

An Ambition for Wallsend

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Development

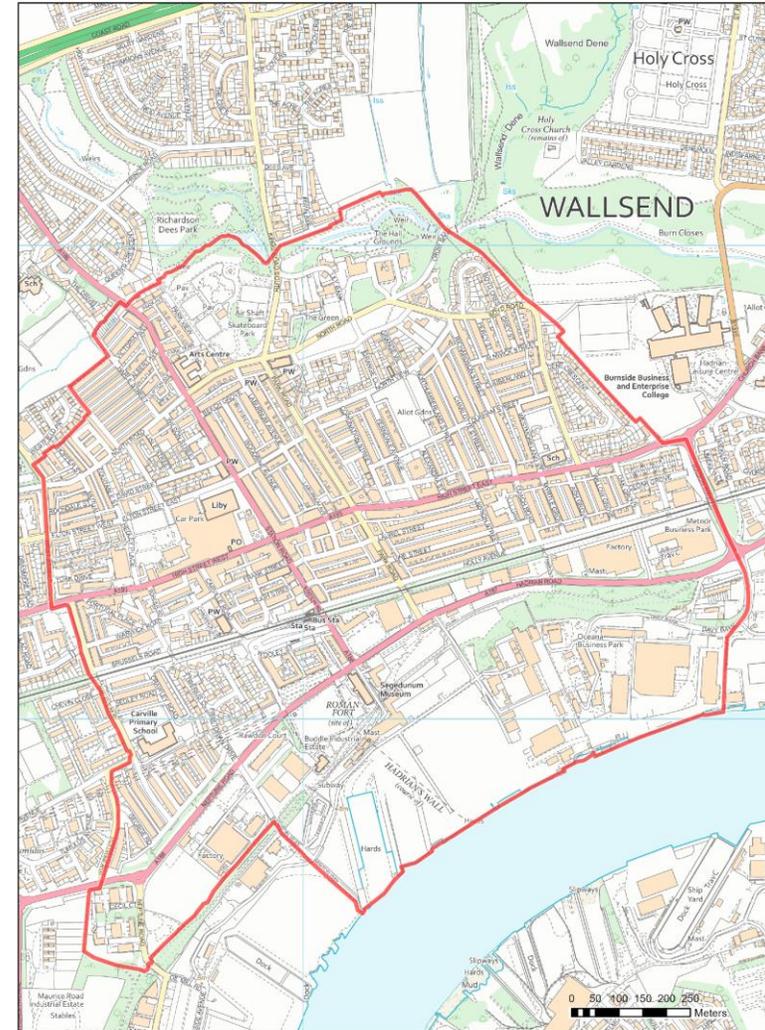


Background

Our North Tyneside Plan 2021-25 – commitment to produce Masterplans for Wallsend, the North West and Whitley Bay

22 May 2022 Cabinet – approved the plan boundary and three policy priorities for the Wallsend Masterplan:

- Housing
- Place
- Jobs



Wallsend Masterplan Boundary (1)
Wallsend Masterplan Area
Scale : 1:8000
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Policy priorities

- **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.



Initial engagement and development of draft Masterplan

Draft Masterplan prepared in response to the three policy priorities and following discussions with:

- Councillors in Battle Hill, Howdon, Northumberland and Battle Hill wards
- Local stakeholders including New River, VODA and Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums
- Officer team including representatives from strategic property, planning, transport and highways, public health, housing, regeneration, inclusive growth, employment and skills and environment

