



North Tyneside Council

Economic Prosperity Sub Committee

13 March 2023

Tuesday, 21 March 2023 in Room 0.01, Quadrant, The Silverlink North, Cobalt Business Park, NE27 0BY commencing at **6.00 pm**.

Agenda Item	Page
1. Apologies for Absence	
To receive apologies for absence from the meeting.	
2. Appointment of Substitute Members	
To be notified of the appointment of any Substitute Members.	
3. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations	
You are invited to declare any registerable and/or non-registerable interests in matters appearing on the agenda, and the nature of that interest.	
You are also invited to disclose any dispensation in relation to any registerable interests that have been granted to you in respect of any matters appearing on the agenda.	
You are also requested to complete the Declarations of Interests card available at the meeting and return it to the Democratic Services Officer before leaving the meeting.	
4. Minutes	5 - 6
To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting held on 24 January 2023.	
5. An Ambition for Wallsend	7 - 48
To examine the Cabinet's policy priorities for Wallsend Town Centre and the projects included within the draft Wallsend Masterplan to deliver those priorities.	

Members of the Economic Prosperity Sub Committee

Councillor Liam Bones
Councillor Margaret Hall
Councillor Joe Kirwin
Councillor Jim Montague
Councillor Bruce Pickard
Councillor George Westwater

Councillor Sarah Day
Councillor Val Jamieson
Councillor Louise Marshall
Councillor Martin Murphy
Councillor Joan Walker (Deputy Chair)
Councillor Matt Wilson (Chair)

Economic Prosperity Sub Committee

Tuesday, 24 January 2023

Present: Councillor M Wilson (Chair)
Councillors M Hall, V Jamieson, L Marshall, J Montague,
M Murphy, B Pickard and J Walker

Apologies: Councillors J Kirwin and G Westwater

EP18/22 Appointment of Substitute Members

There were no substitute members appointed.

EP19/22 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.

EP20/22 Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 29 November 2022 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

EP21/22 Engagement with Local Businesses

The sub-committee met to examine the ways in which the Authority engaged with the local business community, particularly through the North Tyneside Business Forum, and how this had, or might, evolve given the increasingly challenging economic conditions.

The Head of Inclusive Economic Growth, Julie Dodds, attended the meeting to present a profile of businesses in the borough, the range of business support and engagement activities currently delivered by the Authority and the key challenges facing local businesses.

The sub-committee heard how the Inclusive Economic Growth Team delivered a range of services including:

- a) a referral point for business enquiry,
- b) a structured programme of engagement with the top employers in the Borough,
- c) an inward investment programme to promote the area on a national and international stage,
- d) the North Tyneside Business Factory supported people to start up new businesses and offered support to SME's looking to grow, and
- e) Shop North Tyneside promoted the 'shop local' message and provided a platform for local businesses to promote their businesses, products and services.

Members also considered the role of the North Tyneside Business Forum, an independent community interest company, made up of business owners, which provided mutual support

and guidance to local businesses. The Authority supported the Forum with a small amount of funding and staff resources. It also provided advice and shared intelligence on where activity could be targeted.

The sub-committee asked a series of questions to gain a better understanding of the pressures facing local businesses and how the Authority may help to support them. During the discussion the following topics and themes were considered;

- the pressures within the hospitality sector associated with increases in fuel costs, the limited consultancy support the Authority was able to offer and how businesses themselves were adapting to increased costs, for example by reducing their opening hours;
- the impact of Brexit and the Covid pandemic on the labour market, creating skills shortages;
- how the relationship between the Authority and the Business Forum could be developed in terms of broadening its representation of medium and large employers and developing its overarching strategy and activity programme;
- the potential value of many micro business expanding their operations and employing more workers. Such expansion was often resisted because of the associated legal, health and safety, and employment requirements. It was suggested that the Authority could help overcome these barriers by bringing businesses together to share the burdens or by providing consultancy services;
- how sharing local success stories and case studies could help promote entrepreneurship;
- the risks associated with speculative large scale development which meant inward investors were now more likely to pursue design and build schemes. It was noted that there was currently demand for smaller commercial units; and
- the potential role for the Authority in creating clusters of complimentary businesses so that they may collaborate and support each other. Reference was made to examples of where vacant office or retail space had been converted to deliver incubator space and accelerator programmes.

EP22/22 State of the Economy

The sub-committee was presented with data which provided an indication of the state of the economy in North Tyneside. The data included the numbers of people claiming Universal Credit, the town centre vacancy rate, the number of new business start-ups, the number of companies in distress, out of work benefit claimants, levels of earnings and qualifications within the population and the number of apprenticeships.

The sub-committee queried why the data on the number of apprenticeship starts did not extend beyond 2021. Officers undertook to obtain an explanation of why data beyond 2021 was not yet available and the timescales for its release.

Meeting: Economic Prosperity Sub-Committee

Date: 21 March 2023

Title: An Ambition for Wallsend

Author: Michael Robson

Tel: 643 5359

Service: Law and Governance

Wards affected: All

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 This report provides an introduction and background information to enable the sub-committee to examine the Cabinet's policy priorities for Wallsend Town Centre and the projects included within the draft Wallsend Masterplan to deliver those priorities.

2. Details

2.1 The sub-committee is responsible for reviewing and challenging the impact of decisions and actions taken by the Elected Mayor, Cabinet and partner organisations in relation to town centres, economic development, business and enterprise, inward investment, planning, transport and tourism. The sub-committee can support and assist the Elected Mayor and Cabinet in the formulation of their future plans, strategies and decision making by making evidence based recommendations to them.

2.2 In March 2022, Cabinet agreed a set of policy priorities for Wallsend Town Centre. These are to:

- a) Improve the quality of the housing offer in Wallsend; in particular making the area a focus of the Mayor and Cabinet's plans for 5000 affordable homes and tackling some of the poor quality privately rented housing in the Masterplan area;
- b) Make the town centre and the nearby neighbourhoods great places to visit and live; improving the street scene, public spaces and working with partners to make sure people feel safe; and
- c) Make sure Wallsend residents are connected to good jobs; using the full range of tools, including adult education, apprenticeships and the capabilities plus the transport infrastructure around the town to make sure people in the community, who need it, are supported to improve their life chances.

2.3 In November 2022, Cabinet agreed the contents of a draft Wallsend Masterplan to be used as a basis for consultation and engagement with residents, businesses and stakeholders. The draft Masterplan contains a series of projects to deliver designed to deliver the cabinet's policy priorities. A copy of the report to Cabinet and the draft Masterplan is attached as an appendix to this report.

- 2.4 The Director of Regeneration and Economic Development, John Sparkes, and his team have accepted an invitation to attend this evening's meeting to present details of the draft Masterplan, the consultation and engagement activities undertaken and an overview of the preliminary findings to emerge from these conversations.
- 2.5 The purpose of the meeting will be to:
- a) consider the Cabinet's policy priorities for Wallsend Town Centre;
 - b) assess the projects contained within the draft Masterplan in terms of delivering the Cabinet's priorities;
 - c) consider the emerging feedback from residents, businesses and other stakeholders from the consultation; and
 - d) if appropriate, make comments and/or recommendations to the Director of Regeneration and Economic Development and/or Cabinet to help shape the final Masterplan.
- 2.6 The Economic Prosperity Sub-Committee has previously investigated and reported on [the future of retail and town centres](#) in January 2020.

3. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Report to Cabinet 28 November 2022

Appendix 2 – Draft Wallsend Masterplan

4. Background Information

The following documents have been used in the compilation of this report and may be inspected at the offices of the author:

- North Tyneside Council Constitution
- Economic Prosperity Sub-Committee minutes and work programme 2022/23
- Minutes and reports to Cabinet 28 March 2023 & 28 November 2022

North Tyneside Council

Report to Cabinet

Date: 28 November 2022

Title: An Ambition for Wallsend

Portfolio: Deputy Mayor	Cabinet Member: Councillor Carl Johnson
Report from Service Area:	Regeneration and Economic Development
Responsible Officer:	John Sparkes, Director of Regeneration and Economic Development Tel: (0191) 643 6091
Wards affected:	Battle Hill, Howdon, Northumberland and Wallsend

PART 1

1.1 Executive Summary:

At its meeting on 28th March 2022, Cabinet received a report which set out a set of policy priorities for Wallsend Town Centre. These policy priorities were developed with the Deputy Mayor and following engagement with the Ward Councillors for Battle Hill, Howdon, Northumberland and Wallsend and were to inform a Masterplan for Wallsend which is identified as a priority in Our North Tyneside Plan 2021-2025.

