverside Embankment Walkway project.
4. New ferry location will have stronger connections to Fish Quay



Usage

Tourist and leisure industry journeys accounted for 31% of all trips in 2008. By 2009 commuter journeys increased by 9% to account for 28.5% of all ferry journeys with almost half of all passengers (49%) in full time employment. 34.58% of ferry users are from North Tyneside (NEXUS Annual report 16/17).

The Nexus Annual Report 16/17 also areas identified potential to draw in visitors from outside Tyne and Wear (e.g. Morpeth, Blyth and Durham) indicating the potential demand for longer distance travel via the Ferry.



Access & Movement

Pedestrian & Cycle Movement Strategy

The underlying core principle behind the masterplan design is pedestrian movement.

The existing urban grain is retained, however following the site analysis; routes such as Howard Street and Saville Street have been re-developed to increase pedestrian priority and greater connectivity.

The way in which a place is accessed is fundamental for both it's function and peoples perception of the area.

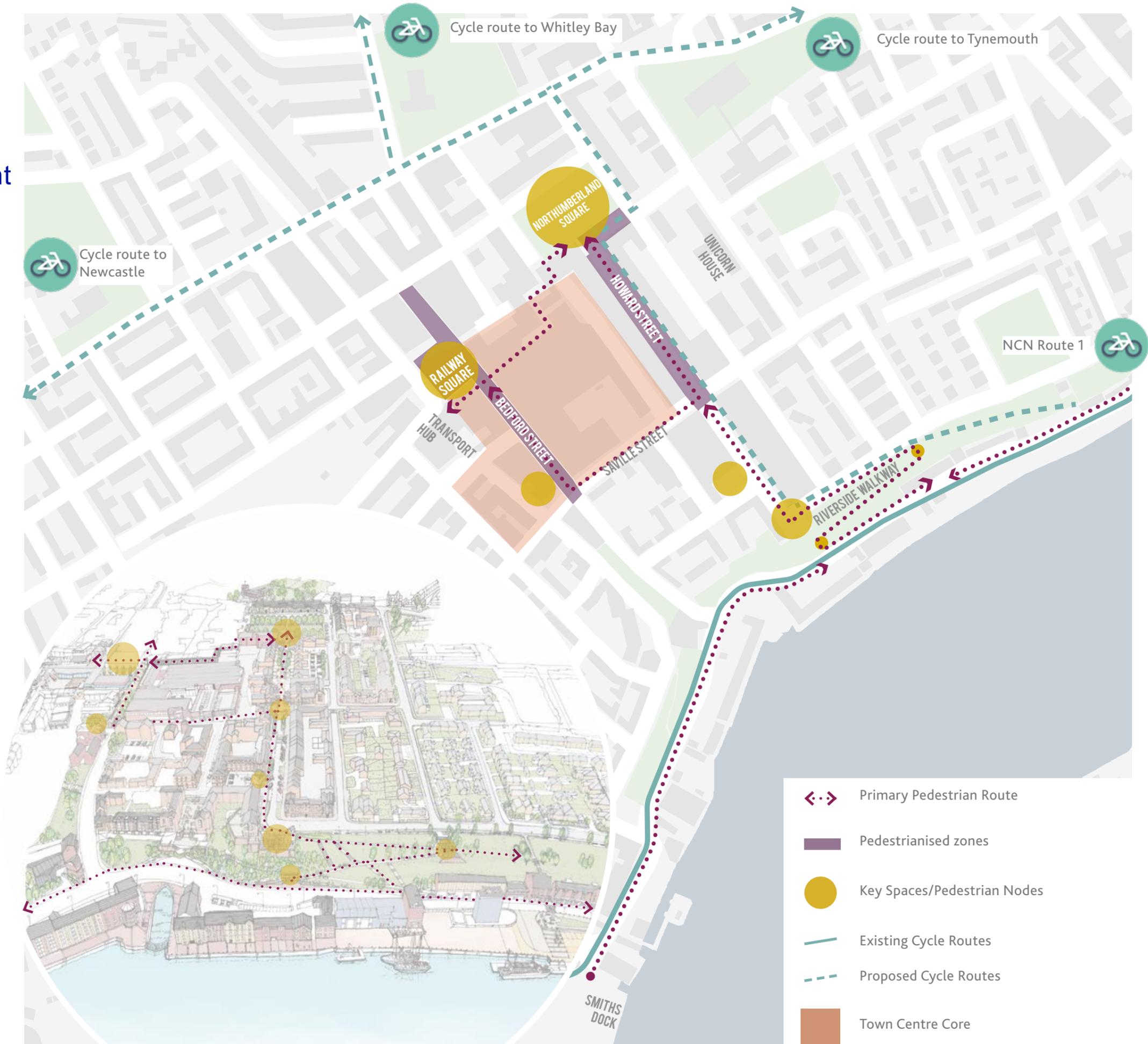
Increasing the pedestrian priority on both Howard Street and Saville street, with shared surface treatment on Saville Street and removing traffic from the north of Howard Street, when combined with Bedford Street and the improved routes through the Beacon Centre creates a high quality easily navigable pedestrian loop through the town.