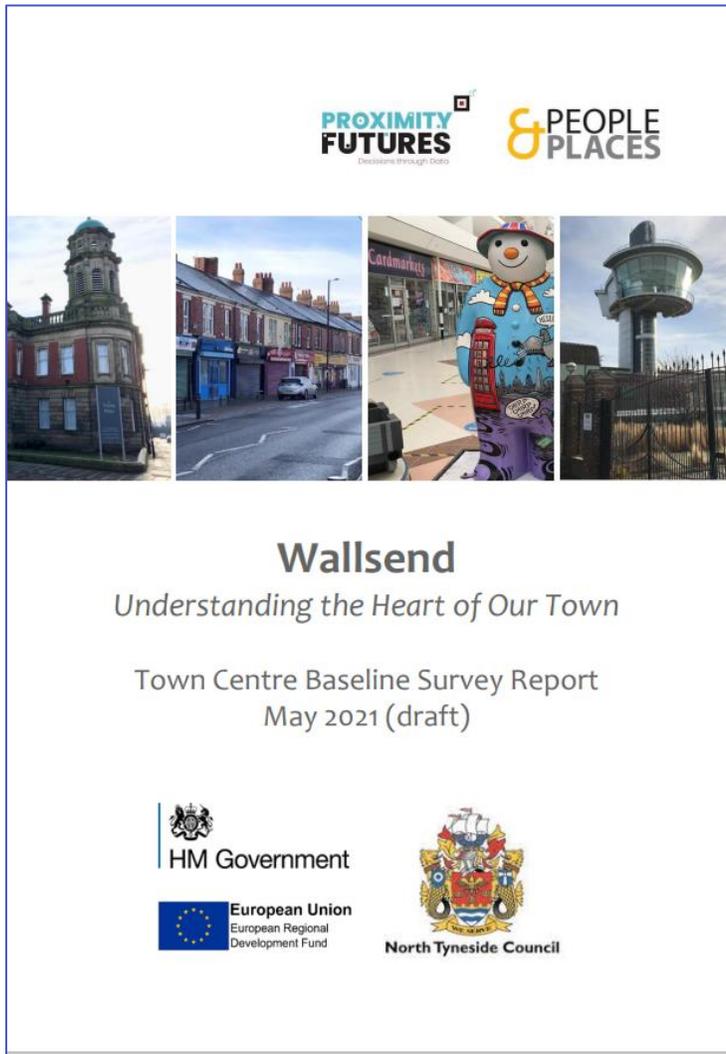


Delivery in Wallsend in the last 10 years has included...

- Customer First Centre (£2.1m) and Spirit of North Tyneside VCSE hub (£0.73m)
- Hadrian Health Centre (£9.2m)
- ALDI supermarket, Burger King and new car park
- Wallsend Town Hall refurbishment as managed office space (£2m)
- New Council housing at Swan Close (£1.2m) and Alexandra Street (£4.278m)
- Refurbishment of Richardson Dees Park and the other Wallsend Parks (£3.7m)
- Housing refurbishment at Charlotte Street (£1m)
- Site clearance and infrastructure at Swans followed by sale to Shepherd Offshore
- Swans Centre for Innovation managed office scheme (Phase 1 - £2m; Phase 2 - £1.75m)



What we have done since May's Cabinet



- Reviewed the “Understanding the Heart of our Town” report and its business and customer surveys
- Assessed the town centre’s buildings, streetscape and public spaces and developed ideas for improving them
- Reviewed the local commercial property and residential market
- Identified opportunities to support residents into work such as the proposed “Working Well” employability hub in the Town Centre
- Created the River Tyne Task Force and launched the ‘Tyne Powered’ brand



What we have done since May's Cabinet

- Established a **Board** with representatives from VODA, local businesses, residents and Ward Councillors to guide the Towns & High Streets Innovation Programme
- Bid for £19 million of **Levelling Up Fund** grant to fund streetscape and active travel improvements in the town centre and around Segedunum
- Established a new base for the **Business Factory** in Wallsend Town Hall
- Condition surveys and looking at options for the future of **Wallsend Civic Hall**
- Submitted a Development Phase bid at **Segedunum Roman Fort & Museum** for £5m heritage lottery grant
- Engaged with the '**Healthy Happy Places**' initiative to identify opportunities for interventions that support and enhance good mental health



Funding secured since January 2022

- Secured **£1.940 m funding from the NTCA Towns & High Streets Innovation Programme** for bespoke business support (*and appointed a dedicated business support worker (Wayne Young)*), shopfront grants, active travel/streetscape improvements, a Segedunum high street presence and town centre events and promotion
- Secured **£499,000 funding from Arts Council England's MEND fund** for repairs to Segedunum consisting of a new lift to the tower, roof repairs, emergency lighting upgrades and new air handling plant (to control atmospheric conditions and enable national museum exhibitions to be accommodated)



The Draft Masterplan proposals

| | 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 | | | |



1 – Wallsend Town Square



- Heart of the town centre, largely owned by New River
- Focal point for visitors and town centre activities
- Refurbishment of pedestrianised areas next to the Forum, Customer First Centre and Anson Public House
- Remodelling through new planting, paving and street furniture providing high quality multi-functional space at key Gateway



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.



