

Conwy Deposit Local Development Plan 2007 – 2022 (Revised edition 2011)



SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

LDP10: Colwyn Bay Masterplan

March 2011

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Colwyn Bay - A Town Wide Strategic Masterplan.

Draft Final Report. September 2010.

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Foreword & Background.

This master plan is the culmination of a consultancy commission led by DPP Shape, working with Arc 4, Keppie Massie and Martin Stockley Associates. Commissioned by the Welsh Assembly Government and Conwy County Council, the master plan guides and illustrates a new future for the town of Colwyn Bay. It has been developed through the collaborative working of a dedicated steering group, local consultation and stakeholder workshops with a diverse range of officers, agencies, property owners, businesses and residents

The challenge has been to re-invent Colwyn Bay as a 21st century town with a renewed focus on its role as a seaside town and an attractive place to live, visit and invest.

Our starting point has been Colwyn Bay's economic fortune which has suffered over many decades. Many of Wales's seaside resorts have faced challenges in responding to changing economic circumstances and consumer tastes. Colwyn Bay has had particular issues associated with the construction of the A55, the physical separation of the beach from the town centre, and the consequent lack of vitality of the town centre, resulting in an under-utilisation of many of the town's key tourist features and distinctive features including the beach, retail core, promenade, park and pier. Colwyn Bay has failed to establish a distinctive economic role in the hierarchy of North Wales towns and its housing, retailing and investment issues spring from this. Recognition of this led to the Bay Life Initiative and the focussing of regeneration funds within the North Wales Strategic Regeneration Area.

Colwyn Bay now has a unique opportunity to capture the investment associated with a number of truly exciting projects such as the new town beach, the coastal defence investments, investment in a Rugby Academy and events facility and a focus on the housing renewal issues in the town. These present many of the ingredients for a new Colwyn Bay. The master plan brings all of the ideas and initiatives into one integrated strategy for change.

There are a variety of projects and ideas in the master plan. Some are radical and long term such as the remodelling of the Bay View Shopping centre and the A55 bridge link while others can be easily implemented as early win catalyst projects such as the new

town square as they require limited acquisition and preparatory works. All projects whatever their scale, will have the impact needed to help transform and reposition Colwyn Bay as a desirable place to invest, visit, work and live. The key has been to make sure that all the projects interconnect and integrate with each other and the wider economic and cultural ambitions of the town. The proposals are presented within a coherent spatial framework.

Chapter 1. A Vision for Colwyn Bay.

The Brief.

- 1.1 DPP Shape's brief has been to develop a phased master plan for the town of Colwyn Bay, underpinned by a strong delivery strategy. The master plan has been developed with an understanding of the wider strategic setting of the North Wales Coast and its economic drivers. Colwyn Bay's locational relationship with Conwy, Llandudno and competing employment and residential markets have all informed the plan. This masterplan focuses on specific proposals within the town and how to make the most of planned investment. With this in mind, the approach here is site and project focused ensuring that proposed initiatives lock into both a strategic land acquisition framework and existing, deliverable priorities.

- 1.2 In summary the brief required the master plan to:
 - Link in with the aspirations and objectives of the Bay Life Initiative
 - Identify prospects for commercial and retail development.
 - Develop an acquisitions strategy to support development projects
 - Identify projects that would promote evening economy.
 - Explore the possibility of location of Council Offices into the town centre.
 - Maximise the potential of the Promenade and sea defence projects.
 - Maximise the potential of Eirias Park and the proposed Rugby Academy.
 - Improve linkages both pedestrian and vehicular across the town and improve public transport access.
 - Consider the need to propose iconic projects to strengthen the town identity.
 - Identify where and how east Colwyn residential area and its housing market can be improved and better linked.
 - Consider public realm projects and further pedestrianisation.

- 1.3 Implicit in all the above is the need to address the character and identity of Colwyn Bay and in particular bring a spatial and physical dimension to the aspirations of the Bay life initiative.

The Vision.

- 1.4 The vision for Colwyn Bay is to create ***‘A thriving, attractive and vibrant town that is welcoming, safe and friendly; a place with a unique character that people are proud to live in’.***
- 1.5 This vision statement describes a new town which works on a number of important levels for visitors, business and residents. A thriving town is where the economics, business opportunities and investment is co-ordinated and where the private sector can engage with a clear plan of action.
- 1.6 Colwyn Bay’s unique and picturesque setting must be exploited and enhanced and new buildings and spaces need to be the best possible in order to help strengthen and establish a strong identity for the town. A welcoming town is where visitors find the town uplifting, exciting and easy to get around with plenty of attractions encouraging visitors to see more, stay longer and spend.

Aims and Objectives.

- 1.7 The overall aims and objectives for this strategic masterplan emerged from early steering group and stakeholder meetings. The following strategic objectives have been addressed through the proposals in this plan.
- **Identify and exploit the key triggers for economic change.**
 - **Identify opportunities for commercial and retail development.**
 - **Address housing market weaknesses in the Lawson Road and Greenfield Road neighbourhood.**
 - **Maximise investment in the pedestrian and vehicular infrastructure.**
- 1.8 The key to successful delivery will be the careful co-ordination and integration of investments from both the public and private sectors to address the town’s weaknesses and make the most of its many assets. In order to address the above strategic objectives, the more specific aims of this plan are as follows:
- **Create the conditions for investment and economic growth in the longer term**
 - **Work with the good historic fabric of the town**

- **Increase connectivity to the water front**
- **Integrate proposals already underway such as the work being done to address coastal defence.**
- **Increase east-west links across the town centre particularly between the town centre, East Colwyn and Eirias Park.**
- **Unlock the potential of the Dingle.**
- **Improve links to Abergele Road.**
- **Enhance the opportunity provided by the new proposed Events Centre and Rugby Academy and the rest of Eirias Park.**
- **Unlock the potential of the Bay View Shopping centre.**
- **Create a new focus for the town centre.**
- **Improve vehicle movement to and within the town.**
- **Improve public transport access.**

Chapter 2. Developing the Master Plan.

Consultation and Engagement.

- 2.1 Resident consultation and involvement has been integral to the development of the master plan and a process of engagement has been undertaken across diverse sections of the town using many methods of communication. It is important to acknowledge that there is on going, more detailed neighbourhood planning work still underway within the important housing renewal area at Greenfield and Lawson Roads. This intensive community development work will assist residents to be genuinely involved in identifying priorities for action. The consultancy team has ensured that local issues are taken into account as plans and ideas have emerged. A summary of activity is set out below.
- 2.2 A **community consultation event** took place in March 2010 to allow early ideas to be shared and immediate comments recorded and fed into the masterplanning process. The event took place throughout the day of Friday 26th and Saturday 27th March in the Bay View Shopping Centre. The event centred on a series of concept boards depicting current images of Colwyn Bay, demonstrating its many assets, as well as providing ideas for potential projects to explore and to discuss. People were able to feed back via a postcard and post-it note comments. **443** responses were received.
- 2.3 An **online survey** was also developed so that people could view the plans and feed back their views remotely alongside any postcard responses. www.colwynbaymasterplan.info was viewed 46 times with 10 people taking part in the survey.
- 2.4 A **housing workshop** and **business breakfast** also took place in March and April with stakeholders being given the opportunity to feedback their concerns and priorities. 70 stakeholders attended the events and gave valuable feedback.
- 2.5 A series of events have taken place in the Central Colwyn Bay residential area to feed into a more detailed neighbourhood plan as follows:

2.6 **Open Day April 2010**

An open day was held to identify local issues and priorities for the area. Approximately 30 people attended this event during the course of the day.

Top 5 priority areas identified in order of importance:

- Drug and alcohol related issues
- Poor housing – HMOs
- Lack of employment opportunities
- Poor reputation of the area
- Lack of facilities/activities for young people

Strengths:

- A strong sense of community
- Two good local schools
- Proximity to the Town Centre
- Large properties with lots of potential for development

2.7 **Focus Groups June 2010**

Five focus groups took place, each set against a theme, those being:

- Community involvement and social capital
- Young people
- Crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour
- Learning skills and employment (later cancelled due to lack of take-up)
- Environment and Housing

2.8 **Door-to-door Survey July 2010**

A door-to-door survey was carried out to capture the views of residents who had not participated in the open day or the focus groups. A further 22 responses were received from this research. The priorities identified mirrored the priorities that emerged from the open day and the focus groups.

2.9 **Public Meeting July 2010**

A public meeting took place on 15th July at Ysgol Pendorlan to discuss the Neighbourhood Planning process and the next stages.

2.10 **Workshops**

A series of workshops have taken place exploring key themes pertinent to the future of the town. These have represented the start of a longer term process of engagement and new ways of working with local people. The workshops included a range of local representatives and groups and have helped set priorities for this strategic masterplan. Workshops included:

- Tues 17th August - Housing
- Tues 24th August - Community Safety and Anti Social Behaviour
- Tues 7th September - Young People
- Tues 14th September - Community feedback

Baseline Summary.

2.11 The consultancy team issued the first report, ‘Colwyn Bay. Baseline and Emerging Master plan’ in May 2010. This document was principally a baseline analysis of the historic context, socio economic background and policy context for this work. This first report highlighted a number of opportunities for investment including many existing plans and proposals. This initial report identified the key drivers for change and principles for further development of a more integrated and strategic plan for the town. The following sets out a brief summary of the main baseline issues.

Understanding Colwyn Bay.

2.12 The master plan is underpinned by an urban design framework and approach to spatial planning which creates a clear geographic focus on the town centre, the promenade, beach, Eirias Park, and the housing renewal area at Greenfield and Lawson Roads. This creates the overall framework within which proposals have been developed and tested. This approach combines the overarching aims and objectives set out at the start of this document with a clear spatial strategy. Understanding the place and how it functions, its strengths and weaknesses has been critical in the masterplanning process.

2.13 The baseline findings parallel the challenges set out in the Bay Life Initiative. It is clear that the town has a poor image and identity despite its wider setting. This is compounded by the fact that the retail core of the town looks neglected and tired with a range of empty units and an overall low value offer. Despite Station Road having an impressive set of existing buildings, pedestrianisation has impacted on

the vibrancy and activity on this street. The Bay View shopping centre also impacts on the town drawing many people away from the centre and into its enclosed mall. Its unsympathetic massing and bulk in plan and form also conveys a poor, low value image to visitors.

- 2.14 Similarly, the Bay Life Initiative emphasises the lack of a central space or hub where retail business, transport and people can converge as the heart of the town. Pedestrian circulation is not legible, particularly for visitors looking to explore and discover the town's unique assets while links to the waterfront and park are very poor and uninviting.
- 2.15 Arrival into the town either by car or train is also weak. Traffic circulation is counter intuitive and Colwyn's train station is disappointing after experiencing the coastal train trip. Additionally the square which is little more than a station car park is tired, poorly maintained, badly designed and uninviting. It is evident that there is no sense of arrival and no real sense of expectation and invitation at Colwyn Bay.
- 2.16 Living in parts of Colwyn Bay also has its challenges. Again in line with the Bay Life Initiative we know there is an unbalanced housing stock, with many of the large Victorian and Edwardian houses converted into multiple occupancy. There is little affordable family housing within the town centre despite the fact that living close to the sea, a good park and proximity to a town centre would be ideal for many young families.
- 2.17 The seafront is perhaps the best but most forgotten asset. Good links across the A55 and the railway are fundamental to the town's seaside identity particularly for visitors to the town. This goes hand in hand in with the development of new destinations for the town increasing visitor's numbers and strengthening the local economy.
- 2.18 As described in the baseline analysis there are a host of challenging physical and spatial obstacles that the master plan has tackled that have had detrimental elemental affect on how the town is used and experienced. In summary the challenges have been:

- The barrier and lack of connection between the town and the sea front caused firstly by the railway and then the A55 Expressway.
- The topographical relationship between the town and the sea front.
- The design of the Bay View Shopping Centre and its relationship to the town centre.
- The role Abergele Road needs to play as a distinctive High Street.
- The need to link the town eastwards to the new Events Centre, Rugby Academy and Eirias Park across the Dingle.
- Exploiting the significant assets of the town waterfront, and green spaces.

Heritage and Conservation.