The policy priorities agreed by Cabinet were:

- **Improve the quality of the housing offer in Wallsend;** in particular making the area a focus of the Mayor and Cabinet's plans for 5000 affordable homes and tackling some of the poor quality privately rented housing in the Masterplan area
- **Make the town centre and the nearby neighbourhoods great places to visit and live;** improving the street scene, public spaces and working with partners to make sure people feel safe; and
- **Make sure Wallsend residents are connected to good jobs;** using the full range of tools, including adult education, apprenticeships and the capabilities plus the transport infrastructure around the town to make sure people in the community, who need it, are supported to improve their life chances.

Over the past 6 months, and working with the Deputy Mayor, Ward Members, the Chief Executive and other stakeholders the Authority has prepared a draft Masterplan which reflects its ambition for the town centre and delivers on the policy objectives which were agreed in May 2022. The draft Masterplan enshrines the Cabinet's agreed policy objectives and includes a series of projects

to deliver them. The first stage of that work is now complete, and a draft Masterplan has been prepared.

The report provides background and a summary of the work done so far in developing a draft Masterplan. Subject to the Masterplan being endorsed by Cabinet, it is proposed that it is used, over the coming months, as a basis for consultation and engagement with residents, businesses and other stakeholders with an interest in the regeneration of Wallsend.

The purpose of this report is therefore to seek Cabinet's approval of the draft Wallsend Masterplan and to use it as a basis for engagement with residents and businesses in Wallsend.

1.2 Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- (1) Notes the progress made in delivering the Wallsend Town Centre Masterplan since March 2022;
- (2) Agrees that the Draft Wallsend Town Centre Masterplan be used as a basis for consultation and engagement with residents, businesses and stakeholders over a 6-week period in January and February 2023;
- (3) Authorise the Director of Regeneration and Economic Development to consult and engage with residents, businesses and stakeholders in line with recommendation (2) above,
- (4) Authorise the Director of Regeneration and Economic Development in consultation with the Deputy Mayor and the Director of Resources to prepare a final Draft Wallsend Town Centre Masterplan.
- (5) Agrees to receive a further report in Spring 2023 when Cabinet will be asked to consider and approve the final draft Wallsend Town Centre Masterplan.

1.3 Forward Plan:

Twenty-eight days' notice of this report has been given and it first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published on 30 September 2022.

1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework

This report relates to the following themes in the 2021-25 Our North Tyneside Plan:

- A thriving North Tyneside
- A secure North Tyneside
- A green North Tyneside

The Wallsend Masterplan also uses the Local Plan 2017 as a Framework, which sets the planning policies to guide the development and regeneration of Wallsend Town Centre and the adjoining areas.

1.5 Information:

1.5.1 Background

As reported in detail to Cabinet in May 2022, Wallsend has a long and proud history and has played a significant role in shaping the regional and national economy. Its history (and name) dates back to the Roman conquest where it served as the eastern end for Hadrian's Wall.

However, Wallsend is perhaps best known for being a manufacturing powerhouse being at the centre of industrial growth on the River Tyne throughout the 19th Century and garnering a worldwide reputation for ship building.

The economic fortunes of Wallsend have ebbed and flowed with changes in the national economy and de-industrialisation. However, as reported to Cabinet in May 2022, Wallsend has seen a renaissance in advanced manufacturing driven by offshore energy opportunities. The Authority has always taken a long-term view around securing sustainable economic growth and sought to ensure that strategic employment sites, such as the Swan Hunter site were retained for employment purposes. The sale of the site in 2020 to Shepherd Offshore limited is a significant step in seeing the site brought forward in due course for manufacturing purposes in line with the Authority's objectives.

More recently, the Mayor through the Authority's 'Our North Tyneside Plan' gave a commitment to bring forward a Masterplan for Wallsend Town Centre and, at its meeting on 21 February 2022, Cabinet agreed an update to its regeneration strategy "An Ambition for North Tyneside." That updated strategy made clear that Wallsend Town Centre and its environs were a specific priority.

The Cabinet are aware, from the March 2022 Cabinet Report, of the challenges facing town centres and the draft Masterplan will provide a framework for targeted interventions, when funding permits, within the town centre to deliver on the Authority's policy objectives. The Masterplan will also provide a clear narrative and strong platform from which to launch future funding bids.

1.5.3 What the Authority has achieved so far

As noted in the Executive Summary, in May 2022, Cabinet agreed 3 policy objectives and themes as priorities for the Masterplan namely:

- **Improve the quality of the housing offer in Wallsend;** in particular, making the area a focus of the Mayor and Cabinet's plans for 5000 affordable homes and tackling some of the poor quality privately rented housing in the Masterplan area. Building upon recent developments and interventions such as new housing on the site of the former Police Station and the refurbishment of neglected properties on Charlotte Street. In 2020-21, as part of our Empty Homes Programme, the Authority refurbished and repurposed residential properties in Charlotte Street which leads to High Street East. Having acquired them from a landlord where there were significant issues around poor property management/maintenance and anti-social behaviour, the properties have now been successfully converted from flats to family accommodation. This intervention has had a major impact on the appearance and perceptions of Charlotte Street and has significantly improved the quality of lives of the residents living there

- **Make the town centre and the nearby neighbourhoods great places to visit and live;** improving the street scene, public spaces and working with partners to make sure people feel safe.
- **Make sure Wallsend residents are connected to good jobs;** using the full range of tools, including adult education, apprenticeships and the capabilities plus the transport infrastructure around the town to make sure people in the community, who need it, are supported to improve their life chances. Much work has already been undertaken, helping to support the College and University focus on Energy together with work by our Employment and Skills team.

1.5.4 **Right now:**

Healthcare Facilities: We also continue to work with partners to support the delivery of new healthcare facilities via the Hadrian Health Centre to the rear of the Forum Shopping Centre. In addition to providing much needed new facilities and bringing forward a vacant site, increase footfall and linked trips, the development will also improve the appearance and liveability of the town centre.

Segedunum: Following confirmation of £0.499m MEND funding from Arts Council England in 2022, which seeks to invest in the physical fabric of cultural institutions, the Authority will commence a series of remedial works to the main Segedunum visitor building. We will also seek to attract further external funding to assist with the delivery of transformational changes to the Segedunum Museum offer. This will be to enhance its visitor offer and provide facilities that reflect its World Heritage Site status and reinforces its role as a town centre asset in the heart of the community which contributes to the wider visitor experience and sense of place. A stage 1 bid is expected to be submitted to the National Lottery Heritage Fund shortly.

Business Factory: Aligning with the Authority's policy objectives around ensuring residents are connected to good jobs; the Business Factory has relocated to the Old Town Hall and is continuing to deliver business pre-start and start up advice and support to a broad range of clients.

Engagement Activity: The Authority has sought to undertake some engagement prior to commencing work on the Masterplan. It has engaged with Members of the four wards that are served by the Masterplan area, and officers have met with representatives of New River Retail, who own The Forum Shopping Centre, and they have shared a vision and plan for their asset which forms part of the draft plan. A Towns and High Streets Board, which includes VODA and business representatives, has also been set up as a requirement of the funding award to discuss and endorse the Towns and High Streets Innovation Programme and grant application to NTCA.

UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) bids via the North of Tyne Combined Authority NTCA: A response from Government on the UKSPF Investment Plan submitted in July is likely to be received in October 2022. Officers are working with colleagues from the Combined Authority, Newcastle City Council and Northumberland County Council to develop a number of interventions that build on activity previously supported through the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund. Funding will be targeted on the following three key investment priorities; Community and Place; Supporting Local Business; and People and Skills.

Power to Change: The Authority has worked with representatives from Power to Change, the community business support organisation, to identify empty properties that could

potentially be purchased and run by the community. Power to Change's vision is that by 2025, more communities in England will run businesses that give them power to change what matters to them.

Wallsend Hall: The Authority is currently looking at the condition of the property, with a view to securing some initial works to protect the fabric of the listed building. Next steps will see the Authority advertising the property as an expression of interest exercise to secure a new private sector operator who will bring the building back into beneficial use which will contribute to the Authority's policy objectives for Wallsend

The Buddle: The ownership of the Buddle was transferred from the Authority to Adavo Workspace on 15th March 2021. The original intention of the company was to provide similar accommodation within the Buddle to that which the company has created in the former Wallsend Town Hall. The work to progress this was initially delayed because of the pandemic, but more recently the company has decided to move away from providing a solely traditional office-based business centre and to improve and convert the property with part of the focus being accommodating businesses in the wellness sector.

Former Swan Hunter Shipyard Local Development Order (LDO): On 27 June 2022 Cabinet considered a report to extend the simplified planning regime at the former Swan Hunter shipyard to help bring forward its development and to support our employment objectives for the site. A subsequent public consultation exercise was carried out and no issues were identified requiring modification of the proposed LDO. The necessary actions are now being taken to formally adopt the LDO and to submit a copy of the LDO to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. This simplified planning regime makes the site more attractive to the market by providing certainty around planning use and permissions.