3 – Segedunum World Heritage Site Gateway

- Setting to Segedunum is bland and doesn't shout World Heritage Site
- Major opportunity to reimagine Buddle Street and the paved area between Buddle Street and Woolley Street
- Potential to create 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
- Need for early engagement with residents, TWAM and Historic England e.g., to ensure designs respect the archaeological interest, this site has not been fully excavated and is a Scheduled Monument
- Visualisation on next slide shows what might be possible



SEGEDUNUM HERITAGE SITE GATEWAY

BEFORE



4 – The Forum

NewRiver Retail is planning further investment and has secured planning permission to:

- demolish the top floor of the car park on Elton Street
- reconfigure and provide additional surface level parking and new public realm
- demolish shop units, atrium area and first floor flat
- create new shop units, entrances and shop fronts facing outwards



5 – Bus & Metro Station

- Bus station has limited visual appeal and contributes little to the townscape
- In some ways, creates a barrier between the town centre and Segedunum.
- Options to modify the existing interchange through new tree and shrub planting and improved pedestrian and cycle links to Segedunum.
- Possible option to remove some bus stands enabling new development to progress such as a cycle hub and secure cycle parking or even new build housing.



6 – Housing Streetscape Improvements

- Proposal 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
- Space for planting and safe children's play
- Futureproof to accommodate future electric vehicle infrastructure
- Radical improvement in the appearance, liveability and appeal of Wallsend Town Centre as a destination of choice for new (and existing) residents
- Next slide shows Vine Steet but this principle could be applied to any of the streets





BEFORE



VINE STREET



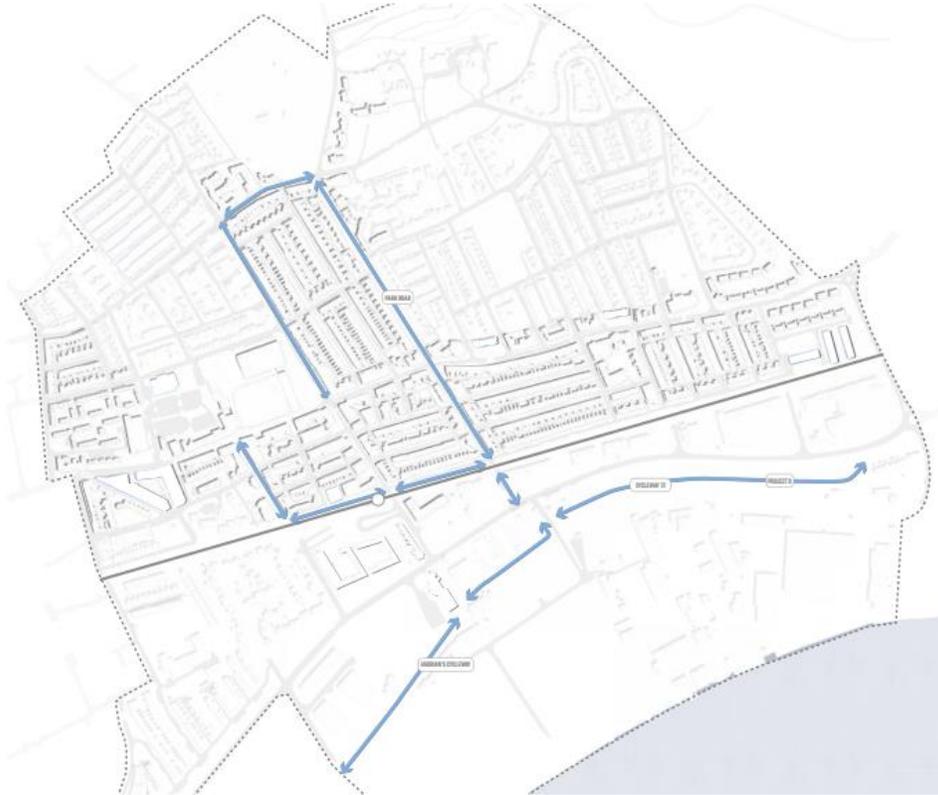
North Tyneside Council

7 – Housing Development (New Build & Refurbishment)

- Bring forward opportunities to refurbish existing homes
- Be proactive in bringing forward new build such as the Portugal Place site as well as windfall sites
- Complemented by initiatives to raise housing standards especially in poor quality private rented homes.
- Builds on our success in North Shields where we have successfully delivered new housing opportunities
- 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



8 – Cycle Corridors



- Wallsend is on the National Cycle Routes and has a considerable reach into the local, national and international cycling communities.
- Scope for improvements to the C2C/Route 72/Hadrian's Cycleway including a possible cycle hub and creation of new routes north from the C2C via **Holly Avenue** to the town centre and via **Park Road** 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.