- 2.19 The existing commercial heart of Colwyn Bay is recognised as being an area of special architectural and historic interest and was designated as a conservation area in 1988. This part of the town has a well defined street layout and pattern and a strong building line has been established, creating a sense of enclosure. There is also however a character of spaciousness due to the width of some streets. Architectural richness and variety has emerged through the development of individual and bespoke buildings and a number of these are listed.
- 2.20 Colwyn Bay was largely developed in the latter part of the 19th century and is therefore a relatively new town. It does however have a very clear, tangible and also modest Victorian character, the positive aspects of which can be used to inform and guide future intervention and modern development in the town. The economic fortunes of the town are reflected in its fabric. In the 1980's the A55, the Bay View Shopping Centre, the loss of many shop fronts and unsympathetic developments have all impacted negatively on the town's character.
- 2.21 This strategic masterplan does not change any of the statutory designations that aim to protect the historic character of conservation areas or listed buildings. This plan focuses on where investment is likely to make a town wide impact and offers a co-ordinated and integrated approach to investment that will bring long term economic sustainability. Project definitions later in this report set out greater detail about delivery issues.

Housing Renewal.

2.22 The housing renewal area has many positive features which include properties with character, a local school and a number of positive community facilities. It has relatively high levels of owner occupation for a renewal area, having a central location in a town that is receiving significant investment and opportunities through regeneration projects such as the new proposed Events Centre in Eirias Park. It has a significant opportunity to become a well located, popular residential area, offering a different mix of housing market close to the town centre, the retail offer, leisure facilities and close to major transport routes.

2.23 However, the area also has a poor reputation and lacks identity. It is characterised by poor quality housing stock, a poorly managed private rented sector, low income households and a range of social and economic problems. But the resident population are relatively satisfied, recognising the benefits that living in the area offers and understanding where improvements need to be made. Whilst we are not underestimating the resources and commitment involved, the area has a future but requires a carefully managed programme of investment that combines physical and revenue resources to:

- Improve existing homes and the overall residential offer.
- Target areas of clearance and focus on a new housing family housing offer.
- Maintain/improve existing level of owner occupation but increases those owners that are younger and economically active and able to invest in their homes and community
- Work with local people and businesses to improve the social, economic and environmental performance of the area.

2.24 Emerging future priorities in the area should be:

- Retaining and increasing properties in the owner occupation sector
- Reducing the number of properties managed by poor quality private landlords
- Improving choice and the quality of the housing offer
- Taking a Neighbourhood Management approach to secure long term investment

- Developing a locally agreed approach to a spatial plan for the neighbourhood that maximises opportunities for new house building on relatively small sites but where new housing products will impact on the overall housing market.

2.25 A detailed consultation programme and neighbourhood planning process is underway and this will help develop a neighbourhood action plan for the area and agree priorities with local people to engage them in the future opportunities of the Town and their neighbourhood.

Leisure and Tourism.

2.26 Colwyn Bay, unlike the neighbouring resorts of Llandudno and Rhyl, appears to have a relatively minor leisure sector. Consequently the proportion of town centre space assigned to amusements and leisure industries is vastly reduced relative to neighbouring seaside localities. The town benefits from the leisure facilities provided within Eirias Park, such as the athletics track/football stadium, tennis courts, bowling greens, swimming pool and the proposed 'forest school'. The town also boasts a zoo; the Welsh Mountain Zoo (National Zoo of Wales) and beyond a range of hill and woodland walks with spectacular views over the town and the Bay. Water sports are popular off the eastern end of the promenade and nearby Rhos on Sea, including skiing, jet bikes, kite surfing and sailing.

2.27 The town centre does not benefit from a substantial town centre theatre (such as Llandudno, although Theatr Colwyn does fulfil a vital function, acting more as a smaller 'community theatre'), conference facilities (such as Blackpool or Brighton), a fairground or working pier (such as Llandudno or Rhyl) or even a dedicated cinema.

2.28 The beach has become a neglected resource. The reduced beach levels through coastal erosion have had a detrimental effect on the character and functionality of the beach. The proposed Promenade remodelling, together with coastal protection and beach project will have a profound impact on Colwyn as an important visitor attraction.

2.29 In order to supplement leisure proposals, consideration has been given to enhancing the leisure/night time economy with the provision of bistro – style/"café society" outlets. The focus should be on the availability of a range of

'eating/drinking' options rather than a pure 'bar' based culture. This type of offer will be essential in maximising opportunities to encourage the existing community, local visitors and tourists to circulate around the town in the evening, creating positive activity.

Market Context Summary.

- 2.30 The focus of primary retail space in Colwyn Bay is in the blocks bounded by Abergele/Conway Road, Sea View Road, Princes Drive and Penrhyn Road, and incorporating Station Road. This also includes the Bay View Shopping Centre, which fronts Sea View Road. Secondary retailing functions are located more peripherally, aligned in a linear pattern along particularly the north side of Abergele Road and Conway Road. Whilst a number of vacant units within the town have been identified, this has occurred on a macro-economic level on a UK wide basis.
- 2.31 Colwyn Bay, according to the Verdict 'UK Retail in the Regions: Wales Report' dated November 2009, has fared better than its neighbouring settlements, with a vacancy rate of 8.9%, compared to 11.4% in Rhyl and 15.9% in Bangor. Colwyn Bay lacks many of the established high street names, and in particular a larger department store. Debenhams, Marks and Spencer and Next are all absent, however, multiple retailers such as Boots, WH Smiths, Thomas Cook, Argos and New Look are represented within the Central Business District (including the Bay View Shopping Centre). There is a clear abundance of charity shops and lower order pound-shops and bookmakers, even within the recognised retail 'core'.
- 2.32 The highest proportion of office accommodation within the town centre is located to the west of the Central Business District (CBD) and identified principal shopping areas, along Wynnstay Road and Princes Drive. Professional services appear to have clustered within this area, occupying the larger and more substantial former residential buildings. Purpose built, more modern office accommodation is available at Heritage Gate, located due east of Colwyn Bay town centre along Abergele Road. Public Sector office space, incorporating the Police Headquarters and Civic Centre, is set back opposite the Heritage Gate development, and located on the eastern edge of Eirias Park. Further office accommodation is available sporadically above retail units throughout the areas identified above.

Movement and Connections.

Vehicular Network

- 2.33 The **A55** cuts through the town centre in a deep cutting, taking regional traffic past Colwyn Bay. From the A55, Colwyn Bay have very little presence for passers by, and on arrival, the sense of place is very poor.
- 2.34 A large number of the streets in Colwyn Bay are one way, including many of the side streets from the A457. One way systems create unnecessary traffic movements and the possibility to revert them to two way streets should be reviewed.

Parking

- 2.35 The side streets provide free on street parking, restricted to 1-2 hours. There is also on street parking provided along the A457, and ample parking along the Promenade. Colwyn Bay Traffic Study (1999) found that both off-street public car parks and on-street car parking has capacity at peak times.

Pedestrian Access and Routes

- 2.36 Colwyn Bay town centre has got a good road network making the town centre relatively easy to move around by foot. However there are a number of constraints and barriers making pedestrian access difficult to and from some areas. The most obvious barriers are the A55 and the railway, separating the town centre from the waterfront.
- 2.37 From the town centre there is only one direct access to the waterfront and the Pier; via Victoria Avenue and the Station. There is a real opportunity here to create a better connection between the town centre and the waterfront, and to create places along it, such as an improved town square outside the Station, which would also act as a gateway and arrival point for travellers arriving by train.

Eirias Park

- 2.38 The Eirias Park leisure and sport facility located to the east of the town centre is proposed to be re-developed within the next few years, driven by the Rugby Academy and Events Arena proposals. Pedestrian routes and how visitors arriving by public transport to the new stadium, should be looked into.

Cycle Routes

- 2.39 The National Cycle Network Route no 5, which follows the North Wales coast from Flintshire through to Gwynedd runs along Colwyn Promenade, in a marked lane, off road. This is part of the national network.

Public Transport

2.40 Buses

Colwyn Bay is well served by buses and most routes stop along the A457 and certain routes (LA contracted) also stop at the station.

Rail

Colwyn Bay is served by the east westerly train line between Holyhead and Chester and trains are frequent, every 1-2/hour. There are also direct trains to both Manchester (2 hours) and London (under 3 hours).

The station area as an arrival point could be much improved to greet and welcome visitors to Colwyn Bay. This area could be key in any strategic and environmental improvement of the town.

In Summary.

- 2.41 The baseline research, review of existing policies and strategies and critical consultation with a diverse range of stakeholders including residents have all informed the development of this town wide masterplan. There is a high level of pride and concern about the future of Colwyn Bay and a recognition that new approaches to the town's assets are needed. The delivery of a vision and detailed plans for delivery must build on the interest and momentum that clearly exists.

Chapter 3. The Masterplan – Place Making.

- 3.1 This section of the report describes the final master plan in terms of an urban design framework, illustrative master plan, intervention areas and transformational projects.
- 3.2 The master plan is organised around a sequence of projects of varying size and complexity. They also form the basis of the acquisition and development strategies described later. This chapter begins with the over arching spatial themes that are to be addressed, moves onto key objectives and then sets out specific spatial proposals and interventions.

Spatial Themes.

- 3.3 Underpinning the master plan concept are three key urban design themes that have shaped the design process. All of them combine and overlap in order to drive a new identity and character for the town. The intention is to change and enhance the spatial experience of the town and link its assets together. These themes are;
- Areas of change and restructuring.
 - Re- wiring the town centre.
 - Re- connecting with the sea.

Areas of change and restructuring.

- 3.4 There are key areas where physical change and opportunities for investment will make a significant impact. The Promenade, the town centre, East Colwyn and Eirias Park all contain proposals that will involve the careful restructuring of the town through co-ordinated, planned delivery. This masterplan is not about radical town wide re- building. The vast majority of the town and its buildings remain in place. This is about making the most of strategic investments and creating wider opportunities for improving linkages and creating a renewed and beneficial social and economic impact.

Re- wiring the town centre.

- 3.5 The master plan proposes improved and some cases new movement patterns in the town with an emphasis to the sea and eastwards to the park. Under the master plan proposals it would be possible to walk from the Civic Quarter in the east, over

the Dingle, through Eirias Park into East Colwyn and then through to the town centre and the town Square. There are two fundamental connections needed to re connect the town together. These are a footbridge across the Dingle and the link to the promenade either over the A55 or from the new town square.

Re- connecting with the sea

- 3.6 Within the heart of the town both visual and spatial connections to the sea are restricted and complex. Intuitive pedestrian movement and connection is extremely limited and confusing particularly on arriving at the station. Older, historic visual connections have also been lost such as Sea View Road which would originally have an interrupted view down to the Bay, but is now obscured by the station. Ironically the Bay View Shopping Centre does not have a view of the Bay and its massing and bulk also obscures other views. The master plan emphasises key views from the town to the sea and through a number of projects ensures that views across the Bay are enhanced and celebrated.
- 3.7 The station remodelling project is designed to open views to the sea from the new town square and Sea View Road. A new bridge link and pocket square in the shopping centre opens up direct connections to the sea. A new development project at the North West corner of Eirias Park opens up views across the Bay and down into the Dingle.

Master Plan Urban Framework – The Key Spatial Objectives.

- 3.8. The framework is divided into different place making, spatial and physical components such as development areas, spatial nodes, access and movement. It defines the 'DNA' or main operating principles of the master plan demonstrating how integrating key aspects together can deliver viable and lasting change. At its core is an emphasis on preserving and strengthening the core functions of the town but with an added opportunity provided by its seaside setting. The urban framework demonstrates the need to:
- Build and strengthen a network of links which re-connect the town along its length from the Civic Quarter in the east to the Penrhyn Road and beyond in the west.

- Provide a series of infrastructure and public realm projects that promote the new connectivity including links over the Dingle valley and the A55 to the pier and new promenade.
- Create a circular route within the town centre focused around a new public square that links key components of the town together including a refurbished and remodelled pier.
- Ensure that development projects are linked and that new uses are clustered to help provide a series of distinct town quarters.
- Bring more people into the town centre by mixing uses and strengthening public transport offer.