Funding Activity: The Authority has secured £1.94m funding for delivery of activity that contributes to the aims and objectives of the Masterplan through the NTCA Towns and High Streets Innovation Programme. Funding will support the delivery of events and festivals, business support, shop front grants and capital works to improve walking and cycle routes between the town centre and Segedunum and the adjacent National Trail and cycle routes. It also establishes a High Street Board with representatives from local businesses, VODA, Wallsend ward councillors, residents and the North Tyneside Business Forum to develop and oversee initiatives and improvements.

The Authority has also made a bid for over £19 million of grant from the Government's Levelling Up Fund to improve public realm around the town centre and adjacent residential streets to create better connectivity between key retail, leisure and cultural sites. The decision on this funding application was expected in October 2022 but may be delayed given the current national funding/budget landscape.

In 'The Growth Plan 2022' the UK Government set out a plan for Investment Zones, designed to drive economic growth and unlock development. Investment Zone sites will provide tax incentives, planning liberalisation, and wider support for the local economy. It is envisaged that these interventions will help 'accelerate' growth alongside a package of tax cuts and borrowing. An in-principle policy offer to all Mayoral Combined Authorities and Upper Tier Local Authorities provides the opportunity for all to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) for a designated Investment Zone with 38 being identified as frontrunners. The Authority has worked with colleagues within the NTCA to prepare an Expression of Interest, that was submitted to Government on 14 October 2022. This EOI included sites within the Wallsend riverside.

Business Support: The Authority continues to work with the new owners (Shepherd Offshore Ltd) of the Swan Hunter site to support the delivery of new employment opportunities and to bring forward new high-quality jobs. The Authority has also engaged with other businesses in Wallsend as part of our strategic account management as well as engaging with the Chamber of Trade through the Town Centre Task Group.

Pre-Masterplan Activity: The Authority has also been active in securing funding to help deliver on our emerging Masterplan objectives. This includes working with the North East LEP to secure £80K from the Accelerated Development Fund (ADF) to assist in the delivery of the Masterplan. This work is now substantially complete and has produced the draft Masterplan which is the subject of this report.

The Draft Masterplan

The draft Masterplan proposes fourteen interventions that will deliver the three policy priorities for Wallsend, as identified by Cabinet.

The scope of the Masterplan area was agreed at Cabinet in March 2022. It covers the town centre core of High Street East and West, the Forum shopping centre and Station Road, with their surrounding catchment area of housing. It also includes the Segedunum Roman Fort and Museum and Wallsend riverside as far as Davy Bank. And to the north it includes the Parks, Wallsend Hall, and the former Buddle School and arts centre building. This builds on the early engagement with ward members which has helped inform thinking and the direction of the Masterplan.

In addition, since March 2022 the Authority has been working to better understand the issues, challenges and opportunities in Wallsend focussing in particular on the three policy priorities of housing, place and employment. This work has included:

- A review of recent reports such as the surveys of town centre businesses and customers in 2021 (the “Understanding the Heart of our Town” report)
- An assessment of the town centre’s buildings, roads, streets, footpaths and public spaces and development of ideas for improving them
- A review of the local property market to better understand the supply of and demand for homes, shops and offices
- Identification of opportunities to support residents in securing employment and improving their skills e.g. adult education and a “Working Well” employability hub
- Creation of the River Tyne Task Force with the North of Tyne Combined Authority, Port of Tyne, businesses and other local authorities marketing the offshore energy opportunities under the ‘Tyne Powered’ brand and providing a collective voice to talk to Government.
- A review of traffic flows, transport usage and car parking.
- Working with the Academic Health Service Network and the One Public Estate initiative to understanding the opportunities for the Masterplan to support public health initiatives and provision

The 14 proposed projects are mostly based on a specific place or building while those covering Business Support, Employment Support and Events & Animation will apply throughout the Masterplan area:

Project 1 – Wallsend Town Square

Located at the heart of the town centre the existing square provides a natural focal point for visitors and town centre activities. Refurbishment of these pedestrianised areas next to the Forum Shopping Centre, Customer First Centre and Anson Public House is a key objective of the Masterplan. This will see the space remodelled through new planting, paving and street furniture and it will provide the high quality, multi-functional space at a key 'Gateway' into the town centre.

Project 2 – High Street West, High Street East and Station Road

Improve the appearance and experience on High Streets West, East and Station Road and improve the experience for pedestrians, cyclists, wheelchair users and other town centre visitors. This could be achieved through widening pavements, introducing street trees and seating while retaining access for vehicles and servicing. Providing some design continuity and developing a Wallsend suite of materials and street furniture will be an essential part of this approach.

Project 3 – Segedunum World Heritage Site Gateway

Reimagine Buddle Street and the featureless paved area between Buddle Street and Woolley Street creating a 'pocket park' and an environment that celebrates and recognises you are passing through a historic fort. A key issue will be to enhance the visual appeal and visitor experience whilst maintaining the road as a key riverside traffic route serving industry

Project 4 – The Forum

NewRiver Retail are planning to further invest and improve the connectivity between Aldi, the Health Centre and the retail shops by removing the large atrium area and replacing it with public realm whilst consolidating the existing retail. The existing two storey car park is a potential development site for which various options are being considered.

Project 5 – Bus & Metro Station

The current Bus and Metro station is in a strategic location sited between the town centre and Segedunum. However, its visual appeal is limited, and the site currently contributes little to the townscape (other than its function as an interchange), and in some ways, creates a barrier between the town centre and Segedunum. The Masterplan seeks to explore options to modify the existing interchange through new tree and shrub planting and improved pedestrian and cycle links to Segedunum. This could extend to removal of some or all bus stands enabling new development to progress such as a cycle hub and secure cycle parking or even new build housing.

Project 6 – Housing Streetscape Improvements

The Masterplan proposes to transform the streets in the terraced housing north and south of the High Street East and West creating inclusive, pedestrian and cycle friendly streets that provide space for planting, allow safe children's play and can accommodate future electric vehicle infrastructure. This will radically improve the appearance, liveability

and appeal of Wallsend Town Centre as a destination of choice for new (and existing) residents.

Project 7 – Housing Development (New Build & Refurbishment)

Bring forward opportunities to refurbish existing homes and be proactive in bringing forward new build such as the Portugal Place/High Street West/Border Road site as well as windfall sites. This will be complemented by initiatives to raise housing standards especially in poor quality private rented homes. This will build on the Authority's success in North Shields where it has successfully delivered new housing opportunities and will broaden the Wallsend housing offer and will help attract new residents who are economically mobile and are able to support local shops and services.

Project 8 – Cycle Corridors

Wallsend is on the National Cycle Routes and therefore has a considerable reach into the local, national and international cycling communities. Improvements to the C2C/Route 72/Hadrian's Cycleway include a possible cycle hub and the creation of new routes north from the C2C via Holly Avenue to the town centre and from there to Richardson Dees Park. These collectively will improve provision and the attractiveness of the routes to cyclists which will have spin off benefits for the town centre.

Project 9 – Segedunum Transformation

The existence of a World Heritage Site within the Town Centre provides a raft of opportunities to drive footfall and spend in the town centre. It also provides the opportunity for the museum to become an asset in the heart of the community which benefits both residents and businesses. The Masterplan therefore proposes the transformation of Segedunum Roman Fort & Museum through new galleries, stories about the wider history of the town, together with Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR) experiences. Works will also involve repairing and reopening the Bath House, relocating the café, creating an outdoor events space and frontage improvements that shouts we're a world-class World Heritage Site. Segedunum presents a unique opportunity to redefine the town centre offer and to improve links to the retail core which will be an essential component of any scheme.

Project 10 – Segedunum Linkages

As noted above, it is important to draw Segedunum into the town centre offer and to improve the linkages between the two. As such, the Masterplan considers options for interventions to improve and enhance the routes between Segedunum and the Metro Station and town centre which could include additional signage, planting, waymarkers, banners and coloured paving and surfacing.

Project 11 – Historic Buildings & Conservation

Wallsend has some beautiful and well-appointed buildings which reflect the wealth and proud history of the town. The Masterplan proposes to initiate and support ways of restoring and finding new uses for much loved, historic buildings such as the Buddle, the Civic Hall and the former Coach and Horses Public House. The Authority will also investigate the scope for declaring a town centre Conservation Area.

Project 12 – Business Support

Growing the local economy and securing inward investment will be a key ingredient of future success. The Masterplan seeks to deliver a programme of bespoke business

support using the grant funding from the Towns and High Streets Innovation Programme. This includes support for start-ups and established SMEs, a town centre business adviser and shop front grants.

Project 13 – Employment Support

One of the Authority's key policy objectives for Wallsend is to ensure residents are connected to good jobs and can fulfil their potential. Development of the Working Well Employability Hub will provide employment and skills support in one place. Initiatives will also assist people not using mainstream services as well as improving adult education provision. Digital inclusion will be a key element given that many job adverts and interviews etc are held on-line.