These spaces are linked by a series of key public realm areas and key nodes which offer a hierarchy to the movement and intermittent places for people to dwell and enjoy.

The proposed cycle network connects the town centre with the outlying neighbourhoods.

Summary:

1. Removal of traffic movements where practicable will create opportunities for reallocation of space to pedestrians and improved public realm making the Town more liveable and appealing to visitors.
2. Improved legibility of key walking route between Fish Quay and Town Centre and draw-in leisure trips from the "Coast".



Access & Movement

Vehicular Movement Strategy

The rationale for pedestrian movement is successful only if the vehicle movement strategy is reconfigured to minimise conflict and improve pedestrian safety.

The strategy undertaken in the review of traffic movement was a phased approach.

Firstly remove vehicle and pedestrian conflict where possible. If this is not completely feasible, then minimise conflict by reducing vehicle movement. As a third step, introduce passive design measures to control vehicle movement to shift perception and increase the awareness of drivers that pedestrians are present.

The increased pedestrian priority on Saville Street and Howard Street presents a significant measure in the creation of a more pedestrian oriented town centre.

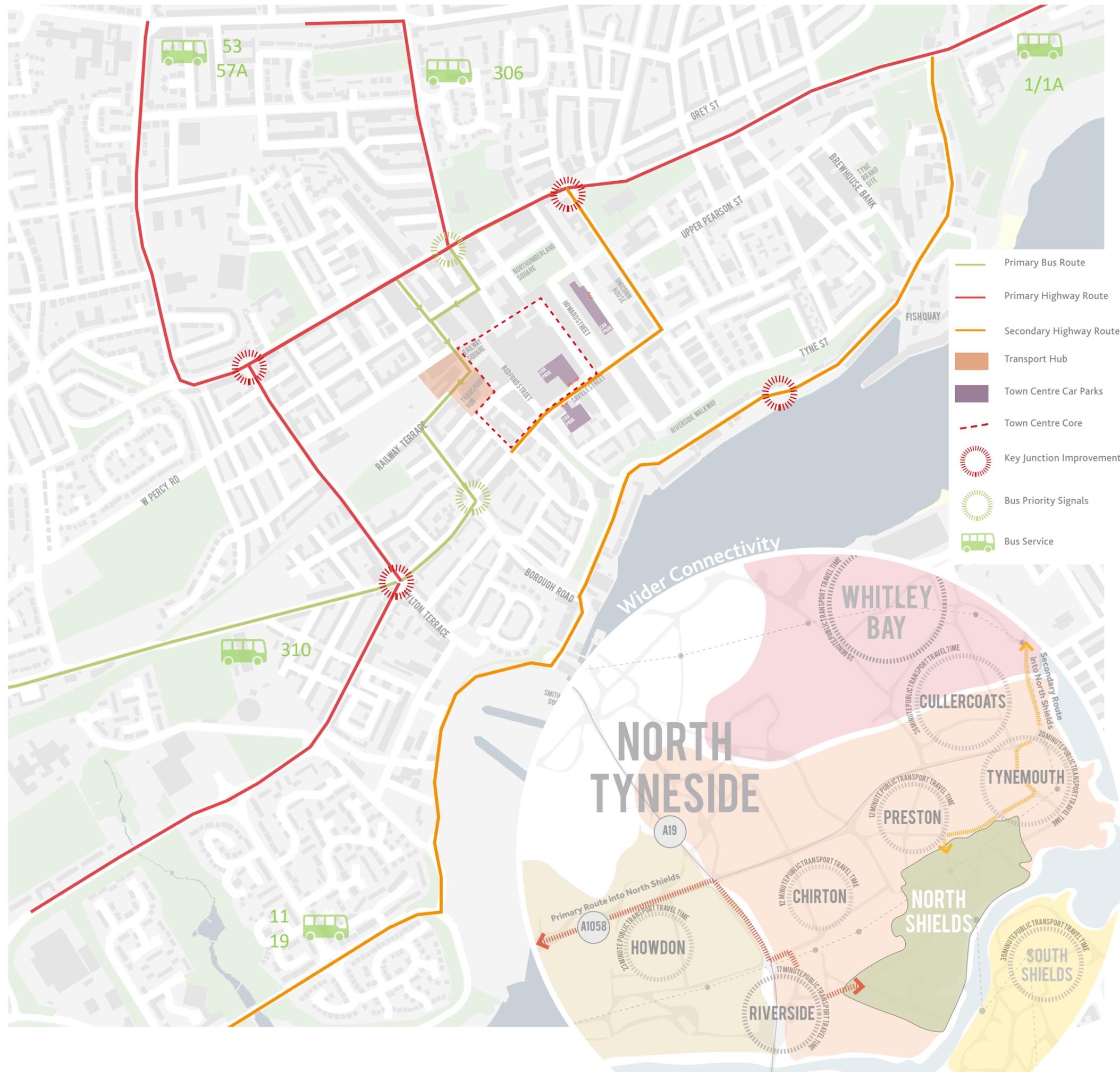
Vehicle movement within the town centre is restricted, and where vehicles are permitted, the streets are designed to slow the vehicles and increase driver awareness that they have entered an area where pedestrians will be active.