3.9 The master plan acknowledges and seeks to strengthen the town's distinctive places and neighbourhoods. The promenade is divided along its length into a family beach either side of the gartered pier as part of the new coastal defence works. A water sports area is located to the east of the Dingle where a water sports centre and new slipways are proposed.

3.10 Eirias Park is further subdivided into distinct destinations and attractions. A sports village is proposed clustered around the new Events Centre, which will host a WRU Rugby Academy. Elsewhere the park is defined by a new family destination, strengthened civic quarter to the east and an educational quarter to the west around the top of the Dingle which also becomes an improved destination in its own right.

3.11 East Colwyn, rebadged, 'Seaville', is strengthened as a distinct town centre residential quarter with improved links and residential offer. To the west the town centre is reconstructed on the back of a remodelling of the Bay View Shopping centre complete with a new town square and station. The existing business quarter remains to the west and is linked by an improved Abergele/Conway Road.

Master Plan Urban Framework – Key Proposals and Interventions.

In terms of the master plan the town is divided up into 7 key areas. These different areas concentrate together key aspects and assets such as, uses, connectivity, location, topography, heritage etc which will underpin a variety of different solutions for change and regeneration. Each area is driven and shaped by different needs but

are designed to link together into a more coherent joined up offer to visitors, business and residents.

Key areas.

1. Sports Village.

An essential part of Eirias Park this project proposes building a much larger more effective offer around the Rugby Academy and stadium. The existing sports uses such as football, tennis and fitness are concentrated into the sports village providing a multi-access health, leisure and fitness facility for both the town and visitors. The sports village would link to the other new leisure proposals in the body of the main park would position Colwyn as a central attraction on the north Wales coast.

2. East Housing area.

This residential area located between the park and the town centre holds the key to improved linkages across the town as well as a greatly improved town centre residential offer. The intention is to help the area face outwards more towards the improved park and town centre, benefiting in these key town assets on its door step. With improved school facilities Seaville could be a much sought after place to live for families. The master plan proposes a reinforced link across the area linking to the park and the Dingle via a new footbridge.

3. Town Centre.

Focused on the Bay View Shopping centre, Station Road and Railway Station this area is full of new public realm and retail development projects that consolidate and strengthen the town's retail and experiential offer. Fundamental is a re-linking of the pier and new promenade back to the centre and the opportunity to link the existing shopping centre back into the heart of the town.

4. Eirias Park.

The park is reorganised to make the most of its assets and opportunities for both residents and visitors both as a leisure and educational facility. The park

will play a vital tourism role particularly on ensuring that people stay longer in the town and do more throughout the year.

5. **Civic Quarter.**

This stays mostly intact but benefits from improved access to the park and town centre.

6. **Beach and promenade.**

Central to this area is the proposed coastal defence project, promenade and new family beach. The master plan builds on these proposals and plans for improved links across the A55 and Railway into the town centre and newly refurbished pier. The importance of this project in terms of Colwyn's future role as a major North Wales visitor attraction cannot be underestimated. The project will provide a vastly improved family attraction, a strengthened water sports offer and improved links to Eirias Park, which itself will become a greater attraction.

Heritage aspects of the master plan.

The master plan proposals set out create a distinct set of places which centre on key aspects of the existing town centre. The town centre is the focus given its economic role in defining the overall role and function of Colwyn Bay. Its character must spring from this. Projects described in the master plan are designed in a many cases, to 'repair' and 'reconstruct' the town, tackling problems and difficulties that have been the outcome of previous unsympathetic development. The overall strategic approach is to create the conditions for bringing in new private sector investment in the long term and a renewed vitality to the town. Approaches to each part of the town respects the existing historic fabric and also aim to create the conditions for future uses and investment.

For example:

Station Road.

Station Road was the first formal street set out in the town linking the Abergele Road (main east –west linkage along the north Wales coast) to the railway running along the bay. Station Road features some of Colwyn's strongest most imposing

terraced buildings designed as the town's major retail street. Station Road is the most important of a set of north south links between the bay and Abergele Road.

The impact of the shopping centre to the east, together with pedestrianisation of Station Road is significant in terms of reduced uses, activity and the continuing economic viability of this key street. Pedestrianisation has reduced visitor numbers and through put which has impacted on retail health and the future life of Colwyn's most significant building group. This, together with limited parking and a lack of cross links to the shopping centre, means that this key street within the conservation area feels isolated and underused.

The master plan proposals set out to do a number of things:

1. Open up a new pedestrian retail link (Bay Crescent) directly into a remodelled shopping centre ensuring that Station Road becomes part the town's central retail circuit.
2. Improved the town square as a key gateway into Station Road.
3. Improved parking and access.

Complement and support the approach to individual buildings outlined in the THI stage 1 analysis of the town centre.

Seaview Road.

This short street with its cottage frontage along its western edge was one of Colwyn Bay's first streets. Its domestic scale of low eaves lines, dormers and chimney pots combined with local material convey an aspect of Colwyn's past centred on worker economy particularly around the gravel excavations which the cottages originally overlooked. Whilst there has been public realm work here to change the streets into a set of pedestrian spaces The impact of the Bay View Shopping centre on this little streets has been significant to its character and identity The view of the sea has gone and the shopping centre has limited engagement for the spatial character of the street or setting of the cottages and their ground floor retail uses.

The master plan proposals set out to achieve a number of improvements in this location.

1. The western edge of the shopping is remodelled to provide active frontage along the length of Seaview Road.
2. The width of Seaview Road is reduced in order to create a stronger spatial experience (enclosure street section ratio) benefitting the scale and articulation cottage frontages as part of a new pedestrian street network.
3. The original cottage frontages are retained and refurbished as a frontage to improved more efficient retail space built into the Ivy Street car park area.
4. Improved and remodelled station and town square open up views to the sea and bay from the north end of Seaview Road.

Abergele Road / Conway Road.

This was originally the main coastal route through North Wales. It appears as a traditional High Street with a range of building types, uses spaces. It has a range of different retail uses many of which are independent and local. The national multiples are mainly located in Bay View shopping centre. The existing built character on Abergele road is charmingly varied and mixed with a wide range of material in use. A significant and memorable aspect to Abergele Road are the street canopies and arcades that run in front of some shops emphasising the important street shopping role Abergele Road had in earlier times.

The master plan proposals set out to do a number of things

1. A way finding and identity project is proposed across the town. This is designed to link different areas together and emphasis each area as a distinct quarter within the town. A new town map and street signage will be developed which will guide visitors to area such Abergele Road from the station and car parks.
2. There is an opportunity to promote Abergele Road as the town's new independent quarter.

Summary

The masterplan includes a number of site specific proposals focussed on key areas of Colwyn Bay town centre. These will not only improve the town's prospects of attracting economic investment and growth, but will also markedly strengthen the significance and character of the Victorian heart of the conservation area. This will also assist in creating the strategic context for negotiations with individual property owners as the wider plans and investment are taken forward.

Chapter 4. The Masterplan – Key Components.

- 4.1 The focus of the master plan takes in the whole town from the western end of Conway Road to the eastern end of Eirias Park. To the north the master plan includes the promenade proposals and the new beach and coastal defence project including the pier. To the south the master plan includes new projects south of the Abergele Road.
- 4.2 There are four key areas of proposed intervention; **The town centre, East Colwyn residential neighbourhood centre around Greenfield Road, Eirias Park, the beach, and the promenade.**
- 4.3 Within each area there are a number of distinct projects proposed ranging from building development, public realm, landscape and transport.

Area 1. A new town centre.

The master plan proposes a new heart to the town based around a remodelled town square and shopping centre. The intention is to provide an improved sense of arrival and focus together with improved links to the Promenade. Key projects include:

1. **A new town square** is proposed. The existing station car parking is relocated together with the alignment of Princes Drive to the north. This opens up a larger, better connected public space with direct pedestrian links into Station and Sea View Roads. The new road alignment also enables an improved station drop off area. The new square is designed to hold markets, seasonal events, exhibitions and also to become a meeting place and focal point for the town. Short stay parking can also be provided if required.
2. **A new station** building is proposed. This project is intended to raise the quality of arrival but also improve its day to day functioning for the town. In place making terms the new building reduces the size of the facility in order to open views to the bay from the town square.

3. **A new beach access point** is proposed by extending and remodelling the existing footbridge over the railway line to provide new access down to the Promenade. An alternative drop off point and additional station parking is also proposed on the promenade side of the station.
4. **An improved new car park** is proposed west of the town square to serve the station. Access is via Princes Drive.
5. **New mixed use development** is proposed for the market hall site. This would comprise a single building mixed use development project linked to the retail areas of Station and Penrhyn Roads and the new town square. This building would have ground floor retail with office or residential accommodation on upper floors.
6. **A new pedestrian link** is proposed into Station Road. The intention is to remove one ground floor unit (currently empty) to facilitate a new walk (Bay Crescent) directly into the remodelled shopping centre and beyond to the beach.
7. **New retail** is proposed fronting onto an improved Seaview Road. The current parking and back land service areas at Ivy Street are remodelled to provide improved retail and serving together with a new pedestrian route linking Station Road to the shopping centre and promenade beyond.
8. **Seaview Road** is remodelled and narrowed in order to provide increased retail space together with a more intimate street space looking down towards the new square. Some existing facades are retained (some of Colwyn's oldest buildings).
9. **A new town centre street** (Bay Crescent) is proposed to provide a new retail destination in the town. Designed as a pedestrian, car free space the crescent connects key parts of the town centre together. Starting at Station Road the new walk cuts through the current Ivy Street car park creating two new retail plots. It then connects across an improved Seaview Road into the shopping centre where new retail is proposed. Another smaller square and

green bridge links across the A55 to the new prom, remodelled pier and family beach.

10. **A new landmark commercial building** is proposed on south east corner of the town square. This project is designed to act as a town centre marker and gateway and sitting above the extended shopping centre with retail on the ground floor. It is envisaged that this might be an office building (approximately 8 floors) bringing working people into the centre of town served by the improved train station and bus interchange. Combined with ground floor retail uses, this potential public sector office use is an opportunity for creating new town centre investments.
11. **A new beach link** from the town is proposed over the A55. This project consists of a new green bridge/street as part of a new curved street running through the remodelled shopping centre to Station Road.
12. **Bay View Shopping centre:** The master plan proposes a remodelled shopping centre. The line of the existing mall is retained but 'cranked' to link more directly to the Station road and the promenade. It is envisaged that this new alignment will operate as a traditional 'open' street with retail either side. The shopping mall complement is retained to the east and remodelled, enabling it be 'closed off outside of hours. The car parking is retained with parking below the existing Morrison's unit.
13. **Bay View Road** is remodelled to create two-way access to a new multi-storey car park, and improve the arrival experience into town from Greenfield Road to the east. This car park is to have a direct, signed pedestrian route through to Abergele Road to help serve the local businesses all of the plots to the south of Bay View Road backing onto Back Bay View become new development opportunities. A new mixed use Arts led facility is proposed linking through to the Theatr Colwyn on Abergele Road.

Area 2 . East Colwyn and the Dingle.

- 4.4 This compact community is enclosed by the A55, The Dingle, Abergele Road and the town centre. This area is an important housing neighbourhood in the town and features in this town wide plan as it is critical to manage the housing market and the reputation of this neighbourhood. A more detailed neighbourhood plan is underway with local groups and stakeholders.
- 4.5 The emerging neighbourhood plan will tackle a number of environmental, social and economic priorities for the housing renewal area and start to consider the spatial priorities for change. The community is currently considering the following priorities and future plans will reflect their current position and priorities for each area:
- Improving the condition of housing stock
 - Tenure diversification and increasing housing choice
 - Improving the quality of the management of the private rented sector
 - Reducing antisocial behaviour and drug related crime
 - Improving the image and reputation of the neighbourhood
 - Improving parking, vehicular and pedestrian permeability including the connection of Grove Road to Belgrave Road, which is in turn extended across Lawson Road
 - A new walking and cycling route from the town centre, along Greenfield Road, Grove Road, Belgrave Road, to a new footbridge across the Dingle into Eirias Park.
 - and connectivity between the are and its surrounding assets.
- 4.6 The community have started to think about how they are able to take a more pro-active approach in determining the outcomes in their community by working in partnership with the Council and determining the requirements that will improve the quality of their lives. The discussions are wide ranging and to date there have been no final decisions made. However, the community is starting to consider whether selective demolition would be an appropriate way forward to change the tenure mix and housing offer and whether it could be an option to assist with parking and open space provision..