Project 14 – Events & Animation

Town centres thrive on activity and a varied events programme can help drive footfall, increase visitor spend and, importantly, leads to repeat visits. Expanding the scope and reach of Wallsend's existing programme to drive footfall and increase participation will be a major contributing factor to the town's future success. This can be achieved through greater use of the Customer First Centre and Segedunum and exploring new initiatives through AR and VR, town trails and attractions such as drone based light shows.

Next Steps

Cabinet is asked to note the work done so far and agree the approach to the next stage.

Officers have developed a draft Communications, Marketing and Engagement Plan which is subject to an EqIA to ensure stakeholders with protected characteristics have an equal opportunity to engage. The draft document sets out the Council's approach to communications, marketing and engagement activities, including the core narrative to support the successful delivery of the Wallsend Masterplan. It aims to:

- Help audiences to understand the Masterplan vision and its strategic intent, in a way that is relevant to their particular point of view and needs
- Ensure information is accurate, consistent and timely
- Help facilitate effective two-way communications and encourage feedback from residents, elected members and partners so that their views, issues and comments can help shape future communication planning
- Increase the profile of and change negative perceptions around Wallsend

A range of communications methods will be used to ensure residents, businesses, staff, members and partners are kept informed and encourage a two-way conversation, both digitally and via traditional methods to ensure all demographics are targeted.

A dedicated email address and phone line will be created for enquiries from members of the public. It is proposed to run the engagement process for a 6-week period from the 16 January -26th February 2022.

In line with the Authority's listening approach, public feedback will be reviewed, and any necessary changes made to the plan, prior to retuning to Cabinet in the spring of 2023 with a final plan for approval. This will then provide a long-term plan for the town and will

provide an effective tool to secure the additional funding necessary to bring forward projects. Further reports will be brought forward to Cabinet should the Authority secure Levelling Up funding in October, and to review progress on an annual basis.

1.6 Decision options:

The following decision options are available for consideration by Cabinet:

Option 1

To approve the recommendation set out in paragraph 1.2 above.

Option 2

To approve and/or reject some or all of the recommendations set out in paragraph 1.2 above.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

1.7 Reasons for recommended option:

Option 1 is recommended for the following reasons:

The scope aligns with the themes within the Levelling Up prospectus and the Masterplan boundary enables the three themes of housing, employment and an improved built environment to be addressed.

1.8 Appendices:

Appendix 1: Masterplan boundary

Appendix 2: Matrix of links between projects and Cabinet policy priorities

1.9 Contact officers:

John Sparkes, Director of Regeneration and Economic Development

Graham Sword, Senior Manager - Regeneration, 0191 643 6421

Paul Graves, Regeneration Project Manager, 0191 643 6013

Julie Dodds, Head of Inclusive Economy and Business Development, 07583 042186

Claire Emmerson, Senior Finance Manager, 0191 643 8109

1.10 Background information:

The following background papers/information have been used in the compilation of this report:

(1) Our North Tyneside Plan 2021-25 <https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/1241/our-north-tyneside-plan>

(2) Levelling Up Fund Prospectus <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/levelling-up-fund-prospectus>

- (3) Accelerated Development Fund Grant Offer – Wallsend Masterplan and A19 Corridor Improvements, Report of the Head of Regeneration and Transport, 31 January 2022: <https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Report%20Accelerated%20Devpt%20Fund%20Grant%20Offer%E2%80%93Wallsend%20Masterplan-A19%20Corridor.pdf>
- (4) An Ambition for North Tyneside – Update Report of the Director of Regeneration and Economic Development, 21 February 2022: <https://democracy.northtyneside.gov.uk/documents/s7901/An%20Ambition%20for%20North%20Tyneside%20-%20Update.pdf>
- (5) An Ambition for Wallsend - Report of the Director of Regeneration and Economic Development, 28 March 2022 <https://democracy.northtyneside.gov.uk/documents/s8209/An%20Ambition%20for%20Wallsend.pdf>
- (6) Former Swan Hunter Shipyard - Report of the Director of Regeneration and Economic Development, 27 June 2022: <https://democracy.northtyneside.gov.uk/documents/s9043/Former%20Swan%20Hunter%20Shipyard%20Local%20Development%20Order.pdf>
- (7) An inclusive economy in North Tyneside - Report to Cabinet, 24 May 2021: <https://democracy.northtyneside.gov.uk/documents/s6007/An%20inclusive%20economy%20in%20North%20Tyneside%20Report.v2.pdf>

PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

2.1 Finance and other resources

The table below outlines the current funding available to the Authority:

	Funding	Match Funding	Total Project Cost
Wallsend Masterplan Accelerated Development Fund	£80,000	£34,500 Feasibility Budget	£114,500
NTCA Towns and High Streets Innovation Fund	£1.94m	£0	£1.94m

Indicative budget costs for interventions such as public realm improvements, highway works and building refurbishment works will be produced as individual projects are developed. The Authority will continue to explore funding opportunities and potential projects will be prioritised as part of the development of the Authority’s Investment Plan.

The Authority has successfully secured consultancy support from the High Streets Task Force at no cost to the Authority.

2.2 Legal

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. As specific actions are brought forward under the policy priorities set out above the legal implications (if any) for those actions will be identified and reported.

2.3 Consultation/community engagement

2.3.1 Internal Consultation

The Ward members for Battle Hill, Howdon, Northumberland and Wallsend and the relevant Lead Cabinet Members have been briefed. Finance, legal and procurement senior officers have provided advice on this project and the background to this report. There will also be work with relevant service areas to ensure the full effects of the Masterplan are considered across the Authority. A Wallsend Masterplan officer group has been established to manage production and implementation of the Masterplan. In addition, the Engagement and Communications teams have worked closely with the Regeneration service to develop a draft Communications, Engagement and Marketing Plan.

2.3.2 External Consultation/Engagement

Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums, as operators of Segedunum, have been advised about the Wallsend Masterplan as have the Wallsend Chamber of Trade. The Authority has also, as part of the Towns and High Streets Innovation Fund programme, established a Board that includes representatives of local businesses and VODA. In addition, we have engaged with the Government's High Streets Task Force (HSTF), to gain support on further engagement work during the Masterplan consultation period. The HSTF will help with further engagement with businesses in the town. Discussions have also been held with NewRiver Retail, who operate the Forum Shopping Centre, to get an understanding of their longer-term objectives for the centre which includes some proposals for further investment. Additional external engagement on the draft Masterplan is proposed in January 2023 ensuring that residents, businesses and others have an opportunity to comment on the proposals.

2.4 Human rights

There are no Human Rights issues arising from this report.

2.5 Equalities and diversity

The engagement activities within the draft Communications, Engagement and Marketing Plan aims to reflect differing needs and the means of engagement will be subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment prior to finalisation of the plan. As individual projects within the Masterplan such as highways, active travel and public realm are developed they will be subject to Equalities Impact Assessments.

2.6 Risk management

A risk register will be developed for each of the projects and will be reviewed monthly by the project delivery teams.

2.7 Crime and disorder

There are no crime and disorder issues arising from this report. As the Masterplan and feasibility work progresses, consideration of crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour will be central to the development of the proposals.