The principle flow of traffic is illustrated on the opposite plan. Public bus routes are shown and how the re-orientation has connected key areas of the town whilst reducing the vehicular priority within the town centre.

The proposed primary bus routes connect the town centre with the outlying neighbourhoods.

Summary:

1. All bus routes serve new interchange
2. Services from North access via Nile Street and exit via Church Way or Sidney St
3. Services from South access and egress via Borough Road
4. Services exiting Town Centre benefit from priority calls at traffic signals (Church Way & Borough Rd)
5. All services will be able to turn around at Interchange avoiding need for "dead" mileage and reducing number of roads dominated by bus movements
6. Junction improvements at key vehicular gateways into the town centre



Access & Movement

Town Centre Way-finding & Signage Strategy

A clear wayfinding strategy and easily navigable streets and pathways will be essential to the success of the regeneration proposals outlined within this document.

The approach to wayfinding within North Shields can be split into three clear approaches:

- Informing & guiding pedestrians
- De-cluttering public spaces and streets
- Creating an attractive, safe and effective pedestrian network

Wayfinding initiatives can support and encourage journeys on foot especially helping to remove the current pedestrian barrier between the upper and lower sections of the town centre. Our approach to improving wayfinding within the town centre can be summarised as:

- Creating easy-to-follow walking routes, with good sightlines and forward visibility to contribute to personal security and wayfinding;
- Providing well-designed surfacing, signage and public art, which can help orientate people so that they can navigate easily and, at the same time, give clear indications of the route to popular destinations at key decision points; Including, where practicable, distance and journey times on signage;
- Designing signage to be appropriate to the North Shields' character, with the style and quantity carefully measured against the size and scale of the town and the number of route decision points; and
- Helping to assess and reduce visual clutter in a town centre and reinforce its identity through the wayfinding strategy.

The public spaces of the town centre are, in many cases, compromised by visual clutter such as highway signage, multiple poles for lighting and traffic lights, bins, advertising and pedestrian barriers.

This is damaging to the attractiveness of the town centre core, whereas the approach in the masterplan of rationalising and reducing signage and clutter will not only create a more attractive and easily navigable public realm, it can also be more cost effective for the council in the long term.

Signage, in all its formats, will be an important element in guiding residents, businesses and visitors into and around the town centre, whether travelling by foot, bicycle, public transport or car.

It can make a big impact upon the attractiveness and visitor experience of a place. It will be important to keep wayfinding and directional signage up-to-date and relevant.

Well designed Signage can contribute to a positive economic impact and the public realm proposals must include a high quality, well designed suite of wayfinding and signage that can be carefully incorporated into the design.