- 4.7 The strategic proposals within this wider town plan have been informed by priorities and ideas identified through this process of consultation.

Area 3. Eirias Park and Civic Quarter

- 4.8 The master plan proposes a major reorganisation of the town's largest park to maximise its potential as a key recreation and leisure resource. With the advent of the proposed new Events Centre the proposals envisage a new 'sports village' clustered to the south around the stadium. To the north the lake is remodelled to become the town's very own outside events and performance space. The intention is to create a series of different areas focused on a variety of events and activities, within the park a 21st. Century park setting offering a real destination of choice and quality for both residents and visitors.

Key projects include:

1. **A new footbridge** is located across the Dingle providing a new western entrance to the park for the town centre. Together with improved entrances at Abergele Road and the prom the park will have three town centre entrances.
2. **A new children's wild play** area is located near the footbridge designed to serve not only visitors but also Seaville and its neighbourhood school.
3. **A poor weather play barn** is located in the northwest corner of the park with integral parking. The building overlooks the bay and the northern end of the Dingle and is designed to act as an entrance marker linking the park with the beach front and water sports centre below. A remodelled park entrance is envisaged.
4. **The Northern Woodland** is retained and developed as an eco teaching resource combined with proposals for the new Forest School
5. **Eirias Lake** is remodelled into Colwyn's outside theatre and events space. Using the natural topography of the land, amphitheatre steps are shape around the lake facing a floating stage. A water side board walk is proposed which links to a new island and boating area.

6. **The northern edge of the lake** becomes a wetland habitat and ecological education resource linked to the Forest School.
7. **A climbing and scrambling wall** is proposed enclosing the south western edge of the lake composed of large stone boulders, build outs and escarpments.
8. The existing **model boating lake** is retained and improved.
9. **New bowling greens** are proposed creating a more formal park and garden setting for the civic centre building.
10. **Car parking** at the main entrance boulevard **to the Civic Centre** is reorganised and increased into a more efficient layout concealed behind trees and landscaping.
11. **An over 60's outside gym** is proposed adjacent to the sports village located on the park's main circular walk.
12. **A family picnic area** is located between the lake and the sports village. With canopy structures covered areas and picnic furniture
13. **The proposed Events Centre** is the centre piece of the sports village with accommodation to be provided in converted buildings to create a tailor made athletes village.
14. **Three new football pitches** are proposed (two all-weather and one to be flood lit)
15. **James Alexander Barr tennis centre** is relocated onto the sports village facing onto Abergele Road. The new centre comprises 4 internal courts and two external with parking and access to the other facilities in the sports village.

16. **Dan's Den** is located near the main entrance adjacent to the extended and improved skate park and car parking.
17. **A remodelled and improved entrance way** is envisaged from the Abergele Road. Existing car parking is remodelled and improved.
18. **A new hotel** is envisaged on the old laundry site. Located opposite the entrance to the park and sports village it is envisaged that the hotel will support visitors to the Academy as well increased visitor numbers to the town.

Area 4. Colwyn Bay Beach and Promenade.

- 4.9 Crucial to the town's development is the coastal defence and beach promenade project which will once again provide the town with a seaside visitor attraction which has diminished over the years. The master plan embraces this work and attempts to link this key project into the town centre. At the same time the project needs to provide for new commercial opportunities for restaurants, kiosks and attractions that serve the needs of water sports users and families and create a friendly , inviting environment for visitors to the seafront.

Key projects include.

1. **Colwyn Bay Pier** has been the focus of a local campaign for development and investment for some years. Alternative uses, a renewed role and function and investment strategies are still being investigated to identify a way forward. Within the context of this plan, the consultancy team recognise the potential value that any re – use of the pier structure could bring, especially if links back to the town centre can also be achieved as part of a more strategic approach.
2. **A new promenade** is proposed with improved parking, facilities for food and drink, entertainment, cycle routes, and access to the beach.
3. **A new seaward groyne** is included as part of the coastal defence plans and beach project. The groyne is accessible from the promenade with board

walks that lead to observation platforms. The objective here is to make full use of the coastal defence funding and tie that into wider objectives and opportunities..

4. **A new family beach** is proposed to the west of the new groyne.
5. **A new water sports centre** is proposed at the Dingle entrance.
6. **New slipways** are proposed combined with rock revetment defence work to facilitate a dedicated water sports area to the east of the groyne.

Infrastructure and movement.

Vehicular network

- 4.10 The one-way system that is currently Sea View Road, Bay View Road and Greenfield Road is to be modified to allow for re-development along Bay View Road, to provide more intuitive movement by car in this area, and to improve the arrival experience into the town by car from the A55. Greenfield Road and Bay View Road will be converted to two-way streets with streetscape improvements on each.
- 4.11 A 'square about' is proposed at the junction of Bay View Road, Greenfield Road and the access road into the Bay View shopping centre car park which gets very busy at peak times. This will maintain junction capacity of the existing mini-roundabout, but also allow for additional movements associated with the new car park proposed on Bay View Road. The 'square about' concept aims to enhance the public realm (mini roundabouts rarely achieve this) by encouraging slower vehicle speeds and improved pedestrian crossing facilities. Some loss of on-street parking bays will be required in order to accommodate two-way movement (6m carriageway typically), whilst maintaining minimum 2m wide footways.
- 4.12 There is an opportunity to install a new signalled pedestrian crossing at the junction of Greenfield Road and Abergele Road, which would replace the existing pelican crossing to the east of this junction.

- 4.13 Improved car parking signage should be implemented at key gateways to the town centre – Victoria Avenue, Abergele Road / Conway Road, directing drivers to the strategic car parks and helping to minimise unnecessary movements through the town in search of car parking. In the longer term, real-time, variable message signage should be considered in these locations indicating available spaces.
- 4.14 A new public square outside the train station involves re-alignment of the public highway (Victoria Avenue/Princes Drive). Two-way movement through the square will be permitted, although slower speeds encouraged through design and active calming measures.
- 4.15 School drop-off and pick-up areas for both the primary school at Trevor Road and High School in Eirias Park are to be improved. These are to be managed spaces that will enhance the public realm and provide sufficient capacity for parents to drop-off and pick-up, reducing the risk of traffic backing-up along local roads in this residential community

Parking

- 4.16 Short stay, free on-street parking should be maintained on Abergele Road / Conway Road and the side streets to support the local businesses. New developments in the master plan build on some existing public car parks.
- 4.17 ‘Lost’ public car parking capacity will be re-provided by way of a new multi-story car park along Bay View Road as part of new development, together with increased parking capacity in the Bay View Shopping Centre as part of a wider re-modelling of this centre. Direct, signed pedestrian access to this car park from Abergele Road is to be provided so that the local businesses on Abergele Road benefit from this provision. Capacity of circa 200 spaces is proposed for the new multi-storey car park. This may need to be increased depending on the size of the new office building fronting station square.
- 4.18 In addition to new highway signage proposed at strategic locations good quality way finding should be installed throughout the town so as to make for easier movement of visitors.

- 4.19 Parking capacity at the train station (Arriva managed) and Princes Drive will be maintained.
- 4.20 In Eirias Park, new car parking is proposed as part of the new Events Centre development, An additional total of 112 new parking spaces and 8 coach spaces added to the existing 87 spaces, are proposed to serve the existing and proposed leisure facilities, accessed through a new park gateway.

Pedestrian access and routes

- 4.21 Two principal desire-lines for pedestrian routes were identified in the baseline report: through the Bay View shopping centre linking the town and promenade across the A55 cutting; and from Bay View Road through the residential community, across the Dingle to Eirias Park.
- 4.22 A pedestrian bridge link is proposed from the re-modelled shopping centre, over the A55 cutting, to the existing pedestrian route under the railway. The walking environment will be enhanced through the shopping centre and surrounding streets as part of this proposal, and connection to the promenade becomes much more direct. Enhanced signage and way finding will greatly assist legibility throughout all areas.
- 4.23 Greenfield Road will be enhanced as a pedestrian route from the town centre, along Grove Road which is extended through to Belgrave Road, in turn extended beyond Lawson Road to a new pedestrian bridge link across the Dingle into Eirias Park.

Cycle routes

- 4.24 Access from the town centre to the National Cycle Network Route no 5 that runs along the Promenade is provided across the new bridge link and street through existing shopping centre. Secure cycle parking, and possibly a cycle hire facility at the new station interchange is also proposed.
- 4.25 Cycle access from the town centre through to Eirias Park will be provided long the enhanced pedestrian route along Greenfield Road / Lawson Road, across the bridge spanning the Dingle.

Public Transport

- 4.26 Figure x shows the town centre bus network and frequencies. The bus stop on the corner of Station Road and Abergele/Conway Road is very popular and requires more space. Station square should become the main interchange for bus/train/cycle modes, although care is needed not to concentrate all bus services in this one location, which would have adverse environmental effects. Bus layover should not be accommodated in this square.
- 4.27 Drawing (SK) 100 shows the proposal for Station Square in front of the train station, following initial consultation with the train operator, Network Rail, Conwy Council and WAG. The proposal maintains parking capacity at the station, but re-arranges it to free-up space for a public square, better arrival experience, and enhanced walking route into the town centre. A train/bus/taxi/cycle transport interchange with ticketing and retail provision is proposed on Victoria Avenue by re-aligning the highway. Access from the station down to the promenade is proposed from a new viewing platform with lift.

Other Projects

The Master Plan

There are a total of 28 projects within the central Colwyn Bay area. We have undertaken an area based characterisation of each of the sites. The 28 different projects appear to be geographically clustered into seven separate areas. A brief description of each immediate area has been undertaken, accompanied with an outline of the proposed project.

1. **The Beach/Promenade Area (Projects 1& 27)**

A range of new leisure uses, have been illustrated to convey the diversity of opportunities associated with the beach and promenade area. Such developments, focus on the beach area immediately west of the Victoria Pier. Colwyn Bay, unlike some of the surrounding beaches is sandy. The beach area is cut off from the town centre, with the A55 and railway line acting as a barrier. Access is severely restricted between the promenade/beach area and town centre. The promenade runs behind the substantial concrete sea walls. Access to the beach is via a few selective

walkways. The Pier is currently in a dilapidated state, having been shut down since 2008. The Masterplan recognises the importance of the Pier structure in creating a potential focus for renewed beach and promenade identity. The feasibility of uses, costs of repair and the extent of the Pier structure are all for further more detailed viability testing.

2. **Station and Immediate Frontage (Projects 2 & 7)**

The town square proposal centres upon the Colwyn Bay Railway Station frontage and entrance into the main shopping areas. The plan is to create a “new station development, incorporating a new town square with redirected Victoria Avenue/parking and interchange” and new walkway linking the station and beach. The area is currently paved, with a car park and drop off facility directly fronting the station itself. This area forms part of the wider station gateway, and is the first aspect of Colwyn Bay when departing the train station. The Masterplan has modified earlier proposals, and refocuses the proposed interventions on the transport interchange and creation of a town square.

3. **Retail Core (Projects 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 & 10)**

The Masterplan proposals state that the Bay View Shopping Centre is to be transformed and extended along a new street, linking Station Road, with a new bridge linking the site with the pier. Such plans focus principally on the redevelopment of the eastern part of Station Road and the western portion of Sea View Road, and would forge increased links between the principal ‘open air’ shopping area around Station Road, and the Bay View Shopping Centre, a link which the Scott Wilson ‘Conwy County Borough Council Retail Study’ (February 2007) states should be encouraged. New development along Ivy Street would improve pedestrian through flow and vitality towards the eastern end of the retail core.

Colwyn Bay is defined within the ‘Conwy Local Development Plan Deposit Plan 2007-2022 Background Paper 15 Retail Study’ (April 2009), as being a ‘Town Centre’, as opposed to being labelled a ‘Sub-Regional Centre’ such as Llandudno. Whilst Colwyn Bay offers a “reasonable vital and viable town centre,” providing “excellent retail choice for its immediate catchment area”, it

lacks the larger department stores and choice within particularly comparison goods which Llandudno offers. Many of the larger high street multiple retailers such as Marks and Spencer, Next, Debenhams, HMV and Waterstones have premises within Llandudno, whilst the major retailers within Colwyn Bay are those which command a much lower threshold population, and in many instances target lower income populations, such as Argos, WH Smiths, Boots, Morrisons, Burtons, Superdrug, Clarks and Bon Marche. This is despite the population of Colwyn Bay (29,000 at the 2001 Census) being significantly larger in comparison to that of Llandudno (20,000 at the 2001 Census).