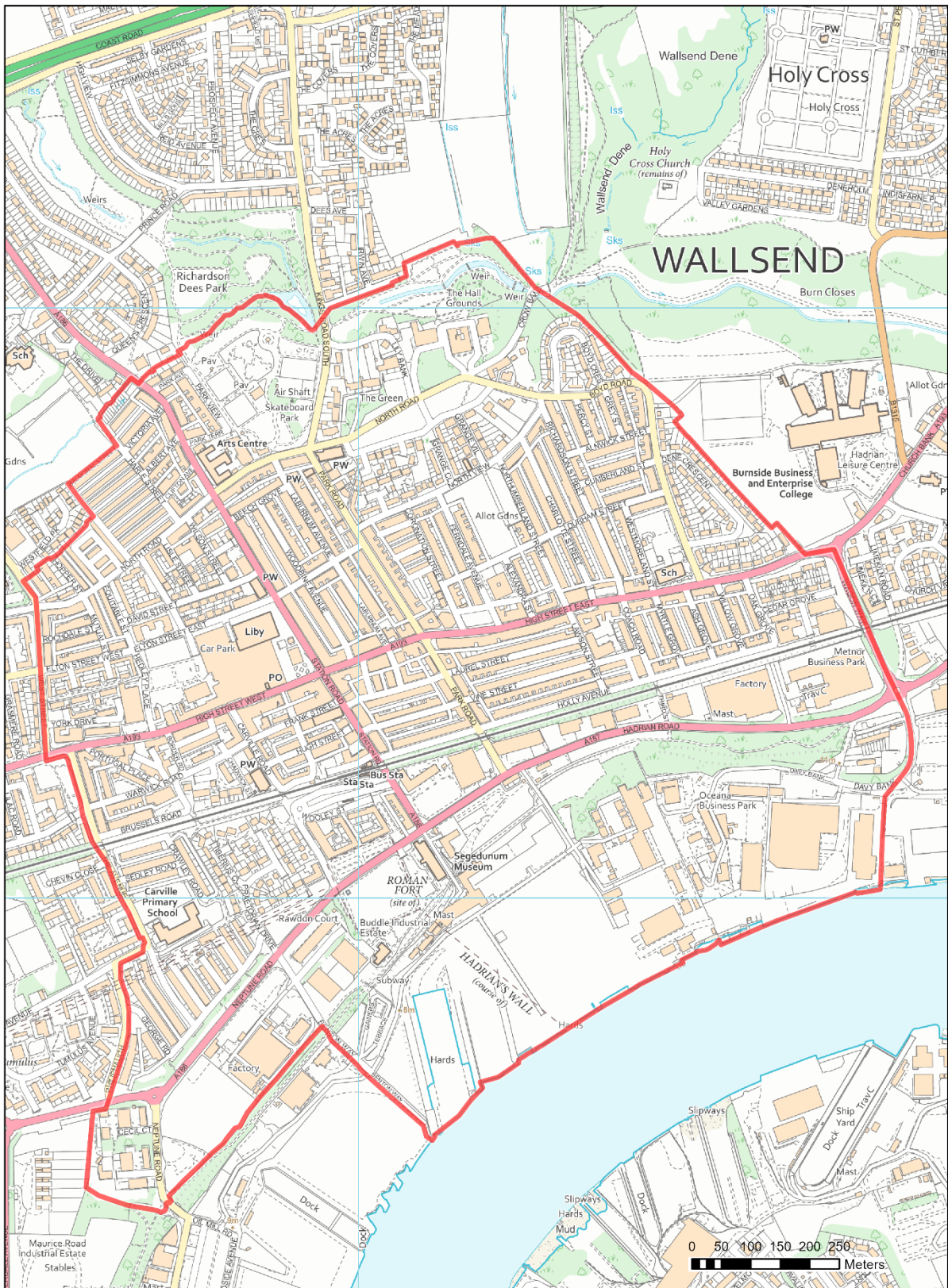
2.8 Environment and sustainability


The feasibility work undertaken with this funding is informing the development of robust business cases that include full environmental and sustainability plans to support the Authority's goals set out in the Carbon Net-Zero 2030 Action Plan.

PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Chief Executive X
- Director(s) of Service X
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s) X
- Chief Finance Officer X
- Monitoring Officer X
- Assistant Chief Executive X

APPENDIX 1 – Masterplan boundary



 Wallsend Masterplan Boundary (1)

Wallsend Masterplan Area

Scale : 1:8000



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capita

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APPENDIX 2 – Matrix identifying the links between the proposed projects and Cabinet’s policy priorities

	Improve the quality of the housing offer in Wallsend	Make the town centre and the nearby neighbourhoods great places to visit and live	Make sure Wallsend residents are connected to good jobs
1 – Wallsend Town Square			
2 – High Street West, High Street East and Station Road			
3 – Segedunum World Heritage Site Gateway			
4 – The Forum			
5 – Bus & Metro Station			
6 – Housing Streetscape Improvements			
7 – Housing Development (New Build & Refurbishment)			
8 – Cycle corridors			
9 – Segedunum Transformation			
10 – Segedunum Linkages			
11 – Historic Buildings & Conservation			
12 – Business Support			
13 – Employment Support			
14 – Events & Animation			

WALLSEND TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN

Page 23



DRAFT

INTRODUCTION

Wallsend has a long and proud history dating back to the Roman conquest and occupation where its fort served as the eastern end for Hadrian's Wall. Its Roman past gives Wallsend an international profile with Segedunum Roman Fort being part of Hadrian's Wall UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Whilst the town's name is derived from its Roman origins, the town is perhaps best known for being a manufacturing powerhouse. It was at the centre of industrial growth on the River Tyne throughout the 19th Century and had a worldwide reputation for ship building and was also a pioneer in electrical power generation.

Whilst the fortunes of Wallsend have ebbed and flowed with changes in the national economy in the 1970s and 1980s, the River Tyne corridor has found a new role in recent years with the renaissance in advanced manufacturing driven by offshore energy opportunities. This was exemplified with the recent sale of the former Swan Hunter shipyard to Shepherd Offshore who intend to bring the site forward for manufacturing purposes in line with our shared ambition.

The modern town of Wallsend and its town centre grew in the 19th and early 20th century in parallel with its shipyards and mines. The shopping core was formed around the axis of Station Road and its High Streets which continued little changed until the development and opening of the Forum Shopping Centre in the 1960s.

The decline of the shipyards in the 1980s and 1990s and loss of employment and income contributed towards the decline in the town centre. The challenges for town centre retailing continued with the growth of out-of-town shopping and, more recently, online shopping and the cost-of-living crisis.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The Council has identified the regeneration of Wallsend Town Centre and its neighbourhoods as a key priority.

The Our North Tyneside Plan sets out our bold ambitions for making North Tyneside an even greater place to live, work and visit. The plan outlines a vision of building a better North Tyneside, looking to the future and listening to and working better for residents.

The Plan focuses on five key themes that will help create a North Tyneside that is thriving, family-friendly, caring, secure and green.

Under the **thriving** theme the Our North Tyneside Plan includes pledges to:

- Regenerate Wallsend high street, bring forward a Masterplan for Wallsend town centre and ensure regeneration delivers ambition, opportunity and benefits for all of our residents
- Bring more good quality jobs to North Tyneside – by helping local businesses to grow and making it attractive for new businesses to set up or relocate in the borough
- Invest in adult education and to support apprenticeships to make sure people have the right skills for the job
- Reduce the number of derelict properties across the borough

The regeneration of Wallsend is also a key priority in the Council's regeneration strategy, 'Ambition for North Tyneside'.

In March 2022, the Council's Cabinet resolved that, for Wallsend, there were three **policy priorities** for inclusion in the Masterplan. These are to:



- **Improve the quality of the housing offer in Wallsend;** in particular making the area a focus of the Mayor and Cabinet's plans for 5,000 affordable homes and tackling some of the poor quality privately rented housing in the masterplan area;



- **Make the town centre and the nearby neighbourhoods great places to visit and live;** improving the street scene, public spaces and working with partners to make sure people feel safe; and



- **Make sure Wallsend residents are connected to good jobs;** using the full range of tools, including adult education, apprenticeships and the capabilities plus the transport infrastructure around the town to make sure people in the community, who need it, are supported to improve their life chances.

This Masterplan proposes **fourteen** interventions that will deliver the three policy priorities for Wallsend.

WHAT HAVE WE DONE SO FAR

Over the past fifteen years the Council has successfully worked with partners to create a multi-functional town centre developing new facilities and bringing vacant buildings back into use, this has included:

- Development of the Hadrian Health Centre which will open later this year
- Development of the Customer First Centre
- Development of the ALDI food store, Burger King and Wetherspoons
- Renovated and brought back into use eleven derelict homes in Charlotte Street
- Development of Hadrian Leisure Centre
- Refurbishment of Richardson Dees Park and the adjoining Wallsend parks

Since March 2022 we have been working to better understand the issues, challenges and opportunities in Wallsend focussing in particular on the three policy priorities of housing, place and employment.

This work has included:

- A review of the 2021 surveys of town centre businesses and customers (the “Understanding the Heart of our Town” report)
- An assessment of the town centre’s buildings, roads, streets, footpaths and public spaces and development of ideas for improving them
- A review of the local property market to better understand the supply of and demand for homes, shops and offices
- Identification of opportunities to support residents to secure good quality employment by improving their skills through increased access to adult education and addressing barriers to employment with the creation of a “Working Well” employability hub in the Town Centre
- Creation of the River Tyne Task Force with the North of Tyne Combined Authority, Port of Tyne, businesses and other local authorities marketing the offshore energy opportunities under the ‘Tyne Powered’ brand and providing a collective voice to talk to Government.

PARTNERSHIP AND DELIVERY

We have also started to talk with Partners about how we can work together to address the three Masterplan priorities.

This work has included:

- Securing over £1.5 million funding from the North of Tyne Combined Authority for events and festivals, business support, shop front grants and improving walking and cycle routes between the town centre and Segedunum
- Establishing a High Street Board with businesses, VODA, residents and the North Tyneside Business Forum to develop and oversee initiatives and improvements
- Securing support and advice from the Government’s High Street Task Force
- Working with the Academic Health Services Network to investigate how they can assist to ensure that regeneration brings about health improvements
- Making a bid for over £19 million of grant for town centre improvements from the Government’s Levelling Up Fund
- Developing a Stage 1 (Development Phase) bid for National Lottery Heritage Fund grant for the transformation of Segedunum

As projects are developed to address the Masterplan priorities we will investigate delivery and funding routes as outlined on the last page of this Masterplan.