9 – Segedunum Transformation

Segedunum Aerial Proposal



- World Heritage Site - can drive footfall and spend in the town centre.
- Opportunity for the museum to become an asset in the heart of the community which benefits both residents and businesses.
- Proposed transformation through new galleries, stories about the wider history of the town, Augmented Reality (AR) & Virtual Reality (VR) experiences
- Potential to repair and reopen the Bath House, relocate the café, create an outdoor events space and frontage improvements that shouts '*we're a world-class World Heritage Site*'
- Development Phase lottery bid seeking £5m grant submitted in February, will be advised in June if we are invited to submit a Delivery Phase (full) application



10 – Segedunum Linkages

- Need to draw Segedunum into the town centre offer and to improve the linkages between the two.
- The Masterplan considers options for interventions to improve and enhance the routes between Segedunum and the Metro Station and town centre, could include additional signage, planting, way markers, banners and coloured paving and surfacing
- Funding (circa £1m) secured from Towns and High Streets Innovation Programme



11 – Historic Buildings & Conservation



- Wallsend has some beautiful and well-appointed buildings which reflect the wealth and 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.
- We will also investigate the scope for declaring a town centre **Conservation Area**



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
 - shop front grants



13 – Employment Support

- One of our 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 provide employment support for people not using mainstream services as well as improving the existing adult education provision delivered at Segedunum Business Centre.
- Digital inclusion will be a key element given that many job adverts and interviews etc are held on-line.



14 – Events & Animation

- Town centres thrive on activity and a varied events programme can drive footfall, visitor spend and repeat visits.
- Expanding the scope and reach of Wallsend's programme to drive footfall and increase participation will be a major factor in the town's future success.
- This can be achieved through greater use of the Customer First Centre and Segedunum for events and exploring new initiatives through AR and VR, town trails and attractions such as drone based light shows.
- £100,000 funding secured from Towns and High Streets Innovation Programme for events and animation in 2023-24, also developing 'infrastructure' so that benefit is felt beyond 23-24



Next steps – Engagement results

Engagement on the Draft Masterplan ran from 19 January to 3 March:

- Display at Wallsend Customer First Centre including six drop-in sessions with officers available to answer questions
- Four ways to comment:
 - i. Short paper survey – 12 surveys returned
 - ii. PlaceShapers portal – 577 responses
 - iii. Online survey – 15 surveys completed
 - iv. Email address – AmbitionW@northtyneside.gov.uk – 4 emails received



On Friday we had [North Tyneside Council](#) come down and talk through the new exciting plans for Wallsend, Our User Participation group gave their feedback on the plans and what they would like to see in Wallsend area.



Next steps – Engagement results

- The responses are currently being analysed and a report drafted that will summarise the findings, this will be included in the report to May's Cabinet to seek approval of a final Masterplan.
- Initial analysis is showing high levels of support for projects such as Segedunum, an improved Town Square next to the Forum, new and refurbished housing and bringing vacant historic buildings back into use.
- Concern and questions were raised about:
 - any proposals affecting on street parking such as those for Vine Street (and nearby streets)
 - new cycle routes where there was loss of vehicular space
 - anti-social behaviour
 - the range of shops and evening economy
 - litter and the need for cleansing and maintenance of the town centre



Next steps – Masterplan and Delivery

- Continue to engage with the **High Streets Task Force**, the **Towns and High Streets Innovation Partnership** (THSIP) Board, VCSE sector and businesses
- **Deliver** the THSIP projects in 2023–24 and **seek additional funding** from NTCA to extend this programme
- Consider feedback and bring an **amended Masterplan** back to Cabinet on 22 May 2023 for approval
- Develop a **programme** of projects with lead officers and key milestones
- Determine **governance** for implementation of the Ambition for Wallsend Programme
- And crucially.....continue to investigate opportunities for **external funding** to bring forward projects, such as Levelling Up Round 3 (all projects will be subject to further engagement)



Thank you – any questions?