It appears that over the timeframe studied within the 'Conwy County Borough Council Retail Study' (February 2007), yields within Colwyn Bay have increased from 8.0% to 8.5% between 1994 and 2005, whilst by the same token; yields have fallen from 7.5% to 7.0% in Llandudno. Such figures illustrate the competition between the two locations, and illustrate the poor performance of retailers within Colwyn Bay relative to Llandudno over the measured timeframe.

The Bay View Shopping Centre contains around 25 units, and currently houses a Morrison's Supermarket, Iceland and Argos. The Morrison's Supermarket alone comprises of circa 3481m² of floorspace. Spread over two floors, the layout is raised to incorporate a car park facility below. Access by car is currently from Greenfield Road/Victoria Avenue, with further retail frontage and pedestrian access from Sea View Road.

The 'Conwy County Borough Council Retail Study' (February 2007) recognises that the Bay View Shopping Centre is:

"vital and viable, however, it is detrimental to the historic town centre as many of the multiple retailers are located in this centre. In any event, the further expansion of Bay View shopping centre is restricted by its position"

And furthermore:

“does not contain any vacant units”

The success of the Bay View shopping centre suggests that there are issues with supply. Many of the ‘multiple retailers’ have chosen to locate within the Bay View shopping centre, as opposed to the ‘open air’ Station Road. Station Road and Penrhyn Road, and the secondary retail areas (predominantly along Abergele Road) do, as the Scott Wilson ‘Conwy County Borough Council Retail Study’ (February 2007) provide a “diverse range of independent retailers that help to establish the character of the town centre.” The diverse mix and perforation of discount operators and charity shops into the immediate town centre, and high vacancy rates are a function of the over-supply of poor quality retail accommodation within Colwyn Bay town centre.

The popularity of the Bay View shopping centre, and the fact that there are currently no vacancies, provide an indicator that new high quality retail units could prove popular. New high quality retail units would comprise of a mixture of larger and smaller units (much like the existing layout of the Bay View shopping centre), and include service access to the rear, loading bays and prominent frontage. It must be recognised that the expansion of the Bay View shopping centre will be modest, relative to the total amount of retail space currently on offer within Colwyn Bay.

The Scott Wilson ‘Conwy County Borough Council Retail Study’ (February 2007) reports that Colwyn Bay is under trading with regards convenience goods, and recommends that the Planning Authority should consider the merits of each individual convenience store proposal. The expansion of the Colwyn Bay convenience store allocation will benefit the retail mix and increase the number of shoppers coming into Colwyn Bay. By allowing the expansion of existing units such as Morrisons, and specifically attempting to place new food provision within the town centre, it is hoped that increased vitality and footfall will create a spill over affect and improve the competitiveness of Colwyn Bay as a centre relative to the competition elsewhere. Given the high proportion of retailers such as Morrisons and

Iceland currently within the present Bay View shopping centre, expansion would facilitate retail growth within this sector.

The 'Conwy Local Development Plan Deposit Plan 2007-2022 Background Paper 15 Retail Study' (April 2009), recommends that "floorspace for comparison goods should be constrained until at least 2015." We recognise that this is probably true, not least because vacancies will have increased and rents fallen since the Scott Wilson Report presented its findings in 2007. However, it is important to note that any scheme approved now, would only open after 2015, and by that point the market will probably be of sufficient strength to permit a modest increase in the amount of retailers specialising in the sale of comparison goods.

The remodelling of the Bayview Shopping Centre would not compromise current car parking facilities. The Scott Wilson 'Conwy County Borough Council Retail Study' (February 2007) reports that "there is a requirement for off-street parking", which is due to the relatively high levels of on street parking and the associated congestion. An increase in the amount of on site parking will off-set the losses incurred developing the current car parking site on Ivy Street.

4. **Renewal Area (Projects 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 & 18)**

The spatial focus of the Masterplans proposed idea to create better links and spaces is the 'East end', which falls wholly within the HMRI boundary. Such proposals state that existing land development is to be remodelled to create new residential clusters with new public spaces and routes. Please see description of HMRI area above.

According to Shape's plans, "focused clearance together with new residential development provides new opportunity and identity for the east side." The corresponding annotated map identifies areas around Lawson Road, Belgrave Road and Erskine Road, all of which fall within the HMRI area described previously.

5. **Abergele Road (Project 12)**

Abergele Road runs east to west, and is one of the main access routes into Colwyn Bay town centre from the eastern suburbs, such as Old Colwyn. One of the projects identified within the masterplan specifies the upgrading of Abergele Road. The northern portion is dominated by three storey terraced properties, which are currently a mixture of retail premises and properties in mixed use, which typically house retail functions on the ground floor with flats above. The southern side is more residential, although with a growing proportion of retail units as Abergele Road heads into the centre of Colwyn Bay. . The Western end of Abergele Road forms part of the area previously defined as the 'retail core'.

Abergele Road could be an active and vibrant part of the town centre. Originally part of the main north Wales cross route it performed as a distinct High Street before the development of Station Road, and much later the Sea View Shopping Centre. In the proposed master plan Abergele Road emerges as Colwyn Bay's distinct and local retail destination building on the strong range of independent retailers that already exists along the length of the street. The distinctive arcaded canopies and strong architecture are a huge benefit to establishing a distinctive place within the town. The canopies are extended where possible, and together with a new way finding strategy that badges the street as a distinctive local quarter better links are achieved into the town centre.

The street is very busy so opportunities to increase or widen the pavement are limited. However, this does not means that a better lighting and way finding and signage strategy could not be developed as part of a town wide project.

6. **The Dingle (Projects 18 & 19)**

Proposals include "new development at the head of the Dingle, with a new footbridge across the park." The Dingle forms part of a wooded path, linking Abergele Road to the sea. The path follows the valley of the Nant-Y-Groes stream. There are significant pockets of developable land, particularly towards the southern end of the path near to Lawson Road, where the valleys gradient is less pronounced. . The Dingle forms access from the

Promenade to the North, towards Abergele Road to the South. Car access is permitted from the Promenade, which eventually contracts into a pathway for pedestrians. The route also facilitates access between the town centre (to the East) and Eirias Park (to the East) (from Greenwood Road), and towards the Dingle Nature Reserve to the South.

7. **Eirias Park - (Projects 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26)**

Eirias Park is located towards the eastern end of Abergele Road, going out of the town centre towards Old Colwyn. The park is a vast expanse of green space, and contains an athletics track/football stadium, tennis courts, bowling greens and swimming pool. The Civic Centre and local Police Headquarters are located to the east of Eirias Park. Proposals include the creation of an indoor training facility alongside the existing stadium/athletics track which has been earmarked as An events centre, which is proposed to accommodate (amongst other things) a Welsh Rugby Union Academy. In conjunction with the events centre, the Masterplan also incorporates new sports pitches, a remodelled leisure complex and new bowling club within close proximity to the Civic Centre.

Shape's plan identifies the creation of a visitor destination/event space within the park through landscaping with the lake as a central focus. The remodelled park with reinforced pedestrian routes will enhance the 'performance area'. Formal gardens will contribute to a more varied park use and will be developed on an existing under utilised football pitch. It is anticipated that links with the civic centre will enhance community spirit and ownership.

A new extension to the Civic Centre is proposed which will seek to maximise occupation and usage of the existing centre. The extension is an ideal opportunity to improve the integration of the centre within the park. A remodelled Police academy is also mentioned within the Masterplan.

8. **Singular Sites to the South of Abergele Road (Projects 9, 11, 28)**

There are three sites identified which are located to the South of Abergele Road. Projects 11 and 28 are both described within 'Conway's 5 Sites for

Early Acquisition'. Project 9 comprises a residential development site which amounts to around 1.94 acres of land, which currently houses a two /three storey retail and office building fronting both Conway Road and Coed Pella Road, with associated car parking facilities to the rear. The retail frontage, located along the busier Conway Road, contains the entrance to the Colwyn Bay branch of the Job Centre, Coleg Llandrillo's Community Learning Centre, as well as a local convenience store and a vacant unit. The frontage onto Conway Road is two storeys, and it is assumed that the first floor contains office space. The frontage onto Coed Pella Road comprises three storeys of office space. It is assumed that all accommodation is currently occupied by the Department for Work and Pensions amongst other public sector bodies. The property is of early 1970s construction, and the materials used principally brick and concrete. The car park and associated tarmacadam surface to the rear of the building covers an area totalling 1.36 acres. Consideration would need to be given to the acquisition of these interests in order to facilitate land assembly to the proposed residential, hotel and mixed use development sites.

Rationale for Public Sector Partners Involvement

The rationale behind the Strategic Acquisition Strategy is to ensure that the public sector partners deliver comprehensive regeneration and development where needed in Colwyn Bay. For example we are aware that acquisitions within the Housing Market Renewal area have, to date, been on a piecemeal basis and whilst the area does not have a large proportion of vacant properties, there are HMO properties which may need to be considered as part of a wider programme in conjunction with the local Registered Social Landlords.

We have not considered the Housing element of the strategy in too much detail at this stage pending the outcome of Arc4's findings.

The underlying principles to Conwy CBC's and WAG's involvement and establishment of the Strategic Acquisition Strategy is the Bay Life Initiative Development plan 2007-2014 which will seek to deliver:-

- Coastal improvement and waterfront developments.
- Significant new offices established in the town centre
- Eirias Park hosting a Centre of Excellence for sport, leisure and culture
- Creation of a community hub
- Improved housing in the town
- An evening economy
- Integration of the town centre, waterfront, park and residential areas.

Chapter 5. The Masterplan – The Transformational Projects.

- 5.1 This section focuses on the key transformational projects that will have the greatest impact on the town and contribute the most in terms of the vision and strategic objectives set out.
- 5.2 Within Colwyn Bay, there are a number of plans for investment at varying stages of implementation and different stages of decision making. There are a raft of funding and investment sources and management arrangements in place and new approaches to public sector intervention, revenue support to address the key objectives in Colwyn Bay and private sector investment will need to be developed.
- 5.3 Within this masterplan, there is a need to integrate and co-ordinate activity with emerging national and regional economic conditions and the forthcoming comprehensive spending review all define the context for setting priorities. This section of the report identifies the transformational projects .
- 5.4 The transformational projects set out below cover all the key pieces of physical investment that need to be taken and are included here on the basis of:
- Their potential to deliver town wide impacts.
 - Their fit with the aims and objectives of the plan.
 - The level of support already confirmed from local communities.
 - Their ability to be delivered with private sector investment and partnerships.
 - Their contribution to the long term sustainability of Colwyn Bay.
 - Their ability to act as a catalyst to further investment and regeneration in Colwyn Bay.
- 5.5 Arrangements for the delivery of this masterplan will include new streamlined processes that will:
- help the partnership achieve the key masterplan objectives.
 - integrate and streamline socio- economic assessments and social criteria with site specific investments.
 - be deliverable within changing funding contexts in both the public and private sectors.

- involve local people and take full account of the needs of local communities
- be sustainable
- enable the management of risk

5.6 Set out below are the opportunities identified by the Masterplan and a brief summary of potential risks. In most instances the key risk will be the availability of funding, whether private or public sector and therefore it is essential that a programme of funding and delivery is considered as soon as possible. The Masterplan provides for short, medium and long term delivery.

Colwyn Bay Town Centre

Opportunities

Bay View Shopping Centre

5.7 Bay View Shopping Centre, located to the East of the town centre, should be reconfigured in order to address the issues it currently faces of accessibility, circulation and connectivity with the town centre.

5.8 The Bay View Shopping Centre is a successful shopping centre, with only two vacant units. The Centre as it currently stands is inward facing. The proposals will improve access by opening up the centre with some outward facing units. Links with the station and pedestrian areas/public square will be improved which will enable footfall to the centre to be increased.