MATSTERPLAN FOCUS AREA

Page 26



- Project 1** - Wallsend Town Square
- Project 2** - High Street East, High Street West & Station Road
- Project 3** - Segedunum World Heritage Site Gateway
- Project 4** - The Forum
- Project 5** - Bus and Metro Station
- Project 6** - Housing Streetscape Improvements
- Project 7** - Housing Development (New Build & Refurbishment)
- Project 8** - Cycle corridors (Park Road & C2C/ Hadrian's Cycleway/ NCN72/ National Trail)
- Project 9** - Segedunum Transformation
- Project 10** - Segedunum Linkages to Town Centre
- Project 11** - Historic Buildings and Conservation
- Project 12** - Wallsend Business Support
- Project 13** - Wallsend Employment Support
- Project 14** - Wallsend Events & Animation

Note : Projects 12, 13 and 14 are not location specific so do not appear on the plan



Project 3 - Segedunum World Heritage Site Gateway



Project 6 - Housing Streetscape Improvements



PROJECT I

Wallsend Town Square

The pedestrianised areas next to the Forum Shopping Centre, Customer First Centre (CFC) and Anson Public House are busy routes for shoppers and visitors to the CFC while also accommodating seating, bus stops and Hans Schwarz's Grade II listed 'Market Woman' statue. The paving, planting, seating, bins and bollards is looking tired and dated and does not provide the high-quality environment this key 'Gateway', crossroads and public space deserves.

An option is to **remodel the space through new paving, seating, bins, lighting and bollards** which will also enable it to become more useable space and accommodate more events such as fairs and markets. Where possible trees, planting and grass will be incorporated to increase biodiversity.

There is also scope to provide a better setting for the Grade II Listed 'Market Woman' statue which is currently partly hidden by dense planting.

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WALSSEND TOWN SQUARE



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PROJECT 2

High Street West, High Street East & Station Road

High Street West, the Forum and the Customer First Centre, generates the highest number of pedestrians in the town centre with shoppers attracted by its shops, cafes, public houses, bank and Post Office. It is also a busy route for vehicles and an important bus route.

There is scope however to significantly improve the look of High Street West and improve the experience for pedestrians, cyclists, wheelchair users and others. This could be achieved by:

- Reducing the width of the road and **widening the pavements**
- Introducing **street trees** creating year round interest and enhancing biodiversity
- Providing opportunities for **outdoor seating** for cafes
- New **streetlighting**
- **Decluttering** by removing unnecessary bollards and upgrading other bollards and street furniture.

If funding can be secured, further engagement will be required with shoppers, road users and businesses to ensure that a scheme is designed that reconciles the need to maintain servicing for shops and other businesses alongside improvements to the environment.

Streetscape improvements along these principles can also be developed for High Street East and Station Road.



PROJECT 3

Segedunum World Heritage Site Gateway

The open area between Buddle Street and the housing in Woolley Street was hard surfaced in the late 1990s in parallel with the development of the Segedunum Museum south of Buddle Street.

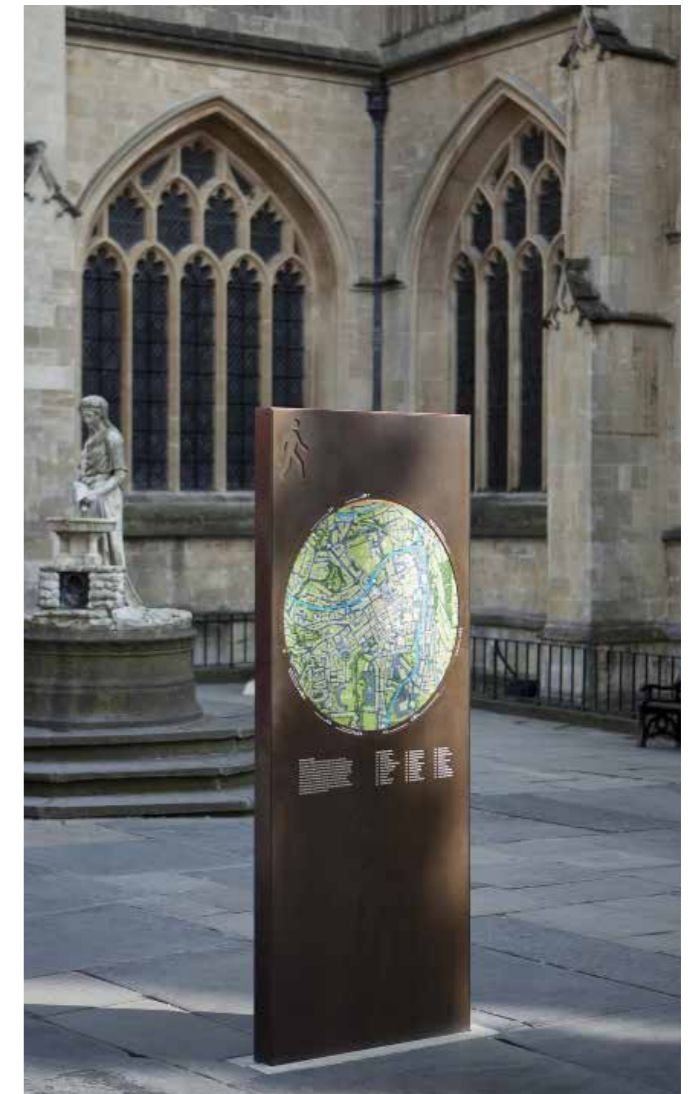
While it is possible to see from the museum viewing tower that this area formed the northernmost part of the Roman Fort (it housed the infantry barracks) it is somewhat featureless at ground level and provides an uninviting setting to both the housing that fronts onto it and the World Heritage Site opposite.

There is scope to reimagine what this space could look like and what it could be used for. This could include **planting and seating** for use by residents, visitors to Segedunum as well as cyclists and walkers on the C2C route/Hadrian's cycleway and the National Trail.



Page 30 In Buddle Street itself there is scope through **coloured or textured road surfacing and Gateway features** to identify that you are passing through a historic fort while maintaining its key role as a commercial riverside and abnormal load route.

These changes will complement the emerging plans to transform the museum and fort site itself and making sure the two sides of the road are visually linked.



SEGEDUNUM HERITAGE SITE GATEWAY

BEFORE



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PROJECT 4

The Forum

The Forum Shopping Centre forms the retail core of the town centre accommodating national, regional and local retailers along with the Customer First Centre (CFC) providing a broad range of goods and services for the community. It is a key employment site offering opportunities in retail, hospitality and catering and other services.

The CFC includes the library and the newly opened Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector hub managed by VODA. Adequate town centre car parking is provided in the two storey Centre car park and on the Aldi surface car park.

Since their ownership in 2010 the Centre owners, NewRiver, have worked with the Council and other partners to develop the CFC, Aldi and Burger King offers and, very recently, the new Hadrian Health Centre which will open in November 2022.

NewRiver are planning to further invest and improve the connectivity between Aldi, the Health Centre and the retail shops by removing the large atrium area and replacing it with attractive public realm whilst consolidating the existing retail. The existing two storey car park is a potential development site for which various options are being considered.



PROJECT 5

Bus and Metro Station

Wallsend Bus Station opened in 1982 in the same year as the Metro Station and the Tyne and Wear metro system was launched.

The bus station has been well served by local bus services as either a terminus or calling point, and as at October 2022 continued to be served by six main bus services, with just over 200 daily departures on weekdays. As part of wider revisions to bus services it has become more common for buses to omit the bus station from their route, while continuing to serve stops on Station Road, High Street West and/or High Street West.

These changes in use of the bus station has provided an opportunity to now consider remodelling, or even removing, the bus station which could include the following interventions:

- Retaining the bus station and introducing new **tree and shrub planting** to soften its appearance.
- Accommodating a **pedestrian and cycle link** between the Metro Station/ town centre and Segedunum and Hadrian's Cycleway and Hadrian's Wall National Trail
- Accommodating a **cycle hub** with secure cycle parking for Metro users
- Accommodating **some new build housing**
- Ensuring that changes support access to employment opportunities within Wallsend and across the wider Borough

All of these options would need more detailed feasibility work and a funding plan but at this stage views are sought on the proposed ideas.



TRANSPORT HUB & IMPROVED PEDESTRIAN ROUTES



Page 34

BEFORE



PROJECT 6

Housing Streetscape Improvements

The town centre benefits from a large amount of housing on it's doorstep with local residents supporting local shops and services but improvements are required in order to really capitalise on this relationship.

The terraced housing streets, in very broad terms, can be split into two distinct types. Type 1 is more generous in proportion and the properties, in general, have front gardens and period curtilage details. These streets are found north of High Street East and include Park Road and Laburnum Avenue. Type 2 are smaller properties and have less character due to the lack of front gardens or curtilage details. These streets are found south of High Street East and West and include Vine Street and Hugh Street.