5.9 Whilst currently filled with recognised High Street brands such as Iceland, Argos, and the Morrison's supermarket, the centre has budget/low value retail provision. Reconfiguration of the existing units will enable new and larger units to be created which will attract interest from other high street retailers who require larger foot plates and higher levels of footfall who cannot be accommodated at present.

5.10 Initial discussions with Bay View Owners representatives have been positive and they are keen to work with the public sector to maximise investment in the area.

Other Retail Businesses

5.11 The retail provision within the town centre extends outside of the Bay View Shopping Centre along Abergele Road.

- 5.12 Projects to improve these retail areas will include both infrastructure and physical improvements improving both the pedestrian and traffic circulation within the town centre. Improvements to Abergele Road will need to include improved public realm and shop fronts, and proposed improvements to the traffic and pedestrian routes would also improve footfall and contribute to the economic conditions that will reduce the levels of vacant units.
- 5.13 A new bridge over the A55 dual carriageway will facilitate access to/from the Promenade. Any retail expansion will provide increased choice and improve the retail offer, allowing Colwyn Bay to compete with Llandudno which is identified as the sole sub-regional shopping destination. The objective is to increase both local shopper and visitor numbers, to prevent leakage of retail functions from the town centre and ensure Colwyn Bay is a vibrant shopping centre.

Risks

Bay View Shopping Centre

- 5.14 Expansion of the Bay View Shopping Centre is dependent upon the owner's investment to fund their proposed changes to the design and layout of the centre. Altering, or indeed expanding upon the currently successful mix of low value goods may yield results however the long term objective is to change the level and quality of retail offer available to the town centre. The public sector/private sector relationship is therefore of critical importance regarding the proposed changes to the Bay View Shopping Centre, to encourage availability of private sector funding and the management of the delivery process.

Other Retail Businesses

- 5.15 Whilst the Bay View Shopping Centre is within single ownership, the remainder of the shopping areas of Station Road and Sea View Road are in multiple ownerships. Similarly Abergele Road, which contains more secondary retail functions with either storage facilities or residential units above, is within multiple ownerships. Any redevelopment proposals will have to satisfy a greater number of parties in order to go ahead, with structured consultation and greater encouragement and possibly incentives required in order to gain the necessary investment.

Commercial Offices

Opportunities

- 5.16 The benefits of creating a new build office structure within the centre of Colwyn Bay is the opportunity to create a landmark building, which could provide a level offer to the commercial market which would change the market conditions within Colwyn Bay and the character of the immediate area. The new office building could provide retail accommodation on the ground floor, which would be used as a 'one stop shop' for public services, with Colwyn Bay inhabitants having all of the front-line services provided for within a single unit which is easily accessible within the town centre.
- 5.17 Any office development built within Colwyn Bay would not be done speculatively through the private sector. It is therefore envisaged, as recognised above, that any office development would have to be developed in relation to a specific occupier and it is more likely that the occupier would have to be a public sector body.
- 5.18 With the benefit of a public sector agency as a core tenant, any remaining space may attract locally based companies currently trading from Princes Drive and Wynnstay Road who wish to increase the size of their workspace and "trade up" from their existing premises which are in the main large, refurbished former residential/leisure accommodation.

Risks

- 5.19 The commercial office development is largely dependent upon possible public sector relocation. Indeed it is unlikely that the development could be delivered without the Council as occupier. Similarly the uncertainty, scale and individual requirements of services will have a direct effect upon the size of accommodation required. Given the proposed location of the office development, the relationship with the owners of the Bay View Shopping Centre is of crucial importance regarding deliverability, and in particular their opinions regarding the extent of redevelopment.
- 5.20 It is important to note that current market conditions mean that the office scheme will not be brought forward speculatively, and is wholly reliant upon the demands of possible public sector relocation.

Colwyn Bay Beach

Opportunities

- 5.21 Colwyn Bay beach remains one of the main visitor attractions within the town. There is a unique opportunity to rejuvenate the waterfront area, with improved links to the town centre, complete with a new retail and café provision. Improving the vitality of the area through improved access with the town centre will complement the existing retail offer, which comprises of smaller units selling ice cream, snacks and drinks. Improved footfall will support a café/bistro type establishment, which would act as a catalyst and encourage more visitors towards the promenade area.
- 5.22 The eastern portion of the beach will provide water sports facilities. Sailing, waterskiing, windsurfing and jet skiing are some of the functions which could be supported alongside a more sedate offer of pedalos.
- 5.23 Retail units could exist alongside a water sports arena. Supporting uses such as repair shops and specialist clothing shops may operate in this location. Enhanced kiosks, offering a greater variety of goods within renovated surroundings could operate.
- 5.24 The Pier is currently in poor condition and within a derelict state. Any redevelopment of the pier should complement the existing proposals outlined above, or indeed be included within a scheme to improve the promenade area.

Risks

- 5.25 The economic success and the redevelopment of Colwyn Bay promenade is largely dependent upon travel patterns and visitor numbers, with the success of the traditional British seaside town key to the resort's fortunes. Whilst the advent of package holidays and cheap flights have eroded the tourist base of many of Britain's seaside towns, there are signs that this pattern may reverse, as concerns about the environmental impact of air travel and the costs associated with holidays abroad have led many to reassess their demands.
- 5.26 The development of the promenade/beach area is wholly dependant on improving access, branding and signage for the area and securing the necessary funding in order to deliver a recognised state of the art facility. Development will need to be of

sufficient quality to improve the area in the manner suggested above and integrated management between relevant agencies such as the council, the local tourist board and law enforcement agencies will be required.

- 5.27 It must be stressed that any redevelopment of the promenade area will be implemented over a significant timeframe.

Housing

Opportunities

- 5.28 The proposed new housing allocation is located predominantly to the East of Colwyn Bay town centre. We are aware that the Council/RSL has undertaken ad hoc/opportunistic acquisitions across the area.
- 5.29 New development will improve the diversity and choice of residential units within the immediate 'Housing Renewal Area' (HRA), and create further opportunities to develop family housing. Such plans include providing infill development upon existing 'back' and vacant land, creating new residential clusters with new public spaces and routes. There is also the opportunity of relocating any non-conforming uses to other areas thereby releasing potential development land.
- 5.30 Focused small scale clearance will provide additional off street parking and additional amenity space, and make better use of the existing space.
- 5.31 The area needs to be supported by a neighbourhood management plan, which will address problems such as security, refuse and anti social behaviour in order to improve the overall perception of the area and its environment and provide a better place to live for the residents.
- 5.32 There are plans to improve access between Lawson Road to the east side of the HRA and Eirias Park, via a new landmark bridge crossing the Dingle. Such links will add value to the housing offer which is enhanced because of the greater access links forged between the residential area and the park. The majority of residential units within the HRA contain smaller gardens, and so access to a park could have a more pronounced effect.

Risks

- 5.33 The success of the scheme is dependent upon a variety of different factors such as the availability and use of public and private funding. Acquisitions need to be coordinated and focused, forming part of a wider plan as opposed to a piecemeal/adhoc nature. The efficiency of expenditure and public sector support will be a crucial factor within the development of the area.
- 5.34 Objections to clearance and possible community ambivalence towards the scheme may limit the desired performance or impact of the scheme.
- 5.35 The lack of a good neighbourhood management plan and support of the housing market by identifying areas of intervention could negatively impact on the positive impact created by improving the local built environment. Similarly, a lack of engagement with landlords may have consequential affects upon any scheme. Ensuring that public bodies proactively enforce the powers at their disposal in support of any redevelopment scheme is of crucial importance, and the failure of such bodies to successfully tackle problems such as overcrowding, unlawful HMO's and anti-social behaviour may adversely affect the chances of turning the fortunes of the HRA.

Transforming Movement.

New Footbridge over the A55

- 5.36 A key challenge identified through the baseline study was how to overcome the barrier to movement between the town centre and the seafront which is presented by the A55 and the railway.
- 5.37 Through the masterplanning process an opportunity was identified to create a new crossing point in the form a landmark bridge that would provide a strong connection between the town and the sea front as well as announcing the Town to passers by using the A55.
- 5.38 It was recognised that any bridge would have a number of constraints to overcome such as ensuring a minimum 5.03m high clear span across the A55, crossing the slip road, Victoria Avenue and then overcoming the additional barrier presented by the railway.

- 5.39 There is an existing footway under the railway bridge (that used to be a trafficked road prior to construction of the A55 cutting). The proposal makes use of this existing footway to link the promenade and its pier to the new footbridge,
- 5.40 There is not sufficient distance between Victoria Avenue and the underpass to be able to bridge over the Avenue and then provide a DDA compliant ramp down to the underpass. It is therefore necessary to provide an at-grade pedestrian crossing of Victoria Avenue. This presented a further challenge as it meant that a strategy would have to be developed for ensuring sufficient clearance over the A55 slip road which runs parallel and adjacent to Victoria Avenue.
- 5.41 Two potential options have been developed as described below:

Option 1 (Drawing (GA) 001)

This option proposes a curved bridge deck which arcs to the west and as such crosses the slip road before it has started to climb to its higher level. Its curved geometry allows sufficient headroom over the A55 slip road to be achieved. A surface treatment is then provided to continue the arc as an at-grade crossing of Victoria Avenue. The landscape is then re-graded to a maximum gradient of 1 in 20 to allow passage beneath the underpass. Re-grading works may require that the clearance beneath the underpass is reduced to a minimum of 2.4m.

- 5.42 In order to support the curved bridge deck a leaning structural steel arch is proposed which will span the A55 and support the bridge deck loads through a series of cables. The loads would then be transferred into the ground by new abutments at the bases of the arch.
- 5.43 As well as providing support to the bridge deck the arch would form a significant feature announcing Colwyn Bay at its gateway on the A55.

Option 2 (Drawing (GA) 002)

This option provides for a crossing straight across the A55 in line with the existing underpass. The deck would cross Victoria Avenue at grade and steps and an

access ramp would then be provided from Victoria Avenue down to the existing underpass.

- 5.44 Whilst this option does provide a straight-across route for the bridge deck, it would involve civil engineering works to re-grade the existing A55 slip road, ensuring that sufficient headroom. The re-graded slip road would have a gradient of 1 in 20.
- 5.45 In order to maintain a clear span with no intermediate support an vertical steel arch structure is proposed to support the bridge deck and transmit the bridge deck loads into the ground.
- 5.46 Option 1 has been identified by the masterplanning team as the preferred option due to the elegance of the design and the reduced impact on the existing A55 trunk road structure.

Risks

- 5.47 The most significant risks to the delivery of this new footbridge are the availability of funding, and the support of all stakeholders including the North Wales Trunk Road Agency. Important to the success of the scheme will be the delivery of associated public realm improvements and private developments which will generate the footfall and pedestrian desire necessary to make any new footbridge a success and a valuable asset to the town.

Bay View Road and Greenfield Road

- 5.48 Bay View Road, Seaview Road and Greenfield Road currently operate as one-way roads. With re-development along the length of Bayview Road, we are anxious to avoid a one-way gyratory system.
- 5.49 Bay View Road is to be transformed by the re-development, and forms part of an essential walking, cycling link from the town centre to the residential area to the east and on through to Eirias Park. A treatment is proposed along Bay View Road with space reallocated to allow widened footways, tree planting and a space for street parking and/or loading area in front of the new buildings. Bay View Road will allow two-way vehicular movement from Greenfield Road up to the proposed new car park at the western end of the street. This new car park can then be accessed

directly off Greenfield Road without the need to circumnavigate a one-way system, and this can be signed directly off the A55 slip roads. Some street parking on the north edge of the road will be lost, but can be re-allocated on the southern edge to serve the new developments.

5.50 It is proposed to revert Greenfield Road to a two way street, allowing more direct and intuitive access to and from the A55. There will be some loss of street parking as a result of this, however it is expected that provision for loading to the local businesses on Greenfield Road can be maintained.

5.51 Under the masterplan proposals the junction of Bay View Road and Greenfield Road has a significant role to play and must fulfil the following roles:

- The junction is a key Gateway to the town to visitors arriving by car. A Gateway should announce the town to the visitor and present a strong first impression, and have a civic quality.
- The junction will be a key decision making point for both vehicle drivers and pedestrians, who must choose whether to continue along Greenfield Road towards the residential areas to the south, or turn west towards the proposed new town centre car park. It is important that speeds are reduced on approach to the junction and that the junction is treated so as to aid the decision making process, reducing unnecessary clutter whilst providing sufficient information to allow the driver to make their choice of route.
- It is a busy junction on the town centre road network, serving the existing Bay View Shopping Centre car park and service area (which is likely to increase in capacity over time), the new development on Bayview Road and its multi-storey car park, and access to Abergele Road. A redesigned junction will need to have sufficient capacity to accommodate the existing vehicular traffic flows plus any additional traffic which may be generated by the regeneration of the town.

5.52 Due to the key role that the junction must play it is designed as a “Square about” a piece of civic infrastructure which will fulfil the roles described above whilst

maintaining the necessary vehicular movements and flows in the same way as a roundabout. A potential arrangement for the Square about is shown on drawing (HI) 100, with vehicle tracking shown on drawing (HI) 101 & 102..

- 5.53 The Square about will function similarly to a roundabout, but designed to encourage reduced speeds and increased driver awareness, and permit pedestrian crossing movements across the space. The distinctive treatment proposed will not only present a strong impression to people entering the town, but will also ensure that vehicle drivers are alert on entering the space.
- 5.54 This square will be treated in robust but distinctive materials, the arrangement based on enabling and encouraging pedestrian movements and improving legibility. The carriageway level will be raised to create a near-level surface across the square (low upstand kerbs provided).

Risks

- 5.55 Securing funds is the primary risk to the delivery of the scheme in some form. Careful design and communication of the proposed movement principles will be key to meeting all of the aspirations for this proposed intervention.

Station Square

- 5.56 Station Square presents a key gateway to the town for visitors arriving by both car and by train and also provides one of the few existing pedestrian connections between the town centre and the sea front as it is constructed on a deck across the A55. At present the space is dominated by car parking, highways and the associated clutter and does not announce the town to visitors in a positive light.
- 5.57 The masterplan proposes that a scheme is developed which transforms the space into a public square which will be designed to achieve the following objectives:
- Improve the arrival experience from the station
 - Provide space for visitors to orientate themselves on leaving the station.
 - Provide improved public transport interchange
 - Improve visual and physical connections between the town centre and the Promenade

- Creation of a new Public Space

- 5.58 An outline design has been developed which proposes that the carriageway is diverted to the north of the space freeing up a large area to the south of the Square which can be developed as a Civic Square which could accommodate public events and activities such as markets. The outline design is shown on Drawing (SK) 100.
- 5.59 The realignment of the carriageway introduces a tight bend which will encourage reduced vehicle speeds and proposes an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing where the pedestrian desire line from the Station entrance to the town centre meets the carriageway.
- 5.60 The existing Network Rail car park has been reconfigured and moved to the edge of the Square in order to ensure that the number of spaces is retained whilst reducing the impact of the car park on the space.

Risks

- 5.61 Arriva Trains North Wales, and the North Wales Trunk Road Agency. Agreeing a clear brief for the Square at an early stage of the design process and ensuring on going communication throughout the design and construction process will be key to ensuring that all stakeholders' requirements are satisfied without compromising the quality of the scheme. Similarly, funding for this project will be made up from a number of sources including European convergence funding, NSIP, NSIP Plus, Regional Transport Fund and possibly sustainable transport framework funding. Pooling these resources together effectively to deliver the list of objectives listed in section 5.55 above needs strong championing and coordination.

Chapter 6. Acquisitions Strategy

- 6.1 The Strategic Acquisition Strategy can be seen as an evolving process and will be run in conjunction with Conwy County Borough Council and the Welsh Assembly Government. This is a critical part of the delivery strategy and as such needs to be proactively managed. It is important that the acquisitions are achieved within the timescale of the project as a whole in order to maximise funding available for the North Wales Coast Strategic Regeneration area. Overall the Strategic Acquisition Strategy must deliver the required properties, at the current time and within budget. There must be a minimum of wastage and superfluous resource. Properties which are occupied outside the terms and remit of a co-ordinated or controlled Strategic Acquisition Strategy are likely to be surplus to requirements and will not only be an initial waste of resources but will also be an unnecessary arrangement cost in the future.
- 6.2 Sites have been earmarked for early acquisition, and are located in both the Housing Market Renewal Area and also in and around Colwyn Bay. Such sites include: -
- *Old Market Hall, 2/4-16 Princes Drive*
 - *3-8 Bay View Road and 1-3 Lincoln Terrace (not purchased)*
 - *CFR, Douglas Road (not purchased)*
 - *2 and 4 Groes Road (also known as the former Laundry Building) (not purchased)*
 - *10 Douglas Road*
- 6.3 Furthermore, local RSL, Pennaf are also key partners in the town. Their acquisitions have been almost exclusively focused within the renewal area, and include the agreed purchase of the Edelweiss Hotel (located just off Lawson Road), 11 Lawson Road, 14 Lawson Road, and the Chapel, Lawson Road, and submitted offers on 88 Abergele Road, 62 Greenfield Road and 64 Greenfield Road. A number of proposed acquisitions are still in negotiation. The purchase of properties thus far has been done on an ad hoc and piecemeal basis, as and when properties have come to market.

6.4 For the time being, we have included the following sites within the Strategic Acquisition Strategy:-

1. The Housing Market Renewal Area
2. The five sites included within Conwy's early acquisition proposals
3. The additional areas of Penrhyn Road, Wynstay Road, Mostyn Road, Princes Drive, Marine Road and Conway Road
4. The 28 sites identified within the Shape Masterplan.

6.5 The "Strategy" sets out the criteria and justifications for the public sector's involvement within the area, together with the identification of key land holdings and opportunities which may be brought forward. We are working closely with the master planning and client teams to inform programming and identify early wins, identify properties on the market, identify vacants/derelict and properties not in public sector ownership and to address issues of deliverability and outputs.

Housing Market Renewal Area

6.6 The renewal area covers approximately 41 acres, just east of Colwyn Bay town centre and incorporates a total of 451 properties. The vast majority of properties located in the HMRI area are currently in residential use, although there are a significant number of retail units along Abergele Road and to the west of Greenfield Road. A total of 36 properties operate solely as retail units, with another 53 currently in mixed use including a retail element. A high proportion of residential properties to the north of Abergele Road are substantial 2/3 storey Victorian houses, with a variety of terraced, semi detached and detached dwellings. The average size of such residential properties has exacerbated a high level of conversion into flats. Indeed, a total of 93 properties (20.6%) have been divided into HMOs according to the VOA. There are three clusters of industrial accommodation throughout the HMRI area, amounting to a total of 12 units (2.7% of the total). The bulk of the commercial accommodation is located to the rear of Greenfield Road, which contains a total of 7 units. A further 4 units are located on Back Belgrave Road, and another on Grove Road.

Conwy's 5 Sites for Early Acquisitions

1. Old Market Hall, 2/4-16 Princes Drive

The Old Market Hall incorporates a number of predominantly under-utilised retail units, located within close proximity to Colwyn Bay Railway Station and the Imperial Hotel. The properties form part of the wider station gateway, and are of particular prominence. The properties lie within the same block as the County Court Buildings and the local JD Weatherspoons pub occupying the former town centre cinema, aptly named 'The Picture House'. The properties comprising the Old Market Hall are all three storeys, with vacant ancillary/office accommodation above. Only one of the 5 retail units appears to be occupied. It is understood that CCBC have purchased the former KFC unit, which occupied Nos. 2/4 Princes Drive. This site has earmarked for potential mixed use development, which could incorporate a ground floor retail unit with residential or office space above. The development possibilities for this site have not been fully explored, although as has been previously recognised, the site is of intrinsic importance given its proximity to the station, and any refurbishment of the premises will have to reflect this.

2. 3-8 Bay View Road and 1-3 Lincoln Terrace

3-8 Bay View Road comprises two 3 storey Victorian semi detached properties, which overlook the Bay View Shopping Centre. 1-3 Lincoln Terrace comprises three 2 storey properties, which are approached from a back road. This site forms part of a wider scheme to completely remodel Bayview Road to provide a mixed use scheme and arts complex linked to the theatre, and facilitate access between Bayview Road and Abergele Road.

3. CFR, Douglas Road

The building currently used by 'Conwy Furniture Reclaim' is located along Douglas Road and comprises a single storey clad industrial unit. The property benefits from a tarmac frontage which is currently used for parking. The site, along with 10 Douglas Road, forms part of a wider development site (Project 11) identified within the Masterplan, which extends along the whole of Douglas Road. Further property acquisitions may be required in addition to the CRF site and Number 10 in order to complete the

assembly of the whole site, which is earmarked for residential units within the Masterplan document.

4. **10 Douglas Road**

The property comprises a two storey detached property, fronting onto Douglas Road. The property is bounded by a car park to the north, and the CFR site described above to the south. The site forms part of the development site, identified above within Site 3 (CFR Douglas Road).

5. **2 and 4 Groes Road (Former Laundry)**

No. 2 Groes Road comprises an imposing two storey detached house, located upon an elevated corner plot overlooking Abergele Road and Eirias Park. Whilst No. 2 Groes Road appears to be currently within residential use, No. 4 appears to be within commercial use. No. 4 Groes Road contains 13 units; of which Nos. 1-8 comprise a motorcycle warehouse, and Nos. 9, 10, 11-12 and 13 which are currently utilised as workshop/warehouse accommodation. The total site amounts to circa 1.6 acres and has been earmarked as a possible site for a future hotel development. This site is referred to as Project 28 within the Masterplan.

Additional Areas of Wynstay Road, Mostyn Road, Princes Drive, Conwy Road

- 6.7 The additional area studied includes the area bounded by Conway Road, Marine Road, Princes Drive and Penrhyn Road. There are a total of 124 properties located within the area, with a mixture of residential, retail and office uses. Penrhyn Road forms the western boundary of the Colwyn Bay's main shopping area. Similarly Conway Road, as has been detailed above, contains a number of retail units containing secondary uses. Conway Road has a number of the major high street banks, such as Barclays and RBS in substantial corner properties. Wynnstay Road and Princes Drive contain a number of offices, and seems popular amongst professional practices, with accountants, surveyors and solicitors in occupation. Marine Road, Hawarden Road and Mostyn Road contain a number of larger three storey detached/semi-detached properties, which have been subdivided into flats. A number of larger, modern purpose built flats have been built within proximity to the junction around Conway Road and Marine Road. The additional area studied above has not been considered for any acquisitions. This is for two reasons. Firstly, a

number of private sector led developments for elderly people such as Swn-Y-Mor and Rhoslan Park located on the corners of Marine Road and Conway Road have already improved the area aesthetically. Secondly, this area does not create the possibility of opening up infill development sites quite so easily as the Housing Market Renewal Area considered above.

Area Analysis in Support of Acquisitions

- 6.8 A varied amount of work has been undertaken regarding each separate site. We have undertaken an area level characterisation for the whole of Colwyn Bay town centre area. This has enabled us to understand the local built environment, infrastructure and public realm. This has been accompanied and supplemented in many instances with a more specific property level characterisation, which attempts to understand each property on a more individual basis. Each individual property has been externally inspected, which has generated data such as the nature, type, occupation and condition of the incumbent stock. Further analysis of such data, alongside VOA and market data has enabled us to ascertain the use, as well as availability. The area level and property level characterisation was further informed and supplemented by a full photographic catalogue of each street and more specifically, each individual property.

Housing Renewal Area

- 6.9 Analysis included two site visits, which provided a full photographic catalogue of properties within the renewal area. A matching schedule has been drawn up, which lists all properties, as well as listing the buildings current use as specified by the VOA. We have identified the clusters of HMOs and specific clusters of poor quality premises, as we sought to undertake our property level characterisation process.

Conwy's 5 Early Acquisition Sites

- 6.10 Each of the 5 sites identified by Conwy County Borough Council has been identified and extensively studied. This was done to place each individual property within the context of the surrounding built environment. Furthermore information has been ascertained from the VOA to identify the buildings current use. If the property has been placed on the market, particulars have been obtained. Each individual property has been photographed and catalogued to supplement our opinions gained from the extensive study of the site.