Much of the housing immediately next to the High Street is private rented which, when unmodernised and poorly maintained and insulated, can lead to poor quality housing conditions for residents.

Other initiatives (see Project 7) will be considered to address the problems associated with poorly maintained housing, these can include proactive inspections and enforcement, housing grants, landlord licensing, tenant referencing and addressing anti-social behaviour.

This specific project though addresses the streets themselves and the opportunity to transform the external environment by creating inclusive, pedestrian friendly streets that:

- Provide **space for tree and shrub planting**
- Create **opportunities for children to play**
- Reduce the dominance of the private car while future proofing to accommodate **electric vehicle** infrastructure
- Improves the **walking and cycling** experience and ensures that people feel safe
- Address the function and condition of the **back lanes** as well as the frontages

The image shows Vine Street as an indication of what could be achieved in any of the streets in and around the town centre.



PROJECT 7

Housing Development (New Build & Refurbishment)

Wallsend is a popular residential area with a range of available housing, excellent public transport, good schools, proximity to the Coast and Newcastle City Centre and high quality parks.

Over the past ten years the Council has successfully built and refurbished some attractive and popular affordable housing in Wallsend including:

- 12 homes built at Swan Close on the former Wallsend Boys' Club site
- 41 homes built in Alexandra Street
- 7 homes refurbished in Charlotte Street bringing derelict properties back into use

Page 36 The Council has also worked in partnership with Registered Providers leading to the following homes being delivered:

- 6 Homes by Karbon at Park House
- 7 Homes by Home Housing at Wilson Street (Star House)
- 20 homes built by Home Housing in Carville Road (former Co-Op)
- 8 homes by Karbon at Church Bank

Housing will be a key driver of Wallsend's regeneration and one of the three policy priorities in the Masterplan is to:

- **Improve the quality of the housing offer** in Wallsend; in particular making the area a focus of the Mayor and Cabinet's plans for 5,000 affordable homes and tackling some of the poor quality privately rented housing in the masterplan area;



PROJECT 7

Housing Development (New Build & Refurbishment)

The Borough wide Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and other evidence highlights some key points to consider in developing and refurbishing housing in the Wallsend Masterplan area:

- There is a high proportion of 1 and 2 bed properties, especially private rented flats, these have a high turnover, and many are empty for long periods affecting community cohesion. A more sustainable community could be created **through providing larger, family homes either through new development or conversion of flats.** The Council has recently acquired and refurbished several long term empty homes in Charlotte Street and there is scope for more of this either by the Council, its trading company, Aurora, or other housing partners. Refurbishment opportunities could include conversion of vacant shops or their upper floors.
- There is a high proportion of private rented accommodation and a relatively low proportion of council housing. There was significant dissatisfaction from people in Wallsend about the quality of accommodation expressed in the SHMA household survey 2020. **There is an opportunity to work with the private landlords to improve the quality of the housing stock using measures such as a landlords' forum and a licensing system There is also scope to encourage owner occupancy, especially first time buyers, e.g. through discounted affordable homes.**
- Condition and quality – a significant proportion of housing is poor quality with a third of private housing failing to meet the Government's Decent Homes Standard. It is likely to be the poor quality of the housing stock that has meant that house and rent prices are low and little changed over the last few years compared to other areas, despite the area's excellent location and good transport links. **There is scope therefore to introduce a programme of housing retrofitting that targets insulation and reduces fuel poverty.**
- **New Build** – be proactive in bringing forward new development sites including the sites allocated in the Local Plan at Portugal Place and south of the RAOB Club, these have the potential to provide over 30 new homes.



PROJECT 7

Housing Development (New Build & Refurbishment)



PROJECT 8

Cycle corridors (Park Road & C2C/ Hadrian's Cycleway/ NCN72/ National Trail)

The UK's most popular long distance cycle route, the C2C, passes through the heart of Wallsend and, in one stretch, between its internationally famous sites of Segedunum and the former Swan Hunter shipyard.

Given the continuing growth in cycling for leisure and commuting there is potential to improve the route's look and feel and perception of safety. This also provides the opportunity to better connect residents to employment opportunities. This could include selective thinning of vegetation, improved lighting and providing new facilities such as a **cycle hub** providing safe and secure cycle parking, cycle hire and servicing. A logical site would be close to Segedunum Museum and its proposed new ground floor café.

Page 39 The C2C (which incorporates Route 72/Hadrian's Cycleway) provides an east-west route through Wallsend but there is limited provision elsewhere including north-south connecting the town centre and riverside with the parks and beyond to the coast road and its links to the wagonways. Project 6 'Housing Streetscape Improvements' envisages a reduction in vehicles and their speeds within the streets around the high streets and allows for the creation of more, improved cycle links through the area.

A key new route could connect the C2C/Route 72/Hadrian's Cycleway to the Metro and town centre core via Holly Avenue. A new segregated cycle route could also be introduced through the area along **Park Road**. This route connects directly from Cycle Way 72 in the south and runs to Richardson Dees Park in the north of the Masterplan area.



PROJECT 9

Segedunum Transformation

Segedunum Roman Fort forms part of the Hadrian's Wall UNESCO World Heritage Site and brings a national and international profile to Wallsend. It is a key and unique asset that deserves a higher profile and needs to play a major part in the heart of the community.

The Fort lies immediately north of the former Swan Hunter shipyard, a name that is known around the world, as well as the Hadrian's Wall National Trail (walking) and the C2C cycle route linking the Cumbrian and north east coasts.

Segedunum Museum opened in 2000 and is a popular attraction especially with primary schools, trail walkers and history buffs. The museum is also a key local employer offering opportunities in the cultural sector. There is a need however to refresh the museum and fort through development of new facilities, comprehensive refurbishment and reimagining the visitor offer to attract new audiences. This work will ensure the museum is relevant and attractive to local, regional, national and international audiences.

This project will need significant investment and Arts Council England has approved £499,000 of grant towards repairs at the museum such as new air conditioning plant, roof repairs and a replacement tower lift. Alongside the repair works the National Lottery Heritage Fund has invited a development (first) phase grant bid and this will be submitted in 2023. This application will include:

- Introduction of **new gallery spaces** and **reimagining** of the existing displays
- Reopening the reconstructed Bath House with a new internal audio visual offer
- Relocating the car park and **creating an outdoor events space** in its place
- Relocating the café to ground floor enabling it to open independently and beyond the museum's opening hours
- **Improvements to the grounds** to incorporate play areas and garden areas targeting families
- **Improving links between all parts of the site** including the excavated Bath House site (Ship in the Hole site) and the stretch of wall north of Buddle Street



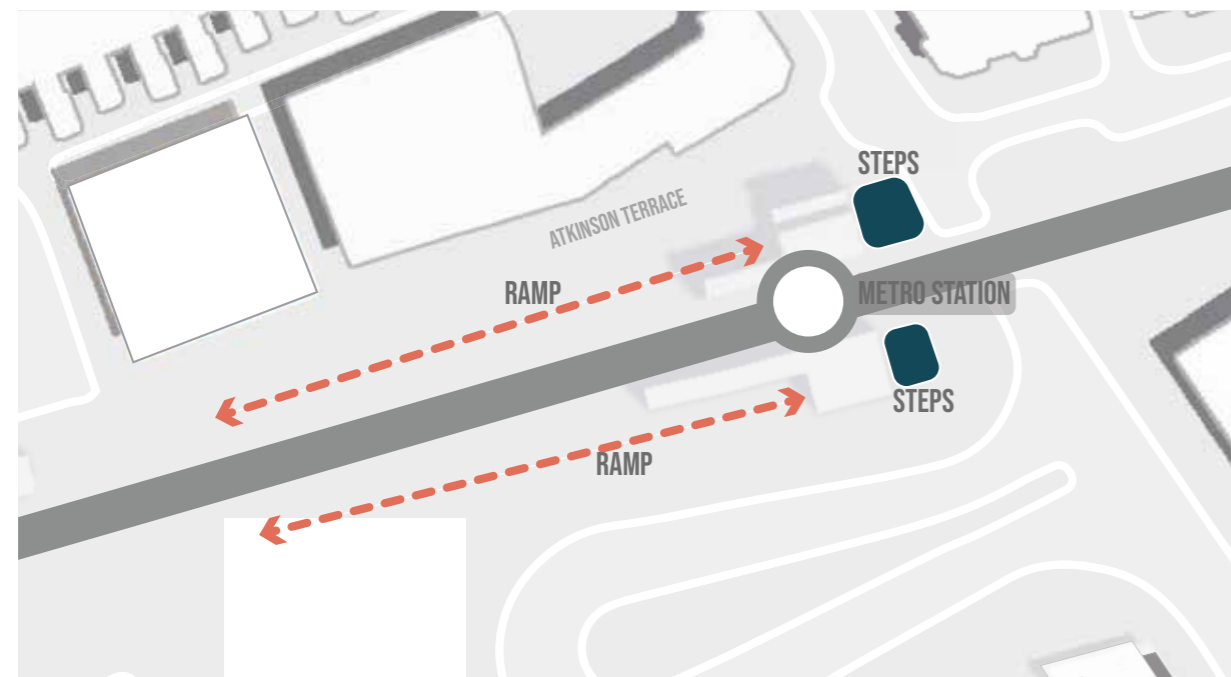
PROJECT 10

Segedunum Routes to Town Centre

Visitors to Segedunum arriving by Metro from Newcastle can currently use two ways of getting from the Metro Station to Segedunum:

- Flight of steps which leads down to Station Road at the Atkinson Terrace junction and then follows a narrow footway south along Station Road and under the Metro bridge towards the Buddle Street- Hadrian Road crossroads and Segedunum
- Ramp which runs parallel with Atkinson Terrace leading to the tunnel that passes under the railway (Metro) line and then emerges at the bus station from which there are four routes south that can be taken to reach Buddle Street/Segedunum:
 - Carville Road
 - Through Wooley Street housing
 - Back lane between Wooley Street and Station Road
 - Station Road

There is a need to consider the options for interventions to improve and enhance the routes between Segedunum and the Metro Station and town centre which could include additional signage, planting, waymarkers, banners and coloured paving and surfacing.



PROJECT II

Historic Buildings and Conservation

The Masterplan area includes several landmark buildings which are architecturally and historically important as well as being much loved by generations of Wallsend residents. These buildings include the Town Hall and the Memorial Hall (the MEM) which are both in use and cared for.

There are others however which need reinventing and put to new uses to enable them to continue to make a positive contribution towards both the immediate townscape and Wallsend's wider vitality.

The first is Wallsend Civic Hall, a Grade II listed building in the heart of the Green Conservation Area which, with its grounds, is a key part of the Wallsend public parks.

The Hall, which was rebuilt in 1812 has been owned by North Tyneside Council and its predecessors since 1916 and has most recently been leased out for use as a wedding venue and for other events.

The lease is now nearing its end and work is starting to survey the building to better understand its condition before options are developed to bring it back into a use that befits its character, setting and history.

The second is 'the Buddle' which was a school for over 100 years before being transformed into a community arts centre in the 1980s. The Council is now working with the developer of Wallsend Town Hall managed workspace facility,

Adavo, to bring the Buddle back into use as a business centre focusing on health, beauty and wellbeing.

The third is the privately owned Coach and Horses in High Street East which has been vacant for a number of years and the Council is investigating what it could do to assist in bringing this Grade II listed building back into use.

The Town Hall and the nearby Coach and Horses sit within a Victorian and Edwardian town centre which has largely retained its historic grid pattern of streets but has lost some of its visual appeal in the street surface and street furniture and many of its shopfronts.

The Local Plan includes policy AS8.8 which states "The Council will support positive measures to tackle heritage and townscape issues in a holistic way in Wallsend town centre, including through e) Preparation of a shop front design guide to assist in steering appropriate visual enhancements to shop fronts; and f) pursuing a conservation area in Wallsend town centre."

It is proposed to prepare a shopfront design guide alongside the shopfront grant scheme (funded by the North of Tyne Combined Authority until March 2024). It is also proposed to begin discussions with Historic England about the potential for pursuing and declaring a conservation area in the town centre



PROJECT 12

Wallsend Business Support

Businesses wishing to start up and grow within Wallsend can access support from an established business support network including the Business Factory which is based in the Town Hall. The Town Hall also provides managed office space along with the Swans Centre for Innovation while the Market Village in the Forum Shopping Centre has space that is ideal for retail start-ups.

All Wallsend businesses can also join the Wallsend Chamber and North Tyneside Business Forum providing access to events and networking opportunities.

The Council has secured grant funding from the North of Tyne Combined Authority's Towns and High Streets Innovation Programme to support small and medium sized businesses (SMEs) in the town centre. This will enable the Council to deliver the following:

- Bespoke Business Support for start-ups and established SMEs, this could include support for pop up shops, markets, incubators and advice on marketing, digital and HR
- Appointment of a Town Centre Business Advisor providing one to one advice and arranging bespoke support according to the needs of businesses
- A shop front grant scheme for improving shop fronts, windows, roller shutters and other features together with design advice and support to improve the look of the shopping streets
- Work to strengthen engagement with businesses in the development and implementation of the other regeneration projects via the Wallsend Chamber of Commerce, North Tyneside Business Forum, and Towns and High Streets Innovation Board

PROJECT 13

Wallsend Employment Support

Wallsend offers two key employment sites within the Masterplan area with opportunities in retail, hospitality and catering and other service industries and a manufacturing and engineering focus to the south of the Town Centre along the banks of the river. One of the three policy priorities in the Masterplan is to make sure Wallsend residents are connected to good jobs; using the full range of tools, including adult education, apprenticeships and the capabilities plus the transport infrastructure around the town to make sure people in the community, who need it, are supported to improve their life chances.

To ensure that residents are supported to access the full range of opportunities three key projects have been identified to address this priority:

- **Working Well Employability Hub** – Building on the pilot project in North Shields it is proposed to develop a similar one stop-shop in Wallsend. This will provide easy access under one roof to employment and skills support including confidence building, guidance on job applications and courses in maths, English and ICT.
- **Employment Support** – Continuation of services to assist residents who, for whatever reasons, do not access mainstream services. Discussions are underway with the North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA) about future funding routes including the devolved UK Shared Prosperity Fund and funding has been secured to develop Employment Partnerships to better coordinate and maximise existing employment support.
- **Adult Education** – Adult & Community Learning is currently delivered from Segedunum Business Centre but options are being considered to improve the facilities available to residents to increase the range of course options and promote participation in lifelong learning including progression opportunities into Further and Higher Education. The revised offer will see more accessible provision being available both in the Town Centre and located adjacent to key employment sites.

PROJECT 14

Wallsend Events & Animation

Wallsend is home to some of North Tyneside's most popular events and there is considerable scope to develop the current programme and create new activities for residents and visitors.

We will develop initiatives that encourage movement of visitors between attractions and the high street, resulting in longer dwell times and higher spend. This will include capitalising on the presence of the World Heritage Site at Segedunum which is strategically important and can help to develop the town's USP in attracting new and repeat footfall.

Priorities

1- To sustain and develop existing events

Wallsend Festival has taken place in the heart of the town for over 20 years and brings the community out in force. It features a mix of stalls, entertainment and fairground rides and is much-anticipated each July. The annual fireworks display at Segedunum Roman Fort is another hugely popular event, drawing thousands of residents. It showcases the museum as playing an important role in the town.

Any enhancements, including stronger links with Segedunum, can further stimulate footfall and extend the benefits to a greater number of visitors. Sustaining a strong programme of events in and around the town centre, riverside and parks can help demonstrate vibrancy and animate public spaces.

2 - To develop new events and cultural opportunities that drive footfall Wallsend can benefit from some focussed activity that really bring the town to life and engage the community, borough residents and visitors. The opportunities include more use of the exhibition space at both Wallsend Customer First Centre (CFC) and Segedunum. The CFC hosted the world premiere of the Peter Rabbit Storytime exhibition, attracting thousands of visitors. There is potential to host more high profile events and exhibitions in both spaces.

3 - To explore new opportunities

We will explore new forms of contemporary entertainment and events, including the capacity for a drone-based night time light show.

We will work with local, regional and national artists to bring a greater number of outdoor arts performances to the town.

We will explore the use of technology, such as AR and VR, to introduce innovative town trails, encompassing the town's parks, attractions and public spaces.



DELIVERY

The projects that make up this draft Masterplan will be developed and delivered by the private, voluntary, community and public sectors. This is likely to be over a ten year period and will be subject to the availability of funding and future grant applications.

The Council will work with partners to identify who is best placed to develop and lead on the projects. Delivery strategies will be developed for each project that includes an identification of the resources needed. Budget estimates will be developed for each project identifying both capital and revenue requirements and potential funding sources.

The North of Tyne Combined Authority has already approved £1.94 million of grant under the Towns and High Streets Innovation Programme towards activity in Wallsend Town Centre. This will be targeted on business support for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), events, shop front grants and environmental improvements.

The Council and its partners will continually look to identify other funding sources to implement the projects within it.

For the Towns and High Streets Innovation Programme an initial Board of representatives from businesses, the Wallsend Chamber, VODA, North Tyneside Business Forum and the Council was set up to decide on the programme of interventions. The membership of this Board will be broadened to ensure that it is inclusive and representative of the Wallsend Masterplan area.

NEXT STEPS

The next steps following consultation on this draft Masterplan will be for the Council and its partners to consider the comments received and then amend the plan for consideration by the Council's Cabinet and the High Street Transformation Board in Spring 2023.



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