Additional Areas of Wynstay Road, Mostyn Road, Princes Drive, Conway Road

6.11 Conwy County Borough Council has furthermore provided us with another area of focus, bounded by Marine Road, Princes Drive, Penrhyn Road and Abergele Road/Conway Road. On receipt of a detailed plan, we undertook an analysis of the local area which included undertaking a property level characterisation of all properties.

Land Acquisition Opportunities.

6.12 To date we have analysed the data collected as part of our baseline information database, and drawn basic conclusions in relation to the property market in each of the individual areas. We have prepared a matrix upon which we can quickly move to assessing land assembly costs, issues and opportunities in relation to the areas and sub areas which have been provisionally identified as targeted areas. We are aware that a number of properties have already been acquired by the public sector are subject to negotiations.

6.13 External inspections of all properties have been undertaken during early 2010 and a photographic database completed. For an area of this size there appear to be few vacant residential properties and only a few vacant retail units. From our experience in other regeneration areas we would have anticipated more vacant properties within the Colwyn Bay Housing renewal area, and within the additional areas studied.

6.14 No internal inspections have been carried out and we have not entered into discussions with any of the owners or occupiers of properties identified.

Recommendations include:

6.15 Increased coordination between agencies currently involved in the regeneration of Colwyn Bay. In particular, RSLs such as Pennaf need be working in tandem with both the Welsh Assembly Government and Conwy County Borough Council.

6.16 Agreeing the areas to be specifically targeted. As this report has highlighted, a number of proposed schemes and works have been proposed for Colwyn Bay. Whilst it is anticipated a number of such schemes will go ahead, there needs to be

priority sites and a timeframe for future development, so that certain sites can be prioritised and early strikes captured.

- 6.17 The priority area should be that of the retail centre, over and above the 'Housing Renewal Area' and 'Additional Areas Considered', albeit being pursued in conjunction with the upgrading of the Promenade and Eirias Park. It is believed that the 'Housing Renewal Area' and 'Additional Areas Considered' could be upgraded within the medium term, with a much more interim solution required.
- 6.18 In terms of priorities within the 'Retail Core', the reconfiguration of the Bay View shopping centre, which will forge the link between Sea View Road and Station Road, and the improvements to the square fronting Colwyn Bay Station should be given the greater priority in relation to the other schemes considered. The proposed office development on the site would form part of this recommendation also.
- 6.19 The acquisition strategy will have to respond to the delivery targets specified above, and it is therefore recommended that the strategy responds to the retail elements described above, and the requirements of the town centre. Acquisitions of selective properties along Station Road and Sea View Road will be required, in conjunction with any land or buildings located along Ivy Street which will be required in order to facilitate the proposed development.
- 6.20 The need for concentrated spatial targeting. Whilst it is acknowledged previous acquisitions have been spatially coordinated and concentrated within a small area, especially for properties currently acquired to the south eastern section of Lawson Road, we must stress the need to allocate resources towards concentrated properties within a pre-defined location. Sporadic purchases of properties may constrain future development options and limit future budgets.
- 6.21 In some instances, the ad hoc piecemeal approach, acquiring properties as and when they come to market may work, provided they fit into a coordinated action plan for the area. If wholesale changes are not required for an area, such an approach may function fairly efficiently, as properties are acquired and converted to a standard which the acquiring authority sees fit. However, in this instance, spatial

coordination must be a prerequisite should the specific plans outlined by Shape be given the green light.

Chapter 7. Delivery Arrangements.

- 7.1 The delivery arrangements for taking forward this town wide strategic masterplan are central to its overall success. Traditional arrangements for project management, corporate responsibilities and statutory functions within the local authority present a set of issues beyond the remit of this commission. Delivering a vision for a town and not just co-ordinating but owning, all aspects of the strategy demands new ways of working, especially during the current times of great political, governmental and economic change. This plan is about creating a unifying aspiration, a vision and also a partnership
- 7.2 This document sets out a range of strategic objectives, a spatial masterplan and a number of transformational projects for Colwyn Bay that are both bold and focussed. They are a direct response to the current needs and opportunities within the town and an understanding of the economic and political imperatives that will continue to drive domestic policy for many years.
- 7.3 The strategy itself will remain a wish list if delivery is not organised at the right strategic level. How to organise delivery is suggested here and relates to the objectives of the strategy itself rather than any assessment of current structures in Colwyn Bay, or their capacity or current role. It is not within the remit of this commission to comment or evaluate in detail on local delivery vehicles as they are currently constituted. This is about co-ordination and capacity and the management of a single strategy in a single place! The very strongest partnership of national, regional and local tiers of government must be integrated with the continuing involvement of local communities and the private sector. The core functions of such a partnership include the following:
- **Custodian and leader** of the vision and master plan for the town. Whilst the themes, projects and funding packages to take forward elements of the masterplan will all be different, the custodian's role is to ensure that there is **effective delivery** across the area with progress made towards the broad strategy.
 - **To drive, lead and procure** all aspects of investment with a particular focus on housing investment, strategic environmental, park and public realm

improvements and key employment related investments including facilitating the shopping centre opportunity and more strategic funding for transport, infrastructure and flood defence works.

- **To drive and negotiate the best deal** for Colwyn Bay with public sector investors. This will be set in the context of 25% public spending cuts from 2011-2015 (Emergency Budget headlines – June 2010). This demands joint working at the highest levels between the Council, the Welsh Assembly Government, investors and community partners.
- **To market** Colwyn Bay, building the private sector investment base, the area's profile, supporting and leading the focus of all partners.
- **Providing consistency** of approach over many years, across funding and policy changes.
- **A strategic approach to funding and investment.**

7.4 As well as being the custodian of the vision, the delivery agency for this town wide plan in Colwyn Bay must have a remit to knit together all funding streams across all themes and frameworks. From all public sector and service delivery budgets to all capital programmes and private sector investment, a single strategic approach to Colwyn Bay is the driver here.

7.5 The history of urban policy in UK towns and cities is scattered with organisational experiments, pilots and initiatives that have had varying degrees of impact and managed different funding regimes in a range of different contexts. This masterplan must be about learning from these experiences and driving forward a new delivery partnership that makes the vision happen.

7.6 In any case, a radically altered national context means that previous funding requirements and the structures associated with them must be scrutinised. Delivering better results for less money is the new mantra within the public sector and part of the way to achieve this is to tap even more into the creative potential of people, communities, enterprise and create a new "localism" for Colwyn Bay.

7.7 The delivery partnership for this strategic masterplan must also be structured and resourced to lead the development of new approaches to private sector funding, engage with key landowners and the investment industry.

7.8 Creative and innovative approaches to securing funding from both the public and private sector will be required to implement the many themes and projects within this masterplan. The traditional use of public sector funding to lever private investment and to increase values and help create more functioning local markets will be difficult. New financial models and joint ventures to work with public stakeholders and private investors will be needed and the delivery vehicle for the masterplan must be tasked, with taking the leading role as a strategic investor in its own right. The delivery body will also be tasked with protecting investment already made in the town and ensuring broad social and economic objectives are met.

Statutory Planning.

7.9 The delivery of the masterplan will also be integrated with statutory planning processes. The core principles of sustainable development are reflected throughout this document and underpin the overall strategy. Whilst large elements of the masterplan are not focussed on new physical or spatial actions, it is vital that the masterplan itself is given weight within local development plans. The LDP process later in 2010 will incorporate the key aspects of this plan.

7.10 To ensure greater weight, the plans and proposals set out in this document conform to the objectives, vision, strategy and key policies set out in the emerging LDP. This strategic masterplan is not a blueprint and is flexible enough to change over future years as investment and market conditions fluctuate

7.11 These ideas and masterplan proposals have emerged from a community participation process undertaken at the start of the commission. This now needs to be developed and built upon as the delivery body for the strategy organises and takes ownership of further community involvement and sufficient monitoring mechanisms for the lifetime of the strategy.

7.12 The approach and proposals set out in this document have been endorsed by Conwy's Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 19th August 2010. Further stakeholder engagement work with the private sector, residents and businesses will be required as part of the implementation of the plan.

Chapter 8. Delivering a Vision..... In conclusion:

What sort of place could Colwyn Bay be?

- 8.1 At the heart of our proposals is a new stronger more exciting picture of the town and what it can offer, not only to its residents and businesses but also visitors and investors.
- 8.2 The master builds on what is good about the town as a way of drawing people to it, helping them see more and stay longer. There is no doubt that Colwyn Bay could once again be the seaside destination it once was while also strengthening its role as the 'capital' of the North Wales coast.

Imagine what a future Colwyn Bay could be from the point of view of others:

For Visitors:

- 8.3 Our family travels along the railway looking down at the new beach, rows of colourful beach huts and amazing pier like board walks that stretch out to sea. They arrive at a brand new modern station which looks out to sea on one side and a brand new town square on the other. There is a new bridge which links across from the square onto the prom below. They can see the newly remodelled pier with its restaurants, attractions and observation wheel.
- 8.4 They cross the tree lined square where there is a craft market on together with musicians and performers. To the left is Colwyn's tallest and newest building marking the centre of town - A state of the art green office building with spectacular views from the roof top café. A stroll up Colwyn's oldest but newly refurbished street Sea View Road takes the family into Colwyn Crescent. This is the town's newest shop lined street. From here the family can turn left towards the beach, right into Station Road or straight on towards Abergele Road with its specialist shops, cafes and theatre.
- 8.5 Shopping, lunch, and then off to the beach. The family walk over the new green bridge from Colwyn Crescent to the new pier and down to the beach. The sand is clean and soft and easy to get to. The prom is full of people strolling between the

new boardwalk groins watching the sailing and jet skis clustered around the new water sports centre.

- 8.6 The evening sees the family stroll over the footbridge to the park. They look down on others exploring the new outside sculpture gallery stretched out and flood lit along the Dingle. (Not previously mentioned) They walk through the new park entrance towards the lake where they enjoy a music performance and stroll around the new park. The kids climb over the boulders and get their feet wet in the habitat area.

For Residents:

- 8.7 Better affordable housing is being built in east Colwyn. this is a great place to live for families. A few minutes walk away over the footbridge is the new sports village and Eirias Park. In the other direction is the town centre and the new family friendly beach. The sports village provides fitness classes and sports training for the kids. There are a variety of things to try both indoors and outdoors ranging from climbing, football, tennis, rugby, running, swimming, all sorts of indoor sports. There is also a place for skateboarding, BMX and a youth club.
- 8.8 There are good schools close by all linked to the park and Seaville. There are even outside teaching areas in the Woodland School and new habitat area.
- 8.9 The park also has a regular programme of festivals and events. There are a lot of visitors to the Dingle too, to see the sculpture.

For Businesses:

- 8.10 More and more people are now visiting Colwyn Bay. The town's beach project and renaissance has been national news and with advent of reduced flying more people are coming along the A55 to stay.
- 8.11 The town centre has changed too. More people work right in the heart of the town. With the relocation of the Council into its new green building on the Square more and more people are using the town shops and facilities. This has attracted other business and retailers. There are new shops in the town but also more things to do like better cafes, restaurants and bars.

8.12 There is new housing being built (or created if conversions?) which is bringing in young families, changing the population mix and building more aspiration across the town. This has impacted on services such as schools, health facilities and council services.

- new iconic building is located at the 'nose' of the shopping centre with retail and one stop services on the ground floor. This at once brings a new sense of location and identity to the heart of the heart of town while also bringing in new office workers (approximately 600).
- There are two new links from the town the beach achieved by a new street which is designed to improve access and circulation. It open up Station Road to more pedestrian access and links it to a wider retail focused circulation 'loop' around the town core.
- More retail space is proposed at the shopping centre and on Sea View Road utilising Ivy Street.
- A new town square and station is proposed which improves transport accessibility while also bringing a stronger sense of arrival and centre to the town.
- Road traffic is reorganised with some roads becoming two way. This is designed to improve circulation and accessibility.
- Pedestrian circulation is improved to east Colwyn and across the Dingle via a new footbridge.
- The housing balance is re-set with focused clearance and additional new family home projects.
- The park is remodelled into a sports village and family park, maximising its assets and proposed sports initiatives
- The promenade project is linked in with the wider master plan together with the new beach and coastal defence works.
- Watersports business opportunities